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Fish & Wildlife Digest

A Summary of Rules and Management Information

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New Jersey Department of
Environmental Protection



NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF
Fish and Wildlife

New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Digest



State of New Jersey
Department of Environmental Protection
James E. McGreevey, Governor
Bradley M. Campbell, Commissioner



Office of Natural and Historic Resources
Marc A. Matsil, Assistant Commissioner

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The Division of Fish and Wildlife is a professional, environmental organization dedicated to the protection, management and wise use of the state's fish and wildlife resources.

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Commissioner's Message

By Bradley M. Campbell

We are truly blessed to have such a rich diversity and abundance of marine life in our bays, estuaries and off our shores. Our fabulous marine resources provide more

than 10 million days of recreation and immeasurably enrich the quality of life for over 500,000 New Jersey saltwater anglers and more than 300,000 visitors who come to fish our waters. And the recreational and commercial fisheries associated with our marine resources measurably enrich our quality of life here in New Jersey by contributing more than two billion dollars to the state economy.

It's easy to see the importance of responsible management and protection of this valuable resource. What we do along our shores to protect remaining uplands and coastal wetlands, and responsibly manage our discharges into coastal waters, is key to protecting our marine resources. However, responsible environmental protection along our coast is not enough to ensure the future of our marine resources. We have to be just as responsible 10, 50 or 100 miles from our coast because what we do there also affects our marine environment. All watersheds eventually empty into the ocean.

Consequently, smart growth is critical to the quality of life for people in New Jersey for many reasons. Sprawl, overdevelopment and their primary and secondary impact on our waterways and, ultimately, our marine environment, threaten our precious marine resources. Sprawl, overdevelopment and congestion affect the quality of life for everyone in New Jersey.

Fighting sprawl, overdevelopment and congestion, and encouraging development and redevelopment of our urban and older suburban and

rural centers are among Gov. James E. McGreevey's top priorities. To improve the quality of life for all New Jerseyans, the DEP has launched initiatives to achieve smart growth and to protect the state's waters and natural resources. The new, map-based initiative is called the Blueprint for Intelligent Growth (BIG) Map, also referred to as the DEP Map.

A major goal of the DEP Map is to make the State's environmental regulatory standards transparent to developers and municipalities, so they will fully understand their regulatory obligations before proposing new development projects. The DEP Map will show where DEP, through streamlined regulatory approaches, will encourage growth, new development and redevelopment, and where it will discourage inappropriate growth to protect the state's waters and natural resources. Strengthening the protection of water quality and water quantity is a key objective of the DEP's Map.

Continuing his commitment to protect the quality of the state's drinking water supplies and key natural resources, Gov. McGreevey has proposed various bodies of water for Category One status. This is a science-based designation that provides the highest level of regulatory protection for waterways from any activities that produce a measurable change in existing water quality.

Last year on Earth Day, April 22, the governor directed DEP to propose rules to upgrade nine drinking water reservoirs and six ecologically sensitive stream segments to Category One, or C1, designation. The C1 initiative aims to prevent degradation of water quality and to maintain the existing high water quality to support uses such as drinking water, the propagation of fish, and the protection of wildlife and natural resources. During the past year, the Governor has proposed 24 bodies of water for C1 status. The DEP is developing a more comprehensive statewide process for identifying potential C1 water and establishing clear standards for protecting these specially designated waters. As part of this process, DEP has reached out to the public for comment and will seek additional public input through a formal administrative rulemaking process.

Better stewardship of our precious water resources is critical to ensuring safe and reliable water supplies for our growing communities in the future. It is paramount that we safeguard the quality of the water we send to our marine environment, which supports our marine species. We protect our quality of life by making sure we protect theirs.

OUR MISSION:

To protect and manage the state's fish and wildlife to maximize their long-term biological, recreational and economic value for all New Jerseyans.

OUR GOALS:

To maintain New Jersey's rich variety of fish and wildlife species at stable, healthy levels and to protect and enhance the many habitats on which they depend.

To educate New Jerseyans on the values and needs of our fish and wildlife and to foster a positive human/wildlife co-existence.

To maximize the recreational and commercial use of New Jersey's fish and wildlife for both present and future generations.

Saltwater Fishing: It Takes Complex Science to Keep it Simple

By Marty McHugh, Director

New Jersey's saltwater fishermen already know our waters offer some of the finest angling opportunities available anywhere along the Atlantic coast. But few likely are aware of the work we're doing back here on land to ensure you'll have a rewarding experience at sea.

For those who might wonder how we're protecting the best interests of New Jersey anglers, I'd like to offer a little insight.

While saltwater fishing remains one of life's simple pleasures, managing the state's marine fisheries and the process of determining size and bag limits have become complex work. Our marine biologists, for example, devote much of their time to painstaking data collection and detailed analysis. Other experienced men and

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New Jersey Fish & Wildlife Telephone Directory

Internet Address www.njfishandwildlife.com

Commercial Preserves & Semi-Wild Preserves.....	609-984-6211
Deer & Turkey Permit Hotline	609-292-9192
DEP ACTION LINE - 24 HOURS.....	877-WARNDEP
Exotic & Nongame Captivity Permits	609-292-9591
Falconry Permit Information	908-735-8793
General Information.....	609-292-2965
Hunter Education	877-2HUNTJNJ
Hunting, Fishing, & Duplicate Licenses	609-292-2965
Operation Game Thief	800-222-0456
Outstanding Deer Program.....	609-292-9450
Pheasant & Quail Stocking Information	609-984-0547
Rifle Permit Information.....	609-984-1400
Trout Stocking Hotline	609-633-6765
Wildlife Conservation Corps Information	856-629-1014
Wildlife Control	908-735-8793
Wildlife Management Area Information	609-984-0547

Trenton Office

501 E. State St., Station Plaza 5, 3rd Floor, PO Box 400, Trenton, NJ 08625-0400	
Endangered and Nongame Species	609-292-9400
Freshwater Fisheries	609-292-9450
Land Management	609-984-0547
Law Enforcement	609-292-9430
Marine Fisheries	609-292-2083
Shellfisheries	609-984-5546
Wildlife Education	609-292-9450
Wildlife Management	609-292-6685

Nacote Creek Research Station

P.O. Box 418, 360 Rt. 9 N. (Milepost 51) Port Republic, NJ 08241	
Marine Fisheries	609-748-2020
Shellfisheries	609-748-2040
Marine Education	609-748-2031
Wildlife Management	609-748-2063
Marine Law Enforcement	609-748-2050

Bivalve Shellfish Office

P.O. Box 432, Port Norris, NJ 08349 856-785-0730

Shellfish Dealership Information

NJ Consumer Health Service, Dept. of Health
P.O. Box 369, Trenton, NJ 08625 609-588-3123

Shellfish Water Classification

NJ Div. of Watershed Mgt.
P.O. Box 405, Stoney Hill Road
Leeds Point, NJ 08220 609-748-2000

Freshwater Fisheries Lab

PO Box 394, Lebanon, NJ 08833 908-236-2118

Northern Region Office

26 Route 173 W., Hampton, NJ 08827	
Wildlife Management	908-735-7040
Endangered and Nongame Species	908-735-8975
Hunter Education	877-2HUNTJNJ
Wildlife Control	908-735-8793
Land Management	973-383-0918
Law Enforcement (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren Counties) . . .	908-735-8240

Pequest Trout Hatchery and

Natural Resource Education Center
605 Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863 908-637-4125

Central Region Office

1 Eldridge Rd., Robbinsville, NJ 08691	
Land Management	609-259-2132
Hunter Education	877-2HUNTJNJ
Wildlife Control	609-259-7955
Law Enforcement (Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean Counties).....	609-259-2120

Southern Region Office

220 Blue Anchor Rd., Sicklerville, NJ 08081	
Information	856-629-0090
Hunter Education	877-2HUNTJNJ
Land Management	856-629-5006
Freshwater Fisheries	856-629-4950
Wildlife Control	856-629-7224
Law Enforcement (Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem Counties).....	856-629-0555

This marine Digest has been designed with regulations grouped in the center to create a pull-out section.

Portions of this Digest are available in enlarged format for the visually impaired.

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WHERE TO WRITE US

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Saltwater Fishing: It Takes Complex Science to Keep it Simple

(continued from page 2)

women at the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife regularly meet with volunteers and advisors to share key information affecting saltwater angling regulations. State conservation officers log thousands of hours in law enforcement.

The process of determining size and bag limits for many marine species is established by Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission fishery management plans. The fisheries commission is a consortium of the 14 Atlantic coastal states from Maine to Florida along with Pennsylvania. Its coastal fishery management plans are designed to conserve and manage migratory marine fish species, focusing primarily on those close to shore. In New Jersey, there are 16 marine fish species currently managed under the fisheries commission's plans, including popular species such as striped bass, summer flounder, weakfish, bluefish, scup, black sea bass, tautog, American eels and menhaden.

Under federal legislation approved in 1993, all Atlantic coastal states must comply with these fishery management plans. The consequences for failing to comply can be severe, including complete closure of a state's fishery for that species. Here at the Division of Fish and Wildlife,

we recognize that making sure New Jersey fishermen get their fair share of angling opportunities is a big responsibility, and we take it seriously.

Like other Atlantic coastal states, New Jersey develops regulations limiting the harvest of particular species, enforces those regulations and conducts biological monitoring of the fisheries populations in our waters.

Developing regulations for each species management plan is a concerted effort among New Jersey Fish and Wildlife staff, the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council and the public. For some species, regulations change annually depending on the latest scientific information and the previous year's harvest. The regulatory process takes time and typically demands extensive data analysis. Indeed, the amount and quality of the data can affect season length for a particular species as well as the size and number of fish New Jersey anglers can keep.

Fishermen throughout New Jersey play an invaluable role in shaping state regulations. During the year, we frequently sit down with fishermen to listen to their angling preferences and recommendations. We value your views, and whenever possible, we do our utmost to craft

regulations that reflect your guidance.

If you're an angler interested in participating in the process, opportunities abound. You can make sure your voice is heard by attending public hearings or bi-monthly meetings held in many locations throughout the southern and coastal areas of our state.

For a schedule of meeting notices and other helpful information, check out our Web site: www.njfishandwildlife.com

We also encourage fishermen to partner with us on regulation enforcement. Enforcement is a critical component of every fisheries management plan. And it's a tall task, considering New Jersey boasts more than a million recreational anglers and annual commercial landings that exceed 100 million pounds.

Along with our marine fish responsibilities, we are required to conduct a minimum of 2,360 patrols of restricted shellfish waters annually by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Clearly, the integrity of our marine fish and shellfish resources hinges on the strength of our enforcement program.

No question, New Jersey Fish and Wildlife's team of conservation officers has an impressive track record of seeking out anglers who intentionally violate regulations. But we know extra pairs of eyes and ears enhance our enforcement efforts, and we owe a debt of thanks to those watchful fishermen who routinely report illegal angling activity whenever and wherever they spot it. You can help us crack down on violators by calling our toll-free hotline: (800) 222-0456.

Another essential aspect of our work, biological monitoring, becomes more demanding every time the fisheries commission either creates a new fisheries management plan or approves necessary changes. Our division's Marine Fisheries Administration focuses most of its biological sampling efforts on species specifically targeted by the fisheries commission's fishery management plans.

Consider what we do to meet requirements for a particular species, the striped bass, as an example. Plan monitoring requirements include tagging striped bass, sampling young-of-year striped bass in the Delaware River, analysis of catch statistics, collection of age samples, collection of length/weight samples, development of age/length keys and administration of the bonus bass program. These monitoring activities consume more than four and a half years in personnel time and cost upwards of \$335,000 annually. And that's just for one of many New Jersey species!

So, the next time you read or hear about changing regulations for your favorite species, remember we're working hard to protect your interests, and we welcome participation from the people who know saltwater fishing best: New Jersey's fishermen.

Don't Miss the 12th Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament!

This year's Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament will be held Sunday, October 5 at Island Beach State Park. Last year more than 1,200 adults and children registered for the event. Despite high winds, participants took full advantage of a beautiful day outdoors with family and friends.

During the past 10 years, the following have been either partially or fully funded by proceeds from this tournament: specialized balloon tire beach wheel chairs that provide beach access for the disabled and elderly at Island Beach State Park (IBSP); educational displays used in the Interpretive Center at IBSP; a beach access ramp connecting parking area A7 to the beach at IBSP; an automatic heart defibrillator unit for IBSP; two mobile fishing equipment trailers with rods and reels for use in fishing education programs throughout the state; and educational materials/field study equipment for various environmental education projects such as the Barnegat Bay Kayak Tour and Environmental Education Enhancement Program, Hooked on Fishing-Not on Drugs (HOFNOD) program, Pathways to Fishing program, Department of Environmental Protection's Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program, and the Sedge Island Natural Resource Education Center.

The goal of the tournament is to encourage both youngsters and adults to learn more about the

sport of surf fishing and take advantage of a great family activity. The winner of the 2002 Governor's Cup was Pete Clavero of Hazlet, New Jersey with a 44-inch striped bass.

The Division would like to thank the following organizations for their contribution to the Eleventh Annual Governor's Surf Fishing Tournament: Betts Tackle Ltd., Betty & Nicks Bait & Tackle, Bullet Weights Inc., Burriss Savvy Optics, DeLorme Mapping, D.O.A. Fishing Lures, Inc., Eagle Eye Indoor Range, Electric Fishing Reel Systems, Inc., Field & Stream and Outdoor Life, Frank's Boat Rentals, Gargoyles, Inc., Hoppe's Division, Images Group, Inc. on behalf of Imperial Schrade Corp., Mr. Bill Horner (custom rod builder), Innotek, Inc., Kwiike Kwiver Company, Inc., Lamiglas, Inc., Legal Limits, Morrison's Seafood Inc., New Dolphin Bait and Tackle, New Jersey Angler Magazine, New Jersey State Aquarium, Ocean County Parks and Recreation, Richland General Store, Scott's Bait & Tackle, Shoreway Marine Inc., Sportsman's Outpost, Springfield Marine & Aluminum, Swiss Army Brands, Inc., The Brunton Company, The Outdoor Recreation Group, TTI Companies, and YBC.

For more information and registration forms contact: ATTN: G.F.T., NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, Nacote Creek Research Station, PO Box 418, Port Republic, NJ 08241 or call 609-748-4347.

Study Reveals Reefs Enhance New Jersey's Marine Environment

Results from a recent reef colonization study conducted from 1996 to present by the Division of Fish and Wildlife indicate that New Jersey reefs support hundreds of times more marine life than the sandy sea floor. The study was conducted to determine the types and amounts of marine life that colonize ocean reefs and to compare those levels with what is normally found on the sandy bottom. It was an attempt to answer the question: Do reefs produce marine life or simply attract it?

The study began in 1996 when 30 experimental reef habitats were placed on the Barnegat Light Reef Site. Each habitat consisted of a 3' x 1' x 1' plastic-coated wire box embedded in a concrete base. The boxes were filled with a variety of materials to imitate the hiding places found on reefs and to duplicate common reef-building materials. Each box contained 10 corrugated fiberglass panels, 50 whelk shells (large snails) and eight plates of four common, reef-building materials, steel, concrete rock and tire rubber.

Over the past five years, scuba divers retrieved a total of 10 habitats from the ocean reef site. The divers encapsulated each habitat in a plastic drum to capture all of the marine life inside. After each year's collection, Fish and Wildlife biologists spent four months in the lab removing, sorting, counting, identifying and weighing the marine life living within the experimental habitats. What they found was impressive. Over 145 species of marine life, including fish, crabs, shrimp, lobster, mussels, barnacles, starfish, urchin, snails, worms, sponges, anemones—and many more—had colonized the small, experimental habitats.

Biologists estimate that a one-square meter area of reef habitat is home to 432,022 individual marine organisms. In an area the size of a card table, the reef provided homes for 118,651 mussels, 29,310 barnacles, 4,626 anemones, 16,626 worms, 2,349 urchins, 3,545 crabs, 22 lobster and 133 young fish less than four inches long. In addition, the habitat also was colonized by colonial encrusting organisms such as stone coral, bryozoans, hydroids and sponges, that could not be enumerated, but collectively accounted for hundreds of thousands of organisms. These experimental habitats have the population of a city in a microcosm. The total biomass of all these organisms amounted to 129 pounds. Biomass is a biologist's measure of the weight of all the organisms living in a particular habitat. In this study, biomass referred to the weight of all marine life inhabiting a square meter of sea floor.

The Division also collected 60, one-foot-square samples of the sandy sea floor near the Cape May reef. A similar area (square meter) of sandy sea floor naturally has only about 2.5 ounces of marine life. Thus, on an equal area basis, reef habitats have 825 times more biomass than the sandy bottom. Reef structures are three-dimensional and thus, offer more



Experimental reef habitat fully colonized by marine life.

attachment surfaces for marine life growth than the two-dimensional sea floor. Also, the firm substrate of a reef structure enables encrusting organisms to withstand storms which stir up the sand bottom. The numerous crevices and holes of a reef offer fish, crabs and other mobile animals secure places to hide from predators.

The increased biomass of the reef habitat is significant because it represents a far greater food source for ocean predators. The study revealed that marine life populations on the habitats which were exposed to predation were reduced by over 45 percent due to feeding by fish, crabs, lobster and starfish. The investigation also demonstrated that there were no significant differences in the colonization of various reef materials—concrete, rock, steel and tire rubber. Apparently, mussels, barnacles and other encrusting organisms are not discriminating, they just require something firm upon which to attach. Manmade materials (concrete, steel, rubber) are just as productive as natural rock.

New Jersey reefs are colonized entirely by marine animals. The depths on reef sites, generally over 60 feet, are too great for the penetration of sufficient light to sustain plant growth. Instead of plants, the foundation of the reef food-web consists of many species of filter feeding animals that live attached to reef structures and feed by straining the plankton carried past them by ocean currents. Filter feeders (i.e. mussels, barnacles, tubeworms and others) are in turn eaten by fish,

crabs and lobsters. Stationary filter feeders serve another function on the reef by providing a carpet of cover or hiding place for small mobile invertebrates such as shrimp, snails and worms. These animals also may become food for larger predators that comprise this trophic web.

The goal of building reefs, which provide firm, stable substrate for the attachment of marine organisms, is to enhance the biological productivity of the sea floor. Based on the results of this study, reefs do enhance New Jersey's marine environment. By providing new homes for fish and shellfish, reefs also create new fishing grounds for anglers and interesting attractions for scuba divers.

By Bill Figley, Principal Fisheries Biologist

Publications Available

The following publications are available by writing:

Nacote Creek

Research Station Publications
PO Box 418 • Port Republic, NJ 08241

- Shellfish Growing Waters Classification Charts. This publication is available free at any shellfish license agent and online at www.state.nj.us/dep/watershedmgt/bmw/index.htm.
- *NJ Reef News** leaflet is available free. Send self-addressed stamped #10 envelope (3 oz. postage) to address above.
- *Party and Charter Boat Directory**. Send self-addressed stamped #10 envelope (3 oz. postage) to address above.
- *A Guide to Fishing and Diving New Jersey Reefs**. See this Digest, page 7, for details.
- *New Jersey Pumpout Station Directory-2000-2001 Boating Season Guide**. Send self-addressed stamped #10 envelope (2 oz. postage) to address above.

*Also available on the Division's website at www.njfishandwildlife.com

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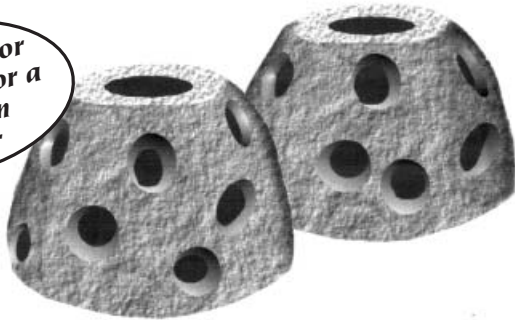


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ADOPT-A-REEF HABITAT

Create an undersea condo for New Jersey marine life

A great gift or memorial for a fisherman or diver



New Jersey's marine life—sea bass, lobsters, crabs and many others—need a place to live. You can help by sponsoring the placement of a concrete reef habitat on a New Jersey ocean reef. Not only will your habitat create a home for marine life to thrive, but it will also provide anglers and divers a new place to fish and explore. A tax deductible donation will help pay for the fabrication and transportation of your habitat(s) to a New Jersey ocean reef site.

How much does it cost and what will you receive for sponsoring ocean habitats?

Sponsor 1 habitat:

Cost: \$200 • You will receive: A color chart depicting location of your habitat(s) and listing as a Sponsor in the next edition of *Reef News*.

Sponsor 10 habitats:

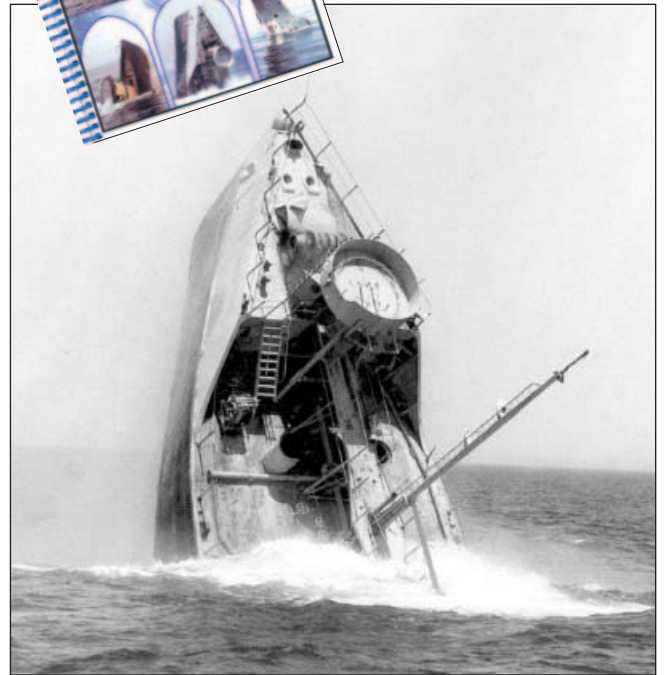
Cost: \$1,000 • You will receive: A color chart depicting location of your habitat(s); listing as a Sponsor in the next edition of *Reef News*; a plaque commemorating your habitat(s) and your reef name published on NJ reef charts.

Upcoming Reef Deployment Schedule

- 2003—Little Egg, Atlantic City
- 2004—Ocean City, Great Egg



The Shipwrecks of New Jersey's Reefs



This new publication provides 160 pages of photos, diagrams, historical information and sinking locations (LORAN and GPS) of 108 vessels sunk on New Jersey's reef sites over the past 30 years, making it a valuable reference for both fishermen and divers.

Complete this form and mail to the address below:

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Enclose check or money order for \$15.00 per book (\$12.95 plus \$2.05 postage), payable to "Artificial Reef Association".
Mail to: ARA, P.O. Box 16, Oceanville, NJ 08231

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Your habitat name " _____ " Number of habitats sponsored: _____

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For more information, call the Reef Program at 609-748-2020

Ocean City Reef

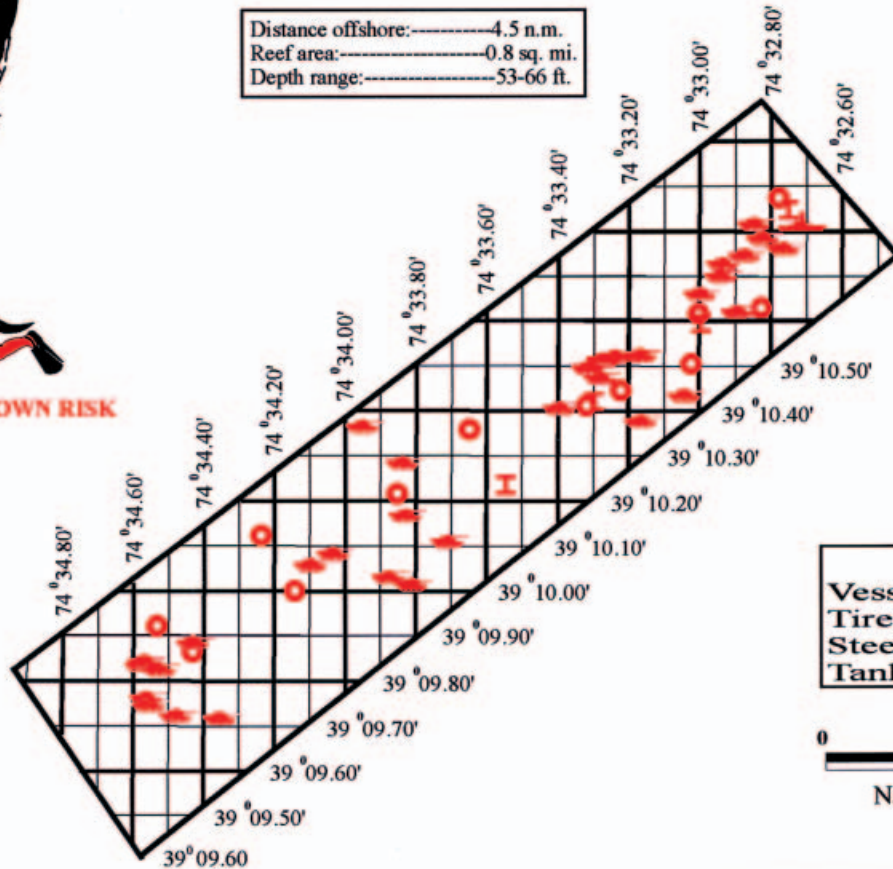
DGPS

From →	Great Egg Inlet	Corson's Inlet	Townsend's Inlet
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Distance, (n.m.)	7.4	4.3	7.4



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