

LAND CLASSIFICATION

LAND SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

The land suitability analysis process began with a comprehensive description of Fire Island's environmental resources. Various data about the natural, cultural, economic, and social environments were compiled, mapped, and analyzed. Since 1970, the National Park Service has commissioned several major studies to develop suitable resources information for planning and management. The first of these was completed in 1971 and provides information on existing federal lands in the national seashore. This study includes reports on climate, fauna, flora, hurricane-protection measures, geology and coastal processes, and estuarine water quality. Geology and vegetation maps were also prepared.

In 1974, the inventory was expanded to include several islandwide studies and a comprehensive description of the non-federal lands in the national seashore area. Emphasis was placed on acquiring information about the exempted communities. The inventory considers land use, landownership, development, carrying capacity for particular uses, evidences of environmental manipulation (groins, jetties, artificially stabilized dunes, etc.), pollution sources and levels, topography, geology and coastal processes, soils, groundwater hydrology, flora, fauna, estuarine water quality, storm-damage assessments, and historic resources. The final report includes detailed maps showing land use, landownership,

development, soils, geologic features, topography, vegetation, and historic/archaeologic resources. The base maps and graphics illustrating this data and the plan's proposals are essentially accurate; however, several small facility modifications have occurred since 1974, such as additions to boardwalks and removal of structures. In those cases where the base map differs from the text of the plan, the text will reflect the plan's intent.



Additional studies were undertaken during 1975 to gather information and provide recommendations regarding land-use controls and zoning questions within the communities. Major issues addressed included congressional intent for zoning and development, and responsibilities for control of zoning within the seashore boundary.

After acquisition of comprehensive environmental information, all lands and waters within the national seashore were evaluated to determine their suitability for the desired land uses and their general capability to withstand these uses. These lands fall into four general categories: lands for protection and interpretation, lands for environmental preservation, lands requiring protection because of inherent values, and lands suitable for low- to moderate-intensity recreation and support facilities. In conducting the land suitability analysis, lands requiring protection because of their natural and interpretive values were identified first. The suitability of the remaining lands for recreational use was then evaluated. The following presentation reflects the approximate sequence of the steps in the suitability analysis.

Lands for Protection and Interpretation

In evaluating environmental resources, lands containing outstanding natural resources or significant historic resources were identified first. These resources are regionally if not nationally significant and will be given the greatest possible level of protection. They are also areas that are of great existing or potential interest to visitors and hence are especially suitable for interpretation. No developments that might impair ecological integrity (natural resources), historical authenticity (historic resources), or aesthetic quality (both) will be permitted. Because of the vulnerability of these lands to the adverse effects of incompatible uses on adjacent lands, they must be adequately buffered by sufficient acreage to preserve special qualities. (The outstanding natural and historic resources of the seashore are identified in appendix C.)

Lands for Environmental Preservation

Federal lands other than those specifically designated as outstanding natural areas were evaluated for their desirability as an environmental preserve in a primitive

classification. Lands were identified where there was no substantial disturbance of the natural environment or existing recreational activities, and where there was sufficient acreage to allow protection and a reasonable degree of isolation from development and recreational activities on the island. These lands included the marshes on East Island and Sexton Island, the segment of Fire Island lying between Long Cove and Smith Point West, tidal marshes of the William Floyd Estate, and segments of Suffolk County lands east of Smith Point County Park.

The majority of federal lands in the 8-mile zone are recommended for protection under a special classification — environmental protection/primitive zone. A wilderness review will be initiated prior to 1980 to determine which, if any, of the federal lands in the 8-mile zone might be recommended for wilderness designation.



Lands Requiring Protection Because of Inherent Values

Certain lands not included as outstanding natural resources or primitive areas do meet important natural area criteria and should be protected because of inherent values. Some of these lands may be suitable for very limited recreation; however, substantial interpretation is not anticipated. Lands with inherent values include the dune area, wetlands, and small areas of maritime forest. (See appendix C for a listing of these lands.)

Lands Suitable for Recreation and Support Facilities

Lands that would be most suitable for low- and moderate-intensity recreational activity areas were determined by the following process: Lands previously identified as outstanding, primitive, or requiring protection because of inherent values were eliminated; lands had to have a substantial primary dune and preferably a good secondary dune; elevation and distance from ocean to bay were considered; the existence of a natural deepwater channel or a channel that would require limited dredging was a major determining factor; availability of utilities was considered; and areas of existing development or areas that had once contained structures were considered as more suitable for additional recreational facilities.

LAND CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The land classification system at Fire Island National Seashore takes into account the suitability of certain areas for specific uses. Four use zones have been defined for the national seashore: natural, historic, general outdoor recreation, and special-use. Each of the zones is described below; and permitted uses, facilities, and activities are listed. Figure 4 at the end of this chapter delineates the land classification zones.

Class I – Natural Zone

I A – Environmental Protection/Primitive Zone. Lands and waters possessing particular value as wildlife habitat and/or research areas with outstanding physical and biological characteristics.

Uses: Protection of valuable habitats, outstanding ecological features, and other environmental values.

Permitted Facilities: Sand trails, elevated pedestrian dune crossings (2 to 3 feet high), and boardwalks (limited to 5 feet in width) in certain locations where future visitor use would result in damage to natural features.

Recreational Activities: Hiking, surf-fishing, hunting (where permitted by law), and limited natural history interpretation.

I B – Outstanding Natural Feature Zone. Geological and biological features possessing intrinsic value or uniqueness.

Uses: Interpretation of natural features, research, and environmental education.

Permitted Facilities: Boardwalks (limited to 5 feet in width), interpretive signs, and elevated pedestrian dune crossings.

Recreational Activities: Hiking on sand trails and boardwalks, natural history interpretive activities, environmental education, and hunting (where permitted by law).

I C – Natural Environment Zone. Lands that require protection of the natural environment but can accommodate environmentally compatible activities.

Uses: Limited public day-use recreation, natural history interpretation, and environmental education.

Permitted Facilities: Minimal facilities to provide for public safety and protection of the natural resource, such as boardwalks (limited to 5 feet in width), primitive type campsites, small-boat docks, open showers, sewage facilities, and interpretive signs.

Recreational Activities: Hiking, beachcombing, surf-fishing, ocean swimming, surfing, hunting (where permitted by law), natural history studies (both National Park Service directed and individual activities), recreational clamming, and picnicking.

Class II – Historic Zone

This category includes areas managed to preserve and interpret significant historic structures, as well as lands containing resources listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Authenticity and integrity of the historic scene should be maintained with compatible uses of all historic structures. First-order structures are normally restored and preserved. Historic structures of lesser importance can be used for a variety of compatible purposes.

Uses: Interpretive activities relating to the historic resources and the study of the cultural environment, with secondary activities such as environmental education.

Permitted Facilities: Restored historic structures, interpretive boardwalks and paths, interpretive exhibits, and other limited improvements necessary for visitor appreciation of the historical environment.

Recreational Activities: Historical interpretation, walking, environmental education activities, and limited picnicking.

Class III – General Outdoor Recreation Zone

This zone includes lands and waters where visitor use has altered or may moderately alter the natural environment. Facilities on lands within this zone serve the needs of park managers in providing medium-density recreational opportunities. Facilities and structures should not dominate the natural environment and should be architecturally compatible with the resource.

Uses: Traditional moderate-density beach recreation (see table 1 for visitation levels associated with moderate-density beach recreation), natural history interpretation, and environmental education.

Permitted Facilities: Minimum-scale bathhouses, supervised beaches, boardwalks, individual and group campgrounds, maintenance stations, concessioner facilities (snack bars and food-marina stores), seasonal and year-round housing for park staff, seasonal concessioner housing, picnic areas, ranger stations, visitor centers, existing marinas, ferry slips, utilities, and necessary support facilities such as wastewater treatment.

Recreational Activities: General day-use beach recreation, hiking, beachcombing, docking of boats in marinas and related social activity, camping, surf-fishing, picnicking, recreational clamming, and various natural history interpretive activities.

Class IV – Special-Use Zones

IV A – Community Development Zone. This zone includes private lands within the 17 communities located within the boundary of the national seashore. Federal control within the communities is limited by existing legislation to certain zoning standards. Otherwise, the communities are exempted from direct federal control.

Uses: Private development (single-family residential and some commercial) that conforms with local jurisdictional zoning ordinances approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

Permitted Facilities: Structures and improvements that conform with local zoning ordinances approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

Recreational Activities: Activities typical of seashore communities, ranging from surf-fishing and beachcombing to nightclub dining and dancing.

IV B – Major Park Development Zone. Lands within this zone are limited to major large-scale facilities, public bathhouses, and parking lots located within Smith Point County Park, Suffolk County.

Uses: High-intensity beach recreation.

Existing Facilities: Large-capacity facilities, such as extensive parking lots, major bathhouses, drive-in campgrounds, boardwalks, trails, concessioner facilities, and related support facilities.

Recreational Activities: Swimming, picnicking, surf-fishing, playground activities, shellfishing, and other recreational activities permitted in zones I and III.

IV C – Dune District. The dune system of Fire Island National Seashore, which is subject to frequent and severe storm damage, is vital to the protection and perpetuation of the resource. Certain segments of the dune system within the seashore have been severely damaged by man's activities. All dunes not included in the environmental protection/primitive zone will be protected from additional damage by inclusion in this district.

Uses: Public recreational use prohibited.

Permitted Facilities: A small number of vehicular and pedestrian dune crossings necessary for access to areas located behind the dunes.

Recreational Activities: All recreational activity prohibited within the dune district because of the exceptionally fragile nature of the dune system.

LEGEND

- CLASS I A  ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION/PRIMITIVE ZONE
- CLASS I C  NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

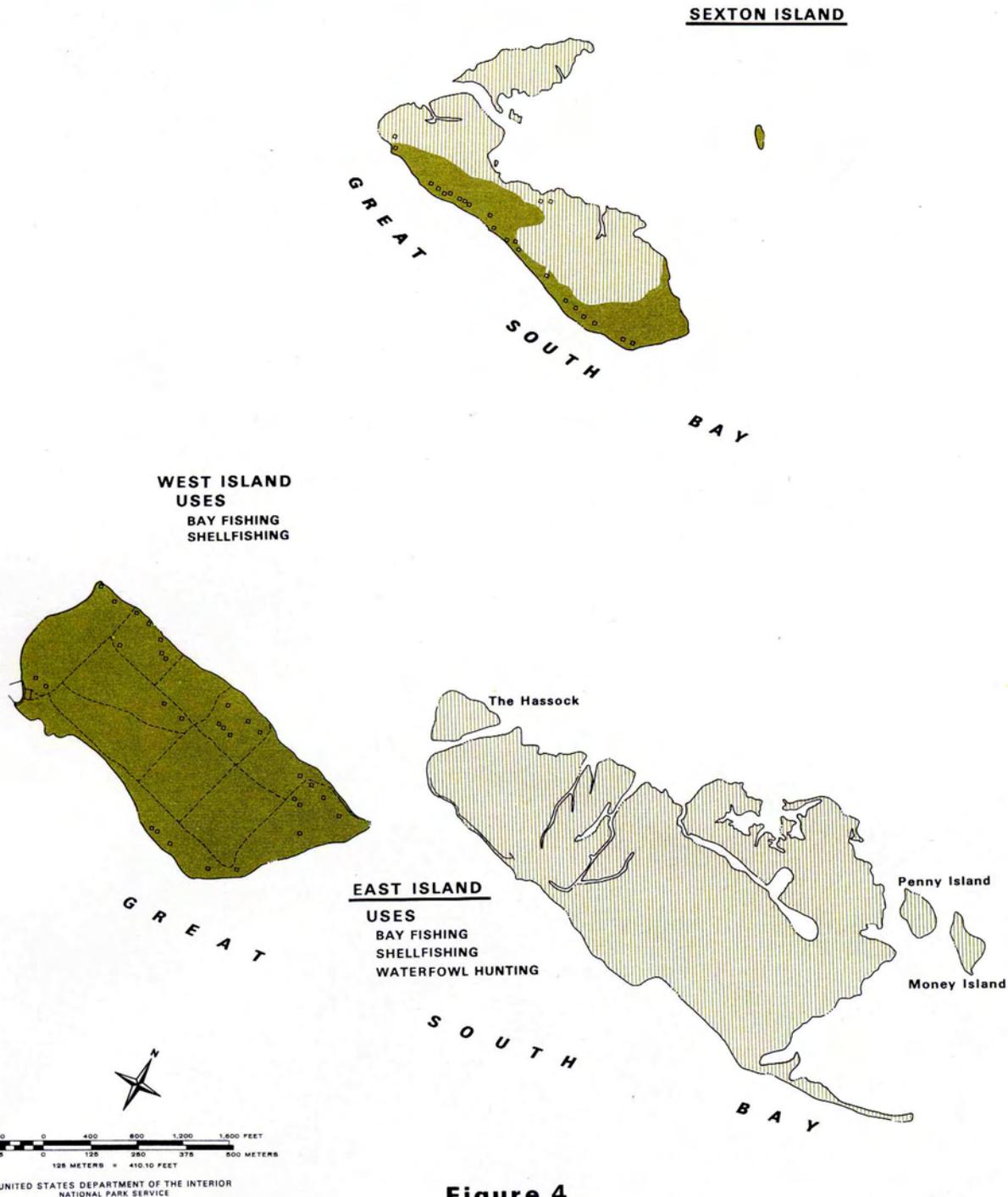


Figure 4
 SEGMENT 1
Land Classification, Public Uses, and Facilities
 Fire Island National Seashore
 NEW YORK

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LIGHTHOUSE MANAGEMENT UNIT

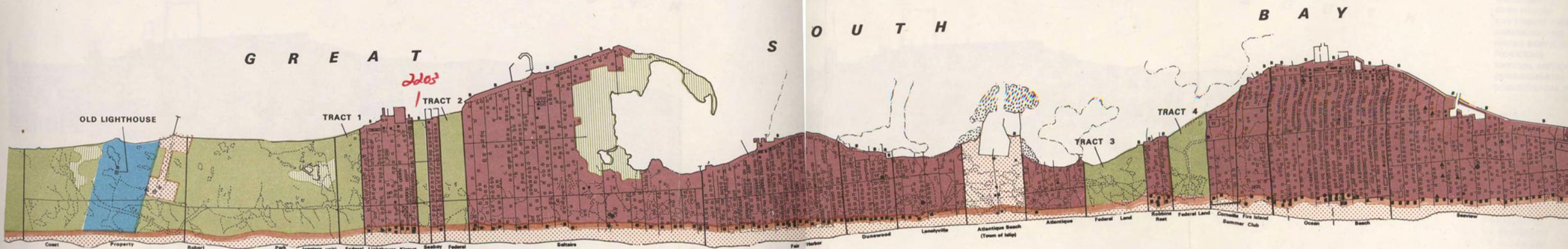
LIGHTHOUSE TRACT (PROPOSED NPS AREA)

USES (PROPOSED)

- HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION
- NATURAL HISTORY INTERPRETATION
- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

TRACTS 1-4 BAY-TO-OCEAN STRIPS

- ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVE



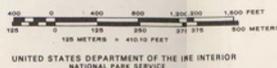
FACILITIES (PROPOSED)

- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER
- INTERPRETIVE TRAIL
- MAINTENANCE STATION
- RANGER STATION
- N.P.S. RESIDENCE
- INTERPRETIVE CENTER/MARITIME MUSEUM
- VEHICULAR CHECKPOINT
- DUNE CROSSING (PEDESTRIAN)
- DOCKING (SMALL BOAT)
- HISTORIC STRUCTURE

CLASS I A		ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION/PRIMITIVE ZONE
CLASS I C		NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
CLASS II		HISTORIC ZONE
CLASS III		GENERAL OUTDOOR RECREATION
CLASS IV A		COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CLASS IV C		DUNE DISTRICT

STRUCTURES

- RESIDENCE
 - STRUCTURES SUBJECT TO SEVERE FLOOD DAMAGE
 - COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE
 - INSTITUTION, STRUCTURE, OR PUBLIC UTILITY
 - ⊙ INCINERATOR
 - WATER TANK OR WATER TOWER
 - ▲ SWIMMING POOL
- OTHER DEVELOPMENTS
- TENNIS COURTS
 - DREDGED CHANNEL
 - DOCK
 - BULKHEAD
 - SEAWALL
 - SHORELINE OR WATER BOUNDARY
 - SAND TRACK OR PATH
 - BOARDWALK OR SIDEWALK
 - POLITICAL BOUNDARY



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Figure 4
SEGMENT 2

Land Classification, Public Uses, and Facilities

Fire Island National Seashore

NEW YORK

SUNKEN FOREST UNIT

SUNKEN FOREST

USES

- SUPERVISED BEACH USE
- SURFING
- MARINA USE
- DOCKING
- ANCHORING
- SHELLFISHING
- SURF FISHING
- BAY FISHING FROM SHORE
- BEACHCOMBING
- HIKING BEHIND DUNES
- PICNICKING
- NATURAL HISTORY INTERPRETATION
- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
- CONVENTIONAL VEHICLE USE (BY PERMIT)

TRACT 5

USES

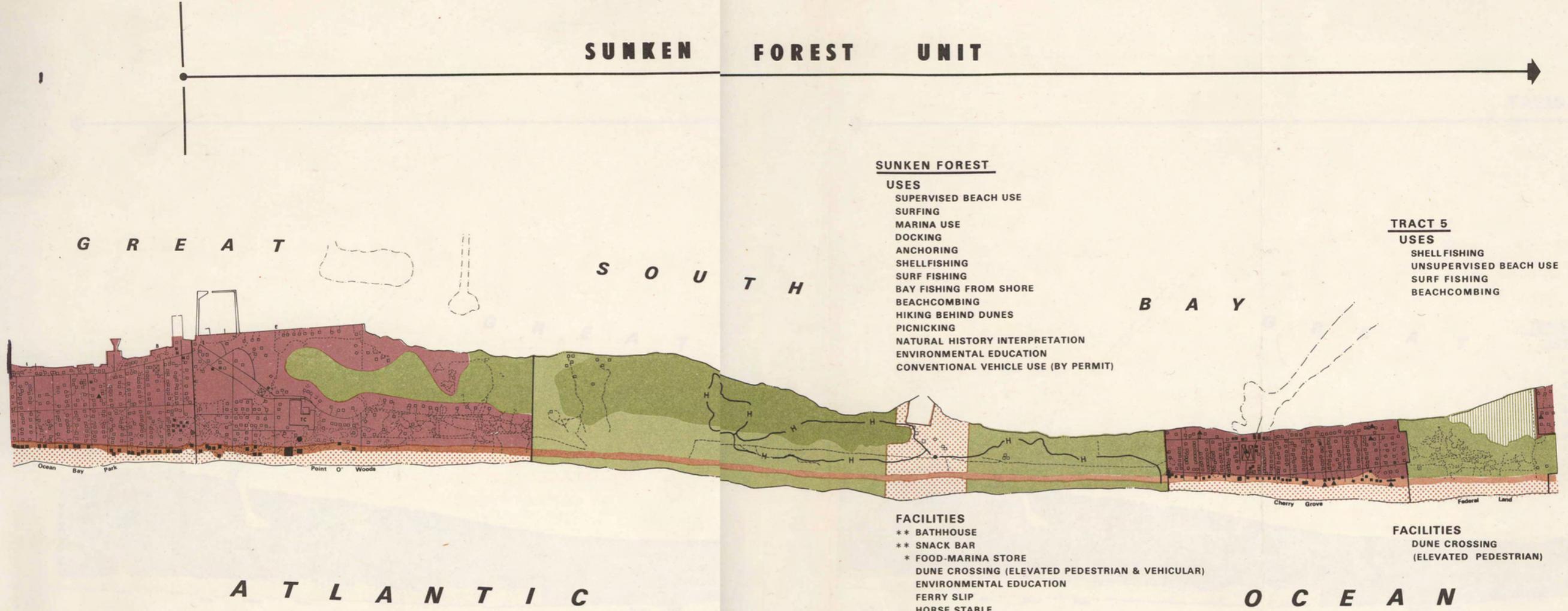
- SHELL FISHING
- UNSUPERVISED BEACH USE
- SURF FISHING
- BEACHCOMBING

FACILITIES

- ** BATHHOUSE
- ** SNACK BAR
- * FOOD-MARINA STORE
- DUNE CROSSING (ELEVATED PEDESTRIAN & VEHICULAR)
- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
- FERRY SLIP
- HORSE STABLE
- INTERPRETIVE TRAIL
- LIFEGUARD STATION
- MAINTENANCE STATION
- MARINA (34 SLIPS)
- ** LIQUID WASTE PUMPING STATION
- ** PICNIC SITES
- ** RANGER STATION
- ** RESIDENCE, N.P.S.
- STORAGE FACILITY
- ** WASTEWATER TREATMENT
- ** INTERPRETIVE CENTER (INFORMATION)
- * PROPOSED
- ** EXPANSION

FACILITIES

- DUNE CROSSING (ELEVATED PEDESTRIAN)



- LEGEND**
- | | | |
|-------------------|--|---|
| CLASS I A | | ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION/PRIMITIVE ZONE |
| CLASS I B | | OUTSTANDING NATURAL FEATURE ZONE |
| CLASS I C | | NATURAL ENVIRONMENT |
| CLASS III | | GENERAL OUTDOOR RECREATION |
| CLASS IV A | | COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT |
| CLASS IV C | | DUNE DISTRICT |
| H | | HIKING (SAND TRAIL) |

- STRUCTURES**
- RESIDENCE
 - STRUCTURES SUBJECT TO SEVERE FLOOD DAMAGE
 - COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE
 - INSTITUTION, STRUCTURE, OR PUBLIC UTILITY
 - INCINERATOR
 - WATER TANK OR WATER TOWER
 - SWIMMING POOL
- OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**
- TENNIS COURTS
 - DREDGED CHANNEL
 - DOCK
 - BULKHEAD
 - SEAWALL
 - SHORELINE OR WATER BOUNDARY
 - SAND TRACK OR PATH
 - BOARDWALK OR SIDEWALK
 - POLITICAL BOUNDARY

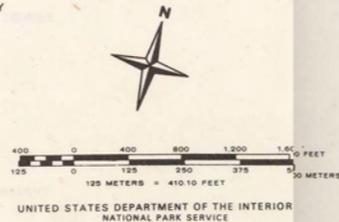


Figure 4
SEGMENT 3

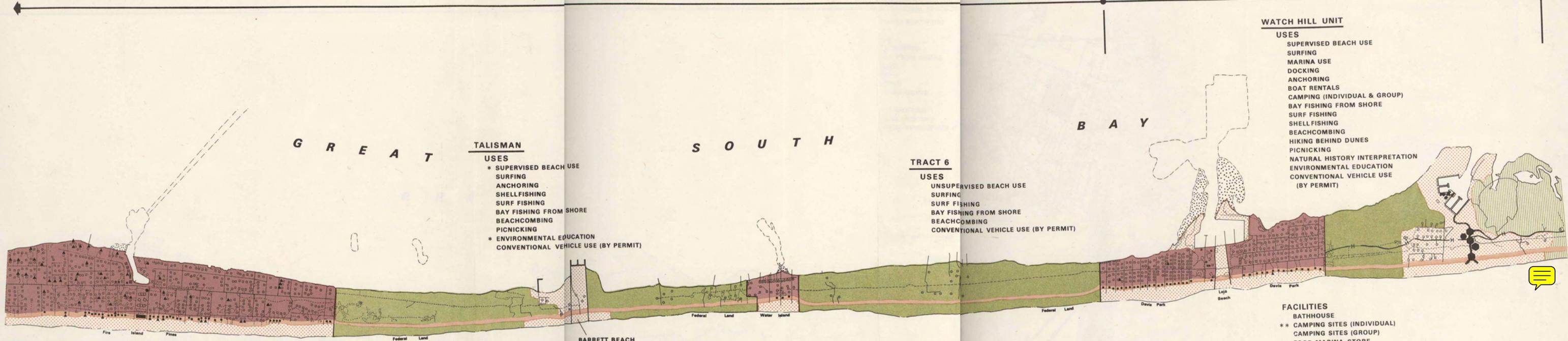
Land Classification, Public Uses, and Facilities

Fire Island National Seashore

NEW YORK

TALISMAN AREA

WATCH HILL UNIT



G R E A T

S O U T H

B A Y

A T L A N T I C

O C E A N

TALISMAN

USES

- * SUPERVISED BEACH USE
- SURFING
- ANCHORING
- SHELLFISHING
- SURF FISHING
- BAY FISHING FROM SHORE
- BEACHCOMBING
- PICNICKING
- * ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
- CONVENTIONAL VEHICLE USE (BY PERMIT)

TRACT 6

USES

- UNSUPERVISED BEACH USE
- SURFING
- SURF FISHING
- BAY FISHING FROM SHORE
- BEACHCOMBING
- CONVENTIONAL VEHICLE USE (BY PERMIT)

WATCH HILL UNIT

USES

- SUPERVISED BEACH USE
- SURFING
- MARINA USE
- DOCKING
- ANCHORING
- BOAT RENTALS
- CAMPING (INDIVIDUAL & GROUP)
- BAY FISHING FROM SHORE
- SURF FISHING
- SHELLFISHING
- BEACHCOMBING
- HIKING BEHIND DUNES
- PICNICKING
- NATURAL HISTORY INTERPRETATION
- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
- CONVENTIONAL VEHICLE USE (BY PERMIT)

FACILITIES

- ** DOCK (TO BE REMOVED DURING OFF-SEASON)
- DUNE CROSSING (PEDESTRIAN)
- * ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER (OVERNIGHT LODGING)
- * FERRY SLIP (REMOVED DURING OFF-SEASON)
- MAINTENANCE STATION (STORAGE)
- ** PICNIC SITES
- ** RANGER STATION
- ** RESIDENCE, N.P.S.
- ** WASTEWATER TREATMENT
- * LIMITED SHOWER STALLS
- ** LIFE GUARD STATION
- * PROPOSED
- ** EXPANSION

FACILITIES

- DUNE CROSSING (VEHICULAR)

FACILITIES

- BATHHOUSE
- ** CAMPING SITES (INDIVIDUAL)
- CAMPING SITES (GROUP)
- ** FOOD-MARINA STORE
- SNACK BAR
- DUNE CROSSING (PEDESTRIAN & VEHICULAR)
- FERRY SLIP
- HORSE STABLE
- INTERPRETIVE TRAIL
- LIFEGUARD STATION
- MAINTENANCE STATION (STORAGE)
- MARINA (158 SLIPS)
- ** LIQUID WASTE PUMPING STATION
- ** PICNIC SITES
- RANGER STATION
- ** RESIDENCE, N.P.S.
- ** WASTEWATER TREATMENT
- INTERPRETIVE CENTER
- VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER
- * PROPOSED
- ** EXPANSION

LEGEND

- CLASS I A ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION/PRIMITIVE ZONE
- CLASS I C NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
- CLASS III GENERAL OUTDOOR RECREATION
- CLASS IV A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- CLASS IV C DUNE DISTRICT
- H HIKING (SAND TRAIL)

STRUCTURES

- RESIDENCE
- STRUCTURES SUBJECT TO SEVERE FLOOD DAMAGE
- COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE
- INSTITUTION, STRUCTURE, OR PUBLIC UTILITY
- INCINERATOR
- WATER TANK OR WATER TOWER
- ▲ SWIMMING POOL

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- TENNIS COURTS
- DREDGED CHANNEL
- DOCK
- BULKHEAD
- SEAWALL
- SHORELINE OR WATER BOUNDARY
- SAND TRACK OR PATH
- BOARDWALK OR SIDEWALK
- POLITICAL BOUNDARY

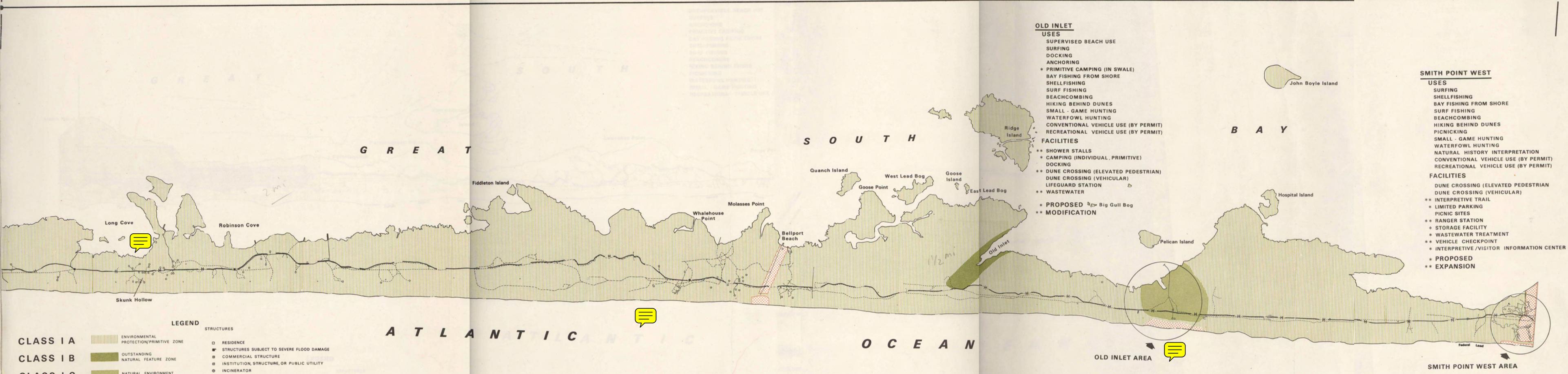


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Figure 4
SEGMENT 4

Land Classification, Public Uses, and Facilities
Fire Island National Seashore
NEW YORK

HIGH DUNE MANAGEMENT UNIT



- OLD INLET USES**
- SUPERVISED BEACH USE
 - SURFING
 - DOCKING
 - ANCHORING
 - * PRIMITIVE CAMPING (IN SWALE)
 - BAY FISHING FROM SHORE
 - SHELLFISHING
 - SURF FISHING
 - BEACHCOMBING
 - HIKING BEHIND DUNES
 - SMALL - GAME HUNTING
 - WATERFOWL HUNTING
 - CONVENTIONAL VEHICLE USE (BY PERMIT)
 - RECREATIONAL VEHICLE USE (BY PERMIT)
- FACILITIES**
- ** SHOWER STALLS
 - * CAMPING (INDIVIDUAL, PRIMITIVE)
 - DOCKING
 - ** DUNE CROSSING (ELEVATED PEDESTRIAN)
 - DUNE CROSSING (VEHICULAR)
 - LIFEGUARD STATION
 - ** WASTEWATER
 - * PROPOSED Big Gull Bog
 - ** MODIFICATION

- SMITH POINT WEST USES**
- SURFING
 - SHELLFISHING
 - BAY FISHING FROM SHORE
 - SURF FISHING
 - BEACHCOMBING
 - HIKING BEHIND DUNES
 - PICNICKING
 - SMALL - GAME HUNTING
 - WATERFOWL HUNTING
 - NATURAL HISTORY INTERPRETATION
 - CONVENTIONAL VEHICLE USE (BY PERMIT)
 - RECREATIONAL VEHICLE USE (BY PERMIT)
- FACILITIES**
- DUNE CROSSING (ELEVATED PEDESTRIAN)
 - DUNE CROSSING (VEHICULAR)
 - ** INTERPRETIVE TRAIL
 - * LIMITED PARKING
 - PICNIC SITES
 - ** RANGER STATION
 - * STORAGE FACILITY
 - * WASTEWATER TREATMENT
 - ** VEHICLE CHECKPOINT
 - * INTERPRETIVE /VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER
 - * PROPOSED
 - ** EXPANSION

- LEGEND**
- CLASS I A** ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION/PRIMITIVE ZONE
- CLASS I B** OUTSTANDING NATURAL FEATURE ZONE
- CLASS I C** NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
- CLASS III** GENERAL OUTDOOR RECREATION
- H HIKING (SAND TRAIL)
- STRUCTURES**
- RESIDENCE
 - STRUCTURES SUBJECT TO SEVERE FLOOD DAMAGE
 - COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE
 - INSTITUTION, STRUCTURE, OR PUBLIC UTILITY
 - INCINERATOR
 - WATER TANK OR WATER TOWER
 - ▲ SWIMMING POOL
- OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**
- TENNIS COURTS
 - DREDGED CHANNEL
 - DOCK
 - BULKHEAD
 - SEAWALL
 - SHORELINE OR WATER BOUNDARY
 - SAND TRACK OR PATH
 - BOARDWALK OR SIDEWALK
 - POLITICAL BOUNDARY

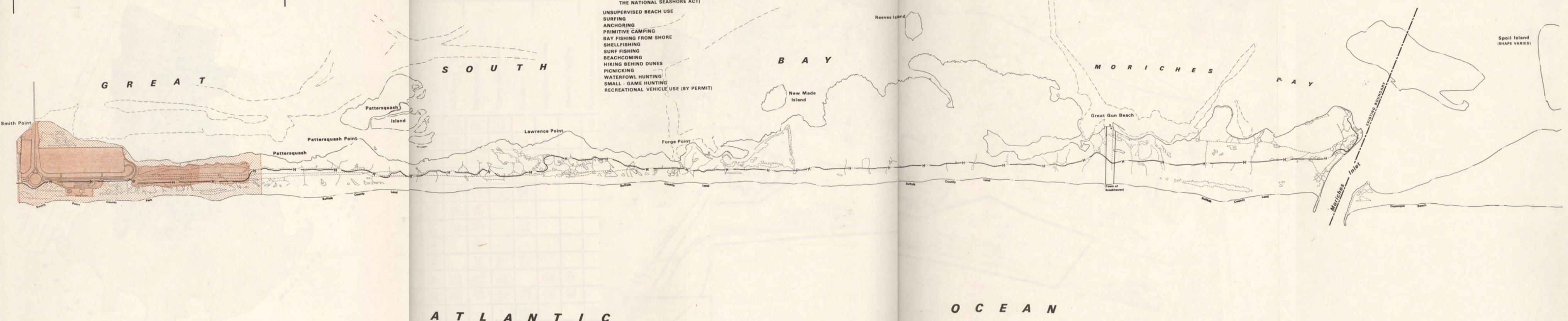


Figure 4
SEGMENT 5
Land Classification, Public Uses, and Facilities
Fire Island National Seashore
NEW YORK

**SUFFOLK COUNTY LANDS
SMITH POINT COUNTY PARK UNIT**

MORICHES AREA

**MORICHES AREA
(SUFFOLK COUNTY LANDS)**
USES (TRADITIONAL LOW-DENSITY RECREATION
 COMPATIBLE WITH LEGISLATIVE INTENT OF
 THE NATIONAL SEASHORE ACT)
 UNSUPERVISED BEACH USE
 SURFING
 ANCHORING
 PRIMITIVE CAMPING
 BAY FISHING FROM SHORE
 SHELLFISHING
 SURF FISHING
 BEACHCOMING
 HIKING BEHIND DUNES
 PICNICKING
 WATERFOWL HUNTING
 SMALL-GAME HUNTING
 RECREATIONAL VEHICLE USE (BY PERMIT)



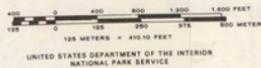
LEGEND

CLASS III
CLASS IV B

- GENERAL OUTDOOR RECREATION
- MAJOR PARK DEVELOPMENT
- HIKING (SAND TRAIL)

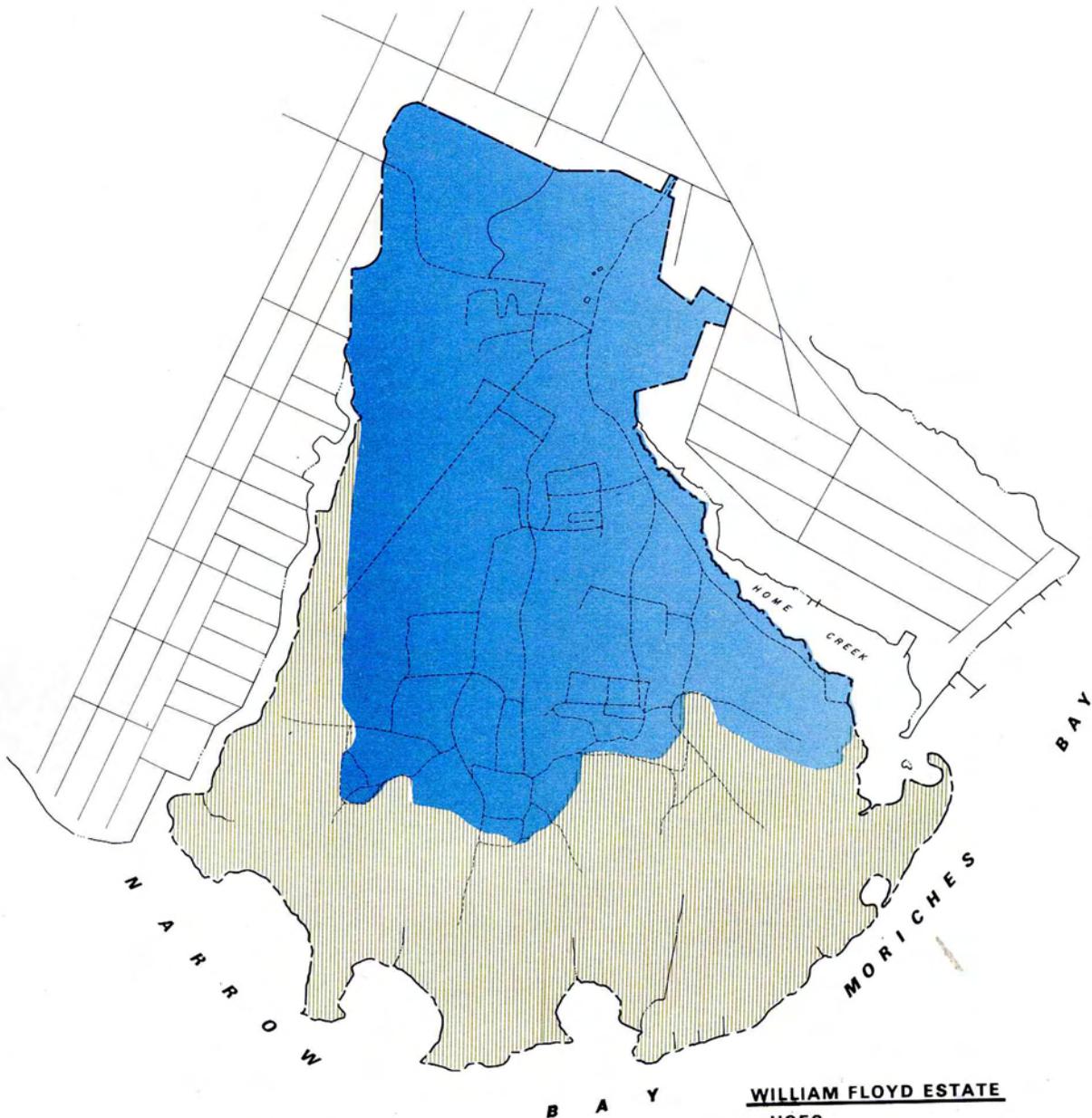
STRUCTURES

- RESIDENCE
 - STRUCTURES SUBJECT TO SEVERE FLOOD DAMAGE
 - COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE
 - INSTITUTION, STRUCTURE, OR PUBLIC UTILITY
 - INCINERATOR
 - WATER TANK OR WATER TOWER
 - SWIMMING POOL
- OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**
- TENNIS COURTS
 - DREDGED CHANNEL
 - DOCK
 - BULKHEAD
 - SEAWALL
 - SHORELINE OR WATER BOUNDARY
 - SAND TRACK OR PATH
 - BOARDWALK OR SIDEWALK
 - POLITICAL BOUNDARY



**Figure 4
SEGMENT 6**

Land Classification, Public Uses, and Facilities
 Fire Island National Seashore
 NEW YORK

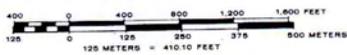


LEGEND

- CLASS I A** ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION/PRIMITIVE ZONE
- CLASS II** HISTORIC ZONE

WILLIAM FLOYD ESTATE
USES

- HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION
- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (DAY USE)



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Figure 4
SEGMENT 7

Land Classification, Public Uses, and Facilities
Fire Island National Seashore
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