



Andrew Peters - Northeast of Turtle Head, Islesboro

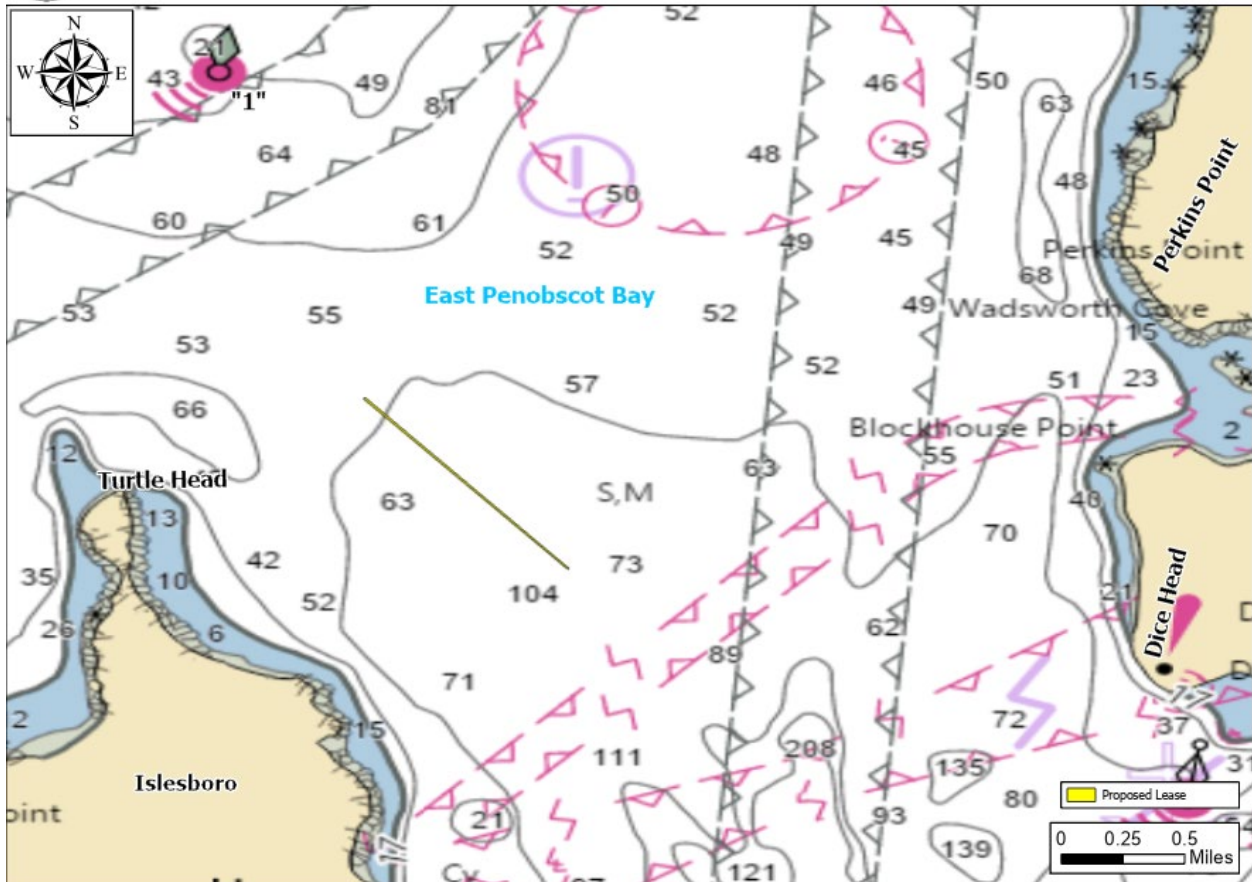


Figure 1. Vicinity map.¹

Location: Northeast of Turtle Head, Penobscot Bay, Islesboro, Waldo County, Maine

Purpose: Experimental lease for the suspended culture of bay scallops (*Argopecten irradians*) and sea scallops (*Placopecten magellanicus*).

Site Review: Meryl Grady and Geoff Shook

Report Preparation: Katie von Hohenleiten, Geoff Shook, and Meryl Grady

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all figures in this report were created in ArcGIS Pro version 3.5 using digitized NOAA Nautical Charts or georeferenced aerial photographs provided by The Maine Office of GIS.



Application Overview

The applicant, Andrew Peters, is requesting a 3.89² acre experimental lease Northeast of Turtle Head in Penobscot Bay for the suspended culture of bay and sea scallops. Gear for this lease would remain onsite year-round, with average depth of nets being approximately 15 feet below the surface of the water.³

General Characteristics

On September 10, 2025, Department of Marine Resources (DMR) scientists assessed the proposed lease site. DMR scientists arrived on site at approximately 10:18 AM. The proposal is located in open water, with the closest shoreline being Islesboro, approximately 4,091 feet to the west of the proposal.

Depth

DMR scientists began collecting water depths at the proposed site during a rising tide at approximately 10:22 AM (Table 1). Measured depths at corners of the proposed lease site ranged from 64.5 to 89.9 feet. Correcting for tidal variation derives approximate water depths at corners of the proposal at mean low water (MLW, 0.0 feet) to be from 58.2 to 83.6 feet. Approximate depths at mean high water (MHW, 10.4 feet⁴) at corners of the proposal are 68.8 to 94.0 feet (Table 2). Water current was flowing in a northerly direction at the time of the site visit.

Table 1. Predicted tidal heights in Fort Point, Maine.⁵

Date	Time	Height (ft)
2025/09/10	12:50 AM	11.7 H
2025/09/10	7:02 AM	-1.1 L
2025/09/10	1:10 PM	12.1 H
2025/09/10	7:29 PM	-1.5 L

Table 2. Collected and derived depths at corners of the proposed lease area.

Corner	Measured Depth (ft)	MLW Depth (ft)	MHW Depth (ft)
NW	64.5	58.2	68.6
NE	64.7	58.4	68.8
SE	89.9	83.6	94.0
SW	89.6	83.3	93.7

Bottom Characteristics

DMR scientists observed the bottom characteristics of the proposed lease site via a remotely operated vehicle (ROV). Bottom characteristics were categorized using the Coastal and Marine Ecological Classification Standard (CMECS), a national standard for describing features of the marine environment (Table 3). Sediment information was determined based on visual analysis of the video. The bottom of the proposed lease site is composed of mud.

² Applicant originally requested 4.0 acres. DMR calculations indicate the area is 3.89 acres.

³ Application pages 12-13, "Cross sectional view"

⁴ MHW in Fort Point is 10.4 feet, NOAA Tide Station 8414721

⁵ <https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/stationhome.html?id=8414721>



Table 3. Bottom characteristics of the proposed site.

Substrate Origin	Substrate Class	Substrate Subclass	Substrate Group
Geologic Substrate	Unconsolidated Mineral Substrate	Fine Unconsolidated Substrate	Mud

Position and Distances to Shore

The measuring tool in ArcGIS Pro 3.5 was used to verify the distances and bearings between proposed lease corners. Distances to shore were determined using the measuring tool in ArcGIS Pro 3.5, a nautical chart provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the application coordinates (Table 4, Figures 2-4).

Application Coordinates (WGS84) – 3.89 Acres

<u>Corner</u>	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>	
NW	44.398472°	-68.865861°	then 42 feet at 055° True to
NE	44.398528°	-68.865722°	then 4,800 feet at 140° True to
SE	44.388528°	-68.853778°	then 30 feet at 225° True to
SW	44.388472°	-68.853861°	then 4,809 feet at 319° True to NW

Table 4. Approximate distances from proposal corners to surrounding features (Figure 3).

Feature	Distance
NE corner to Sears Island shoreline at MLW	~11,233' to the north
NE corner to green navigational buoy "1"	~7,356' to the north
SE corner to Dice Head shoreline at MLW	~8,316' to the east
SE corner to Perkins Point shoreline at MLW	~10,433' to the northeast
SW corner to Islesboro Island shoreline at MLW	~4,465' to the west
SW corner to Coombs Point at MLW	~8,549' to the southwest
NW corner to Turtle Head shoreline at MLW	~4,091' to the west
NW corner to Sears Island shoreline at MLW	~11,243' to the northwest



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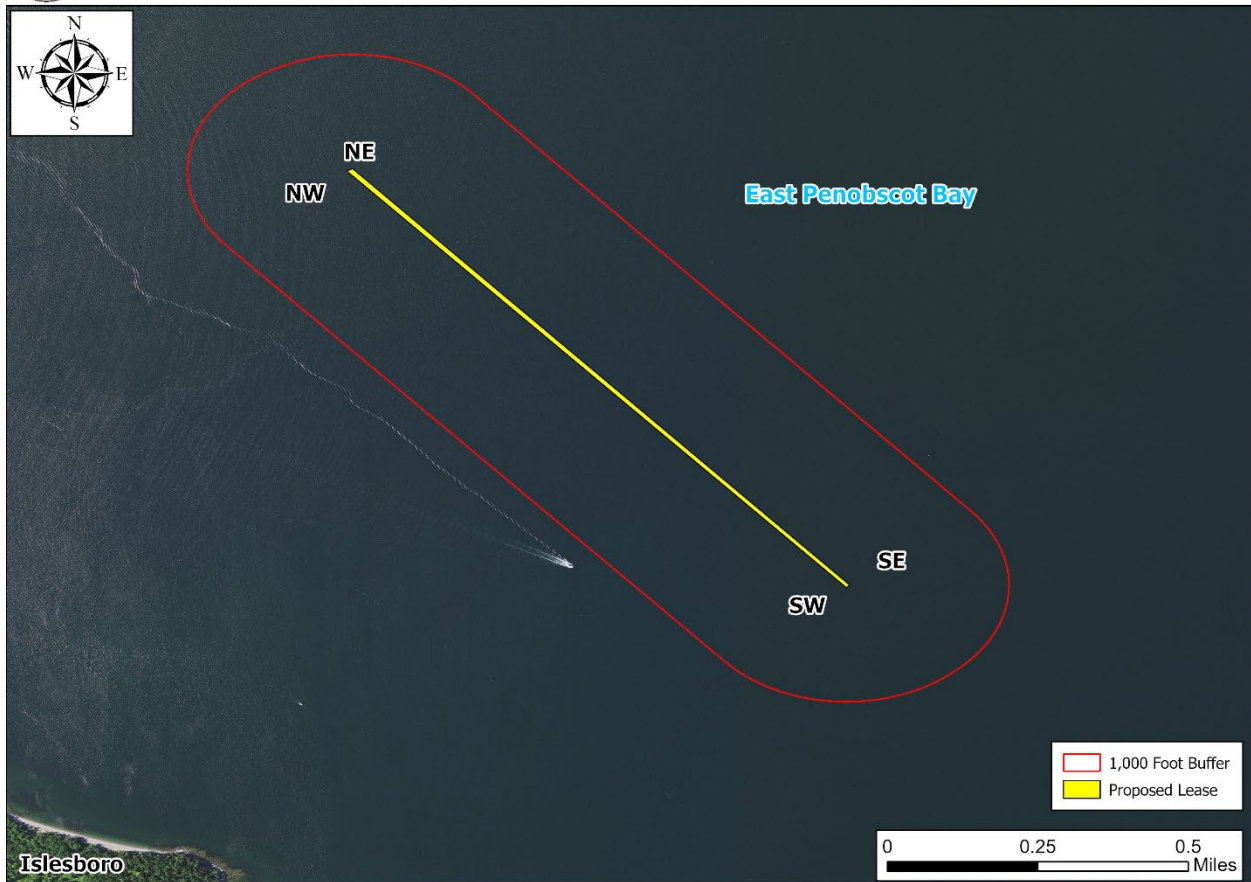


Figure 2. Proposed lease area with site visit observations.⁶

Pursuant to statute and regulation, aquaculture leases are evaluated in consideration of applicable decision criteria. The Site Report documents DMR’s observations of the area and other information, in consideration of those criteria, as noted below:

(1) Riparian Ingress and Egress

The land nearest to the proposal is Islesboro Island approximately 4,091 feet to the west at MLW. During the site visit on September 10, 2025, DMR scientists observed scattered piers along the northern and eastern shores of Islesboro that were visible from the proposal. The closest pier observed was approximately 5,126 feet to the west of the proposal (Figure 2).

⁶ The white lines observed in the imagery (south of the proposal and northeast of Islesboro) are wake lines or water bubble residue from vessels that navigated through the area shortly before the imagery was taken.



(2) Navigation

The proposal is located approximately 4,091 feet east of Turtle Head, Islesboro at MLW. Islesboro splits the main navigational channels in Penobscot Bay that continue to the west and east of the Island before reforming to the north of the island. This area of the navigational chart also has recommended routes for navigational traffic. The proposal is approximately 2,785 feet to the west of the eastern-recommended route, and approximately 4,242 feet to the south of the western-recommended route. Additional consideration for the proposal is that approximately 5,696 feet to the northeast is a caution area that is designated for the purpose of transferring oil that is State maintained (Figure 3).

During DMR’s site visit, DMR scientists observed one sailboat motoring between the NW corner of the proposal and the northern tip of Islesboro, one tanker traveling in the shipping channel to the northwest of Islesboro, then said tanker traveled in the shipping channel up the Penobscot River, one powerboat navigating from Castine towards Belfast to the north of the site, one powerboat navigating south of the site towards Belfast near the northern tip of Islesboro, and one sailboat under power near Sears Island navigating towards the Penobscot River.

The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) informed DMR of their evaluation of the proposal on October 28, 2025. The USACE recommended that the proposal be reduced in size to avoid areas of high vessel traffic as evaluated with a vessel traffic heat map (Figure 4). The USACE recommended proposal coordinates are listed below.

US. Army Corps of Engineers Recommended Coordinates (WGS84) – 2.75 Acres

<u>Corner</u>	<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>	
NW	44.398472°	-68.865861°	then 42 feet at 070° True to
NE	44.398528°	-68.865722°	then 3,201 feet at 140° True to
SE	44.391860°	-68.857757°	then 35 feet at 245° True to
SW	44.391818°	-68.857879°	then 3,200 feet at 319° True to NW



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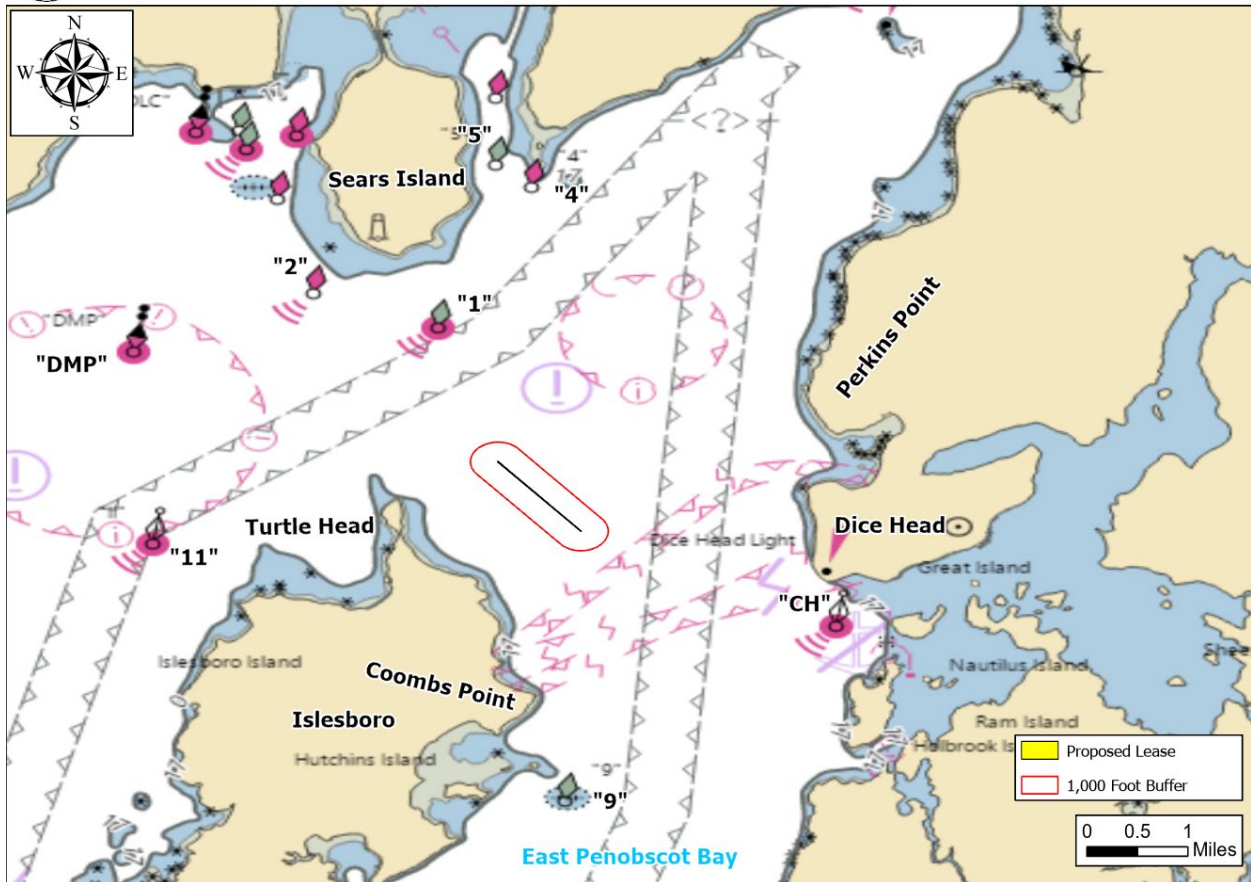


Figure 3. Navigational channels in the vicinity of the proposed lease area.



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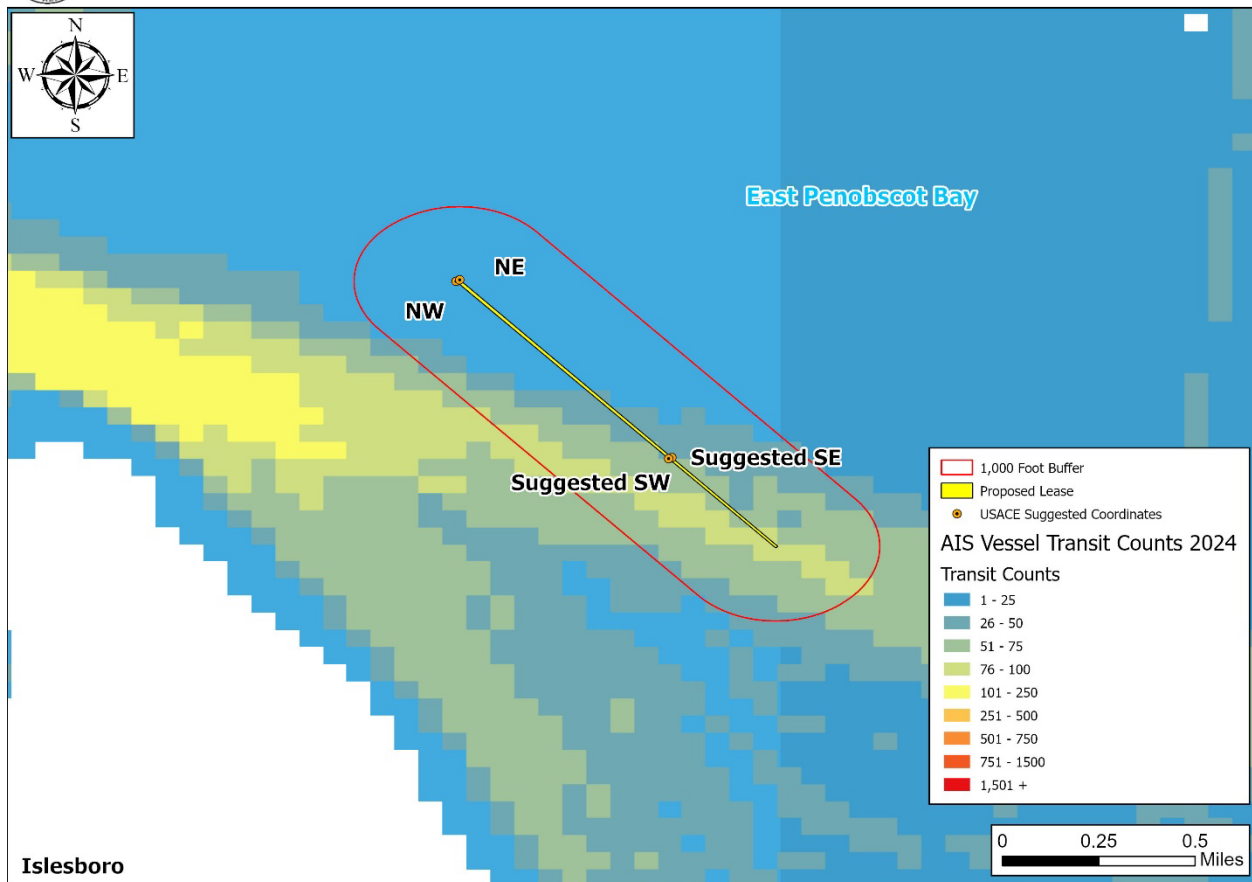


Figure 4. The proposal, suggested USACE coordinates, and AIS vessel traffic heat map from 2024 in the vicinity of the proposed lease area.⁷

(3) Fishing and Other Uses

During the site visit, DMR did not observe any commercial or recreational fishing in the general vicinity of the proposal (Figure 2).

(4) Other Aquaculture Uses

There are no aquaculture leases, leases under review by DMR, or limited purpose aquaculture (LPA) sites within 1,000 feet of the proposal (Figure 5).

⁷ Data was collected using vessels automatic identification system (AIS). This data set summarizes annual vessel transit counts; transit counts show how many times vessels pass through a specific 100 – meter geographic area for 2024.



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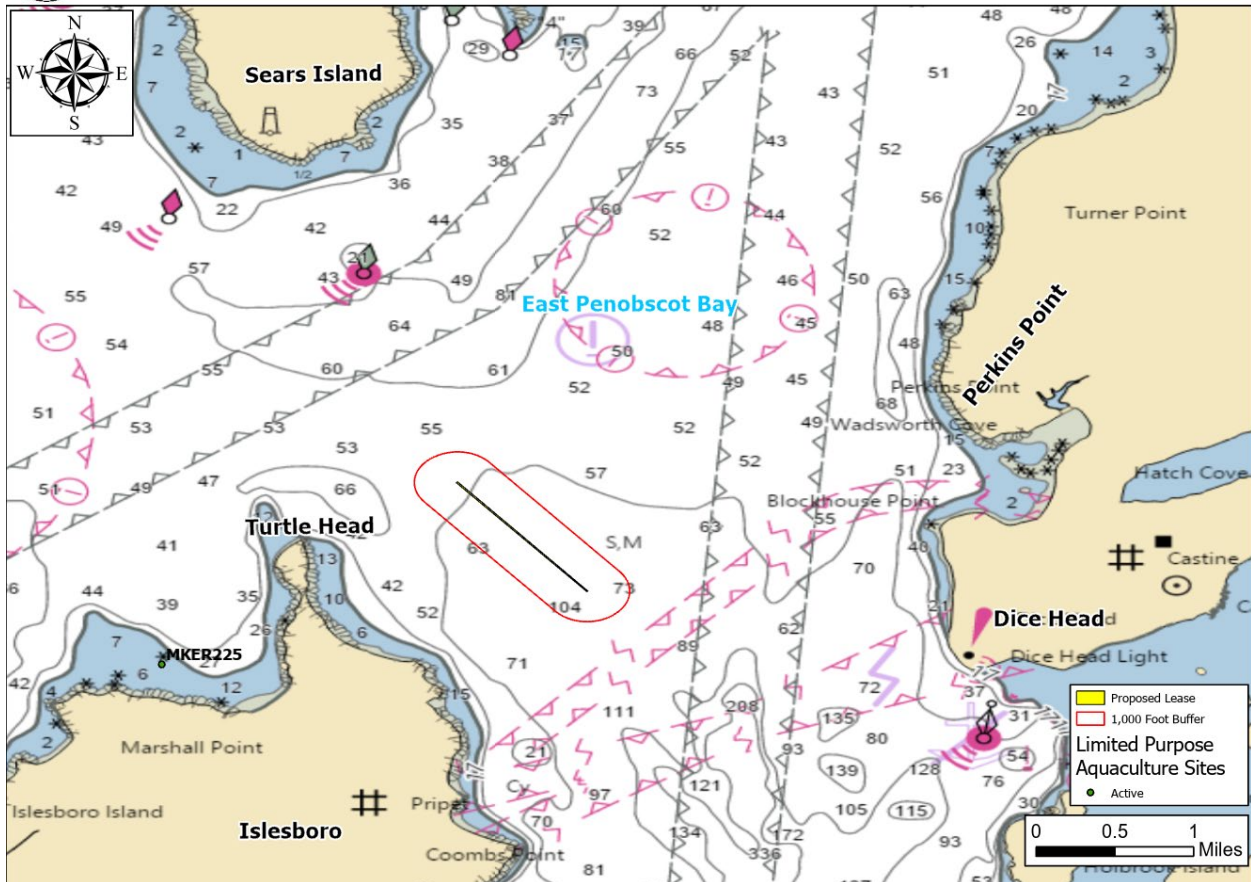


Figure 5. Aquaculture leases, LPA licenses, and applications under review by DMR in the vicinity of the proposed lease area.

(5) Existing System Support

Epibenthic Flora and Fauna

On September 10, 2025, DMR scientists utilized an ROV to assess the epibenthic ecology of the proposed lease. The relative abundance of epibenthic flora and fauna observed in the video footage is described below in Table 5.

Table 5. Species observed on underwater video footage.

Species Observed	Abundance
Mysid Shrimp (<i>mysis sp.</i>)	Common
Sand Shrimp (<i>Crangon septemspinosa</i>)	Occasional
Rockweed (<i>Fucus spp.</i>)	Occasional



Eelgrass (*Zostera marina*)

Records of seagrass collected by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in 2024⁸ indicates no mapped eelgrass presence in the vicinity of the proposal (Figure 6). No eelgrass was observed on underwater video footage within the proposal boundaries during DMR’s site visit.



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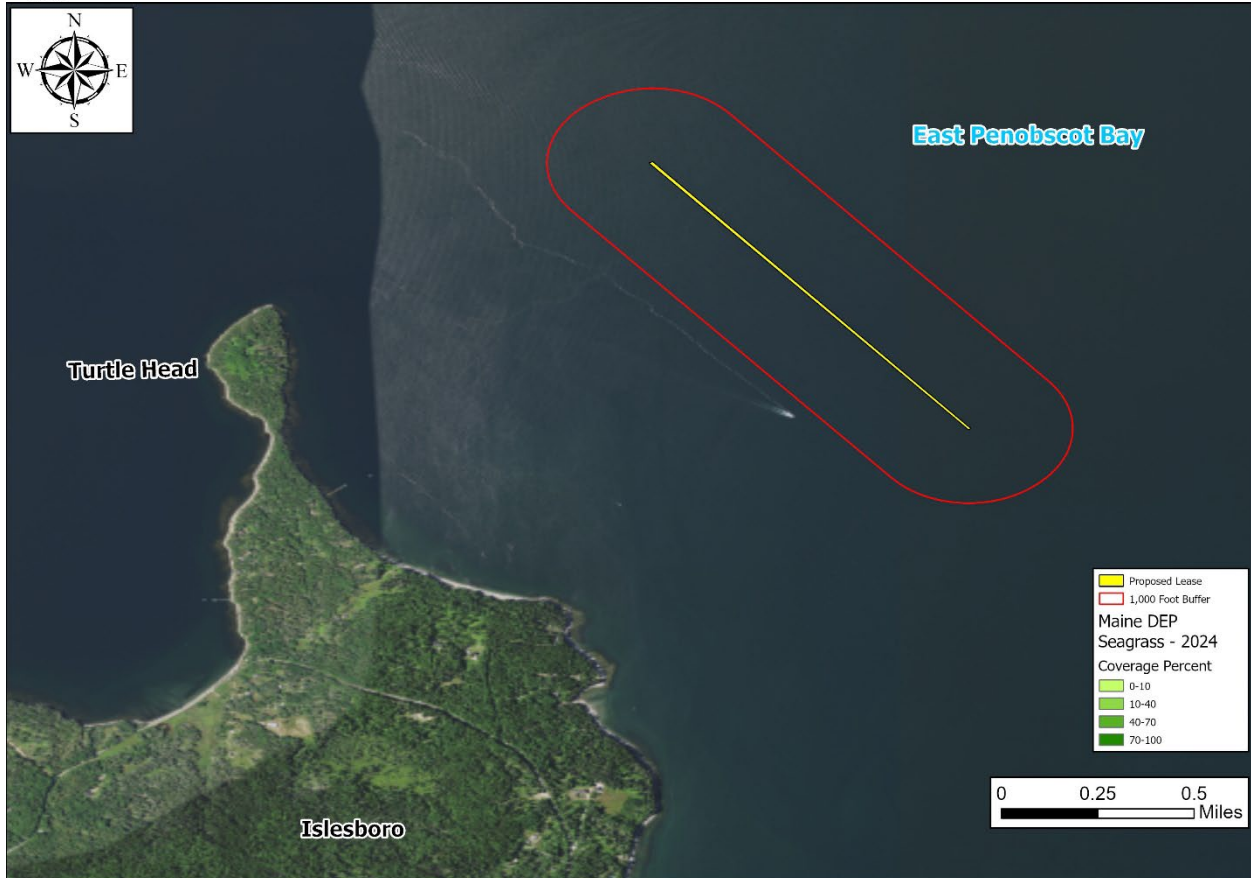


Figure 6. Mapped eelgrass (*Z. marina*) in the vicinity of the proposed lease area.

⁸ Data obtained from The Maine Office of GIS “GISVIEW.MEDEP.Seagrass2024”. Widgeon grass was observed only in tidally restricted water bodies on North Haven and in the upper reaches of the Bagaduce River. Eelgrass was the dominant vascular species in all other locations. This is the most current record of mapped eelgrass within the vicinity of the proposal.



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Wildlife

During DMR's site visit, scientists observed Monarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) and herring gull (*Larus argentatus*) in the general vicinity of the proposal. Additionally, harbor seal (*Phoca vitulina*) and gray seal (*Halichoerus grypus*) were observed swimming in the general vicinity of the proposal.

The Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW) has jurisdiction over inland fisheries and wildlife resources of the state. IFW also has the authority to conserve wildlife populations and their ecosystems through applicable state laws and rules. DMR provides IFW with notice and the opportunity to comment on all complete lease applications. In addition, the site report also includes IFW designated and mapped habitat types that are within 1,000 feet of the lease proposal, if applicable.

According to Geographic Information System (GIS) data maintained by IFW and available through the Maine Office of GIS (MEGIS), there are no mapped habitat types within 1,000 feet of the lease proposal (Figure 7).

Though bald eagles are no longer listed on Maine's Endangered and Threatened Species List, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) may also have jurisdiction over the management and conservation of the species based on applicable law and rule. Data collected by USFWS in 2023 by aerial nest survey shows there is no mapped bald eagle nesting site within the vicinity of the proposal. The nearest mapped bald eagle nest is approximately 2.4 miles southwest of the proposal, in the center of Islesboro Island.

IFW was provided with the opportunity to comment on this proposal. On May 29, 2025, an Environmental Review Coordinator with IFW stated that minimal impacts were expected from the proposal.



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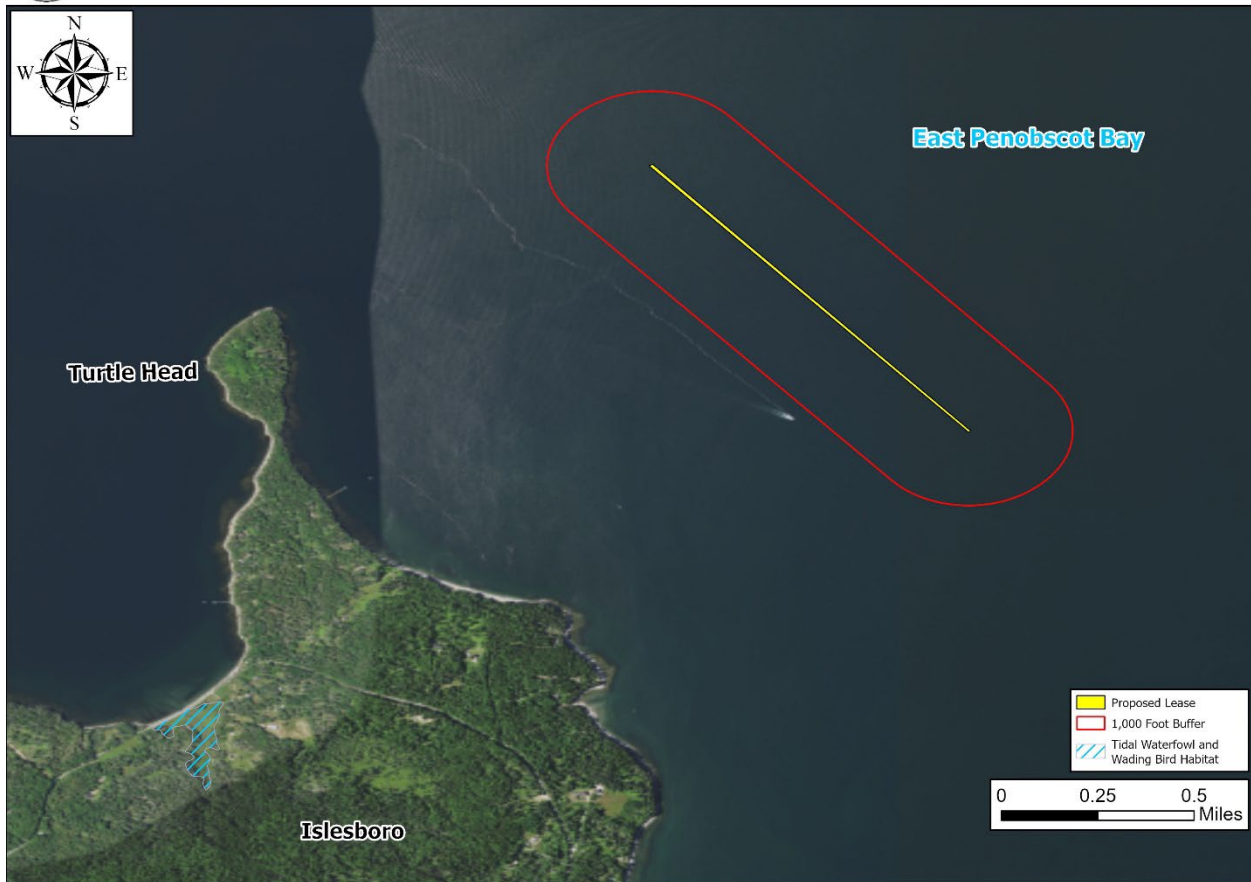


Figure 7. Mapped habitats in the vicinity of the proposed lease area. ⁹

(6) Interference with Public Facilities

The proposed lease is not within 1,000 feet of any beach, park, or docking facility owned by federal, state, or municipal governments.

(7) Growing Area Classification

The proposed lease is currently located within an area classified as Approved by the DMR Bureau of Public Health and Aquaculture (BPHA).

⁹ Data obtained from USFWS "Bald_Eagle_Nests_-_Maine_2023" and IFW "EHRTERN", "EHPLVTRN", "GISVIEW.MEIFW.Twwh", "ShorebirdAreas", and "SNI".