



State of Rhode Island
Coastal Resources Management Council
 Oliver H. Stedman Government Center
 4808 Tower Hill Road, Suite 3
 Wakefield, RI 02879-1900

(401) 783-3370
 Fax (401) 783-2069

PUBLIC NOTICE

File Number: 2023-10-067 Date: January 2, 2024

This office has under consideration the application of:

**Wickford Seafood Co.
 c/o Spencer Bode
 20 Prospect Avenue
 North Kingstown, RI 02852**

for a State of Rhode Island Assent to construct and maintain: a 9.7-acre seasonal aquaculture lease (from November 1st to May 1st annually) for the cultivation of sugar kelp in Dutch Island Harbor. The proposed gear includes two parallel 1500' suspended longlines spaced 225' apart. Working hours during the months of December and January will be restricted to after 11:00am and each year all gear and equipment will be removed by May 1st. Please see attached plans for further details.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Project Location: | West Middle Bay |
| Nearest Town: | Jamestown |
| Waterway: | Dutch Island Harbor, East of Dutch Island |
| Related file#(s) | 2023-02-080 (PD) |

Plans of the proposed work are attached and can be requested at Cstaff1@crmc.ri.gov.

In accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act (Chapter 42-35 of the Rhode Island General Laws) you may request a hearing on this matter.

You are advised that if you have good reason to enter protests against the proposed work it is your privilege to do so. It is expected that objectors will review the application and plans thoroughly, visit site of proposed work if necessary, to familiarize themselves with the conditions and cite what law or laws, if any, would in their opinion be violated by the work proposed.

If you desire to protest, you must attend the scheduled hearing and give sworn testimony. A notice of the time and place of such hearing will be furnished you as soon as possible after receipt of your request for hearing. If you desire to request a hearing, to receive consideration, it should be in writing (**with your correct mailing address, e-mail address and valid contact number**) and be received at this office on or before February 02, 2024.

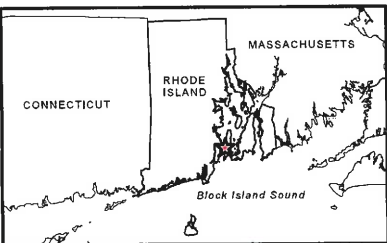
Please email your comments/hearing requests to: cstaff1@crmc.ri.gov; or mail via USPS to: Coastal Resources Management Council; O. S. Government Center, 4808 Tower Hill Road, Rm 116; Wakefield, RI 02879.

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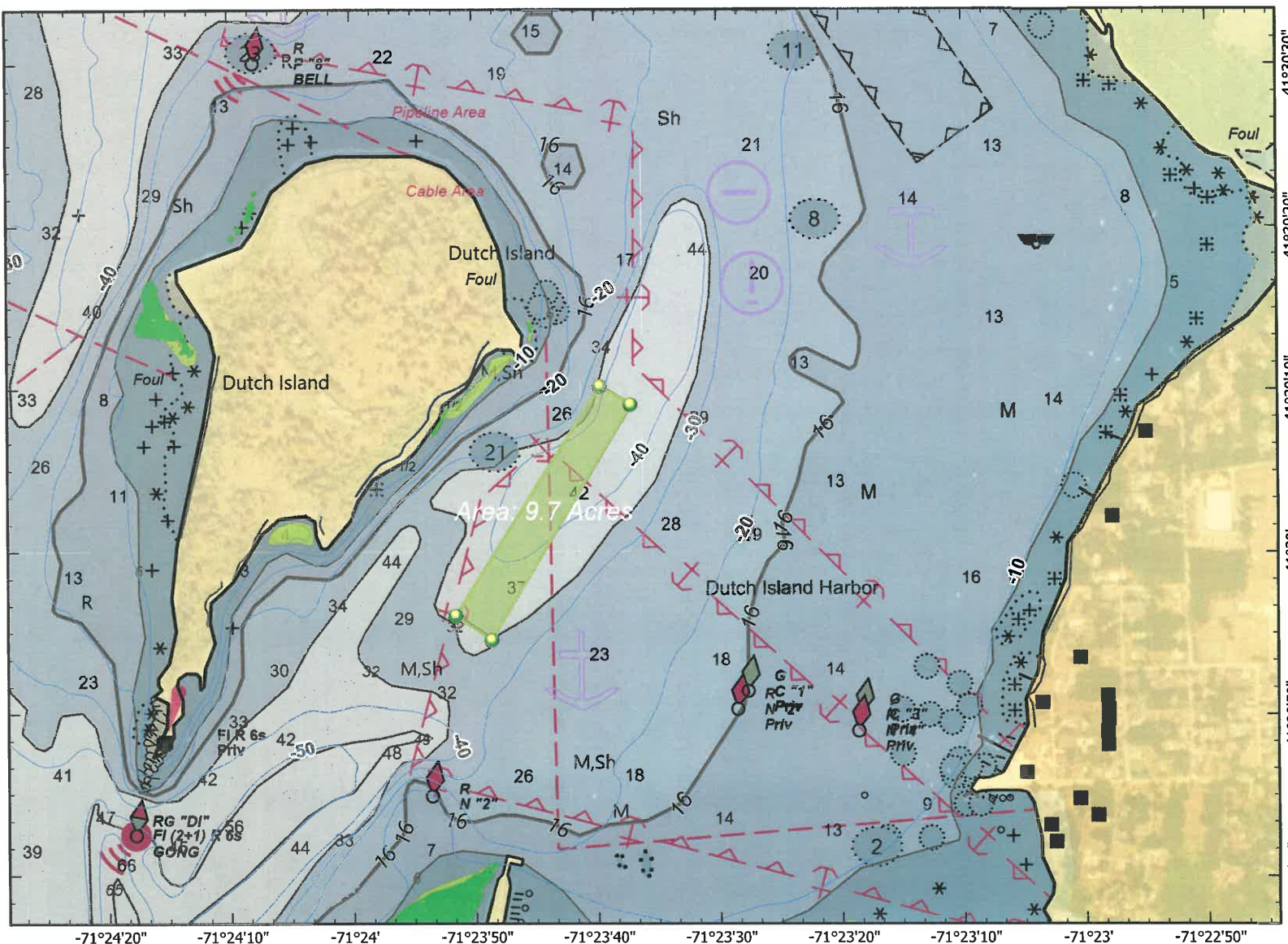
ShellFAST-RI

Proposed Aquaculture Site

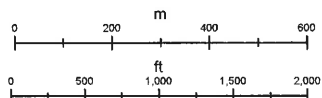


Map Layers

- Historic Eelgrass (2006-2016), RI DEM
- Bounding Coordinates
- Proposed Site
- Bathymetric Contours (MLLW), 10ft, URI EDC
- Eelgrass (2021), RI CRMC



Scale: 1:15,585



The **Rhode Island Shellfish Aquaculture Siting Tool (ShellFAST)** helps shellfish growers find farm sites in Rhode Island coastal waters by quickly predicting the regulatory requirements, potential use conflicts, and biophysical characteristics in particular locations. By using this tool, growers can identify and avoid sites where permitting will be especially challenging and can create some of the figures and metrics needed to apply for a permit in Rhode Island waters.

Data layers used in the viewer are pulled directly from the servers of the authoritative agencies (RI DEM, RI CRMC, RIGIS) and represent the best information currently available.

This map was printed from the ShellFAST-RI online map viewer on 11/6/2023

Photos of the project site and adjacent area

Figure A: East Side of Dutch Island

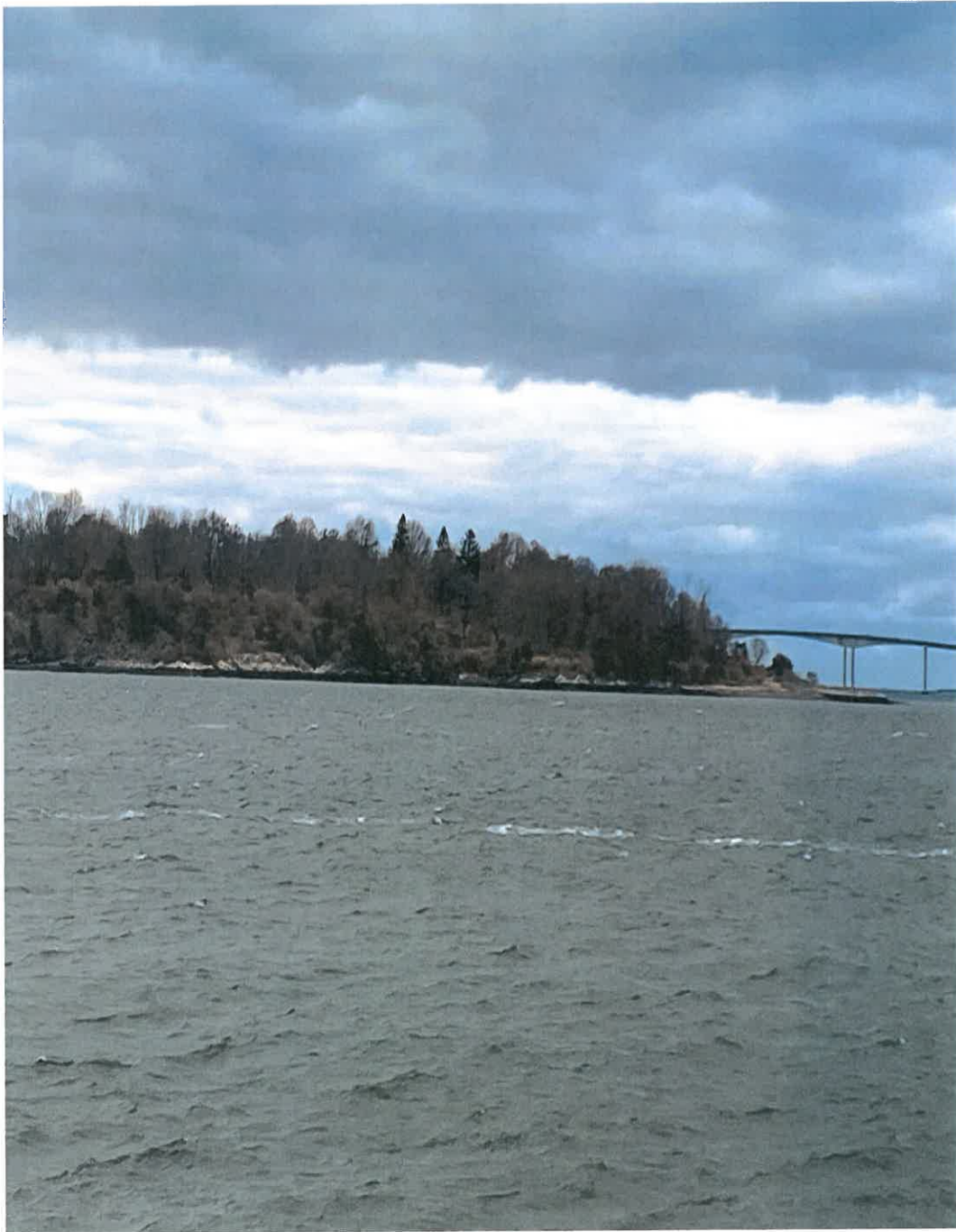


Figure B: Photo of Lease Area



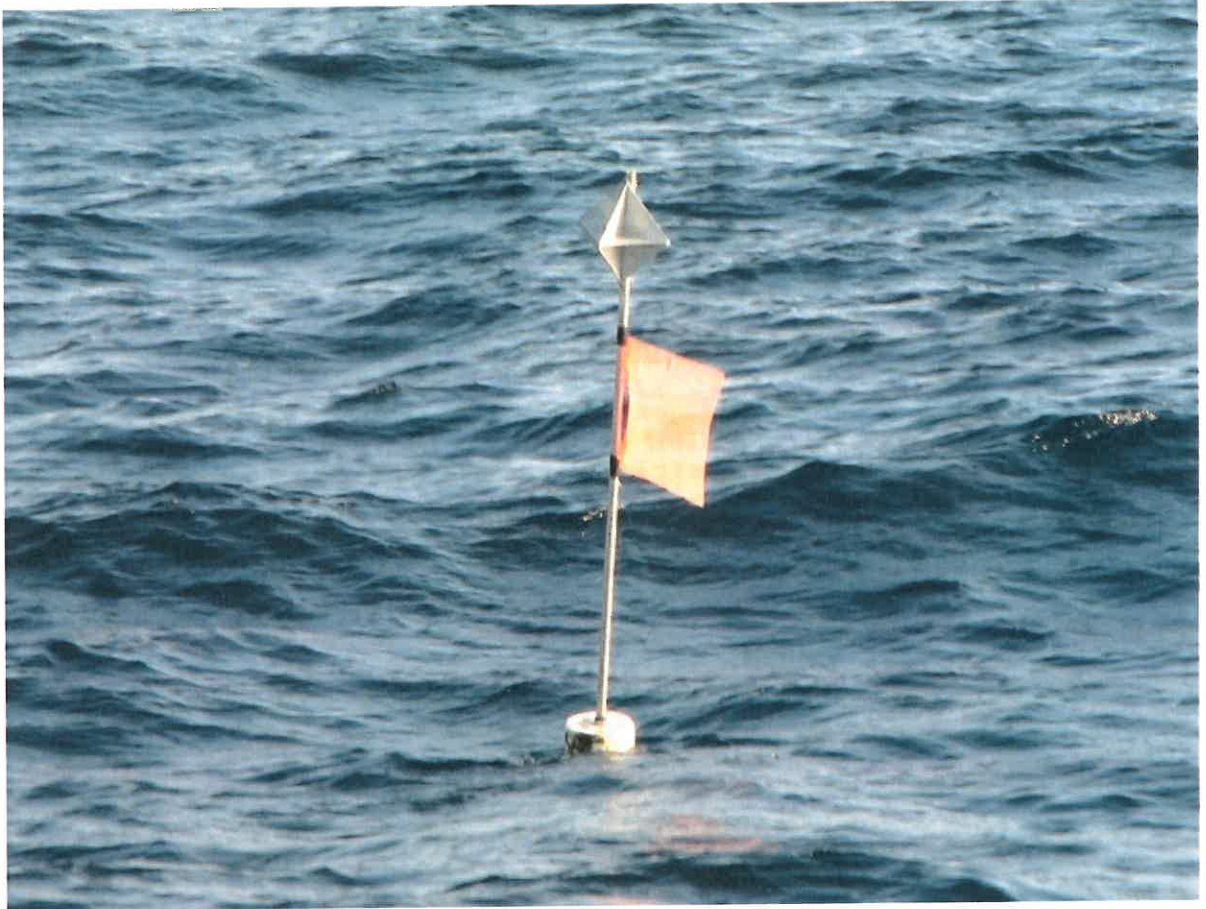
Figure C: Polyball



Example of a single polyball that will mark the location of each mooring attached to the mainlines.

DIMENSIONS: Circumference=66", Height=27", Diameter=21"

Figure D: Reflective Radar Pole



Example of the reflective radar poles that, with the polyballs, make the location of the endpoint of cement anchors.

DIMENSIONS: Height= 6ft

Figure E: Go Deep Lobster Buoy



Example of buoy placed in between polyballs to support the Kelp line.
Dimensions: Height = 21.1", Width = 9.9"

Description of work at proposed site

Sea vegetable production represents an exciting opportunity for Rhode Island at the nexus of environmental and economic stewardship. Sugar Kelp, a native Rhode Island ocean plant, removes excess carbon from the water as it grows, aiding in water quality restoration efforts. Kelp has long been a crucial ingredient in everyday products such as foods, medicines, textiles, and personal care products. Recent advancements in green energy seek to use seaweed in bioremediation and even biofuel. In order to meet rising demand for this versatile crop, Wickford Seafood Company is applying for the proposed lease site in order to grow Sugar Kelp at a commercial capacity in a viable marine space. The Rhode Island Kelp Industry is in its infancy, this proposal is taking on this issue by developing practices that will create a bountiful harvest on an annual basis. Sugar Kelp has endless positives for the marine environments centering around oxygen creation and carbon reductions. With four generations of seafood harvesting in the Ocean State, Wickford Seafood Co. will strive to grow the highest quality of sugar kelp adding to Rhode Island's resources. The natural life cycle of kelp plants produces one harvestable sporophyte (adult) population per year, to be harvested at the end of April well before summer activity in the bay ramps up.

Further development in seaweed production will secure the state's status as a leader in green jobs while demonstrating a commitment to the watermen who built this state's robust ocean economy.

Farm gear and description

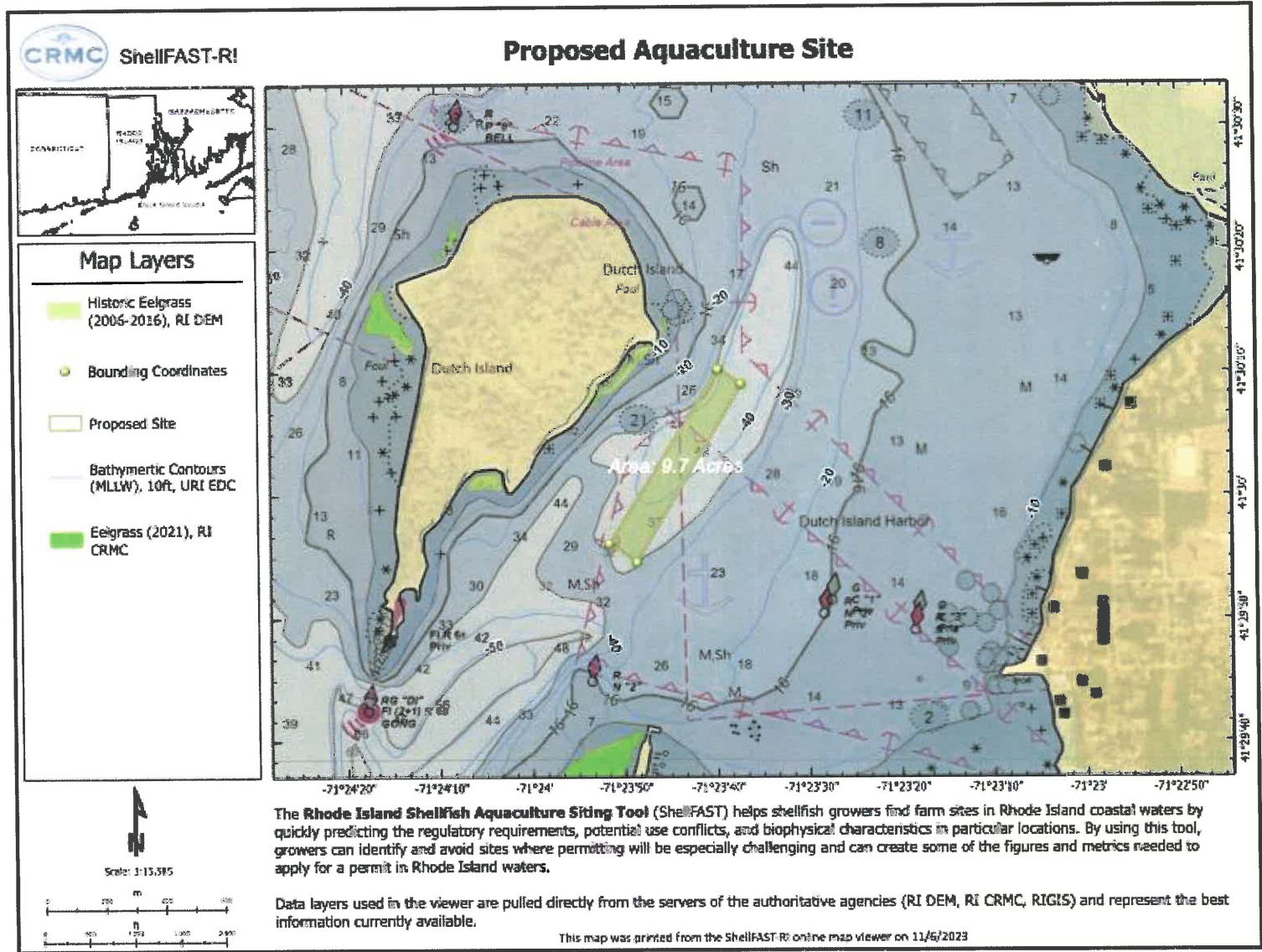
Kelp farming operations will begin after November 1st, when the seed acquired from Point Judith Kelp Company in Narragansett, Rhode Island is ready to be planted. Working hours during December and January will begin after 11 am. On the selected start date of the season (pending weather conditions), the applicant will deploy the 2 parallel anchor systems, which will each include two 250lb mushroom moorings 1700 ft apart on the North and South ends of the proposed lease. There will be two strings of sugar kelp grown in the lease, each string having their own anchor and float system. In the space between these two tension anchors there will be 7 250lb cement moorings apart in 250ft intervals. Each anchor and mooring will be attached to a half-inch sinking line, going to the surface with poly-balls. Additionally, both endpoint anchors will be accompanied by radar reflectors. The two anchor systems will be placed 225 ft apart, the closest system to adjacent land will be 500ft from the shore.

After the two anchor systems are set, in ideal weather conditions, the applicant will deploy the seed onto the mainlines, which will be 6ft under the surface, for optimal kelp growth. The seed will be strung along a line denoted the "seed line" which will subsequently wrap around the mainline of each system. Once all the kelp seed is deployed, the applicant will ensure the healthy growth of the crop by checking the site once every week throughout the season, barring severe weather conditions. The crew will perform these routine checkups and maintenance up until the last two weeks of April, at which time the sugar kelp will be harvested. When the harvesting process begins, the crew will untie the mainline for the first anchor system

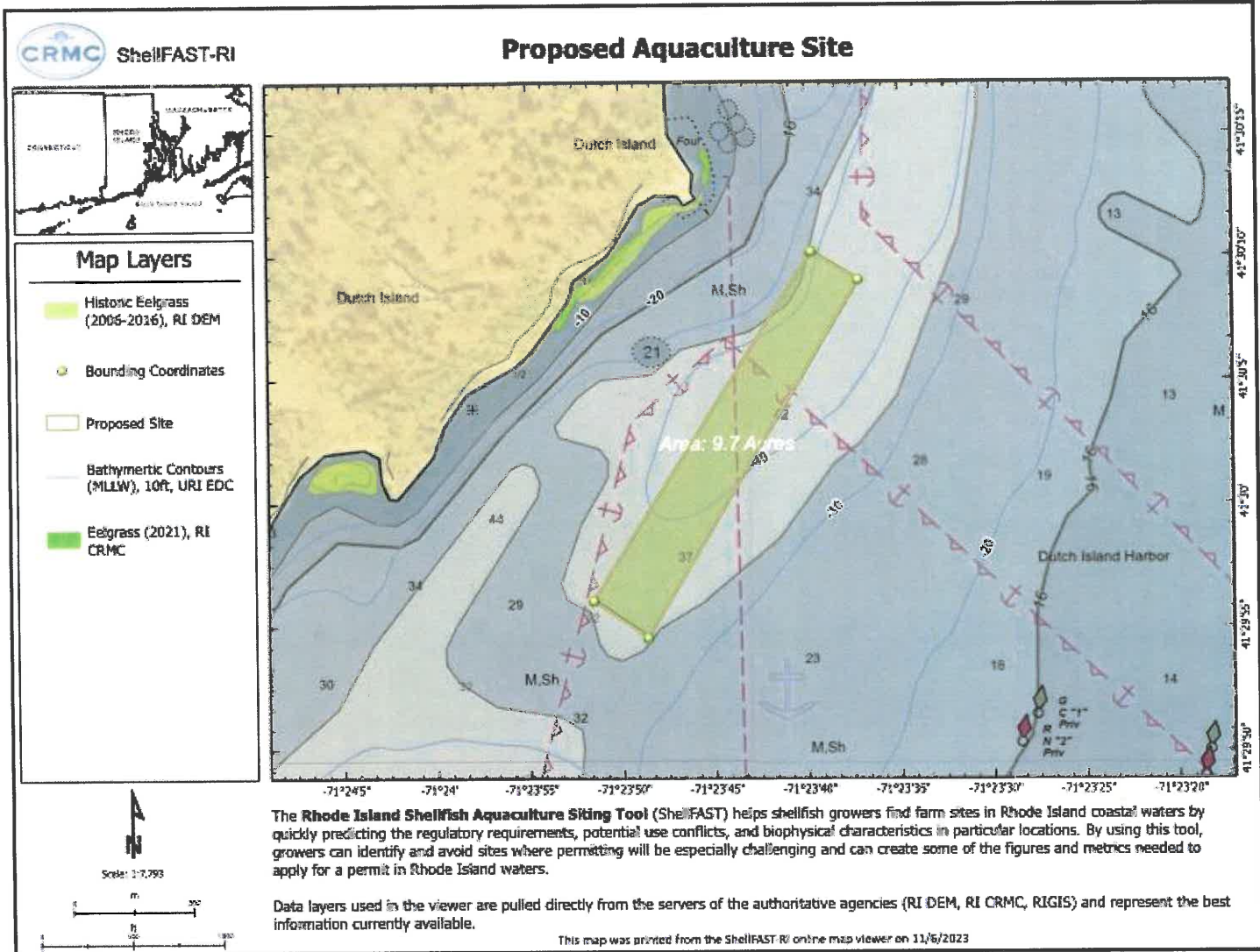
from the selected anchor point (either the North or South anchor, depending on weather and tide), then begin the process of going down the length of the mainline, pulling the mainline into the boat. They will trim all the sugar kelp off the mainline into food grade containers, which will be prepared for processing and shipment upon returning to the dock. All of the product as of now will be shipped to the sole buyer, Point Judith Kelp Company.

Operational parameters

Cultivation schedule for Saccharine Latissima typically runs from November 1 to May. The winter schedule minimizes interference with other Bay user groups, who are more active in the summer. Barring inclement weather, the applicant will deploy its anchor systems, grow lines, moorings, and buoys to the site after November 1. Seed obtained from Point Judith Kelp Company will be strung along the grow lines. Harvest will occur in late April and finish May 1, at which time all equipment will be hauled from the site and stored properly onshore for the summer. Between November 1 and May 1, the applicants will visit the site every two weeks to perform routine checkups and maintenance. This routine activity can be conducted from a small vessel to minimize the visual impact of the operation. No power washing or processing activity will take place at the site. All operations will be conducted in compliance with state and local laws. All vessels will conform to the U.S. Coast Guard regulations for fishing vessels operating in state waters. Where applicable OSHA and NIOSH guidelines will be followed. **NO WORK WILL BE CONDUCTED ON FARM SITE BEFORE THE HOURS OF 10:30 AM.**

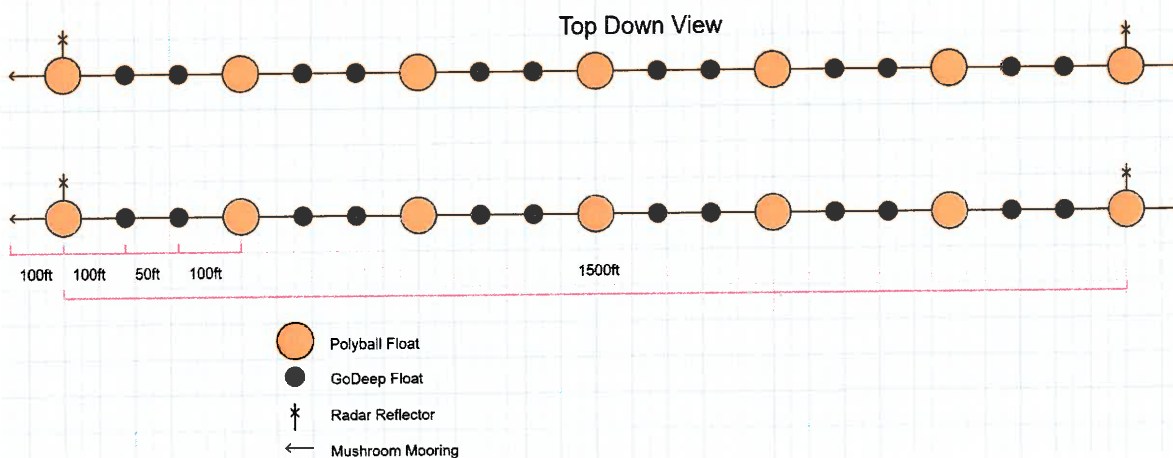
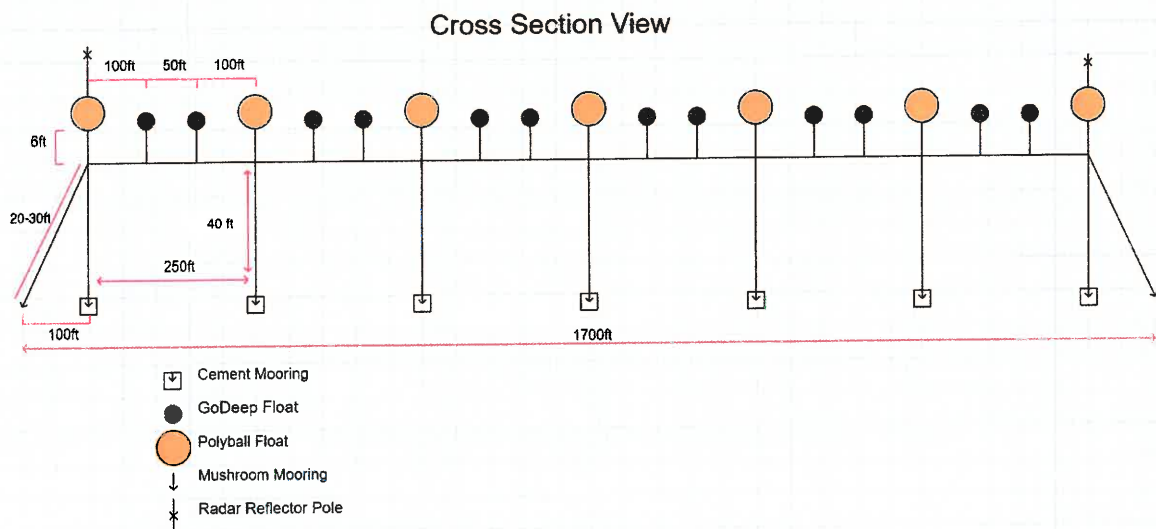


Location map



Site map

Cross section view drawing of site



Operational plans

1. Name and mailing address of individual, firm, partnership, association, academic institution, municipality or corporation who is principally responsible for the aquaculture operation or activity, if corporation, specify and include names of all owners/partners:

Wickford Seafood Company
Spencer Bode, Sole Owner
508-264-276
spencerbode17@gmail.com
20 Prospect Ave.
North Kingstown, RI 02852

2. CRMC file number for the facility, new applications will be assigned a file number by CRMC:

This number is to be determined at a later date

3. DEM aquaculture license number (applicable if products are offered for sale) new applicants will need to obtain the DEM aquaculture license:

This number is to be determined at a later date.

4. Type of facility (e.g., commercial lease site, upweller, the experimental site, restoration site, experimental site) and nature of operations (i.e. methodology used).

The type of facility for which the proposed lease site will be used for is a commercial sugar kelp farming operation. The methodology used in the operation will entail two independent anchor systems running parallel, set 225 ft apart from one another and spread across a 1700 ft stretch of water. Each system will support a mainline, upon which the kelp seed will be planted and grow through the season.

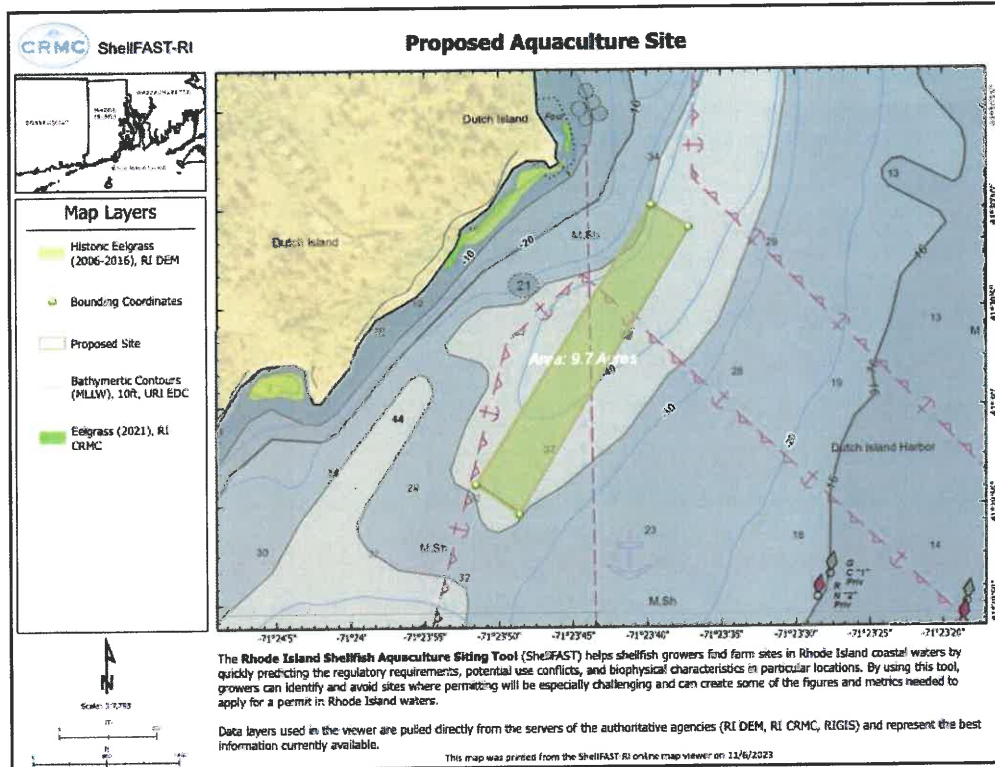
5. Location of facility(include aerial or chart depicting exact location):

Town: Adjacent to Jamestown and Dutch Island, RI

Water Body: West Passage Narragansett Bay

Lat/Long coordinates

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 41.50285402 | -71.39437203 |
| 41.50252458 | -71.39364247 |
| 41.4985069 | -71.39683966 |
| 41.49893278 | -71.39765506 |



6. Identification of all species of shellfish grown at the facility. Acknowledgement that the applicant will follow Biosecurity Board see protocols should be included.

No species of shellfish will be grown at this facility. The sole species the applicant intended to grow at the proposed sea site is Saccharina Latissima, Sugar Kelp. The applicant will follow all biosecurity board see protocols.

7. Description of types of structures, gear and methods used at the facility(e.g., rafts, pens, cages, tanks, up-wellers, docks) and their locations on the site. (include a sketch/site plan that details a cross section of structures as they appear in the water column including proximity to surface and bottom).

The primary structures that will be used to grow sugar kelp at the proposed lease site are two independent anchor systems, which will be set parallel along the East and West edges of the farm. Each anchor system will include two 250 lb mushroom anchors placed 1700 ft apart, with one marking the North end, and the other marking the South. In the space between these two anchors will be 6 250 pound moorings spaced apart in 250 ft intervals. Each anchor and mooring will be attached to a half inch sinking line, going to the surface with polyballs, and attached to a main line that stretches from one endpoint anchor to the other endpoint anchor. Additionally, both endpoint anchors will be accompanied by ft tall radar reflectors. Two go deep lobster floats will be attached to the mainline in the space between each mooring, to aid in buoyancy for successful kelp growth. The two anchor systems will be placed at a 200 ft width apart and the closest system to adjacent land will be over 500 ft from shore.

8. Description of the methods and equipment used to identify and mark site.

The endpoint anchors will be placed on the four corners of the proposed lease site. In order to mark the site on the surface, the applicant will utilize 6ft tall reflective rader poles adjacent to 66' polyballs, both attached to the ends of the mainline with a half inch sinking buoy line. The standard 11 inch buoys on the rade radar poles will be branded with the assigned lease number to provide visual identification for the proposed lease site.

9. DEM shellfish harvesting classification at site.

The proposed lease site is in growing area 7 - west passage as classified on the DEM RI Shellfish Harvest restrictions map.

10. Description of practices and procedures used during the growth, harvest, storage, transportation and sale of the cultured species.

The applicant will plant Sugar Kelp seed in ideal weather conditions after Nov1. Once the two independent anchor systems are set, the applicant will deploy the seed onto the mainlines, which will be 6 feet under the surface, for optimal kelp growth. The seed will be strung along a line denoted the “seed line” which will subsequently wrap around the mainline of each system. Once all the kelp seed is deployed, the applicant will ensure the healthy growth of the crop by checking the site once every week through the season, barring severe weather conditions. The crew will perform these routine checkups and maintenance up until the last two weeks of April, at which time they will harvest all the Sugar Kelp. At the time of the harvest, they will untie the mainline of the first anchor system from the selected anchor point(either north or south anchor, weather and tide dependent, then pull the mainline into the boat. They will trim all the sugar kelp off of the mainline into totes, where the product will be cleaned and prepared for shipment. Upon returning to the dock, the crew will transfer the kelp to shipping containers and send the product off with the buyer. They will then repeat the same process with the second anchor system, harvesting all of the kelp grown throughout the season. All of the product will be shipped to the sole buyer, Point Judith Kelp Company.

11. Procedures for maintaining records: for operations using seed acquired from out of state: description of notification, disease certification, and labeling/tagging procedures:

We will follow all health regulatory procedures for processing sugar kelp.

12. Procedures for maintaining records: for upwellers/seed growing facilities in prohibited waters water: description of procedures, including frequency of grading(with particular reference to requirements that seed must be removed before it exceeds maximum “seed” size threshold, ie, <32mm for oysters, <25mm for quahogs.

Not applicable for this operation.

13. Procedures for maintaining records: for operations using seed from prohibited waters, or operations using shellfish obtained from a third party that originated as seed from prohibited water:

Not applicable for this operation.

Detailed description of demarcation methods and record keeping practices used at the lease site to ensure that have been cultured at least 12 month in approved waters, prior to sale, including:

- a. Detailed record keeping practices specifying date, source, average size, and amount of seed and

- b. Protocols and associated record keeping for tracking product, e.g., use of tagged/numbered cages and/or bags, use of marked trawls, and/or use of marked segregated portions of lease sites.

Not applicable for this operation.

Descriptions of the process for notifying the third party that a seed came from prohibited waters, the date of that transfer, and the remaining time needed to maintain the animals in approved waters prior to sale.

Not applicable for this operation.

Written responses to Section 1.3

Coastal Resources Management Program - Section 1.3.1 (A) - Category B requirements

All persons applying for a category B assent are required to:

1. Demonstrate the need for the proposed activity or alteration.

The applicant's need to apply for the proposed lease site is to obtain a commercially viable space in which they can farm *Saccharina latissima*, sugar Kelp at a profitable capacity. The applicant is a fourth generation offshore fisherman who is seeking to diversify and provide a more sustainable product for Rhode Island's ocean based economy.

2. Demonstrate that all applicable local zoning ordinances, building codes, flood hazard standards, and all safety codes, and environmental requirements have or will be met, local approvals are required for activities as specifically prescribed for non tidal portions of a project in sections 1.3.1 B,C,F,H,I,K,M,O,Q.

Not applicable for this operation.

3. Describe the boundaries of the coastal water and land areas that are anticipated to be effected

The applicant does not anticipate that any coastal waters or land areas will be affected by operations at the proposed 9.7 acre lease site, as the closest gear to adjacent land will always be at least 500 ft from shore.

4. Demonstrate that the alteration or activity will not result in significant impacts on erosion and/or deposition process along the shore and tidal water,

All kelp farming operations at the proposed lease site will take place 500 ft from shore, thus, erosion and deposition along the shore should not occur.

5. Demonstrate that the alteration or activity will not result in significant impacts on the abundance and diversity of plant and animal life

The farming of Sugar Kelp should not pose any negative impact on the diversity of plant and animal life in the water body. Rather, the applicant anticipates that the kelp operations will benefit surrounding habitats and should increase the diversity of animal and plant life. The updated site has been selected to avoid overlap with historical mussel beds. Thus, the updated lease site will not pose any negative impact to local plant and animal life.

6. Demonstrate that the alteration will not unreasonably interfere with, impair, or significantly impact existing public access to, or use of , tidal water and or the shore.

Given that the updated lease site is over 500 ft from shore, there should be no interference with public access and use of the adjacent shoreline. Additionally, the applicant does not anticipate any negative impact to existing public access to the water area, they are aware of commercial fishing and lobstering that occurs in the area, and will take the necessary precautions to avoid interference. The seasonal nature of Kelp aquaculture should prevent major impairments to summer time public access to the waters, as the season only lasts from November to April. During December and January, work at the site will not begin prior to 11 AM, thereby preventing conflict with recreational duck hunters.

7. Demonstrate the the alteration will not result in significant impacts to water circulation, flushing, turbidity, and sedimentation<

Kelp aquaculture operations at the proposed lease site will not pose any impact to water circulation, flushing, turbidity nor sedimentation in the surrounding waters.

8. demonstrate that there will be no significant deterioration in the quality of he water in the immediate vicinity as defined by DEM,

Kelp aquaculture is a proven practice that has a positive impact on surrounding water quality. The applicant does not anticipate any deterioration of the water quality in the immediate vicinity.

9. Demonstrate that there will not result in significant impacts to water circulation, flushing, turbidity and sedimentation.

The adjacent land is Dutch Island, a former military base that is now owned and operated by the State of Rhode Island. The applicant deems that the proposed

kelp operations should pose no threats to the purity of the surrounding waters nor the adjacent land. However, the applicant shall defer to the Rhode Island Historic Preservation to ensure that there are no negative impacts towards any area of historic/archaeological significance.

10. Demonstrate that the alteration or activity will not result in significant conflicts with water dependent uses and activities such as recreational boating, fishing, swimming, navigation, and commerce:

The seasonal nature of this Sugar Kelp will minimize any conflict or interference with recreational water, considering the season only lasts from November to April. Additionally, site work during December and January will not begin before 11 AM, thereby preventing conflict with recreational duck hunting.

11. Demonstrate that measures have been taken to minimize any adverse scenic impacts

The proposed kelp operation will employ a minimum number of surface floats, all of which are unrecognizable from the shoreline. These floats are the only part of the operation that are visible above the surface. Thus, the proposed lease site will effectively prevent any adverse scenic impact of the surrounding areas.

Review of Sections 1.1.10 and 1.3.1(K) of the RICRMP

The applicant will acquire a RI Aquaculture license as the approval of this preliminary determination document is pending. The applicant has reviewed these sections for the completion of this application.

Information regarding provisions for pedestrian access to the shore and availability of lease area for other uses, including but limited to boating, swimming, fishing etc.

The proposed lease area shall not limit pedestrian access to the adjacent shore. The only portion of the kelp operation visible above the surface are the floats that are equivalent to lobster/conch gear that is commonly used in this area. The applicant deems that this

will not inhibit any recreational use of the surrounding waters such as boating, swimming, fishing etc.

Additional Category B Requirements

1. Describe the location and size of the area proposed.

The proposed site is 9.7 acres off the eastern side of Dutch Island. The nearest site boundary to shore is around 500 feet away from shore.

2. Identify the species to be managed or cultivated within the permitted area and over which the applicant shall have exclusive right.

The applicant will cultivate *Saccharina Latissima*, aka sugar kelp.

3. Describe the method or manner of management or cultivation to be utilized, including whether the activities proposed are experimental, commercial, or for personal use.

The applicant will grow sugar kelp commercially with intent to sell to Point Judith Kelp Company.

4. Provide such other information as may be necessary for the Council to determine
a. The compatibility of the proposal with other existing and potential uses of the area and areas contiguous to it, including navigation, recreation, and fisheries. (In addition, please provide the following necessary information as required in the 1000' Contiguous Area Map:

- list of all **property owners within 1000'**;
- list of all approved aquaculture leases within 1000';
- list of CRMC designated ROW(s) within 1000';
- CRMC water use types within 1000'; and
- any shoreline(s) within 1000' which have been preserved for conservation, recreation and/or public access through easements, purchased by the state or municipality, or are owned by a land trust or state-recognized conservation organization.)

There are no approved aquaculture leases within 1000' according to the latest version of the ShellFAST-RI viewer.

Dutch Island is owned by the state and designated as a wildlife refuge. The proposed lease site is over 500 feet away from the shore, and will not interfere with state conservation activities there. The site is firmly located within CRMC-classified multi-use waters. Off its western border, the site sits next to CRMC-classified conservation waters. However, the proposed site does not overlap with CRMC conservation use waters and will not interfere with conservation efforts.

B. The degree of exclusivity required for aquacultural activities on the proposed site. (In support of this requirement and in accordance with 1.3.1(K)(b), the applicant must include a plan demonstrating reasonable public ingress and egress to and from the proposed site for traditional water activities such as boating, swimming, and fishing. The ingress/egress plan may be notated on a copy of the site plan or other map.)

As Kelp grows throughout the winter, the applicant does not foresee much potential for interference with public recreational activities such as boating, swimming, and fishing. The applicant has placed the site in multi-use waters, and has taken care to avoid interfering with NOAA navigational channels.

c. The safety and security of equipment, including appropriate marking of the equipment and/or lease area.

All equipment, including the red polyballs, go deep lobster buoys, and reflective radar poles, will be labeled and installed according to US Coast Guard Safety regulations.

d. The projected per unit area yield of harvestable product.

The projected per unit area yield of harvestable product is 10,000 lbs of kelp.

e. The cumulative impact of a particular aquaculture proposal in an area, in addition to other aquaculture operations already in place. (At minimum, applicants should consider the impact of any other aquaculture operation within 1000' of the proposed site.)

As there are no other aquaculture proposals within 1000 feet, the projected impact of the project will be minimal. If anything, the applicant expects the cultivation of kelp to have a positive impact on water quality and overall ecosystem health in the bay.

f. The capability of the applicant to carry out the proposed activities.

The applicant has successfully contributed to Rhode Island's fishing industry for over a decade. The applicant will implement and adhere to all safety protocols as outlined by the US coast guard. The applicant will implement and adhere to all CRMC conservation protocols.

g. The impact of the proposed activities on the scenic qualities of the area.

Kelp grows underneath the surface of the water, therefore the proposed activities should have almost no impact on the scenic qualities of the area.

Sugar Kelp Aquaculture Lease Proposal

that there are no negative impacts towards any area of historic/archaeological significance.

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The applicant will acquire a RI Aquaculture license as the approval of this preliminary determination document is pending. The applicant has reviewed these sections for the completion of this application.

10. Information regarding provisions for pedestrian access to the shore and availability of lease area for other uses, including but limited to boating, swimming, fishing etc.

The proposed lease area shall not limit pedestrian access to the adjacent shore. The only portion of the kelp operation visible above the surface are the floats that are equivalent to lobster/conch gear that is commonly used in this area. The applicant deems that this will not inhibit any recreational use of the surrounding waters such as boating, swimming, fishing etc.

