

March 30, 2012

Boze Hancock, TNC-NOAA National Partnership Coordinator
The Nature Conservancy Global Marine Team
University of Rhode Island Narragansett Bay Campus
South Ferry Road
Narragansett, RI 02882-1197

Dear Mr. Hancock:

The Board of Selectmen of the Town of Chilmark, Massachusetts, is writing to support an application by The Nature Conservancy of Massachusetts for a TNC/NOAA Community-based Restoration grant. A small town with a high cost of living and a strongly seasonal economy, Chilmark relies heavily on its marine resources. In particular, harvest of shellfish from the town's ponds is an important off-season source of income and sustenance for year-round town residents. It is also a centuries-old tradition and a central element of Chilmark's identity. For these reasons, shellfish populations and the health of ponds and estuaries are central concerns of this community. We consider the proposed project to be an important step forward in enhancing these resources.

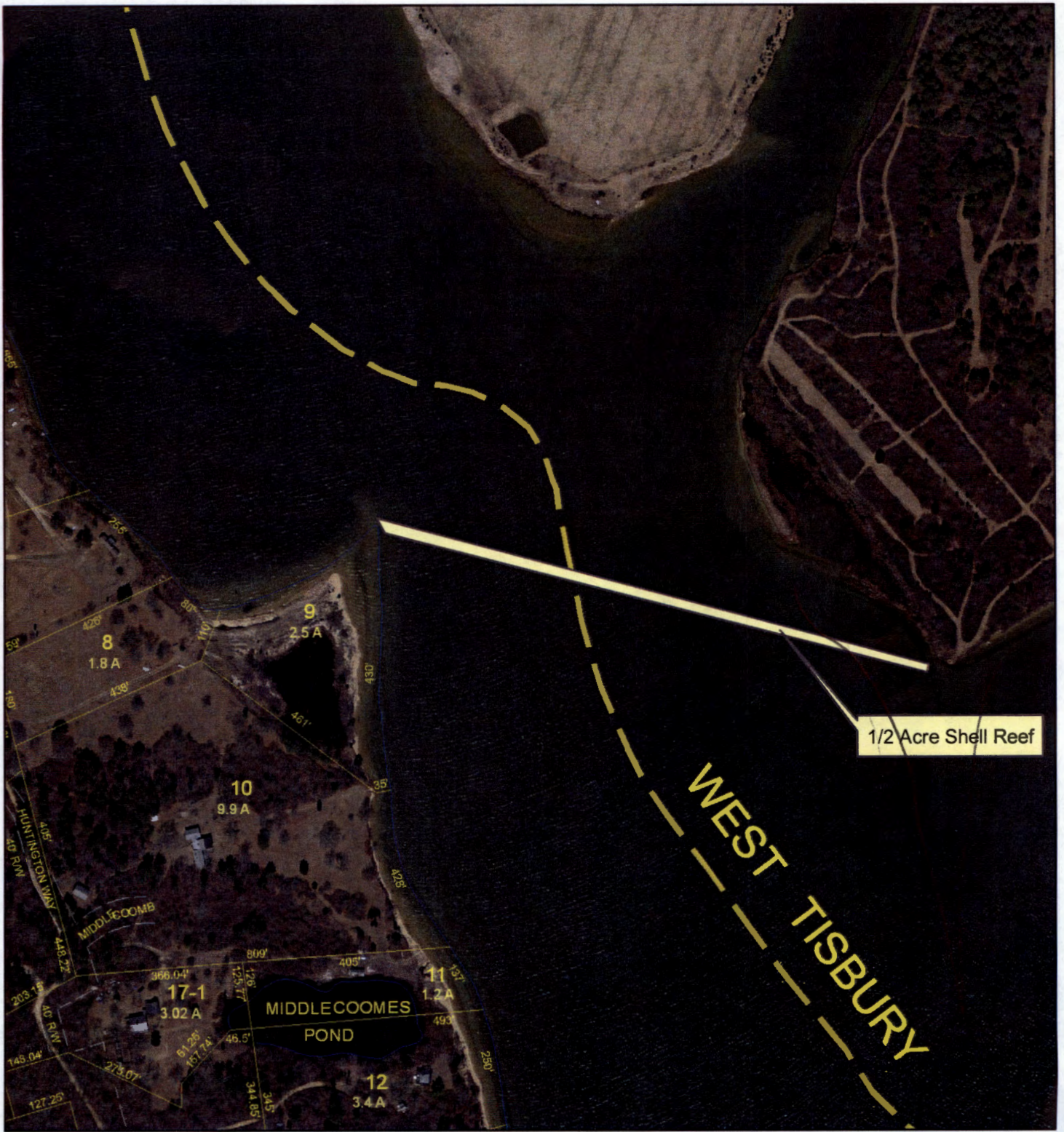
The project will use cultch deposition and oyster seeding to produce a new, hopefully permanent population of oysters in the Tisbury Great Pond, on which Chilmark has extensive frontage. The resulting oyster bed will provide habitat for a wide range of benthic organisms, enhancing the pond's vitality and biodiversity. It will help mitigate water quality concerns in the pond by sequestering nitrogen and removing particulates from the water column, enhancing conditions for aquatic vegetation. And it will serve as a spawner sanctuary, introducing locally adapted oysters into other parts of the pond. We expect the result to be a boost to the oyster fishery in the pond as well as an increase in the other ecological services provided by oysters.

The site will be monitored to track establishment of oysters and use by other wildlife, and appropriate management closures will be maintained to ensure that the newly established resource remains intact and functional. The Town of Chilmark will be able to provide in-kind match for a grant to support the project, contributing the extensive local knowledge and manpower of the town's shellfish community to help ensure the success of the project.

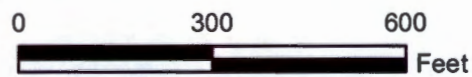
We look forward to working with The Nature Conservancy, the neighboring town of West Tisbury, and other Vineyard entities in advancing this project, which we think will offer considerable benefits to both the town of Chilmark and the greater Martha's Vineyard community. And we respectfully urge the NOAA/TNC Community-based Restoration Grant Program to provide funding to support this effort.

Sincerely,

For the Chilmark Board of Selectmen



**Shellfish TNC Reef Grant
Chilmark & West Tisbury**



3/28/2012



Isaiah Scheffer

From: Isaiah Scheffer [isaiah_scheffer@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, March 26, 2012 3:22 PM
To: Isaiah Scheffer
Cc: Tim Carrol; Admin. Asst ConCom Chuck; Tim Carrol; Warren Doty; Harbor Assistant Virginia; Liz Lewenberg; Matt Mayhew; Wes Brighton; John Armstrong
Subject: Fw: TGP Nature Conservancy

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "mvsg@comcast.net" <mvsg@comcast.net>
To: Isaiah Scheffer <isaiah_scheffer@yahoo.com>; Warren M. Doty <warrendoty@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, March 23, 2012 12:27 PM
Subject: TGP Nature Conservancy

Matt Pelikan gave a presentation at the WT Shellfish Committee with two selectmen present. The committee voted in favor of recommending selectmen to write a letter of support. The project will be about \$50,000, will require a 50% match, involve no more than 1/2 acre and probably not begin until next spring because of the need for permits. The site would remain under control of the towns but there would probably be an MOU with TNC allowing them to manage/study the site for about 5 years. He would like the reef/bed to be unfished for 5 years to allow evaluation. Matt would like to have support letters and more importantly a potential site by April 4th. Selectmen felt the only obstacle to moving it forward would be deciding on a site. Ray said he would be contacting Isaiah about going out and trying to find the site in the center of the pond that is not soupy mud and has a history of producing oysters. We also discussed the possibility/desirability of putting the sanctuary reef in the closed area. Matt was going to contact Hickey to see if this might be possible.

Rick

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries - Designated Shellfish Growing Area



Shellfish Area Classification			
	Approved		Conditionally Restricted
	Conditionally Approved		Prohibited
	Restricted		Management Close

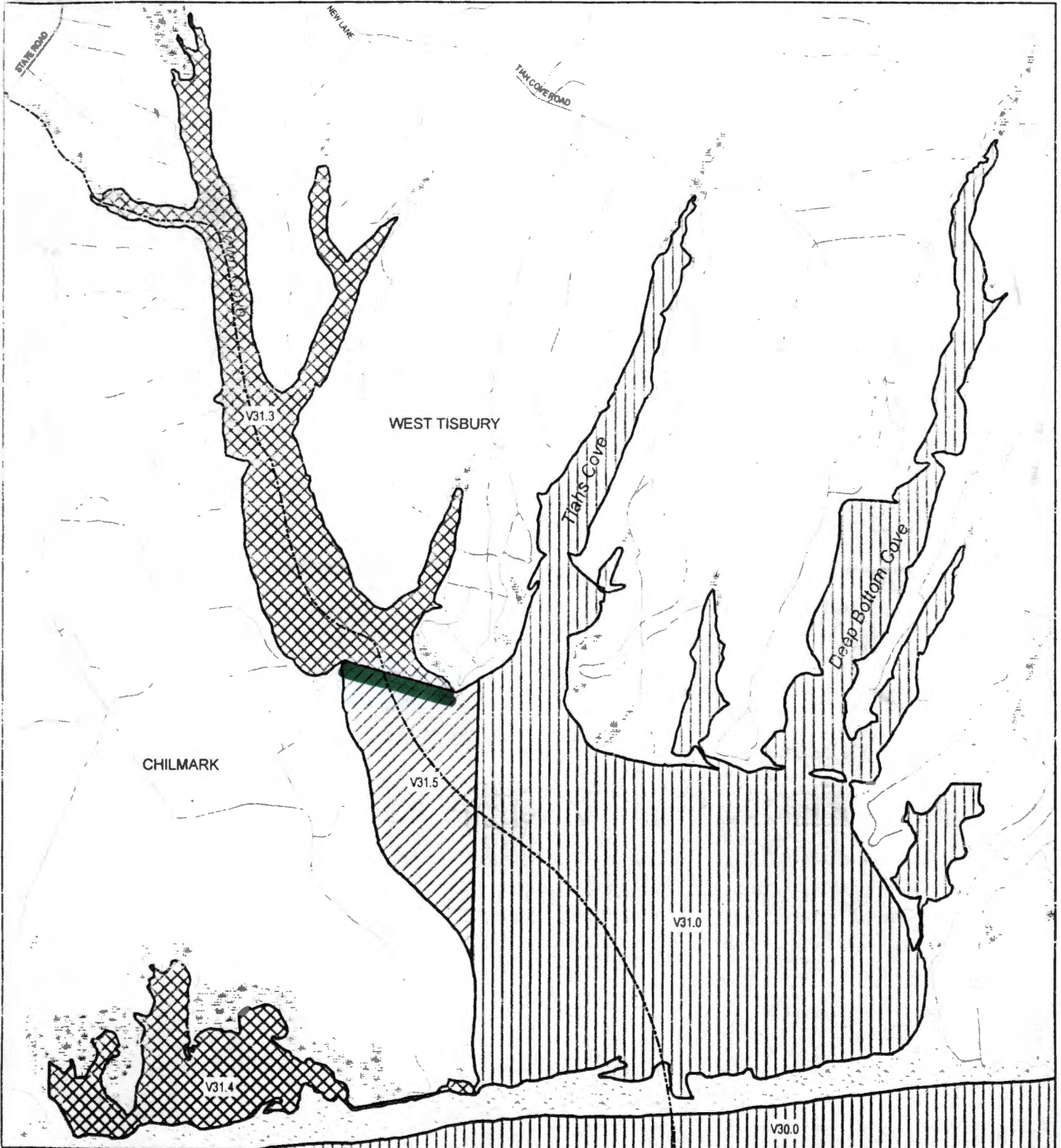
Map Features Legend			
	MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY		Cranberry Bog
	Marsh/Bog		Salt Marsh
	Wooded marsh		Open Water
			Reservoir
			Tidal Flats
			Beach/Dune



Produced: Sep. 10, 2009

Growing Area Code: V31
 Area Name: TISBURY GREAT POND
 Area Town(s): Chilmark, West Tisbury

0.09
 Miles



This product is for planning and educational purposes only. It is not to be used by itself for legal boundary definition or regulatory interpretation.