

Ocean SAMP: Submerged Historic Sites in the Vicinity of Block Island

Rod Mather and John Jensen

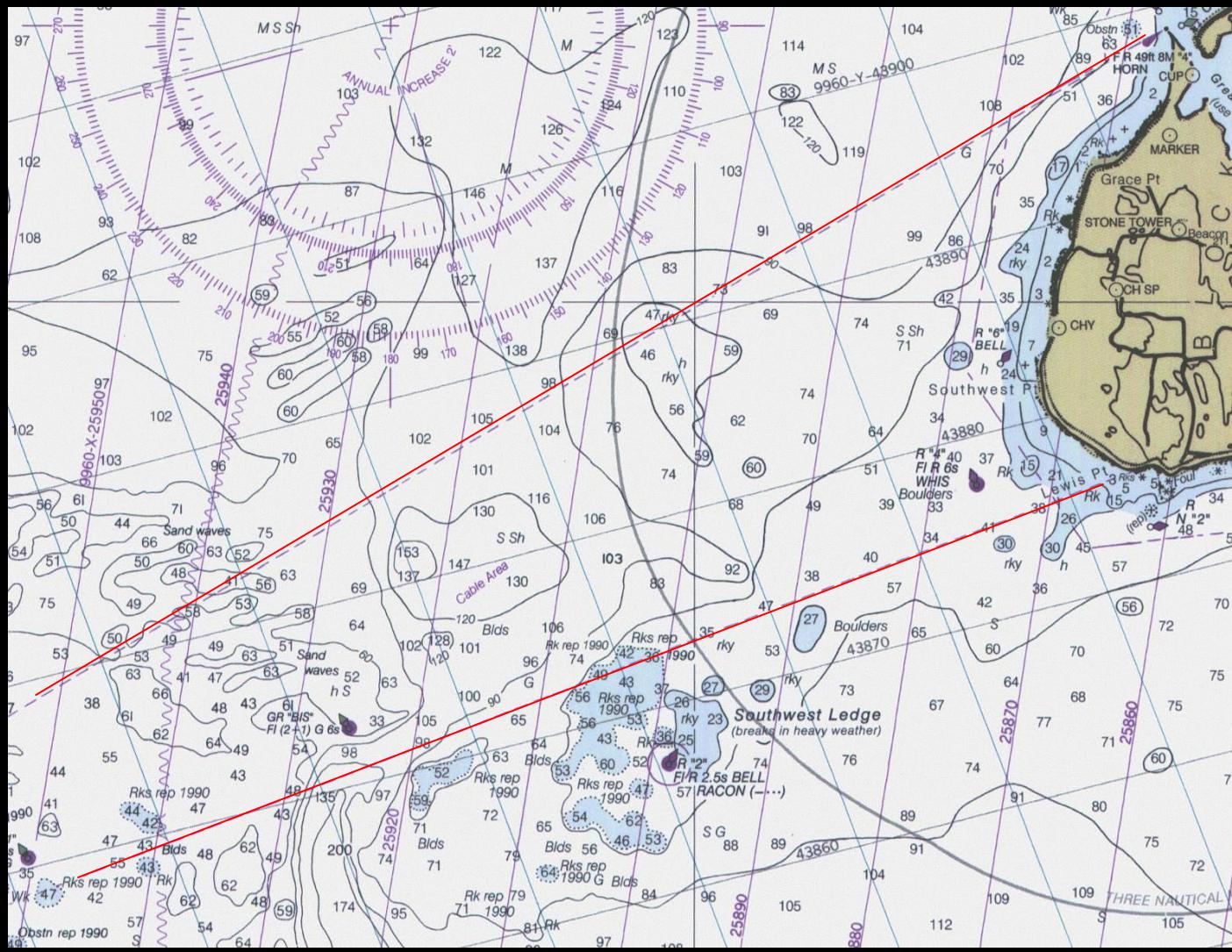
Department of History

URI

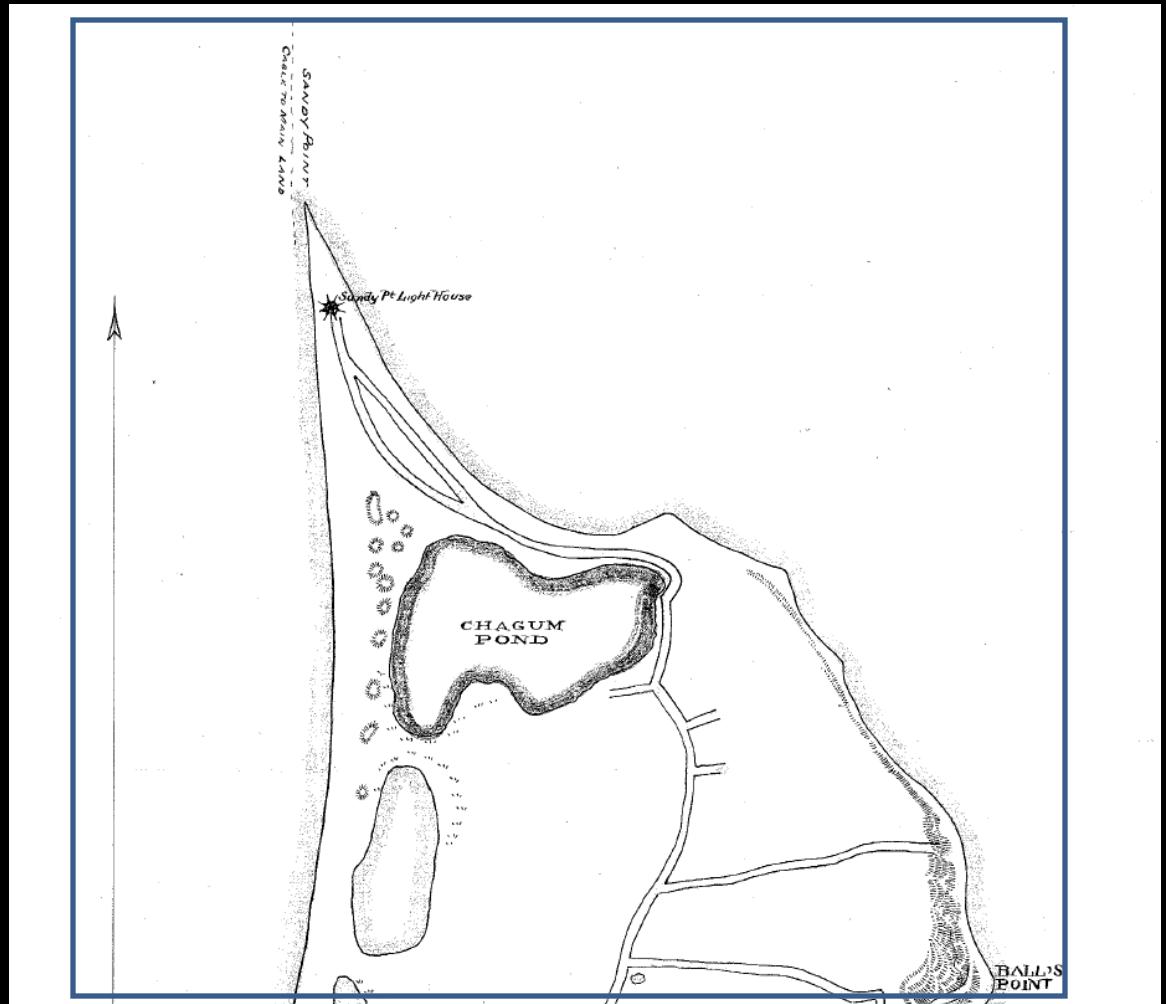
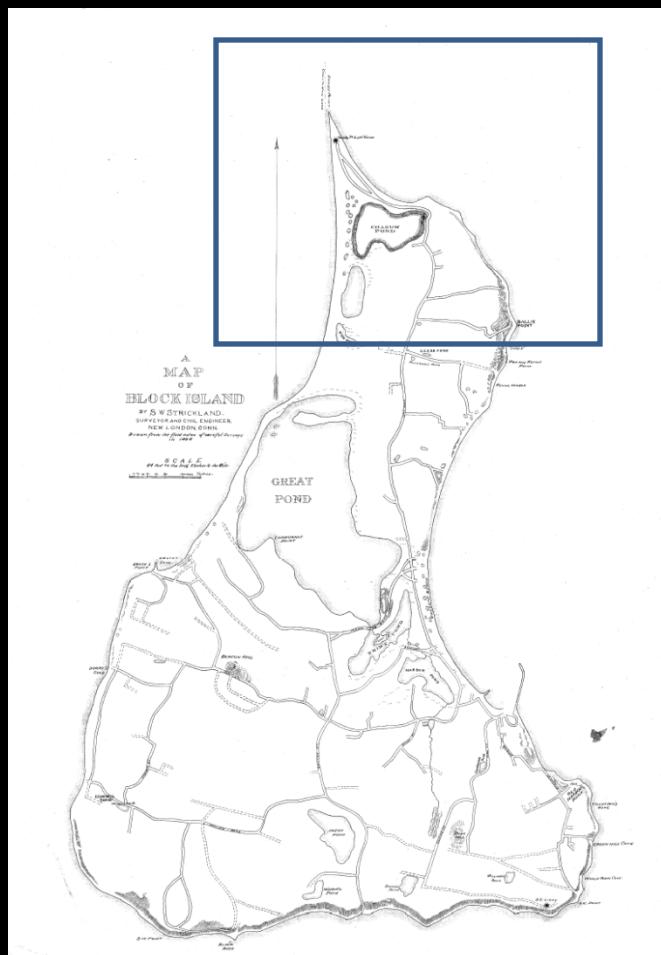
Scope of Work To Date

- Focused on Southern Block Island
- Historic Rather than Prehistoric Sites
- Shipwrecks, Buildings, Cables, Marine Structures (wharfs, quays, bridges)
- In Practice – Shipwrecks

Southwest Cable Area



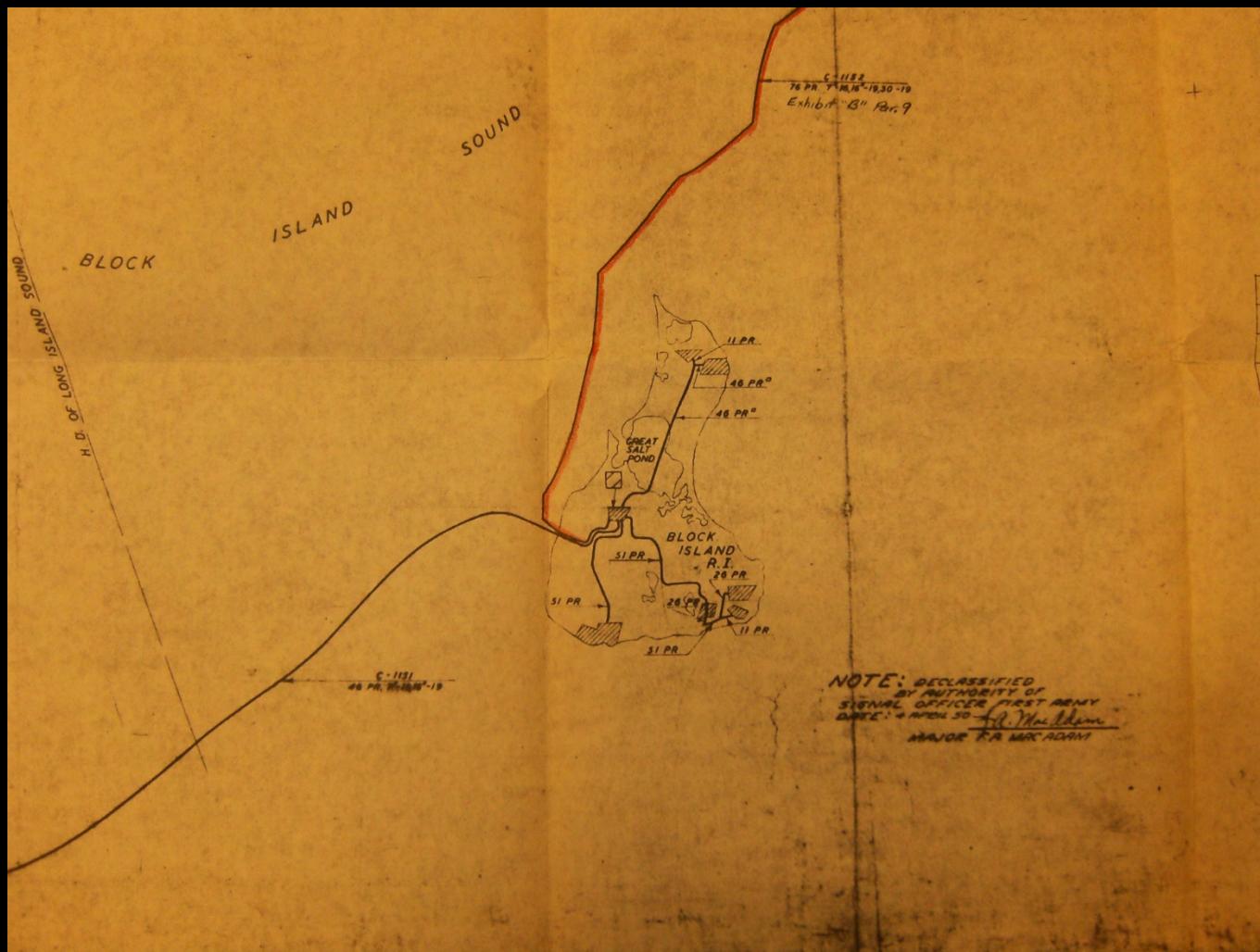
Block Island – 1884 First Submarine Cable



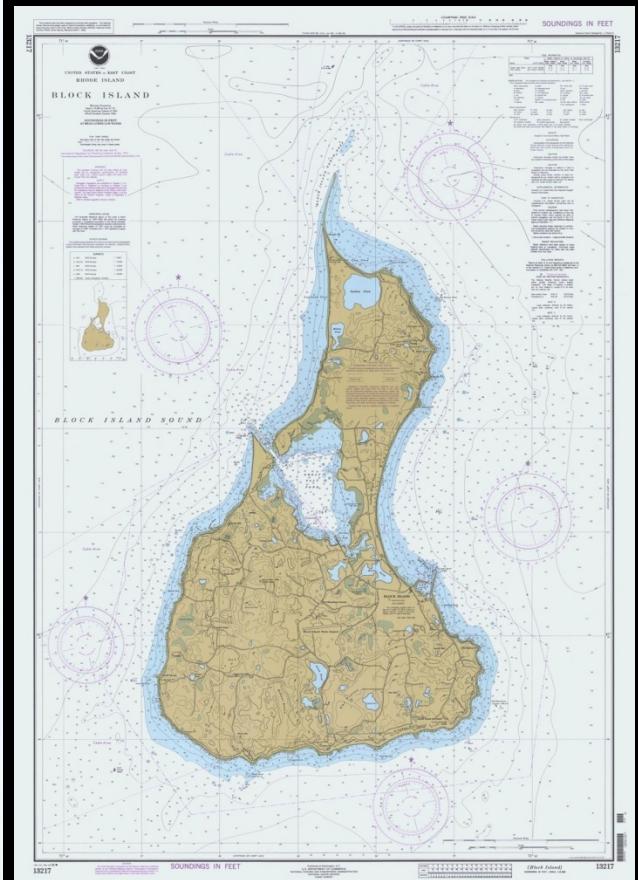
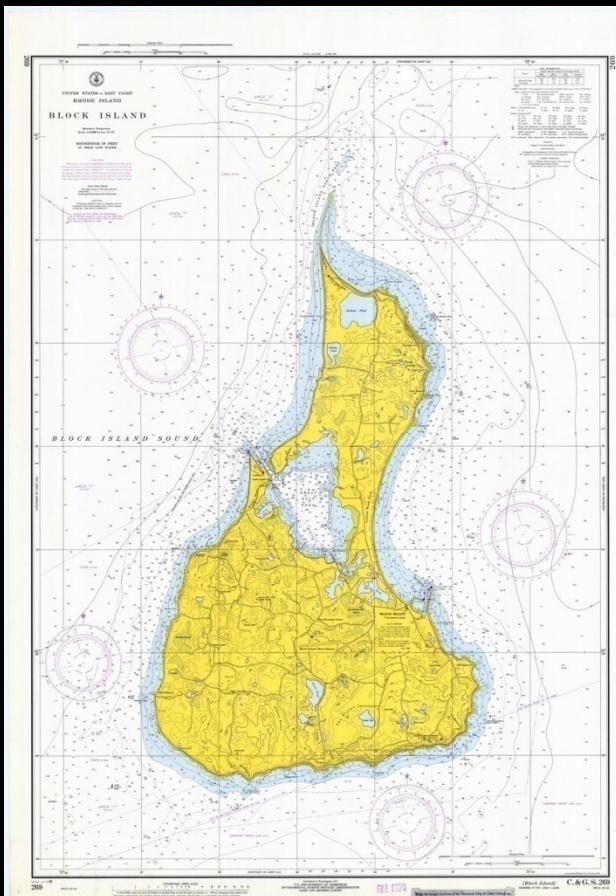
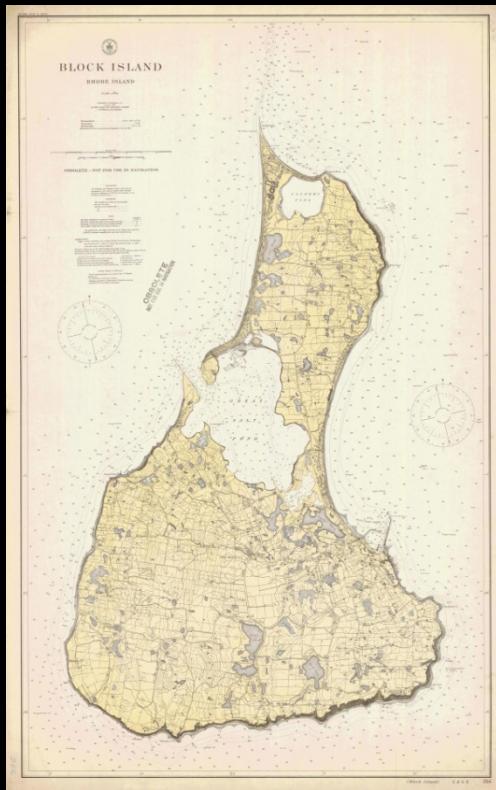
WWII Cable Easements



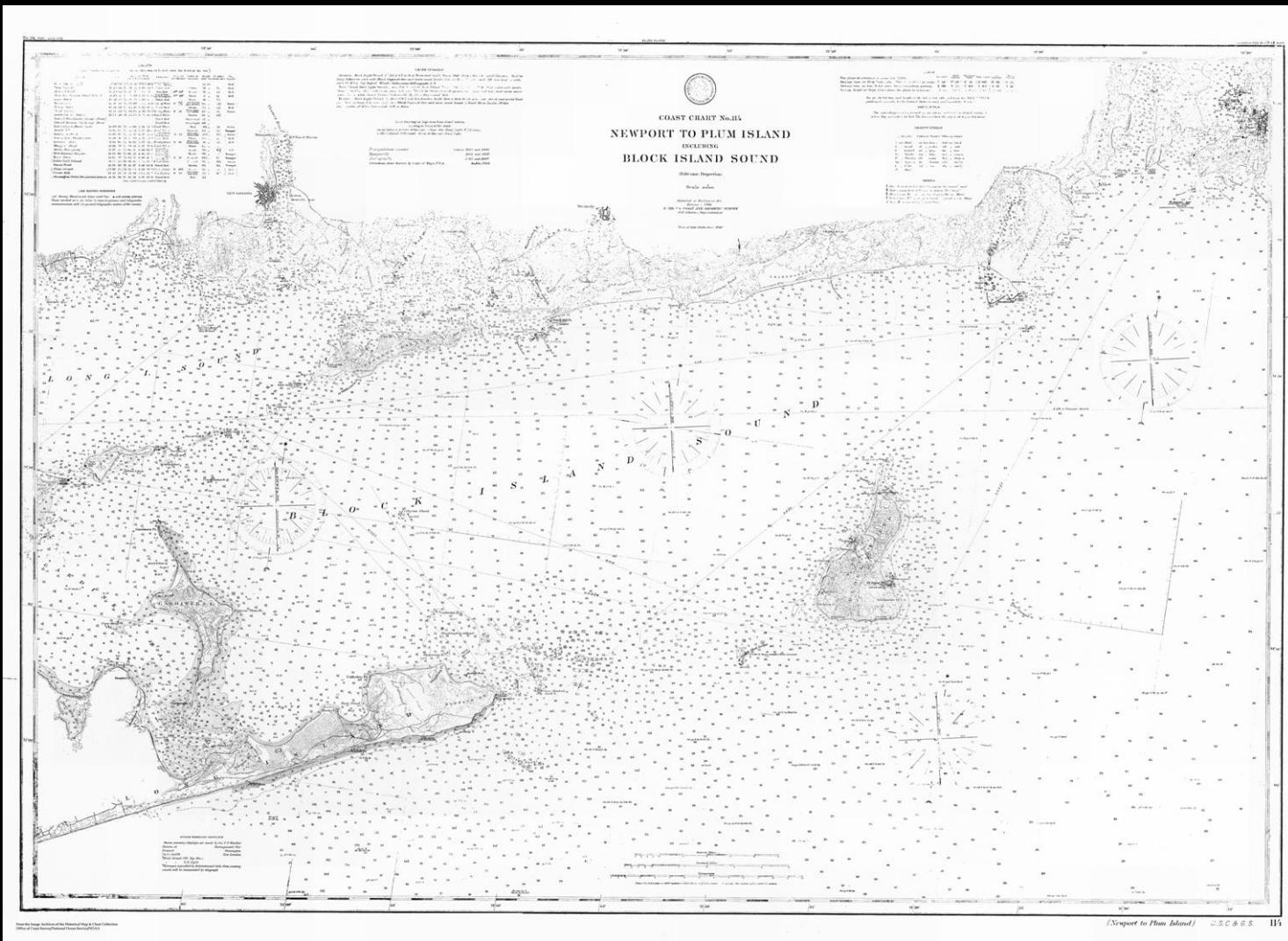
Submarine Cables and De-accession



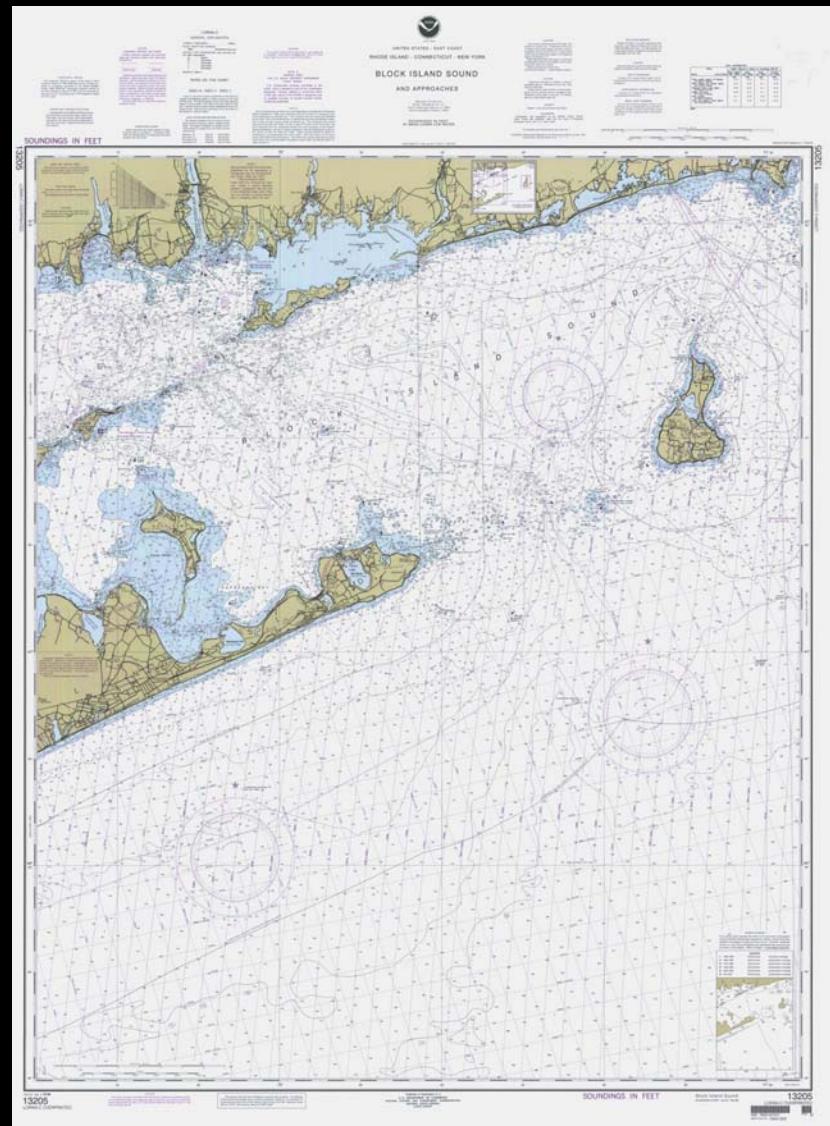
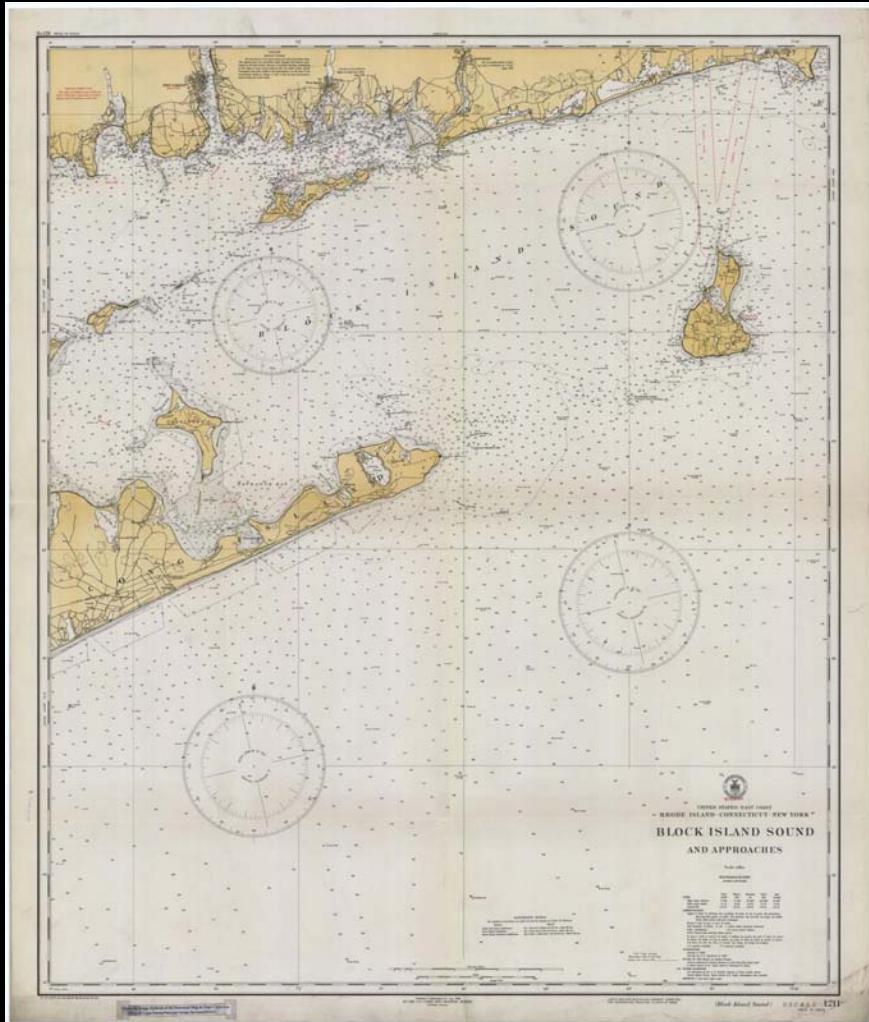
Geo-referenced Historic Nautical Charts – 1914, 1968, 1996



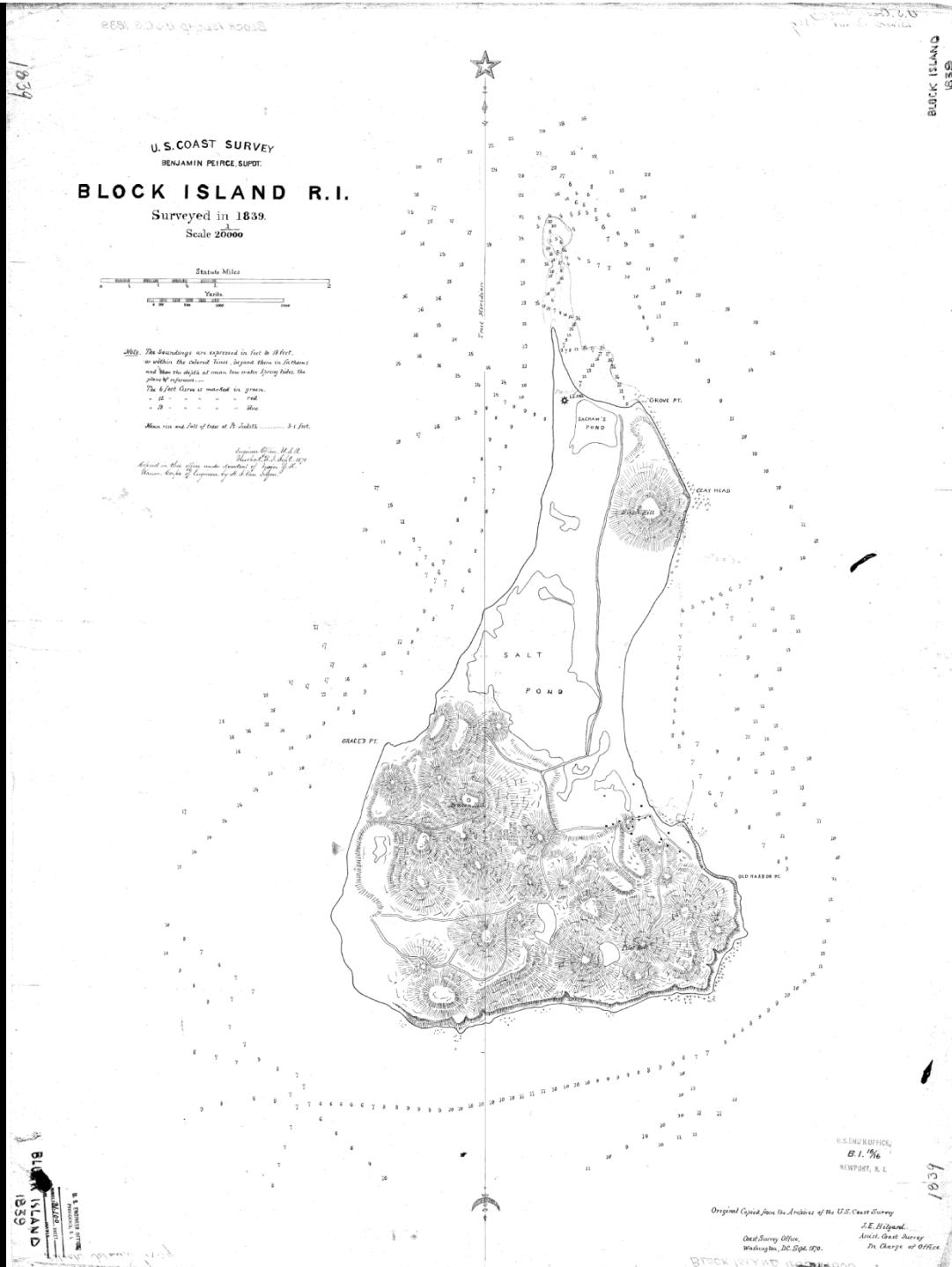
Block Island Sound - 1901 (1848)



Block Island Sound – 1934 & 1999



Hydrographic Survey - 1839



US Life Saving Station, Wreck Reports, 1900

WRECK REPORT.	
<i>Sandy Point Life-Saving Station, District No. 8</i>	
Date of Disaster:	<i>May 23, 1891</i>
1. Name of vessel.	<i>Polar Wave</i>
2. Rig and tonnage.	<i>Schooner 84 tons</i>
3. Hailing port and nationality.	<i>Boston America</i>
4. Agt.	<i>Twenty Five</i>
5. Official number.	<i>150018</i>
6. Name of master.	<i>Richard Warren</i>
7. Names of owners.	<i>Savory's Parker</i>
8. Where from.	<i>Boston</i>
9. Where bound.	<i>Block Island, fishing</i>
10. Number of crew, including captain.	<i>Seventeen</i>
11. Number of passengers.	<i>None</i>
12. Nature of cargo.	<i>Fish and Salt</i>
13. Estimated value of vessel.	<i>2500</i>
14. Estimated value of cargo.	<i>15.00</i>
15. Exact spot where wrecked.	<i>Clay Head</i>
16. Direction and distance from station.	<i>S.S.E. 2 1/2 miles</i>
17. Supposed cause of wreck (specifying particularly).	<i>Thick Fog and Rain</i>
18. Nature of disaster, whether stranded, sunk, collision, etc.	<i>Total Wreck</i>
19. Distance of vessel from shore at time of accident.	<i>250 yds</i>
20. Time of day or night.	<i>1:00 P.M.</i>
21. State of wind and weather.	<i>Brisk. Thick</i>
22. State of tide and sea.	<i>Ebb 1/2 down. Smooth</i>
23. Time of discovery of wreck.	<i>1:25 A.M.</i>
24. By whom discovered.	<i>Charles R. Sprague</i>
25. Time of arrival of station-crew at wreck.	<i>3:30 A.M.</i>
26. Time of return of station-crew from wreck.	<i>4:30 A.M.</i>
27. Were any of the station-crew absent? If so, who?	<i>Charles A. Mitchell</i>
28. Was life-boat used? *	<i>No</i>
29. Number of trips with life-boat.	<i>None</i>
30. Number of persons brought ashore in life-boat.	<i>None</i>
31. Was surf-boat used? **	<i>Yes Beebe & McLellan Surfboat</i>
32. Number of trips with surf-boat.	<i>Two</i>
33. Number of persons brought ashore with surf-boat.	<i>Four (4)</i>
34. Was small boat used?	<i>No</i>
35. Number of trips with small boat.	<i>None</i>
36. Number of persons brought ashore with small-boat.	<i>None</i>

* Supply model or make of boat.
** Supply model or make of boat.

S-100

59. Amount of damage, if saved.
60. Estimated value of cargo saved, and its condition.
61. Estimated value of cargo lost.
62. Amount of insurance on vessel.
63. Amount of insurance on cargo.
64. Number of persons sheltered at station, how long, and total number of meals furnished.
65. Number and names of persons resuscitated from apparent death by drowning or exposure to cold.

59. *None*
60. *All cargo all saved but sold for damage*
61. *About \$1200 worth lost*
62. *Two thousand five hundred*
63. *None*
64. *None*
65. *None*

66. Number of persons found after death and cared for.
67. Remarks—All particulars not included in the above list will be here stated, giving especially the nature of the service given by the Life-Saving Service; and if the wreck occurred at a time when the crew was not employed at the station, give the name of the boatman who rendered assistance, using additional sheets of paper if necessary. Whenever the circumstances make it necessary to transport the boat or apparel to or from the scene of disaster that fact should be noted, giving the name of the person from whom the team was hired.

The fishing Schooner Polar Wave stranded during a thick fog and rain on Clay Head at 1:00 P.M. on May 23, 1891. She was discovered in about 25 minutes by Surfman No. 4 Charles R. Sprague who immediately burned his Castor Signal and returned to the station. On account of regular surf boat being overhauled for the summer the Beebe McLellan self bearing surf boat was used. On account of being short one man and not having a proper runway for handling such a heavy boat in soft sand it took much hand work and considerable time was spent in floating her. She leaked badly in the water but ast tanks and had filled by time we had gone two quarters of a mile. However we reached the scene of disaster at 3:30 A.M. In the mean time the vessel had broken and the crew of 17 all told had left her in their boats I landed 4 in the surfboat the others pulled away in the direction of the Harbor and were cared for at the New Shoreham Station. A dory containing a few articles were brought to the station for safe keeping.

DATE OF REPORT:
June 4th, 1891 Edward P. Sisson
Keeper

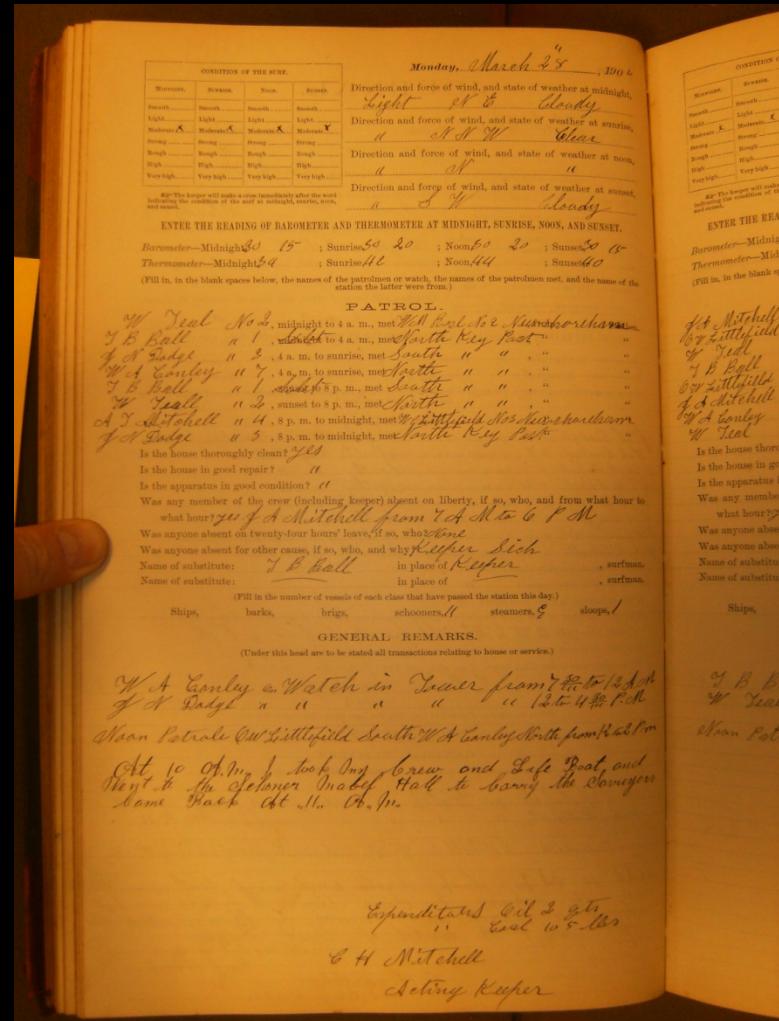
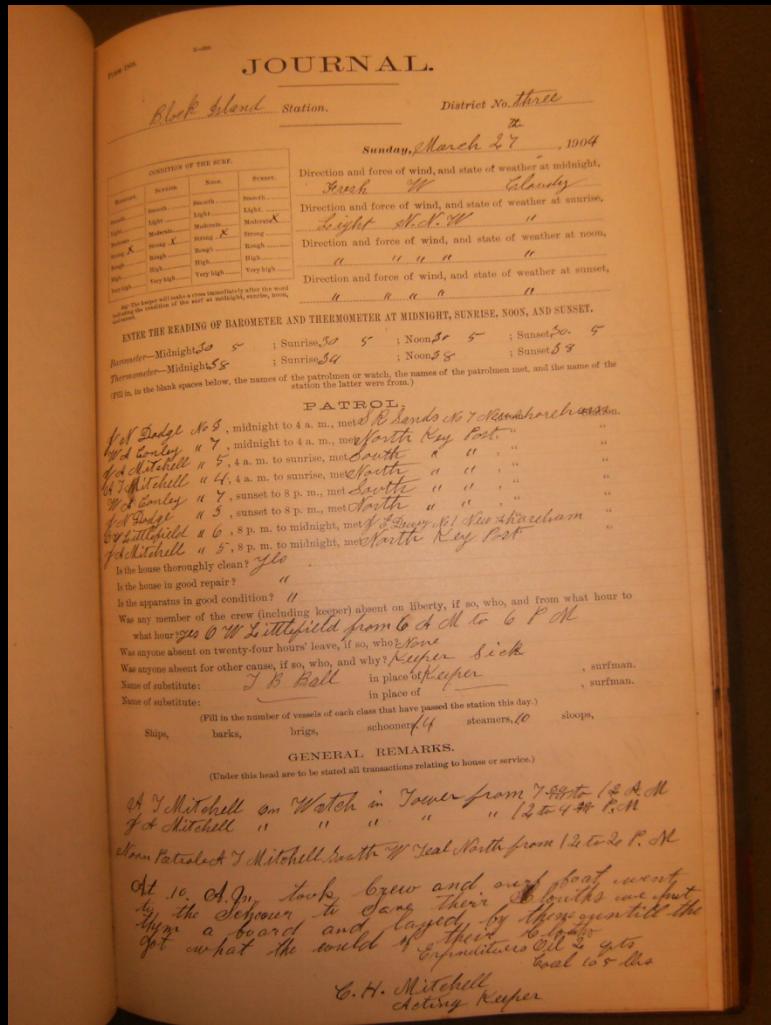
NOTE.—Two copies of the above to be filled up, as directed in paragraph 30 of the Revised Regulations, 1884, and sent to the District Superintendent, who will forward one to the office of the General Superintendent. Copy to be entered upon the Journal.

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US Life Saving Station Wreck Reports, 1874

March 1 st	Tuesday N.W. Moderate Breeze and Clear House ventilated all of Heading and and put up in in good order, and House thoroughly cleaned and washed up and put in good order all of the Metals through Scour and Rinsed in good order. Coal expended 25 lbs of White Lead expended on guard of turpentine expended	Estimate value of cargo about \$1400. Wind weather Wind South West Velocity 10 Time of day and State of Weather and tide about 9 o'clock P.M. time of tide 8 ft
April 1 st	Samuel Allen Keeper of Station No 2 Block Island R. I.	Exact spot wrecked Harbor North whether vessel saved or lost if saved Estimated amount of damage she Received Five hundred Dollars Estimate value of cargo save and its condition cargo save in refers
May 11 th	House ventilated	Refugee got off by Wrecking Company of Block Island and taken to New York A.D.
June 8 th	Station House ventilated	By Contract for one thousand Dollars
July 6 th	Station House ventilated	Samuel Allen. Keeper of Station No 2 Block Island R. I.
	Wreck Report Station No 2 Block Islands R. I. District No 2 Jun 28 th 1874	Superintendent visited the Station Paid of the Keeper all the metals in good order
1	Name of vessel hailing Port and Nationality	Samuel Allen. Keeper of Station No 2 Block Island R. I.
2	Benjamin Calverer Sayers Port N.Y. July 10 th Name of Master and name of owners	Superintendent visited the Station Paid of the Keeper all the metals in good order
3	Capt D. Smart	Samuel Allen. Keeper of Station No 2 Block Island R. I.
4	Rig and tonnage Brig Bording 155 tons	
5	Number of crew on board Seven	
6	Where from and where bound	
7	Brown Philadelphia bound to Boston	
8	Cargo Coal	
9	Estimate value of vessel three thousand Dollars	

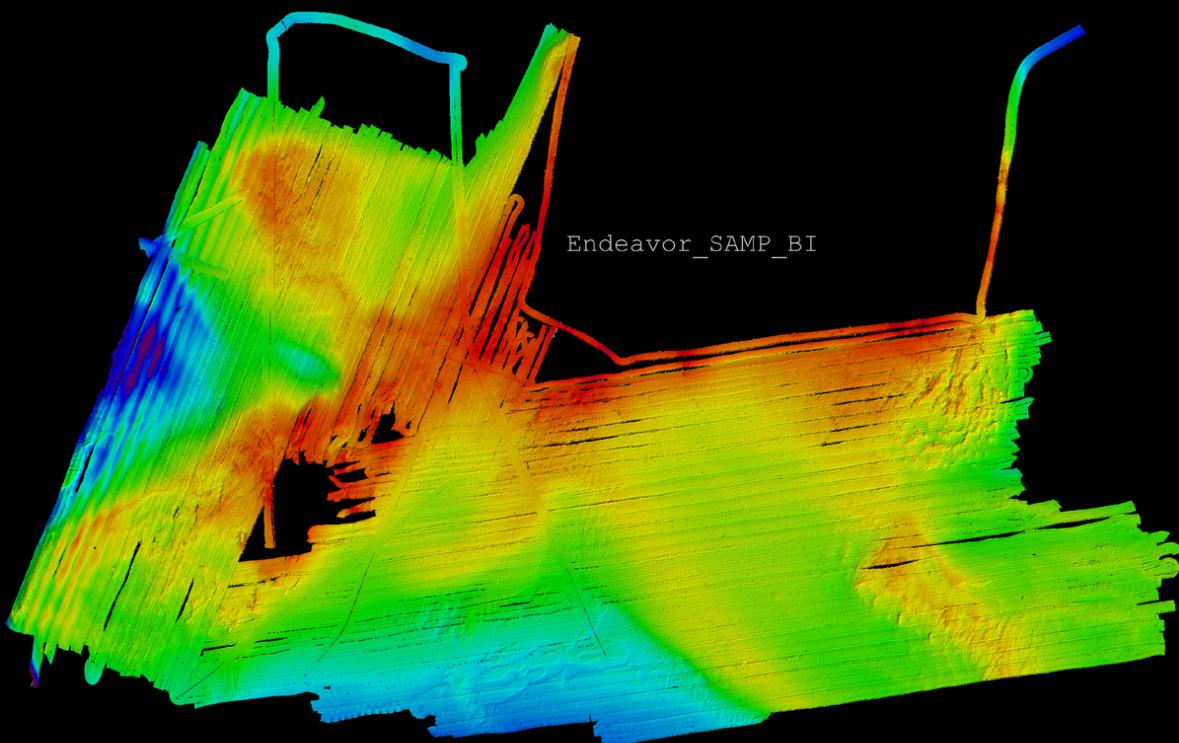
US Life Saving Station Journals



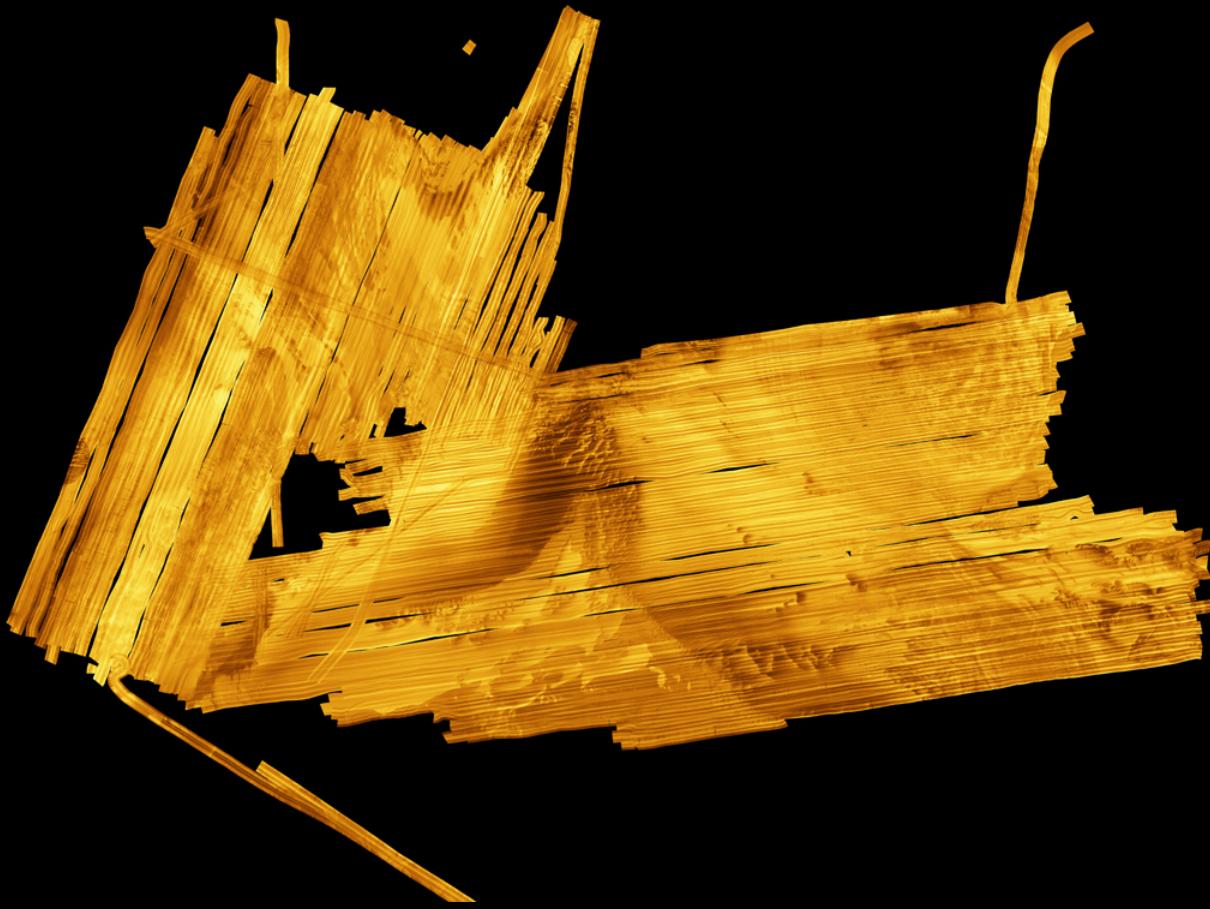
Database of Known and Probable Vessel Losses Near Block Island

- Official State Database
- URI Database (historic research, snag numbers, recreational diver numbers, AWOIS, SAMP geophysical survey)

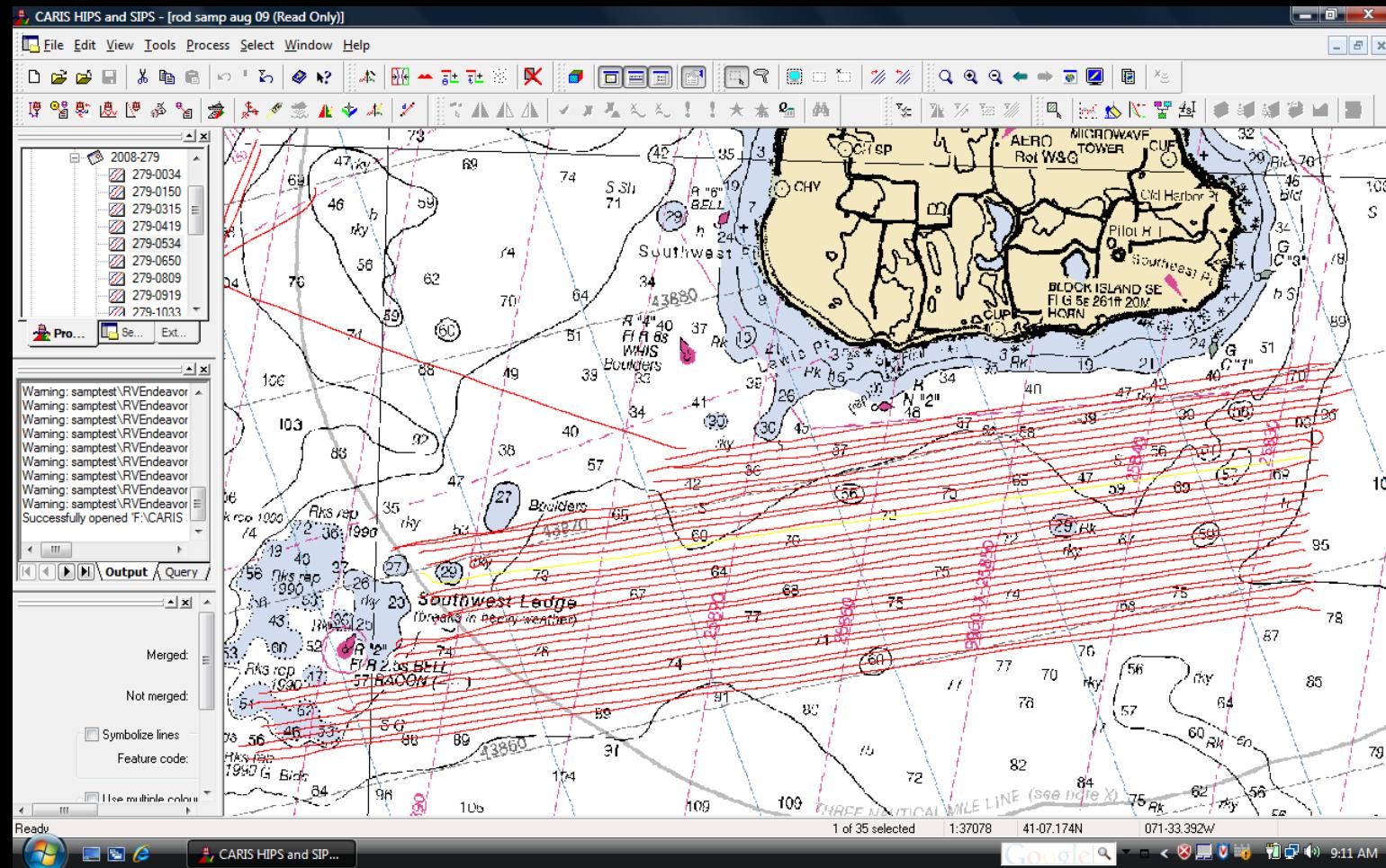
Multibeam Data for State Waters South of Block Island – *Endeavor* Cruise 2008



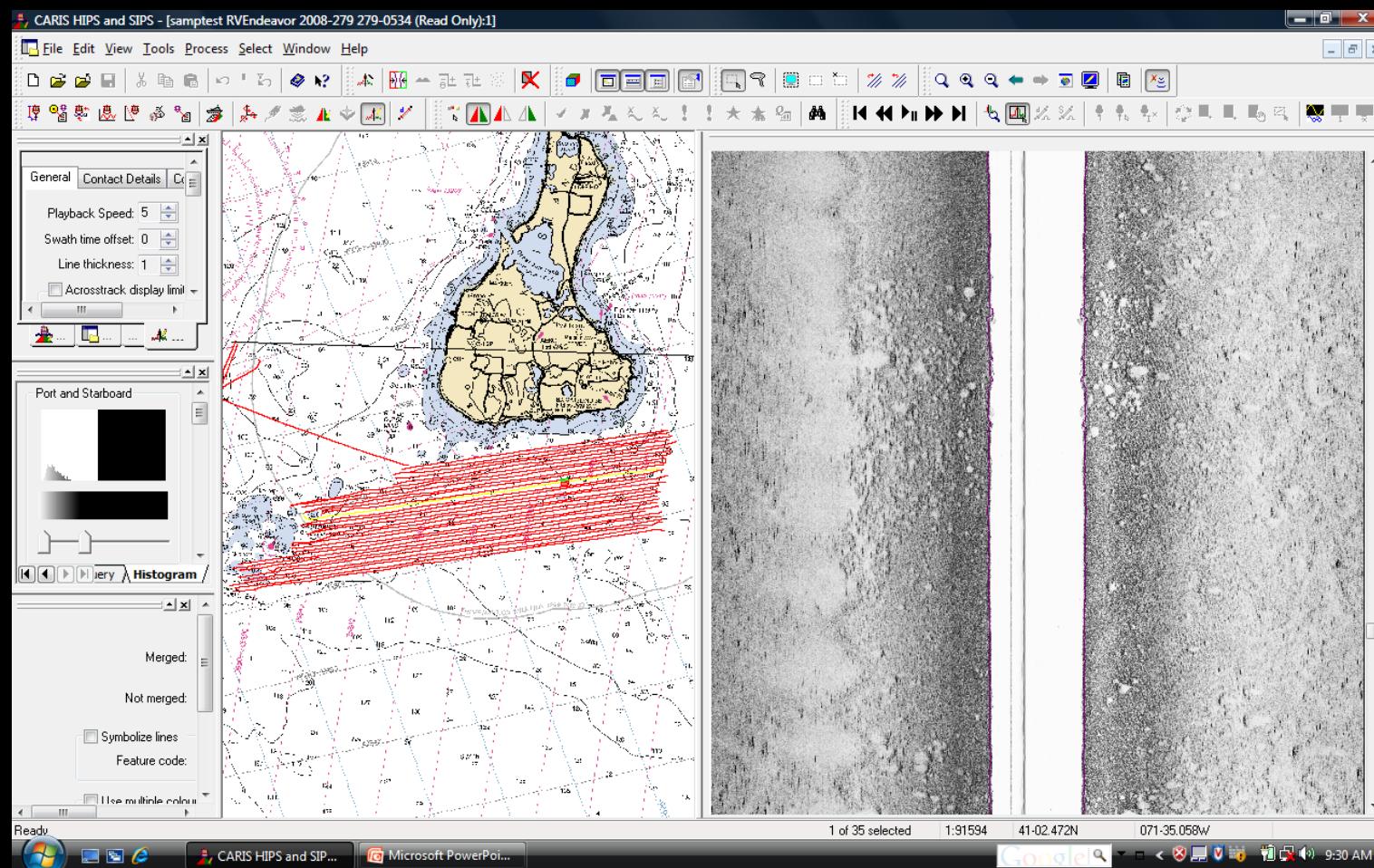
Side Scan Mosaic – *Endeavor* Cruise 2008



Post-Processing Side Scan Data and Target Identification



Post-Processing Side Scan Data and Target Identification



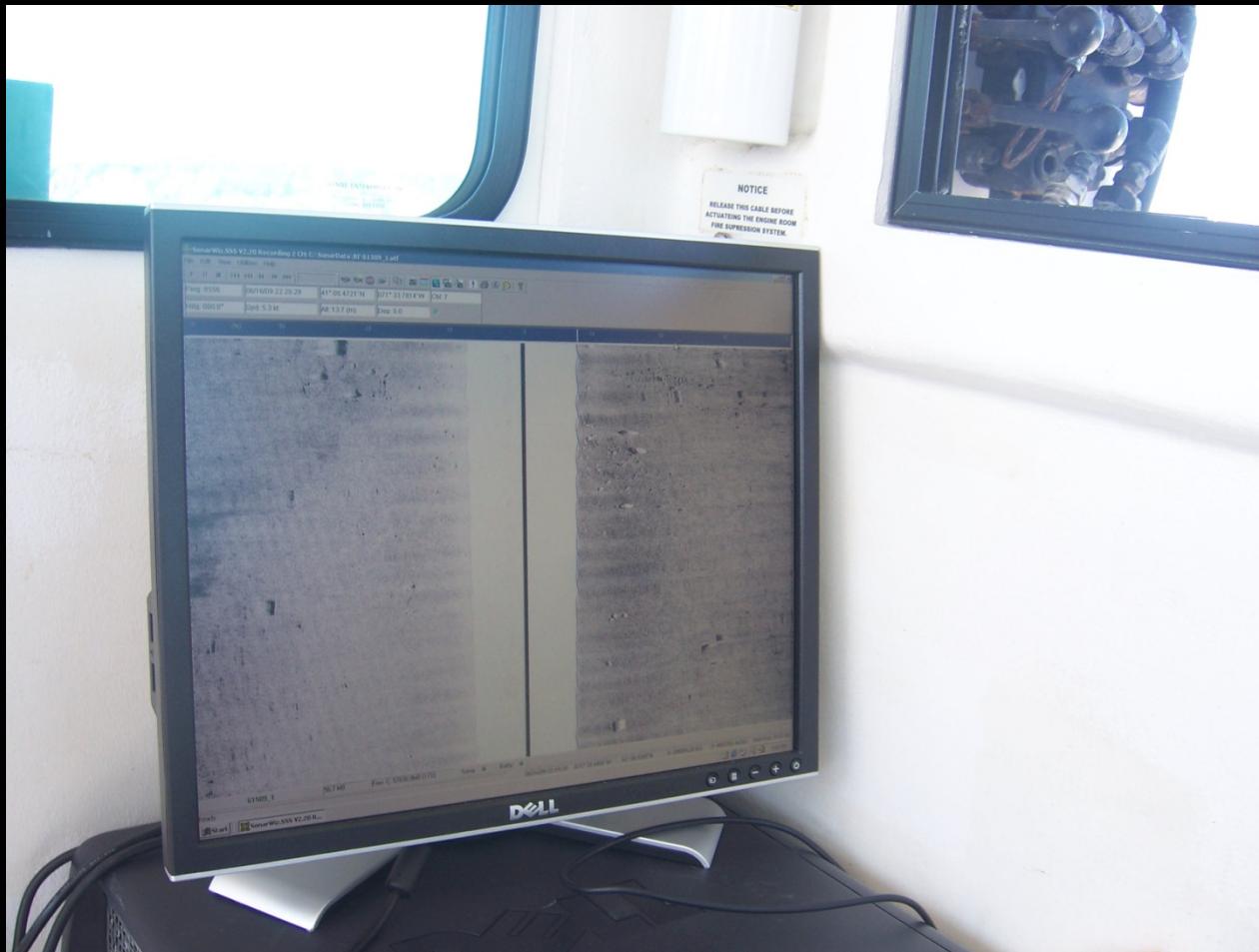
Target Classification

- 1 – Certain (0)
- 2 – Probable (0)
- 3 – Possible (5)
- 4 – Unlikely (24)
- 5 – Conceivable (56)

Groundtruthing and Site Specific Studies (June 2009, August 2009)



Acoustic Reacquisition



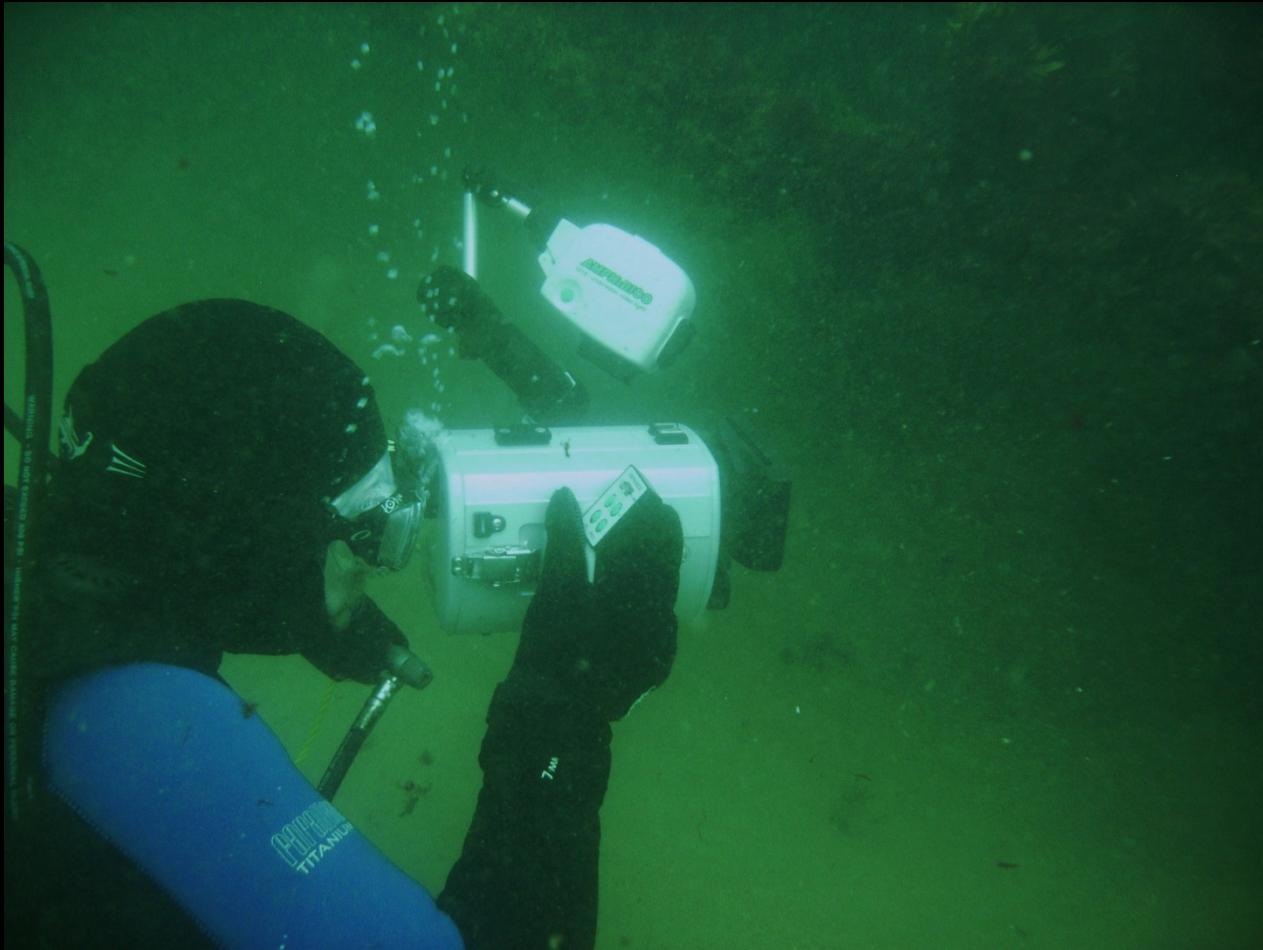
Groundtruthing and Site Assessment



Lightburne, 1939



Photographic and Video Documentation



Evidence of Damage and Looting

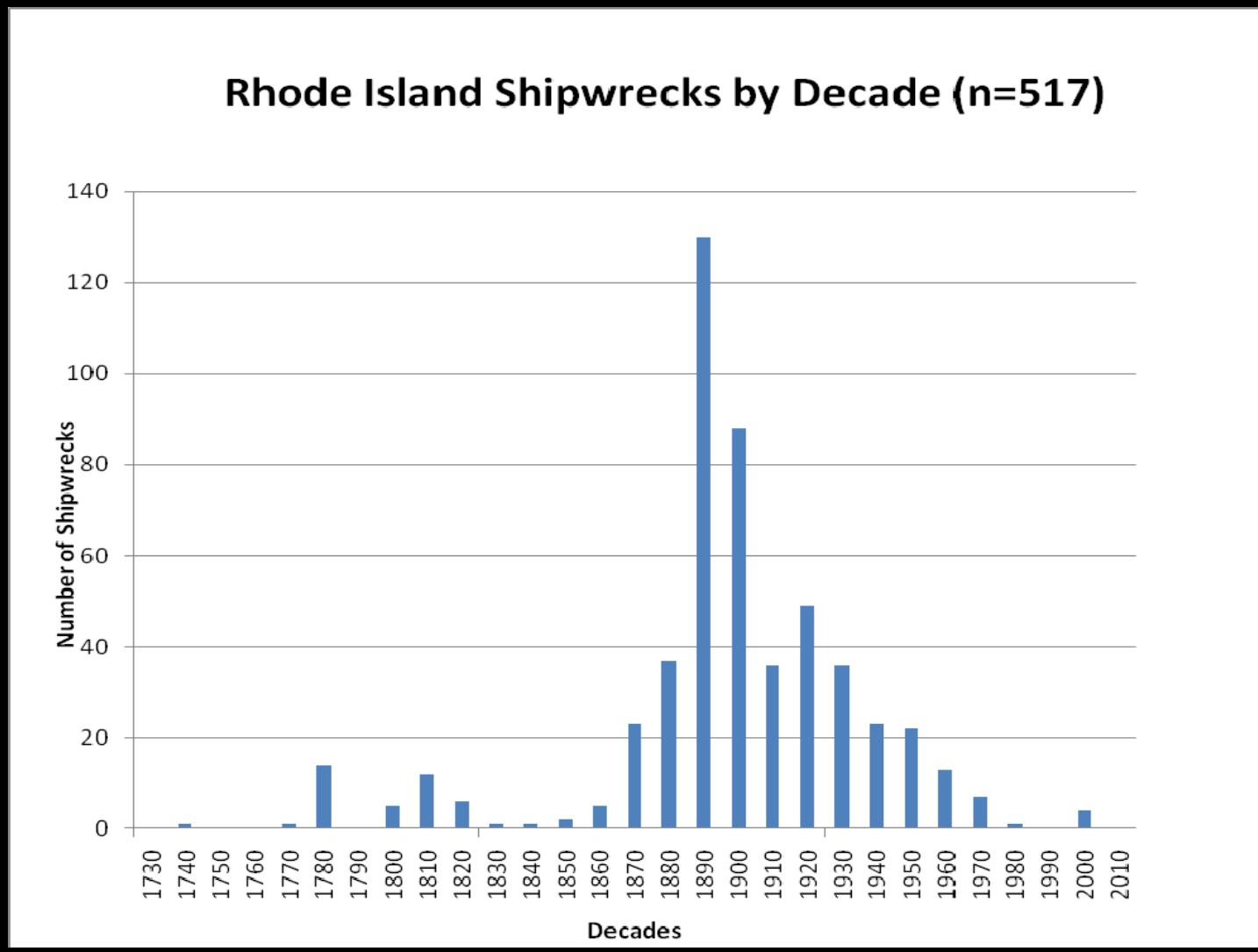


Shoreline Survey



Preliminary Shipwreck Distributions for Block and Rhode Island Sounds

Preliminary Shipwreck Temporal Distribution



Pre-Contact Archaeological Sites

- Certainly exist in Rhode Island waters
- Cutting edge of underwater archaeology
- Requires paleo-archaeological landscape reconstruction
- Requires sub-bottom data and cores
- Requires high resolution survey
- Requires tribal input
- Site testing
- Not practical within Ocean SAMP structure – should be addressed in the EIS