



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT
415 RICHARD JACKSON BOULEVARD, SUITE 411
PANAMA CITY BEACH, FLORIDA 32407

October 10, 2019

Regulatory Division
North Permits Branch
Panama City Permits Section

PUBLIC NOTICE

Permit Application No. SAJ-1993-01520(SP-LSL)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The Jacksonville District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. §403) as described below:

APPLICANT: Ms. Zoe Mansfield
City of St. Marks
788 Port Leon Drive
St. Marks, Florida 32355

WATERWAY AND LOCATION: The project would affect waters of the United States associated with the Gulf of Mexico. The center of the proposed reef site is about 6.7 nautical miles on a direct bearing of 131° from the #1 buoy (green) in the St. Marks River Entrance Channel or 13.7 nautical miles on a direct bearing of 103° from the #4 buoy for the Panacea Channel off the coast of Wakulla County, Florida.

Directions to the site are as follows: The center of the proposed reef site is about 6.7 nautical miles on a direct bearing of 131° from the #1 buoy (green) in the St. Marks River Entrance Channel or 13.7 nautical miles on a direct bearing of 103° from the #4 buoy for the Panacea Channel.

APPROXIMATE CENTRAL COORDINATES:

	Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	Centroid	29.95209	-84.08052
2	Northeast Corner	29.95418	-84.07813
3	Southeast Corner	29.95000	-84.07813
4	Southwest Corner	29.95000	-84.08292
5	Northwest Corner	29.95418	-84.08292

PROJECT PURPOSE:

Basic: Artificial reef development.

Overall: To re-authorize and expand an existing artificial reef with multiple deployments of approved materials in order to enhance the aquatic environment within the offshore waters of the Gulf of Mexico, south of Wakulla County, Florida.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The existing artificial reef site was described as a small 500 by 500 feet square. Bottom sediments consisted of a coarse, light brown color with small pieces of shell throughout. No seagrasses were located within the reef site. There have been 3 major deployments of reef materials on the Dog Ballard Artificial Reef site in 1994 and 1996. The first deployment of this reef site was concrete rubble placed in 1994 under a Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) grant. Another non-grant load of concrete power poles was also placed in 1994. In 1996, Wakulla County received a grant from FDEP for new reef construction of the cube reef. The previous permitted area is 500 by 500 square feet and the proposed area is ¼ nautical mile on each side encompassing 52 acres of seafloor. Approximate depths within the proposed site is -24 relative to Mean Low Low Water.

PROPOSED WORK: This proposed project was previously noticed on April 17, 2019. It is being re-noticed because the applicant changed the location in order to avoid hardbottom from the overall project footprint.

The applicant seeks a 10 year re-authorization and expansion of an artificial reef site known as the Dog Ballard artificial reef. The proposed artificial reef would be ¼ nautical mile by ¼ nautical mile encompassing 52 acres of sand bottom. The proposed navigational clearance requested is -14' Mean Low Low Water. All reef materials would be consistent with the publication *Guidelines for Marine Artificial Reef Materials*, 2nd edition, the National Artificial Reef Plan, the state of Florida Artificial Reef Strategic Plan, and the OAR Artificial Reef Development Plan. Materials would be transported by barge or ship and deployed using a crane and placed in 'patch reefs' at 500' intervals within the permitted area. It is anticipated that at least 4 separate phases of reef deployments would be made over the course of the permit depending on funding and suitable reef material availability. It is proposed that each 'patch reef' consists of about 300 tons of reef materials or 153 cubic yards of mainly concrete depending on the type of materials deployed. For the life of this permit, it is proposed that up to 1,200 tons or 613 cubic yards of reef materials would be deployed on this site. There is a 50' buffer zone area inside the site borders on all sides where no materials would be deployed to ensure all reef materials are deployed within the permit site.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: The Corps is not aware of any known historic properties within the permit area. By copy of this public notice, the Corps is providing information for review. Our final determination relative to historic resource impacts is subject to review by and coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer and those federally recognized tribes with concerns in Florida and the Permit Area.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: The Corps has determined the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect swimming sea turtles, including green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricate*), Kemp's Ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys kempi*),

leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*), Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*), and Smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*). The Corps will request National Marine Fisheries Service concurrence with this determination pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

The Corps has determined, based on the use of *The Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, and the State of Florida Effect Determination Key for the Manatee in Florida (April 2013)*, that the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the West Indian manatee with the inclusion of conditions a, b, c, d, and e of the *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-water Work (2011)*.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT (EFH): This notice initiates consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service on EFH as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act 1996. The proposal would impact approximately 52 acres of unconsolidated bottom (coarse, light brown color with small pieces of shell throughout) utilized by various life stages of species within the following Fisheries Managements Plans (shrimp, reef fish, stone crab and coastal migratory pelagics). Our initial determination is that the proposed action would have a minor adverse impact on EFH or federally managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

NOTE: This public notice is being issued based on information furnished by the applicant. This information has not been verified or evaluated to ensure compliance with laws and regulation governing the regulatory program. The jurisdictional line has been verified by Corps personnel.

AUTHORIZATION FROM OTHER AGENCIES: Water Quality Certification may be required from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and/or one of the state Water Management Districts.

COMMENTS regarding the potential authorization of the work proposed should be submitted in writing to the attention of the District Engineer through the Panama City Permits Section, 415 Richard Jackson Boulevard, Suite 411, Panama City Beach, Florida 32407 within 30 days from the date of this notice.

The decision whether to issue or deny this permit application will be based on the information received from this public notice and the evaluation of the probable impact to the associated wetlands. This is based on an analysis of the applicant's avoidance and minimization efforts for the project, as well as the compensatory mitigation proposed.

QUESTIONS concerning this application should be directed to the project manager, Mrs. Lisa S. Lovvorn, in writing at the Panama City Permits Section, 415 Richard Jackson Boulevard, Suite 411, Panama City Beach, Florida 32407; by electronic mail at lisa.s.lovvorn@usace.army.mil; or, by telephone at (850) 285-9533.

IMPACT ON NATURAL RESOURCES: Coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Marine Fisheries Services, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, environmental groups, and concerned citizens generally yields pertinent environmental information that is instrumental in determining the impact the proposed action will have on the natural resources of the area.

EVALUATION: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including cumulative impacts thereof; among these are conservation, economics, esthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historical properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food, and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will also include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, EPA, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act or the criteria established under authority of Section 102(a) of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972. A permit will be granted unless its issuance is found to be contrary to the public interest.

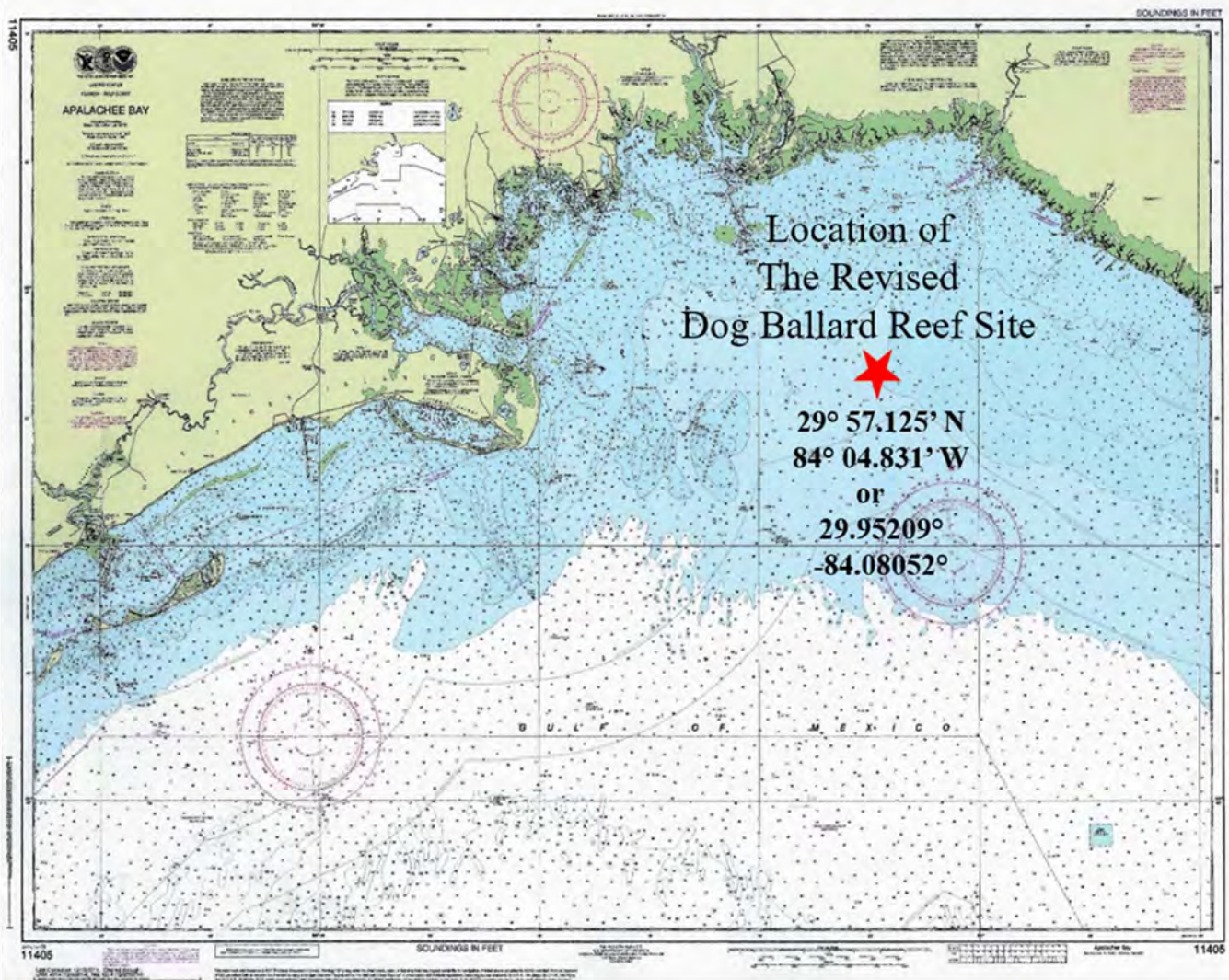
The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other Interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this determination, comments are used to assess impacts to endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT CONSISTENCY: In Florida, the State approval constitutes compliance with the approved Coastal Zone Management Plan. In Puerto Rico, a Coastal Zone Management Consistency Concurrence is required from the Puerto Rico Planning Board. In the Virgin Islands, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources permit constitutes compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Plan.

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC HEARING: Any person may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within the designated comment period of the notice and must state the specific reasons for requesting the public hearing.

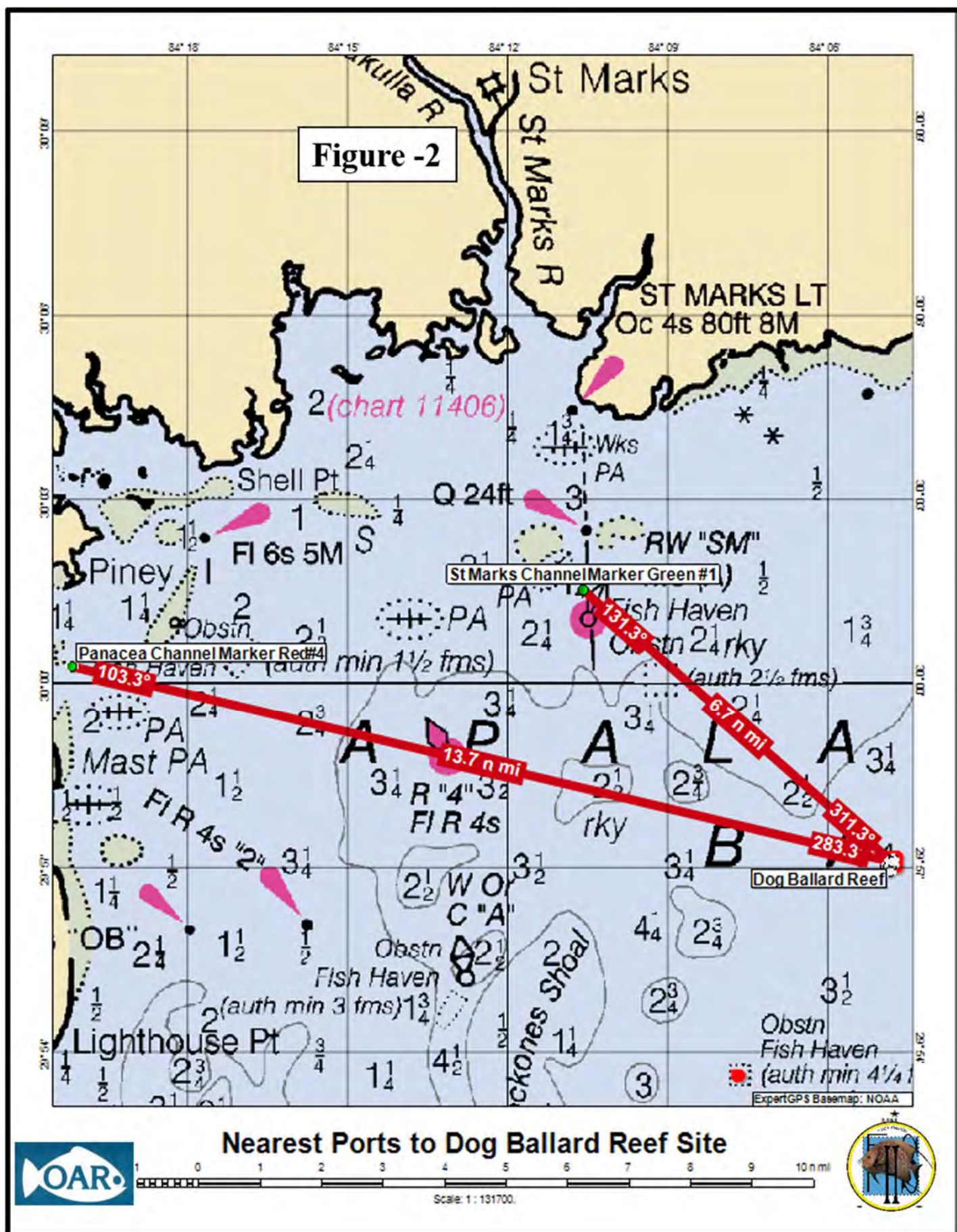
Figures

Figure -1



NOAA Nautical Chart 11405
Apalachee Bay (12/27/2014)





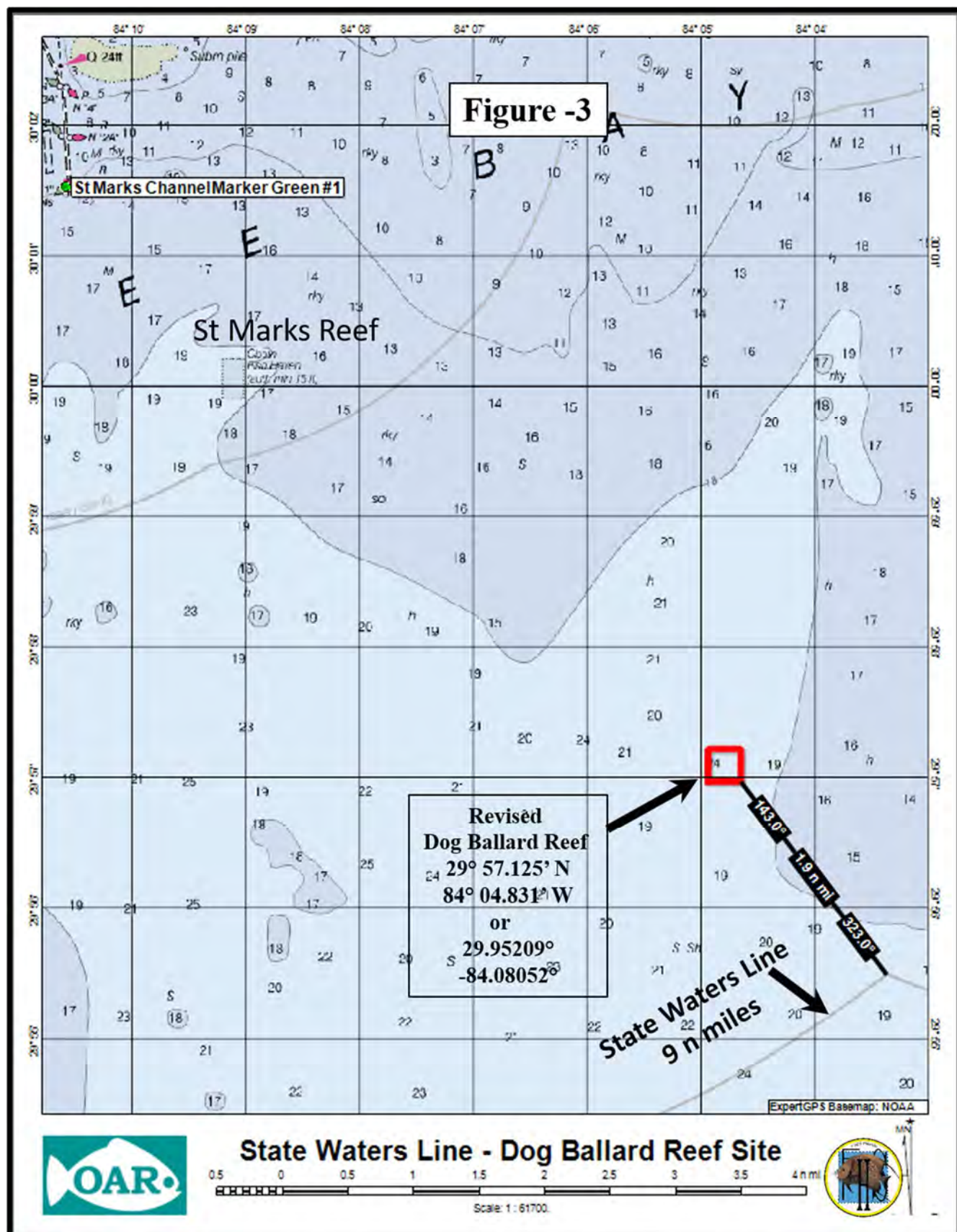


Figure -4

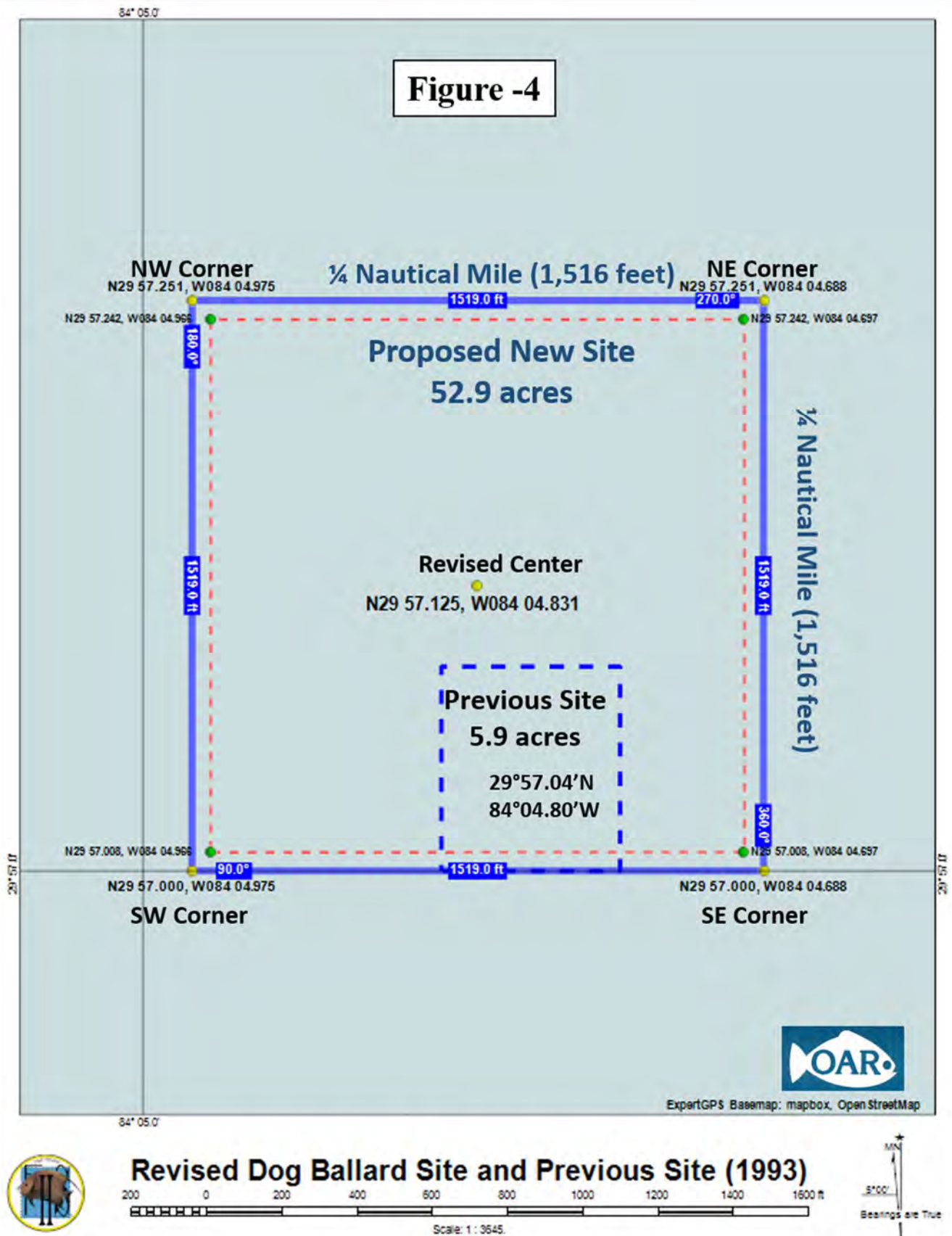
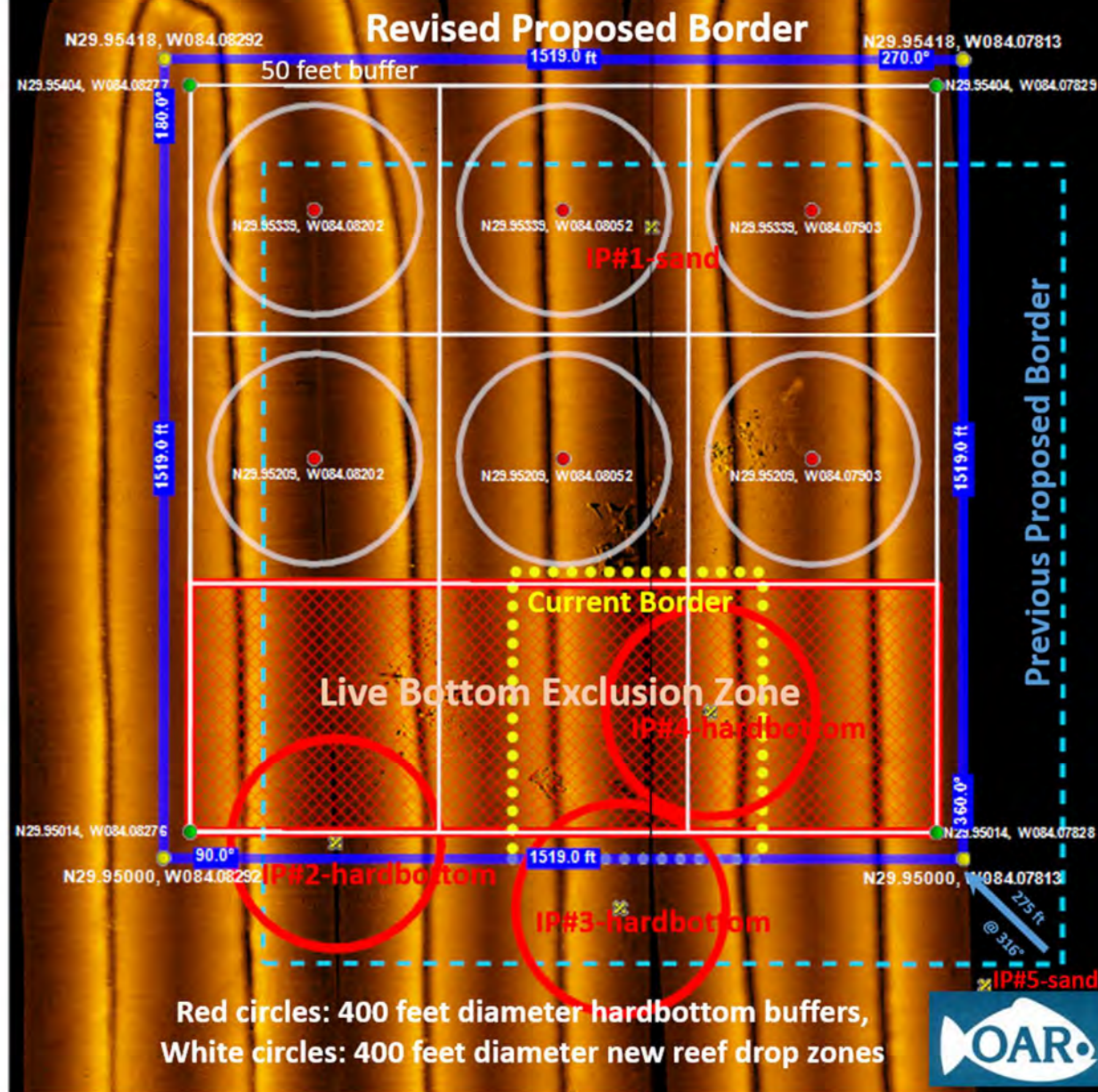


Figure -5

**Proposed shift in permitted site to the NW
based on 8/11/2019 OAR dive assessment**



Red circles: 400 feet diameter **hardbottom** buffers,
White circles: 400 feet diameter new reef drop zones



Dog Ballard Proposed Reefs - Revised 8/29/2019

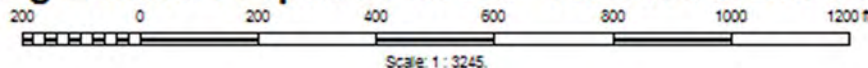
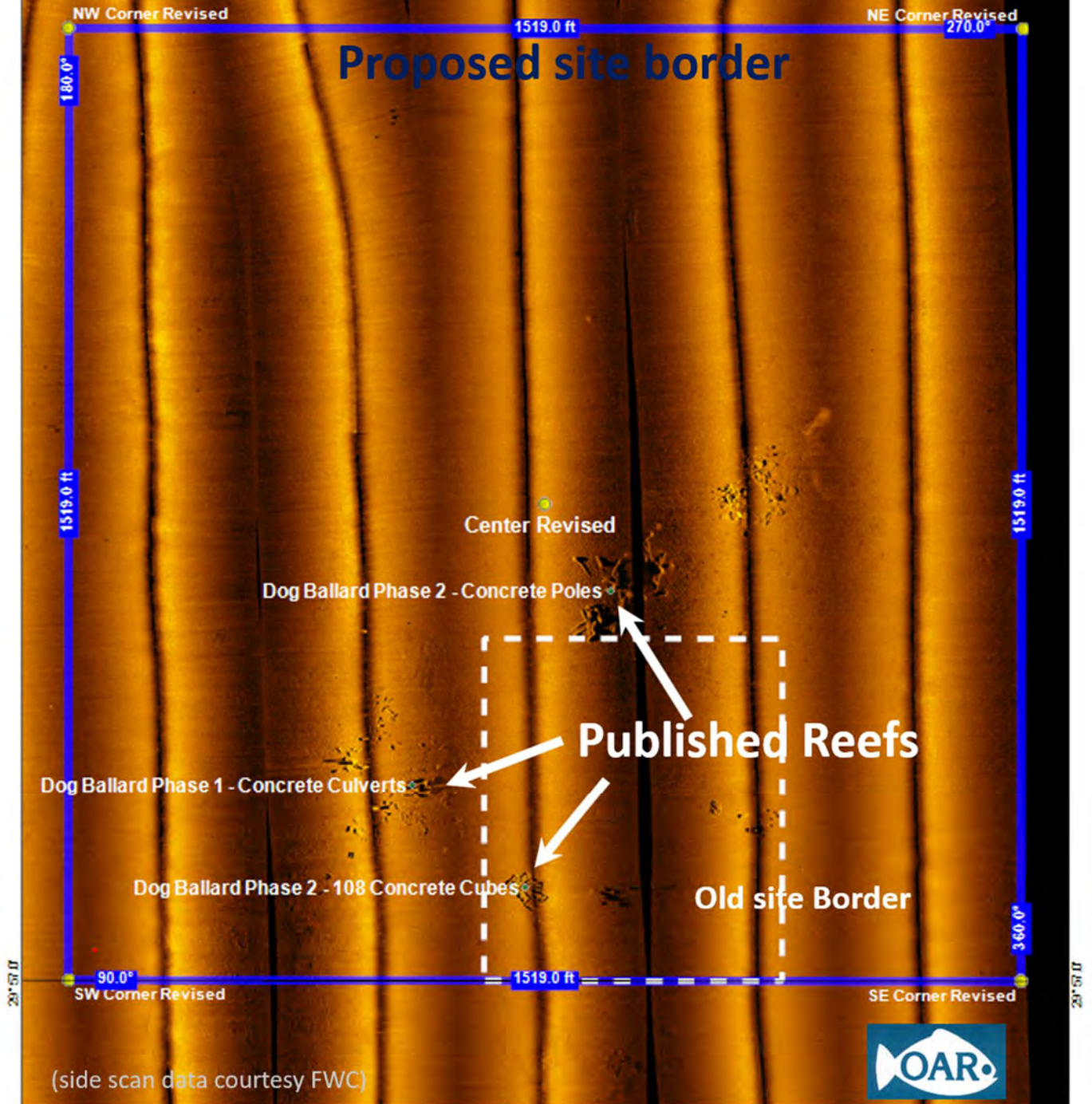


Figure -6



Revised Dog Ballard Side Scan Map with Existing Materials

100 0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 1100 ft

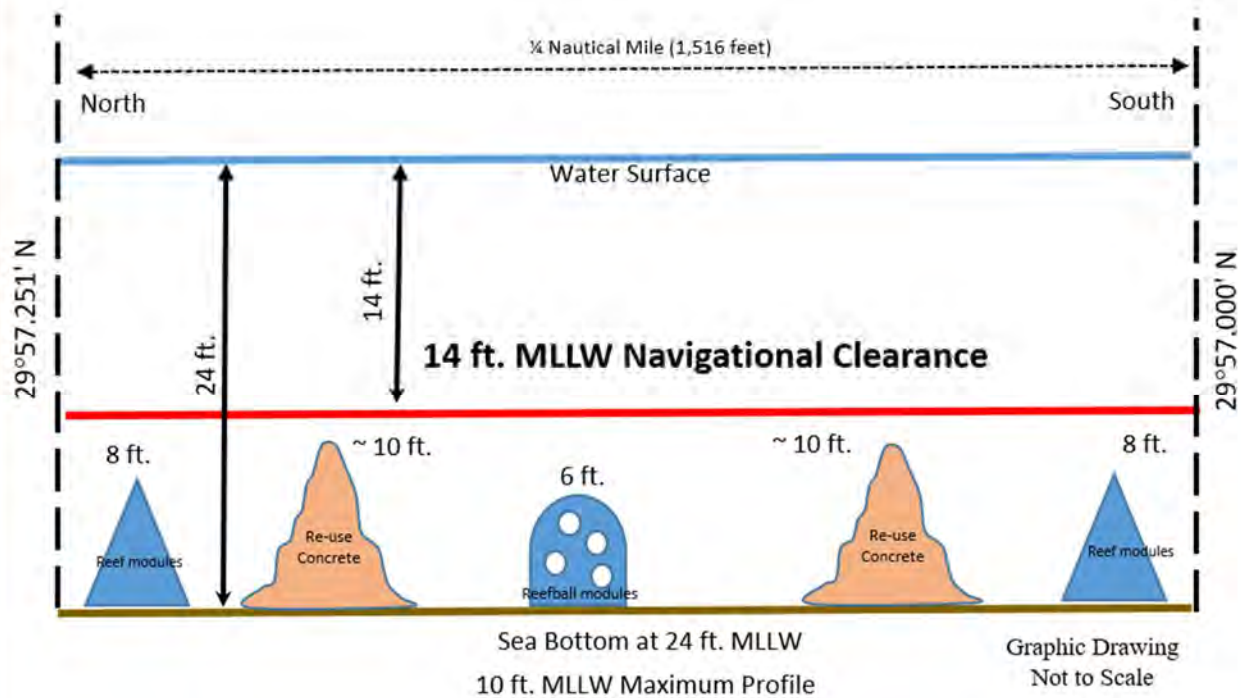
0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 1100 ft

Scale: 1 : 2500.



Figure - 7

**Dog Ballard Artificial Reef
Graphical Cross Section Drawing
14 feet Navigational Clearance**



**Dog Ballard Reef Site
Cross Section Drawing**



Figure -8



Reefballs



Limestone Rock



Walter Florida Limestone Reefs



Walter Grouper/Ecosystem Reefs



Concrete Culverts



Walter EcoSystem Reefs



Dog Ballard Reef Site
Examples of possible
artificial reef materials

