

Commercial Fisheries and Fish Habitats - Past

Map background

Concerns over the resilience of today's fisheries prompted the creation of this map, which provides some insight into local changes that have occurred over the last thirty years. Generally, there is little documentation about long-term fishery trends at the bay scale. Neither this map nor Map 15 (Commercial Fisheries and Aquaculture - Present) document every fishery occurring in the bay at a particular point in time. In fact, this map does not show past lobster grounds. (Local fishermen, however, noted that thirty years ago the lobster fishery occupied the whole bay, although the density of gear was lower.)

The accuracy of the information shown on this map varies between fisheries. Known for certain is the implementation of the 1995 moratorium on the Medomak River alewife harvest. Similarly, the locations of former spawning grounds for cod and haddock have been well researched and reviewed. Uncertainty about the methodologies used to gather the 1970's data on fishing grounds, suggests that this material is reasonably correct but far from perfect. Those consulted knew of no current herring fishery in this bay although in the 1970's it was an active component of the local economy. The precise year that the urchin fishery left the bay is also unknown, but it was quite active in the 1980's and today is virtually absent. The wild blue mussel harvest was said by local fishermen to have been relatively strong a decade or more ago but weaker nowadays due to competition from farmed product (which may account for the absence of blue mussel grounds on Map 15). Fishermen also noted that quahogs, which they characterized as numerous locally, can no longer be legally harvested from the bay due to concerns about their regional population status.

Not all of the fisheries shown on this map have been lost. Worming, clamming, shrimping, and scalloping still take place in the bay. When comparing past to current grounds one might notice shifts in the location of these fisheries. It is important to remember that differences may be a result of how data was collected or presented.

Few websites have information about the history of local fisheries. Aspects of the stories of lobsters, herring, and alewives are provided by the Gulf of Maine Aquarium (www.gma.org/). These three species as well as many others are described by the Maine Dept. of Marine Resources at: www.maine.gov/dmr/rm/speciesinformation.htm. Articles on lost spawning grounds can be downloaded from the Penobscot East Resource Center's website at: www.penobscoteast.org/ames_research.asp.

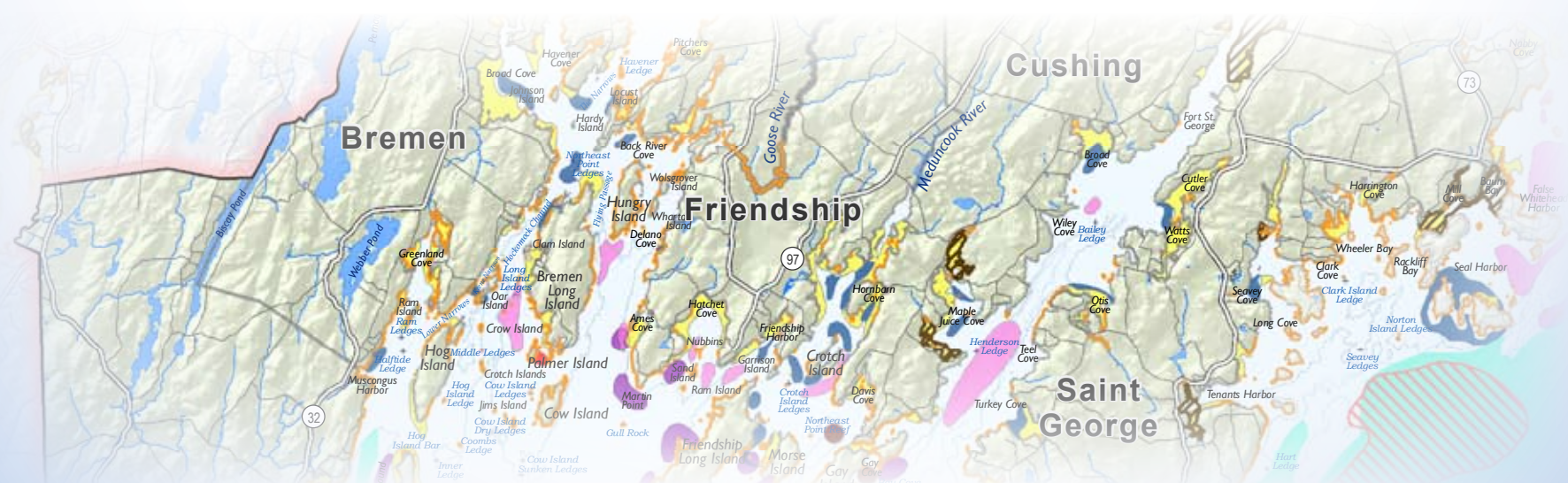
Legend detail

Fisheries: Locations or grounds where fishing activity was present for a particular species as of the date noted.

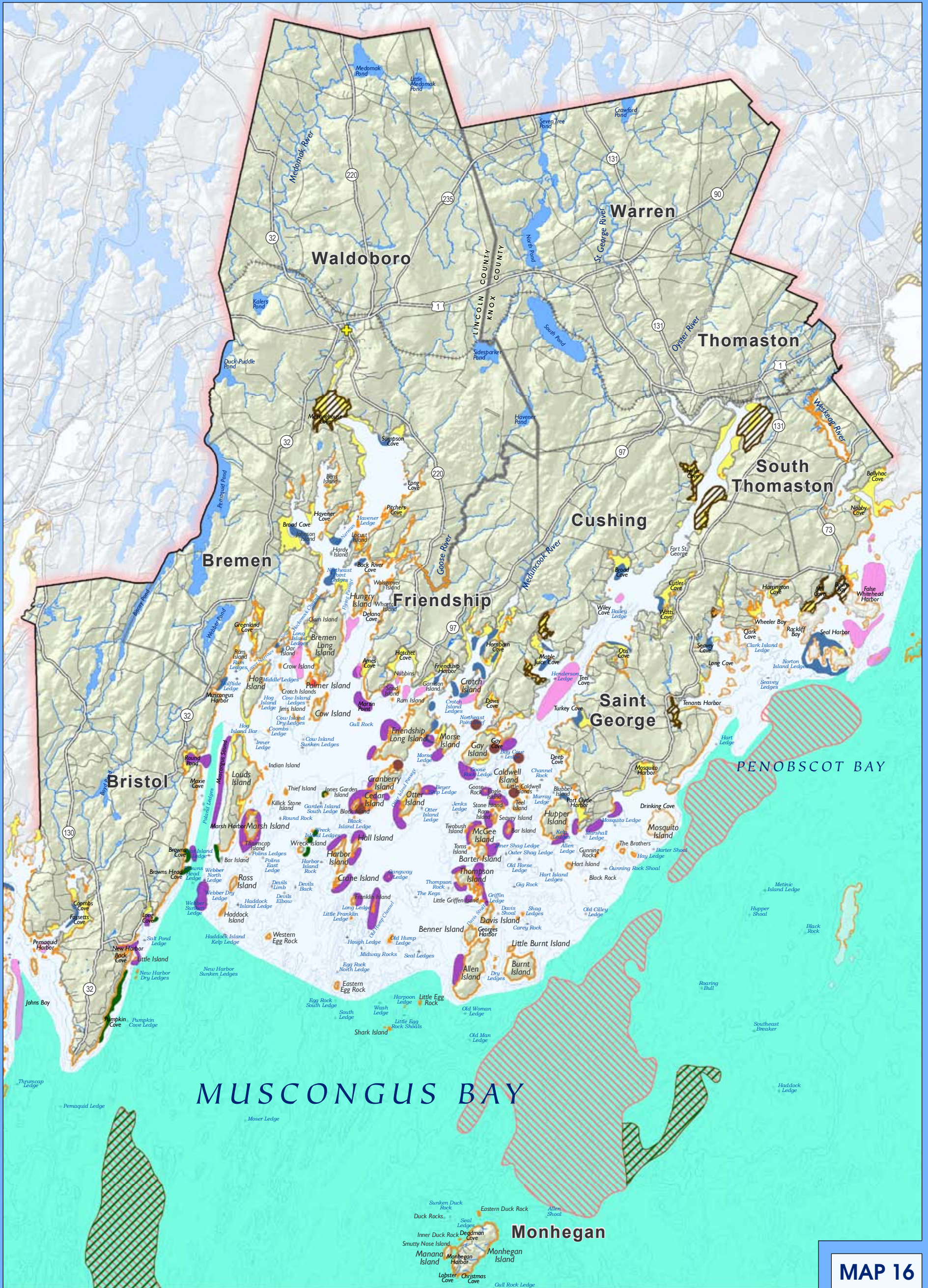
Former productive spawning grounds: Areas which once supported spawning activity for a particular species. These grounds began to decline with the arrival of more efficient fishing gear in the early 20th century. They have had no significant spawning activity and supported no targeted fishing activity since their collapse.

Data sources

Features	Information Source	Digital Data Source
Alewife (as of 1995)	Quebec-Labrador Foundation-Marine Program (in consultation with the Lloyd Davis Trust)	Center for Community GIS http://www.community-gis.org
Atlantic herring weir (as of 1977), Atlantic herring (as of 1977), Irish moss (as of 1977), Northern shrimp (as of 1977)	Maine State Planning Office (<i>Maine Coastal Inventory</i> , 1977, Fish and Wildlife Series 1 and 2, Maps 2-1, 5-1, and 5-3.)	Center for Community GIS http://www.community-gis.org
Bloodworm (as of 1977) Blue mussel (as of 1977), Ocean quahog (as of 1977), Sea scallop (as of 1977), Soft-shell clam (as of 1977)	Maine Dept. of Marine Resources (Fefer, Stewart I. and Schettig, Patricia A. (1980) <i>An Ecological Characterization of Coastal Maine</i> . FWS/OBS-80/29. USDOJ, USFWS. 6 Volumes including maps.)	Maine Office of GIS (WORM, SHELL) http://apollo.ogis.state.me.us/catalog/
Green sea urchin (as of late 1980s to early 1990s)	Quebec-Labrador Foundation-Marine Program (in consultation with former commercial fishermen)	Center for Community GIS http://www.community-gis.org
Formerly productive spawning grounds	Penobscot East Resource Center	Penobscot East Resource Center http://www.penobscoteast.org/ames_research.asp



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MAP 16

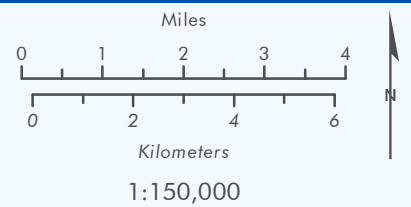
Fisheries

- + Alewife (as of 1995)
- Atlantic herring weir (as of 1977)
- Atlantic herring (as of 1977)
- ▨ Bloodworm (as of 1977)
- Blue mussel (as of 1977)
- Green sea urchin (as of late 1980's to early 1990's)

- Irish moss (as of 1977)
- Northern shrimp (as of 1977)
- Ocean quahog (as of 1977)
- Sea scallop (as of 1977)
- Soft-shell clam (as of 1977)

Formerly productive spawning grounds

- ▨ Atlantic cod (collapsed 1987)
- ▨ Haddock (collapsed 1966)



Digital Data Sources: Center for Community GIS, Maine Office of GIS, Penobscot East Resource Center

Map created by: QLF-Center for Community GIS, 2008