

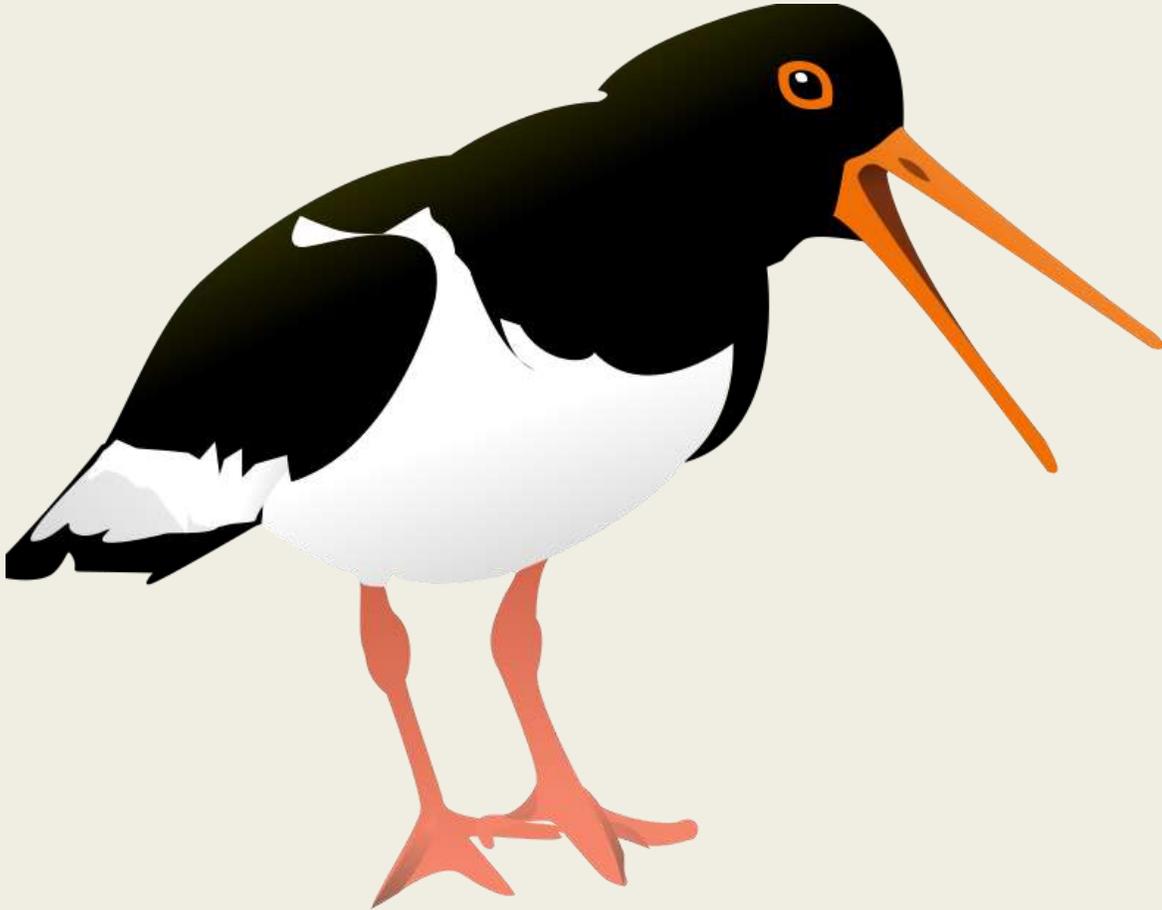
# Restoration Projects on Massachusetts Coastal Islands: Updates from the 2025 Season



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# Overview



- Snake Island Restoration Updates
- Dead Neck Sampson's Island Restoration Updates
- Introduction to Button Island and Start of Restoration Efforts

# Snake Island, Winthrop

- Northernmost island in the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area
- 3 acres; lagoon; extensive mudflats
- Eastern side is forested; *Phragmites*
- West side is coarse sand, pebbles, shells, cobble
- Vegetated berm with bush honeysuckle, goldenrod, mugwort, multiflora rose, rugosa rose, sea rocket, sumac, and sweet clover.
- Monitored by Mass Audubon, owned by the Town of Winthrop



# Vegetation Removal Areas



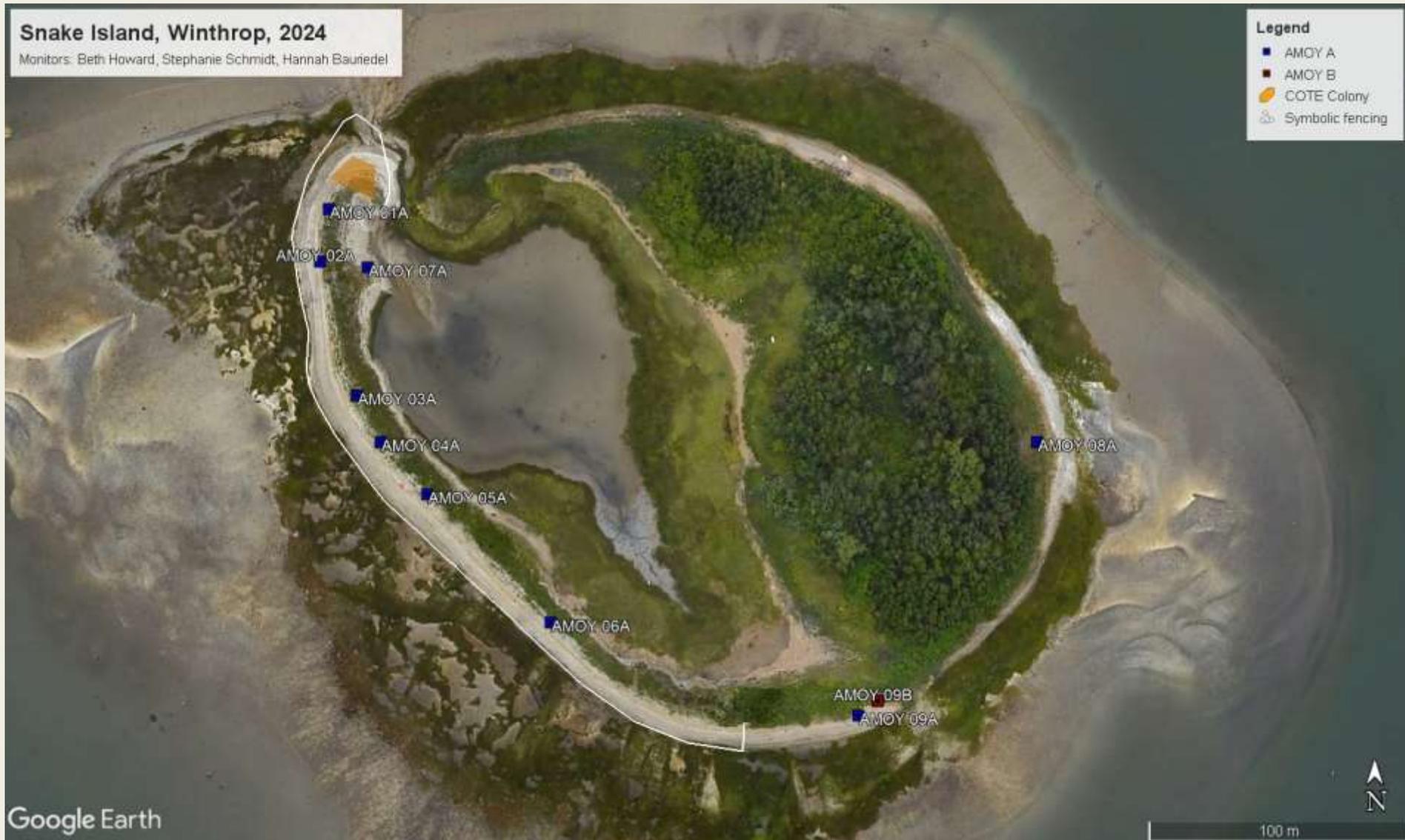
- Small-scale selective vegetation removal in specific windows
- Target invasive species: mugwort, sweet clover, *Phragmites*, multiflora Rose, rugosa Rose
- Partnership between Town of Winthrop, Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park and Mass Audubon



# AMOY Nest Locations Pre-Restoration



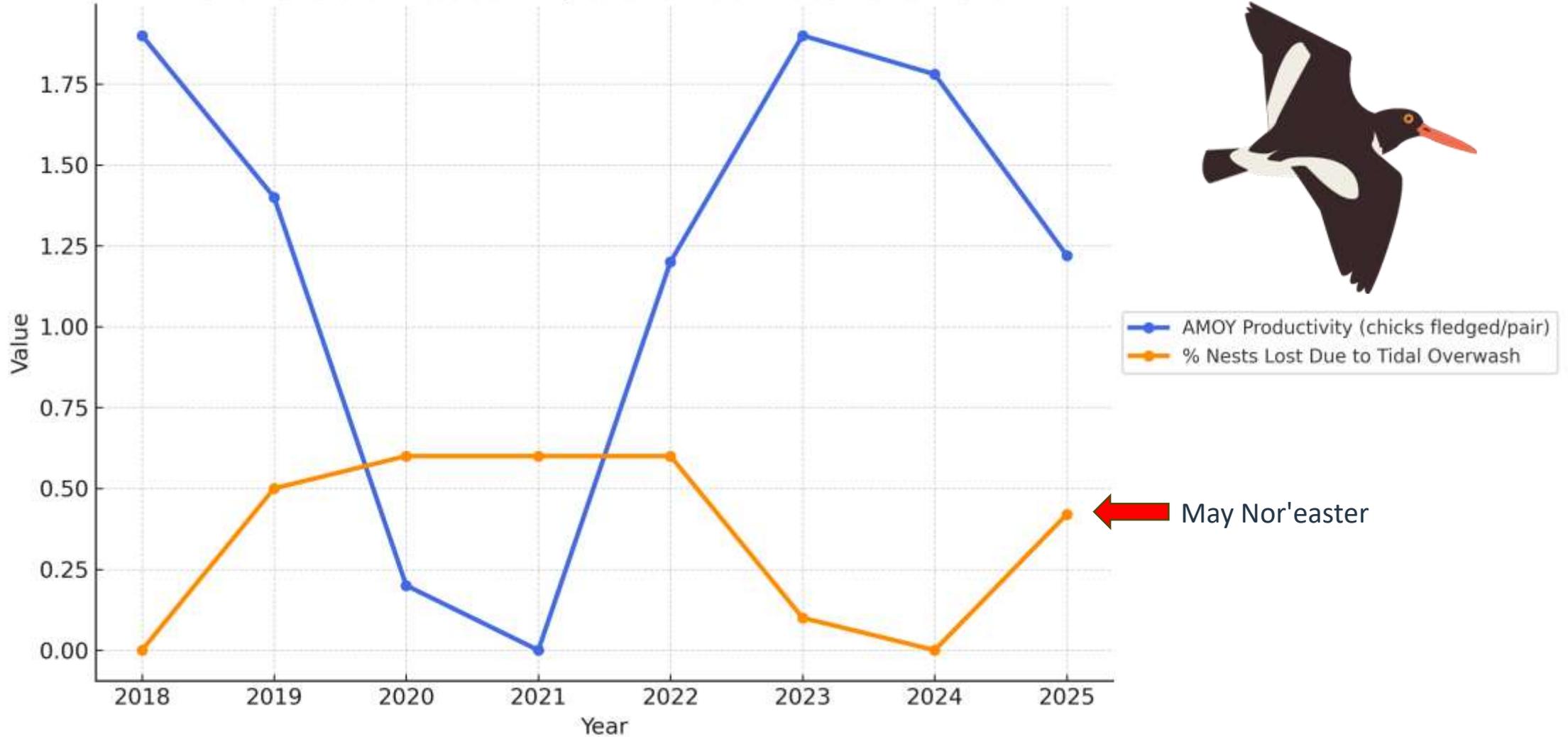
# Nest Locations With Restoration - 2024



# Nest Locations With Restoration - 2025



## Snake Island Productivity & Overwash Loss 2018-2025



● AMOY Productivity (chicks fledged/pair)  
● % Nests Lost Due to Tidal Overwash

← May Nor'easter

2023 Productivity: 1.88

15 chicks fledged

2024 Productivity: 1.67

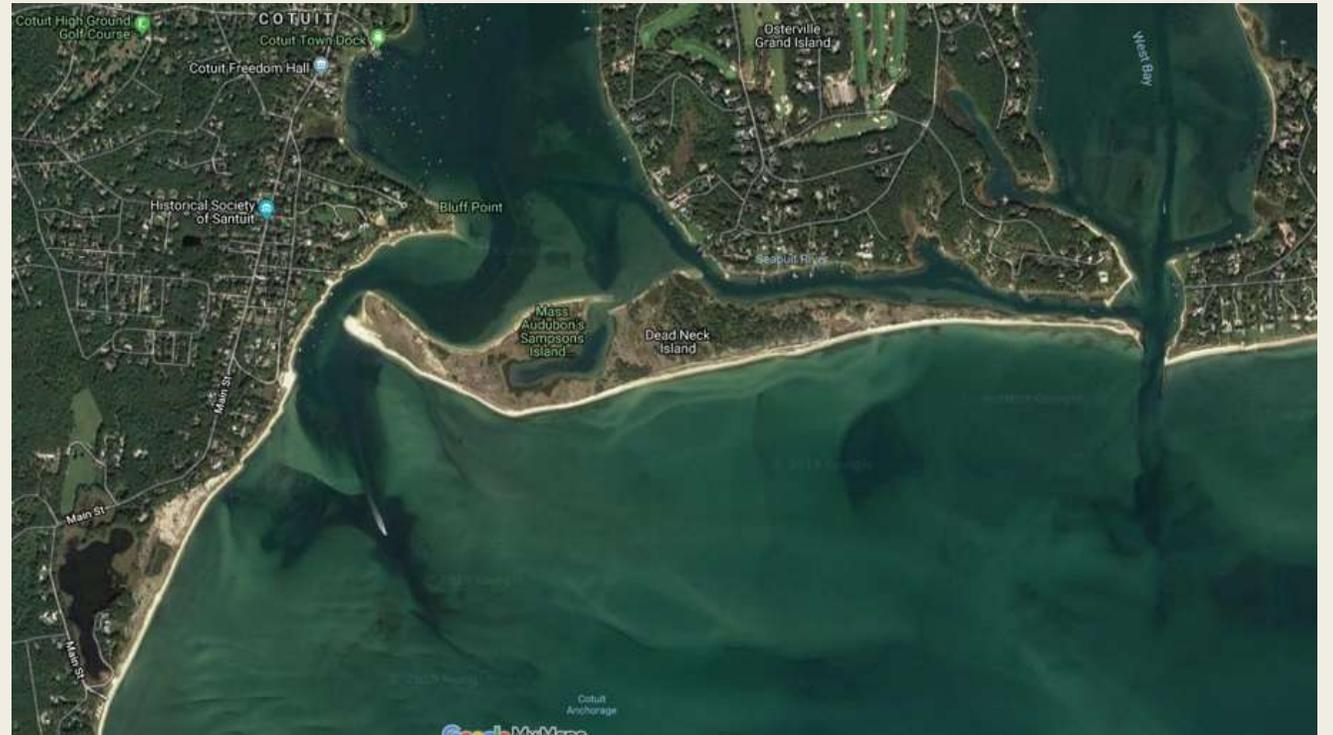
15 chicks fledged

2025 Productivity: 1.22

11 chicks fledged despite Nor'easter delay

# Dead Neck Sampsons Island, Cotuit

- Barrier island located in Cotuit/Osterville, MA on Cape Cod
- Co-managed and owned by Mass Audubon and Barnstable Clean Water Coalition
- Approximately 117 acres
- Formal monitoring for nesting shorebirds began in 1985 on DNSI



# Multi-Year DNSI Restoration



# Multi-Year DNSI Restoration

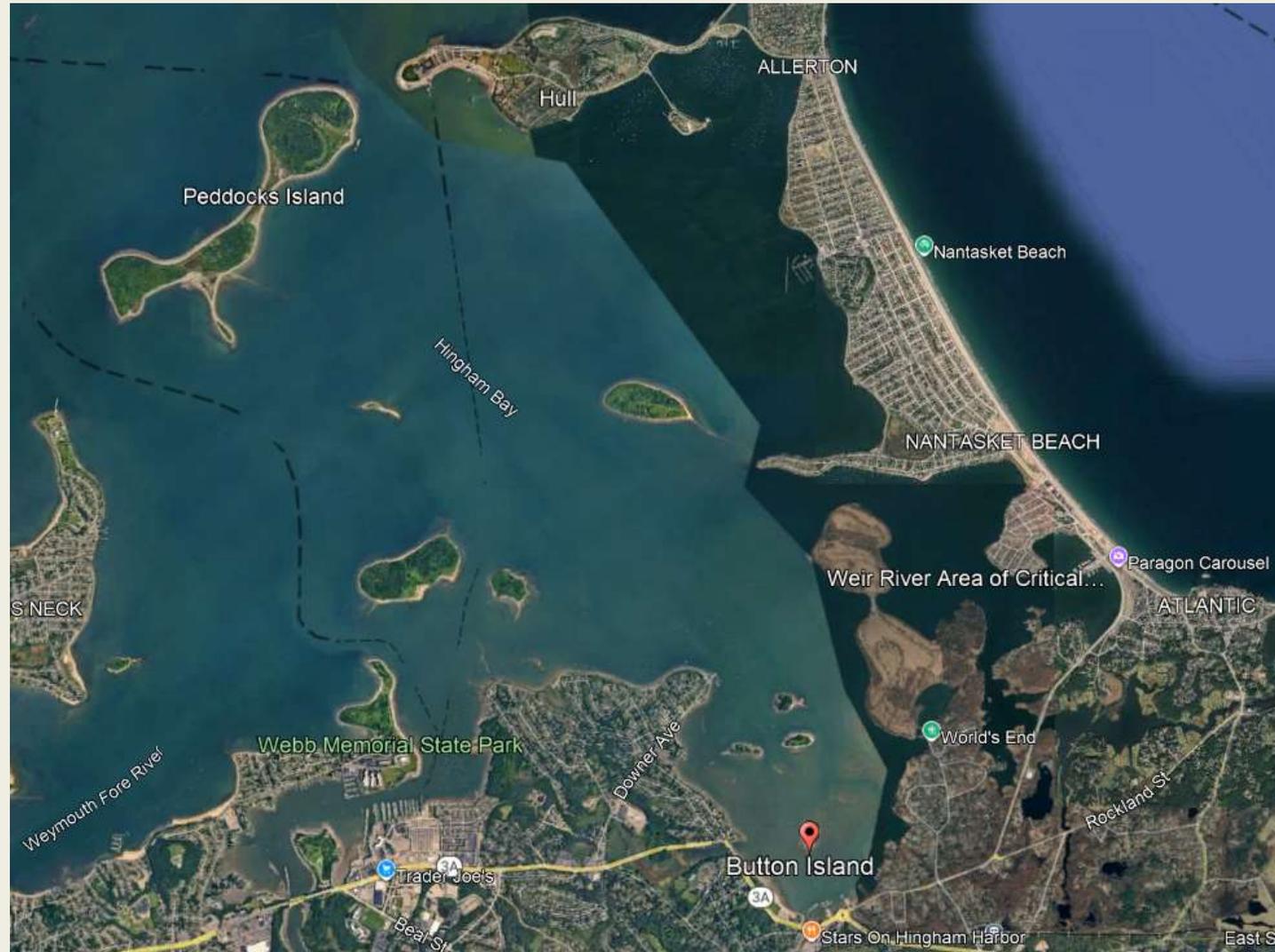


# AMOY Nesting w/ Restoration

- 2022- 1<sup>st</sup> successful AMOY fledging in over 17 years
  - 1 pair fledged full brood of 3 chicks
  - Nested on Western restoration area
- 2023-2025- 1-2 pairs nested
  - Primarily nesting on restoration areas
  - Mixed productivity – coyote predation
    - 5 fledglings in 2023 (2 pairs)
    - 0 in 2024 (1 pair)
    - 1 in 2025 (2 pairs)
- Pair attempted to nest in 2019
  - Predated by coyote



# Button Island, Hingham



- Located in Hingham Harbor south of World's End and Nantasket Beach
- Owned and managed by Town of Hingham
- MAS covers shorebird and wading bird monitoring
- Extensive invasive Mugwort and White Sweet Clover
- 57% of nest attempts overwashed in 2024
  - Pairs pushed closer to tide line

# Proposed Restoration

- MAS applied through Town of Hingham Conservation Commission to remove 270 square feet of invasive vegetation by hand on the south side of the island



# 2025 Season

- Vegetation removal occurred in mid-March
- 4 pairs nested in 2025 with .5 chicks fledged/pair
  - Productivity still limited by overwash



# Takeaways

- Small-scale, targeted vegetation removal can have a measurable impact on nesting selection and productivity
- Large-scale renourishment and restoration had an immediate impact on recolonization of a site by AMOY after over 17 years of absence
- Partnerships critical
- Future plans:
  - Advocate for ongoing small-scale vegetation removal on Snake and Button
  - Evaluate impact and strategy for Button
  - Advocate for long-term, maintenance dredging on DNSI



# Questions?

