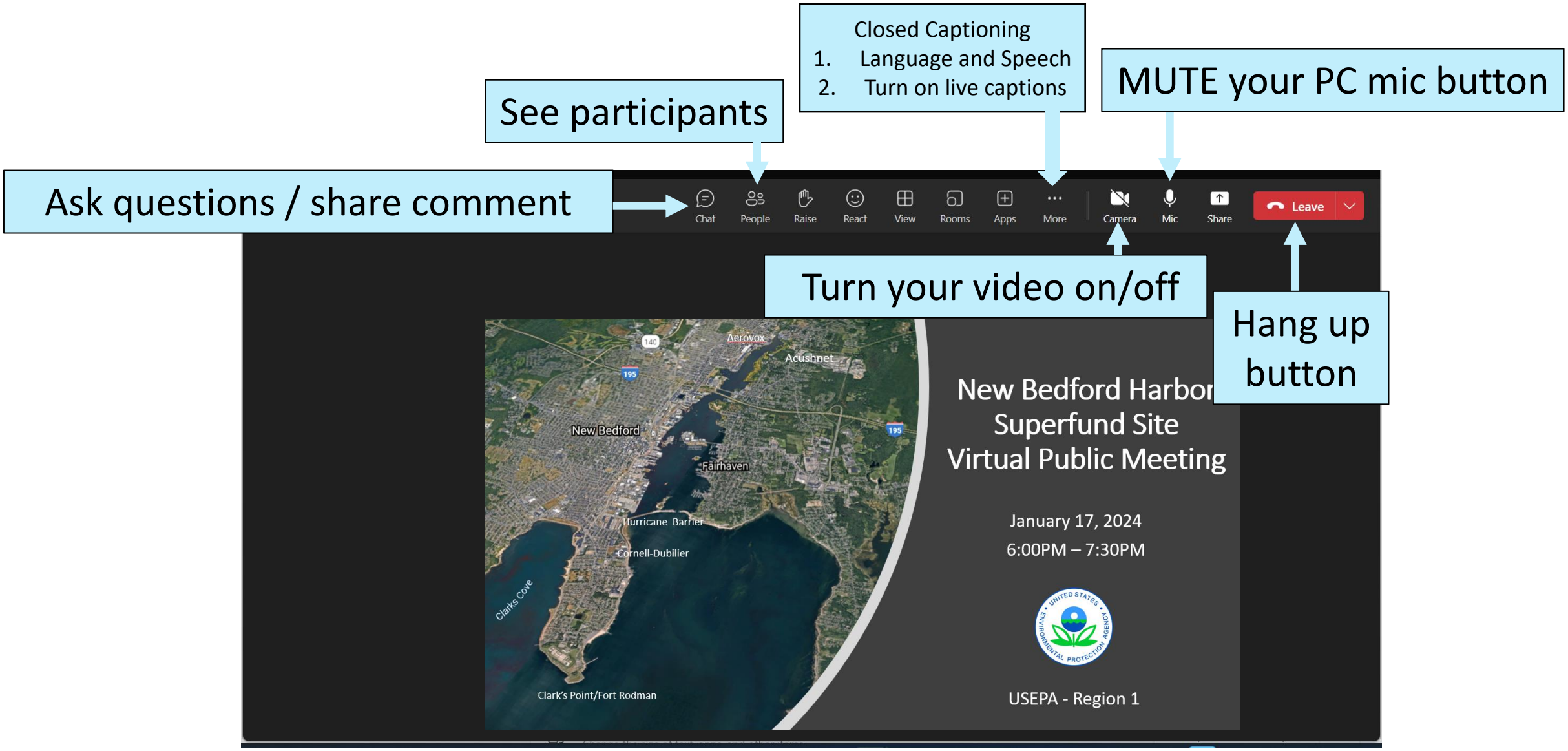
New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site Virtual Public Meeting

June 10, 2025

6:00PM – 7:30PM

USEPA - Region 1

SEMS Doc ID 691424



Virtual Meeting Participant Instructions

Ground Rules for Online Participation

Our requests:

- Keep your microphone muted when not speaking
- Respect time limits for questions and comments
- Keep comments and chats respectful and appropriate for a public audience
- Follow the facilitators' guidance and instructions on how to participate

Project Team

- Aaron Shaheen – EPA Community Involvement Coordinator
- David Dickerson – EPA Remedial Project Manager
- Chris Kelly – EPA Remedial Project Manager
- Marie Esten – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Project Manager
- Paul Craffey – Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Project Manager

Agenda

1. Review of 2024 accomplishments
2. Review 2025 remedial work
3. Seafood Consumption Advisories
4. Community Involvement Plan
5. “Explanation of Significant Differences” (ESD)
   - sediment cap areas
   - 25 v. 50 ppm TCL along River Walk
   - Institutional Controls
   - public comment period

The Upper Harbor - looking north

Photo: Ed Pepin

Summary of 2024 Accomplishments

1. Completed saltmarsh plantings at East Zones 2 and 3
2. Completed remediation AND plantings at West Zones 2 and 3
3. Completed off-site disposal of “Cell 1” material at Sawyer St and started off-site disposal of soils *underneath* Cell 1
4. Completed re-dredging at North of Wood Street area
5. Monitoring and maintenance of remediated shorelines and sediment caps
6. Performed various environmental monitoring programs, including the first-year of post-cap monitoring of the LHCC*
7. Installed new fish consumption signage

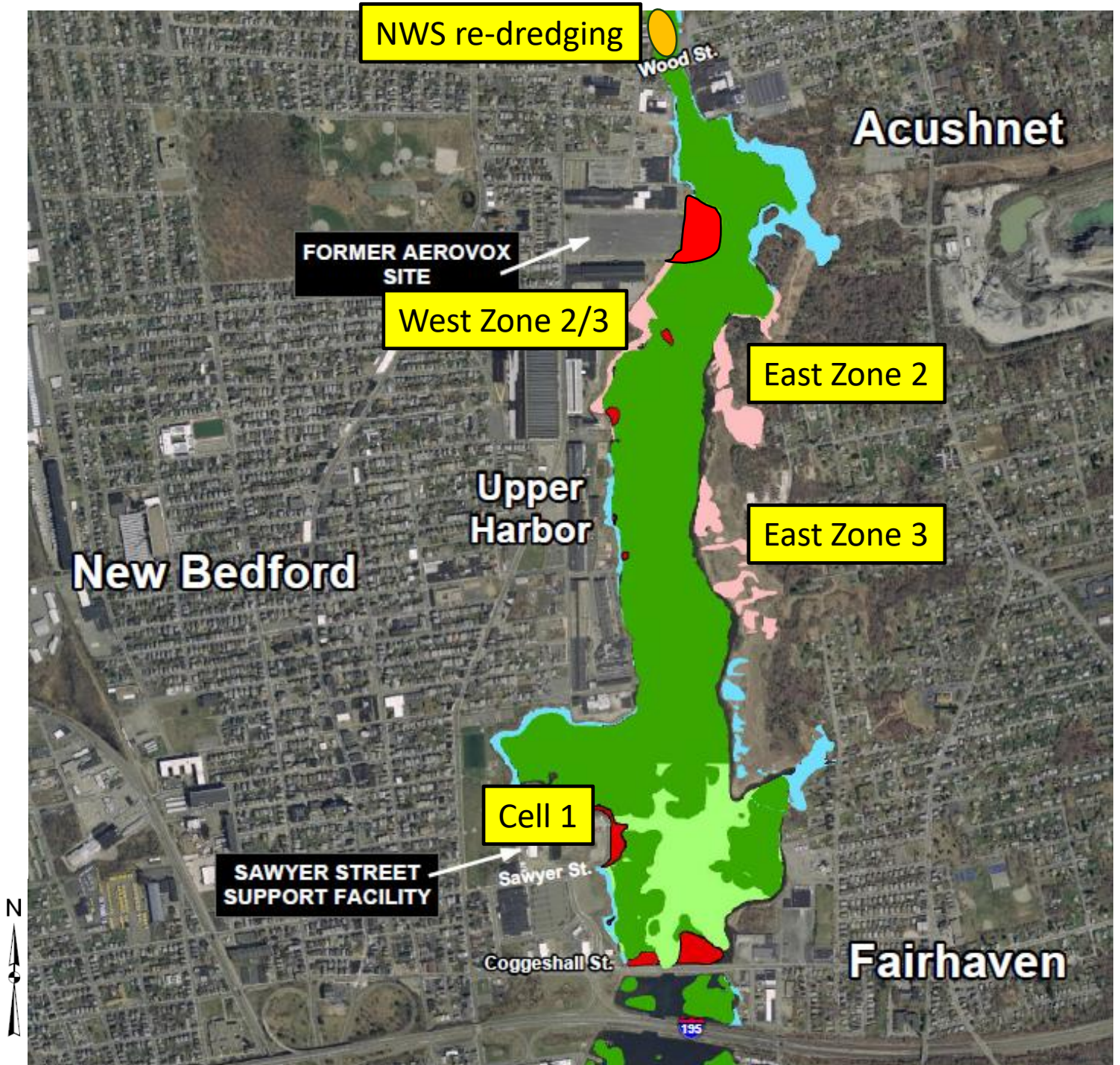
(all areas are shown on the next slides)

*LHCC = Lower Harbor CAD Cell

Areas of Work: 2024
Upper Harbor

Legend:

- dredged areas (completed 2020)
- intertidal areas completed
- intertidal areas 2023 - 2024
- sediment cap areas (completed 2019)
- dredging not needed
- north of Wood Street re-dredging



Redredging north of the Wood/Slocum Street bridge

Photo: Jacobs Engineering

Redredging north of the Wood/Slocum Street bridge

Photo: Jacobs Engineering


West Zone 2/3 Excavation
Photo: Ed Pepin

West Zone 2/3 Restoration Completed

Photo: D. Dickerson

East Zone 2 Restoration

Saltmarsh grasses being planted
(after excavation and clean backfill)

Photo: Jacobs Engineering

Restoration Monitoring

Mapping of:

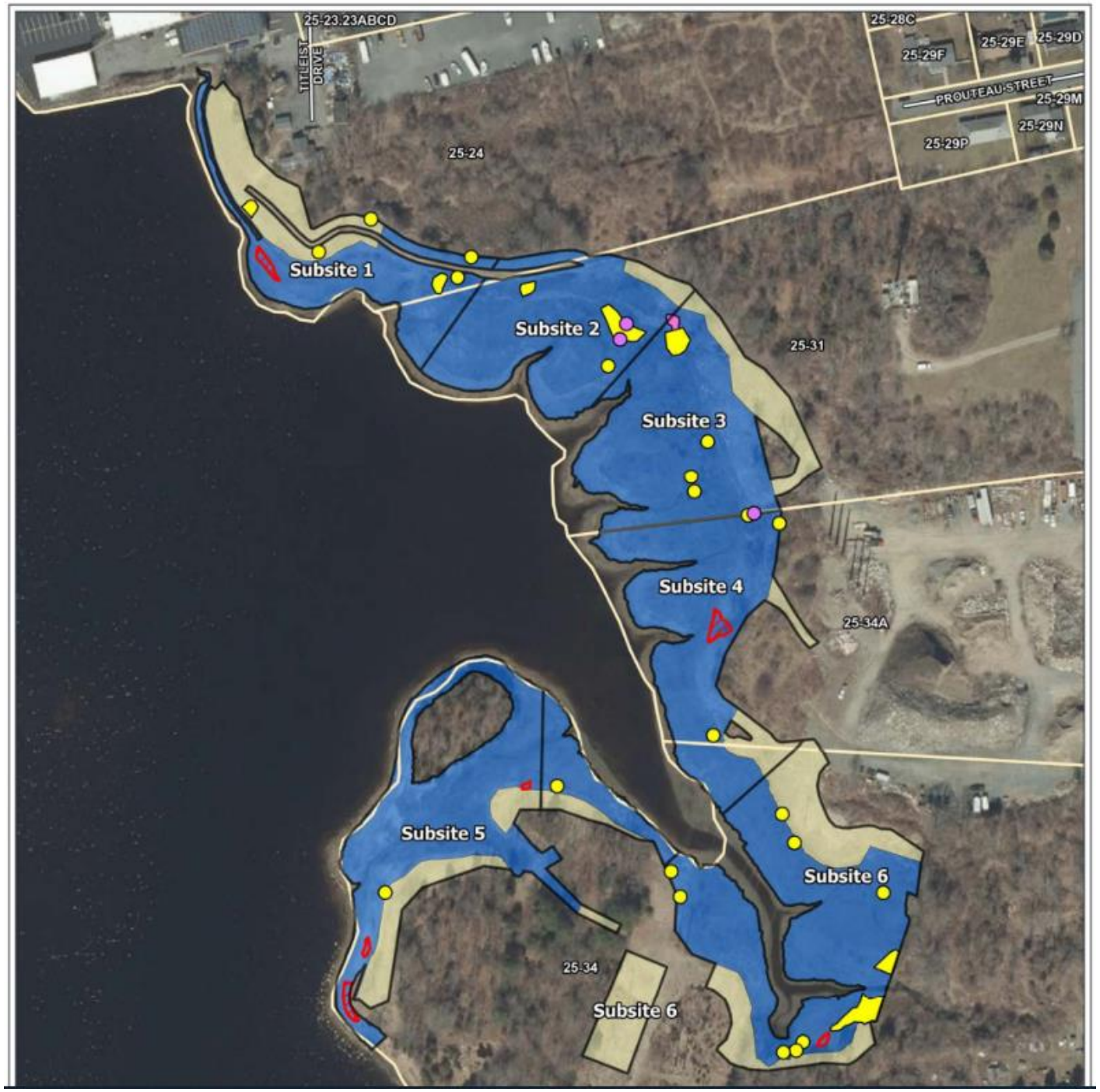
1 – sparse vegetation

2 – invasive species

3 – erosional areas

Legend:

- sparse vegetation
- *Phragmites* (invasive)
- purple loose-strive (invasive)
- wetland/saltmarsh area
- upland area



Restoration Monitoring

Sediment cap L-014 (landward edge, WZ4)

May 2024 – low tide

Photo: D. Dickerson

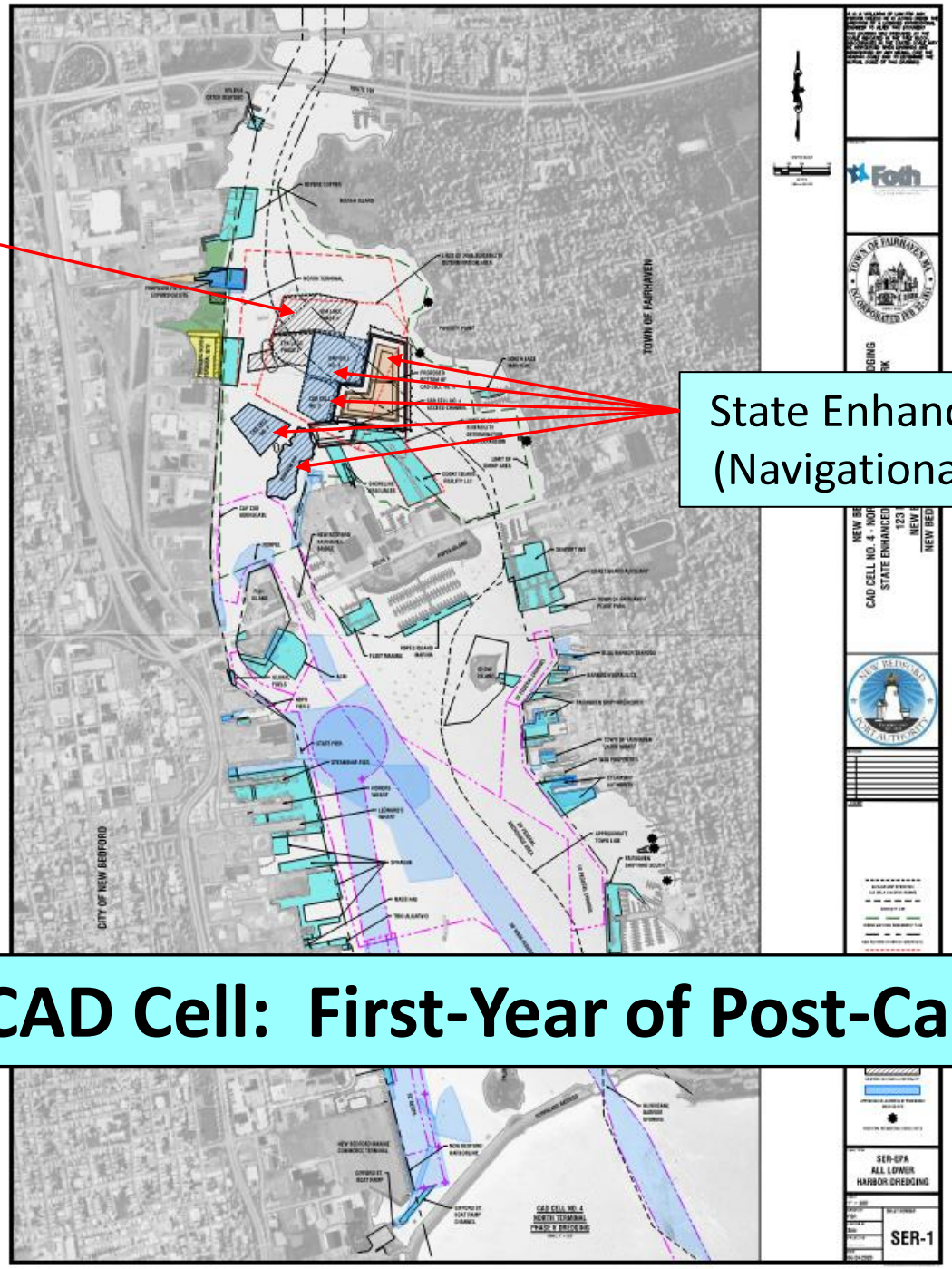
Restoration Monitoring

Oysters are self-colonizing in several areas of the upper harbor


Market Basket
Sawyer St
Cell 1
Riverside Park
All PCB-contaminated soil in AND underneath Cell 1 has been disposed off-site
Photo: Ed Pepin

Superfund Lower Harbor CAD Cell (LHCC)

State Enhanced Remedy (Navigational) CAD Cells



Lower Harbor CAD Cell: First-Year of Post-Cap Monitoring

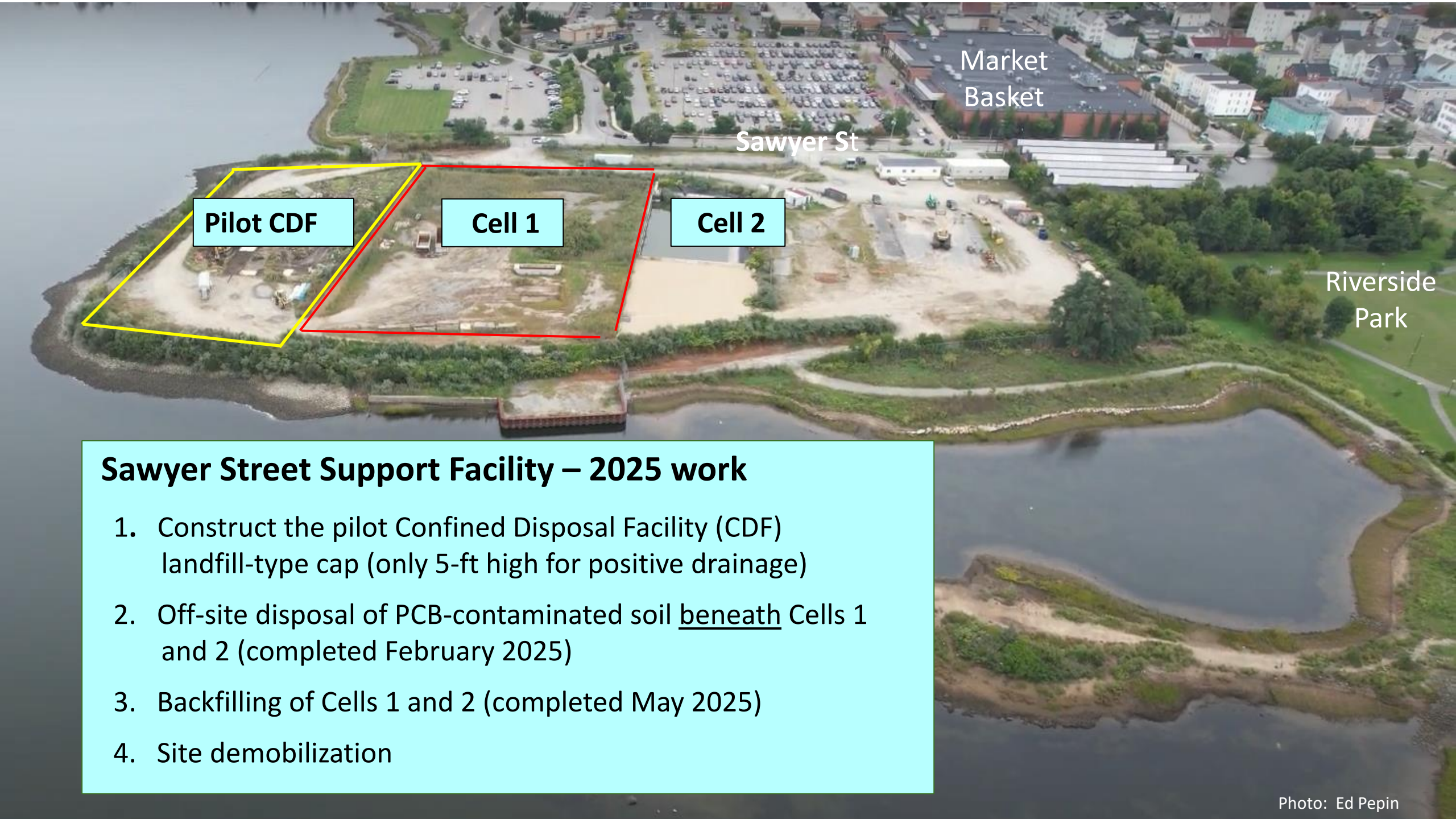
Lower Harbor CAD Cell: First-Year of Post-Cap Monitoring

Three types of monitoring all show that the LHCC cap is functioning as designed:

- Bathymetry (three rounds – mapping of the harbor bottom)
- Through-cap cores (verified that a 3-ft cap remains in place)
- Sediment chemistry at cap surface (no PCBs > 0.07 ppm)

Planned Work in 2025

1. Completed off-site disposal of soil/sediment *beneath* Cells 1 and 2 at the Sawyer St. facility
2. Construction of the pilot CDF cap at Sawyer St.
3. Demobilization activities at the Sawyer St. facility
4. Continued monitoring and maintenance of remediated saltmarshes and sediment caps
5. Continued fish consumption outreach
6. Five Year Review



Sawyer Street Support Facility – 2025 work

1. Construct the pilot Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) landfill-type cap (only 5-ft high for positive drainage)
2. Off-site disposal of PCB-contaminated soil beneath Cells 1 and 2 (completed February 2025)
3. Backfilling of Cells 1 and 2 (completed May 2025)
4. Site demobilization

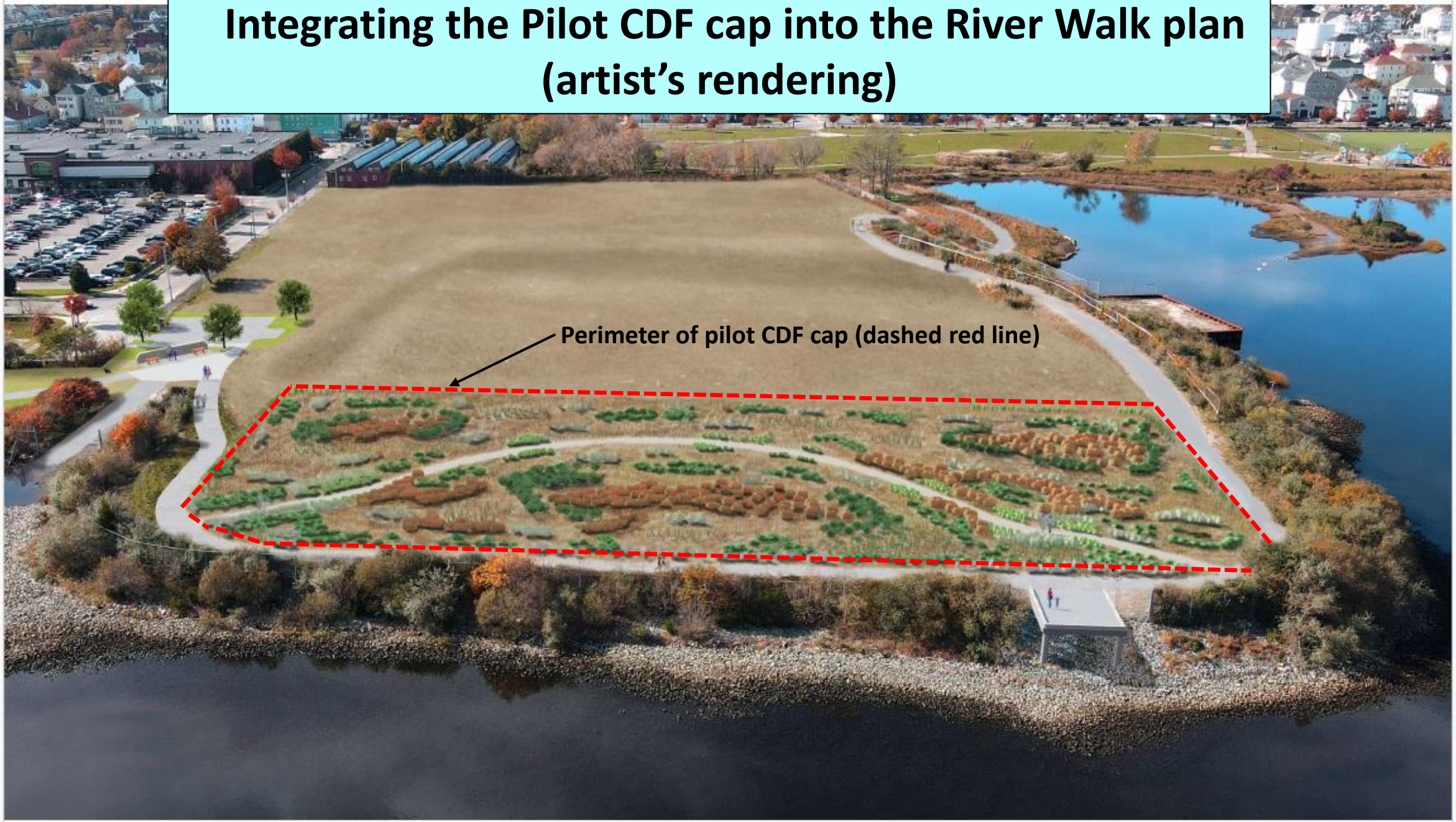
Photo: Ed Pepin

Sawyer Street Support Facility - Dec 2024

Photo: Ed Pepin

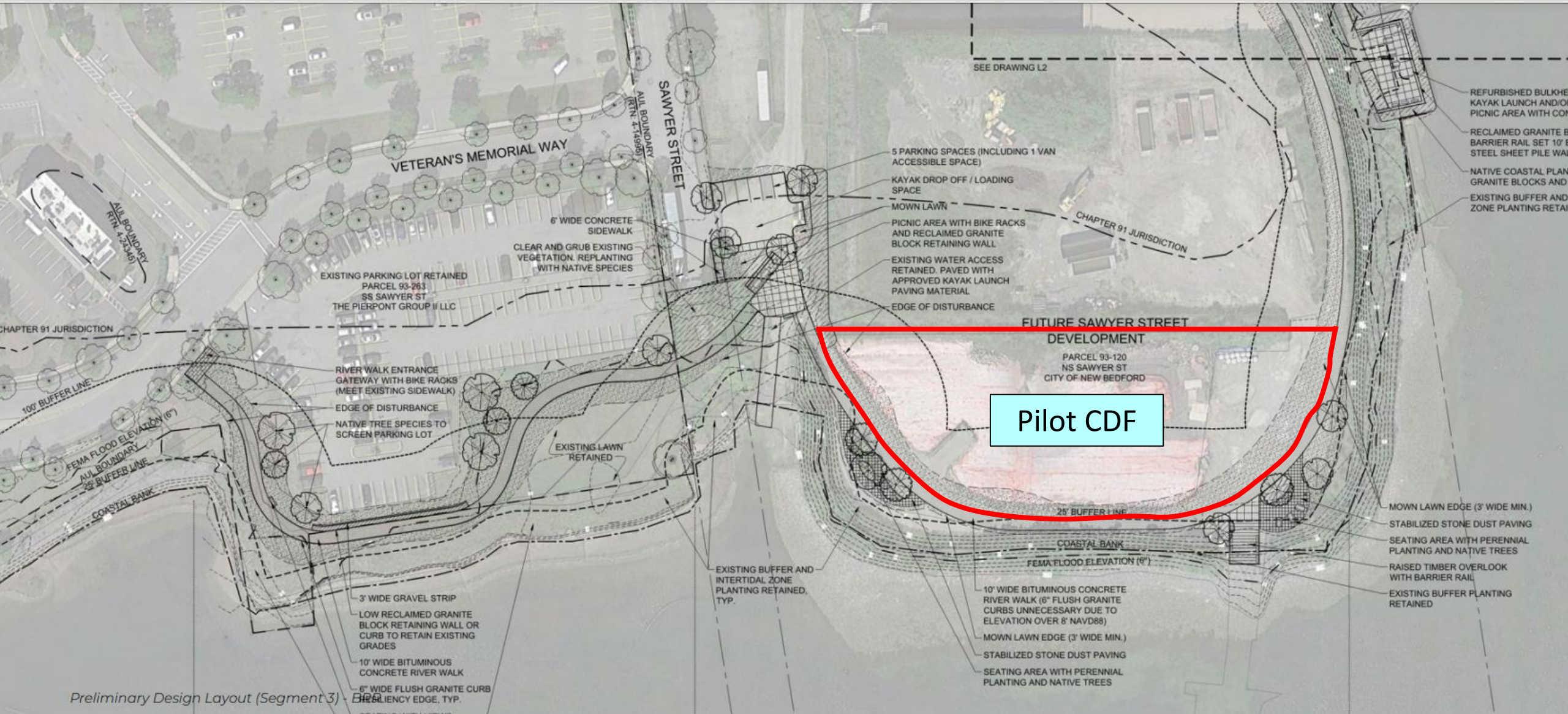

Market Basket
Sawyer St
Pilot CDF
Future Redevelopment
Riverside Park
Future River Walk
Integrating the Pilot CDF cap into the River Walk plan
Base photo: Ed Pepin

Integrating the Pilot CDF cap into the River Walk plan (artist's rendering)



Integrating the Pilot CDF cap into the River Walk plan (artist's rendering)

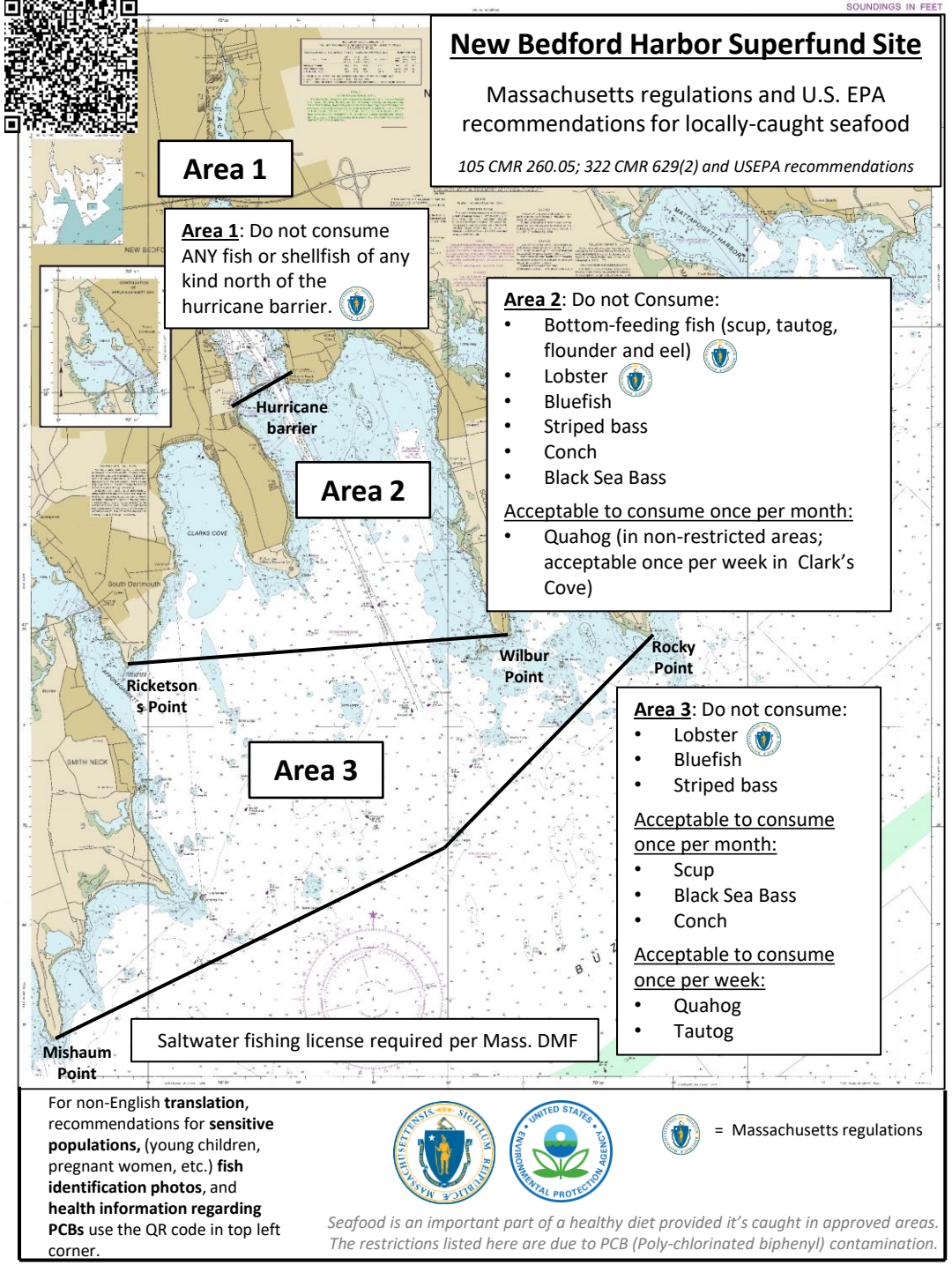
Preliminary Design Plan for River Walk



Preliminary Design Layout (Segment 3) - BRD

Fish consumption restrictions and advisories continue

Updated fish consumption signage



Collaboration with local CEDC for shoreline outreach

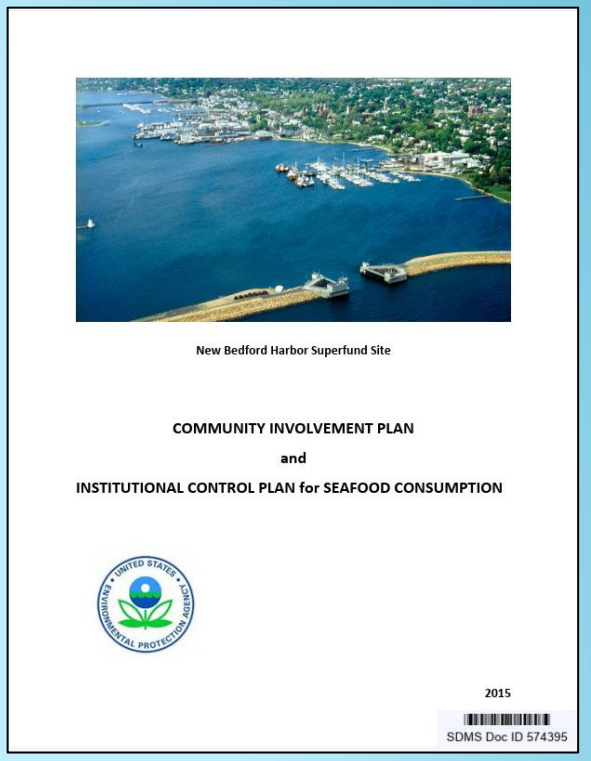
- Multi-lingual outreach coordinators survey local fishermen along Site shoreline/bridges/hurricane barrier
- Now using iPad to streamline data gathering
- Results to date show that some consumption of locally-caught seafood is still occurring

Community Involvement Plan

The EPA is asking for public input on the New Bedford Harbor Community Involvement Plan

Please reach out to the EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator, Aaron Shaheen, for more information.

Contact information:
Office: 617-918-1071
Cell: 617-913-9181
Email: shaheen.aaron@epa.gov



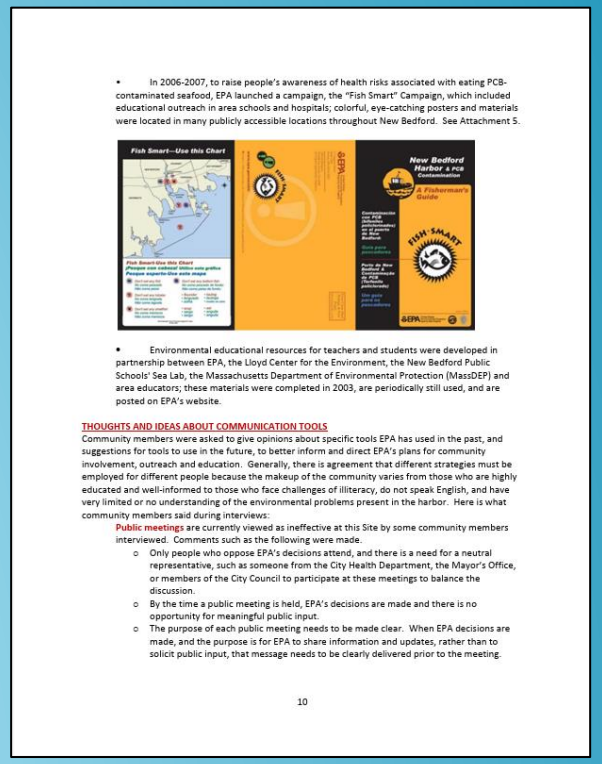
New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN

and

INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL PLAN for SEAFOOD CONSUMPTION

2015



- In 2006-2007, to raise people's awareness of health risks associated with eating PCB-contaminated seafood, EPA launched a campaign, the "Fish Smart" Campaign, which included educational outreach in area schools and hospitals; colorful, eye-catching posters and materials were located in many publicly accessible locations throughout New Bedford. See Attachment 5.

- Environmental educational resources for teachers and students were developed in partnership between EPA, the Lloyd Center for the Environment, the New Bedford Public Schools' Sea Lab, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and area educators; these materials were completed in 2003, are periodically still used, and are posted on EPA's website.

THOUGHTS AND IDEAS ABOUT COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Community members were asked to give opinions about specific tools EPA has used in the past, and suggestions for tools to use in the future, to better inform and direct EPA's plans for community involvement, outreach and education. Generally, there is agreement that different strategies must be employed for different people because the makeup of the community varies from those who are highly educated and well-informed to those who face challenges of illiteracy, do not speak English, and have very limited or no understanding of the environmental problems present in the harbor. Here is what community members said during interviews:

Public meetings are currently viewed as ineffective at this Site by some community members interviewed. Comments such as the following were made.

- Only people who oppose EPA's decisions attend, and there is a need for a neutral representative, such as someone from the City Health Department, the Mayor's Office, or members of the City Council to participate at these meetings to balance the discussion.
- By the time a public meeting is held, EPA's decisions are made and there is no opportunity for meaningful public input.
- The purpose of each public meeting needs to be made clear. When EPA decisions are made, and the purpose is for EPA to share information and updates, rather than to solicit public input, that message needs to be clearly delivered prior to the meeting.

Explanation of Significant Differences (#7)

Public comment period from June 11 to July 10, 2025 regarding:

1) sediment cap alternatives

2) use of a recreational versus industrial land use cleanup level (25 v. 50 ppm PCBs) along the upper harbor shoreline/River Walk in New Bedford

3) use of “Institutional Controls” to prevent human contact risk where PCB levels exceed unrestricted use risk standards

10 sediment caps shown in red where dredging was not considered feasible, advisable or cost-effective with the available equipment

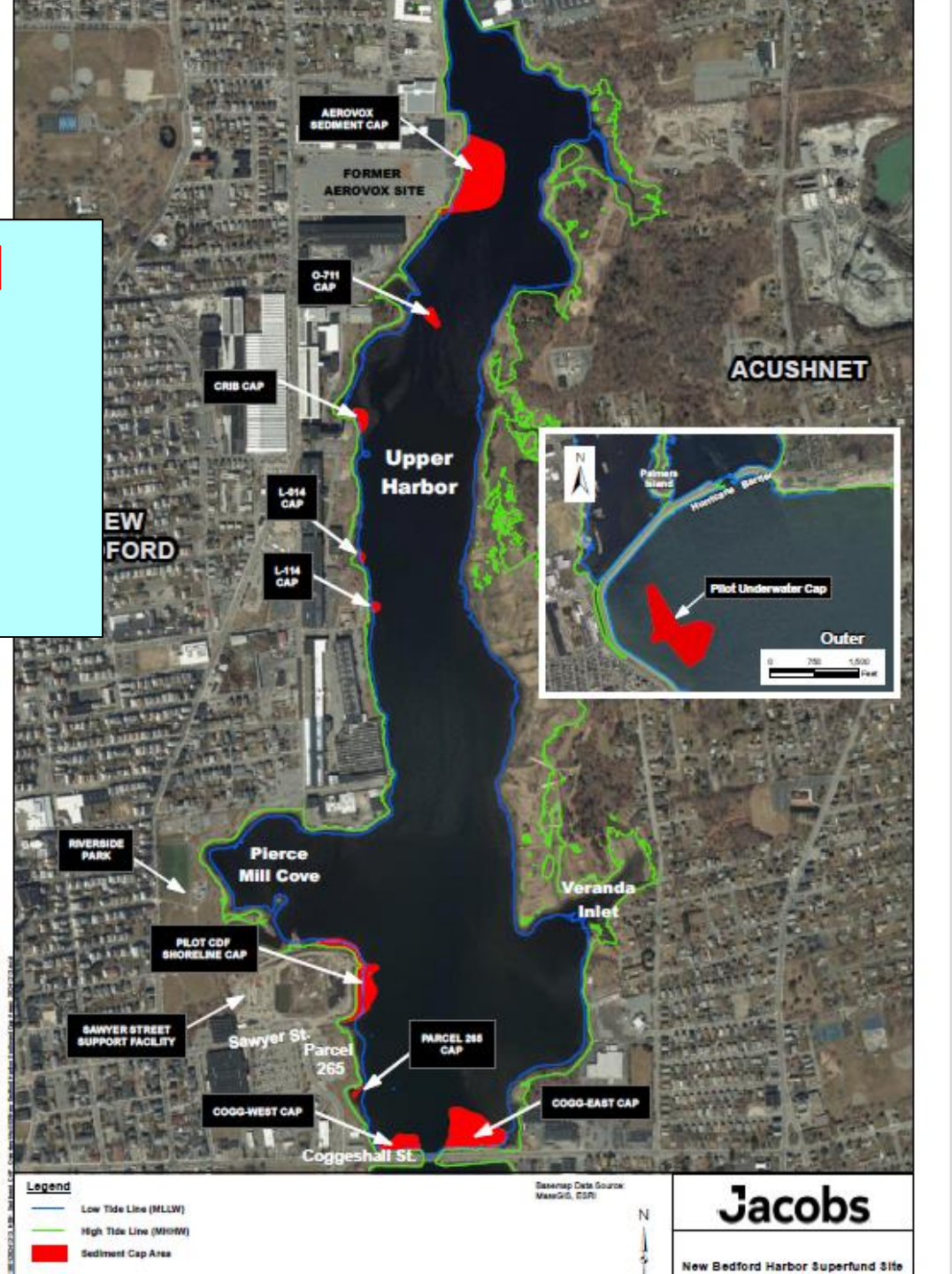
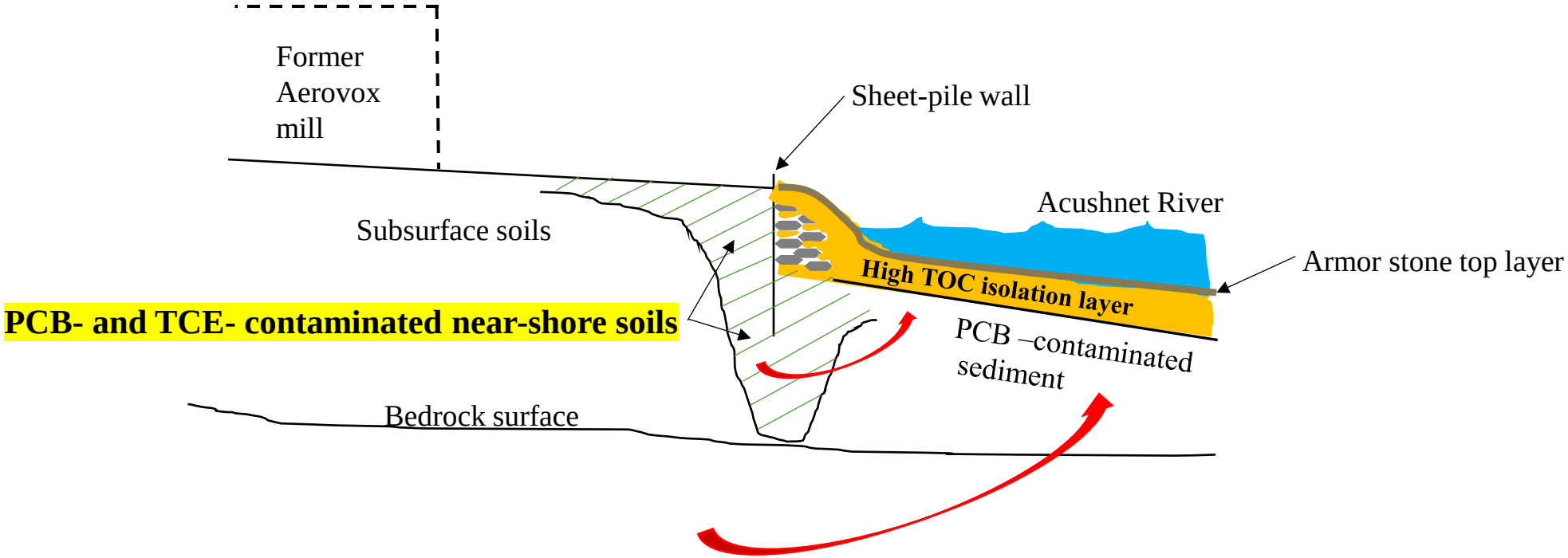


Photo showing the landward edge of the sediment cap along the Coggeshall St bridge

Side View of the Aerovox Sediment Cap



Concept Drawing Only

TOC = Total Organic Carbon

Three Alternatives Evaluated for Sediment Caps

- **Alternative 1**: incorporate the sediment caps as permanent elements of the Remedy, with monitoring and maintenance and "institutional controls" to ensure permanence

- **Alternative 2:** remove the sediment caps and perform dredging per the 1998 ROD's Remedy (would require sheet piling, heavier duty equipment to remove debris, and backfilling to protect abutting shoreline structures)

- **Alternative 3**: remove the sediment caps and implement *in-situ* bio-augmentation to reduce sediment PCB levels over time using certain microbes amended with activated carbon

Alternatives Analysis Report

- Evaluates the three sediment cap alternatives against Superfund remedy selection criteria:

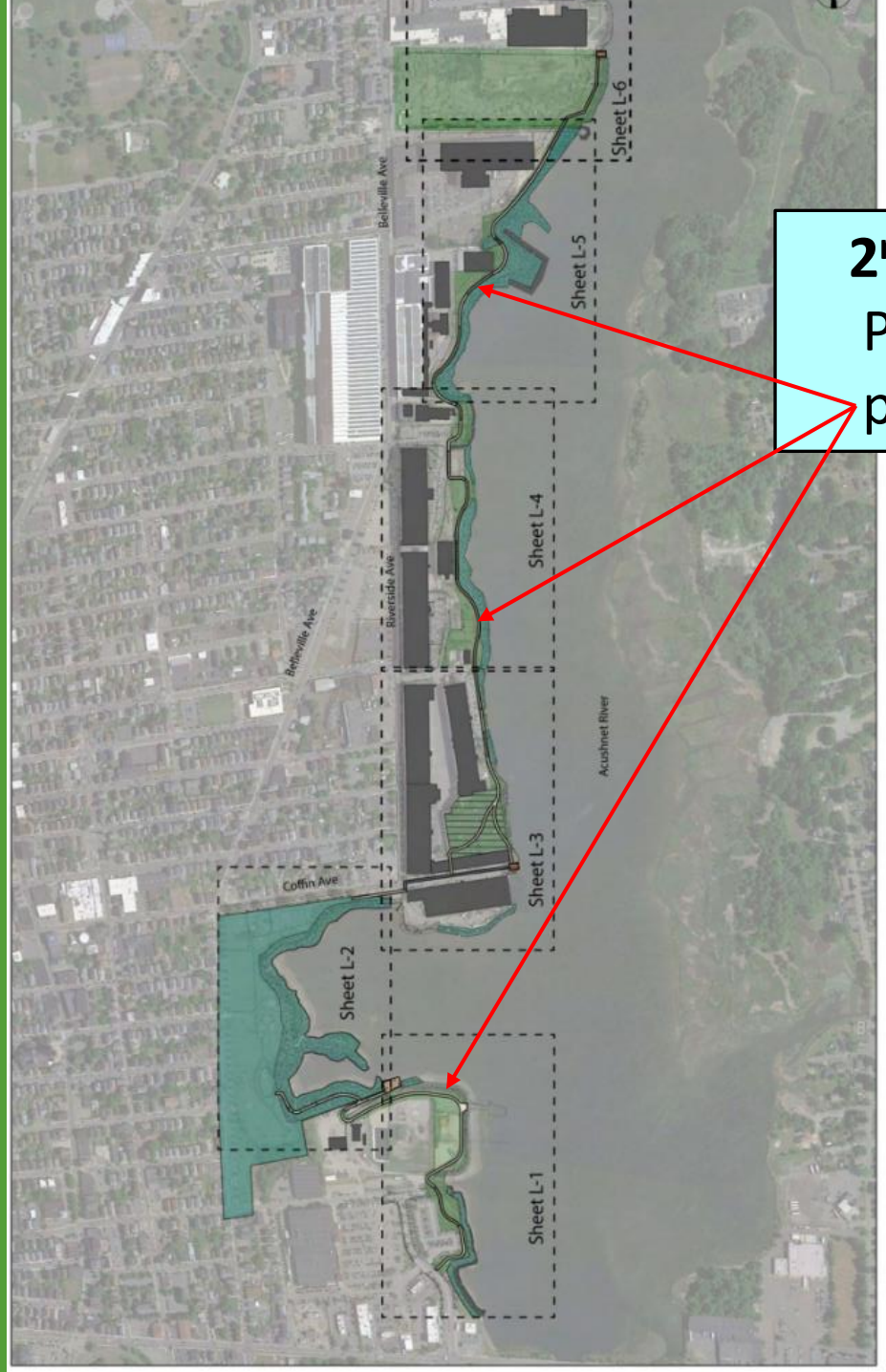
  overall protectiveness, compliance with laws and regulations (aka ARARs), implementability, short term effectiveness, long term effectiveness and permanence, use of treatment, and cost

- The draft ESD recommends Alternative 1 (incorporating the sediment caps as permanent elements of the NBH Remedy) due to effectiveness, permanence, implementability, cost and initial MassDEP concurrence (pending public comments).

Estimated Costs for the Three Sediment Cap Alternatives

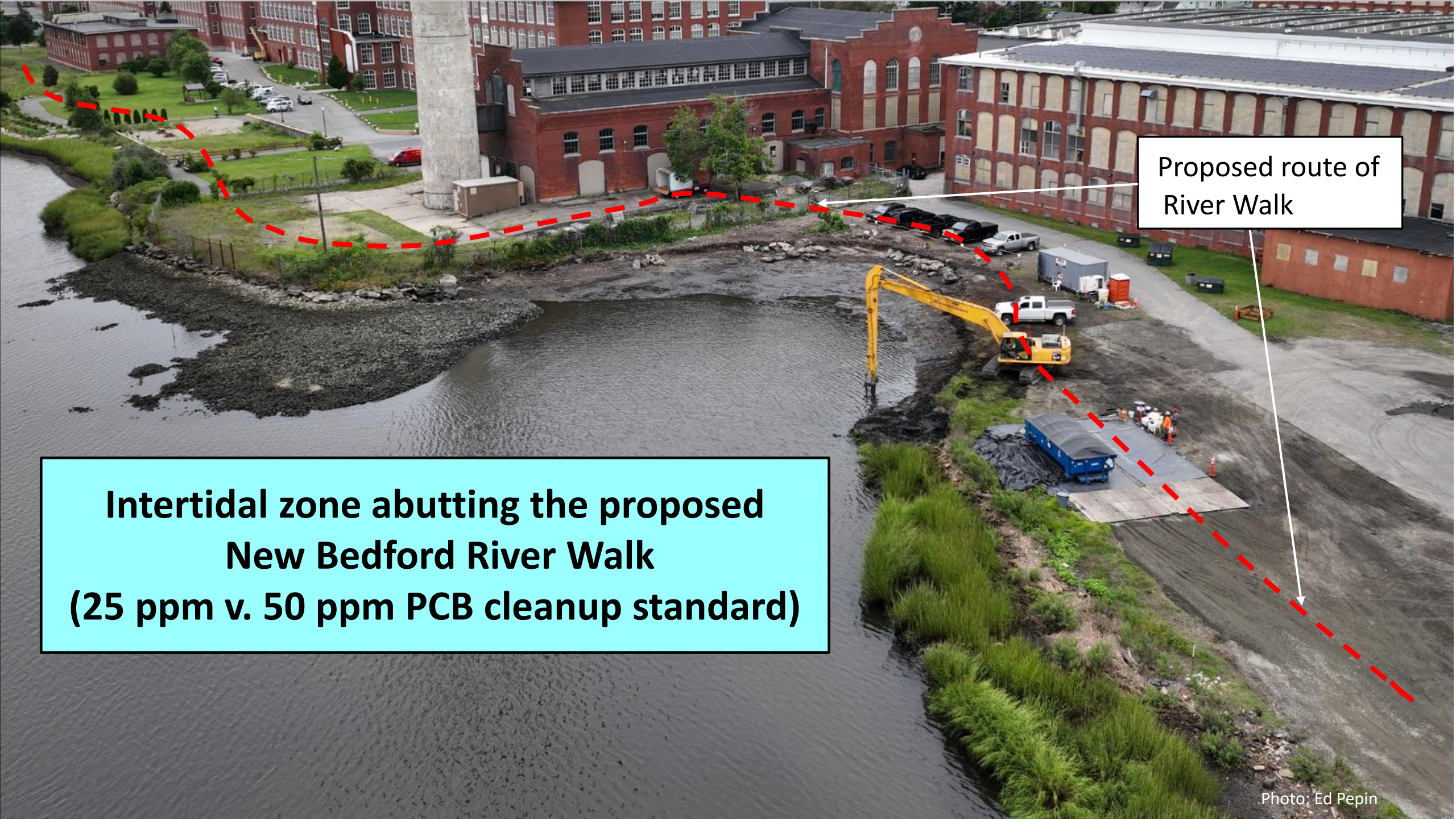
Alternative	Construction Cost	30-yr O&M* Cost	NPV cost**
1. Keep caps in place	$0 (already in-place)	$1.3M	$1.0M
2. Remove the caps and perform dredging	$132M	$0 (no *additional* site-wide costs)	$127.2M
3. Remove the caps and perform *in-situ* bio-augmentation	$58.2M	$36.7M	$80.6M

*operations and maintenance **Net Present Value



2nd ESD Issue: use of a 25 ppm v. 50 ppm PCB cleanup standard abutting the proposed New Bedford River Walk

Recreational versus commercial/ industrial land use


Proposed route of
River Walk
Intertidal zone abutting the proposed
New Bedford River Walk
(25 ppm v. 50 ppm PCB cleanup standard)
Photo: Ed Pepin

Recap: Public comment period from June 11 to July 10, 2025 regarding:

1) sediment cap alternatives

2) use of a recreational versus industrial land use cleanup level (25 v. 50 ppm PCBs) along the upper harbor shoreline abutting the proposed New Bedford River

→ 3) use of “Institutional Controls” to prevent human contact risk where PCB levels exceed unrestricted use risk standards

Submit written comments by 7/10/25:

- Email: kelly.christopher@epa.gov
- Online: https://www.regulations.gov
- Regular mail: (see ESD7 on-line for address)

Visit the project web site www.epa.gov/nbh

Questions and Comments

For additional information please visit **www.epa.gov/nbh**

Photo: D. Dickerson