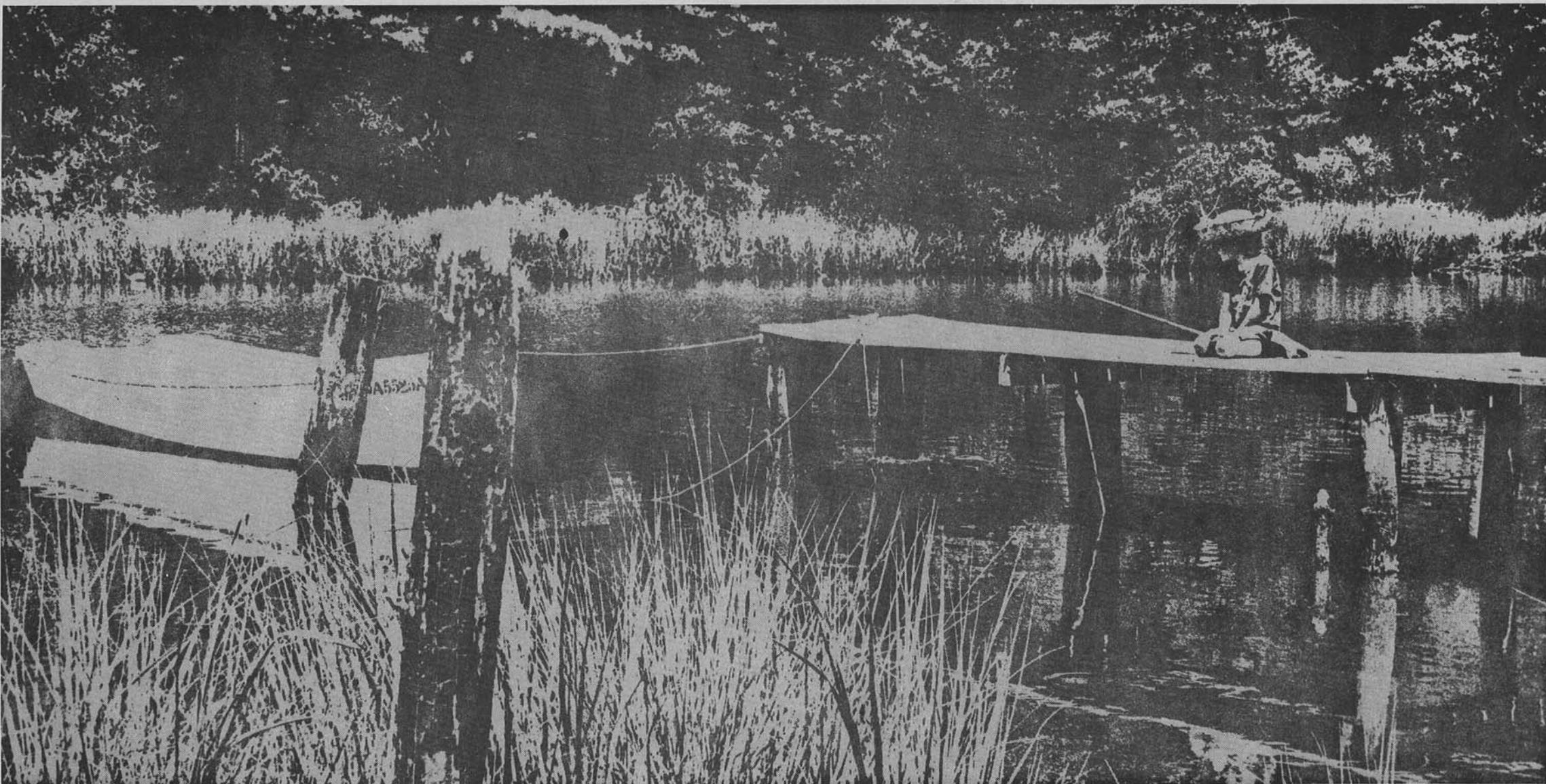


Shoreline Situation Report  
PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA



Supported by the National Science Foundation, Research Applied to National Needs Program  
NSF Grant Nos. GI 34869 and GI 38973 to the Wetlands/Edges Program, Chesapeake Research Consortium, Inc.

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Chesapeake Research Consortium Report Number 47

Special Report In Applied Marine Science and Ocean Engineering Number 114 of the

VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE  
Gloucester Point, Virginia 23062

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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

## CHAPTER 2

### Approach Used and Elements Considered

physiographic classification of the fastland is based upon the average slope of the land within 400 feet (122 m) of the fastland - shore boundary. The general classification is:

- Low shore, 20 ft. (6 m) or less of relief; with or without cliff
- Moderately low shore, 20-40 ft. (6-12 m) of relief; with or without cliff
- Moderately high shore, 40-60 ft. (12-18 m) of relief; with or without cliff
- High shore, 60 ft. (18 m) or more of relief; with or without cliff.

Two specially classified exceptions are sand dunes and areas of artificial fill.

#### Nearshore Zone

The nearshore zone extends from the shore zone to the 12-foot (MLW datum) contour. In the smaller tidal rivers the 6-foot depth is taken as the reference depth. The 12-foot depth is probably the maximum depth of significant sand transport by waves in the Chesapeake Bay area. Also, the distinct drop-off into the river channels begins roughly at the 12-foot depth. The nearshore zone includes any tidal flats.

The class limits for the nearshore zone classifications were chosen following a simple statistical study. The distance to the 12-foot underwater contour (isobath) was measured on the appropriate charts at one-mile intervals along the shorelines of Chesapeake Bay and the James, York, Rappahannock, and Potomac Rivers. Means and standard deviations for each of the separate regions and for the entire combined system were calculated and compared. Although the distributions were non-normal, they were generally comparable, allowing the data for the entire combined system to determine the class limits.

The calculated mean was 919 yards with a standard deviation of 1,003 yards. As our aim was to determine general, serviceable class limits, these calculated numbers were rounded to 900 and 1,000 yards respectively. The class limits were set at half the standard deviation (500 yards) each side of the mean. Using this procedure a narrow nearshore zone is one 0-400 yards in width, intermediate 400-1,400, and wide greater than 1,400.

The following definitions have no legal significance and were constructed for our classification

purposes:

- Narrow, 12-ft. (3.7 m) isobath located < 400 yards from shore
- Intermediate, 12-ft. (3.7 m) isobath 400-1,400 yards from shore
- Wide, 12-ft. (3.7 m) isobath > 1,400 yards from shore

- Subclasses: with or without bars
- with or without tidal flats
- with or without submerged vegetation

#### b) Shorelands Use Classification

##### Fastland Zone

###### Residential

Includes all forms of residential use with the exception of farms and other isolated dwellings. In general, a residential area consists of four or more residential buildings adjacent to one another. Schools, churches, and isolated businesses may be included in a residential area.

###### Commercial

Includes buildings, parking areas, and other land directly related to retail and wholesale trade and business. This category includes small industry and other anomalous areas within the general commercial context. Marinas are considered commercial shore use.

###### Industrial

Includes all industrial and associated areas. Examples: warehouses, refineries, shipyards, power plants, railyards.

###### Governmental

Includes lands whose usage is specifically controlled, restricted, or regulated by governmental organizations: e.g., Camp Peary, Fort Story. Where applicable, the Governmental use category is modified to indicate the specific character of the use, e.g., residential, direct military, and so forth.

###### Recreational and Other Public Open Spaces

Includes designated outdoor recreation lands and miscellaneous open spaces. Examples: golf courses, tennis clubs, amusement parks, public beaches, race tracks, cemeteries, parks.

###### Preserved

Includes lands preserved or regulated for

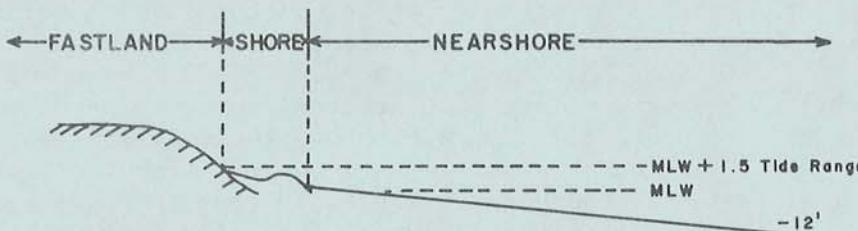


Figure 1

A profile of the three shorelands types.

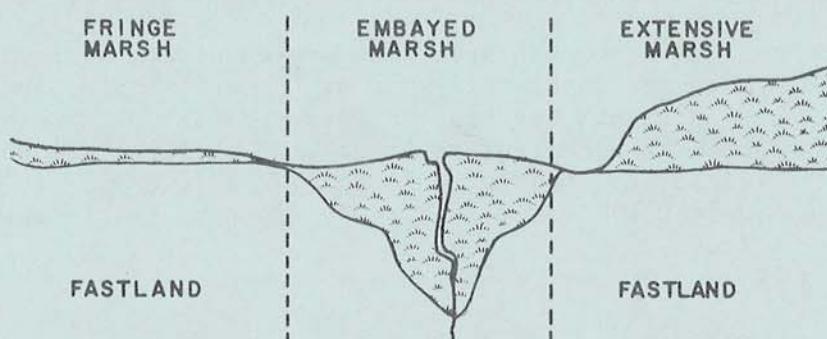


Figure 2

A plan view of the three marsh types.

h) Distribution of Marshes

The acreage and physiographic type of the marshes in each subsegment is listed. These estimates of acreages were obtained from topographic maps and should be considered only as approximations. Detailed county inventories of the wetlands are being conducted by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science under the authorization of the Virginia Wetlands Act of 1972 (Code of Virginia 62.1-13.4). These surveys include detailed acreages of the grass species composition within individual marsh systems. In Shoreline Situation Reports of counties that have had marsh inventories, the marsh number is indicated, thus allowing the user of the Shoreline Situation Report to key back to the formal marsh inventory for additional data. The independent material in this report is provided to indicate the physiographic type of marsh land and to serve as a rough guide to marsh distribution, pending a formal inventory. Additional information on wetlands characteristics may be found in Coastal Wetlands of Virginia: Interim Report No. 3, by G.M. Silberhorn, G.M. Dawes, and T.A. Barnard, Jr., SRAMSOE No. 46, 1974, and in other VIMS publications.

i) Flood Hazard Levels

The assessment of tidal flooding hazard for the whole of the Virginia tidal shoreland is still incomplete. However, the United States Army Corps of Engineers has prepared reports for a number of localities which were used in this report. Two tidal flood levels are customarily used to portray the hazard. The Intermediate Regional Flood is that flood with an average recurrence time of about 100 years. An analysis of past tidal floods indicates it to have an elevation of approximately 8 feet above mean water level in the Chesapeake Bay area. The Standard Project Flood level is established for land planning purposes which is placed at the highest probable flood level.

j) Shellfish Leases and Public Grounds

The data in this report show the leased and public shellfish grounds as portrayed in the Virginia State Water Control Board publication "Shellfish growing areas in the Commonwealth of Virginia: Public, leased and condemned,"

November, 1971, and as periodically updated in other similar reports. Since the condemnation areas change with time they are not to be taken as definitive. However, some insight to the conditions at the date of the report are available by a comparison between the shellfish grounds maps and the water quality maps for which water quality standards for shellfish were used.

k) Beach Quality

Beach quality is a subjective judgment based upon considerations such as the nature of the beach material, the length and width of the beach area, and the general aesthetic appeal of the beach setting.

## CHAPTER 3

### Present Shorelands Situation

the Fort Lee Military Reservation, the Hopewell chemical plants, large urban residential areas, sand and gravel mining operations, and several marinas. Less than ten percent of the area is unused.

There are several possible alternate uses for parts of this section of shoreline. The land adjacent to the I-95 bridge in Petersburg is owned by the city. Proposed plans call for the development of a public recreational park which would include docks for ferry boats, picnic areas, a railroad museum, and tours through various historical homes. Another possible recreational site would be along the headwaters of Cabin Creek in Hopewell. This wooded area could be used for various low intensity activities such as hiking, picnicking, and camping. The site is located near a housing development and not far from the urban residential area of City Point. Such "nature parks" are much needed near areas of high density population buildup.

In contrast with the highly developed shoreline of the cities of Hopewell and Petersburg, the shorelands of the county of Prince George are largely agricultural and unused. However, alternate shore uses are very limited for this area also.

The Jordan Point section, which is near Hopewell and on the major route between Hopewell and Williamsburg, has a marina, an airport, and a country club. The present use precludes alternate development here. Most of the remaining shorelands are contained within several large estates, "Brandon", "Flowerdew Hundred", "Willow Hill", and "Upper Brandon". These estates, which have survived from the 1800's, directly control the use of much of the shorelands. These rural-agricultural sections of the county will probably remain relatively unchanged.



FIGURE 8



FIGURE 9

FIGURE 8: Aerial view of Brandon Point. This area has nice sandy beaches of fair width, though often littered with debris.

FIGURE 9: Ground view of Brandon Point. Note debris on beach.

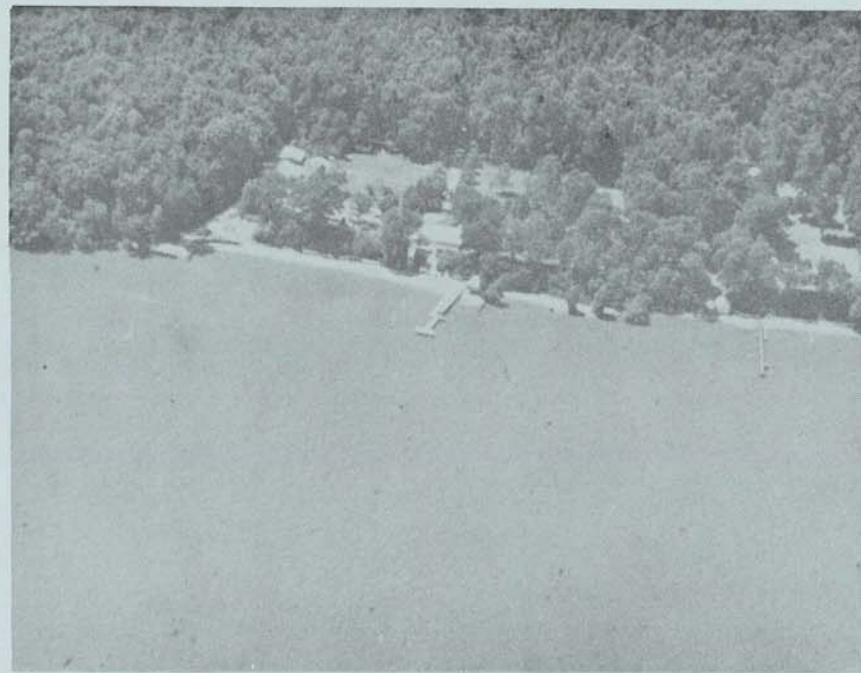


FIGURE 10

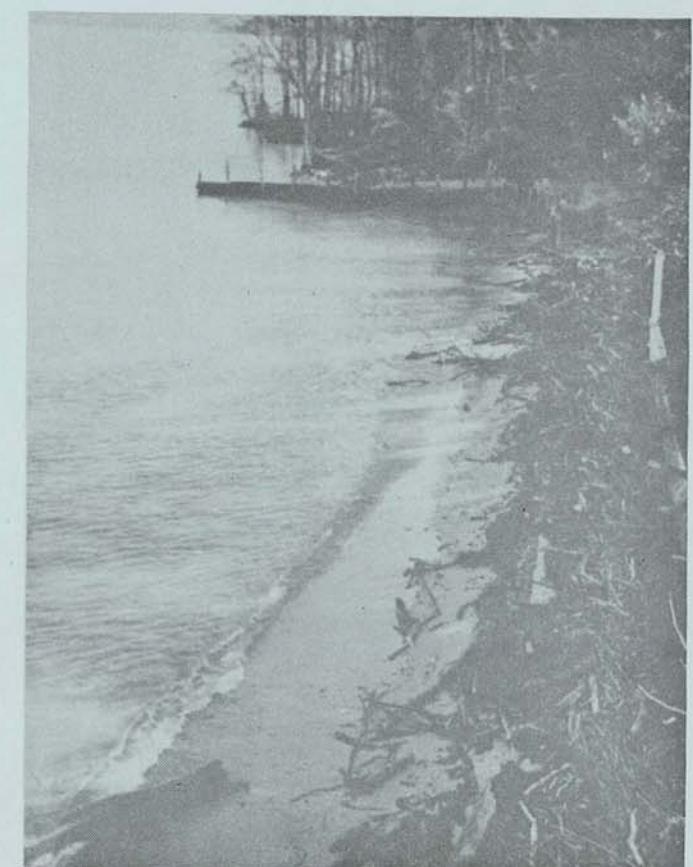


FIGURE 11

FIGURE 10: Aerial view at Fort Powhatan. The shoreline has elevations of 50 feet in most areas here.

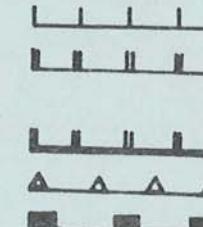
FIGURE 11: View from the bluffs at Fort Powhatan. The groyne serves little purpose, and the retaining wall at the cliff base seems ineffective.

77° 15'

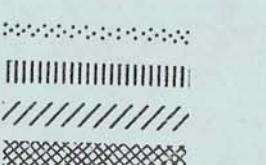
PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY  
BRIDGE ≈  
MAP 1B

SHORELANDS TYPES

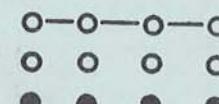
FASTLAND

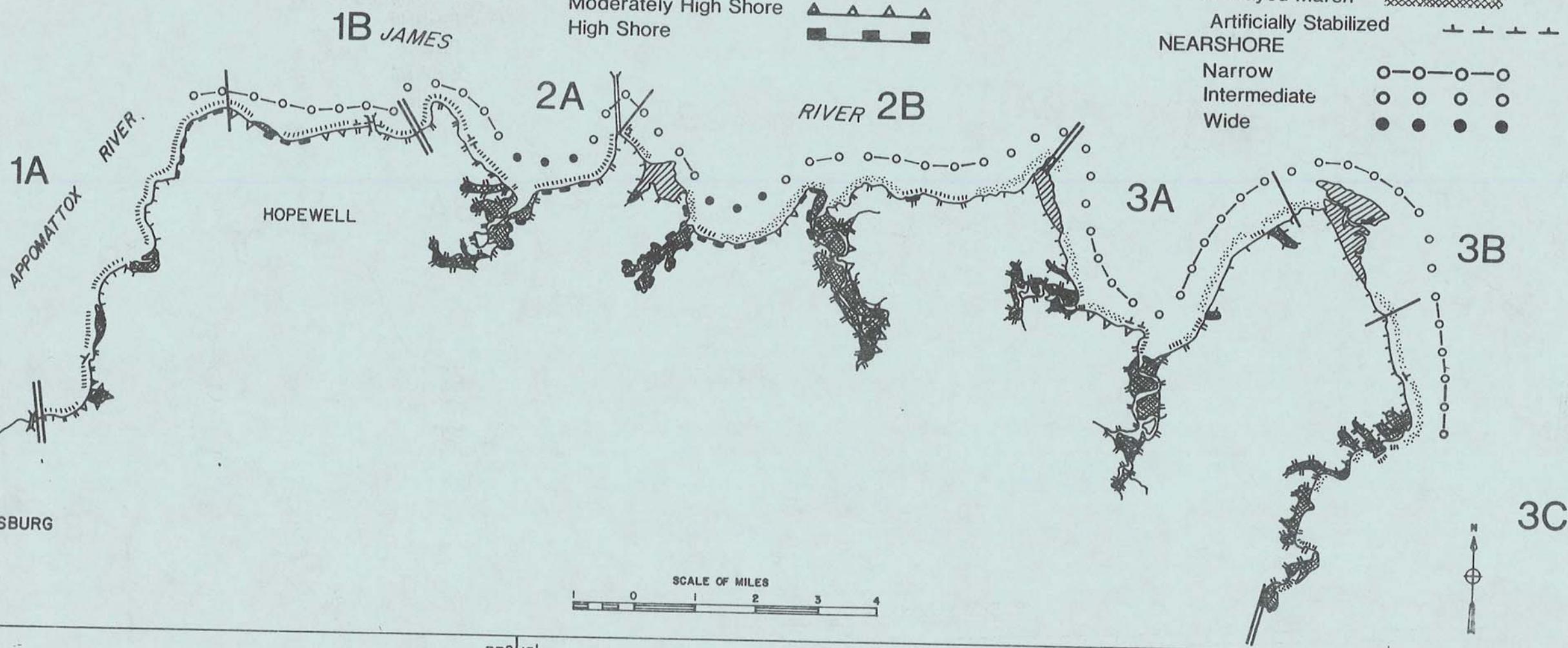
- Low Shore
  - Moderately Low Shore
  - Moderately Low Shore  
with Bluff
  - Moderately High Shore
  - High Shore
- 

SHORE

- Beach
  - Fringe Marsh
  - Extensive Marsh
  - Embayed Marsh
  - Artificially Stabilized
- 

NEARSHORE

- Narrow
  - Intermediate
  - Wide
- 



77° 15'

PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY  
BRIDGE   
MAP 1D

SHORELINE EROSION

PROTECTIVE STRUCTURES

WASTE DISCHARGES

PROTECTIVE STRUCTURES

Bulkhead B

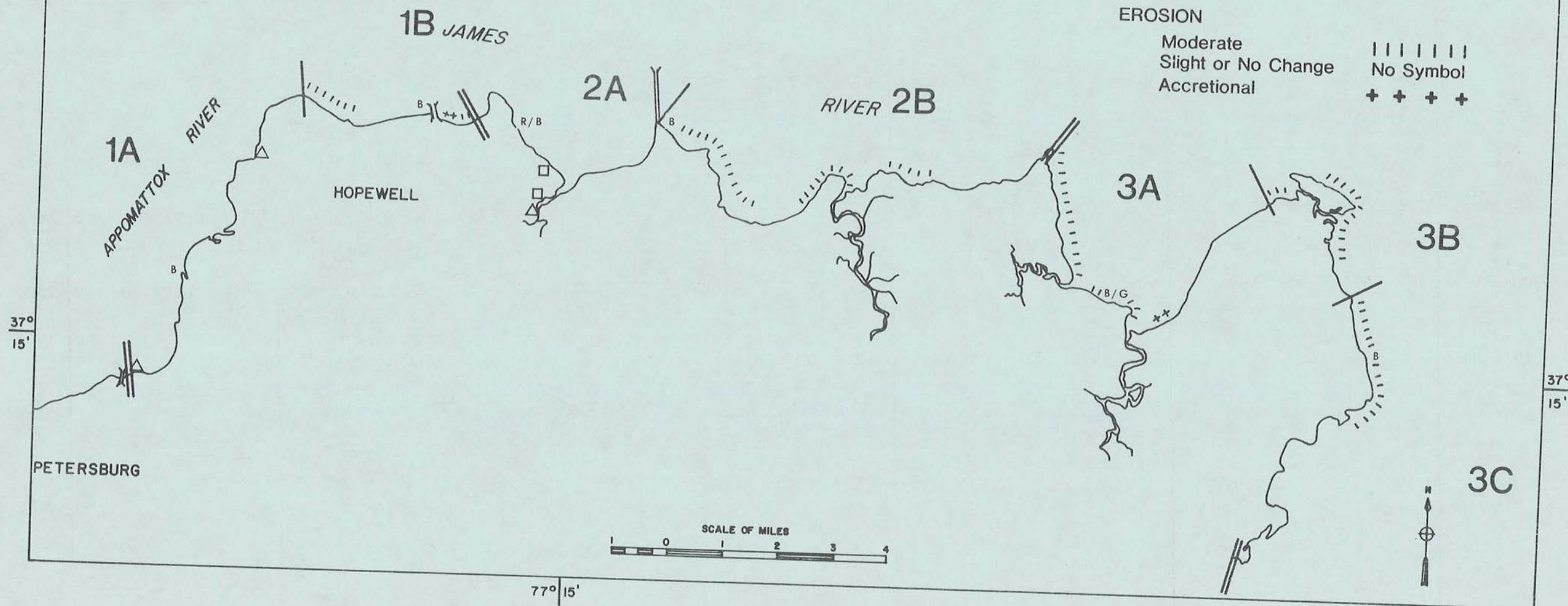
Groin G

Riprap R

WASTE DISCHARGES

Industrial □

Sewage Δ



## CHAPTER 4

- 4.1 Table of Subsegment Summaries
- 4.2 Segment and Subsegment Descriptions
- 4.3 Segment and Subsegment Maps

SUBSEGMENT 1A

PETERSBURG TO HOPEWELL

(Maps 2 and 3)

EXTENT: 39,400 feet (7.5 mi.) of shoreline from the I-95 bridge at Petersburg to the Hopewell City limits. The subsegment also includes 41,200 feet (7.8 mi.) of fastland.

SHORELANDS TYPE

FASTLAND: Low shore 44% (3.4 mi.), moderately low shore 9% (0.7 mi.), moderately high shore 19% (1.5 mi.), and high shore 28% (2.2 mi.).

SHORE: Artificially stabilized 3% (0.2 mi.), fringe marsh 94% (7.1 mi.), and embayed marsh 3% (0.2 mi.).

RIVER: The Appomattox River is too narrow and shallow for classification, having controlling depths of 5 feet in 1971.

SHORELANDS USE

FASTLAND: Agricultural 6% (0.5 mi.), commercial 1% (0.1 mi.), governmental (Fort Lee Military Reservation and the Federal Reformatory) 34% (2.6 mi.), industrial 40% (3.1 mi.), recreational 7% (0.6 mi.), and unmanaged, wooded 12% (0.9 mi.).

SHORE: Some waterfowl hunting in the marshes, but mostly unused.

RIVER: Commercial shipping and pleasure boating.

SHORELINE TREND: The shoreline trends basically NNE - SSW. Fetches are negligible due to the narrowness of the river and the numerous marsh islands.

OWNERSHIP: Private 61%, federal 34%, and city 5%.

ZONING: Mostly agricultural for the federally owned lands. There is some industrial and recreational zoning in Petersburg.

FLOOD HAZARD: Low. This area is not exposed to direct storm effects. Any flooding would be the result of heavy upstream rains.

BEACH QUALITY: There are no beaches in this subsegment.

PRESENT SHORE EROSION SITUATION

EROSION RATE: No data. The area appears stable.

ENDANGERED STRUCTURES: None.

SHORE PROTECTIVE STRUCTURES: There is approximately 1,000 feet of bulkheading at a marina one mile north of the Petersburg City limits.

OTHER SHORE STRUCTURES: There are several piers and a boat ramp at the Appomattox Small Boat Harbor.

SHORE USE LIMITATIONS: Approximately thirty-four percent of the shorelands in this subsegment are included in the Fort Lee Military Reservation. These lands are federally owned and controlled, which would preclude any development. An additional forty percent of the shorelands are actively mined for sand and gravel. No development seems probable here until the mining operations are complete. The remaining sections of the shorelands are used for agriculture, some industry (Petersburg Sewage Treatment Plant), and recreation. Though construction near the I-95 bridge seems probable, development elsewhere in the subsegment is unlikely.

ALTERNATE SHORE USE: Low. The area with the most growth potential is a parcel of city owned property near the I-95 bridge. The City of Petersburg is considering plans for a public park which would include a boat basin for ferry boat tours, a museum, various historic homes, and other facilities. Elsewhere, there is little alternate use potential.

MAPS: USGS, 7.5 Min. Ser. (Topo.), HOPEWELL, Va. Quadr., 1969;  
USGS, 7.5 Min. Ser. (Topo.), CHESTER, Va. Quadr., 1969;  
USGS, 7.5 Min. Ser. (Topo.), PETERSBURG, Va. Quadr., 1969.  
C&GS, #531, 1:20,000 scale, JAMES RIVER, Jordan Point to Richmond, 1971.

PHOTOS: Aerial-VIMS 12Jul74 PG-1A/107-114.

SUBSEGMENT 1B

CITY OF HOPEWELL

(Map 3)

EXTENT: 24,000 feet (4.5 mi.) of shoreline from the westward extent of Hopewell City limits east to the end of Hopewell's water boundary (3,400 feet southwest of City Point). The subsegment also includes 24,600 feet (4.7 mi.) of fastland.

SHORELANDS TYPE

FASTLAND: Moderately low shore 34% (1.6 mi.), moderately high shore 34% (1.6 mi.), and high shore 32% (1.5 mi.).

SHORE: Artificially stabilized 13% (0.6 mi.), fringe marsh 78% (3.4 mi.), and embayed marsh 8% (0.4 mi.).

RIVER: The Appomattox River is too narrow for classification, having controlling depths of 5 feet to Petersburg in 1971.

SHORELANDS USE

FASTLAND: Commercial 8% (0.4 mi.), residential 76% (3.6 mi.), and unmanaged, wooded 16% (0.7 mi.).

SHORE: Private use and some waterfowl hunting in the marshes.

RIVER: Commercial shipping and pleasure boating.

SHORELINE TREND: The shoreline trends basically E - W in this subsegment.

OWNERSHIP: Private.

ZONING: Residential.

FLOOD HAZARD: Low, noncritical. The entire subsegment has elevations of at least 20 feet, with the exception of the mouth of Cabin Creek.

BEACH QUALITY: There are no beaches in this subsegment.

PRESENT SHORE EROSION SITUATION

EROSION RATE: Slight or no change to moderate, noncritical. The historical erosion rate from Cabin Creek to Hopewell City limits is 2.0 feet per year.

SUBSEGMENT 2B

JORDAN POINT TO WINDMILL POINT

(Maps 4, 5 and 6)

EXTENT: 139,000 feet (26.3 mi.) of shoreline from Jordan Point to Windmill Point. The subsegment also includes 156,000 feet (29.6 mi.) of fast-land.

SHORELANDS TYPE

FASTLAND: Low shore 24% (7.2 mi.), moderately low shore 40% (11.9 mi.), moderately high shore 9% (2.6 mi.), high shore 26% (7.5 mi.), and high shore with bluff 1% (0.4 mi.).

SHORE: Beach 28% (7.5 mi.), fringe marsh 8% (2.0 mi.), embayed marsh 60% (15.7 mi.), and extensive marsh 4% (1.1 mi.).

NEARSHORE: Narrow 9%, intermediate 18%, and wide 10%. The remainder of the subsegment is located along the creeks.

SHORELANDS USE

FASTLAND: Agricultural 25% (7.4 mi.), commercial 3% (0.9 mi.), industrial 4% (1.1 mi.), recreational 1% (0.3 mi.), residential 3% (1.0 mi.), and unmanaged, wooded 64% (18.9 mi.).

SHORE: Little used except for the marina at Jordan Point. Some waterfowl hunting in the marshes.

NEARSHORE: Sport boating, fishing, and other water related activities. Commercial shipping to Hopewell and Richmond.

SHORELINE TREND: The shoreline trend is basically W - E from Jordan Point to Windmill Point. The fetch at Jordan Point is WSW - 1.7 nm, and at Coggins Point W - 1.9 nm. The fetches at Windmill Point are WNW - 3.5 nm and SSE - 2.2 nm.

OWNERSHIP: Private.

ZONING: Jordan Point is zoned for business. The rest of the subsegment is zoned for agricultural, residential, and some industrial use.

FLOOD HAZARD: Low, noncritical. The majority of the shorelands have elevations of at least 20 feet.

BEACH QUALITY: Fair. Most beaches are of moderate

width with some vegetation.

PRESENT SHORE EROSION SITUATION

EROSION RATE: Slight or no change to moderate, noncritical. The area experiencing most change is Flowerdew Hundred, which has an average erosion rate of 2.4 feet per year.

ENDANGERED STRUCTURES: None.

SHORE PROTECTIVE STRUCTURES: There is a small area of effective bulkheading at Jordan Point Marina. Several sand filled barges off Jordan Point serve as effective breakwaters.

OTHER SHORE STRUCTURES: There are several piers located in the subsegment. Structures at Jordan Point include a marine railway, concrete boat ramp, and numerous covered slips.

SHORE USE LIMITATIONS: Sixty-four percent of the shoreline in this subsegment is embayed or extensive marsh. These areas are protected by the Virginia Wetlands Act of 1972, which strictly controls any planned alteration of tidal marsh areas. Development behind marshes is possible, though access to the water would be limited and difficult. Several areas along the shoreline, mainly around Jordan Point, have already been developed. The marina and airport at Jordan Point would prohibit other building in that area. The Beechwood Manor subdivision does have room for expansion if necessary. The rest of the subsegment is characterized by high or moderately high elevations near the shoreline. The inland plains are generally used for agriculture. The Flowerdew Hundred area is one of several large parcels of land owned by individuals in the county. Development in these sections would depend directly upon the wishes of these landowners. For the present time, these lands are largely used for agriculture.

ALTERNATE SHORE USE: Low. This subsegment is largely rural - agricultural in nature. Development will probably continue to center on the well used inland motor routes through the county. Isolated residential development is possible in areas along the shore. It is expected, however, that the shorelands will remain primarily in their present rural state for the near future.

MAPS: USGS, 7.5 Min.Ser. (Topo.), WESTOVER, Va.

Quadr., 1965;

USGS, 7.5 Min.Ser. (Topo.), CHARLES CITY, Va.

Quadr., 1965.

C&GS, #530, 1:40,000 scale, JAMES RIVER, Jamestown Island to Jordan Point, 1971.

PHOTOS: Aerial-VIMS 12Ju174 PG-2B/38-66.

Ground-VIMS 10Dec75 PG-2B/32-44;  
64-72.

behind in the fastland. The marsh should be preserved. This subsegment is actively used for agricultural purposes, being part of two large estates. Any development would be at the sacrifice of the agriculture.

ALTERNATE SHORE USE: Low. Two large estates actively control the use of this subsegment. No change in the present agricultural use is foreseen for the near future.

MAPS: USGS, 7.5 Min.Ser. (Topo.), CHARLES CITY, Va. Quadr., 1965;  
USGS, 7.5 Min.Ser. (Topo.), BRANDON, Va. Quadr., 1965.  
C&GS, #530, 1:40,000 scale, JAMES RIVER, Jamestown Island to Jordan Point, 1971.

PHOTOS: Aerial-VIMS 12Jul74 PG-3B/5-15.  
Ground-VIMS 10Dec75 PG-3B/1-10.

#### SUBSEGMENT 3C

##### UPPER CHIPOKES CREEK

(Maps 8 and 9)

EXTENT: 76,800 feet (14.5 mi.) of shoreline from Brandon Point to the headwaters of Upper Chippokes Creek. The fastland extent is 91,000 feet (17.2 mi.).

##### SHORELANDS TYPE

FASTLAND: Low shore 42% (7.2 mi.), moderately low shore 50% (8.5 mi.), moderately high shore 3% (0.6 mi.), and high shore 5% (0.9 mi.).

SHORE: Artificially stabilized less than 1%, beach 21% (3.1 mi.), fringe marsh 6% (0.9 mi.), and embayed marsh 73% (10.4 mi.).

NEARSHORE: Narrow 16%. The remainder of the subsegment is located along Upper Chippokes Creek, which has controlling depths of 2 to 5 feet.

##### SHORELANDS USE

FASTLAND: Agricultural 42% (7.2 mi.) and unmanaged, wooded 58% (10.0 mi.).

SHORE: Some waterfowl hunting in the marshes, but mostly unused.

RIVER: Commercial shipping and pleasure boating.

CREEK: Sport fishing and other water related activities.

SHORELINE TREND: The shoreline trend is basically NE - SW in this subsegment. The fetch at Chippokes Point is SE - 5.6 nm.

OWNERSHIP: Private.

ZONING: Agricultural.

FLOOD HAZARD: Low, noncritical. The majority of the subsegment has elevations of at least 10 feet. Only the marsh areas are subject to flooding.

BEACH QUALITY: Poor. This subsegment has narrow, strip beaches.

##### PRESENT SHORE EROSION SITUATION

EROSION RATE: Slight or no change to moderate, noncritical. While the areas near the creek

head appear stable, erosion elsewhere ranges from 1.1 to 1.4 feet per year.

ENDANGERED STRUCTURES: None.

SHORE PROTECTIVE STRUCTURES: There is approximately 400 feet of effective bulkheading at Brandon.

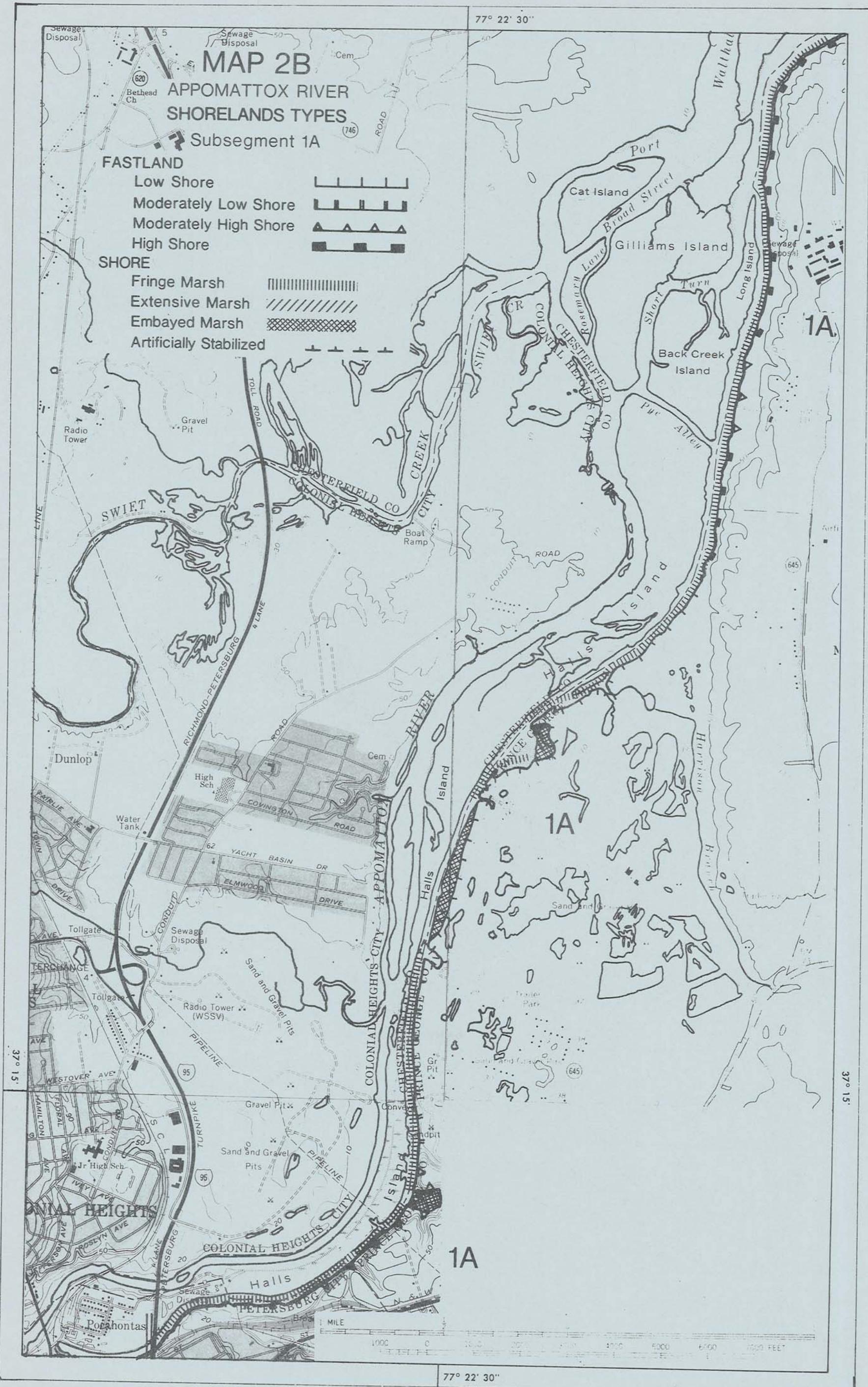
OTHER SHORE STRUCTURES: There is a pier at Brandon and a boat landing near the head waters of Upper Chippokes Creek.

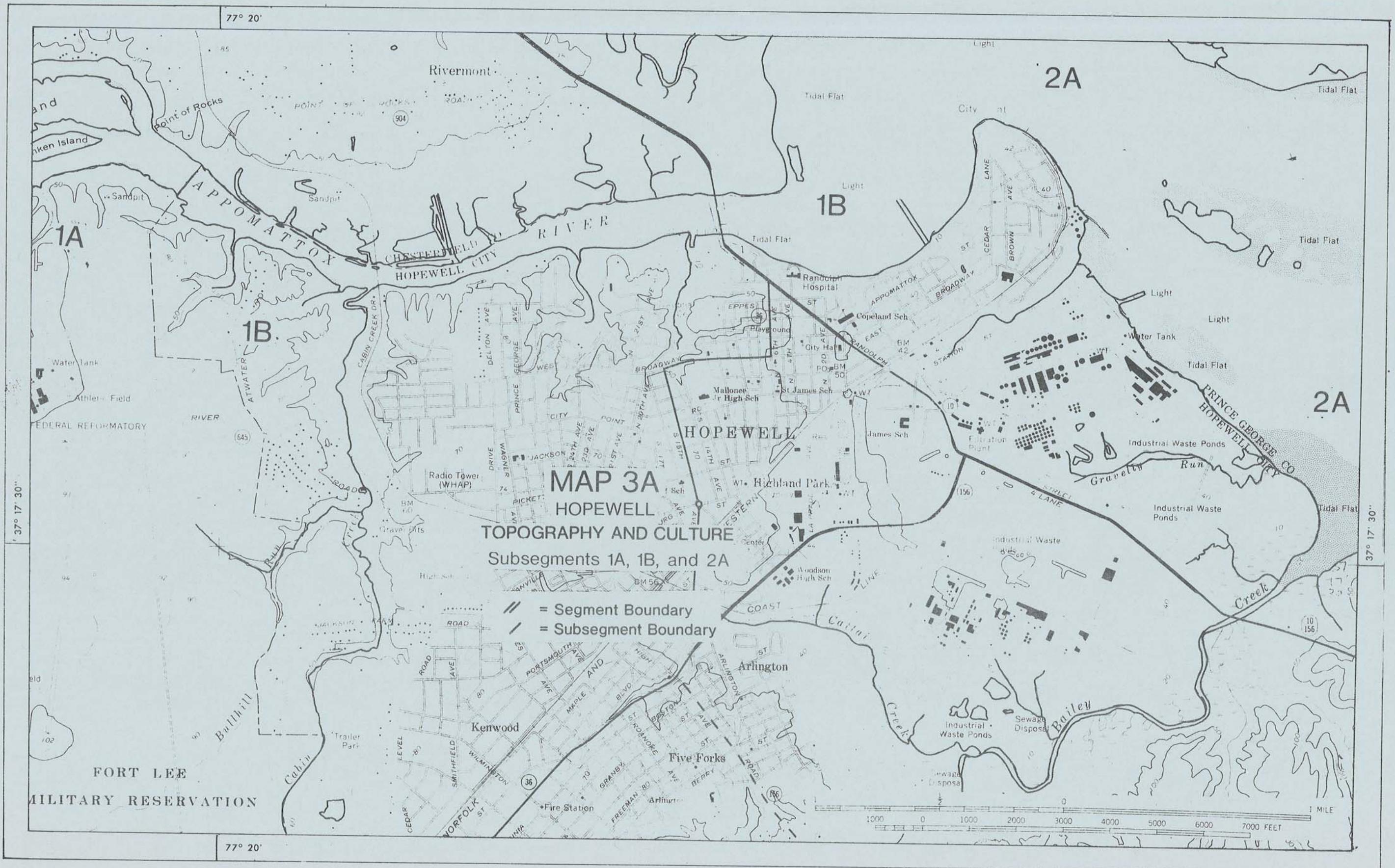
SHORE USE LIMITATIONS: The fastlands of this subsegment are divided between agricultural and wooded lands. Generally, the agricultural areas are located from the mouth of Upper Chippokes Creek north to Brandon. The shorelands of the creek are entirely unmanaged, wooded. As in the preceding subsegment, the agricultural lands are part of a large estate, "Brandon", and their use is therefore controlled by the estate. The wooded lands along Upper Chippokes Creek are fronted by large areas of embayed marsh (seventy-three percent of the shoreline is embayed marsh). The shorelands along the creek have very limited access, there being only dirt roads to the area.

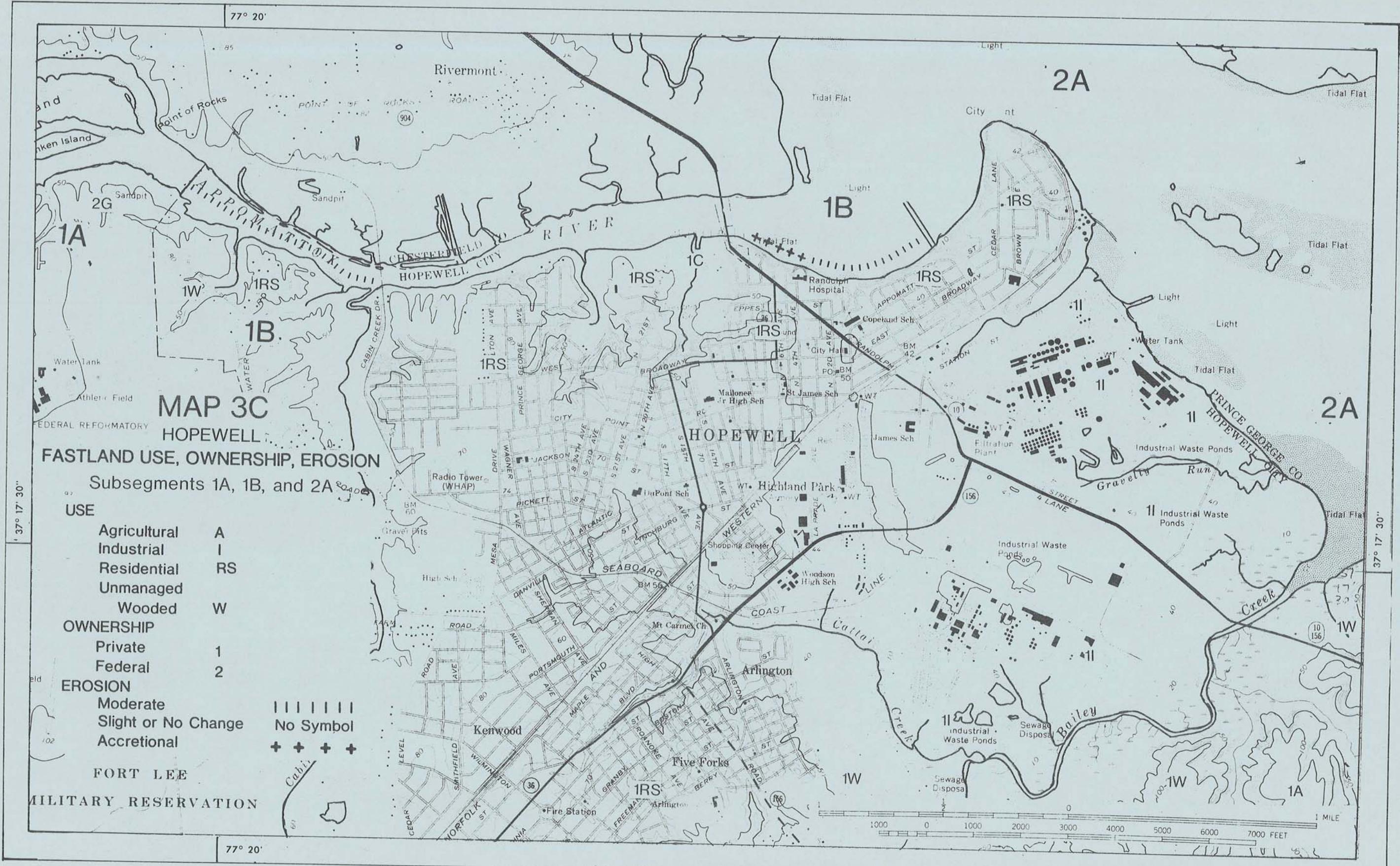
ALTERNATE SHORE USE: Low. Little change in the present shore use seems probable. The agricultural lands are controlled by a large estate and will most likely remain unchanged. The lack of access to the creek shorelands, plus the presence of embayed marsh along the shoreline, make development unlikely here. A low intensity recreational facility near the headwaters of Upper Chippokes Creek is a possibility. This area is near a paved road, and the wooded nature of the land plus the embayed marsh areas would be ideal for nature walks, picnicking, and other such recreational uses.

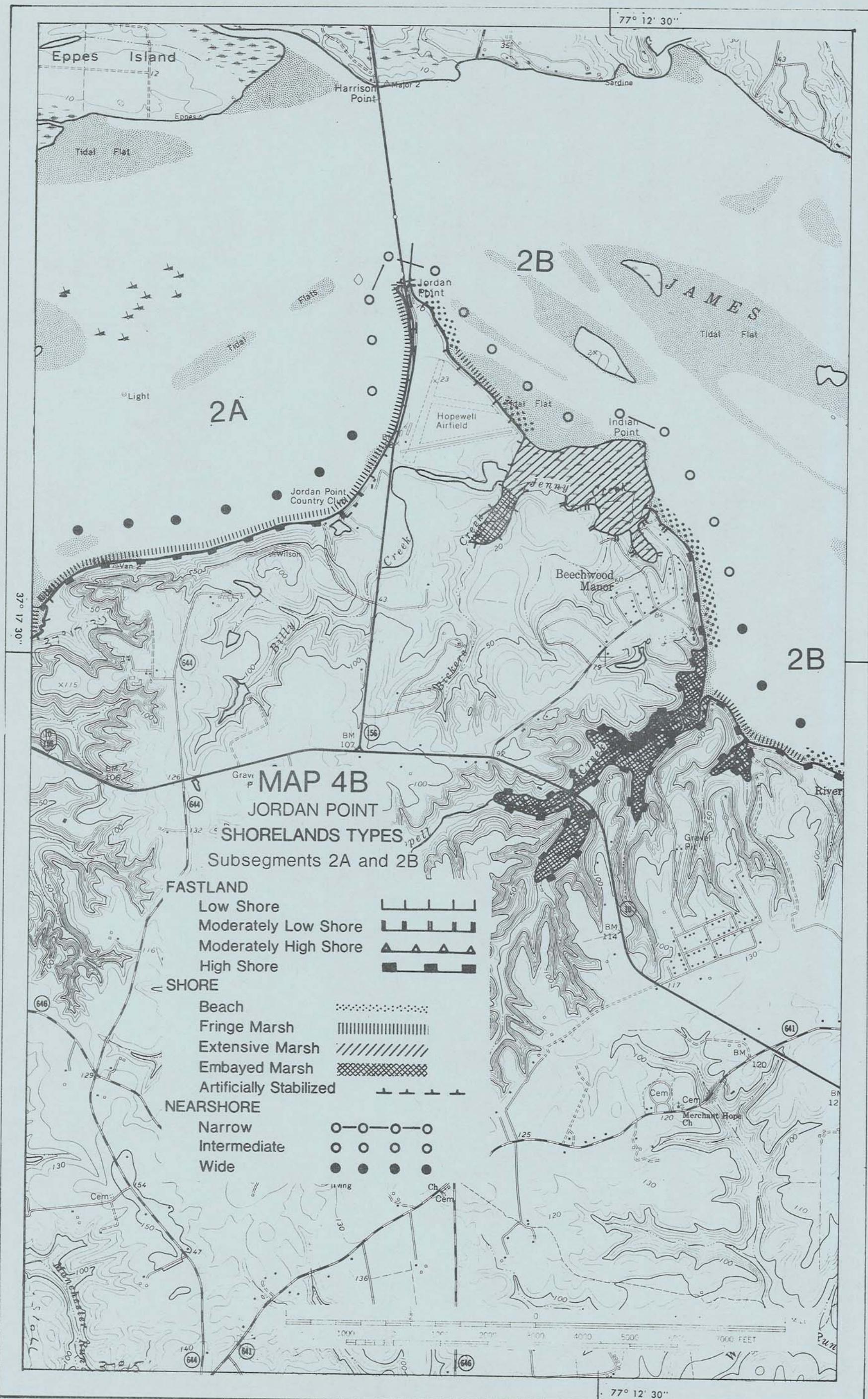
MAPS: USGS, 7.5 Min.Ser. (Topo.), BRANDON, Va. Quadr., 1965;  
USGS, 7.5 Min.Ser. (Topo.), CLAREMONT, Va. Quadr., 1966;  
USGS, 7.5 Min.Ser. (Topo.), SAVEDGE, Va. Quadr., 1966.  
C&GS, #530, 1:40,000 scale, JAMES RIVER, Jamestown Island to Jordan Point, 1971.

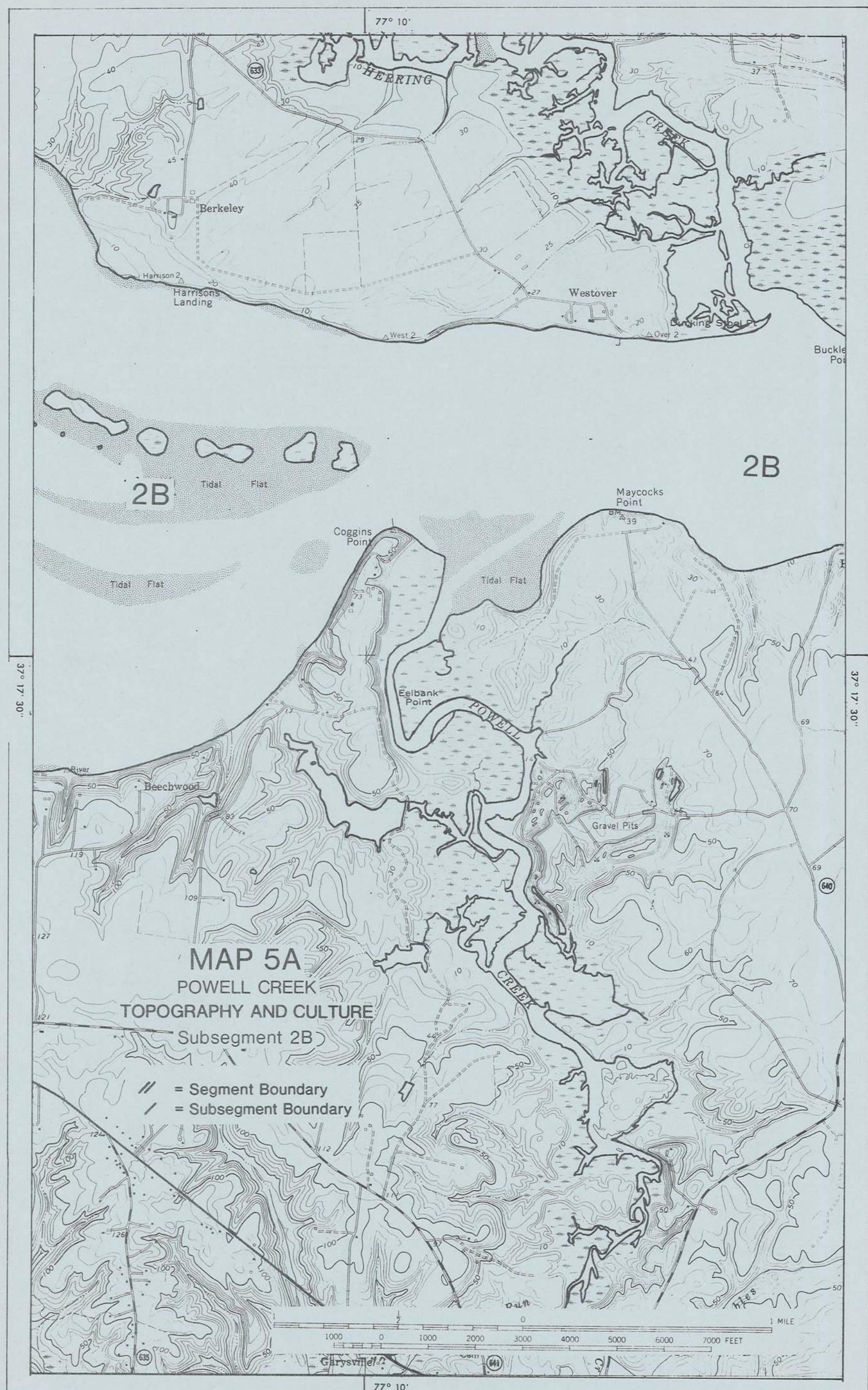
PHOTOS: Aerial-VIMS 12Jul74 PG-3C/1-4;  
PG-3B/5-8.  
Ground-VIMS 10Dec75 PG-3B/1-10.



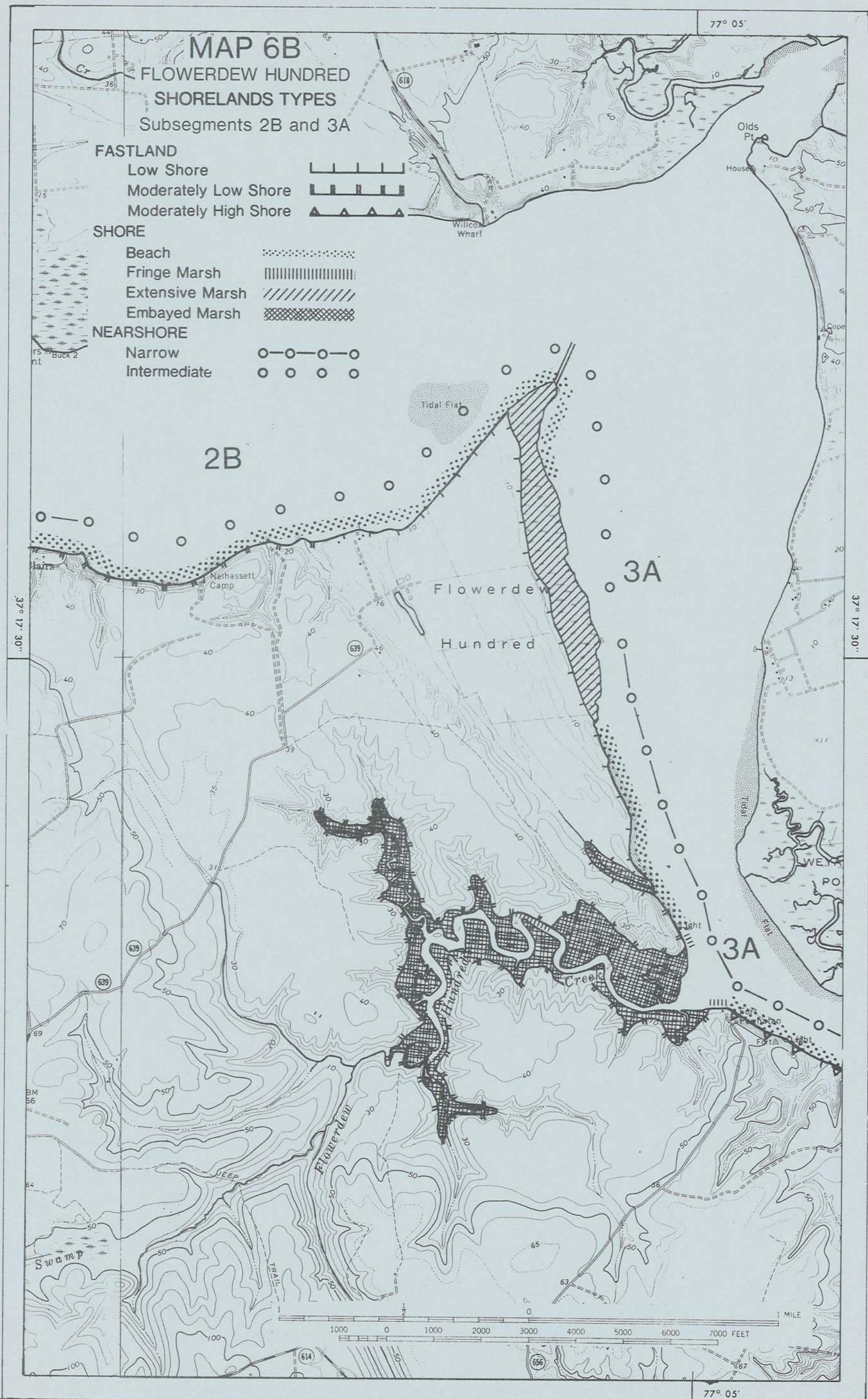




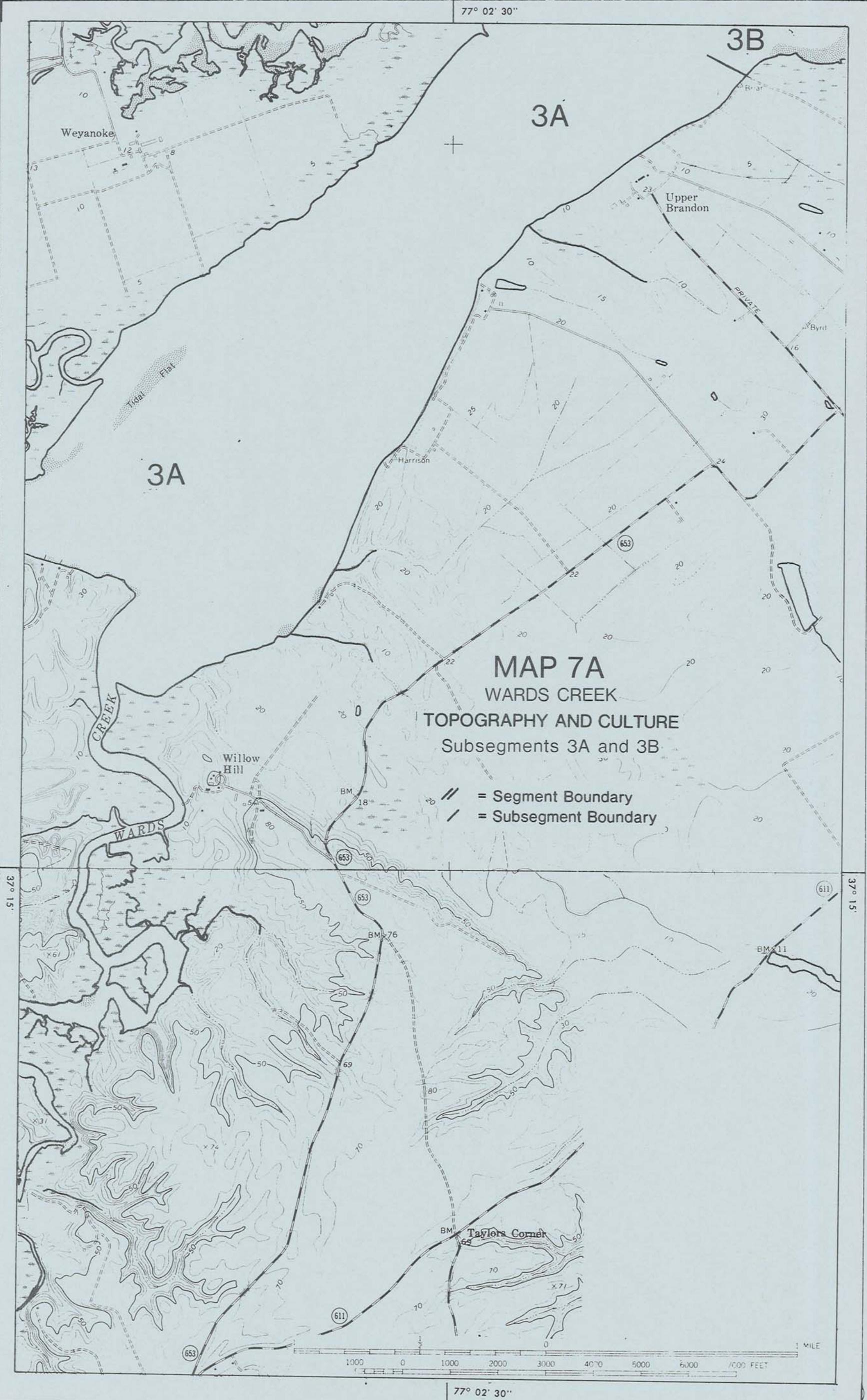








77° 02' 30"



77° 02' 30"

