

# Teachable Watershed Systems

The Maidford River  
and the  
Norman Bird Sanctuary

# Where is the Maidford River?



12-7546 Middletown, RI Sachuest Point  
Aerials Only Gallery 508-295-5551 (c)skypic.com



# The Third Beach Property, Middletown



Source: 2001 Recreation Conservation and Open Space data and 1995 Parcel Mapping courtesy of Town of Middletown Geographic Information System

Mapping and Planning Services  
Jamestown, Rhode Island  
(401) 423-3841 MII 11/02



Source: 1997 Digital Orthophotography courtesy of RGIS and REXOT

**NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY**  
A Wildlife Refuge  
583 Third Beach Road, Middletown, RI 02842  
Tel: (401) 846-2577 www.normanbirdsanctuary.org

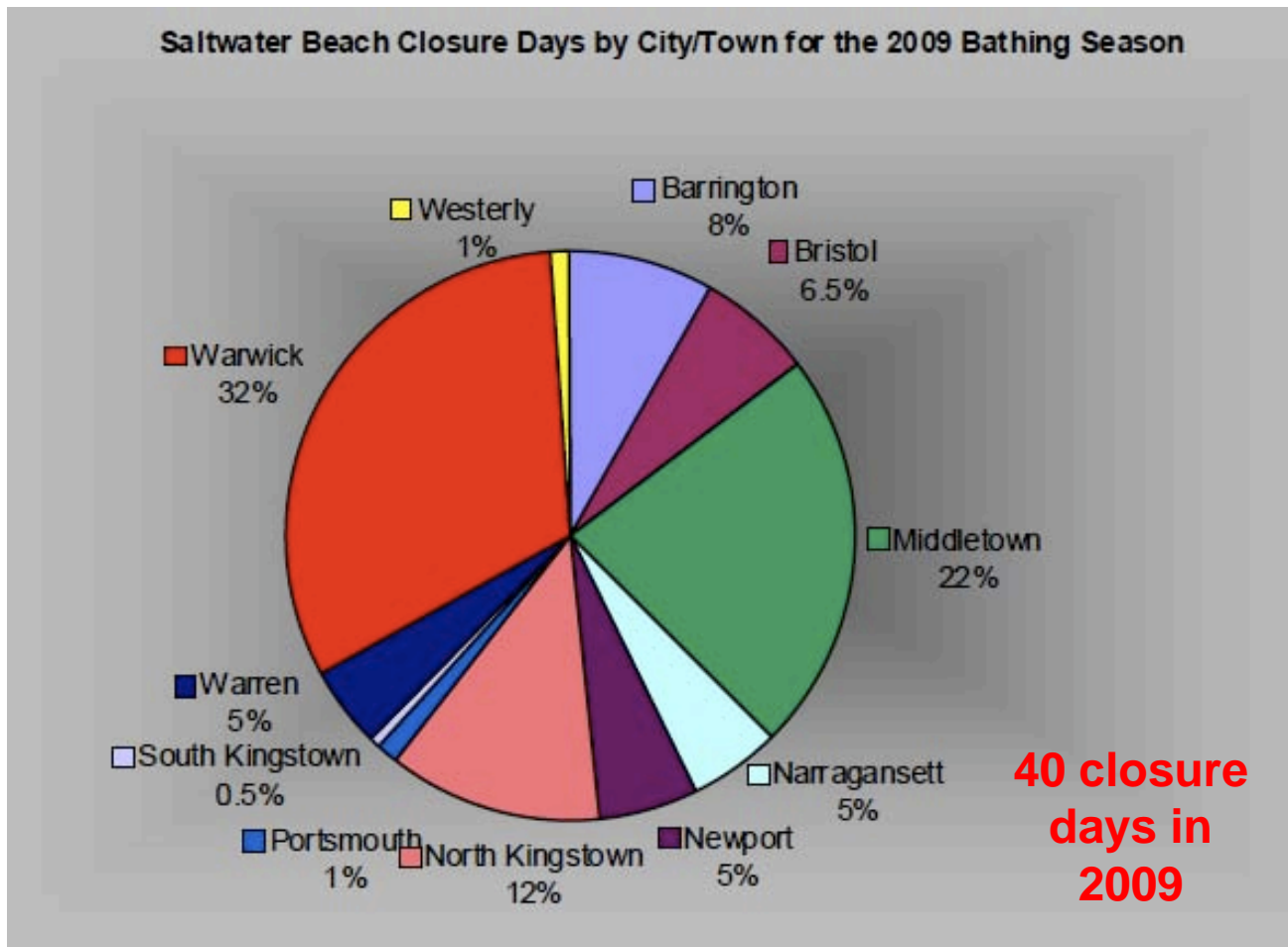


# Why are we interested?



- Part of the NBS property
- Man-made problems
- Environmental education outreach

# The Ugly



# Human intervention

- Third Beach Boat Ramp pressuring threatened Piping Plovers
- River flow impeded by concrete barrier
- Third Beach Road
  - weakened dune system
  - sand filling in salt marshes
- Fecal coliform presence



# The Good

## SAVE OUR SHORELINE

THE NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY HAS UNTIL APRIL TO RAISE THE FUNDS TO PURCHASE 23 ACRES OF SAKONNET RIVER FRONTAGE AND BEACH.

THIS PROPERTY WAS SLATED TO BE SOLD TO A MASSACHUSETTS DEVELOPER. THE NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY EXERCISED ITS OPTION TO MATCH HIS OFFER, AND MUST RAISE \$3,687,500 BY APRIL 14.

THE SANCTUARY NEEDS THE HELP AND SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THIS CRITICAL LAND FOR THE BENEFIT OF WILDLIFE AND FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF THE PUBLIC.



PLEASE HELP THE NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY WITH YOUR DONATION TO MEET A \$1 MILLION CHALLENGE. YOUR DOLLARS WILL BE MATCHED BY THIS CHALLENGE GRANT.

### YES, I AM A STEWARD OF THE EARTH!

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

- ENCLOSED IS MY CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO:  
 NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY THIRD BEACH ACCOUNT
- PLEASE CHARGE MY VISA/MASTERCARD (CIRCLE ONE)  
 ACCOUNT# : \_\_\_\_\_ EXPIRATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

IN THE AMOUNT OF: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE MAIL TO:  
 NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY, 583 THIRD BEACH ROAD, MIDDLETOWN, RI 02842

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL (401) 846-2577

Wednesday, October 27, 1994  
**But can they do it?**

## Birders vow to save beach from developer

BY MARGO SULLIVAN

MIDDLETOWN - Nobody is talking about condos and pavement. The Massachusetts developer who is trying to buy the old Third Beach Club property says he wants to build "a gentleman's farm." But it isn't the vision of grazing horses that has Aquidneck Islanders worried and apparently prompted the

Norman Bird Sanctuary to make a competing bid. It's the fear that their access to the wetlands and the beach between the sanctuary and the Sachuest Wildlife Refuge will be blocked.

A look at the record of that developer, Howard A. Fafard, head of the Fafard Land Development Corp. of Ashland, Mass., gives reason to worry. He insists he has no intention of sub-dividing the property. But sub-dividing is what Fafard does. He has 75 corporation listings in Massachusetts and Rhode Island and has run afoul of authorities and citizens in his home state on several occasions.

Fafard already has made it clear he doesn't like the idea of people wandering near his property. Betsy de Leiris, executive director of the bird sanctuary, said that, in addition to trying to buy the Third Beach property, Fafard made "a generous offer" last month for a 99-year lease on adjoining sanctuary-owned land. He told her he would put his horses in the fields and promised he would use the land in ways compatible with a bird sanctuary. He wanted this additional space, de Leiris said, because he did not want people walking around his estate if he succeeded in building there.

The Third Beach property belongs to the five grandchildren of the sanctuary's benefactor, the late Mabel Norman, and the sanctuary has the legal right to equal Fafard's bid of \$3.7 million for the 23 acres and buy the land. It has put up a \$10,000 deposit and has until tomorrow (Oct. 31) to pony up another \$185,000 if it intends to stay in the race. De Leiris says that money will be available and that she is sure Middletown, public groups and individuals will come through with the rest of the \$3.7 million by the deadline, next March 1, so as to keep this open space between the bird sanctuary and the Sachuest Point Wildlife



THIRD BEACH: Open space or private property? Photo by MARGO SULLIVAN

Refuge open and accessible to the public by road. Newport This Week. "We will need help from donors of all sizes, but we think this is very important to the community and that people understand why we need to move now." The Fafard bid "is a bit of a bluff," she told. See THIRD BEACH, page 1.

# Once the Third Beach Club...



# ...Now the Third Beach Education Center



We hope to reduce the negative human impacts to this watershed by educating the youngest residents of Aquidneck Island

# What are we doing with this resource?



- Protecting the land
- Inspiring love for natural habitats
- Teaching concepts & connections

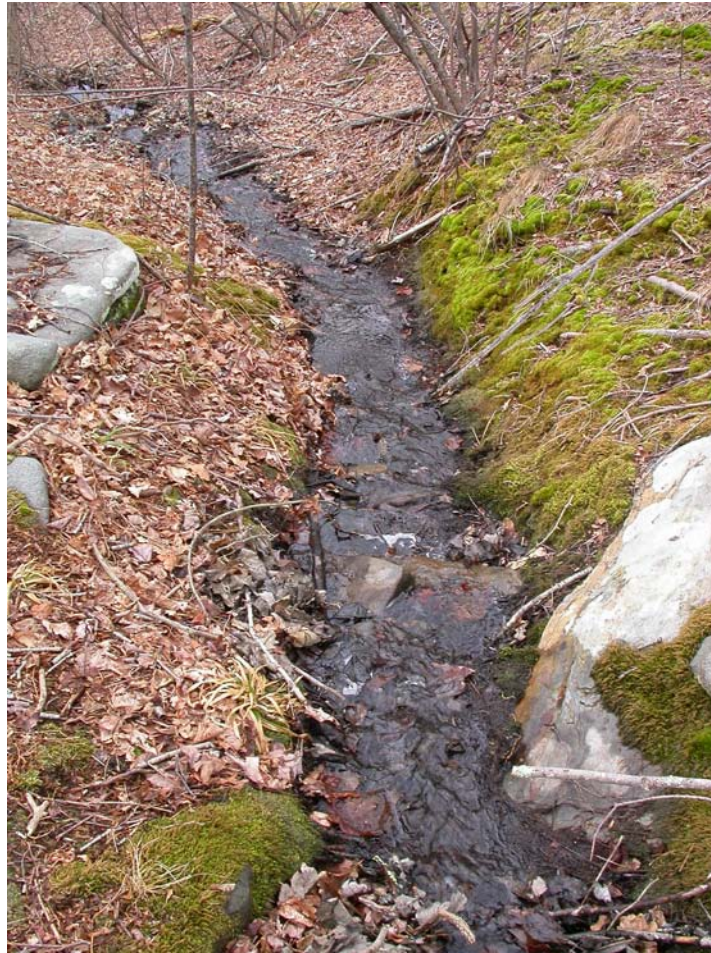
# Field Trips: Upland Watershed Area



# Nelson Pond



# Pond and Stream Ecology



# Back to the river outlet



Structured: fish dissection



Unstructured: nature discovery

# Future Education

- Summer classroom space
- Public outreach
  - Aquidneck Island Paddle Party
  - Something of that Nature art event
- Expanded field trip curriculum:
  - “What’s in the water?”
  - “Rhode Island Wildlife”
  - “Wetlands and Watersheds”

# References

*Special thanks to Lauren Miller, Natasha Harrison, and Lauren Pejza for photos.*

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United States Environmental Protection Agency. 2008 Waterbody Report for Maidford River. April 2011. [http://oaspub.epa.gov/tmdl\\_attains\\_waterbody.control?p\\_list\\_id=RI0007035R-02B&p\\_cycle=2008&p\\_report\\_type=#causes](http://oaspub.epa.gov/tmdl_attains_waterbody.control?p_list_id=RI0007035R-02B&p_cycle=2008&p_report_type=#causes)

