



Town of Orleans

Community Preservation Committee
9 School Road Orleans MA 02653-3699
Telephone (508) 240-3700 – Fax (508) 240-3388

FY27 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PROJECT APPLICATION

(for consideration at Annual Town Meeting in **Spring 2026** or Special Town Meeting in **Fall 2026**)

SECTION A

Project Title: Cedar Pond Shore Land Protection Project

Submission Date: November 14, 2025

Applicant (note if Town, individual or non-profit): Orleans Conservation Trust (Nonprofit)

Mailing Address: 203 South Orleans Road, Orleans, MA 02653

Co-Applicant, if any (note if Town, individual or non-profit):

Mailing Address:

Project Contact Person(s): Stephen O'Grady

Telephone: 508-255-0183

E-mail: stephen.ogradey@orleansconservationtrust.org

Federal Tax Identification Number (if non-profit): 23-7418072

Project purpose (Check all that apply):

Open Space

Historic Preservation

Community Housing

Recreation

Project Location/Address: 32 Locust Road

Community Preservation Funding Request: \$175,000.00

Brief Project Summary, including justification of project category checked above:

Orleans Conservation Trust (OCT) seeks Town partnership in the acquisition of the 3.78-acre vacant lot at 32 Locust Road to protect the land for open space and passive recreation purposes. This key parcel includes 620 feet of shoreline on Cedar Pond and expands upon 12 acres of adjacent protected land established through past OCT and Town collaboration. Conservation of the property would safeguard rare and valuable pond shore wildlife habitat, buffer Cedar Pond and Rock Harbor Creek from further water quality degradation associated with development, permanently protect land within the Inner Cape Cod Bay Area of Critical Environmental Concern, and provide an opportunity for public access to one of the largest freshwater ponds in Orleans only a short walk from the Cape Cod Rail Trail and the Orleans town center.

Importantly, **OCT is requesting only one-third of the funding required to purchase the land;** non-Town of Orleans sources, including a state grant and private funders, will provide the rest of the money for the project. Further, OCT will be responsible for future management of the property, avoiding any additional burden on the Town.

Detailed Narrative

Cedar Pond Shore Land Protection Project

The Orleans Conservation Trust (OCT) seeks to permanently protect 3.78 acres of ecologically valuable land at 32 Locust Road in Orleans. This parcel—situated on Cedar Pond, the town’s fourth-largest freshwater pond—includes 620 feet of pond shoreline within the Inner Cape Cod Bay Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC; see Map 5). The property represents a high-priority conservation acquisition that safeguards critical pond shore habitat, expands a growing wildlife corridor, protects water quality of Cedar Pond and Rock Harbor Creek, and provides an opportunity to establish the first formal public access to Cedar Pond for an area currently underserved in outdoor recreational opportunities.

The project advances Orleans’ longstanding goals for water quality protection, habitat preservation, and equitable public access to open space while aligning with the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act (CPA) priorities for Open Space and Recreation.

Orleans Conservation Trust:

OCT was founded in 1970 to preserve the “seaside charm and rural character” of the town. Today, OCT’s mission is to protect and restore natural lands — for people and wildlife, the health of our waters, and the character of our community. A private nonprofit organization, the Trust acquires and manages land to enhance habitat, provides opportunities for learning and for enjoying nature, promotes sound conservation practices, and works with landowners who wish to conserve property.

Fifty-five years since its founding, OCT stewards more than 700 acres of woodlands, wetlands, and shorelines for the benefit of our town and our cherished coastal environment. OCT creates and maintains trails for all to enjoy, leads guided walks, and provides programs where residents get a deeper understanding of the environment where they live.

OCT has over 1,300 members and an active 15-member board of trustees, which uses the Standards & Practices of the national Land Trust Alliance to guide its organizational success in preserving and managing lands. A dedicated staff—consisting of an executive director, a communications and programs coordinator, a director of land stewardship, a land stewardship technician, and an administrative assistant —provides a steady professional presence to match OCT’s long-standing volunteer engagement.

Land Protection Project:

OCT negotiated purchase of the 32 Locust Road parcel for \$520,000 in June 2025 (supported by an appraisal that assigned a higher value) and plans to close by June 30, 2026. The property will be acquired in fee simple by OCT, with the Town of Orleans’

acquiring a Conservation Restriction (if CPA funding is approved). OCT will be responsible for ongoing land stewardship. The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts is expected to take title to the property before the end of the 2025, pre-acquiring the property to give OCT and the Town the opportunity to raise the funds for the project.

The site includes mature oak and tupelo forest, freshwater shoreline, and prime forest soils, forming a natural link between Cedar Pond and an adjacent Atlantic White Cedar–Red Maple swamp to the west. The swamp is part of 12 acres of conserved land and connects to other priority parcels that may be protected in the future, strengthening an important wildlife corridor.

Conservation values include:

- **Water quality protection:** safeguards shoreline beneficial to Cedar Pond’s ecological recovery (the pond’s water quality has been a focus of the Town for many years; it was once home to a herring run, which has shown recent signs of recovery).
- **Habitat and biodiversity:** supports roosting habitat for egrets and other wading birds, wetland species, and other forest wildlife within the Inner Cape Cod Bay ACEC and the large Atlantic White Cedar-Red Maple swamp system to the west.
- **Recreation and access:** provides an opportunity to establish the only formal public access to Cedar Pond, walkable from the town center, the Cape Cod Rail Trail, and nearby affordable housing. Improvements might include a small parking area, path to the water for walking, birdwatching, and environmental education, and a kayak launch.
- **Resilience:** protects forest and wetland systems that buffer stormwater and floodwaters and add to the climate resilience of Orleans.

Meeting the Goals of the Orleans Conservation, Open Space & Recreation Plan:

The parcel has been identified as a priority in both of the most recent Conservation, Recreation, and Open Space Plans (see Map 2). This project directly fulfills objectives of the 2019 Orleans Conservation, Open Space and Recreation Plan, including:

- **Conservation Goal:** Protects high-value pond-shore habitat and contributes to the preservation of connected freshwater ecosystems.
- **Open Space Goal:** Maintains Orleans’ rural and scenic character by preventing development on the town’s largest remaining unprotected pond-front parcel.
- **Recreation Goal:** Provides long-missing, equitable public access to a Great Pond for passive recreation, environmental education, and enjoyment by residents and visitors, including those in an adjacent Environmental Justice Census Block.

Meeting the Goals of the Orleans Comprehensive Long-Range Plan:

The Cedar Pond Shore project complements the Orleans Comprehensive Plan by:

- Advancing **natural resource protection** and sustainable land use through preservation of critical open space and water resources.
- Supporting **community health and well-being** by expanding opportunities for outdoor recreation within walking distance of the town center and a state-designated Environmental Justice Census Block (see Map 4).
- Enhancing **climate resilience** and **ecosystem integrity** by protecting wetlands, forests, and shoreline that mitigate flooding and improve water quality.
- Reinforcing the town's vision of a community that balances conservation, recreation, and responsible development.

By preventing residential development on this highly vulnerable parcel, the project sustains the town's long-term commitment to preserving environmental quality and community character.

Fundraising for the Acquisition:

OCT's fundraising goal is \$585,000, which includes all project costs and funding to fulfill future stewardship obligations. The purchase price for the land is \$520,000. OCT needs just one-third of the purchase price from the Town (\$175,000) to complete the project.

OCT has already obtained a commitment from the state to reimburse \$260,000 through the Massachusetts Conservation Partnership Grant Program. The remaining funds will come from private individuals and foundations and will be raised by June 30, 2026.

Action Plan and Timeline
Cedar Pond Shore Land Protection Project

October 7, 2024:

- Property listed on open market

June 2025:

- Orleans Conservation Trust's (OCT) offer to purchase for \$520,000 is accepted
- OCT applies for Massachusetts Conservation Partnership Grant

October 2025:

- OCT is notified of \$260,000 reimbursement grant through Massachusetts Conservation Partnership Grant Program

November 2025:

- OCT applies for \$175,000 in Orleans CPA funding

December 2025:

- The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts pre-acquires the property, giving OCT and the Town an opportunity to protect the property

March 2026:

- CPC makes funding recommendations for Town Meeting

May 2026:

- Town Meeting vote on CPC recommended budget

June 2026:

- OCT grants Conservation Restriction (CR) to Town, and OCT assumes ongoing management of the property (state grant compliance package, including CR, due June 30, 2026)
- OCT completes private fundraising

July 2026:

- Town distributes \$175,000 in CPA funding to OCT, ensuring permanent protection of the property

Financial Data
Cedar Pond Shore Land Protection Project

| Item/Service | Cost |
|--|------------------|
| Purchase price | \$520,000 |
| Survey (estimate) | \$6,000 |
| Closing costs and recording fees (estimate) | \$6,540 |
| Property taxes and insurance (estimate) | \$6,231 |
| State grant preparation and application fee | \$1,500 |
| Land Management Plan + Baseline Documentation Report | \$2,500 |
| Loan costs (\$260,000 at 1% for 7 months) | \$1,500 |
| Split rail fence and parking improvements | \$15,000 |
| Contribution to OCT Land Stewardship Fund | \$26,000 |
| Total Project Cost | \$585,271 |
| | |
| Excluded: OCT Project Management Costs | |

Maps

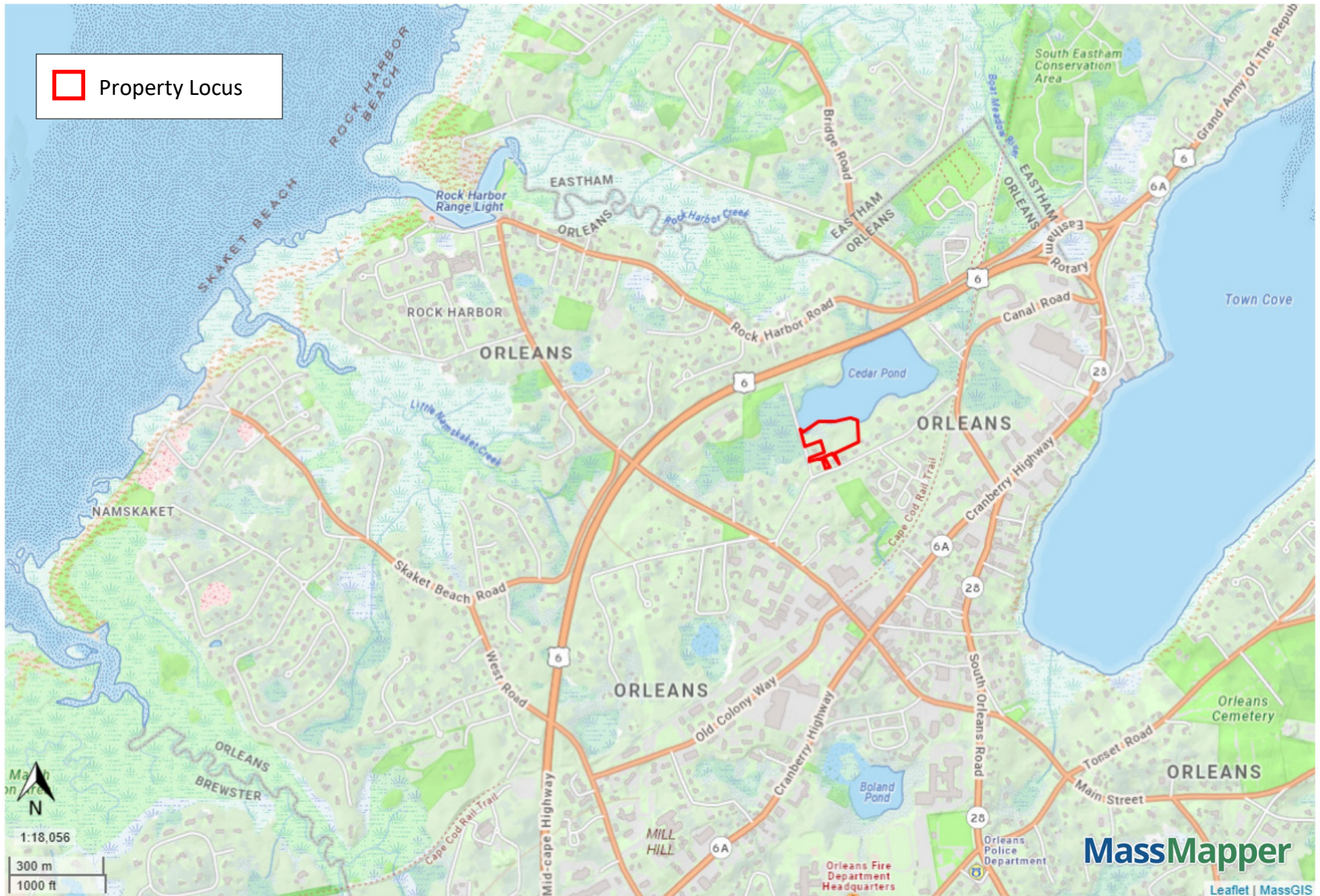
Cedar Pond Shore Land Protection Project

Map 1: Town Locus Map



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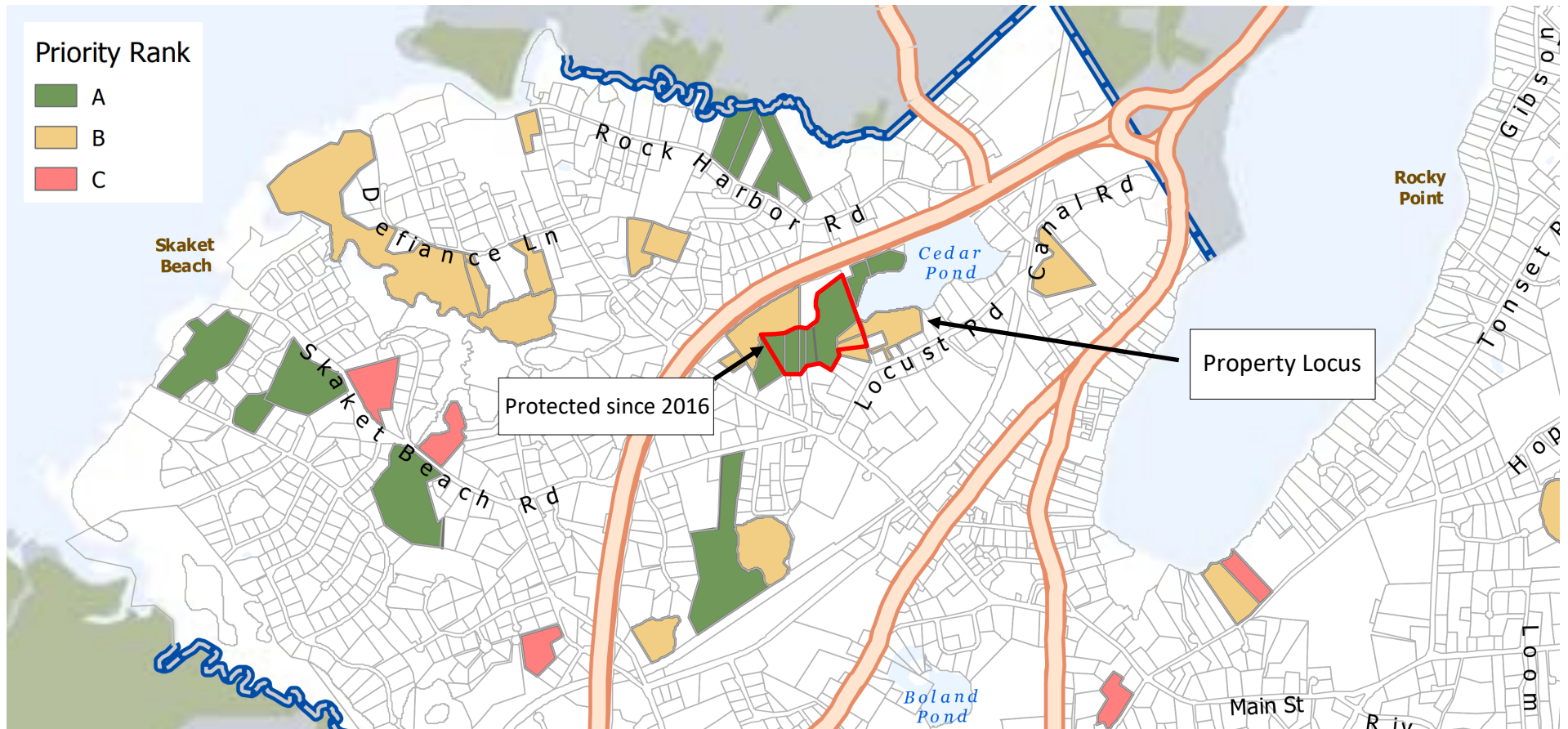
Maps

Cedar Pond Shore Land Protection Project

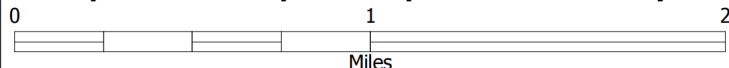
Map 2: Orleans 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan Priority Parcels Map
 (Parcel remains a ranked Priority Parcel in updated OSRP Plan, not yet formally adopted)



Map 7D – Open Space Priority Parcels



Map 7D - Open Space Priority Parcels



The information depicted on these maps is for planning purposes only. It is not adequate for legal boundary definition, regulatory interpretation, or parcel level analysis. It should not substitute for actual on-site survey, or supersede deed research.

- Town of Orleans Tax Parcels
- Adjacent Towns Open Space
- Town Line



Maps

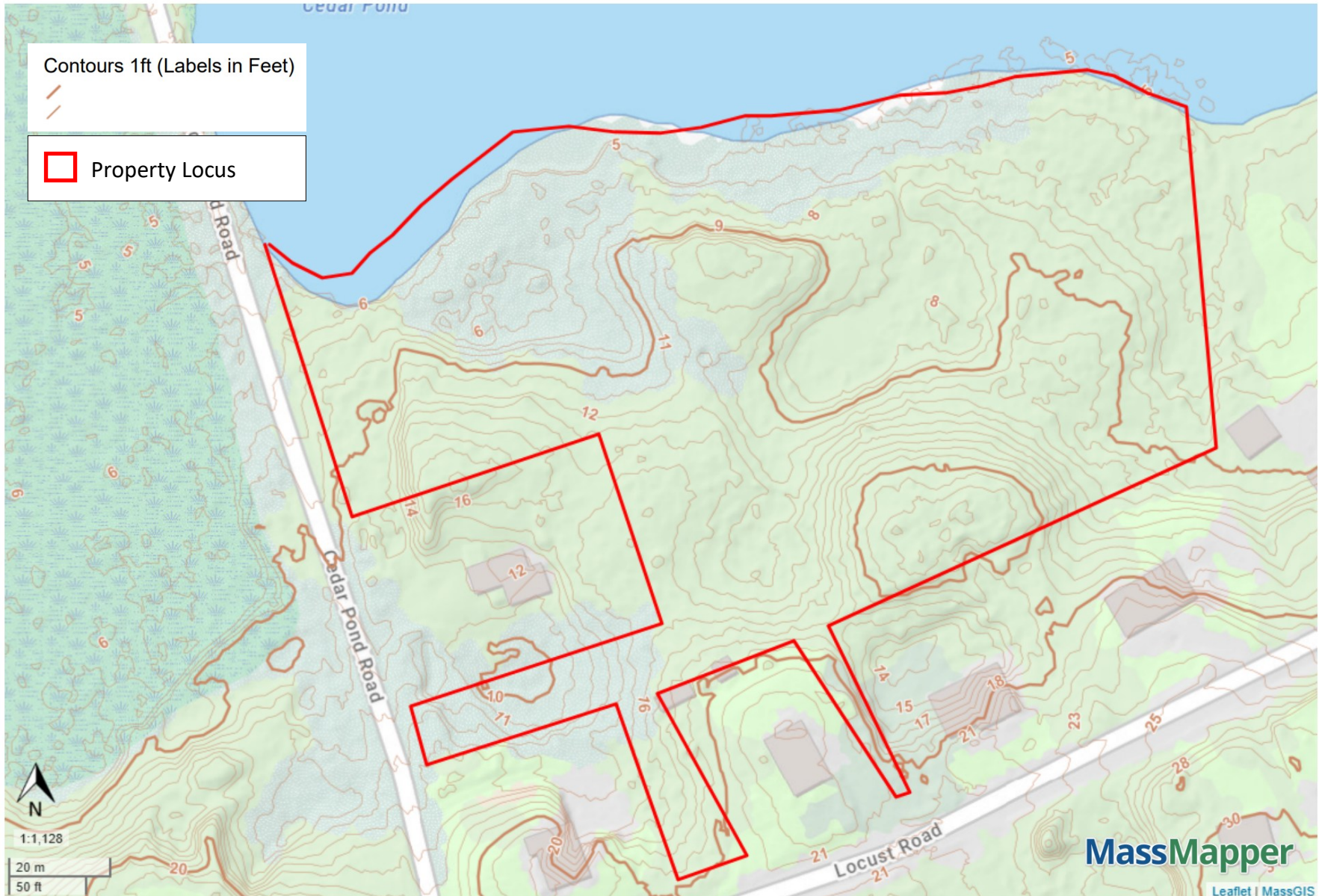
Cedar Pond Shore Land Protection Project

Map 3: Topography



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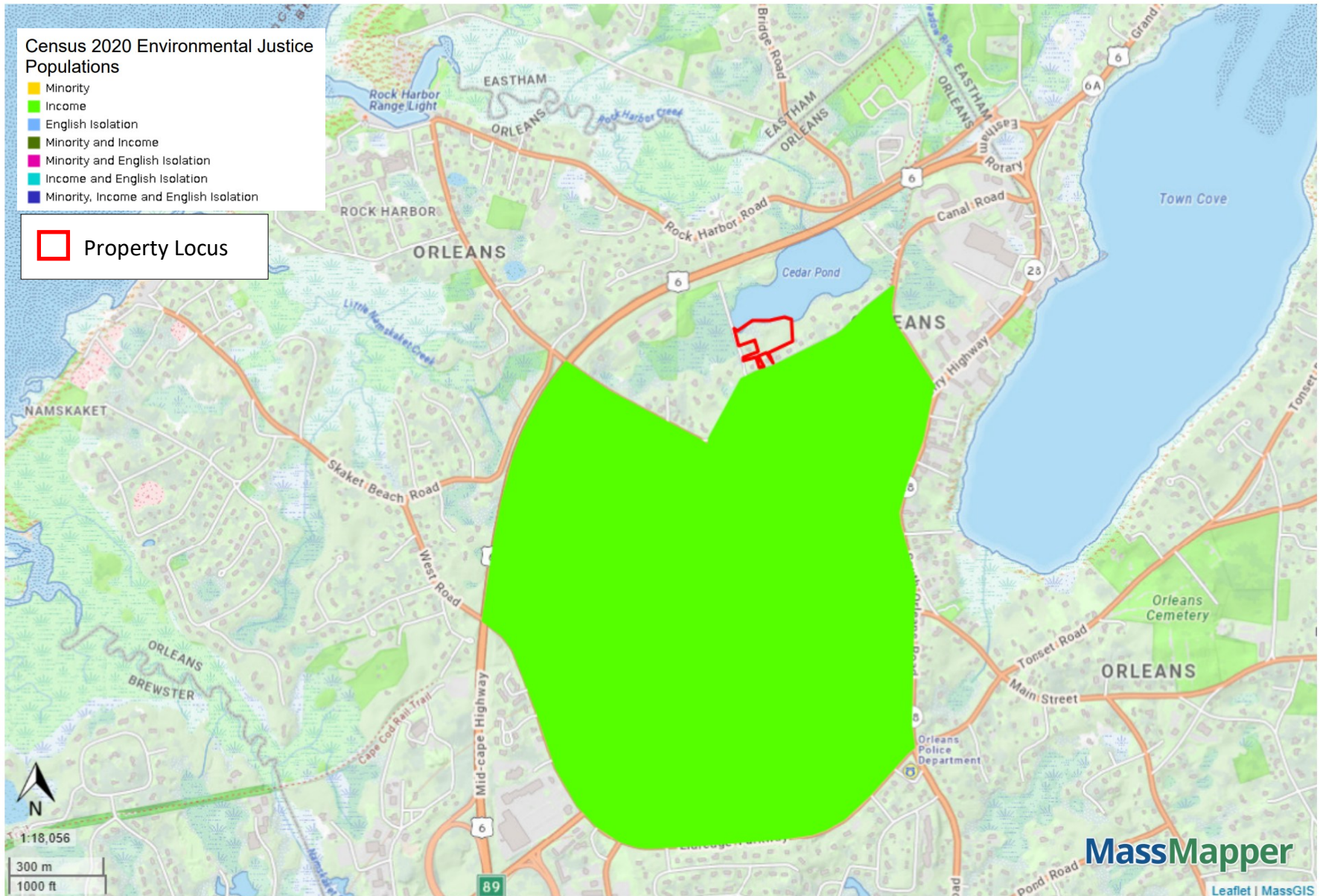
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Map 4: State-Designated Environmental Justice Census Block



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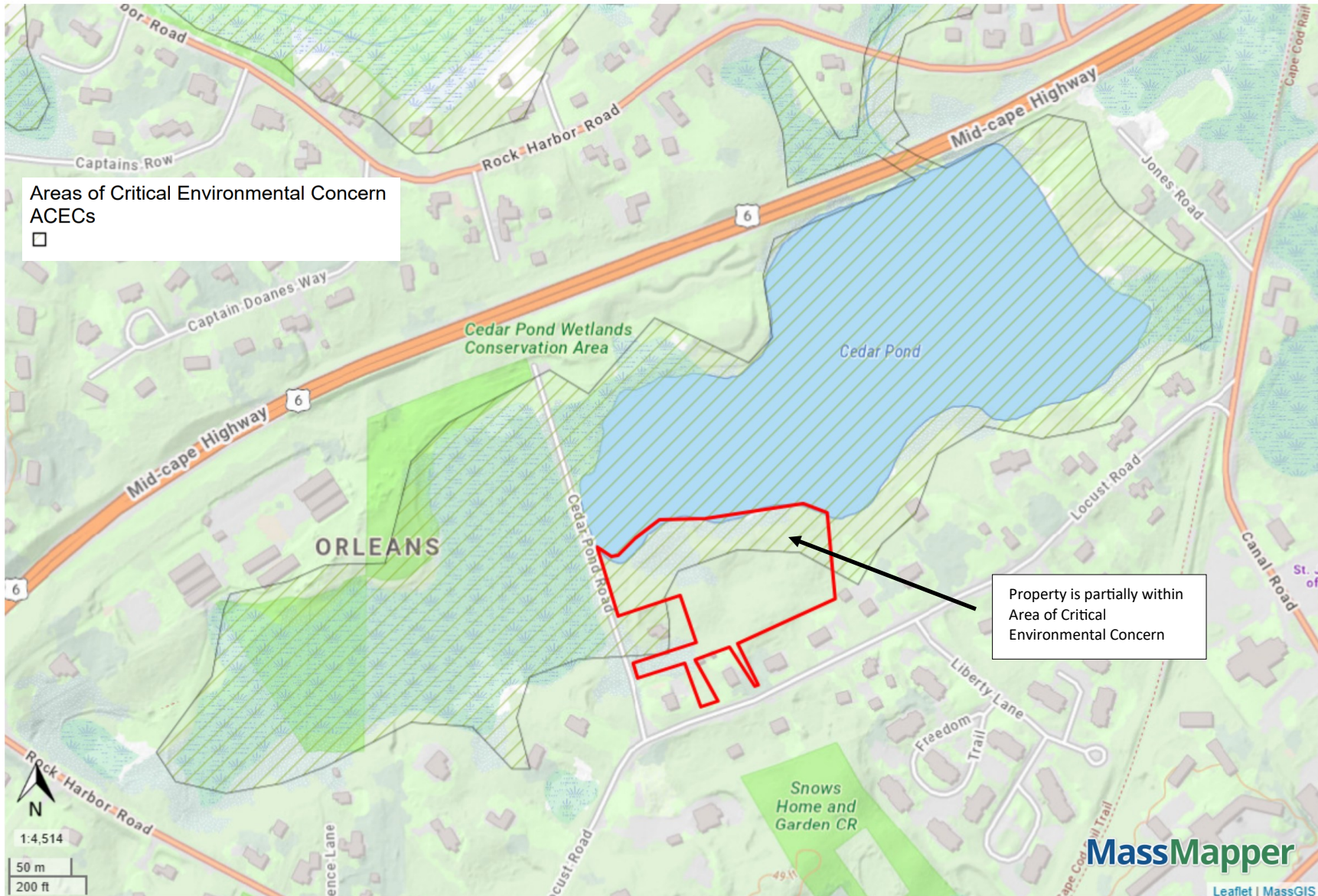
Cedar Pond Shore Land Protection Project

Map 5: Inner Cape Cod Bay Area of Critical Environmental Concern



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Maps

Cedar Pond Shore Land Protection Project

Map 6: Surrounding Open Space

