

Grounding Site Excerpt From Descriptive Report - Hydrographic Survey H11637

Project OPR-P132-FA-07

Northeastern Prince William Sound, Alaska

Scale 1:20,000

November, 2007

NOAA Ship FAIRWEATHER

Chief of Party: Commander Andrew L. Beaver, NOAA

A. AREA SURVEYED

The survey area was located in Northeastern Prince William Sound, within the sub-locality of Orca Bay. This survey corresponds to Sheet K in the sheet layout provided with the Letter Instructions, as shown in *Figure 1* below.

Data acquisition was conducted from September 11 to October 11, 2007 (DN 254 to DN 284).

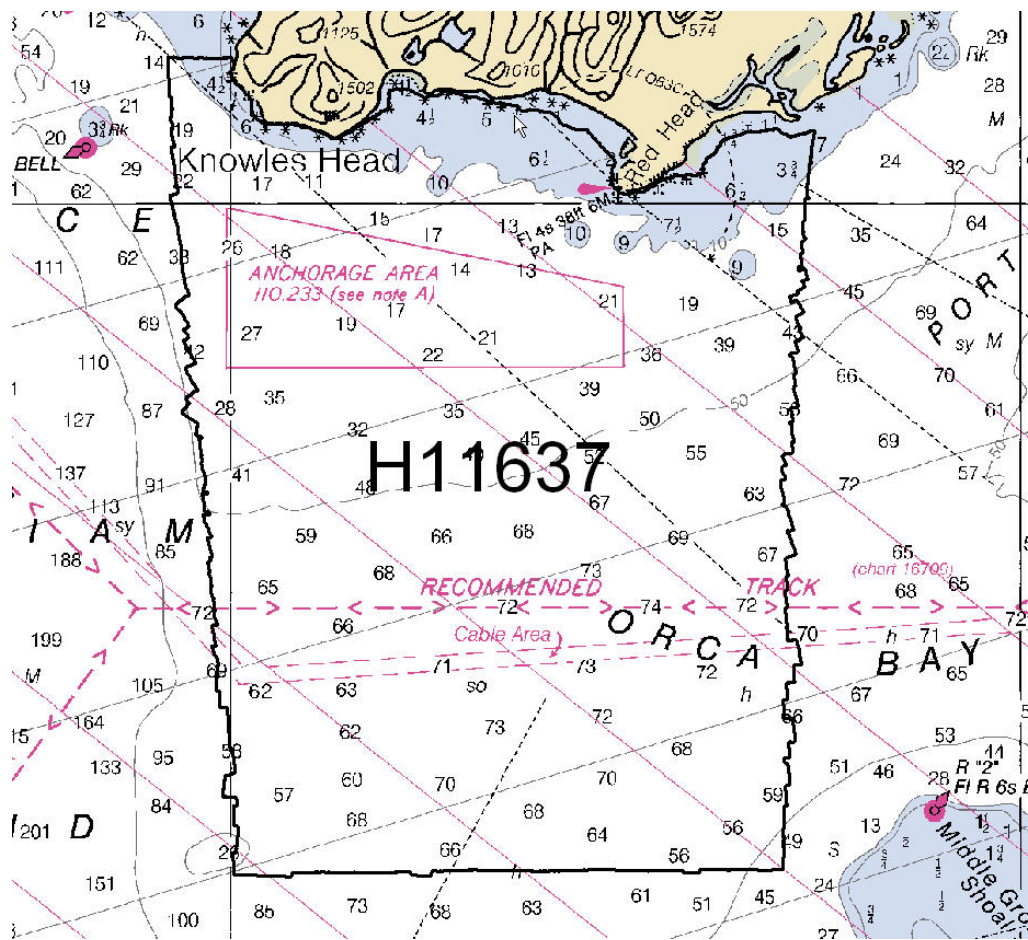


Figure 1: H11637

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Proposed Grounding Site

The State of Alaska and the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council (PWS RCAC) delineated a grounding site in the northeast corner of this sheet as a location for large vessels in distress to intentionally go aground. It was believed that this location had a shallow gradient and a soft, muddy bottom, allowing a large vessel to go aground with a low risk of causing severe hull damage. However, this project found this not to be the case.

The proposed grounding site was found to be a shallow, hard bottom with two underwater ledges. One ledge blocks the east approach and the other ledge just east of Red Head blocks the west approach as shown below in *figure 11*. The three bottom samples taken in the proposed grounding site were “Medium Pebbles”, “Course Pebbles”, and “Rock”, verifying the suspicion of a hard, possibly hazardous bottom for a ship going aground.

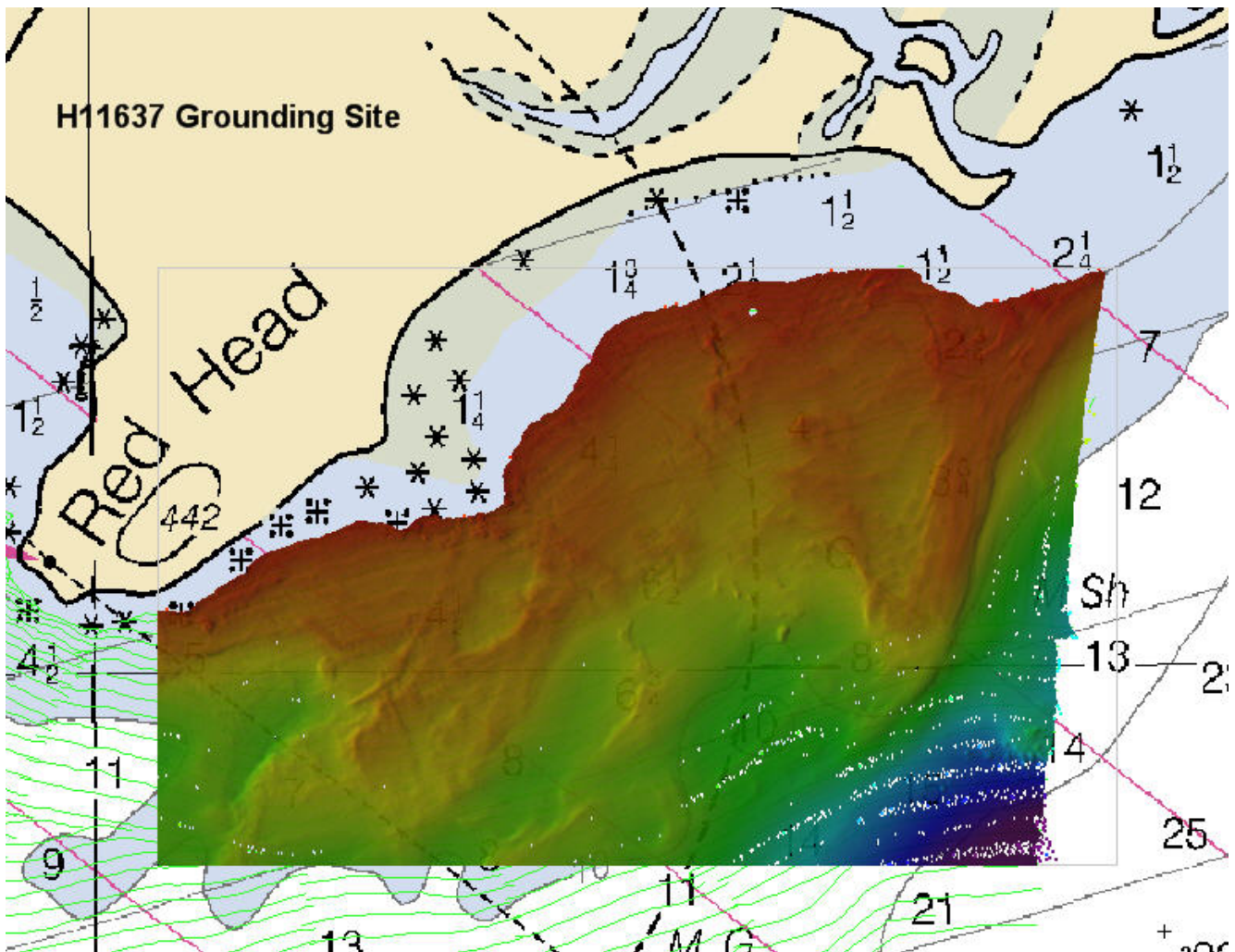


Figure 11. Grounding Site shown with a 1 meter resolution base surface.

To the west of Red Head, a potential alternate grounding site may exist. Shown in *figure 12* is an area that is shallow, smooth, and gentle gradient, which appears to consist of a relatively soft bottom. The one bottom sample acquired in the area showed a sand and gravel surface. The bottom sample location is shown in the south west corner of the area in *figure 12*.

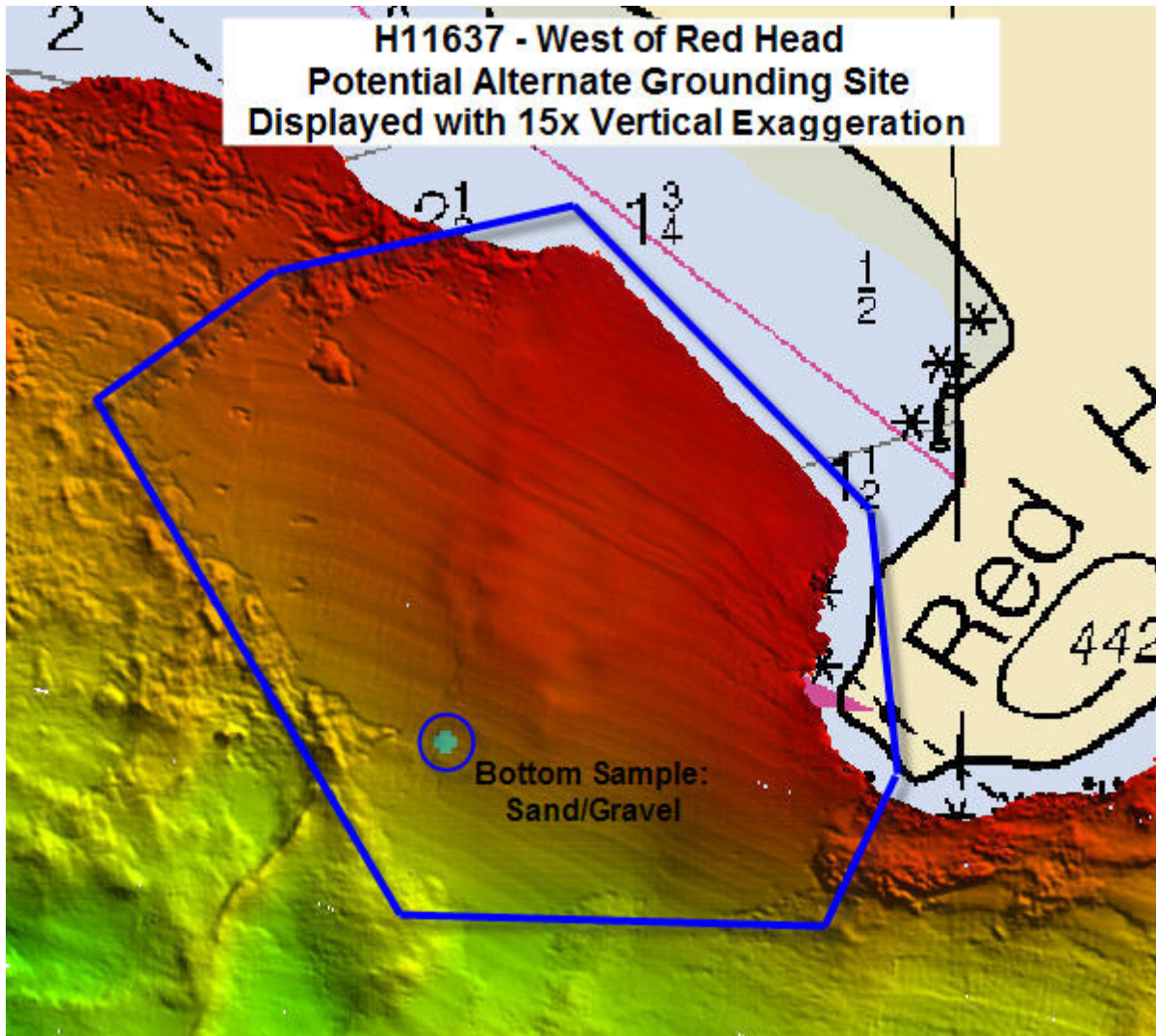


Figure 12. Potential Alternate Grounding Site shown with a 1.5 meter resolution and 15x vertical exaggeration