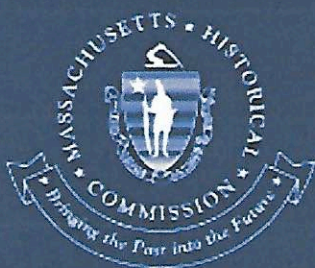


# HISTORIC & ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES OF SOUTHEAST MASSACHUSETTS

A Framework for  
Preservation Decisions



**MASSACHUSETTS  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**William Francis Galvin**  
Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Chair, Massachusetts Historical Commission

# HISTORIC & ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES OF SOUTHEAST MASSACHUSETTS

## A Framework for Preservation Decisions

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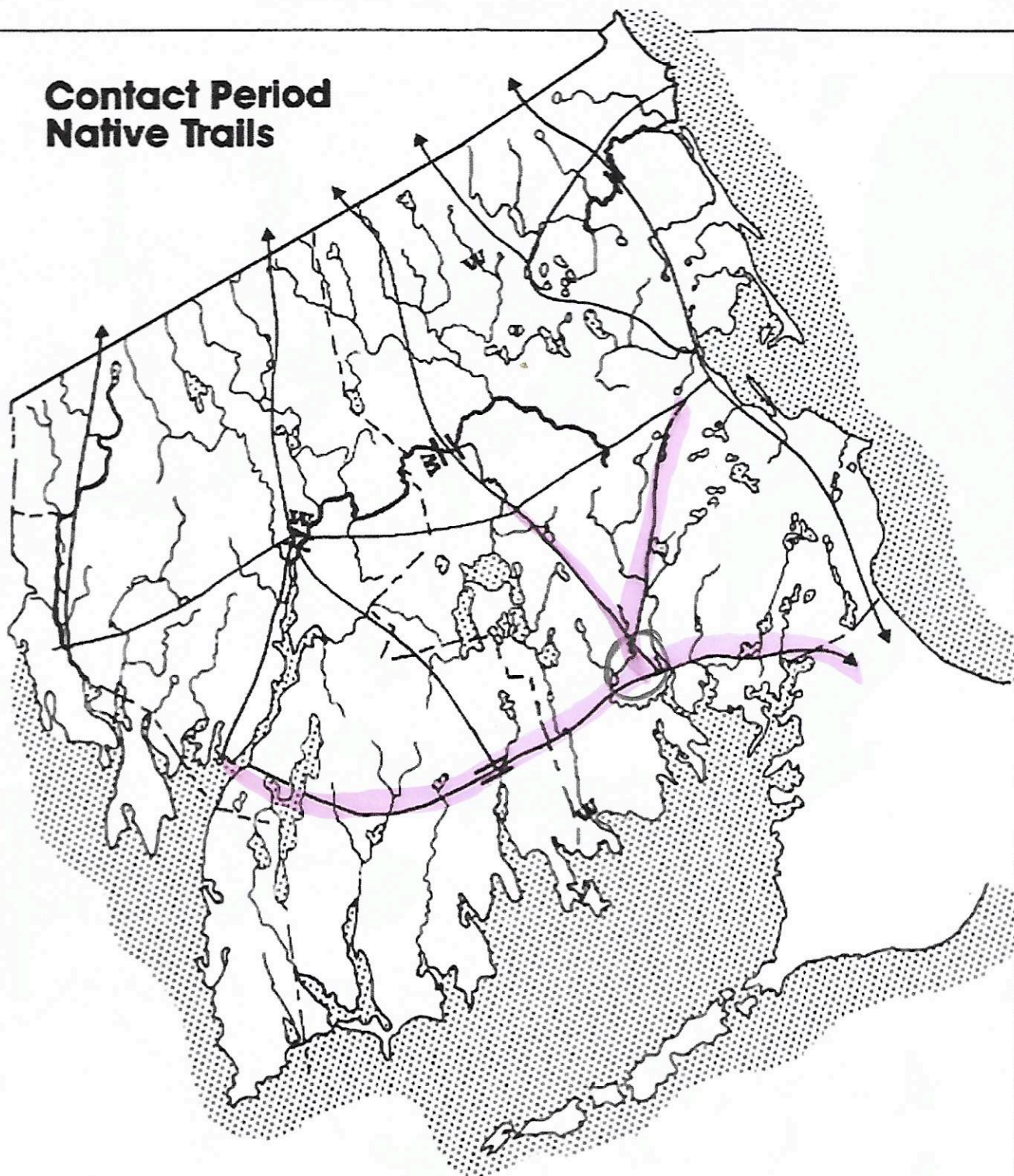
Maps by Shirley Southworth and Ellen Starr

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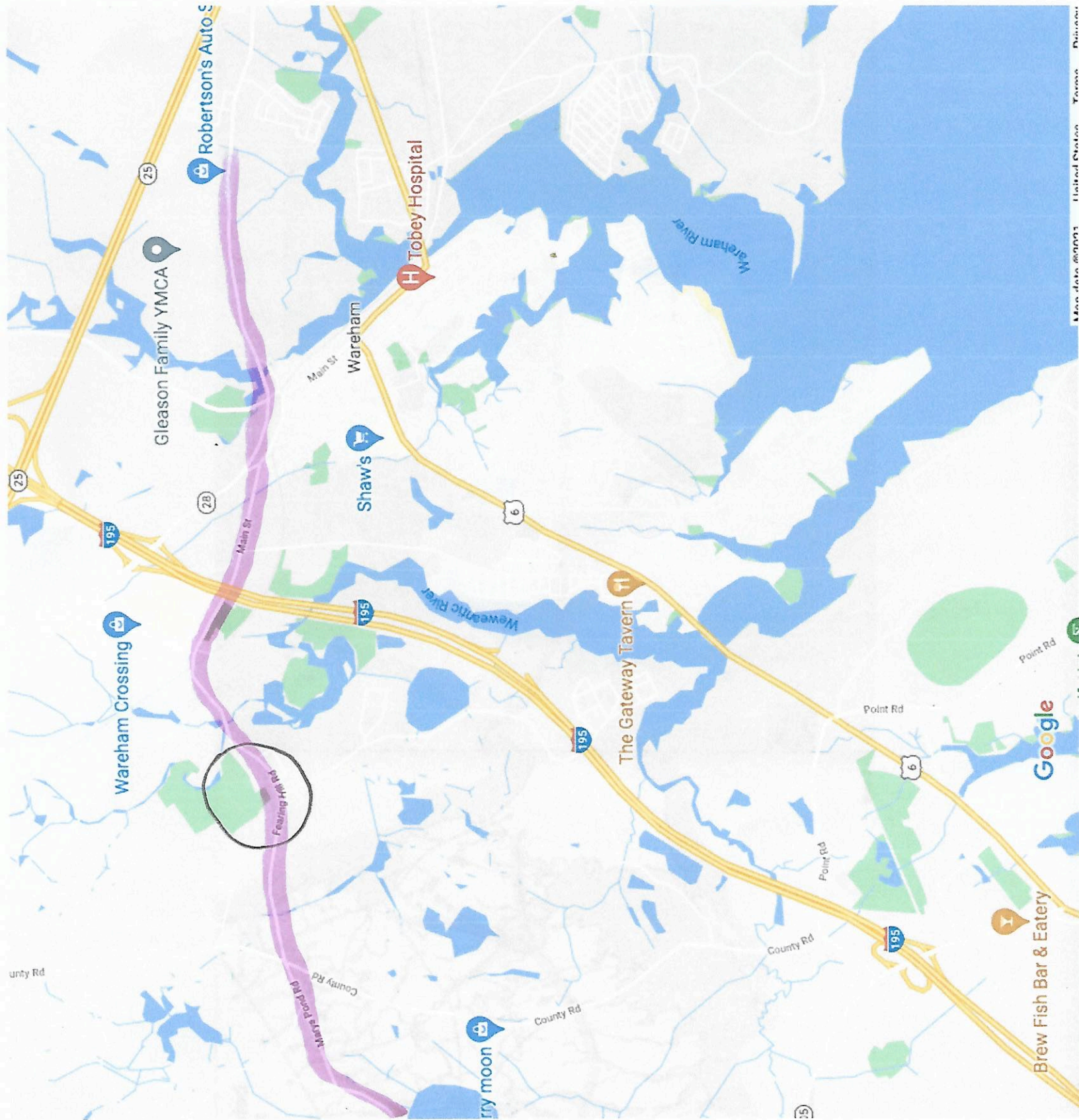
## Contact Period Native Trails



- Major Native Trails
- == Major Fords
- W Fish Weirs

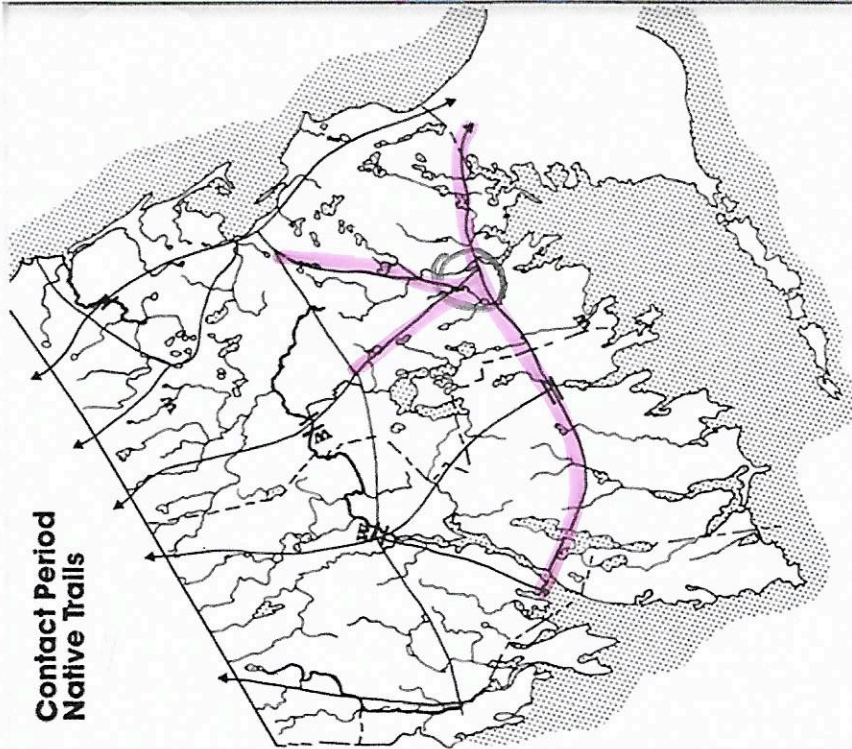
Map 3





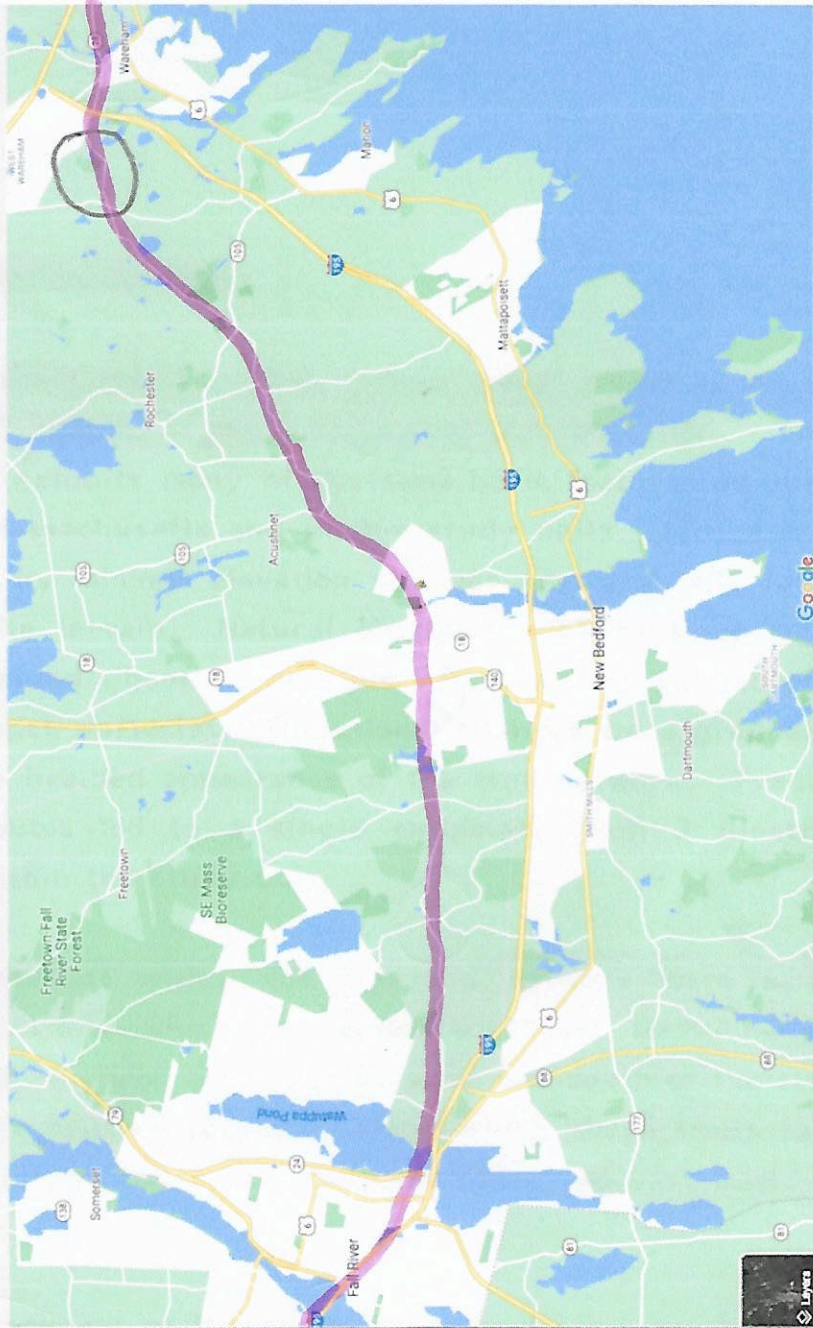


# **Contact Period Native Trails**



- Major Native Trails
- Major Fords
- Fish Wells

Map 3



### C. Transportation Corridors

During the Contact period, native travel relied on an extensive overland trail system as well as water transportation. The native trail network exhibits many of the same basic features as observed in the Eastern Massachusetts and Boston study units. Native trails were characterized by minimal elevation changes and generally followed the contours of the terrain. Natural obstacles such as steep grades and bogs were avoided whenever possible. Routes often skirted around the perimeter of such obstacles. Directional changes were gradual, contributing to the braided appearance of the trail network. Frequently, a number of routes led to a single endpoint. Map 3 illustrates the major trails within the study unit.

Most important within the overland network were a series of inter-regional trails which connected southeast Massachusetts with settlement and resource areas north, west and south of the study unit. There were six primary corridors along which these trails ran. Four of these were north-south oriented, the other two east-west. See Map 3.

1. The easternmost of the north-south trails ran south from Massachusetts Bay through Norwell, forded the North River in Hanover, continued southeast along Plymouth Bay and on through southern Plymouth to Cape Cod.



2. The second of the north-south trails went south from the Blue Hills through Abington and the Bridgewaters, forded the Taunton River at Titicut and continued southeast through Middleborough (Nemasket) to Wareham. *And interestingly ends on Fearing Hill Road*
3. The third north-south trail also ran south from Massachusetts Bay through Easton and Taunton to the ford at Cohannet across the Taunton River. Here the trail split. One branch went southwest through Dighton and Somerset towards the Taunton River estuary while the other ran southeast through Freetown and New Bedford to the ford on the Acushnet River.
4. The last north-south trail ran from Massachusetts Bay along the Neponset River and then followed the Bungey and Ten Mile Rivers through the Attleboroughs and continued towards upper Narragansett Bay.
5. The major east-west trail went west from Plymouth (Patuxet), forded the Nemasket River in Middleborough and the Taunton River at Cohannet and continued west to Narragansett Bay.
6. A second east-west trail ran closer to the Buzzards Bay coast. From Cape Cod, it went west through Wareham and Rochester, crossed the Acushnet River and continued through Dartmouth and Fall River to the Taunton River estuary. *This is Fearing Hill Road*

In addition to these inter-regional connectors, a number of intra-regional routes provided access between major settlement cores and resource areas. These trails generally extended from the study unit's interior to the resource-rich coast. Several other intra-regional routes radiated out from the Pembroke Ponds core connecting this area with Nemasket to the west and Patuxet to the south. Major routes extended from Nemasket and Cohannet south to the Buzzards Bay region. Additional interior trails linked the settlement cores of Titicut, Nemasket and Wampanucket.