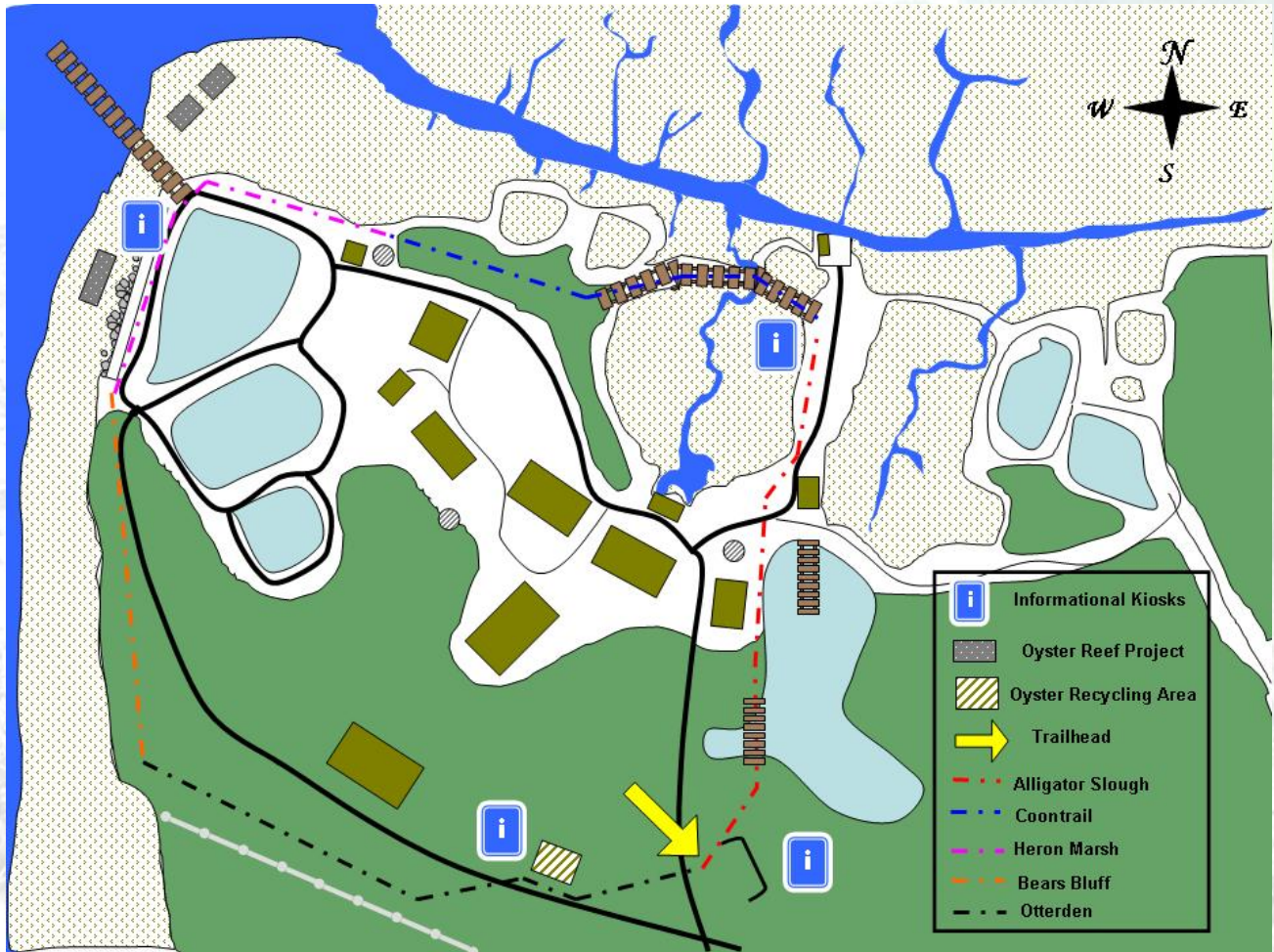


# Welcome to Bears Bluff National Fish Hatchery's Self Guided Tour

You are standing in the middle of an estuarine ecosystem. This is where freshwater mixes with saltwater resulting in a reduced salinity, or brackish environment. Estuaries create a biologically unique ecosystem that is among the most productive in the world.



## Alligator Slough - - - -

The alligator tracks begin the tour and will take you by a freshwater pond where you can see a variety of birds, reptiles and fish.



## Coontrail - - - -

Follow the raccoon tracks across a boardwalk which overlooks a previously impounded area that has reverted back into natural tidal marsh. Use the educational placards to help you identify some of the plants and animals you see.



## Heron Marsh - - - -

The Great Blue Heron tracks will take you to the edge of the Intracoastal waterway where you can observe a man-made oyster reef that was constructed using recycled oyster shell.



## Bears Bluff - - - -

The black bear tracks will take you through an area of maritime forest and along Bears Bluff which overlooks hundreds of acres of oyster flats and salt marsh



## Otterden - - - -

The river otter will lead you by our oyster shell recycling area. This site is set up to collect used oyster shell from the public. Donated oyster shell is returned to the environment and used to construct reefs like the one you saw on Heron Marsh.



Bears Bluff National Fish Hatchery's self-guided tour has been established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with the help of its partners.

