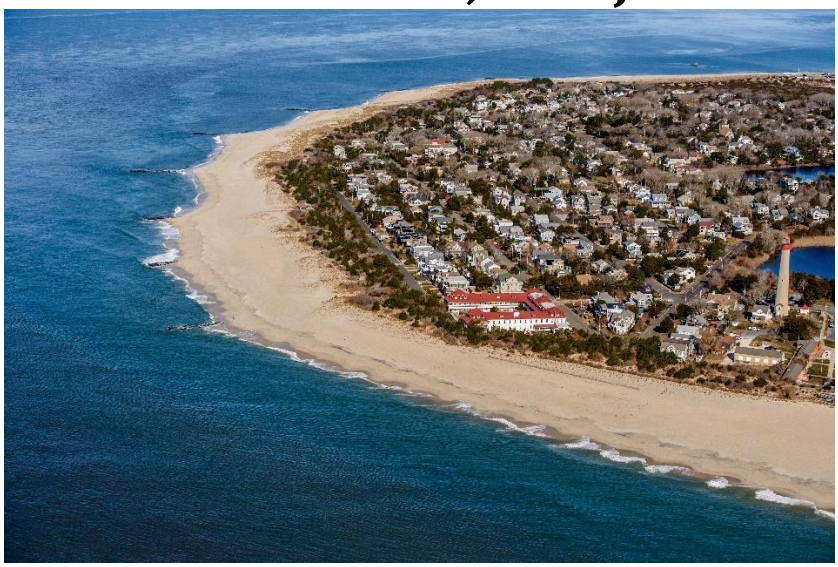
STATUS OF THE MUNICIPAL BEACHES
2025 ANNUAL REPORT
CAPE MAY POINT, NEW JERSEY



Aerial photographs showing the Borough of the Cape May Point beaches. Top view to northwest – Lighthouse Avenue to Cape Avenue; Bottom view to southeast – Alexander Avenue to Lake Drive (photos courtesy T. Kingston, March 19, 2025)

PREPARED FOR: THE BOROUGH OF CAPE MAY POINT
215 LIGHTHOUSE AVENUE
CAPE MAY POINT, NJ 08212

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Table of Contents

Introduction

The Stockton University Coastal Research Center (CRC) surveyed the ocean beaches within the Borough of Cape May Point Lighthouse and Alexander Avenues on March 19 and April 21-22, 2025. These beach profiles were compared to previous surveys that were conducted April 2022, May 2023, and March 2024. The findings included in this report complete the annual review of the municipal beaches prior to the 2025 beach bathing season.

The Borough's beaches are included in the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) *Lower Cape May Meadows-Cape May Point* Coastal Storm Risk Management Project that consists of a dune (+16.7 feet), 20-foot-wide berm, and wetlands restoration. The project is scheduled for periodic nourishment every four years (pending funding availability). Sand was placed on the beach at Lake Drive in March 2021. Between December 2024 and March 2025, sand was excavated from the beach berm within Cape May Point State Park (near the Borough's eastern border) and "backpassed" eastward to create three "sand island" placement sites on the beaches within South Cape May Meadows Preserve (managed by The Nature Conservancy) (Rochette, personal communication, 2025). No sand was placed on the Borough's beaches during this event.

In the summer of 2024, the Cape May County shoreline experienced typical summer meteorological and wave/tidal conditions with no notable storm events. Coastal flooding occurred September 20, 2024 where the entire New Jersey shoreline felt the impacts of persistent winds from the east that created coastal flooding (due to the intersection and air rotating patterns from stalled coastal low and high pressure systems offshore) (Office of the New Jersey State Climatologist, 2024 https://climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim/?section=menu&%20target=sep24). Coastal flooding also occurred on November 15, 2024. Winter storms and low pressure systems transpired in January and February 2025, but none caused significant waves (NOAA, Storm Events Database, accessed May 2025, https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/listevents.jsp?eventType=ALL&beginDate_mm=05&beginDate_dd=01&beginDate_yyyy=2024&endDate_mm=04&endDate_dd=30&endDate_yyyy=2025&county=CAPE%2BMAY%3A9&hailfilter=0.00&tornfilter=0&windfilter=000&sort=DT&submitbutton=Search&statefips=34%2CNEW+JERSEY). March and April 2025 were active months for swell heights that ranged from 4.4 to 12 ft. Swell from the south and southeast with nearshore waves at 6-8 ft and onshore winds 24 to 32 mph affected the Cape May Point beaches March 5-6 and 16-18, and another set of events occurred April 3, 18-19, and 29, 2025 with swell from the south, nearshore waves at 2-4 ft, and onshore winds 20 to 25 mph (Surfline, accessed April 2025). The CRC's beach profile surveys were completed two days after the March event and two days after the mid-April event. Though not named storms, these higher wave events triggered berm scarping and nearshore erosion.

From the March 19 and April 21-22, 2025 site visits, all beach access points remained open and accessible. Beach access points from Harvard Avenue (Lehigh Ave, Whilden Ave, Coral Ave, and South Lake Drive) were the easiest to navigate as well as access points at Alexander Ave, Brainard Ave, and Stites Ave. The Pearl Avenue pathway may be challenging for those with lower mobility and might be a candidate for the installation of some form of pedestrian walkway matting to ease access. An alternative is for pedestrians to enter from Cape Avenue and walk on the beach to the northwest. The Surf Avenue access point is relatively longer, but the Surf Ave. roadway and ascent up to the dune crest is half the distance as a paved walking surface. Parking and walking access all appear to remain adequate for the residents and visitors.

Beach Monitoring Program

The CRC established the Borough's beach monitoring program in 1991 to address the changes observed along the shoreline. Nine permanent monitoring survey lines were established about midway within the groin cells at the following streets along the Borough's ocean and bay shorelines (Figure 1). Each profile starts at a fixed reference position behind the dunes, crosses the dunes, beach and extends over 600 feet into the water, ending at a depth of 12 to 16 feet. Below is a list of the monitoring site locations and the survey number and dates included in this report:

CMP-0: Lighthouse Avenue	Surveys 50, 51, 52, & 53 ending April 22, 2025
CMP-1: Lehigh Avenue	Surveys 50, 51, 52, & 53 ending April 22, 2025
CMP-2: Whilden Avenue	Surveys 50, 51, 52, & 53 ending April 22, 2025
CMP-3: Coral Avenue	Surveys 50, 51, 52, & 53 ending April 22, 2025
CMP-4: Lake Drive	Surveys 50, 51, 52, & 53 ending March 19, 2025
CMP-5: Cape Avenue	Surveys 50, 51, 52, & 53 ending April 21, 2025
CMP-6: Pearl Avenue	Surveys 50, 51, 52, & 53 ending April 21, 2025
CMP-7: Stites Avenue	Surveys 50, 51, 52, & 53 ending April 21, 2025
CMP-8: Alexander Avenue	Surveys 50, 51, 52, & 53 ending April 21, 2025

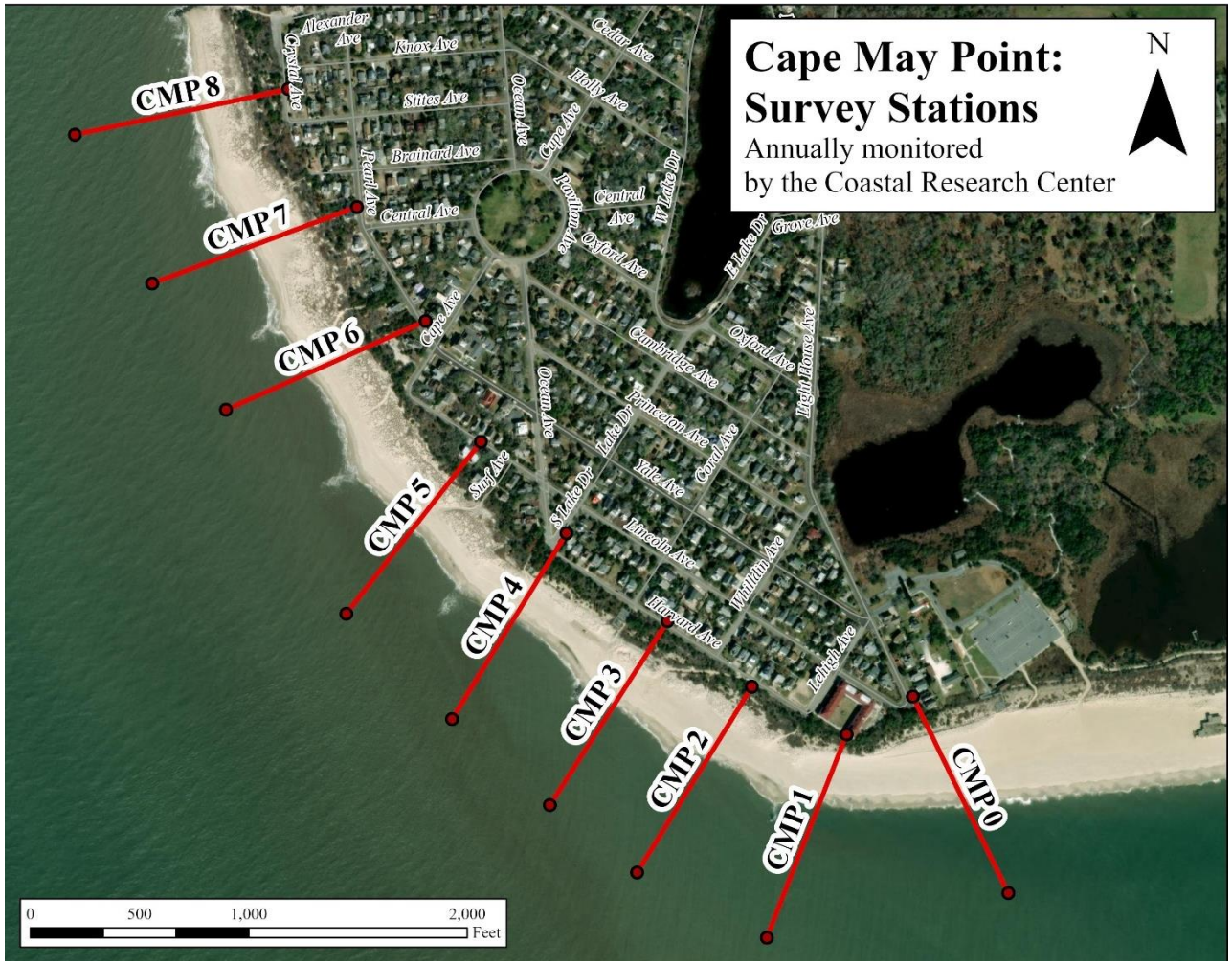

Figure 1. Site map of the Cape May Point beaches showing locations of transects monitored by the Coastal Research Center.

Table 1 shows the Borough's annual shoreline and beach volume changes between April 2024 and April 2025. The shoreline changes are based on the advance (seaward) or the retreat (landward) of the zero-elevation (0.0 ft) NAVD88 datum position on each cross section. This elevation represents the "shoreline" position; it approximates the proper change horizontally for any shoreline point selected on the beachface subject to daily wave run-up. The unit sand volume computed for the cross section in cubic yards of sand per foot of shoreline is multiplied by the distance between the groins in Cape May Point to arrive at the net volume in the right column for each cell.

Table 1. Profile Shoreline & Sand Volume Changes: April 2024 (Survey 52) to April 2025 (Survey 53)

Profile Number	Shoreline Change (feet)	Volume Change (yds^3/ft)	Cell Distance (feet)	Net Volume Change (yds^3)
CMP-0	-2.3	-12.82	420	-5,385
CMP-1	4.5	-12.20	445	-5,428
CMP-2	-10.6	-13.11	460	-6,032
CMP-3	8.5	5.25	450	2,361
CMP-4	-17.6	-8.71	675	-5,882
CMP-5	-5.8	-1.07	690	-740
CMP-6	-13.8	1.22	710	863
CMP-7	-30.2	-7.44	680	-5,057
CMP-8	-41.6	-13.26	660	-8,748
Total Volume Change for Cape May Point =				**-34,049**

The April 2024 (S52) to April 2025 (S53) profile volume change comparisons show a net loss of sand at the Borough's beaches (-34,049 cubic yards). This is a reverse of the past trend where the beaches have recorded a net gain of sand since 2017 (see CRC annual reports 2014-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024). In the past three years volume gains were 614 cubic yards 2021-2022; 50,896 cubic yards 2022-2023; and 57,566 cubic yards 2023-2024.

Shoreline changes reversed from 2023-2024, and only the CMP-1 and CMP-3 profiles showed seaward movement. Only CMP-3 had a net gain of sand greater than 2,000 cubic yards within the groin cell (Whilden Avenue to Coral Avenue). The other groin cell that gained sand was at CMP-6 (Cape Avenue to Pearl Avenue) but was a modest amount (863 cubic yards) compared to 2023-2024 (gain of 7,824 cubic yards). Profile CMP-4 (Lake Drive) has typically been the Borough's most problematic profile, and while still recording volume loss over 2024-2025, the most erosion occurred at CMP-8 (Alexander Avenue). CMP-8 has been one of the most consistent for volume gains and seaward movement of the shoreline.

Cape May Point federal beach maintenance occurred in January 2013, 2016, and 2021 (only at CMP-4). The profile cross sections in this report compare the spring conditions from 2022 through 2025 and show that the Borough's beaches have been stable or accreting until the 2025 surveys.

Review of Beach Cells in Cape May Point

This section provides the site descriptions and changes documented at each profile location. Spring 2025 photographs show each site's environmental conditions. The cross sections show where changes have occurred and the locations where sand was added or removed from the profile, as well as the shifts in shoreline (0.0 ft NAVD88 elevation) positions.

Lighthouse Avenue: CMP-0

CMP-0 is located within the easternmost cell that borders Cape May Point State Park and is bounded to the southwest by a rock groin that is buried under berm sand and exposed only in the swash zone. There is no public access directly from Lighthouse Avenue to the beach. The entry points are from Cape May Point State Park or from Lehigh Avenue. This profile location borders the beach where the USACE conducted sand backpassing from December 2024-March 2025. Borrowed sands were used to create "sand islands" on the berm at The Nature Conservancy managed area. No "as-built" volumes were available at the time of this writing (Rochette, 2025, personal communication).

Figure 2. View to the east at the seaward toe of the dunes at Lighthouse Avenue (April 22, 2025). This photo shows the transition into the state natural area. The wide (300+ feet) beach is typical of this location. The WW II battery remains on the dry beach.

The Lighthouse Avenue beach is approximately 375 feet wide from the dune toe to the water's edge. There was landward shoreline movement (-2.3 feet) and volume loss across the profile (-12.8 yds^3/ft). Windblown sand, trapped by vegetation created volume gains along the fence line. In the nearshore, the slope remained consistent with the previous three years.

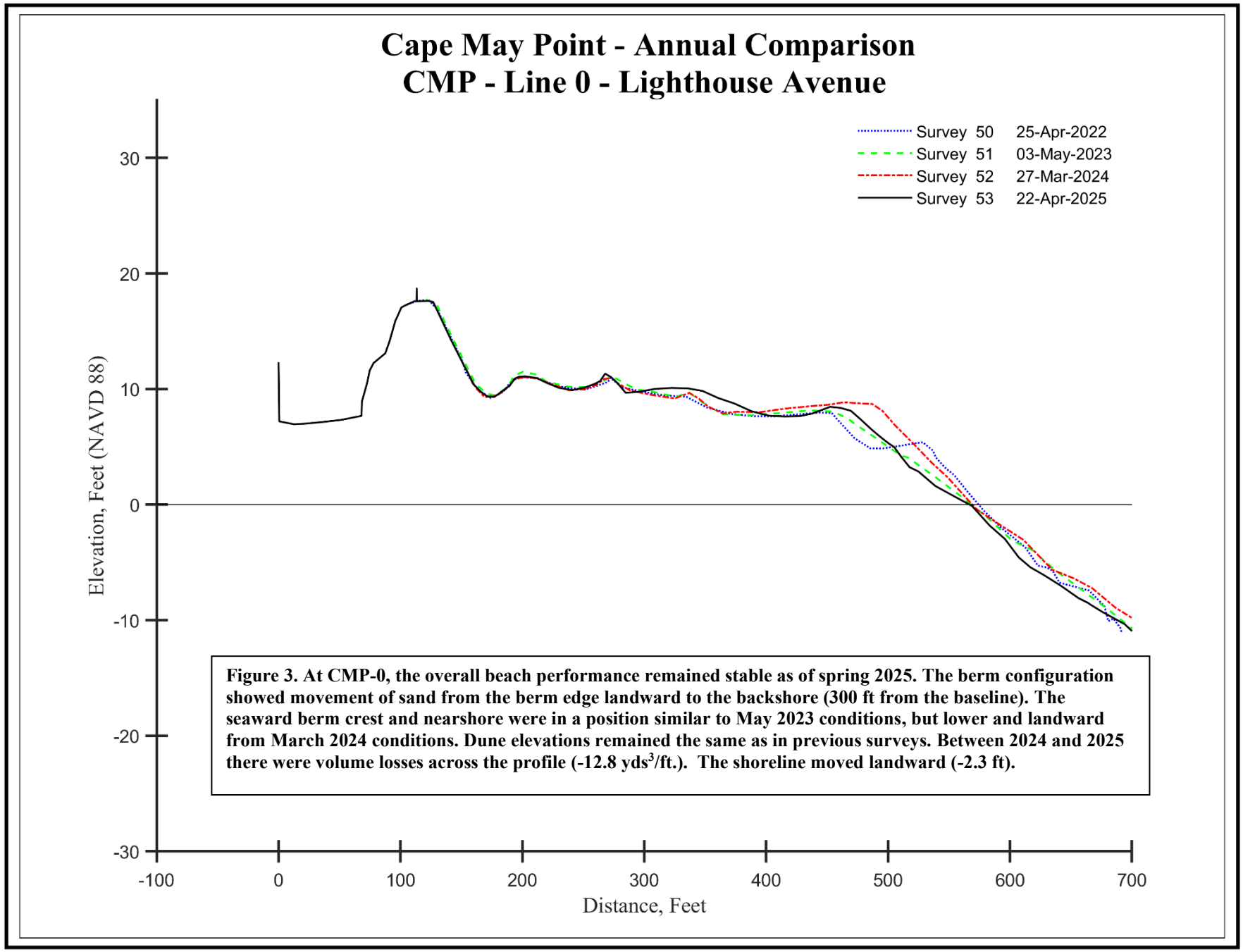

Figure 3. At CMP-0, the overall beach performance remained stable as of spring 2025. The berm configuration showed movement of sand from the berm edge landward to the backshore (300 ft from the baseline). The seaward berm crest and nearshore were in a position similar to May 2023 conditions, but lower and landward from March 2024 conditions. Dune elevations remained the same as in previous surveys. Between 2024 and 2025 there were volume losses across the profile (-12.8 yds^3/ft.). The shoreline moved landward (-2.3 ft).

Lehigh Avenue: CMP-1

Profile CMP-1 is located within the area bounded by the Lighthouse Avenue groin and the Lehigh Avenue groin. Prior to the initial USACE project no dry beach was present between the rock groins. Shore protection was provided by a rock revetment that armored the seaward dune slope. Beyond the groins the seafloor steeply dropped into the adjacent tidal channel. The initial USACE project re-established a dry recreational berm and covered the revetment with sand to restore the dune.

Figure 4. View to the northeast from the dune toe at CMP-1 (April 22, 2025). Vegetation planted between March 2024 and April 2025 trapped windblown sand near the dune toe and appears to allow seaward expansion of the dune. The dune to the left side is located on top of a stone revetment, and the beach remains well wider than the pre-beach nourishment width creating an excellent storm protection barrier as well as a recreational resource.

This cell also received sand during the USACE authorized second maintenance project conducted between November 2012 and January 2013. That project counted both the Lighthouse and Lehigh sites as one placement volume at 78,174 cubic yards. No sand placement has occurred here since that time. Between March 2024 and April 2025 CMP-1 lost sand above and below the 0.0 ft NAVD88 elevation as the seaward berm crest lowered and the nearshore moved landward (-12.2 yds^3/ft.). However, the shoreline moved seaward (4.5 feet).

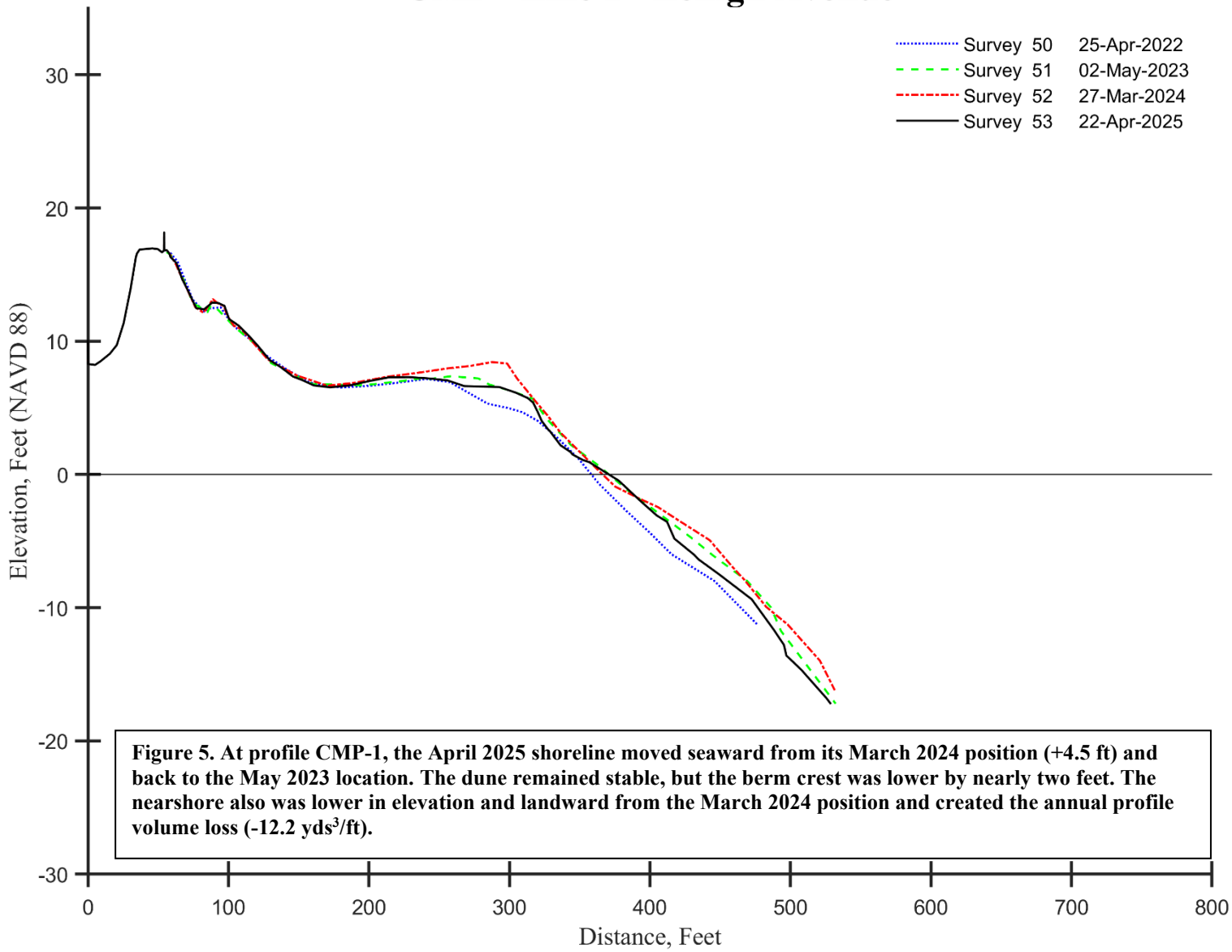

Figure 5. At profile CMP-1, the April 2025 shoreline moved seaward from its March 2024 position (+4.5 ft) and back to the May 2023 location. The dune remained stable, but the berm crest was lower by nearly two feet. The nearshore also was lower in elevation and landward from the March 2024 position and created the annual profile volume loss (-12.2 yds^3/ft).

Groin Cell - Lehigh to Whilden Avenues: CMP-2

The CMP-2 beach is the first groin cell where "Beachsaver" submerged reef units were installed in 1993. Many of these units were buried under sand during the 2025 surveys, except at this location and at CMP-5. Sand that was added to the groin cell during the initial USACE project resulted in the near burial of a rock seawall that served as property protection prior to the federal project. No additional sand was placed at this location during the 2013 maintenance or from subsequent cycles.

At CMP-2, the "Beachsaver" unit was observed on the 2020 profile cross-section, and as a break in slope on the 2022 and 2024 surveys. The unit was prominent in the April 2025 survey (near the 500-foot distance from the reference point). Over 2024-2025, the unit trapped sand on the seaward side of the structure, and seafloor elevation was similar to the April 2022 and May 2023 positions.

Figure 6. The photo shows a view to the northwest from the foredune at Whilden Avenue (taken April 22, 2025). The dune gained in elevation from March 2024, but the dune toe did not expand seaward, thus leaving approximately 150 ft of dry beach for recreational use.

The 2021 cycle of USACE sand placement did not directly place sand into this groin cell. In 2024-2025 there was sand volume loss above and below the datum (-13.1 yds^3/ft.) and landward shoreline movement (-10.6 ft). The "Beachsaver" units are buried in the center of the beach cell and are exposed with any lowering of the seafloor elevation. In 2025, the units are exposed at about –5.0 ft NAVD88 and may become a hazard to water bathers. Caution is urged to water bathers in the area surrounding the unit and in-water bathing beyond 3-foot depths is not recommended. In addition, these individual 10-foot-long reef concrete units did not settle into the seabed in a uniform manner over time. Early traverses along the crest between the rock groins found that units tilted from end to end and were of differing crest elevations between adjoining segments so exposure could easily vary along the line of the reef structure, buried in places, but exposed at the surface in others.

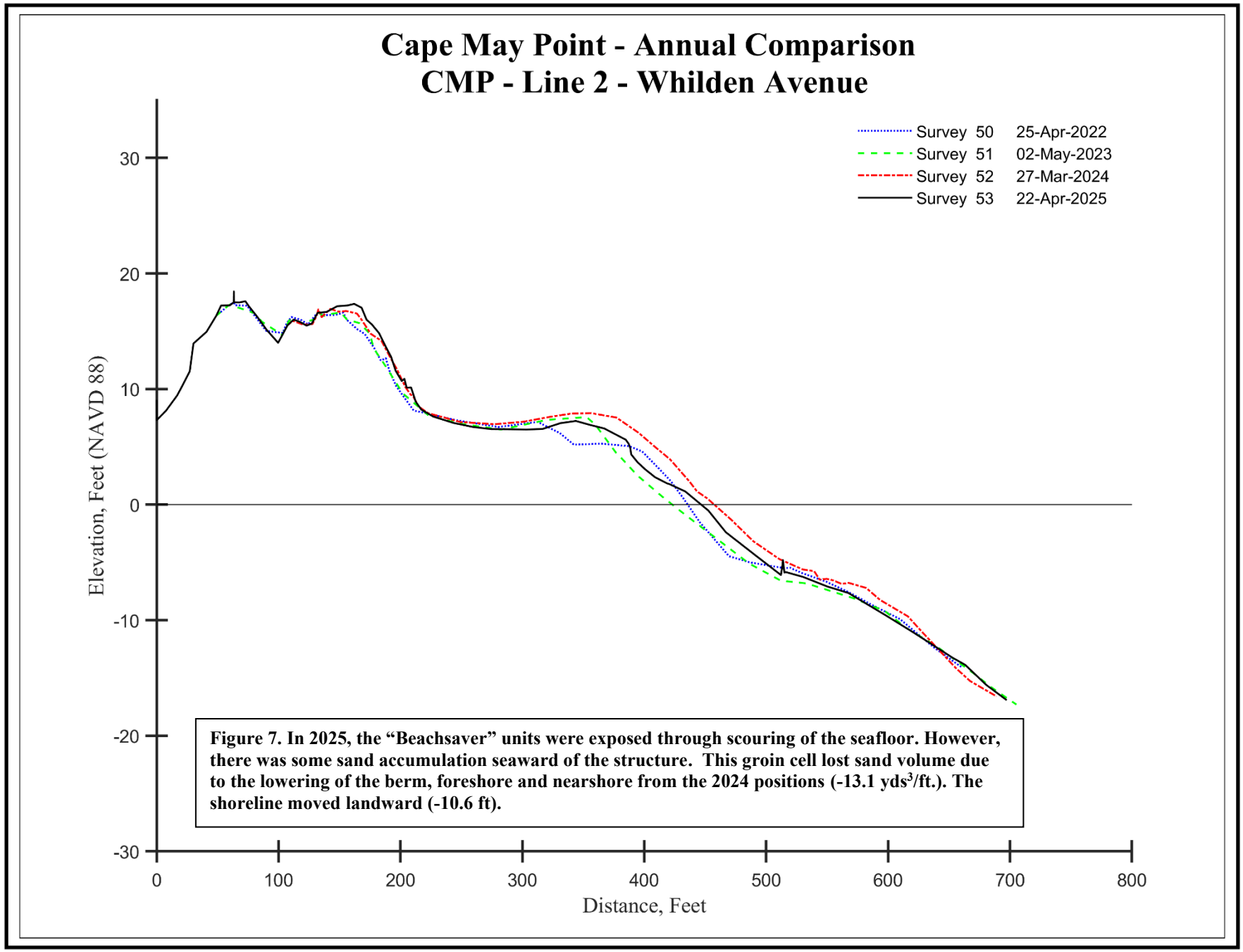

Figure 7. In 2025, the "Beachsaver" units were exposed through scouring of the seafloor. However, there was some sand accumulation seaward of the structure. This groin cell lost sand volume due to the lowering of the berm, foreshore and nearshore from the 2024 positions (-13.1 yds^3/ft.). The shoreline moved landward (-10.6 ft).

Groin Cell - Whilden to Coral Avenues: CMP-3

Profile CMP-3 is bounded by rock groins at Whilden Avenue and Coral Avenue. This beach cell was the second original 1993 “Beachsaver” unit installation in Cape May Point. Sand was added to the groin cell during the initial USACE project and subsequent accumulation along the units resulted in the burial of the entire beach unit structure. No additional sand was placed here during the maintenance cycles (2012-2013; 2016; nor 2021). The units were not exposed at the seafloor surface in the April 2025 survey.

Windblown sand continued to accumulate at the dune toe and that has allowed seaward growth of the foredune since 2021. In 2024-2025, this is the only groin cell within the Borough that gained volume, and the shoreline moved seaward. The sand volume change was a gain of 5.24 yds^3/ft and the shoreline moved seaward (8.45 ft).

Figure 8. View to the southeast of the seaward foredune toe and backshore at profile CMP-3. In April 2025, the foredune peak was 13.1 ft NAVD88, two feet higher than in March 2024 (photo taken April 22, 2025).

Since 2023, the “Beachsaver” units remain buried under sand at the Coral Avenue profile. As with all the other profiles within the Borough (except at CMP-5), the seaward berm crest lowered in elevation over 2024-2025, however, the nearshore elevations were consistent with the March 2024 survey.

Though buried, water bathers should be cautious of the units and any barnacle encrusted top concrete surfaces may remain a hazard for foot cuts to unaware swimmers, few of which even know the structures are present.

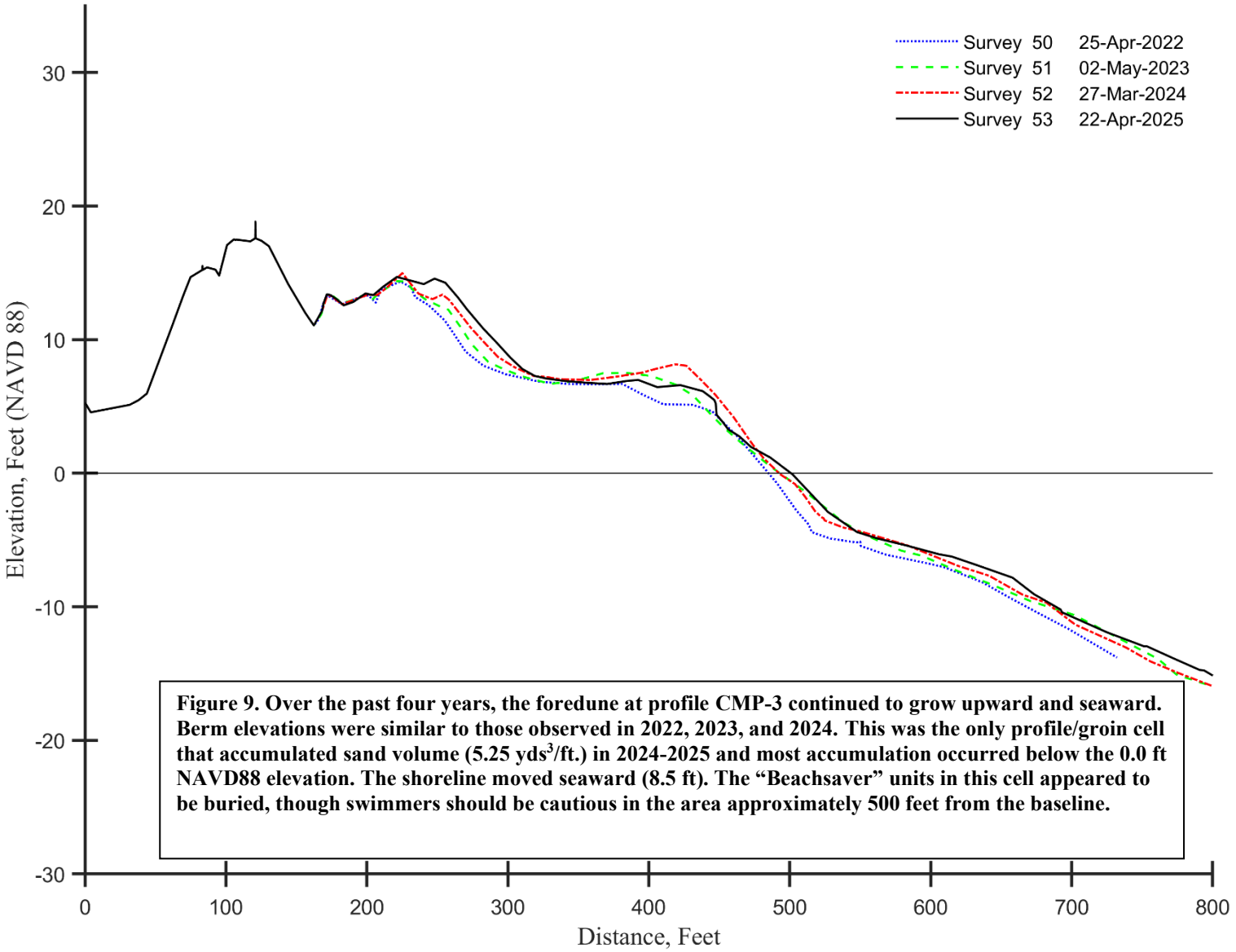

Figure 9. Over the past four years, the foredune at profile CMP-3 continued to grow upward and seaward. Berm elevations were similar to those observed in 2022, 2023, and 2024. This was the only profile/groin cell that accumulated sand volume (5.25 yds^3/ft.) in 2024-2025 and most accumulation occurred below the 0.0 ft NAVD88 elevation. The shoreline moved seaward (8.5 ft). The "Beachsaver" units in this cell appeared to be buried, though swimmers should be cautious in the area approximately 500 feet from the baseline.

Groin Cell - Coral Avenue to Lake Drive: CMP-4

The Lake Drive (CMP-4) beach cell is bounded by the rock groins at Coral Avenue and south of Lake Drive (closer to Surf Avenue). This cell does not contain any nearshore "Beachsaver" structures, but it has received sand both during the initial project and in the 2nd maintenance cycle nourishment project. Over the winter of 2012/2013, the USACE placed 37,000 cubic yards of sand in the Lake Drive beach cell (Dwight Pakan, former USACE Philadelphia District Project Manager). This site also received modest sand placement in 2016 (42,300 cubic yards, Dwight Pakan, personal communication). In 2021, approximately 50,000 cubic yards of sand were transferred from both The Nature Conservancy managed lands and the Cape May Point State Park beach and truck-hauled to Lake Avenue and to the "Cove" beach in Cape May City (Dwight Pakan, former USACE project manager, personal communication). No sand was placed within the groin cell since 2021.

Figure 10. The March 19, 2025 photo at profile CMP-4 shows the conditions of the berm crest and beachface with evidence of a berm scarp closer to the Coral Avenue groin. The backshore elevation adjacent to the dune toe was half a foot lower than measured in the March 2024 survey.

The CMP-4 beach profile survey was completed two days after the passage of a storm that brought 4-6 ft waves from the southeast and onshore winds. A berm scarp was present southeast of the profile line, but not within the rest of the groin cell to the northwest.

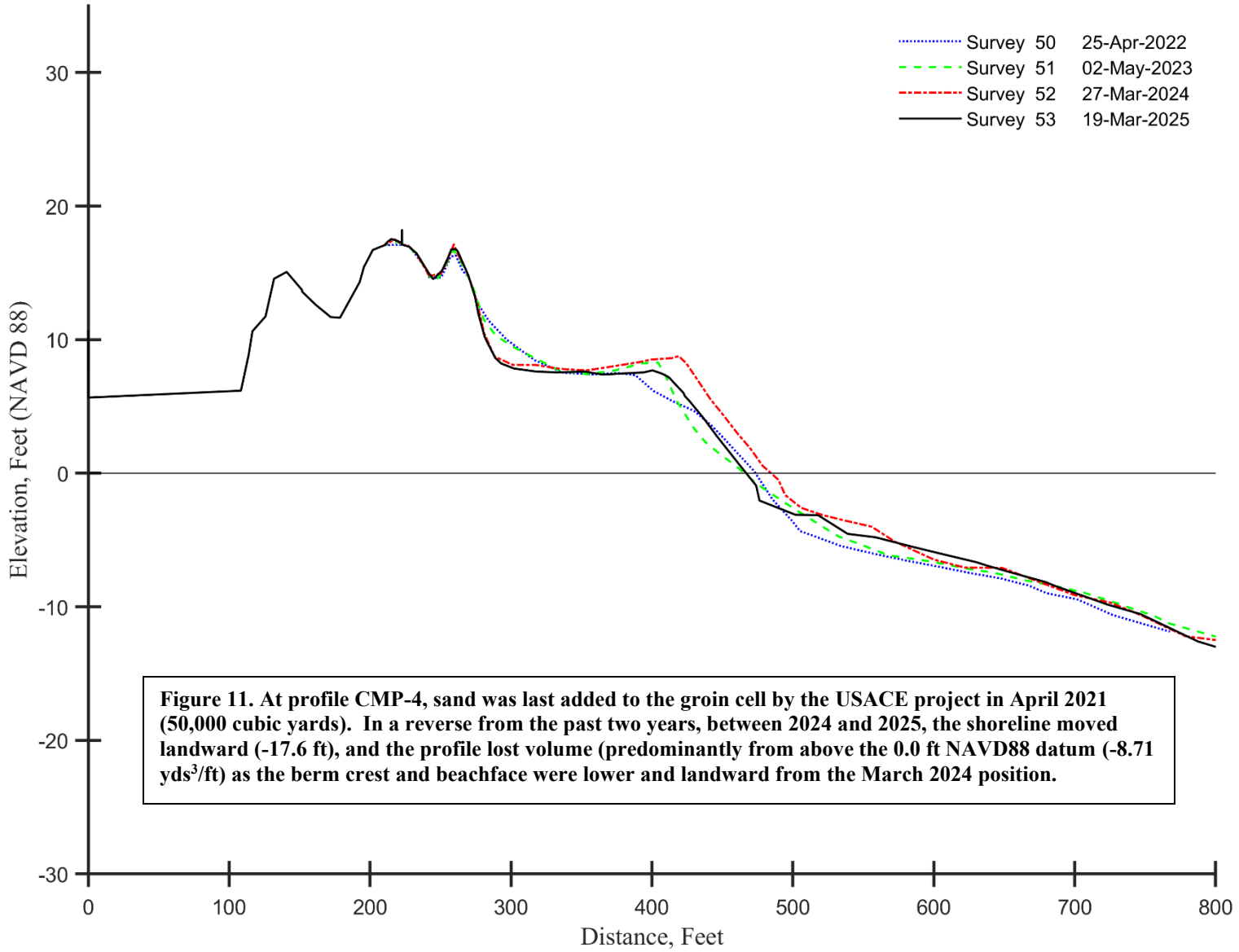

Figure 11. At profile CMP-4, sand was last added to the groin cell by the USACE project in April 2021 (50,000 cubic yards). In a reverse from the past two years, between 2024 and 2025, the shoreline moved landward (-17.6 ft), and the profile lost volume (predominantly from above the 0.0 ft NAVD88 datum (-8.71 yds^3/ft) as the berm crest and beachface were lower and landward from the March 2024 position.

Groin Cell - Surf to Cape Avenues: CMP-5

The groin cell at CMP-5 contains nearshore "Beachsaver" units that were installed in 2002 during the USACE CMP-227 pilot project. In 2025, the breakwater units were present and exposed about two feet above the seafloor (located just over 240-feet seaward of the zero-elevation shoreline position). These units are furthest from the shoreline and lowest in elevation in the mid-section of the groin cell where swimming is allowed. Along the CMP-5 beach profile, the top elevation of the unit was measured at -5.9 ft NAVD88. While the unit may not present a danger, individuals should be aware of its presence when swimming. Along the rock groins, swimming should be restricted where the units are closer to shore due to sand accumulation at the rocks.

No sand was placed northwest of Lake Drive during the 2012-2013 USACE renourishment project nor during the 2016 or 2021 efforts. In past studies of the Borough's beaches, natural processes have moved sand from southeast to northwest along the shoreline over time. At CMP-5 the groin cell lost volume below 0.0 ft NAVD88 between the April 2024 and April 2025 surveys. The foredune gained elevation and expanded seaward contributing to the above datum volume gains. The profile lost volume below the datum as the nearshore slope moved landward (across profile -1.07 $yds^3/ft.$), and the shoreline moved landward (-5.8 ft).

Figure 12. The April 21, 2025 view to the southeast from profile CMP-5 shows the dune, berm scarp, beachface and the Surf Avenue groin. The dry beach landward of the "Beachsaver" unit was about 100 ft in width.

The gain in foredune elevation and width continued as windblown sand was trapped by vegetation. The dune growth has been continuous since 2018 regardless of the shoreline position or beach volume change.

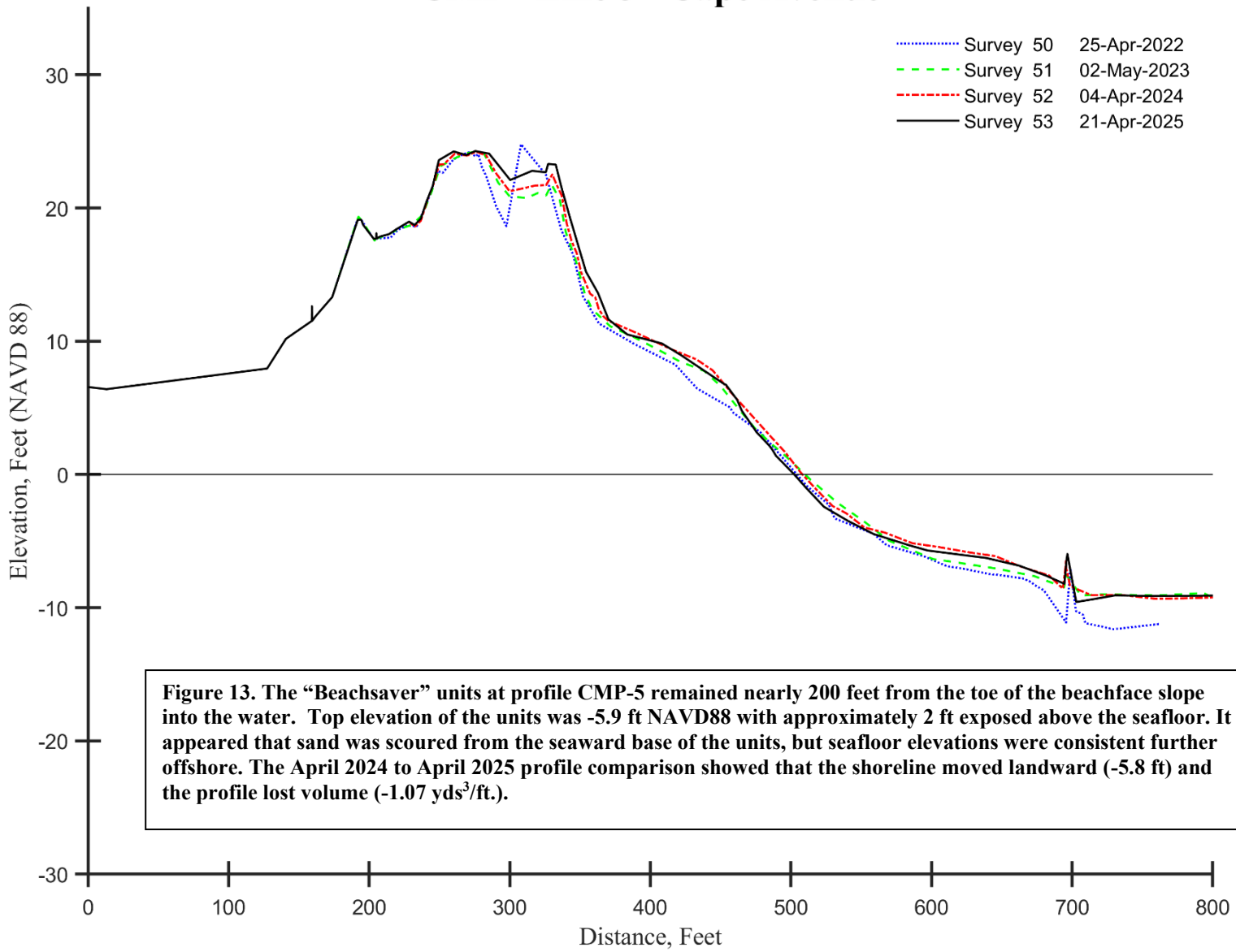

Figure 13. The "Beachsaver" units at profile CMP-5 remained nearly 200 feet from the toe of the beachface slope into the water. Top elevation of the units was -5.9 ft NAVD88 with approximately 2 ft exposed above the seafloor. It appeared that sand was scoured from the seaward base of the units, but seafloor elevations were consistent further offshore. The April 2024 to April 2025 profile comparison showed that the shoreline moved landward (-5.8 ft) and the profile lost volume (-1.07 yds^3/ft.).

Groin Cell - Cape to Pearl Avenues: CMP-6

The CMP-6 profile is bounded by the rock groins at Cape Avenue and Pearl Avenue. The nearshore bay floor contains the prefabricated concrete "Double T" structures that were installed as part of the USACE CMP-227 demonstration project in October 2002. These units were quickly buried and have remained buried by sand in the past 17 annual surveys. Consequently, the structures have no ability to influence additional sand retention. The "Double T" structures are located on the seafloor 11 feet below the 0.0 ft. NAVD88 datum and buried by 4 feet of sand nearly 100 feet offshore. The units, however, might be accessible adjacent to the rock groins, and any recreational activity in the water close to the rock groins is already prohibited.

Figure 14. The photo from profile CMP-6 shows a one-foot berm scarp and a 100 ft dry beach (taken April 21, 2025, view to the northwest). The foredunes here have grown upward and seaward since 2021 as a result from accumulated windblown sand.

No sand was placed this far northwest in any of the USACE beachfill projects, so the beach building that occurred here over the past four years was the result of natural processes that moved sand from the updrift beaches (southeast of this location). The CMP-6 profile gained a modest amount of volume between 2024 and 2025 (1.22 yds^3/ft.) with most sand gains occurring below the datum and offshore (from 850 ft to 990 ft. from the baseline). This groin cell and the groin cell bounded by Whilden Avenue and Coral Avenue (CMP-3) were the only two Borough beaches that gained volume over the past year (Table 1).

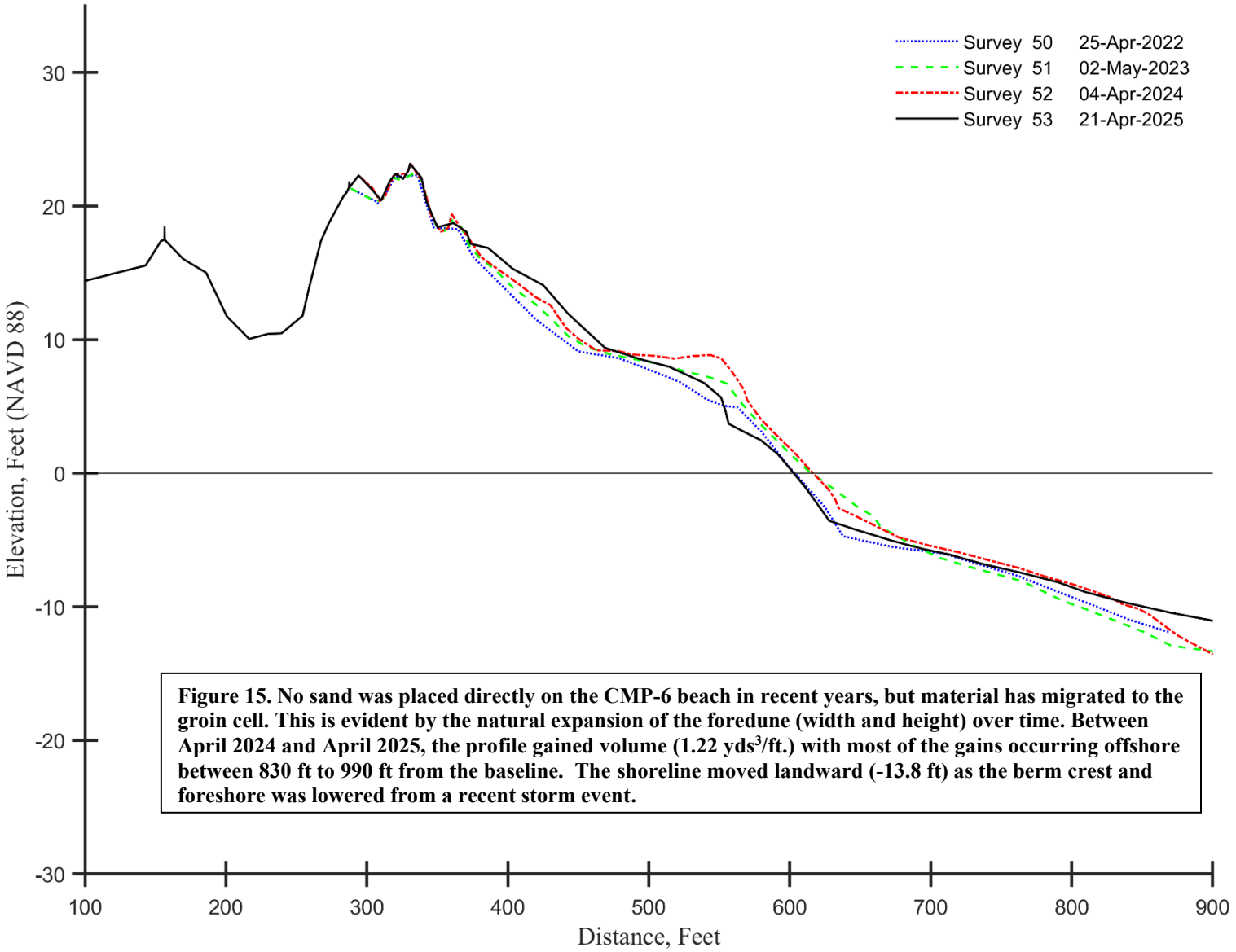

Figure 15. No sand was placed directly on the CMP-6 beach in recent years, but material has migrated to the groin cell. This is evident by the natural expansion of the foredune (width and height) over time. Between April 2024 and April 2025, the profile gained volume (1.22 yds^3/ft.) with most of the gains occurring offshore between 830 ft to 990 ft from the baseline. The shoreline moved landward (-13.8 ft) as the berm crest and foreshore was lowered from a recent storm event.

Groin Cell - Pearl to Stites Avenues: CMP-7

Profile CMP-7, located southeast of Brainard Avenue, is bounded by the rock groins near Pearl Avenue and Stites Avenue. The cell has not received any sand directly from the past USACE beach restoration or maintenance projects. Natural processes dominated by longshore drift continue to transfer sand from southeast to northwest along the Borough's shoreline. This is evident by the seaward growth of the foredune. Past beach profile surveys have measured dry beach widths of nearly 200 feet. However, during the time of the 2025 survey, the dry beach was approximately 150 feet. This should provide beach patrons with adequate recreational area and good swimming conditions for the summer season.

Figure 16. The April 21, 2025 photo (view to southeast) at profile CMP-7 shows a distinct berm scarp and planed beachface that is evidence of high wave conditions from the south that occurred a few days before the survey. The foredune continued to grow seaward over 2024-2025; evidence that there is ample natural sand transport to this groin cell.

In 2025, the dune crest elevation was 31.8 ft NAVD88. The high and wide dunes provide excellent storm protection to the Borough's infrastructure and homes. The dunes and backshore have gained sand since 2021 and the entire foredune slope has become a dune field since 2018 with elevations greater than 12 ft NAVD88. The storm prior to the 2025 survey eroded the seaward portion of the berm and moved the shoreline landward (-30.2 ft).

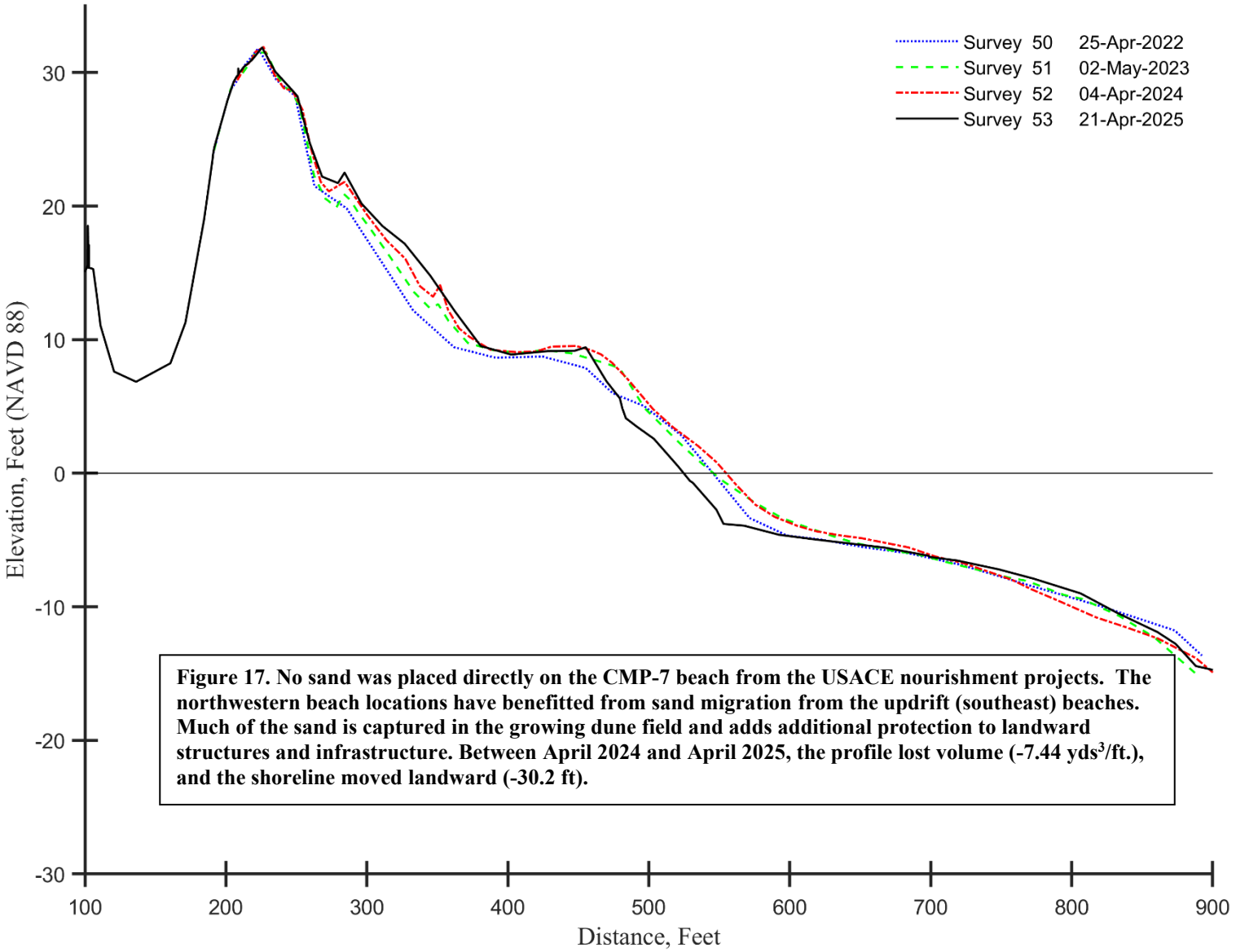

Figure 17. No sand was placed directly on the CMP-7 beach from the USACE nourishment projects. The northwestern beach locations have benefitted from sand migration from the updrift (southeast) beaches. Much of the sand is captured in the growing dune field and adds additional protection to landward structures and infrastructure. Between April 2024 and April 2025, the profile lost volume (-7.44 yds^3/ft.), and the shoreline moved landward (-30.2 ft).

Groin Cell Stites to Alexander Avenues: CMP-8

The Alexander Avenue location, CMP-8, is the northwestern-most beach cell in the Borough of Cape May Point. This location was not included in the USACE beachfill projects. Natural processes have moved sand from the USACE project beaches to this location. The beach extends seaward nearly to the tip of the northwestern groin. (Though much of the groin is exposed in the April 21, 2025 photo below.) Sediment transport from this cell moves onto the western Delaware Bay shoreline and shoals locally known as the "Cape May Rips." Swimming is not permitted at this beach but is reserved for fishing and beach sitting only.

Figure 18. The April 21, 2025 photo (view to the northwest from the CMP-8 profile) shows a distinct berm scarp that was most-likely created from a south-derived swell event that occurred April 18-19. The dune field continued to grow over 2024-2025.

In previous years, the CMP-8 profile has reliably gained in sand volume. The dune field and berm have grown in width and height since 2017. This is evident in the extensive foredune field landward of the dry beach. However, in April 2025, the shoreline moved landward (-41.6 ft). This is unusual for this location and the shoreline here moved the most landward of the measured transects along the Cape May Point coastline. This profile also lost the most sand of the Borough's beaches (-13.26 yds^3/ft.).

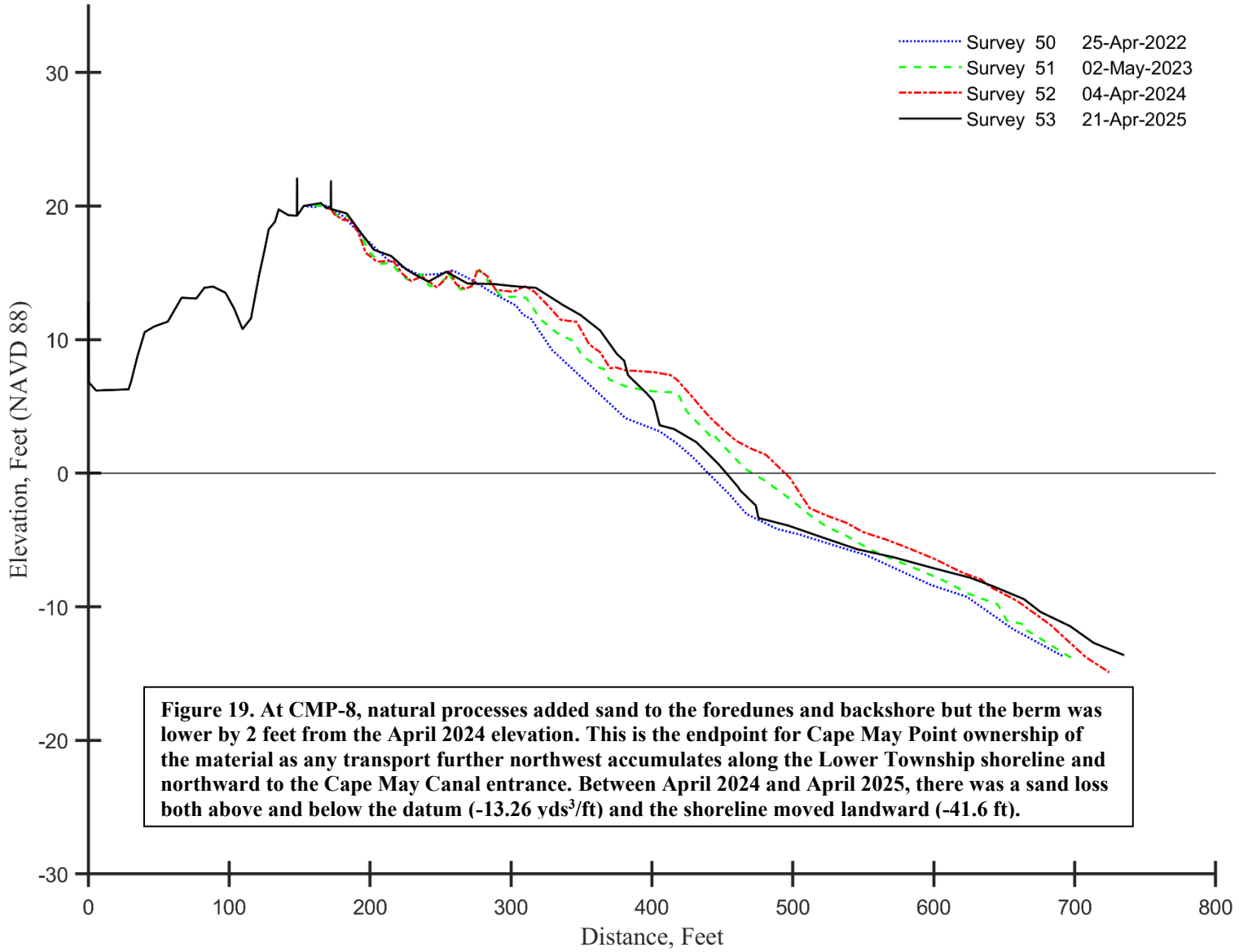

Figure 19. At CMP-8, natural processes added sand to the foredunes and backshore but the berm was lower by 2 feet from the April 2024 elevation. This is the endpoint for Cape May Point ownership of the material as any transport further northwest accumulates along the Lower Township shoreline and northward to the Cape May Canal entrance. Between April 2024 and April 2025, there was a sand loss both above and below the datum (-13.26 yds^3/ft) and the shoreline moved landward (-41.6 ft).

Summary

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) commenced sand placement on the Cape May City and Cape May Point (Borough) beaches in 2007 for the *Lower Cape May Meadows – Cape May Point* ecosystem restoration project. Periodic project beachfills occurred in 2013 (345,000 cubic yards [cy]), and in 2016 (951,893 cy). In 2021, the USACE "backpassed" sand from the Cape May Point State Park and The Nature Conservancy beaches to Cape May Point (via truck) to augment the Lake Drive beach cell with 50,000 cubic yards of sand. The most recent project occurred between December 2024 and March 2025 where sand was excavated from the beach berm within Cape May Point State Park and "backpassed" to eastern beaches managed by The Nature Conservancy. No sand was placed on the Borough's beaches.

In general, the wave climate and littoral current in southern Cape May County moves much of the sand to the Cape May Point beaches. Some sand is transported out to sea, to New Jersey's Delaware Bay beaches, or sand remains in place in Cape May City and The Nature Conservancy managed beaches and dunes. This sand supply has resulted in an influx of material for all the Cape May Point beaches even those northwestern beaches that had not been directly filled.

The Coastal Research Center (CRC) completed the annual elevation surveys of the Borough of Cape May Point beaches in March and April 2025. Both survey dates followed 2-3 days of high wind and swell events from the south/south southeast and were considered "normal" winter conditions. These coastal events were not recorded in the *NOAA Storm Events Database*. As a result, the CRC measured erosion of all the Borough's beach cells from the 2024 conditions except at CMP-3 (Coral Avenue) and CMP-6 (Pearl Avenue) where there were modest sand gains (1.2 to 5.2 yds^3/ft). The volume gains occurred in the foredunes and below the datum approximately 700 feet offshore where there were gains more than two feet above the 2024 seafloor surface. It is the opinion of the CRC that the erosion of the Borough's beaches was due to the timing of the annual surveys and does not reflect the background processes that are consistently in effect. It is also the opinion of the CRC that the "backpassing" activities conducted by the USACE in December 2024-March 2025 did not have a significant impact on the Borough's beaches. The volume and shoreline changes at CMP-0 (Lighthouse Avenue, closest to the borrow area) were consistent with other Borough beaches.

Observations & Recommendations

1. The beach cells at CMP-0 (Lighthouse Avenue) and CMP-1 (Lehigh Avenue) do not have reef structures. Between April 2024 and April 2025, the beaches at Lighthouse and Lehigh Avenues experienced net sand volume losses (greater than 5,000 cubic yards in each cell). Most of the sand losses occurred at the seaward berm edge and beachface. Both beach cells have steep nearshore slopes into deep water and strong tidal currents into and out of Delaware Bay.
2. The cell 2 at Whilden Avenue (CMP-2) shoreline position (zero datum) is approximately 75 feet landward from the "Beachsaver" unit. This unit was exposed at 513 feet from the profile baseline and the elevation at the top of the unit measured at -6.1 ft NAVD88. There is a continued risk of injury to unwary visitors if this structure remains exposed over the summer of 2025. The CRC recommends not allowing swimming in this cell except for wading into 3 feet of water and installing a line of floats indicating the maximum distance into the water which should be about 20 feet from the "Beachsaver" unit.
3. Beach cell 3 (CMP-3 at Coral Avenue) was the only municipal beach that experienced sand volume and shoreline position gains over 2024-2025. Most gains occurred in the foredunes and

offshore below the 0.0 ft NAVD88 datum. The “Beachsaver” units (approximately 500 feet seaward from the baseline) were found to be buried by sand in the April 2025 survey. Markers or floats should be used if swimming is allowed.

4. Beach cell 4 (CMP-4, Lake Ave.) has no structures and typically has a relatively shallow nearshore slope than the groin cells to the southeast. The USACE added 50,000 cy of trucked sand in 2021, but none since then. This beach cell remains a good option for a swimming beach in Cape May Point this season. The shallow slope of the nearshore between the groins makes wading and swimming much safer for beach patrons.
5. Beach cell 5 (Cape Avenue, CMP-5) and beach cell 6 (Pearl Avenue, CMP-6) contain submerged breakwater units that were installed in 2002. At CMP-5, the units were detected at 700 feet from the baseline and there was scouring seaward of the structure. Swimming areas are nearly 200 feet between the shoreline and the “Beachsaver” unit which had a top elevation at -5.9 ft NAVD88. The “Double T” structure in beach cell 6 has been long buried by sand. Swimming near the groins that mark the cell boundaries should always be avoided since the units are slightly closer to the beach adjacent to the rocks. Both beach cells had minimal volume losses (cell 5) or gains (cell 6) over 2024-2025.
6. Beach cell 7 at Stites Avenue (CMP-7) benefited from growth of the foredunes and berm, enhancing the recreational value of the beach again over 2024-2025. However, the south-southeast driven swell a few days before the CRC’s survey created a berm scarp and planed beachface and there was a sand volume loss from the April 2024 conditions. Even with the overall volume losses, the nearshore remained shallow and there were sand gains 700 feet from the profile baseline. This cell may offer a relatively safe option for swimming.
7. Beach cell 8 at Alexander Avenue had the largest sand losses of all the Borough’s beaches, with most losses occurring at the seaward berm edge (evident by a scarp in Figure 18). In past surveys, this beach cell has consistently accumulated sand across the foredunes, dry beach, and nearshore. This beach has traditionally been closed to swimming. Allowing water access would entail the hiring of additional lifeguards.

The Coastal Research Center (CRC) will continue to monitor the conditions on the Cape May Point beaches at the Borough’s request and will assist officials with addressing any coastal zone management issues. Please contact the CRC with any questions or concerns. Cape May Point should enjoy a successful summer season with excellent beach access and extensive space for all types of traditional recreation at the Jersey shore.