

NOAA Hazardous Waste Site Report

O'Sullivan's Island (I-47)
Derby, Connecticut
April 13, 1984

Location and Nature of Site:

The O'Sullivan's Island site is located south of Derby, Connecticut, in the confluence of the Housatonic and Naugatuck Rivers (Figure 1). The two-acre site is in an often flooded, low, swampy area which was briefly used by the City of Derby as a trash dump in the 1950's, but has since been left unused. Gravel is taken from the vicinity of the site by the City for road use. Exposed drums were noted by a contractor in late 1982 while digging out gravel. Due to a lack of funds at the city and state levels and the lack of responsible parties, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency became involved in a removal action in early 1983. The EPA On-Scene Coordinator's report estimates that between 300 and 800 deteriorating drums remain buried at the site. Remedial action is being studied at this time.

Proximity of Chemical Hazard to Marine Resources:

This site is in the flood plain of the Housatonic River, and is 14 miles from Long Island Sound. A total of 197 drums in various conditions with both solid and liquid contents were removed from the site before it was backfilled, graded, and re-planted. EPA listed the site as stabilized at the end of the removal action.

Upon analysis, the drums were found to contain significant concentrations of wastes containing dimethyl cyclopentane, ethyl cyclopentane, toluene, methyl isobutyl ketone, methyl cyclohexane, trichloroethane, and trimethyl pentene. Overall, the drums from the dump were in poor condition, with many leaking or crushed. At least one discharge and fish kill was observed during cleanup. Earlier discharges and possible environmental damage was highly probable, but not observed.

Marine Resources at Risk:

The Housatonic River and nearby estuaries support recreational fisheries, and are spawning and nursery areas for many marine organisms (Tables 1 and 2). It is unknown to what extent the Housatonic River is used by anadromous fish. The mouth of the Housatonic River contains a large marshland with habitats for shorebirds and wading birds including the least tern, a species of special state concern, and the black-crested heron. Various waterfowl also overwinter in this area.

This site is located two miles from Osbornedale State Park.

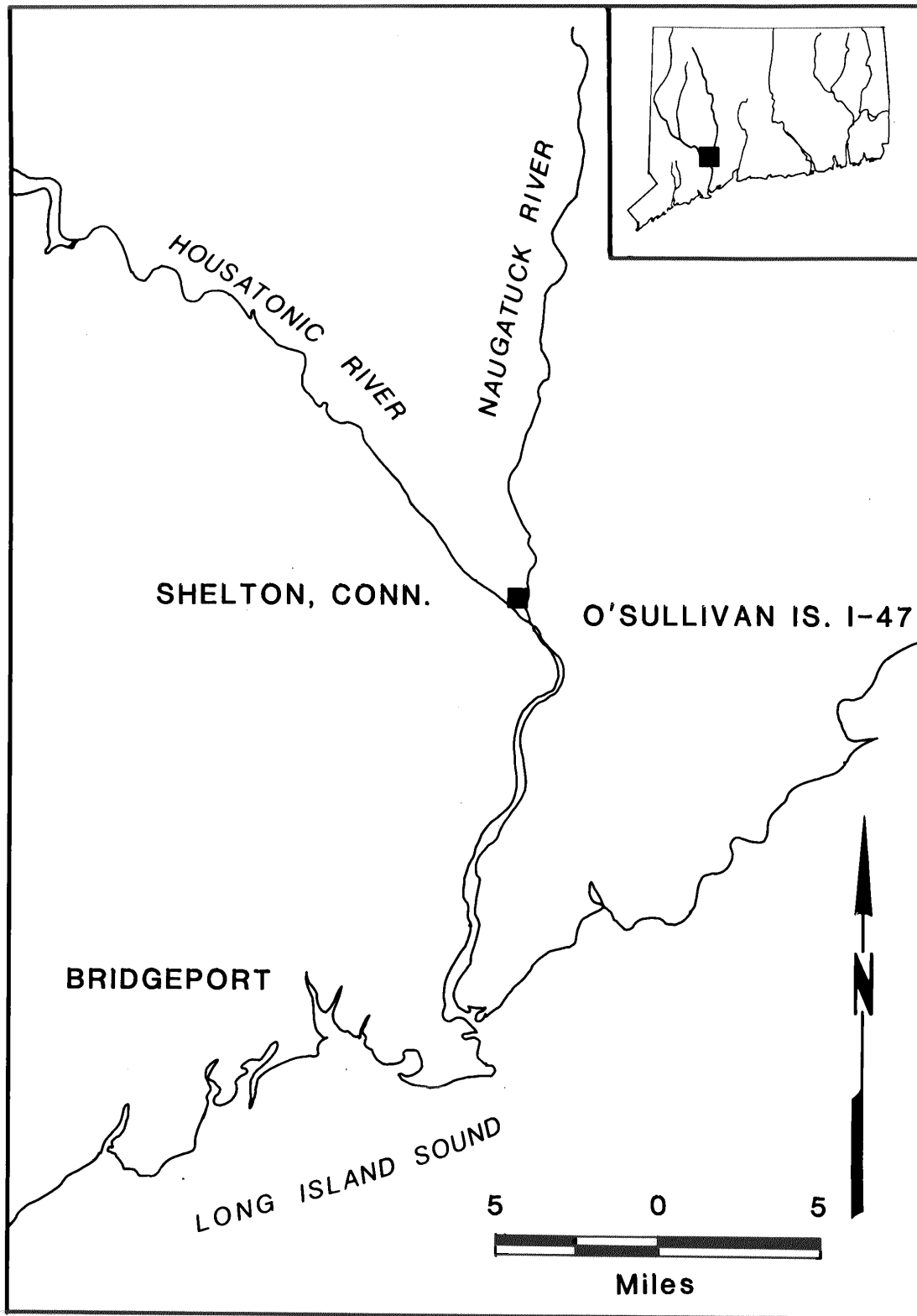


FIGURE 1. Site location.

Table 1. Fishery Resources of the Freshwater Regions of the Housatonic River (1-4)

Finfish Species	Adult Habitat	Spawning Area	Nursery Area	Comm. Fish.	Rec. Fish.	Migr. Route
<u>Anadromous</u>						
Alewife		x	x			x
American shad						x
Striped bass				x	x	x
<u>Non-anadromous</u>						
White catfish	x	x	x	x	x	
American eel	x			x	x	
Sunfish	x	x	x		x	
Yellow perch	x	x	x		x	
Chain pickerel	x	x	x		x	
Largemouth bass	x	x	x		x	

Table 2. Fishery Resources of the Nearshore Waters Near Milford, Connecticut (1,2,3)

Species	Adult Habitat	Spawning Area	Nursery Area	Comm. Fish.	Rec. Fish.	Migr. Route
White perch	x				x	x
Flounder	x				x	
Northern kingfish	x				x	
Weakfish	x				x	
Atlantic tomcod	x				x	
Black sea bass	x				x	
Atlantic menhaden	x				x	
Seatrout	x				x	
Atlantic herring	x				x	
Bluefish	x				x	
<u>Shellfish</u>						
Hard clam	x	x	x	x	x	
Soft shell clam	x	x	x	x	x	
Blue crab	x	x	x	x	x	
American lobster	x	x	x	x	x	
Eastern oyster	x	x	x	x	x	

Summary of Site-Related Actions:

1982. Site discovered.

1983. EPA performed removal of exposed and buried drums.

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References:

1. National Marine Fisheries Service, 1974. Anglers Guide to the United States 2. Atlantic Coast.
2. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1980. Atlantic Coast Ecological Inventory.
3. Breder, C.M. and D.E. Rosen, 1966. Modes of Reproduction in Fishes. TFH Publications.
4. Research Planning Institute. Environmental Sensitivity Index - Connecticut.