



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
New England District

696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742-2751

Public Notice

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Programs & Project
Management Division

Date: July 23, 2015

Comment Period Closes: September 18, 2015

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has prepared a Draft Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for Long Island Sound. The DMMP was requested by the Governors of Connecticut and New York, in their letter of February 8, 2005 to the Chief of Engineers. The need for a DMMP was also identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) June 3, 2005 Rule that designated two of the Sound's historic open-water placement sites, the Central Long Island Sound and Western Long Island Sound Sites (CLDS and WLDS) for continued use. The EPA's rule required preparation of a DMMP to examine alternative placement practices, with the goal of reducing or eliminating open-water placement of dredged material in the waters of Long Island Sound wherever practicable.

USACE is responsible for maintaining 52 Federal Navigation Projects (FNP) in Long Island Sound (LIS) and adjacent waters that include dredged general navigation features (channels, anchorages, and turning basins) requiring periodic maintenance dredging. These include 31 projects in Connecticut, 17 in New York and four in Rhode Island. Dredging is necessary for the continued maintenance, and occasional improvement of these harbors to maintain safe navigation. Other Federal agencies, including the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, and the Maritime Administration, operate facilities around Long Island Sound requiring navigational access.

Historically, most dredged material in the region was placed in open water sites in LIS. Even today most dredged material is found suitable for open water placement following extensive physical, chemical and biological testing. Where feasible, beneficial uses such as beach renourishment have also been used. However, over the past 30 years Federal and state agencies have increased their efforts to find practicable alternatives to open water placement in LIS. This DMMP examines the need for dredging, the history of dredging and dredged material placement, and current beneficial use practices. The DMMP identifies and assesses alternatives for future dredged material placement and beneficial use, identifies the likely Federal Base Plans (least cost environmentally acceptable plan) for future Federal dredging activities, and recommends further action to be taken by individual projects as they come up for their next maintenance cycle, or in feasibility studies for proposed project improvements.

Long Island Sound is a large coastal estuary located between Long Island, New York on the south, and the shores of New York, Connecticut and southwestern Rhode Island on the north. This study included adjacent waters including Block Island Sound, Little Narragansett Bay, Fishers Island Sound, Peconic Bay and Gardiners Bay. A total of nearly 240 harbors, coves, bays and rivers supporting various levels of navigational access are located along these shores.

The DMMP identifies practicable potential cost-effective and environmentally acceptable placement alternatives to meet the dredging needs of LIS's ports and harbors. Without practicable placement alternatives dredging costs will increase, fewer projects will be maintained, economic viability of projects will be reduced, and navigation dependent sectors of the regional economy will be impaired. Opportunities to beneficially use dredged material for purposes of coastal resiliency and environmental restoration and enhancement may not be realized without a DMMP.

The DMMP makes specific recommendations for further interagency involvement in dredged material management, dredging data management, study of the impacts of open water placement, and supporting opportunities for beneficial use. In summary, the several recommendations are as follows:

- The Long Island Sound Regional Dredging Team (RDT) established for this DMMP should be continued, with its geographic range expanded to include the entire Sound. The RDT should also be used by its member agencies to put forth, discuss and examine means of funding and implementing alternatives to open water placement with a focus on beneficial use.
- As Federal projects are funded for future study, design and construction the DMMP should be consulted as to the likely Federal Base Plan and alternatives. Each project should examine placement alternatives with specificity to determine which method should be recommended considering engineering feasibility, cost-effectiveness, any non-economic benefits, the willingness and capability of non-Federal sponsors to meet their responsibilities, and other aspects of practicability.
- A means of collecting, reporting on and maintaining information on all dredging and dredged material placement activities in Long Island Sound should be implemented to serve as a regional tracking system for dredged material, and provide examples of real-world application of placement alternatives.
- Federal and state agencies should target data collection and studies to better address the question of the long-term impacts and acceptability of past and continued open water placement of dredged materials in Long Island Sound. Closer inspection may yield a better understanding of the health of the Sound and impacts at the active and historic placement sites.
- The states should make efforts to examine the opportunities for beneficial use identified in this study, discuss and evaluate those projects, prioritize them according to the states willingness and capability to approve and implement, and work with the USACE to determine what opportunities for Federal participation may exist. The states and the USACE should consider opportunities for beneficial use of parent materials removed in future major improvement dredging projects.

Please mail your comments so that they will be received in Concord, MA on or before September 18, 2015. Address written comments to:

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or email: Meghan.C.Quinn@usace.army.mil

In addition to, or in lieu of, sending written comments, you are invited to attend one of our public hearings. The public hearings dates and locations are:

Monday - **August 24, 2015**
Village Center at Port Jefferson
101-A East Broadway
Port Jefferson, NY 11777

Registration begins at 5:30 p.m.
Hearing to begin at 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday - **August 25, 2015**
Marriot Long Island
101 James Doolittle Blvd
Uniondale, NY 11553

Registration begins at 5:30 p.m.
Hearing to begin at 6:00p.m.

Wednesday - **August 26, 2015**
University of Connecticut, Stamford
1 University Place,
Stamford, CT 06901

Registration begins at 5:30 p.m.
Hearing to begin at 6:00 p.m.

Thursday - **August 27, 2015**
Holiday Inn New London
35 Governor Winthrop Blvd
New London, CT 06320

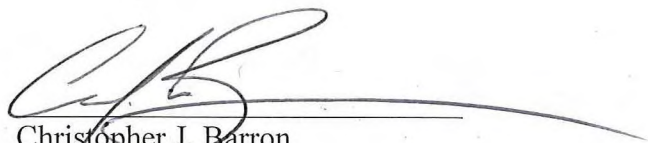
Registration begins at 5:30 p.m.
Hearing to begin at 6:00 p.m.

All interested federal, state and local agencies, interested private and public organizations, and individuals are invited to attend. Persons wishing to provide oral comments are asked to register prior to the start of the hearing. Transcripts of the meetings will be prepared. The hearing procedures are available upon request. After these comments are reviewed, significant new issues are investigated, and modifications are made, a Final DMMP/PEIS will be published and distributed. The Final DMMP/PEIS will contain the Corps responses to comments received on the Draft PEIS.

The draft DMMP and PEIS are available on our web site at:
<http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/ProjectsTopics/LongIslandSoundDMMP.aspx>

24 JUL 2015

Date



Christopher J. Barron
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer