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Corps of Engineers releases Long Island Sound Dredged Material Management Plan for public review

CONCORD, Mass. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released for public review and comment the Long Island Sound Draft Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) on Monday, August 17, 2015. The DMMP and PEIS are available for review on the Corps website at: www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/ProjectsTopics/LongIslandSoundDMMP.aspx.

The public comment period will run through Oct. 16, 2015. Public Hearings were held in New York and Connecticut and two additional Public Hearings are scheduled for September 16-17, 2015.

The first two public hearings were held in New York: on Monday, Aug. 24, 2015 at the Village Center at Port Jefferson, NY; and on Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2015 at the Marriott Long Island in Uniondale, NY. Two subsequent public hearings were held in Connecticut: on Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2015 at the University of Connecticut-Stamford in Stamford, CT; and on Thursday, Aug. 27, 2015 at the Holiday Inn-New London, CT.

In order to provide the public added opportunity to comment, two additional hearings will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 16 at the Hotel Indigo, Long Island - East End (1830 West Main Street, Rt. 25, Riverhead NY), and Thursday Sept.17, 2015 at the Omni New Haven Hotel (155 Temple St, New Haven, CT 06510). Hearings at all locations will begin at 6 p.m. with registration at 5:30 p.m.

The primary purpose of the hearings is to solicit the public's comments and input. Additionally, the Project Team will provide background information on the LIS DMMP/PEIS, details on how the screening of alternatives was performed and information on the alternative formulation process. The presentations given at the public hearings will assist reviewers in understanding the process, which should help the public as they review the Draft DMMP and Draft PEIS.

We encourage interested members of the public to review the draft documents online, so that they can better understand the processes and history involved in dredged material placement. Many are unaware that dredged material removed from Federal or private projects is subjected to rigorous physical, chemical and biological testing that not only tests the dredged material, but also the proposed placement site, as well as a "reference site", to ensure that the material is environmentally acceptable. These tests include very conservative risk assessments that must be passed before the dredged material is classified as suitable for ocean placement, and independently reviewed and assessed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The public should also be aware that on average, there has been a 35-percent reduction in the amount of dredged material deposited at Long Island Sound ocean placement sites between 2006 and 2014 when

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compared to those sites between 1984 and 2004. This is due in large part to New York and Connecticut's efforts to beneficially use sandy dredged material for coastal resiliency projects. Beneficial use is always a preferred option for Corps dredging projects when sandy dredged material is available.

For those who cannot attend the public hearings, written comments may be submitted to the Corps. Public comments on the Draft DMMP and Draft PEIS should be forwarded no later than October 16, 2015 to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, (ATTN: LIS DMMP/PEIS Program Manager Meghan Quinn), 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751.

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