

Deep Water Port *notes*

The News Portfolio of The Connecticut Deep Water Port Community

New London . New Haven . Bridgeport

Long Island Sound Dredge Material Maintenance Plan

(Actum Non Verbum) by Don Frost, Deputy Editor



Tanker "GENMAR COMPANION" LOA 750 feet, Draft 39.0 feet, DWT 72,768 bound for Long Island Riverhead Platform with a cargo of fuel oil. Fuel Oil is stored at Riverhead, and then loaded into barges for distribution to electric power generation stations in the Northeast. Photo - Captain Charles Jonas, Connecticut Marine Pilot

I attended what was called a citizens "scoping" (citizen input) hearing in Stamford November 28, 2007 that dealt with what was then a "proposed" Long Island Sound Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP). Presenting the plan were representatives from three or more different US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) offices, one or more from National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA), two each from the States of New York and Connecticut environmental offices, a representative of Congressman Shays' office and untold minions

from an alphabet of other agencies and special interests.

Following the governments' presentations was a Q&A period. Among those asking questions was the Norwalk harbor master who asked how long ago the Corps of Engineers had approved the designated central and western Long Island Sound disposal sites. A Corps representative answered "over 50 years ago". For the record, the US EPA was only established in July of 1970 – at least 15 years after the sites were approved and in use.

The harbor master's next question was directed at the US EPA person whose stated responsibility is to monitor the two disposal sites in question for any harmful emissions from those sites. He was asked "how many years have those sites been monitored by anyone for possible ecological damage?" The answer: "About thirty years"

The next question was "Has there been any ecological damage over those thirty years?" The answer: "None that we can measure."

The next question was: "Why are we here if the dredged material placed in those sites over 50 years ago, and monitored over the last thirty years, did nothing to harm the environment?"

The ensuing pregnant silence was followed by a heroic attempt by the Corps to explain the DMMP was designed to make efficient use of the dredged material. I left at this time, but I am wondering why this issue is still unresolved after almost four years (actually much longer). In case we in this country, and especially Connecticut, have not noticed our infrastructure and ports are critical to our national economic competitiveness and we have paid a very heavy cost in dollars and lost jobs for doing nothing.

New Vessel *Murden* Will Replace the 40 Year Old *Currituck*, Long the East Coast's Workhorse for Dredging Shallow Harbor Waters

By W.T.S. Butler, Deputy Editor

Wilmington, NC—Maritime advancement faces a number of challenges—intermodal transportation capability: ship, barge, warehousing, truck, train, and air shipments. Competition from other NE US regional ports like Davisville, RI and New Bedford, MA. Competition from other modes of commercial and industrial transportation. And marketing needs from the region.

Equally problematic is the river and harbor dredging needs to accommodate even current short sea shipping activity—let alone expanded requirements and capacity for the future in Connecticut's three deep water ports—New Haven, Bridgeport and New London.

Some material progress will be measured with the Army Corp of Engineers taking delivery this August of a new 500 cubic yard capacity split hull hopper dredge, specifically designed for work in shallow inlets and rivers.

The Corps marine Design Center, Philadelphia reports that the new vessel *Murden* will replace the 40 year old *Currituck*, long the East Coast's workhorse for dredging shallow harbor waters.

The design of the old *Currituck*'s drag arms and dredge heads has been adapted for use on the new *Murden*.

The split hull design of the dredge vessel allows for dredged materials to be discharged in shallow waters by dumping in the water between the twin hulls, avoiding the threat of grounding on its own hopper loads.

The vessel measures 186 feet long, 11 feet from keel to deck, and 35 feet wide.

She can operate in as few as five feet of water. Disposition of the *Currituck* is not clear-nor is the prospect of increased expectation for use of either vessel in Connecticut harbor waters.

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Statewide Dredging Update

by Mr. Joseph R. Salvatore, Dredging Project Coordinator for the State of Connecticut, Joseph.Salvatore@ct.gov

Low Use Navigation Pilot Project:

Fiscal Year 2010 Congress authorized funding to the New England District of the Army Corps of Engineers for projects in Westbrook, Patchogue River and Stratford-Milford, Housatonic River. There was a kick-off meeting on May 18th with the Housatonic River Low Use Project Team, participants included; The Stratford Waterfront and Harbor Management Commission (SWHMC), Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Office of Long Island Sound Programs, New England District of Army Corps of Engineers, Connecticut Department of Transportation Dredge Coordinator, and Roberge Associates Coastal Engineers. The Federal Navigation Projects full depth dredge plan had a

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Statewide Dredging Update, continued from page 2

total quantity of 600,000 CY. The SWHMC reviewed the project and determined that a full depth dredge would not be required, but a depth of -14 totaling 50,000 CY would be acceptable.

The intent of the Low Use Navigation Project is to use a dredge like the Government owned Currituck, and dispose of the sediment at an approved near shore location for beach nourishment. The two locations being studied are; Stratford west of Point No Point and Milford between Cedar and Myrtle Beach's.

The Low Use Navigation Project in theory is to encourage and advise local sponsors and users on organizing themselves for mutual benefit by working through existing public entities.

Through the Corps Regulatory Program create streamlining regional general permits that would strive to eliminate the need for an individual local sponsor to apply for an individual permit for each dredging cycle. Create partnerships for maintenance of projects within the watershed and to address regional development opportunities. Work in partnership with non-federal sponsors to explore alternatives to organize into effective partnerships to carry out maintenance dredging and recover cost from direct beneficiaries.

Currituck Update:

The Army Corps dredge The Currituck was conducting work in the Patchogue River, Westbrook this past May 15th to 27th.

A total amount of 10,800 CY thus far has been removed and disposed of near shore off Hammonasset State Park Beach. The Currituck will return June 14th to 24th to dredge five days in Clinton Harbor and return to finish a section of the Patchogue River.

New England Regional Dredge Team (NERDT):

The NERDT also known as the Sudbury Group conducted a web based conference call on May 26th.

The NERDT is a group of federal and state agencies in New England that meet to discuss and recommend resolution of technical issues related to dredging and dredge material disposal in New England waters. It is called the Sudbury Group because it has met at the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in Sudbury, Mass. for many years.

Regional Dredging Teams (RDT) have been established with the intent to improve dredge material management by fostering communication and planning, provide a forum for issue resolution, and increasing public education and community involvement.

For more information go to www.nerdt.org.

The meeting agenda covered the following; state dredging team updates, LISDMMP working group update, silent inspector update, green book-inland testing manual update, and beneficial use.

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We welcome your ideas, news, thoughts and comments about the revitalization of Connecticut's deep water ports and the ability to vastly improve on commercial and personal transportation to the economic benefit of this state. Please contact deputy editor W. T. S. Butler at usarbitrator@hotmail.com, or 860-478-8972, or at PO Box 43, Mystic, CT 06355.

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