

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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A field survey at the Mill-Quinnipiac River Disposal Mound (MQR) was conducted to assess the recolonization status one year after a reconnaissance survey indicated an abrupt decline of benthic habitat. MQR, located in the Central Long Island Sound Disposal Site (CLIS), is a capped dredged material disposal mound formed during the 1982-1983 disposal season. This report presents results from the August 1992 MQR REMOTS® survey.

Twenty-one stations at MQR were occupied, and triplicate REMOTS® photographs were taken at each station. Results of the 1992 REMOTS® survey were assessed relative to a similar survey from 1991. All of the REMOTS® parameters indicated that benthic conditions had improved at MQR over the year interval between the two surveys.

Historical REMOTS® data from several CLIS capped mounds and the CLIS reference area were compared with the MQR results. Cycles of stress and recovery were present at all stations surveyed. However, the regressive decline in benthic habitat between 1987 and 1991 at MQR suggested an episode of bottom disturbance at that mound sometime before the 1991 survey. The 1992 data indicated that MQR is currently in a recovery phase. Determining the cause of the substantial decrease of habitat quality and subsequent slow recolonization at MQR is important in developing long-term management options for this mound.