

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During recent months the New England Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been assessing the feasibility of designating a disposal site for dredged material in Western Long Island Sound. As a result of that assessment, one particular area, identified as the WLIS III site, has emerged as potentially the most viable location for disposal. Although general information on the environmental conditions at this site are known, more detailed and site specific data are required for design and management of the disposal operation and post-disposal monitoring effort. Consequently, the Disposal Area Monitoring System (DAMOS) program conducted a baseline survey of the area in late January 1982.

The major objectives of the baseline survey were to determine the overall topography and sediment distribution within the site, to assess the containment potential of the area, to measure the background levels of sediment chemistry and water quality, to describe the benthic population in the site, and to assess the potential impact of disposal on fishing interests in the area. Finally, these data were to be used to define a specific location within the site for installation of a taut wire disposal buoy. This location would then be studied in detail to provide baseline information for future monitoring efforts should the site be designated for disposal.

Because any disposal site in Western Long Island Sound must be located in the general vicinity of active fishing grounds, a special effort was made by DAMOS investigators to contact local fishermen. This was accomplished through two information forums which were held in Huntington, N.Y. on 18 January, and in Norwalk, Conn. on 28 January, 1982, and through numerous personal communications with individual fishermen and industry representatives.

This report provides a summary of the January survey results from WLIS III. Based on the information discussed here a management plan can be developed to insure that controlled disposal of dredged material occurs in a safe and efficient manner.