

# Supervisor Romaine and Town Council Urge Governor Cuomo to Sue EPA Over Approval of Dumping Connecticut Dredge Spoils in LI Sound

posted on 11/22/2016 10:38:00 AM

**Farmingville, NY** – Supervisor Ed Romaine and the Brookhaven Town Council recently sent a letter to New York Governor Andrew Cuomo urging him “to do all in your power, including litigation” to force the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reverse their approval of the Long Island Sound Dredge Material Management Plan (DMMP). The controversial plan allows 52.9 million cubic yards of dredged spoils to be dumped in the open waters of the Long Island Sound over the next 20 years. According to the letter, the volume of material is “enough to fill a line of dump trucks 10,000 miles long.” The dredge spoils in question would originate from rivers and harbors along the Connecticut coastline. [View the letter now](#) .

Supervisor Romaine and the Town Board have consistently opposed the federal government’s plan to dump dredge spoils into the Long Island Sound from federal dredging projects. The Board stated in their letter that the decision to dispose of the spoils in the Long Island Sound was based on the economics of “practical alternatives.” This resulted in the determination that dumping in nearby waters, instead of further out to sea, was the cheapest method of disposal without full consideration of the environment. As a result, the letter strongly stated that the plan is an “abject failure.”

In January of this year, Supervisor Romaine and the Town Council sent a letter to New York State Secretary of State, Cesar A. Peralas, in support of his position to require revisions to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ (USACE) DMMP. The letter contended that great strides have been made towards improving the water quality of the Long Island Sound and that this new plan could “undo” the progress that has been made. The Supervisor and Town Council wrote that they understand “the need for dredging to maintain the economic viability of waterways along the Connecticut coastline,” but that the plan “falls far short” of meeting the goals established in 2005.

In August, Supervisor Romaine and Councilwoman Jane Bonner were joined by Senator Ken LaValle, Assemblyman Steve Englebright and others to warn about the potentially contaminated spoils that could be a threat to the sensitive ecology of the Sound. At the time, the Supervisor addressed the US Army Corps of Engineers failure to notify government officials of a scheduled public hearing to review its DMMP and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for the Long Island Sound. He criticized the federal agencies for releasing a long and detailed report to the public only seven days before the hearing, leaving little time for review.

In February of 2005 in a joint letter to the USACE, the Governors of New York and Connecticut requested the creation of the DMMP. The need for a DMMP also was identified by the US Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) June 2005 Rule that designated two of the Sound’s historic open-water placement sites for continued use, the Central Long Island Sound site and the Western Long Island Sound site. 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.

The US ACE is responsible for maintaining 52 Federal Navigation Projects (FNPs) in the Long Island Sound and adjacent waters that include general navigation features requiring periodic maintenance dredging. These include 31 projects in Connecticut, 17 in New York and four in Rhode Island.

**Division of Public Information \* Office of the Supervisor**

One Independence Hill • Farmingville • NY 11738 • Phone 631-451-6595