

State University of New York at Stony Brook

NEWS

University News Services

144 Administration Building

Stony Brook, New York, 11794

Contact: News Director Vicky Penner Katz,

telephone: 516-632-6311 • fax: 516-632-6313 • pager: 516-282-8586 or Judy Fischer

at Marine Sciences, 516-632-8700.

July 27, 1998

University Marine Researchers to Study Impact of Dredging Stony Brook Harbor

STONY BROOK- State University of New York at Stony Brook's Marine Sciences Research Center has begun a two-year study of ways to minimize the need for dredging Stony Brook Harbor, a channel heavily-used by pleasure boaters seeking access to and from Long Island Sound. The Harbor is located on the northeastern perimeter of the Town of Smithtown, just west of the hamlet of Stony Brook in the Town of Brookhaven.

The study is being financed by a \$140,000 State grant administered by the Town of Smithtown. Over the next two years, University marine scientists, under the direction of Dr. Lawrence Swanson, Dr. Robert Wilson, and Dr. Roger Flood, will explore ways to minimize the need for dredging the environmentally fragile harbor's boat channels, maintaining navigation, and finding environmentally-safe solutions to problems created by the dredging process.

During the first year, the Stony Brook researchers will map the harbor bottom and revise the existing computer model of the harbor. They also will look at the transport of sediment in, around, and out of the harbor and West Meadow Creek, and study the formation of sand spits at Long Beach in Smithtown and neighboring West Meadow Beach in Stony Brook.

In the second year, they will use the revised model to study the impact of several different scenarios, including:

- Dredging the existing channel to 12-feet.
- Maintaining the existing six-foot channel.
- Changing the length of the existing channel.
- Removing the dredge spoil from Young's Island, a spit of land running much of the length of the channel.
- Taking no action.

-more-

Dredging Study

Take 2-2-2-2-2

At the completion of the study in April, 2000, their results will form the scientific foundation on which state and local officials can base decisions about future dredging efforts. "The harbor is one of the few remaining jewels in the crown of the north shore today. We would like to provide the most accurate scientific information for its protection and management." Dr. Swanson said.

The study is an outgrowth of work by the Stony Brook Harbor Task Force, an informal policy group comprising representatives of the Town of Brookhaven, the Town of Smithtown, the Village of Nissequogue, the Village of Head of the Harbor, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the Ward Melville Heritage Foundation, the Stony Brook Estuaries Council, the Stony Brook Yacht Club, the University's Marine Sciences Research Center, and Suffolk County.