



**For immediate release
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**PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION CELEBRATES
COMPLETION OF WESTPORT RIVER DREDGING**

*Dredging provides safer access to Town Wharves and channel
for commercial and recreational boats*

Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Commissioner Rick Sullivan will join state and local officials Wednesday to celebrate the completion of dredging of the east branch of the Westport River.

Over the past eight months, approximately 2,900 cubic yards of material was removed from the vicinity of the Westport Town Wharves and 7,900 cubic yards was removed from the town creek, providing safer navigation for commercial fishing vessels and recreational boaters alike.

“This project is a fine example of what can happen when multiple state agencies work in collaboration with a municipality to complete important infrastructure improvements.” said Lt. Governor Timothy P. Murray. “The dredging of the Westport town wharves will stimulate substantial economic spin-off, providing the local fishing fleet with access to essential berthing and offloading space as well as allowing recreational boaters to access the great amenities Westport has to offer.”

“Westport Harbor is one of the highest fish-yielding small harbors in Massachusetts,” said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. “We are very pleased to be able to increase the safety of these commercial fishermen, as well as recreational boaters who enjoy this harbor.”

“The entire community worked hard for a very long time to see this project become a reality,” said Senator Joan Menard. “The dredging was important for the safety of both the commercial fishermen and recreational boaters who navigate through the harbor and I am thrilled that it is completed.”

"It is great to see this project completed. The cooperative work of local, state and federal agencies made this long awaited project a reality." said State Representative Michael Rodrigues. "Dredging this area makes the Westport River and Harbor safer for those who use it both commercially and recreationally."

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Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., Commissioner
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The project involved maintenance and dredging of approximately 27,000 square feet near the Town Wharf and another 48,120 square feet at the town creek on the East Branch of the Westport River. The dredged material will be disposed of offshore at the Cape Cod Bay Disposal Site.

The project, which began in November 2008 and was completed in June 2009, was a DCR Rivers and Harbors project through the Office of Waterways, in cooperation with the Governor's Seaport Council, the Office of Travel & Tourism, and the Town of Westport.

Of the total \$1.4 million cost of the project, DCR provided \$469,385, the Seaport Council provided \$345,000, \$150,000 came from the Town of Westport as grant from the Office of Travel & Tourism, and another \$458,180 will be provided by the Town of Westport. The work was done by Tripp Marine Construction Corp. of Westport.

This is the third and final phase of a multi-year effort to improve conditions at Westport Harbor. In 2002, the Town Wharves were rehabilitated, and in 2006-2007, the Army Corps of Engineers dredged the entrance to the Westport channel.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.