



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT
696 VIRGINIA ROAD
CONCORD MA 01742-2751**

April 7, 2014

Tim Carroll
Executive Secretary, Town of Chilmark
401 Middle Road
Chilmark, MA 02535

Dear Mr. Carroll,

Under charge from the United States Congress the US Army Corps of Engineers is authorized to operate and maintain Federal Navigation Projects (FNP) to protect the shoreline, reduce flood risk, ensure safety of navigation, and promote local / regional commerce. The Menemsha Creek FNP was authorized by Congress in 1945 as a Harbor of Refuge for ships seeking protection from severe and inclement weather conditions. Since that time a number of dredging and jetty repair events have been completed in Menemsha Creek FNP in order to allow vessels safe passage.

In October 2012 Hurricane Sandy induced waves and currents resulted in significant impacts to many of the southern New England coastal cities and town's shorelines. Many of the federal navigation projects in these areas showed marked increases in shoaling and damage to features of the project (breakwaters, jetties, etc). The Menemsha Creek FNP specifically showed displacement of armor stone on both jetties, and substantial shoaling in channel areas already difficult to navigation.

In an effort to understand the potential impacts of dredging to the shellfishery in Menemsha Pond the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head, Town of Chilmark, and Town of Aquinnah contracted Woods Hole Group to analyze data, produce hydrodynamic model run simulations, and provide technical expertise on the Menemsha Pond system. These results were informative and the Corps thanks the Tribe and Towns for their input.

Given the need to restore the FNP to its authorized dimensions after damages from Hurricane Sandy, the Corps will continue to move forward with planning and design of both the Menemsha FNP dredging and jetty repair projects. Per the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) regulations the Corps will solicit comments in a 30-day Public Notice. The Project Manager, Craig Martin, will notify you by email or phone at the beginning of the public comment period.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed O'Donnell", written over a large, stylized circular flourish.

Ed O'Donnell
Chief, Navigation Section
New England District