

Items Presented in the Corps Reports

- The Corps deems a full tide channel to the town wharf would be beneficial based on statistics provided by the Blue Hill Selectmen and Harbormaster, as well as, a 2016 fishermen workshop. Statistical formulas and price updates were used by the Corps in 2020 to determine that the channel would still be beneficial.
- Proposed dredging of a 6-foot deep Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW), 80-foot wide channel 5,600 feet long to the town wharf where a turning basin, 160 feet by 80 feet, will be dredged adjacent to the wharf. Only the upper 2,600 feet of the channel, closer to the wharf, will require dredging.
- The “trench” type channel will allow the safe passage of two powered vessels.
- Approximately 71,500 cubic yards (CY) of material will be removed with a mechanical dredge using an 8-CY bucket that places the material into two 1,500-CY bottom dump scows. The work is estimated to take 2 months.
- 61,000 CY of material tested and deemed “clean” will be disposed at the Corps’ Eastern Passage open water disposal site 14 miles away off West Tremont in about 330 feet of water.
- 10,500 CY of material from the upper two feet of the inner harbor sediment has been tested and deemed “contaminated” with metals and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). The contaminated sediment has reduced the benthic community. The source of contamination is unknown.
- The contaminated material will be placed in a confined aquatic disposal cell (CAD) within Blue Hill Harbor. The 525-foot by 150-foot CAD area water depth is -2 feet MLLW, inaccessible during low water.
- 15,500 CY of material will be excavated to create the CAD “box” into which the contaminated material will be disposed and capped with 3 feet of “clean” material. The remaining material will be disposed at the Eastern Passage site.
- The inner harbor sediment is coarser grain due to strong tidal flushing of the subtidal zone.
- The dredging will replace 3.7 acres of intertidal mudflat habitat with subtidal habitat.
- The Corps estimates an annual shoaling rate of 365 CY, or about 18,200 CY every 50 years.
- A 2019 Corps cost analysis estimated the total cost of the studies and dredging to be \$3,430,000. The 80%/20% federal/Blue Hill cost split will require \$686,000 from Blue Hill. \$343,000 will be required up front and the remaining \$343,000 upon project completion from Blue Hill, which can be paid over 30 years.
- A 2020 Corps project report presented annual maintenance costs ranging from \$14,600 to \$23,700.