



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alexis Weik

## Senator Weik and Other Elected Officials, Business Owners, Community Groups, and Local Residents Urge All Levels of Government to Continue to Work Together to Dredge the Browns River

ALEXIS WEIK July 22, 2021

| ISSUE: **DREDGING, BROWNS RIVER**

This morning, New York State Senator Alexis Weik stood at the Browns River in Sayville to urge all levels of government to continue to work together in the hopes of expediting the dredging of this critical waterway that feeds into the Great South Bay. Senator Weik was joined by state and local elected officials, fire and safety officials, small businesses, residents and local water quality advocates to support the effort.

The Browns River is a federal waterway that is used by thousands of residents, businesses, visitors, and emergency personnel, and the Ferry service is the main method of evacuation for individuals on Fire Island in the event of an emergency. The safe navigability of the River is critical to ensure not only the safety of boaters, but also the economic viability of the businesses along the River and on Fire Island.

The Browns River should be dredged every 8 years, but it has now been nearly 17 years since the River was last dredged. It is the responsibility of the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) to dredge the River, but it can only do so when there is an appropriate “spoil site” for the

dredged materials to be deposited. Suffolk County and the Town of Islip are responsible for having a suitable spoil site available for the dredged materials, and the State—through the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Department of State—are responsible for issuing the permits for the dredging of the River and approving the spoil site. All of which requires each level of government to work together and to have the necessary funding to do the work.

Last week, Senator Weik convened a meeting with all interested parties including representatives from Congressman Garbarino’s office, the County Legislature, the Town of Islip, ACE, and DEC—all of whom agree that we must get Browns River dredged as quickly as possible.

“It has been far too long since the Browns River has last been dredged, but with all levels of government working together and the full support of the community, I am optimistic that we will finally get this River dredged to ensure all those who use and rely on the River can do so safely,” **said Senator Alexis Weik.**

“The dredging of Browns River is long overdue and has gotten to the point of being a safety hazard. I commend Senator Weik in demanding immediate action so that we can avoid a potential tragedy, **said Senator Phil Boyle.**

“From environmental, economic and public safety standpoints, the dredging of Browns River is an absolute necessity. I’m grateful that our entire delegation of elected officials, Federal, State, and Local, understands the urgency of this project—we will not stop pushing until this gets done,” **said Assemblymember Jarett Gandolfo.**

“Thank you Senator Weik for your leadership on this important issue. I look forward to working with federal, state and local leaders to make this project a reality,” **said Suffolk**

**County Legislator Anthony Piccirillo.**

“As Islip Councilwoman, I’m working with the Town and the multiple governmental agencies to get this project to the finish line. Browns River is a crucial waterway on the south shore, and when we complete this dredging project, it will be safer for all who use it,” **said Islip Town Councilwoman Mary Kate Mullen.**

“We support the dredging of Browns River as part of a comprehensive plan to address water quality issues in the Great South Bay,” **said Robyn Silvestri, Executive Director, Save the Great South Bay.**

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