Army Corps of Engineers Projects Will Restore Vegetation on Land Near Northport Harbor and Prevent Flooding Along Asharoken Avenue

Washington, DC—Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) today announced that he secured $443,000 in federal funds to improve environmental infrastructure in Huntington. The final passage of the Fiscal Year 2008 Omnibus Appropriations Bill includes $197,000 in federal funds to restore the ecosystem at Northport Bay and $246,000 to repair and strengthen the damaged seawall at Asharoken Avenue. Rep. Israel is a member of the House Energy and Water Subcommittee of Appropriations, the panel responsible for setting funding levels for the Army Corps of Engineers.

The federal funds will support an ecosystem restoration project designed by the Army Corps of Engineers for the salt marsh at the southern end of Northport Bay. The marsh was used as a placement site for dredged materials when Northport Harbor was dredged in 1963. The restoration project will remove the dredged materials, maximize productive vegetation in the area and eliminate Phragmites, an invasive plant, from the marsh.

“Northport Bay provides Long Island with some of our best beaches and fishing locations, but its marshlands are in dire need of restoration due to the collection of dredged materials that are over four decades old,” said Congressman Israel. “These much-needed funds will restore the marshland by removing dredged material, maximizing productive plant growth and limiting noxious plants and weeds.”

"The Town of Huntington has a long standing commitment to the protection of our wetlands, bays and harbors,” said Huntington Supervisor Frank P. Petrone. “Our wetlands and salt marshes are part of an intricate ecosystem and help to cleanse the harbors and bays. They also serve as an incubator for fish and other wildlife. The restoration of this salt marsh will add a valuable asset to our wetlands inventory.”

Israel also announced $246,000 in funds for the Army Corps of Engineers to repair and strengthen the damaged seawall at Asharoken Avenue. During the 1992 hurricane season Asharoken Avenue was buried in beach sand and was closed for five days. In 1995 the US Army Corps of Engineers built a seawall and berm to protect the road.

Israel received the commitment for repairs from the Army Corps of Engineers after an initial meeting in November 2006. Throughout the last year, a number of storms have caused a deterioration of the seawall separating Asharoken Avenue from the Long Island Sound. The storms have resulted in flooding and the collection of sand and debris along the roadway.

"This federal money will fund vital repairs to the Asharoken seawall that will help protect access to Asharoken and Eaton’s Neck throughout the storm season," said Congressman Israel. "A major storm will further damage the seawall leading to considerable flooding and damage of this

critical artery that leads to the communities of Asharoken and Eaton's Neck. These repairs will help keep this important road intact and reduce the dangers from a powerful storm. "