

Non-Energy Resources, Connecticut Coastal Waters, Year 9 and 10 Activities

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Abstract:

The Connecticut effort in year 9 of the Continental Margins Program concentrated on a 13.6-mi² area south of the Housatonic River. This area was chosen for a side-scan sonar survey because it lies on and adjacent to the bathymetric expressions of two fairly large, subcropping, potential sources of coarse material. Previous seismic work in the area indicated that outcrops or subcrops of these potential source deposits could be delineated using their bathymetric expression. Owing to the limited resolution of the seismic data, a correlation between bottom type and underlying source deposits could not be made with the seismics alone. Results from the November 1993 side-scan survey show that although the source deposits have discernible bathymetric expressions, they are not cropping out as much as expected. As a result, bottom type is not necessarily determined by subcropping deposits in this particular area. Year 10 work was concentrated in Fishers Island Sound, where three areas of potential interest for near-shore gravel resources had previously been identified. These areas were surveyed, during the spring of 1996, using the RoxAnn Seabed Classification System. A small video camera and a Van Veen grab sampler were used to calibrate and verify the RoxAnn data. Although previous sampling had indicated the presence of gravel or gravelly sediment in all of the survey areas, the RoxAnn results showed less gravel than anticipated. Vibrant eelgrass beds and other habitat indicators were detected in all of the survey areas. Given the variable sediment results, and the high habitat potential of the areas surveyed, the likelihood of developing a sand and gravel supply from the near shore of Fishers Island Sound appears quite low.