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**Army Nomination for
FY 1998 Secretary of Defense
Environmental Security Award
in
Environmental Quality? Individual
Colonel Frank Intini**



**New York Army National Guard
Army Aviation Support Facility #1
Ronkonkoma, NY**



UH-60 "Blackhawk" Helicopter Personnel

Fish Habitat Improvements

In coordination with the DEC Marine Division, the State Department of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, and other public and private sponsors, Colonel Intini developed a means for Facility pilots and crews to place an artificial reef in Long Island's Great South Bay. This reef would reestablish an endangered habitat for fish populations. The DEC Marine Division, unable to place the reef materials themselves, requested the Facility's assistance, providing the Facility with yet another sling-load training opportunity that would benefit the environment.



Reef Balls in the Loading Area

The artificial reef consists of 100 igloo-shaped concrete "reef balls," each weighing 1,500 pounds and having a pH comparable to seawater. Colonel Intini and his staff were directly involved in manufacturing the reef balls, ensuring proper reinforcement and construction for sling loading. After the DEC marked off the area for reef ball placement, Facility crews airlifted the balls to the site and released them to create the 100-yard reef. Colonel Intini directed each flight and saw that each reef ball was placed in its assigned location. He also coordinated directly with the US Coast Guard; Suffolk

County Police; Suffolk County Parks Police; NYS Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation; and NYS Police.



Placing Reef Balls along DEC Panels

The reef, which is monitored by DEC's Marine Division, will provide habitat for blackfish, porgies, sea bass, and various game fish, including striped bass, bluefish, and fluke. Future plans include adding 900 reef balls to extend the reef. This late-1997 project provided pilots with unique training in sling-load operations over water and precise placement of loads, while creating a habitat for fish that will increase opportunities for sports fishermen.

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