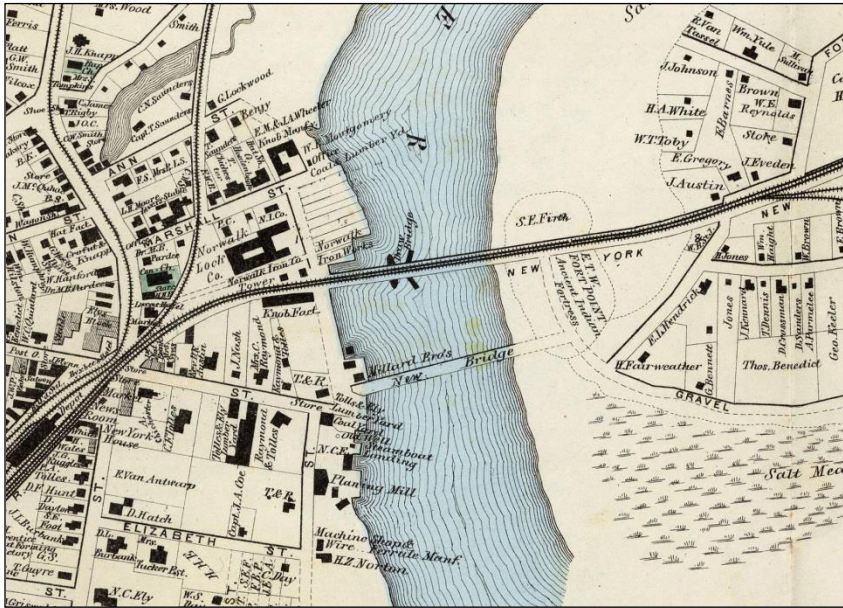


# Norwalk River Railroad Bridge Replacement Project Environmental Assessment (Cultural Resources: Archaeological) Norwalk, Connecticut

The State of Connecticut is replacing the historic railroad swing bridge over the Norwalk River. Many terrestrial parcels will be affected by the undertaking, with actions ranging from property acquisition for equipment storage and construction access purposes, to historic resource removal. Most of the project area is paved and thus not amenable to standard shovel testing to determine whether intact archaeological remains are present. Much of the project area is comprised of filled-in marsh and former near-marsh land, areas that may contain pre-colonial Native American archaeological resources.



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The project also involves impacts to underwater and intertidal resources of the Norwalk River, including the erection of new piers and burying of utility lines in the river bottom. The Norwalk River has been dredged several times to allow for increased access for industrial shipping; however, after performing a bathymetric survey, AHS identified areas that had not been dredged and had the potential to preserve buried archaeological sites.

AHS conducted subsurface terrestrial investigations with a Geoprobe, a mechanical device that collects long soil cores with minimal ground disturbance, and assessed the underwater archaeological potential by using a vibracoring system. Vibracores are coring systems that use an electric- or gas-powered vibrating head to drive a core barrel into underwater sediments, which reduces frictional and compressive disturbances to sediments and provides continuous sample recovery. The Geoprobe and vibracore sampling is being used to 1) evaluate the presence and/or potential for subsurface and underwater cultural materials; 2) reconstruct paleogeography, evaluate depositional environments, and record changes in historical land use and sea level change; and 3) to provide recommendations for further investigations or mitigation based on an overall assessment of underground and underwater archaeological potential within the project area.