



LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER  
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
25TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

December 16, 2013

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
108 Army Pentagon, Room 3E446  
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

I write today to strongly urge the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to provide fiscal year 2014 (FY 14) funding in its FY 14 work plan for the purposes of dredging the Port of Rochester to its federally authorized depth.

It is my understand that the USACE has obligated \$1.2 million provided in H.R. 152, the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act (P.L. 113-2) for maintenance dredging of the Port of Rochester to repair damage caused by Hurricane Sandy, with work tentatively scheduled to begin in May 2014. USACE estimates that between 75,000 and 100,000 cubic yards of material will be dredged during this time.

However, USACE also estimates that a total of 300,000 cubic yards of sediment needs to be dredged for the Port of Rochester to reach its federally authorized depth. Given that the USACE will be conducting maintenance dredging of the Port of Rochester in the summer of 2014, I strongly believe it is in the best interest of all stakeholders for the corps to obligate additional funds and ensure that the \$1.2 million investment is maximized and the Port is dredged to its authorized depth of 21 feet.

The Rochester Harbor provides important economic benefits to the region, and those benefits are expected to increase as the City implements its waterfront revitalization plan in the coming years.

The primary commercial use of Rochester Harbor is the shipment of cement from Ontario, Canada to the Essroc Cement Corporation's wholesale cement distribution facility located in Rochester Harbor. In recent years, there has also been an increase in the passenger cruise ship industry on the Great Lakes. One passenger ship currently uses Rochester Harbor, and the City is well-positioned to reap the benefits of increased cruise ship traffic in the near future. Moreover, the City has initiated construction on a new fully funded \$20 million public marina facility at the Port of Rochester, which will

enhance the recreational use of the Port. The project is expected to significantly increase boating and result in significant new economic and housing development activity in the harbor area.

The failure to provide adequate dredging and maintenance of the Rochester Harbor, will cause significant economic impact to the Rochester region:

- The future of the Essroc facility depends entirely on the continued dredging of the Federal Channel. The closure of the Essroc facility would result in the loss of at least 20 jobs in the City of Rochester, approximately \$3-4 million in annual economic output in Monroe County, and approximately \$400,000 in annual state and local tax revenue. Additionally, the cement cost increase resulting from increased shipping costs could exceed 15 percent across the Rochester region, which would increase the cost of construction and other activities dependent on cement.
- The lack of dredging would also hinder the ability of the Port to attract passenger cruise ships, which could total \$2.5 million in potential annual economic output in Monroe County.
- As sedimentation continues to fill the Federal Channel, the River loses capacity to carry water, particularly during periods of intense precipitation. This lost capacity could result in the expansion of the current floodplain limits in and around the Port. This could result in considerable financial impacts to the existing and planned development at the Port.

The economic success of many industries is heavily reliant on the use of the Port of Rochester. Without proper maintenance, this valuable harbor that serves so many of my constituents and neighboring residents runs the risk of closing.

Once again, I respectfully urge the Army Corps of Engineers to provide FY14 funding in its FY14 work plan to ensure that the Port of Rochester is dredged to its authorized depth. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Louise M. Slaughter  
Member of Congress