



# Calumet-Sag Channel and Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, Cook County, IL

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

## Location

Calumet-Sag Channel and Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, Cook County, IL

## State(s)

IL

## Congressional District(s)

IL-3

## Status

The Cal-Sag currently has not required dredging to meet minimally acceptable channel dimensions; however, a narrowing of the channel is occurring. Emergency maintenance dredging is expected to be necessary in the near future. Sediments in the canal are contaminated and require placement in a confined disposal facility (CDF). Lucas-Berg CDF was modified in the 1980s to meet the requirements for confined placement of contaminated sediments at that time. The facility was never used and would have required major updating to meet current standards before any dredged material could be placed. Section 6004(a)(6) of WRRDA 2014, regarding Lucas-Berg, Illinois Waterway and Grand Calumet River, Illinois, "The portion of the project for navigation, Illinois Waterway and Grand Calumet River, Illinois, authorized by the first section of the Act of July 24, 1946 (60 Stat. 636; chapter 595), that consists of the Lucas-Berg Pit confined disposal facility, Illinois is no longer authorized beginning on the date of enactment of this Act." The Corps Rock Island and Chicago Districts are considering a regional Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) for channel, canal and harbor dredged material placement. The associated planning process has considered multiple sites and alternatives.

Due to budgetary limitations, study efforts, including plan formulation and alternatives evaluation, continue to be constrained. Collaboration with Chicago District and other interests are continuing, including consideration of a joint regional DMMP. This project remains one of very few, if any, other joint regional DMMP projects involving two Districts, two Divisions, as well as several non-Federal sponsors.

## Description

The Calumet-Sag connects Lake Michigan at the Calumet River and Harbor with the Illinois Waterway. The Cal-Sag channel extends 23 miles from T.J. O'Brien lock and dam to the confluence with the main channel of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal at river mile 303.5. Agencies with facility ownership, operation, and regulation responsibilities for the Chicago Area Waterways System include the Chicago and Rock Island Districts, USACE, and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC). Over the 20 years from 1992 through 2011, Annual Tonnage through T.J. O'Brien Lock has ranged from 4.6 million to 13.3 million tons. During 2011 lockages included 10,668 recreation boats and 1,770 commercial boats. In that year, commodity tonnages included over a million tons each of coal, petro-chemicals, crude materials, manufactured goods, and steel. Normal Cal-Sag Channel water levels are managed at -2 Chicago City Datum (CCD). The Cal-Sag channel is shoaling. Deferred maintenance has resulted in the 225' authorized channel width to have narrowed to a minimally acceptable width of 160'. Continuing to defer channel maintenance will negatively impact navigation. An emergency dredging action was almost required in 2013. Sediments in the channel contain contaminants. Removal and placement of these sediments requires additional isolation or processing to protect the environment and human populations. Sediment samples were collected for the Environmental Research and Development Center (ERDC) to conduct environmental fate analyses during FY2015 which will guide design of placement facilities.

## Summarized Project Costs

FY 2014 allocation: \$ 272,400 (funding source: District O&M budget)  
FY 2015: TBD

## Major Work Item (This Fiscal Year)

Rock Island District has initiated the environmental fate analyses of Cal-Sag sediments by the Engineering Research and Development Center in Vicksburg, MS. Collaboration continues with the Chicago District and others interested in the development of a regional dredged material management plan for the Chicago Area Waterways System, including the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, Calumet-Sag channel, and the Chicago and Calumet Rivers and Harbors. Due to expected needs in 2019, Chicago District submitted a draft Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB) report to the Great Lakes and Rivers Division and Mississippi Valley Division in February 2014. Based on a June 2014 In Progress Review, a revised draft report is expected in the second quarter of FY 2015.

## Major Work Item (Next Fiscal Year)

Pending funding, if a feasible joint regional DMMP would be economically justified, Rock Island District would continue to



# Calumet-Sag Channel and Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, Cook County, IL

---

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

**BUILDING STRONG®**

collaborate with Chicago District and other interests in the development of a regional dredged material management plan toward implementation.

**Point of Contact:** Dredged Material Management Program Manager

**Phone:** (309)794-5605

**Email:** [cemvr-pm-web@usace.army.mil](mailto:cemvr-pm-web@usace.army.mil)

---

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS - ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT**

CLOCK TOWER BLDG. - P.O. BOX 2004 - ROCK ISLAND, IL 61204-2004

[www.mvr.usace.army.mil](http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil)