



Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS) Dredged Material Management Plan

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Location

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

State(s)

IL

Congressional District(s)

IL-1, IL-2, IL-3

Status

The Cal-Sag Channel has not required dredging to meet minimally acceptable channel dimensions; however, a narrowing of the channel is occurring. Emergency maintenance dredging could be necessary in the future. Sediments in the canal are contaminated and require placement in a confined disposal facility (CDF). Section 6004(a)(6) of WRRDA 2014, deauthorized the Lucas-Berg CDF. The Corps of Engineers returned the land associated with the Lucas-Berg CDF to the Metropolitan Water Reclamations District of Greater Chicago. The Corps' Rock Island and Chicago Districts are developing 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. Collaboration with Chicago District and other interests are continuing. This project remains one of few, if any, other joint regional DMMP projects. The draft study report has been reviewed by the vertical teams, including both Major Subordinate Commands, Regional Integration Teams, and HQUSACE.

Description

The Calumet-Sag Channel 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 Rock Island District reaches of the Chicago Area Waterways System include both 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. 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 narrowing to a minimally acceptable width of 160'. Continuing to defer channel maintenance could 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 in July 2014. The Environmental Research and Development Center (ERDC) is conducting environmental fate analyses during FY2015. The results of these analyses will guide design of placement facilities.

Summarized Project Costs

FY 2015: TBD

FY 2016: TBD

Major Work Item (This Fiscal Year)

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. The team is currently reviewing the option of creating additional capacity at the existing CDF site in the Chicago District and addressing comments resulting from the public review. Due to expected needs in 2019, Chicago District re-submitted a draft Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB) report to the Great Lakes and Rivers Division and Mississippi Valley Division in January 2015. Based on a June 2014 In Progress Review, a revised draft report underwent public review in the third quarter of FY 2015. Public review comments are currently being addressed. The team is also evaluating extending the life of the existing CDF by raising the berm heights.

Major Work Item (Next Fiscal Year)

Pending funding, if a feasible joint regional DMMP would be economically justified, Rock Island District would continue to collaborate with Chicago District and other interests in the completion of a regional dredged material management plan and implementation of a regional CDF.

Point of Contact: Dredged Material Management Program Manager



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