



FACT SHEET | 2014

Supporting efficient and responsible dredging for the Great Lakes region

Great Lakes Dredging Team (GLDT)

Purpose

The GLDT serves as a forum for both governmental and non-governmental Great Lakes dredging interests to discuss the region's dredging needs. In collaboration with its partners, it supports timely, cost-effective and environmentally sustainable dredging practices at U.S. harbors and channels throughout the Great Lakes, connecting channels and tributaries.

Importance of dredging

The Great Lakes are the largest system of fresh water in the world and are a valuable and unique resource. Dredging is required to construct and maintain recreational and commercial navigation channels and for safe navigation at existing harbors, shipping channels and marinas. Dredging is also required to construct and maintain other important facilities, such as water supply intakes, bridges and utility crossings and for the remediation of contaminated sediments.

Establishment

In 1993, the Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration initiated the Interagency Working Group on the Dredging Process to evaluate problems and delays encountered with dredging the nation's ports. After public meetings, one of the resulting recommendations was to establish a team for the Great Lakes region to provide a mechanism for timely resolution of issues by maximizing interagency coordination.

Membership

The GLDT is a dedicated interagency federal and state partnership, consisting of representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Maritime Administration; Natural Resources Conservation Service; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; U.S. Coast Guard; Great Lakes Commission; Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and New York. Collectively, members bring both policymaking authority and technical expertise to the team. The GLDT has both a federal and non-federal co-chair with four standing committees (steering, outreach, technical and legislation).

Objectives

- Contribute to the national goal of assuring dredging of U.S. harbors and channels is conducted in a timely and cost-effective manner and seek to secure support for dredging activities that can also achieve environmental restoration and enhancement goals.
- Provide a forum to learn about and discuss priority issues related to dredging and management of dredged material to build consensus among GLDT members and facilitate the resolution of dredging issues common to the Great Lakes region among the participating local, state, tribal and federal agencies.
- Promote implementation of relevant portions of recommendations of the interagency report on the dredging process.
- Broker effective communications and decision making among federal and state agencies represented on the GLDT and between the GLDT and key parties in the dredging process.

The GLDT will

- Develop a biannual work plan that identifies dredging-related issues, sets priorities and presents a schedule of objectives.
- Task subcommittees to research issues and make recommendations to the GLDT.
- Employ a consensus-based approach to the prioritization and resolution of dredging-related issues.
- Be transparent regarding activities and actions, and issue deliberations and resolution.
- Communicate in a timely manner decisions and information on policy guidance, scientific advancements and developments in technology to members of the GLDT, state and federal decisionmakers and other interested parties.