

Navigation Maintenance Dredging in the Great Lakes and Connecting Channels

Whereas, in FY 2003 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worked on 29 navigation maintenance dredging projects in the Great Lakes, including 20 deep draft projects and nine shallow draft, involving a total of 2.6 million cubic yards of dredged material; and

Whereas, the Corps' FY 2004 budget will allow for only 22 maintenance dredging projects in the Great Lakes, 19 deep draft and three shallow; and

Whereas, funding for navigation maintenance dredging in the Great Lakes for FY 2003, at \$18 million, was about \$10.8 million short of what was needed to complete all necessary dredging; and

Whereas, some 28 maintenance dredging projects in the Great Lakes in FY 2003 were underfunded or unfunded; and

Whereas, there is currently a backlog of 24 million cubic yards to be dredged to sufficiently maintain navigation channels in the Great Lakes; and

Whereas, because of the extensive requirement for use of confined disposal facilities, restrictions on open lake disposal and other factors, the cost of Great Lakes dredging, ranging from \$6 to \$10 per cubic yard, is over twice the national average; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes receive proportionately less funding for maintenance dredging than other regions of the country; and

Whereas, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system moves over 200 million tons of cargo a year, generates over \$3 billion annually in revenue in the U.S. (and another \$2.25 billion in Canada) and supports over 150,000 jobs.

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission supports a level of funding for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' navigation maintenance dredging activity in the Great Lakes and connecting channels that is at parity with other U.S. regions; and

Be it Finally Resolved, that the Great Lakes Commission urges Congress to allocate funds sufficient to eliminate all navigation maintenance dredging backlogs in the Great Lakes by the end of FY 2007.

Unanimously approved at the 2004 Semiannual Meeting of the Great Lakes Commission, Cleveland, Ohio, May 4, 2004.