



## DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

BUFFALO DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
1776 NIAGARA STREET  
BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14207-3199

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

December 19, 2014

Environmental Analysis Section

**SUBJECT:** Ashtabula Harbor, Ashtabula County, Ohio - Request of Section 401 Water Quality Certification for Discharges of Dredged Material Associated with the Scheduled 2015 Maintenance Dredging Project

Mr. Craig W. Butler  
Director  
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency  
Division of Surface Water  
P.O. Box 1049  
Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049  
ATTN: Mr. Ric Queen

Dear Mr. Butler:

This letter transmits the Section 404(a) Public Notice and Section 401 State water quality certification (WQC) application for the proposed discharges of dredged material associated with our scheduled 2015 maintenance dredging project at Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio (Enclosures 1 and 2). This project entails the maintenance dredging of authorized Federal navigation channels, and placement of the associated dredged material in the existing authorized open-lake placement area. The Public Notice has been prepared in conformance with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulation, "Practice and Procedure: Final Rule for Operation and Maintenance of Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works Projects involving the Discharge of Dredged Materials into Waters of the United States or Ocean Waters," 33 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 337.1.

The USACE - Buffalo District, is requesting Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) WQC for the scheduled 2015 maintenance dredging project at Ashtabula Harbor, or waiver thereof, under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

Channels to be dredged during the 2015 Operations and Maintenance (O&M) dredging project will include the Lower River Channel (to Station 107+75) and Outer Harbor. In addition, a portion of the Lower River Channel between Stations 120+00 and 107+75 is proposed to be dredged in 2015 (see Figures 3 and 4 in Item 6 of Enclosure 2). The inclusion of the second River Channel reach is contingent upon sampling, testing, and evaluation of sediments (spring of 2015) within this reach to determine if the material meets Federal guidelines for open-lake placement. A sediment evaluation will be submitted to OEPA as the basis for this determination. This reach of the Lower River Channel was last dredged as part of the GLRI dredging project

SUBJECT: Ashtabula Harbor, Lake County, Ohio - Request for Section 401 State Water Quality Certification for 2015 Maintenance Dredging Project

executed in 2012-2013.

Please note that all associated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents (Environmental Impact Statements and Environmental Assessments) and Section 404(b)(1) Evaluations have been completed for this maintenance dredging project, and were previously furnished to your office. The majority of the information requested in Item 5 of the WQC application is contained in these documents in further detail.

As you know, we require WQC in order to accept contract bids on this project. The bid opening date has been scheduled for May 15, 2015 and our goal is to secure the WQC by this date. As has been standard practice with many of our dredging projects recently, we respectfully request that no public hearing be scheduled for this application unless significant comments are received specifically requesting one. Please advise us regarding the status of the WQC by January 9, 2014. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Questions pertaining to this matter should be directed to Mr. Eric E. Hannes at (716) 879-4311, by writing to the following address: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1776 Niagara Street, Buffalo, New York, 14207-3199, or by e-mail at: [Eric.E.Hannes@usace.army.mil](mailto:Eric.E.Hannes@usace.army.mil).

Sincerely,



Martin P. Wargo, PWS  
Supervisory Biologist  
Environmental Analysis Section

Enclosures