



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Buffalo District

Public Notice

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OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE STRATEGIC NAVIGATION DREDGING AND DREDGED MATERIAL PLACEMENT

ASHTABULA HARBOR

ASHTABULA COUNTY, OHIO

This 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 Material into Waters of the U.S. or Ocean Waters," 33 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 337.1. Its purpose is to specify what dredged/fill materials would be discharged into waters of the United States by implementation of the proposed action, and advise all interested parties of the proposed project and to provide an opportunity to submit comments, or request a public hearing.

In 2012, the USACE-Buffalo District, anticipates the need to dredge and discharge material excavated from the authorized Federal navigation channels of Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio, which is situated within the designated Ashtabula River Area of Concern (AOC). The objective of the project is to remove contaminated sediments from the Federal navigation channels that currently restrict dredging activities in the AOC, and to maintain sufficient depths in the harbor for deep-draft commercial and recreational vessels. The primary contaminant of concern (COC) associated with these sediments is total polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and the project is funded under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI).

Figure 1 shows the authorized limits and depths of Ashtabula Harbor Federal navigation channels. Up to an additional one foot of material may be removed to insure the minimum depth is achieved. Maintenance dredging in the harbor will predominantly be conducted in areas where sediments do not meet Federal guidelines for open-lake placement and therefore restrict regular dredging activities.

The 2012 dredging operation is tentatively scheduled to be performed during the period between 1 July and 15 December.

This dredging project will involve the removal of an estimated total of 185,000 cubic yards of material from Ashtabula Harbor Federal navigation channels. The dredging will occur mainly in two reaches; one near the mouth of the Ashtabula River and one at the upstream reach of Federal navigation channel. Figure 2 presents the channel areas to be dredged, the depths to be achieved and ultimate placement of the material. Material in these channels consists primarily of silts, clays and fine sands, although the area near the upstream limit of the channel consists mainly of sands, with some gravel and silts. In 2010, material in the lower River Channel (downstream of Station 120+00) and Outer Harbor channels was evaluated using 2005, 2007 and 2009 data in accordance with joint U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)/USACE protocols for the testing and evaluation of Great Lakes dredged material. Based on this evaluation, material within the lower River Channel between stations 120+00 and 107+75 and along the West Breakwater in the Outer Harbor between stations 16+67 and 17+77 was determined to not meet Federal guidelines for open-lake placement. In 2011, material in the Southern Reach between stations 198+00 and 213+36 was evaluated using 2010 data in accordance with the joint USEPA/USACE protocols. Based on this evaluation, material between stations 198+00 and 210+00 was also determined to not meet Federal guidelines for open-lake placement. Across these three areas of the harbor, it is estimated that 140,000 cubic yards of contaminated material needs to be removed to eliminate restrictions on regular dredging activities in the AOC. In 2011, material within the Southern Reach between stations 210+00 and 213+36 was evaluated and determined to meet Federal guidelines for open-lake placement. It is estimated that 45,000 cubic yards of material need to be dredged from this area.

Sediments will be removed from the channel bottom by a mechanical dredge, and placed into scows for transport to the dredged material offloading or placement areas. Dredged material not suitable for open-lake placement is to be transported to the Minnesota Slip at Pinney Dock (1149 East Fifth Street, Ashtabula, Ohio 44005-0041), and offloaded onto trucks for transport to former Elkem Metals Incorporated (EMC-Ashtabula LP) wastewater settling Pond 5C (2700 Lake Road East, Ashtabula, Ohio 44004) for upland placement (Figure 3). Prior to offloading, free water associated with the dredged material (mainly river water entrained during dredging) would be monitored and then discharged back to the harbor. The quality of this effluent is to be determined through site-specific, predictive laboratory testing, the results of which will define necessary controls prior to discharge. It is estimated that effluent in the range of six million gallons could be generated and discharged prior to offloading at Pinney Dock. Upon removal of free water, admixtures may be utilized to provide the sediment strength properties required for final placement. Sediments will be placed and graded within the embankments of Elkem Pond 5C. The main entrance to this facility is approximately 2.0 miles east of Pinney Dock. As a former wastewater settling pond, this embankment provides

properties similar to a dredged material confined disposal facility (CDF) with respect to the containment of sediment from adjacent land and waters. During placement activities within the embankment, storm water runoff would be monitored and then directed to an onsite ditch for discharge to Lake Erie. Similar to the Pinney Dock discharge, the quality of runoff water associated with upland placement of dredged material is to be determined through site-specific, predictive laboratory testing to define necessary controls prior to discharge. Upon placement of the dredged material, Elkem will be responsible for final closure of the embankment per their Permit to Install, pursuant to Ohio water quality regulations. Material dredged from the Southern Reach that is suitable for open-lake placement will be discharged at the existing, authorized 640-acre open-lake placement area in Lake Erie, located approximately 2.25 miles from the end of the harbor's East Breakwater, at an azimuth of 11°15' (Figure 4). This placement area was used by the USACE in 1995, 2001, 2003, 2009 and previous dredging projects, for the placement of Ashtabula Harbor dredged material.

State Water Quality Certification (WQC), or waiver thereof, is required for the discharge of dredged material, under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. This project will involve discharges of dredged material in the form of return water near the Minnesota Slip at Pinney Dock and Pond 5C at the Elkem site, and the placement of dredged material at the open-lake placement area. Therefore, a copy of this Public Notice has been provided to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) requesting WQC for these discharges.

The environmental effects of the dredging operation are documented in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Operation and Maintenance, Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio (1975)*; *Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation, Operation and Maintenance, Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio (1994)*; and *EA and Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation, Operation and Maintenance, Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio (2001)*. These documents, and supplemental documentation, have been filed with the USEPA. Copies are available for examination at the Buffalo District office. Environmental impacts of the dredging and upland placement of material unsuitable for open-lake placement are to be documented in a forthcoming EA and Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation prior to project initiation.

There are no registered historic properties or properties listed as being eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places that will be affected by this project. By this notice, the National Park Service is advised that currently unknown archaeological, scientific, prehistoric or historical data may be lost or destroyed by the work to be accomplished. Information specific to the Area of Potential Effect (APE) is included in a Section 106 Review - Project Summary Form that has been sent under separate cover and has additionally initiated consultation with the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office.

Based on the review of the available environmental data, we have determined that the proposed work will not affect any species proposed or designated by the U.S. Department of the Interior as threatened or endangered, nor will it affect the designated critical habitat of any such species. Therefore, unless additional information indicates otherwise, no further formal consultation pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 1978 will be undertaken with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

This work will be undertaken in a manner consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the State Coastal Management Program.

The decision whether to perform dredging will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative factors thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

This activity is being coordinated with the following agencies, as well as other appropriate Federal, State and local agencies and organizations:

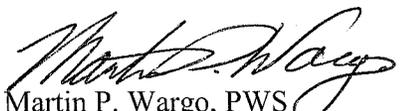
- Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
- Ohio Department of Health
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Ohio Historic Preservation Office
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Any interested parties and/or agencies desiring to express their views concerning the proposed discharges may do so by filing their comments, in writing, no later than 30 days from the date of issuance of this notice. Any person who has an interest which may be affected by the discharge of this dredged material may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the undersigned within 30 days of the date of this Public Notice. The request must clearly set forth the interest which may be affected, and the manner in which the interest may be affected, by this activity.

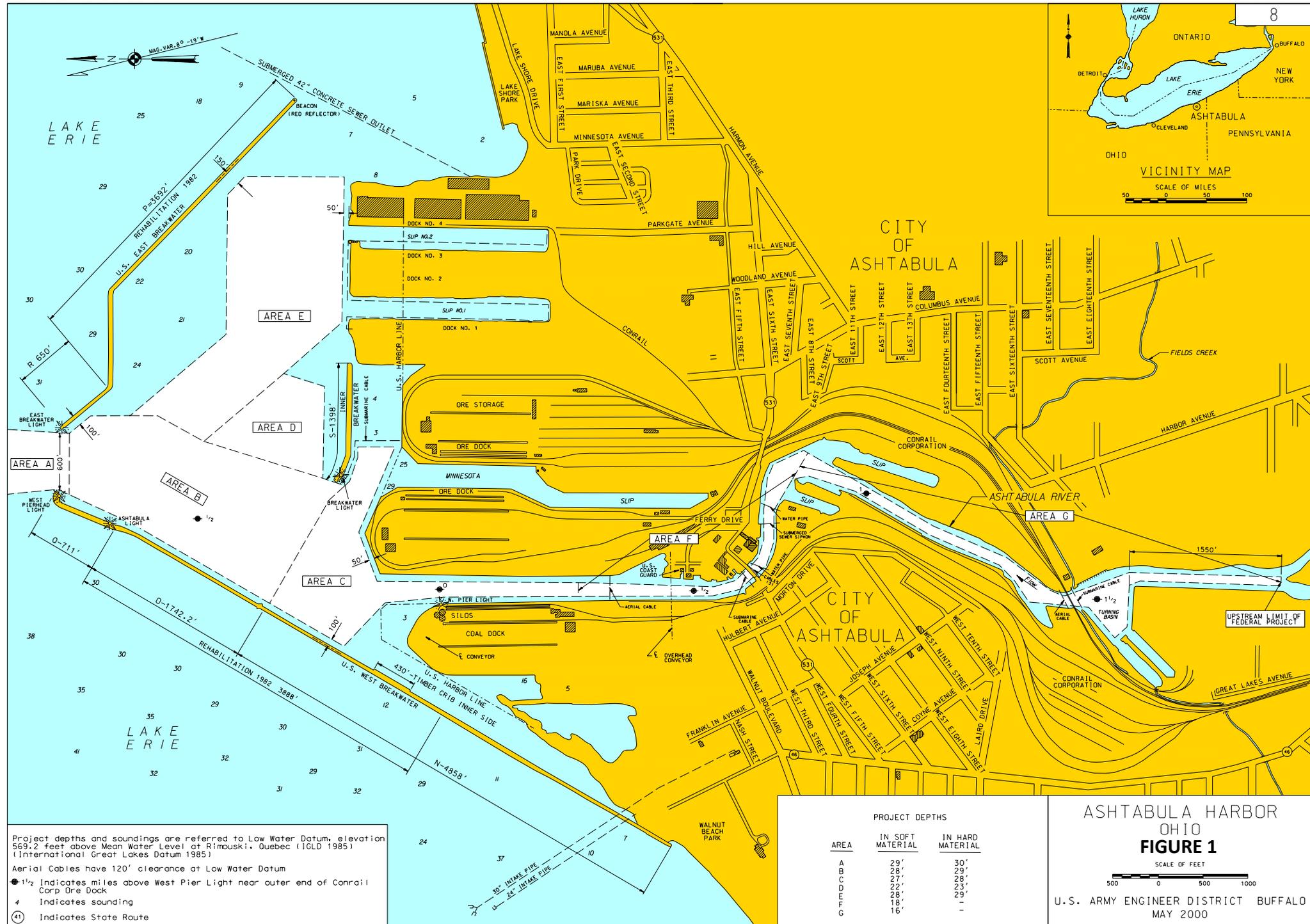
Questions and comments concerning this project should be directed to Mr. Eric E. Hannes of the Environmental Analysis Section, who may be contacted by calling 716-879-4311 (FAX 716-879-4396; e-mail eric.hannes@usace.army.mil), or Mr. Andrew Lenox of the Environmental Engineering Section (716-879-4378; andrew.m.lenox@usace.army.mil) or by writing to the following address:

District Engineer
Department of the Army
U.S. Army Engineer District, Buffalo
Environmental Analysis Section
1776 Niagara Street
Buffalo, New York 14207-3199

This Public Notice is published in conformance with 33 CFR 337.1. All dredging and dredged material discharge will be performed in conformance with Sections 313 and 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1323 and 1344, respectively).


Martin P. Wargo, PWS
Supervisory Biologist
Environmental Analysis Section

Attachments



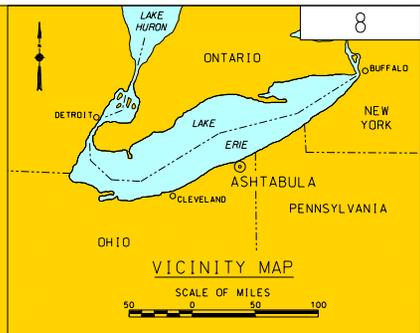
Project depths and soundings are referred to Low Water Datum, elevation 569.2 feet above Mean Water Level at Rimouski, Quebec (IGLD 1985) (International Great Lakes Datum 1985)

Aerial Cables have 120' clearance at Low Water Datum

● 1/2 Indicates miles above West Pier Light near outer end of Conrail Corp Ore Dock

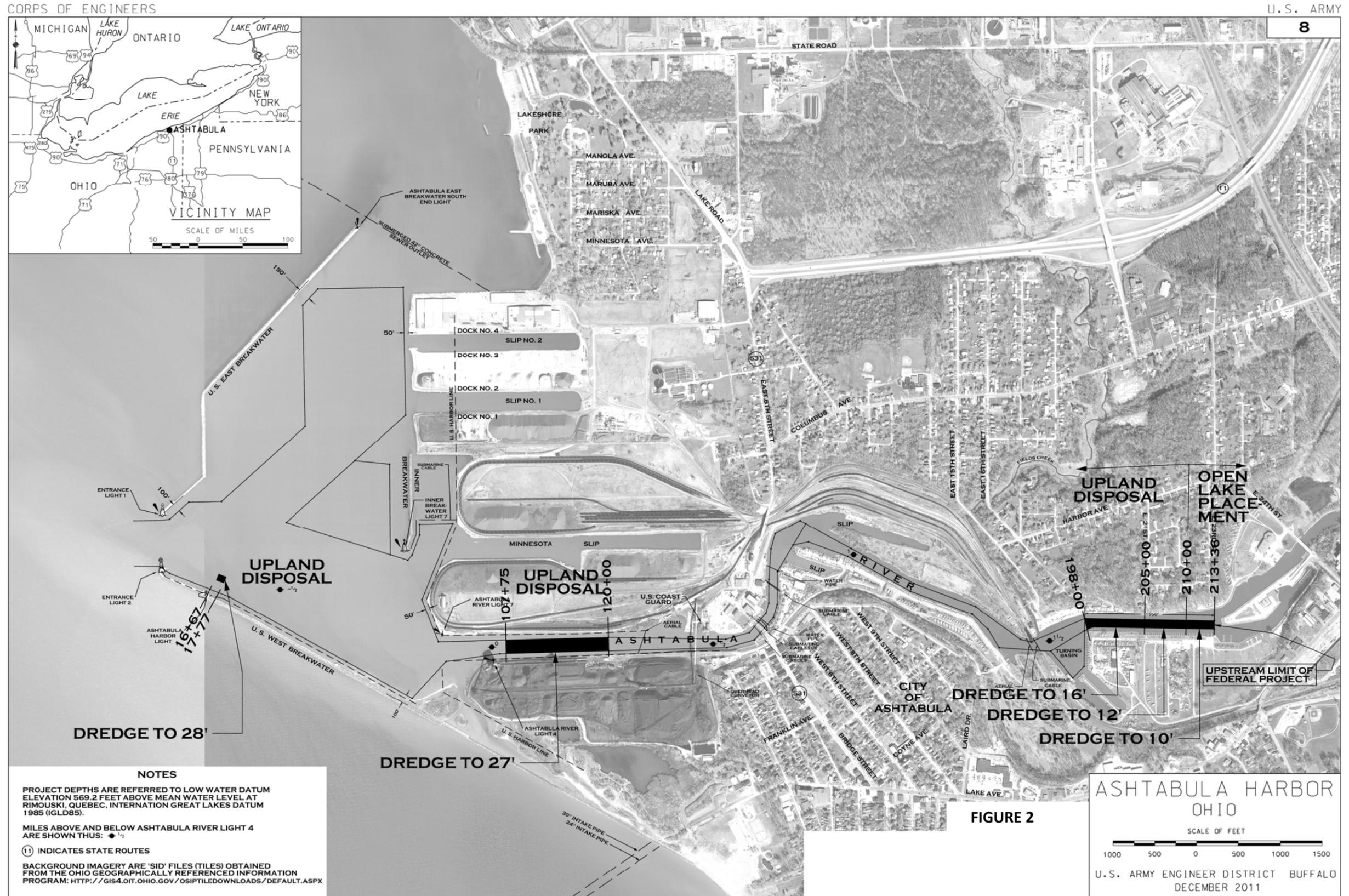
4 Indicates sounding

④ Indicates State Route



ATTACHMENT 2

MINIMUM DEGRADATION ALTERNATIVE (DREDGE 11 ACRES, DEPTHS AS SHOWN)





PLACEMENT: 2.25 STATUTE MILES / AZIMUTH 11°15'

OPEN LAKE PLACEMENT COORDINATES
NAD83 (DD.DDDDDDDDD)

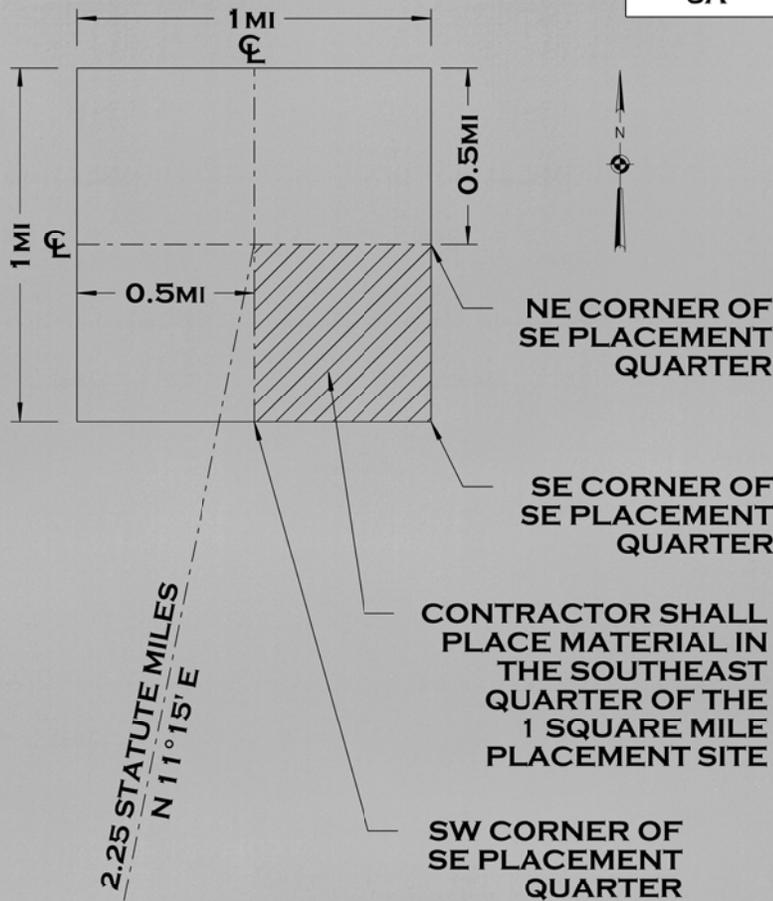
POINT	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
NW CORNER	41.959175525	80.792336258
NE CORNER	41.958890251	80.772928985
SE CORNER	41.944404754	80.773313261
SW CORNER	41.944689967	80.792716218
CENTER	41.951790539	80.782823681

COORDINATES OF SOUTHEAST QUARTER
NAD83 (DD.DDDDDDDDD)

POINT	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
NW CORNER	41.951790539	80.782823681
NE CORNER	41.951647514	80.773121144
SE CORNER	41.944404754	80.773313261
SW CORNER	41.944547763	80.783014718
CENTER	41.948097746	80.778068201

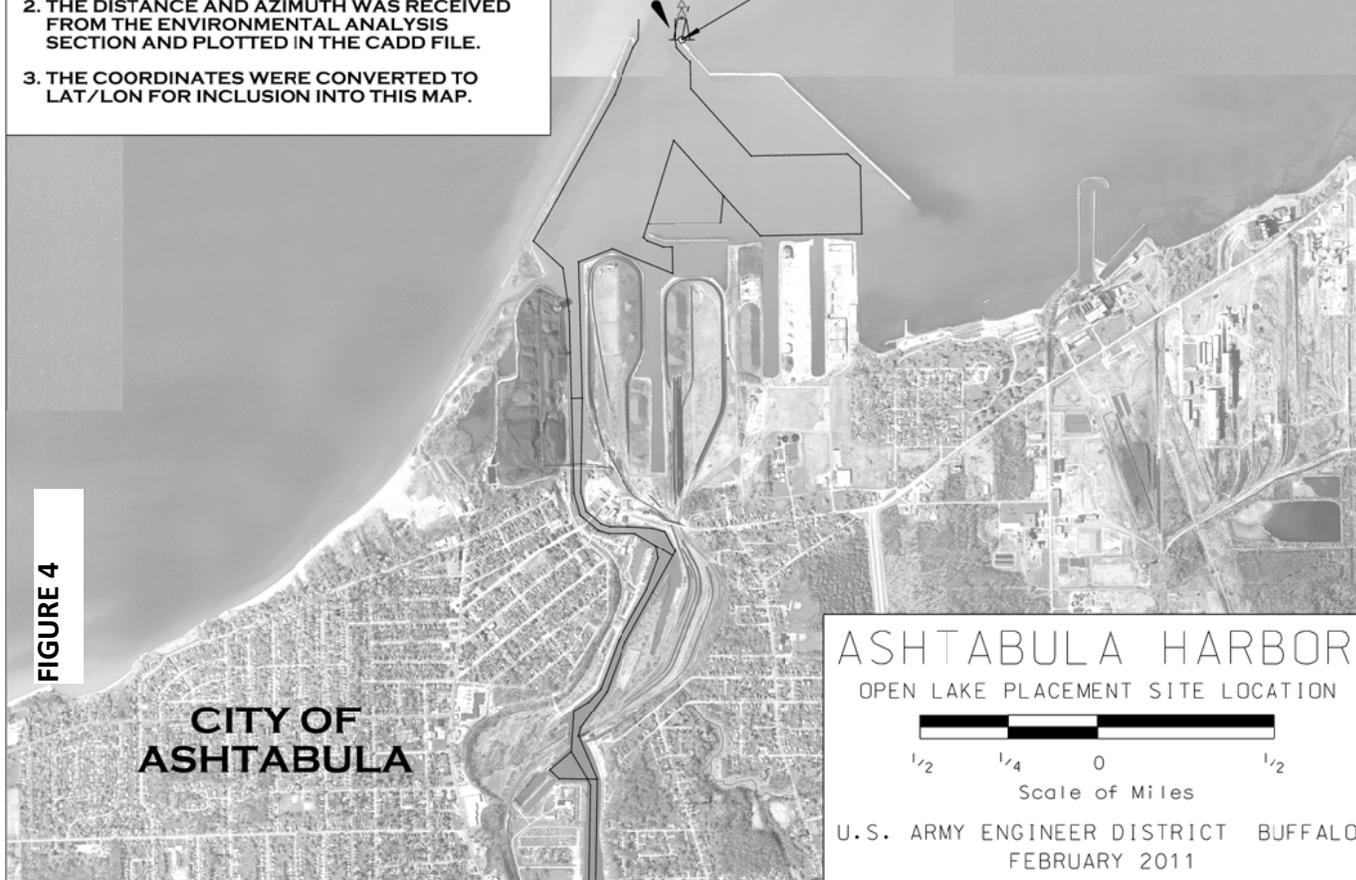
LOCATION OF THE PLACEMENT AREA WAS CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

1. IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THE BEARING AND DISTANCE TO GET TO THE CENTER WAS ALTERED TO THE END OF THE ASHTABULA HARBOR EAST BREAKWATER PIERHEAD LIGHT, AT A DISTANCE OF APPROXIMATELY 2.25 STATUTE MILES AND AN AZIMUTH OF N 11° 15' E. THE TOTAL AREA OF THE OPEN LAKE PLACEMENT SITE WAS DETERMINED TO BE 640 ACRES (1 SQUARE MILE).
2. THE DISTANCE AND AZIMUTH WAS RECEIVED FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS SECTION AND PLOTTED IN THE CADD FILE.
3. THE COORDINATES WERE CONVERTED TO LAT/LO FOR INCLUSION INTO THIS MAP.



EAST BREAKWATER PIERHEAD LIGHT

FIGURE 4



ASHTABULA HARBOR
OPEN LAKE PLACEMENT SITE LOCATION

