



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
DETROIT DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
477 MICHIGAN AVE.  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48229-2550

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Operations Office

14 December 2017

Jim Mrozinski, Chairman  
Portage Lake Harbor Commission  
Onckama Township  
5435 Main Street  
Onckama, MI 49675

Subject: PORTAGE LAKE HARBOR COMMISSION, ONEKAMA TOWNSHIP, MI-  
HARBOR COMMISSION PRIORITIES FOR ADDITIONAL WORK ON  
PORTAGE LAKE REVETMENT REPAIR PROJECT

Dear Mr. Jim Mrozinski,

This letter is in response to the Harbor Commission's letter dated September 28, 2017, in which the Harbor Commission provided suggestions for additional maintenance work at Portage Lake Harbor.

Work on the Portage Lake Harbor revetment repair contract is scheduled to begin in April 2018; however inclement weather may delay the start of construction. At this time, the site conditions are unknown, so a portion of the funds will be set aside to address unforeseen site conditions. The remaining funds will be used to execute some of the additional maintenance work described in your letter. The Corps will issue a request for proposal from the contractor for each additional repair based on the priorities listed below; however the maintenance dredging will be issued as a separate contract. As the proposals are received we will have a better understanding of what additional repairs can be accomplished with the remaining project funds. We reviewed the suggestions for additional repairs described in your letter and have listed the items in the order that we will pursue the work.

1. Portage Lake Harbor Maintenance Dredging – The Corps is currently developing the design for dredging the federal navigation channel to 16 feet below low water datum to remove material that has shoaled since the channel was last dredged. However, the channel will not be dredged wall to wall as your letter suggests because the USACE is not authorized to maintain areas outside of the federal navigation channel.
2. Extend the steel sheet pile (SSP) wall to the east end of the south revetment, which will also include a concrete cap.
3. Place concrete slab on top of rubble mound structure to ensure safe access for structure inspections.
4. Increase width of concrete cap from 5 foot wide to 6 foot wide, which will provide safe access along the structure for inspections.

The Portage Lake Harbor revetments were constructed to retain/prevent sliding of the land, while protecting the upland area against wave action. The revetments are not intended for recreational use. Federal funds are appropriated to the USACE to operate and maintain the structures for navigation purposes. The federal funds cannot be used for "betterments" such as viewing areas, fishing access, or public access.

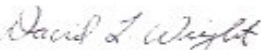
In response to the Harbor Commission's suggestion to install a marker or safety light on the east end of the north wall; the Corps does not have authority to provide aids to navigation. However, the U.S. Coast Guard maintains broad authority over navigation safety in the navigable waters of the United States.

Our hydraulic engineers feel that the existing wave absorber on the north breakwater coupled with the new wave absorber on the south revetment should serve to mitigate increased wave action to the maximum extent practicable. In addition, the environmental documentation for the location and placement of fill for the wave absorber has already been coordinated with local, state, and federal agencies. An additional wave absorber would require re-coordination with agencies and is not likely to be completed in enough time to construct the additional wave absorber.

Regarding your suggestion for a "set aside" escrow account to be used for future channel dredging and maintenance, the Corps' operations and maintenance authority does not allow for retaining any unused funding for out-year maintenance needs upon completion of the work.

I hope this response has adequately addressed your concerns and suggestions related to this matter and we will continue to engage yourselves and other stakeholders as we pursue the addition of the above described features of work. If you have any additional questions, feel free to contact me at (313) 226-3573.

Sincerely,

  
David L. Wright, P.E.  
Chief, Operations  
Detroit District