



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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For Immediate Release:
January 22, 2021
Release No. 210122-001
www.lre.usace.army.mil

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Corps of Engineers cleaning debris inadvertently placed on Minnesota Point

DETROIT - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is coordinating cleanup of aluminum cans and can fragments inadvertently deposited on Minnesota Point during dredge material placement in the fall of 2020.

USACE placed 49,000 cubic yards of beneficial use dredge material on Minnesota Point at the city's request during annual Duluth-Superior Harbor maintenance dredging operations in August and September. In 2019, 53,000 cubic yards of dredge material was placed on the south end of Minnesota Point to minimize erosion due to high water and protect old growth trees. The city requested additional material in 2020 to help restore the eroded beach and dune habitat.

The debris likely resulted from dredge equipment encountering an area containing trash discarded in the harbor in the 1970s based on aluminum can vintage. About 27,000 cubic yards of dredge material came from the area USACE officials believe contained the debris.

The Detroit District's Duluth Area Office staff are monitoring the placement site and collecting can debris as weather conditions allow. Monitoring and cleanup will continue throughout the spring.

Corps of Engineers officials take the situation very seriously and are developing a plan to mitigate the possibility of encountering debris in dredge material in the future. They closely coordinate with city and state officials throughout the project and continue to do so.

Partnering with local, state, and federal agencies, USACE has placed 1.1 million cubic yards of beneficial use dredge material in Duluth-Superior Harbor since 2013. The material is used for habitat restoration and remediation projects – additional benefits from USACE's federally-mandated requirement to maintain navigation in the harbor.

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