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**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
CITY OF DULUTH, MINNESOTA**

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Corps of Engineers and City of Duluth provide information on 2021 Minnesota Point beach nourishment and Section 111

DULUTH, Minn., – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along with the City of Duluth provide information on the completion of 2021 Minnesota Point beach nourishment, maintenance dredging, beach cleanup and the congressionally funded Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Section 111 study.

The Corps of Engineers awarded the 2021 maintenance dredging contract July 14, 2021 to Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, based Roen Salvage Company. The Sturgeon Bay company dredged approximately 53,000 cubic yards (cy) of material from the Duluth-Superior Harbor navigation channel. This material nourished the beach on Minnesota Point.

The Corps of Engineers originally planned to dredge and place nearly 100,000 cy. However, they reduced the amount of material due to stringent protocols and significant safeguards put in place to ensure the material was free from man-made debris. Stringent protocols included reducing the size of the transfer screen used to catch debris, adding contract conditions to monitor and stop production if debris is observed and increasing Corps of Engineers' oversight of contractor operations.

“The stringent protocols like reducing the size of the transfer screen were effective in ensuring material placed did not contain man-made debris” said Project Manager Melissa Bosman.

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The 2021 project placement area began at the pier and extended to the S-curve, just North of 12th Street. The 2021 beach nourishment project wrapped up Sept. 14 and contractors demobilized Sept. 24.

The Corps of Engineers previously conducted a survey of material placed in 2020 to identify material inadvertently placed during 2020 beach nourishment. The survey showed 23 areas with high-magnetic signatures, eight above the water surface and 15 below the water surface. The Corps of Engineers excavated and screened material from the eight areas located above the water surface in June of 2021.

“The 2021 maintenance dredging contract included excavation and screening of material from locations identified in the survey below the water surface,” Bosman said. “The cleanup went well, all debris identified in the survey was successfully removed and properly disposed of.”

In addition to cleaning the areas identified in the survey, the Minnesota Point cleanup plan included mechanical beach raking and walking the beach. The beach was mechanically raked several times and monitored twice per week by Corps of Engineers staff and once a week by contractor Roen Salvage. Beach cleanup efforts indicate most metal fragments have been recovered, however wind/wave transport of some fragments may lead to fragments washing up on the beach in the future.

“Although the focused and surface area cleanup actions are complete, we anticipate there could be small amounts of can fragments found after wind/wave events,” said Bosman. “Some of the can fragments migrated from the 2020 beach nourishment during the fall-spring of 2020 (prior to cleanup) so small amounts of can fragments may wash up on shore periodically.”

“The City of Duluth would like to thank the Corps of Engineers for their continued due diligence to this project,” Director of Parks, Properties & Libraries Jim Filby-Williams said. “While the Corps of Engineers cleaned up the beach for material coming from the 2020 Beach Nourishment Project, they also picked up trash left by beachgoers. The City would like to remind the public that trash and recycle bins are located at various access points along the beach. If you can’t find one, please pick up and pack out your own trash to not further litter the beach and Lake Superior.”

The City of Duluth and the Corps of Engineers coordinated to identify a way to better study Minnesota Point and its erosion issues.

Through Detroit District Outreach efforts, it was determined a CAP Section 111 of the Water Resources Development Act was the best fit among our authorities to investigate the erosion issues at Minnesota Point. The Corps of Engineers approved a Section 111 to study and potentially construct mitigation measures for damages caused by Federal navigation structures.

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“The study will investigate whether the Federal structures in Duluth-Superior Harbor are causing damages to adjacent shoreline on Lake Superior,” Detroit District Chief of Planning Nick Zager said. “If it is found they are causing damage, the amount will need to be quantified. For example, the study could find 75% is caused by Federal structures and 25% by natural erosion. The next steps would be to develop mitigation alternatives and recommend a plan for implementation.”

The Section 111 will likely take 18 to 24 months to complete. The results of the Section 111 will be made public and there will be opportunities for public meetings during the study. The Section 111 is a collaborative process between the Corps of Engineers and Non-Federal partners.

This is a very complex study, the Corps of Engineers will leverage the most state-of-the-art methods to determine whether the Federal structures are having an impact on Minnesota Point.

The City of Duluth will host a public meeting on Nov. 18 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. CST to share information on the completion of 2021 Minnesota Point beach nourishment, maintenance dredging, beach cleanup and the congressionally funded Section 111 program. To join the meeting, please visit: 23094250319@duluthmn.webex.com.

For more information on Duluth area dredging and Minnesota Point beach nourishment and cleanup please see the following link:

<https://celre-gis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=294f4ba1dc854c6188a685bd9dac043b>

For questions or concerns, please contact Carrie Fox at carrie.d.fox@usace.army.mil or Kate Van Daele at kvandaele@duluthmn.gov.