



PRESS RELEASE

June 24, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LAKE COUNTY DREDGING FACILITY CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

New facility will allow dredging of Fairport Harbor to be re-instated

PAINESVILLE TOWNSHIP, Ohio – Federal, State and County officials celebrated the groundbreaking of the North Park Sediment Recycling Facility on June 21, 2022. The State of Ohio’s Office of Budget and Management Controlling Board authorized \$47 million to fund the construction of Sediment Recycling Facilities across the State of Ohio. Lake County will receive \$11.3 million in funding to construct its facility in Painesville Township, which is planned to be operational this fall.

“Today’s event would not be the possible without the leadership from Governor DeWine and our State delegation in Columbus. I want to thank Senator Jerry Cirino (R-Kirtland), Senator Matt Dolan (R-Chagrin Falls), Representative Jamie Callender (R-Concord Twp.), Senator Kenny Yuko (D-Richmond Heights), and Representative Dan Troy (D-Willowick) who stepped up to the plate when the community needed it the most,” said Commission President John R. Hamercheck.

Sometimes called a confined placement facility, they are specifically designed for the containment of contaminated dredged material from Lake Erie that provides control of potential releases of contaminants to the environment. Kurtz Bros. Inc., out of Independence, Ohio will operate the facility.

The need for these facilities was prompted by ORC 6111.32 which bans the disposal of dredged sediment from federal navigation channels into Lake Erie. As a result, dredging of the Grand River in Fairport Harbor came to a halt last year. “That action posed a significant economic problem for the County,” stated David Anderson, Executive Director of the Lake Development Authority. “This is Lake County’s only commercial port. Losing the ability to conduct maritime commerce threatens about 170 jobs and over \$371 million of commodities handled through the port each year. I have participated in a number of economic development groundbreaking events, but the North Park Sediment Recycling Facility is one of the finest examples of public/private partnerships that I’ve ever seen, and we can be proud of the results and what’s to come.”

“Today is obviously a great day for Lake County. Working together with our local officials, we were able to work collectively and find funding to ensure this project takes place,” added State Senator Matt Dolan.



PRESS RELEASE

June 24, 2022

Pg. 2

Senator Cirino stated, "I was very pleased to quarterback the state funding for this important project. This was a cooperative bipartisan effort to ensure our waterways are navigable and that our precious Lake Erie is protected and enjoyed by all. Special thanks to my colleague Senator Dolan and State Representatives Callender and Troy for their support. "

"I am grateful to Governor DeWine and his team, along with our State Senators and Representatives, for their commitment to Lake County, and the more than \$11 million in funding they have committed to the North Park Sediment Recycling Facility in Painesville Township. This dredging project will not only result in water quality improvements to the Grand River and Lake Erie, but continue to provide economic development opportunities along our north coast. Today is not the end, but rather the beginning of lakefront development, interconnectivity with our Metroparks and bringing hundreds of thousands of new visitors, residents, and tourists to our most popular asset in Lake County," added Commissioner John Plecnik.

A loss of 1-2 feet of channel depth would increase transportation costs for local businesses by over a million dollars a year, according to Patrick Mohorcic, Chief Financial Officer and Director of Public Finance for Lake Development Authority. "The impact would be felt by major employers such as Morton Salt, Osborne Concrete and Stone, Carmeuse Lime & Stone, and R.W. Sidley. The harbor handles over 2 million tons of material every year." Mohorcic serves as the project manager for the sediment recycling facility.

"This project is the result of our Lake County officials all working together to solve a problem. As a result of this cooperation, we now have a critical piece in place to help the region not only survive, but thrive into the future," said Representative Jamie Callender. "This project allows us to keep the Grand River fully navigable for both commercial and recreational watercraft. Coupled with the Lake Metroparks work on developing a wonderful lakefront trail from Fairport Harbor to Painesville Township Park, the face of the area will be a lot more friendly and inviting."

The Lake Metroparks Board of Park Commissioners accepted a perpetual easement from the Kurtz Brothers at their June 15, 2022 meeting. The trail easement will allow the Metroparks to continue their lakefront trail from Painesville Township Park and head west along the coast with the long-term goal of connecting to Fairport Harbor.

"The construction of this facility will have a twofold positive impact on our Lake County community. Not only will it help keep the Grand River shipping channel open for the business of loading and unloading needed materials and products, but it will also ensure that harmful dredged substances will be properly disposed or recycled rather than being dumped into our Great Lake," said Representative Daniel Troy.



PRESS RELEASE

June 24, 2022

Pg. 3

As stated previously, the Controlling Board action will allow for the continued dredging of the Grand River by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who receives funding from Congress for this activity. This funding effort has been spearheaded by U.S. Representative David Joyce (R-Bainbridge). The next scheduled maintenance dredging of the Grand River is slated for this summer.

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