

Erie Pier Management Plan Update

The Erie Pier Management Plan (EPMP) is being revised. It was decided at a kick-off meeting of the EPMP Committee in January that this effort would be more of a rewrite than a simple update of the 2007 EPMP. As well as providing significant update of data and information since the 2007 EPMP, the new EPMP will have a greater focus on implementation of beneficial use of dredged material. The primary author will be Jeff Stollenwerk of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority, but Mike Wenholz of the MIC and likely a couple of others will be contributing, as well. A “Background” chapter has been drafted by Mike and sent to Jeff for initial review prior to distribution to the EPMP Committee for their review. Jeff is currently drafting a “Beneficial Reuse” chapter. The goal remains to have the new EPMP completed by the end of 2020 or early 2021.

The 2007 EPMP called for a shift from a disposal mindset to a mindset of beneficial use of dredged material. Data indicates this shift has occurred and continues. Data also indicates the cost of dredging has significantly increased. Finally, EP has long outlived its original estimated lifetime, and has accepted over 3 times the volume of dredged material of the original design capacity of the facility. This is due to both changes in the processing and handling at EP and the increase in beneficial use eliminating the need for significant volumes of dredged material to be brought to EP.

Harbor Safety Workgroup Update

The Harbor Safety Workgroup is a workgroup of the Navigation Subcommittee that has been working on recreational paddling safety messaging and outreach. An increasing number of people have been paddling kayaks, stand-up paddle boards, or canoes in the Duluth-Superior harbor or nearshore areas on Lake Superior. While paddling is an excellent form of recreation, and our area provides plenty of outstanding opportunities, many of these paddlers are not familiar with the dangers associated with cold water, rapid weather changes, general boating traffic, and a working maritime port – especially those who are visiting the area.

The purpose of the Harbor Safety Workgroup is to promote safe paddling in the Duluth-Superior area. Minnesota Sea Grant, US Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit, and the MIC have co-lead this effort along with various partners who have added valuable input into this process. Focus has been on effective messaging, best use of signage and social media, partnering with other groups, and getting the word out in person at events. Minnesota Sea Grant was awarded a grant to help finalize the messaging and give it a professional look, which they are currently working on. They plan to have the website and signs complete by September 2020. It is anticipated additional related work will be completed in 2020 and 2021, but that the outreach and partnerships will continue into the future. Obviously due to COVID-19 we have not been able to get the word out in person at events this year.