



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Public Notice

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OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE DREDGING AND DREDGED MATERIAL PLACEMENT

ASHTABULA HARBOR

ASHTABULA COUNTY, OHIO

This Public Notice has been prepared and distributed in conformance with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulation, "Practice and Procedure: Final Rule for Operation and Maintenance of Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works Projects involving the Discharge of Dredged Materials into Waters of the United States or Ocean Waters," 33 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 337.1. Its purpose is to specify what dredged/fill materials would be discharged into waters of the United States by implementation of the proposed action, and advise all interested parties of the proposed project and to provide an opportunity to submit comments, or request a public hearing.

The USACE - Buffalo District anticipates the need to dredge and place material excavated from the authorized Federal navigation channels of Ashtabula Harbor, which is located on the southern shore of Lake Erie at the mouth of the Ashtabula River (a major tributary to Lake Erie), in order to maintain sufficient water depths for deep-draft commercial and recreational navigation. Federal navigation channels within the Harbor include the Entrance Channel, Outer Harbor Channel, Lower River Channel, and Upper River Channel. The attached map (Figure 1) shows the authorized limits and depths of the Federal navigation channels. To ensure that the minimum authorized depth in Ashtabula Harbor is maintained and to account for dredging tolerance, up to an additional one foot of material may be dredged. An estimated total of approximately 200,000 cubic yards of material will be dredged from Ashtabula Harbor Federal navigation channels during the 2015 dredging operation.

The 2015 dredging operation at Ashtabula Harbor is tentatively scheduled to be performed during the period between 1 July and 15 September.

A contractor of the Federal government will accomplish the project. Sediments will be removed from the channel bottom by a mechanical or hydraulic dredge and placed into hoppers aboard ship or scow for transport to the placement area. The method of excavation will be determined by the contractor performing the maintenance dredging. In previous years, clamshell and hopper

dredges have been used to complete the required work.

Material in the Ashtabula Harbor Federal navigation channels consists primarily of silts, clays and fine sands. In 2010, sediments in the Lower River Channel (downstream of Station 120+00) and Outer Harbor channels were evaluated using 2005, 2007 and 2009 physical, chemical and biological data in accordance with joint U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)/USACE protocols for the testing and evaluation of Great Lakes dredged material. Based on this evaluation, material within the Lower River Channel downstream of Station 107+75 and most Outer Harbor channels was determined to meet Federal guidelines for open-lake placement. Therefore, material dredged from these areas is proposed to be placed at the existing, authorized 640-acre open-lake placement area in Lake Erie, located approximately 2.25 miles from the end of the harbor's East Breakwater, at an azimuth of 11°15' (Figure 2). This area was used by USACE in 1995, 2001, 2003, 2009, 2011, and 2013 as well as previous dredging projects for the placement of Ashtabula Harbor dredged material.

The 2010 sediment evaluation also determined that material within the reach of the Lower River Channel between Stations 120+00 and 107+75, as well as an area in the Outer Harbor located along the West Breakwater did not meet Federal guidelines for open-lake placement due to polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contamination. A Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funded dredging of these areas was completed in November 2013, removing approximately 120,000 cubic yards of sediment not suitable for open-lake placement. This material was subsequently placed in a confined upland placement area. Material within the Lower River Channel between Stations 120+00 and 107+75 will be sampled, tested and evaluated to determine suitability for open-lake placement in the spring of 2015. If this material is determined to meet Federal guidelines for open-lake placement, it too will be dredged and placed at the existing, authorized open-lake placement area.

Water Quality Certification (WQC) from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) is required for this action, pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. Therefore, a copy of this Public Notice has been provided to OEPA requesting WQC, or waiver thereof, for the associated placement of dredged material.

The environmental effects of the dredging operation are documented in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement, Operation and Maintenance, Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio (1975); Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation, Operation and Maintenance, Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio (1994); EA and Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation, Operation and Maintenance, Ashtabula Harbor, Ohio (2001); and Dredging and Dredged Material Placement, Ashtabula Harbor: Finding of No Significant Impact and EA/404 (b)(1) Evaluation (2012)*. These documents, and supplemental documentation, have been filed with the USEPA. Copies are available for examination at the Buffalo District office.

There are no listed historic properties or properties determined as being eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places that will be affected by this project. By this notice, the National Park Service is advised that currently unknown archaeological, scientific, prehistorical or historical data may be lost or destroyed by the work to be accomplished.

This office has determined that the proposed project will have No Effect upon any species proposed or designated by the U.S. Department of the Interior as threatened or endangered, nor will the proposed work result in an Adverse Modification of designated critical habitat for any such species. Therefore, unless new information indicates otherwise, no further consultation pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 1978 will be undertaken with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

This work will be undertaken in a manner consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the State of Ohio Coastal Management Program. A Coastal Management Program Federal Consistency Determination has been submitted to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) documenting this determination.

The decision whether to perform dredging has been based on an evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision reflects the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal has been balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal have been considered including the cumulative factors thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

This activity is being coordinated with the following agencies, as well as other appropriate Federal, State and local agencies and organizations:

- National Park Service
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
- Ohio Historic Preservation Office
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Any interested parties and/or agencies desiring to express their views concerning these proposed discharges of dredged material may do so by filing their comments, in writing, no later than 30 days from the date of this notice. Any person who has an interest which may be affected by the discharge of this dredged material may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the undersigned within 30 days of the date of this Public Notice. The request must clearly set forth the interest which may be affected, and the manner in which the interest may be affected, by this activity.

Interested parties are encouraged to contact the USACE - Buffalo District with their comments regarding the proposed dredging of Ashtabula Harbor. Please review this Public Notice and send your comments in writing within 30 days to the following e-mail address:

AshtabulaDredging@usace.army.mil

or via mail to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Buffalo District
Environmental Analysis Team
1776 Niagara Street
Buffalo, NY 14207-3199
ATTN: Environmental Analysis - Ashtabula Dredging

This Public Notice is published in conformance with 33 CFR 337.1. All dredging and dredged material discharge will be performed in conformance with Sections 313 and 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1323 and 1344, respectively).

Attachments

NOTICE TO THE POSTMASTER: It is requested that the above notice be conspicuously displayed for 30 days from the date of issuance.

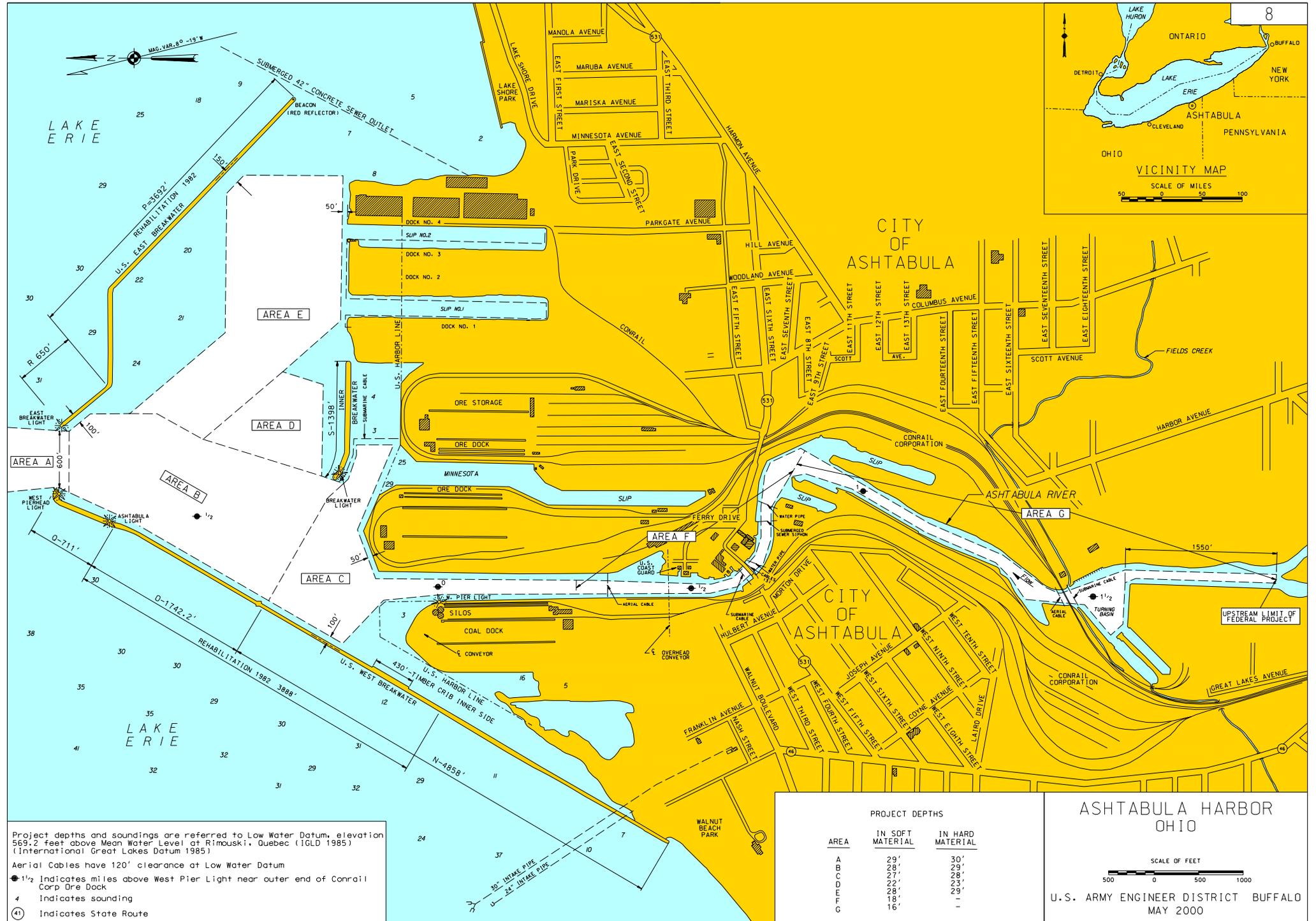
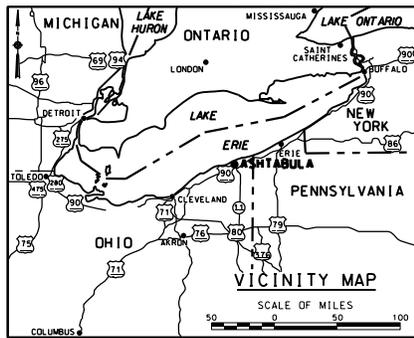
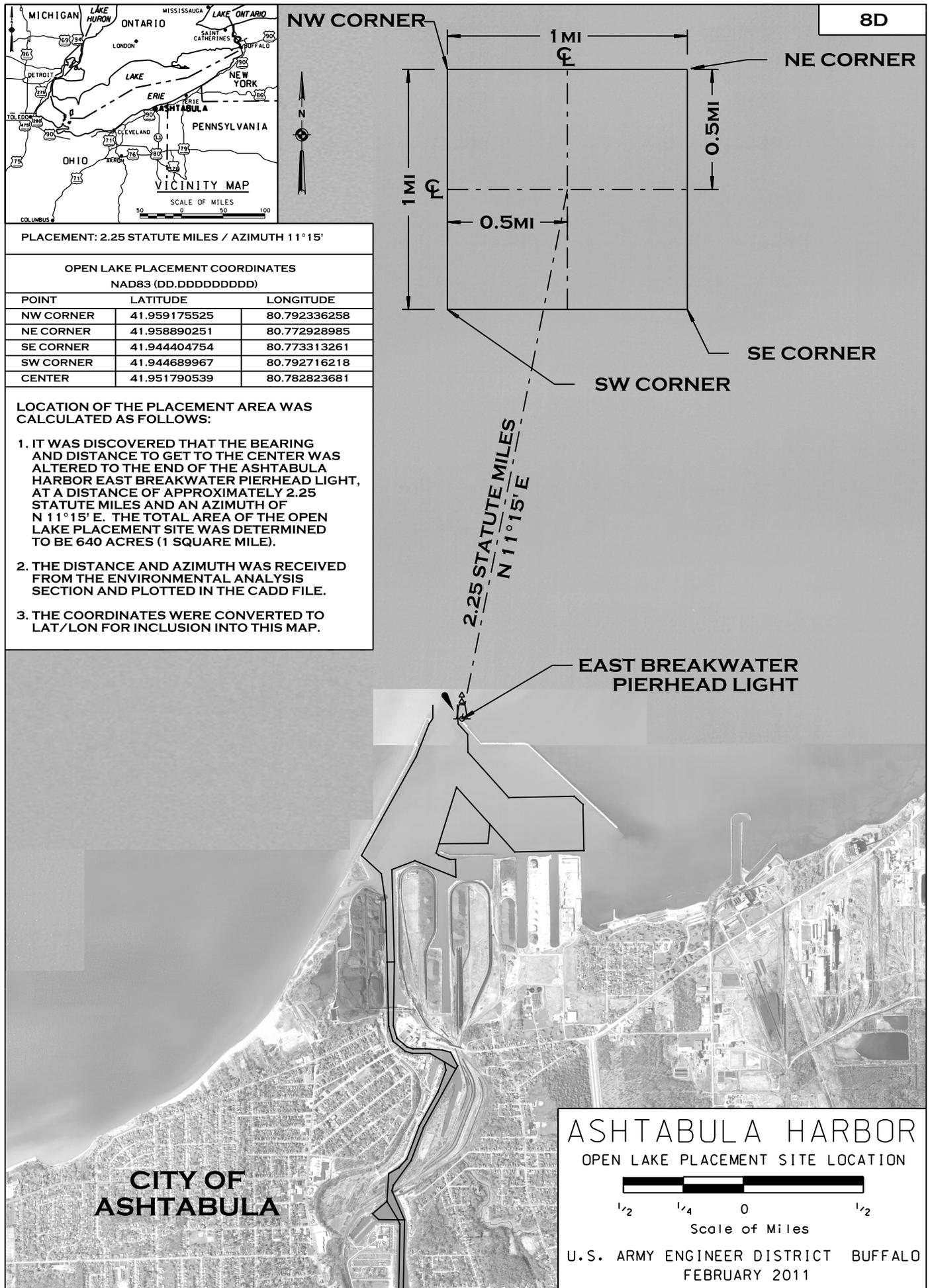


Figure 1: Map of Ashtabula Harbor



PLACEMENT: 2.25 STATUTE MILES / AZIMUTH 11°15'

OPEN LAKE PLACEMENT COORDINATES
NAD83 (DD.DDDDDDDDD)

POINT	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE
NW CORNER	41.959175525	80.792336258
NE CORNER	41.958890251	80.772928985
SE CORNER	41.944404754	80.773313261
SW CORNER	41.944689967	80.792716218
CENTER	41.951790539	80.782823681

LOCATION OF THE PLACEMENT AREA WAS CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

1. IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THE BEARING AND DISTANCE TO GET TO THE CENTER WAS ALTERED TO THE END OF THE ASHTABULA HARBOR EAST BREAKWATER PIERHEAD LIGHT, AT A DISTANCE OF APPROXIMATELY 2.25 STATUTE MILES AND AN AZIMUTH OF N 11°15' E. THE TOTAL AREA OF THE OPEN LAKE PLACEMENT SITE WAS DETERMINED TO BE 640 ACRES (1 SQUARE MILE).
2. THE DISTANCE AND AZIMUTH WAS RECEIVED FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS SECTION AND PLOTTED IN THE CADD FILE.
3. THE COORDINATES WERE CONVERTED TO LAT/LON FOR INCLUSION INTO THIS MAP.

Figure 2 - Ashtabula Harbor Open-Lake Placement Site Location