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## Clinton River dredging data

All dredging was in an area from the mouth of the Clinton River to the Cass Avenue Bridge in Mount Clemens.

Year	Sediment removed (in cubic yards)	Cost
1964	149,474	\$146,581
1965	24,380	30,578
1966	10,350	20,984
1971	45,615	47,569
1979	14,121	87,628
1991	90,244	962,261
2000-'01	55,031	764,464
<b>Total</b>	<b>389,215</b>	<b>\$2,068,153</b>

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



The Detroit News

Macomb after \$3 million for river dredging

Work would ease boating along Clinton beyond Cass

By Gene Schabath / *The Detroit News*

**HARRISON TOWNSHIP** -- A flotilla of three dozen cabin cruisers and other watercraft crammed into downtown Mount Clemens this past week as boat owners and their parties tried to get choice spots for the annual Independence Day concert and fireworks along the banks of the Clinton River.

Boaters who wanted to venture south beyond the Cass Avenue bridge ran the danger of running aground in the shallow water.

But help is on the way.

Macomb County Commissioner Michael Sessa, R-Harrison



Ricardo Thomas / The Detroit News

**Karen Parrott and granddaughter Sydney Caruso stroll beside the Clinton River,**

Metro/State

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Township, is lobbying to get \$3 million from the federal government to dredge a 1 1/2-mile-long section of the Clinton River, from Cass to the Gratiot bridge.

**which boaters say is too shallow between Cass and the bridge at Gratiot.**

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The dredging would make that section of the river safe for boating, and would be an environmental asset for the river, Sessa said.

"Once you get rid of all that sedimentation and junk that's lying on the bottom, that cleans up the water," Sessa said.

U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Lansing, said the mess has been building up and is in dire need of immediate attention.

Some portions of the river, Stabenow said, have not been dredged in three decades.

"There are serious, serious (environmental) problems," she said.

Stabenow and U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Detroit, last month sent a request to the Senate energy and water appropriations subcommittee asking that \$3 million for the dredging be placed in the appropriations budget. If the request is written into the appropriations bill, the measure will then be voted on by the Senate and then by the U.S. House of Representatives.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers spent \$764,464 in 2000-01 removing 55,000 cubic yards of sediment from 4 1/2 miles of the Clinton River from the mouth upstream.

The Corps periodically dredges the Clinton River to make it navigable for recreational boaters, officials said. The largest dredging operation on the Clinton River was in 1964, when 149,474 cubic yards of sediment was removed.

Before the 2000-01 operation, the Clinton River had not been dredged at all since 1991, when 90,244 cubic yards of sediment was hauled from the river bottom. The cost was \$962,261.

The total cost of dredgings in the Clinton by the Corps since 1964 was a little more than \$2 million with 389,215 cubic yards of sediment removed.

As a side benefit, the latest dredging proposal will help the lower nine miles of the river from the Cass Avenue Bridge to the mouth of the Clinton River, Sessa said.

"If it gets dredged, that will allow the river to run free and increase the flow," Sessa said. "The water will be cleaner. A lot of people complain about the murky water color and the lack of flow in the river."

Lake St. Clair boater Barb Gurlach of Clinton Township likes the idea of dredging the Clinton River beyond Cass.

Gurlach and her friends sailed up the Clinton River last week in a cruiser to watch the concert and fireworks in downtown Mount Clemens. But they knew they couldn't go past the Cass bridge.

"Four years ago we went down there (past Cass) on Jet Skis but we ran into weeds" and low water, Gurlach said. "If we could go past Cass that would be great. That would make a nice trip. The more they fix (dredge) it up, the more people would come down here."

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The need for dredging is well-illustrated at Shadyside Park, near the Mount Clemens-Harrison Township border. An island of sedimentation and siltation has formed in the center of the channel and that's blocking the flow of the river, Sessa said.

Stabenow is pursuing more than one funding avenue. A second appropriations request for \$2 million also has been submitted for Clinton River watershed initiatives, she said. The money would go to various projects undertaken by the Clinton River Watershed Council.

If Sessa succeeds in getting the \$3 million, it will be the fourth time in recent years he has had luck getting help for the river. In 2000, he wrangled \$150,000 out of local agencies such as the Macomb County Public Works Office to purge an island of sand and sedimentation from the river at Shadyside Park. That section has since filled back up again, Sessa said.

And last summer, the federal government's Transportation Economic Development and Enhancement Office allocated \$40,000 for construction of a riverside park under Interstate 94 freeway in Harrison Township. Macomb County added \$20,000 more.

In 2001, Congress approved a resolution that gave the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers the authority to dredge the Clinton River past the Cass Avenue bridge.

But finding money in the budget has been the challenge, said Ken Drum, a spokesman for the Corps.

"We do have a budget (for dredging) but because of Homeland Security and the war in Iraq, we don't have the funding," Drum said. "In many cases we can't keep up with the big commercial jobs."

Stabenow vowed to continue the fight to get the \$3 million.

"It has a long way to go but if we don't get it done in committee we will try on the floor," Stabenow said.

"This is high priority for me," she said.

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