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For Immediate Release:
Jan. 12, 2011
Release No. 011211-01

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Soo Locks closing extended by three days

The Soo Locks will officially close for the season on Jan. 18 – three days later than originally planned.

The Detroit District, which operates the locks, granted a request from the Lake Carriers' Association to extend the Poe Lock's closing date so low inventories of iron ore could be replenished to meet the wintertime needs of industry. The association, based in Rocky River, Ohio, represents American flag vessel operators on the Great Lakes.

“After reviewing the economic conditions, and coordinating with environmental agencies, I have approved the request to extend the closing of the Poe Lock by three days so industries needing to re-stockpile iron ore for the winter can do so,” said Lt. Col. Michael Derosier, district engineer. “This decision balances the needs of industry while taking into consideration the welfare of the environment.”

Poe Lock, the largest and most modern of the four locks at the Soo, is the only lock still open. While the locks are closed, work crews conduct wintertime maintenance and repairs for about two months.

Their work will include repairing parts and components of the gates and walls; installing a new hydraulic system for the Poe Lock; and replacing some of the valve cylinders, which are original equipment when the lock opened in 1968.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, maintains a navigation system that includes 95 harbors and the Great Lakes Connecting Channels that join lakes Superior, Michigan, Huron, and Erie. For more details, please contact Lynn Duerod, public affairs officer, 313-226-4680.

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