



NEWS RELEASE

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Soo Locks to undergo winter maintenance

DETROIT – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, announces the Soo Locks in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., will be closed to navigation after Jan. 15 to undergo annual maintenance and repairs.

“The Soo Locks is the linchpin of the Great Lakes Navigation System, and it is vitally important that we keep this infrastructure in good working order” said Lt. Col. Robert Ells, district engineer. “This time of year, our dedicated and hard-working staff at the Soo Area Office perform important maintenance and repair work under strict time constraints to prepare the locks for the next shipping season. The district puts a high priority on this work to keep the locks functioning safely and reliably for the benefit of our nation.”

District personnel will perform a 5-year periodic inspection of the MacArthur lock, while work crews repair watertight doors and miter gates, and install a new air bubbler ice suppression system on the MacArthur Lock gates. Concrete upgrades and installation of gate fenders are also planned in the MacArthur Lock. Piping will be installed in the Poe Lock for a new hydraulic system to operate the gates, booms and valves. Once winter maintenance is complete, the locks will reopen in March.

More than 4,500 vessels carrying up to 80 million tons of cargo maneuver through the locks annually. Iron ore, coal and limestone are among the most frequently carried commodities. Built in 1968, the Poe is 1,200 feet long. The MacArthur was built in 1943 and is 800 feet long.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District, maintains a navigation system of 95 harbors, including the Great Lakes Connecting Channels that join lakes Superior, Michigan, Huron, St. Clair and Erie.

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