

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 19, 2018

Lieutenant General Todd T. Semonite  
Commanding General  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Washington, DC 20314-100

Dear Lt. General Semonite:

I write to encourage you to include a number of important New York projects in your FY 2019 Work Plan. As I am sure you are aware, I worked tirelessly along with my colleagues in Congress to secure additional funding for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in the FY 2019 *Energy and Water, Legislative Branch, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act*. It is now my hope that you will utilize some of that additional funding to accomplish a number of long-time Army Corps priorities in the State of New York. Specifically, I strongly encourage you to include the following projects, organized by geography, in the FY 2019 Work Plan:

- **Rockaway Inlet Dredging** - Rockaway Inlet is critical for the shipment of life-essential commodities such as winter fuel oil, which is transported through this navigation channel asset. Delay of routine maintenance dredging affects the safe delivery of petroleum products to Queens and Nassau Counties in New York State, and has led to severe accidents in the past. Sand removal could also serve the beneficial use of sand renourishment on Rockaway Beach between Beach 91<sup>st</sup> Street and Beach 102<sup>nd</sup> Street, which is critical to ensure the safety and commerce of this heavily-trafficked area during the 2019 summer beach season.
- **Port of New York and New Jersey Navigation Study** - I worked to ensure the FY 2019 appropriations packages included adequate new starts so that the USACE could initiate comprehensive navigational studies. Now, I strongly encourage you to utilize one of those authorized new starts to begin a critical study for the Port of New York and New Jersey. Based on 2016 data, the Port is responsible for over 400,000 jobs, \$90 billion in personal and business income and close to \$8.5 billion in Federal, State and Local tax revenues. While the Port, in partnership with the USACE, completed construction of the 50-foot Harbor Deeping Project in late 2016, the needs of the global container vessel fleet have already surpassed the safe navigational capabilities of the channels that were designed and authorized nearly 20 years ago and do not meet today's needs.
- **Mamaroneck-Sheldrake River Flood Risk Management Project** - \$265 thousand. I worked to authorize the Mamaroneck-Sheldrake River project in the final, bipartisan agreement for the 2018 Water Resource Development Act (WRDA). In April 2007, a Nor'easter storm produced the flood of record for the Village of Mamaroneck, equivalent to the one percent flood event. The 2007 event caused over \$50 million in damages and

impacted over 50 percent of total structures within the study area. Two deaths have occurred as a result of flooding in the project area in the last 25 years, most recently in 2007. These funds are essential to move the critical flood risk management project into preliminary engineering and design and then to construction.

- **Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study** –\$1.2 million. The United States' Great Lakes coastline is particularly vulnerable to threats such as, erosion, flooding, nutrient runoff, aging infrastructure, and lake level fluctuations as evidenced in the summer of 2017 when communities along the entire Lake Ontario shoreline suffered millions of dollars in damages during 14 weeks of record high flood waters that prompted the President to issue a Major Federal Disaster Declaration (FEMA-4348-DR) encompassing the nation's entire Lake Ontario U.S. coastline. To safeguard against these threats, the Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study (GLCRS) as developed by the USACE Great Lakes District Office, is needed ultimately in order to implement projects that will result in a more resilient coastline throughout the Great Lakes and a more strategic expenditure of state and federal funds. Safeguarding the Great Lakes coastline region is vital to our nation's interest and that's why I urge you to include \$1.2 million in funding in order to begin work on the GLCRS.
- **Great Sodus Bay Sheet Pile Wall on Charles Point & East Breakwater Repairs** – \$1.35 million. In August 2018, USACE Buffalo allocated \$150,000 to complete engineering and design for the new sheet pile wall and make this project "shovel-ready" to receive construction phase funding of \$1.35 million. The sheet pile wall and the east breakwater's deteriorating condition was severely exacerbated when Lake Ontario flood waters devastated this area last summer. Currently the broken steel wall is compromised, allowing Lake Ontario waters to dangerously erode the Charles Point cliff jeopardizing the land supporting homes on top of the cliff and the protection of the navigation channel. Substantial and immediate repairs to the sheet pile wall are an urgent need and I strongly encourage you to include \$1.35 million in the work plan to complete the sheet pile wall repair project.
- **Ogdensburg Port Project** –\$2.8 million. The long-awaited project to deepen the Ogdensburg Harbor - which was last dredged in 1984 – will ease congestion, reduce shipping costs and unlock new business opportunities for the North Country. A Project Partnership Agreement was reached in 2017 to complete the project and funds are needed to continue construction in FY 2019.
- **Port of Oswego Deepening** –The Port of Oswego is seeking USACE assistance to study deepening the harbor beyond the current 25 foot depth. As the only deep water port on Lake Ontario in New York, the Port of Oswego needs seaway depth throughout the entire channel in order to access the docks. I strongly encourage you to include adequate funding in the work plan to conduct a feasibility study.
- **Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Section 14 Projects** – There are a number of projects in the Buffalo District that are in need of Section 14 funding to commence emergency shoreline and streambank protection projects. These projects include work in

the town of Greece, and in Old Fort Niagara, and Golden Hills State Park. I strongly encourage you to include adequate funding in this year's work plan to begin work on these important projects.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles Sch", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator

Cc: Mick Mulvaney, Director of Office of Management and Budget (OMB)