



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council  
**HARBOR TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Summary**  
 June 4, 2025

Hybrid Meeting held at Duluth International Airport and Via Microsoft Teams

**HTAC Voting Members**

Present	Name	Organization	Sector Representing
	Ed Anderson	MIC Policy Board	Regional Organization
	Adam Bechle ( <i>alternate</i> )	WI Sea Grant	Agency
Y	Dan Belden	Western Lake Superior Sanitary District	Regional Organization
	Cliff Bentley ( <i>alternate</i> )	MN Department of Natural Resources	Agency
Y	Cameron Bertsch	Douglas County	Local Government
	Brian Boder ( <i>alternate</i> )	St. Louis County	Local Government
Y	CDR John Botti	US Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Duluth	Agency
	Dan Breneman ( <i>alternate</i> )	MN Pollution Control Agency	Agency
Y	Daniel Carlson	US Army Corps of Engineers	Agency
	Natalie Chin	WI Sea Grant	Agency
Y	AJ Clavette ( <i>alternate</i> )	US Customs and Border Patrol	Agency
	John Downing	MN Sea Grant	Agency
	Matti Erpestad	Day Tripper of Duluth	Recreation
Y	LTJG Zach Fedak ( <i>alternate</i> )	US Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Duluth	Agency
Y	Jim Foldesi	St. Louis County	Local Government
	James Gittemeier	City of Duluth	Local Government
Y	Gary Glass	Izaak Walton League	Citizen Group
Y	Cheri Hagen	WI Department of Natural Resources	Agency
	Dan Hartman	DECC	Harbor Tourism
	Joe Havasi	Compass Minerals	Harbor Industry
Y	Barb Huberty	MN Pollution Control Agency	Agency
	Duane Johnson ( <i>alternate</i> )	St Louis County Emergency Management	Local Government
Y	Joel Johnson	Lakehead Boat Basin	Recreation
	Sheldon Johnson ( <i>alternate</i> )	Northwest Regional Planning Commission	Regional Organization
	Brandon Kohlts ( <i>alternate</i> )	WLSSD	Regional Organization
Y	Shawn Krizaj	City of Duluth Fire Department	Local Government
	Kris Laman ( <i>alternate</i> )	US Army Corps of Engineers	Agency
	Rich Laskey ( <i>alternate</i> )	GLF / Key Lakes	Harbor Industry
Y	Jason Laumann	Northwest Regional Planning Commission	Regional Organization
	Robb McGhie	Perkins Specialized Transportation Contracting	Harbor Logistics
Y	Capt. Ed Montgomery	Sea Service LLC	Harbor Industry
	Nick Patterson	JF Brennan	Harbor Industry
	Mike Peterson	GLF / Key Lakes	Harbor Industry
Y	Patrick Phenow	MN Department of Transportation	Agency
	Kelsey Prihoda ( <i>alternate</i> )	MN Sea Grant	Agency
	Capt. Dan Rentschler ( <i>alternate</i> )	Western Great Lakes Pilots Association	Harbor Industry
Y	Amanda Rosebrock	Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Government
Y	Jason Serck (Vice-Chair)	City of Superior	Local Government
Y	Mae Sommerfeld	WI Department of Transportation	Agency
Y	Bri Speldrich	MN Department of Natural Resources	Agency
Y	Matt Steiger ( <i>alternate</i> )	WI Department of Natural Resources	Agency
Y	Jeff Udd (Chair)	Duluth Seaway Port Authority	Regional Organization
	Ashley Vande Voort ( <i>alternate</i> )	Douglas County	Local Government
	Lou Weichseldorfer	CN	Harbor Logistics
	Vacant	St. Louis River Alliance	Citizen Group
	Vacant		Harbor Industry
	Vacant		Harbor-related Business
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**Others Present**

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Tari Aanonsen	MIC	Thomas Howes	Fond du Lac Band
Katherine Alexson	US EPA	Seth Johnson	AMI Engineers
Kevin Beardsley	Duluth Seaway Port Authority	Joseph Lane	UM-Duluth
Brian Bellmore	Barr Engineering	Pat Lammersen	US Coast Guard
Travis Black	MARAD	Willis Mattison	Izaak Walton League
Dan Breneman	MPCA	Teddie Meronek	Friends of the Fitz
Ron Chicka	MIC	Ricky Sarran	MIC
Kate Ferguson	Duluth Seaway Port Authority	Jenny Van Sickle	Friends of the Fitz
Brian Foster	Jeff Foster Trucking	Matt Stahl	CHS Inc.
Ben Gates	US Coast Guard	Nick Thorson	USACE
Ken Gerasimos		Maren Webb	MnDOT
Mike Goettel	WI DNR	Mike Wenholz	MIC
Lucy Hick	NOAA	Katie Williams	USEPA

In addition to the above, there was one additional unidentified person online. We do not have the name of that participant.

**Introductions / Agenda Review / Committee Business**

Ron Chicka welcomed everyone and introduced Jeff Udd as the new HTAC Chair. Mike Wenholz also acknowledged Jason Serck as the HTAC Vice-Chair.

**HTAC Chair Jeff Udd** called the meeting to order at approximately 9:07 AM. Jeff also welcomed everyone to the hybrid HTAC quarterly meeting. Jeff asked if there were any concerns with the March 5, 2025, Meeting Summary, and hearing none asked for a motion to approve.

- Jason Serck moved to approve the 3/5/2025 HTAC Meeting Summary. Shawn Krizaj seconded the motion.
- There was no further discussion.
- **The motion to approve carried unanimously.**

**Thank you to Deb DeLuca, Ron Chicka, MIC**

- Ron C acknowledged the recent retirement of Deb DeLuca as Executive Director of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority. Ron noted Deb as a good partner and supporter of HTAC for the past ten years. Ron read a certificate the MIC prepared for Deb to thank her for her contributions. Deb was not able to be at the meeting so the certificate of appreciation will be provided to her at a later date.



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## **HTAC Dredging Subcommittee Update & Meeting Summary, Dan Breneman, MPCA**

- Dan B provided a brief summary of recent local dredging topics, including the following from the recent Dredging Subcommittee meeting.
  - UW-Superior Transportation and Logistics study proposal – addressing ideas of a dredged sediment beneficial use facility.
  - Status of the MN Sea Grant Dredging Perceptions Study.
  - The Great Lakes Dredging Team April webinar was primarily focused on PFAS issues, and a PFAS Working Group was formed.
- Dan B introduced Dan Carlson to share updates from the US Army Corps of Engineers.
  - Steve Brossart, long-time HATC participant and voting member, retired May 22.
  - Unfortunately, only one bid was submitted for the annual maintenance dredging beneficial use contract, and it was not acceptable. Maintenance dredging will occur but all material will at this point have to go to Erie Pier. USACE is working to find an alternative to beneficially use some of the material, most notably at Wisconsin Point.
  - USACE is examining a number of approaches to better manage and process materials at Erie Pier – especially to better separate sands and fines. There is funding to support this. The goal is to develop Erie Pier into a true commercial-level facility.

## **Navigation & Safety Subcommittee Update, Zach Fedak, US Coast Guard MSU-Duluth**

- Zach F and CDR Botti shared that a new charter of the Navigation & Safety Subcommittee has been finalized. In short, the new charter is necessary to meet recent US Coast Guard NVIC Guidance and for the Navigation & Safety Subcommittee to continue serving its dual role/purpose as HTAC subcommittee and US Coast Guard MSU Harbor Safety Committee, as has been accomplished for many years.
- As part of meeting recent US Coast Guard NVIC Guidance regarding a Harbor Safety Committee some additional entities will be invited to participate, and the area of scope will expand beyond the Duluth-Superior area. The details of how this expanded area will participate has yet to be determined.

## **Duluth Ship Canal Concerns Work Group Update, Mike Wenholz, MIC**

- See the one-pager
- Mike W provided a status update on the work of the Duluth Ship Canal Work Group, a work group of the Navigation & Safety Subcommittee. The purpose of this short-term Work Group is to address the following concerns that have been brought up many times over many years and bring them to finality within the Subcommittee and HTAC:
  1. Navigation Aids for commercial & recreational use of the Duluth Ship Canal
  2. Duluth Ship Canal Velocity Sensor
  3. Duluth Ship Canal Portage on Park Point (8<sup>th</sup> Street at Lake Avenue & Minnesota Avenue)
- The group held its third meeting and all actions have been completed. All that remains is to organize and confirm the workgroup's recommendations and share them with the HTAC for vote by the voting members. Despite an attempt to have the recommendations ready to share at this meeting, Mike W was not able to do so. The goal is to have this ready for the September meeting.



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## **Updates of St Louis River Estuary AOC Work, Barb Huberty (MPCA) & Matt Steiger (WI DNR)**

- See the presentation
- Barb H and Matt S shared updates on all ongoing and new St Louis River Area of Concern projects in both Minnesota and Wisconsin. Completed remediation and restoration sites were also highlighted.
- Barb provided brief updates on work in Minnesota, including Thomson Reservoir, Mud Lake, Interstate Island, and several Manoomin restoration locations.
- Matt provided brief updates on work in Wisconsin, including Pickle Pond, Crawford Creek, Allouez Bay, and several Manoomin restoration locations.
- As of the end of March 2025 SLR AOC management actions were 81.3% complete. 65 of 80 actions are completed (this includes 7 no further action sites).
- Of the remaining 15 actions, 5 are remediation projects and 4 are restoration projects. The remaining 6 actions are studies, plans, and tracking or data operations.
- Four of nine BUIs are removed.

## **Fifty Years Later: Honoring the Memory of the Edmund Fitzgerald, Teddie Meronek & Jenny Van Sickle**

- See the presentation
- Teddie M and Jenny VS shared about how the Edmund Fitzgerald and its crew will be remembered and honored this year and into the future, and the steps taken to make this happen. November 2025 marks 50 years since its sinking.
- Teddie shared how and why the idea to honor the Fitz came to be, including realizing the City had not really done this before (to anyone's recollection).
- A significant part of this effort includes getting a State Historical Society sign erected in the City of Superior to specifically honor the Fitz and its crew, and to note its connection to the City of Superior. The sign has taken a lot of effort and coordination and will cost approximately \$8000. It will be placed off Marina Drive on Barker's Island.
- Forming the "Friends of the Fitz" has been one way to help foster awareness and help promote the sign and other events or activities throughout this year.
- Jenny shared ways the City has been able to support this effort, and its significance to the community.
- Teddie and Jenny shared that their suggestion and hope is that citizens promote the honoring of the Fitz in whatever way is part of their normal life, such as reading a book about the Fitz as part of a regular book club, etc. Citizens can also donate money for the sign.
- People can learn more by following the Friends of the Fitz on Facebook.
- There will be numerous events, including:
  - A special production by Time Arc Theatre October 24 – November 2
  - Official Installation Ceremony on Barker's Island November 9
  - Bong Speaker Series 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary November 13

## **Treaty Rights in the St Louis River Estuary, Thomas Howes, Fond du Lac Band**

- See the presentation
- Thomas H provided a very detailed presentation of Treaty Rights in the Upper Midwest, including the St Louis River Estuary. It included much about the layers of history of the broader topic for context.



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- Thomas shared a map of the historical Ojibwe territory, which extends from east of Lake Ontario to southwestern Saskatchewan/northeast Montana, and north as far as central Ontario and Manitoba, and south through central North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and southern Michigan and Ontario. He noted the people have been known under several other names, but Ojibwe is primary. Ojibwe is the largest cultural group north of Mexico.
- He also shared maps of the 1837, 1842, and 1854 Ceded Territories. These Territories are all part of different treaties with the US government.
  - Treaties are sovereign over all other government entities.
  - An increase in asserting these treaty rights occurred in the 1970's in various court cases.
  - The Voigt decision in the Lac Courte Oreilles fishing case was significant. Reservations had to establish codes/laws and departments to administer them. The Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) was formed as a result.
- The 1854 Treaty is very important and remains so. Article 11 retained hunting, fishing, ricing, gathering, etc. for only three Tribes in the Treaty area. It divided the Territory into reservation areas with individual rights. As a result, Fond du Lac develops and enforces their own conservation regulations. To support and inform such efforts, Fond du Lac also conducts its own monitoring, ecological studies, and environmental assessments.

## **Maritime Administration (MARAD) Funding Opportunities & Updates, Travis Black, MARAD**

- See the presentation
- Travis B introduced himself to the group. He recently started as Director, and plans to stay connected to and participate in HTAC meetings.
- He shared the mission of MARAD, which in short is to foster, promote, and strengthen the U.S. maritime transportation system. This includes infrastructure, industry, and labor components of the system.
- Strategic goals include maintaining maritime capabilities, maritime readiness, infrastructure, and advocacy.
- Travis has a very large area of responsibility, including all the Great Lakes, and portions of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.
- Travis shared and briefly described his primary responsibilities as a Director and then focused the majority of time on one of them – Grant Assistance.
- Travis shared details of 9 different USDOT Port Infrastructure Grant Programs.
- Travis shared information of several available resources and noted several upcoming webinars people could participate in.

## **Roundtable**

- Matt S mentioned that a User Assessment Survey for Wisconsin Point is open. A QR code links to the survey. Matt said he could provide a link to the survey to be shared via the HTAC distribution list.
- CDR Botti and Zach F also provided a brief overview of the upcoming Tall Ships Festival July 10-14. The Parade of Sail will be on July 10. There will be some restricted water access during the event.

**With no other items brought forward, Jeff Udd adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:57 AM.**