



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**

-Alaska District

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**Appendix H:  
View of Local Sponsor**

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## **Unalaska (Dutch Harbor) Channels**

### **Unalaska, Alaska**



**February 1, 2019**

CITY OF UNALASKA  
UNALASKA, ALASKA

RESOLUTION 2018-68

A RESOLUTION OF THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL SUPPORTING THE UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (USACE) PROPOSED DREDGING OF THE ILIULIUK ENTRANCE CHANEL TO A DEPTH OF 58 FEET PLUS A MARGIN OF 2 ADDITIONAL FEET

WHEREAS, the City of Unalaska entered into an agreement with USACE to conduct a feasibility study to determine the benefits of deepening the Iliuliuk Entrance Channel; and

WHEREAS, the USACE studied the seafloor, reviewed marine mammal activity, reviewed currents and storm surge patterns and impacts to Front Beach as a result of increased depth, gathered geotechnical data for the location to be dredged, and conducted navigation simulations to determine benefits and impacts of dredging; and

WHEREAS, USACE presented the initial findings to the Unalaska City Council and to the public; and

WHEREAS, USACE solicited public input and review for the findings of the draft study; and

WHEREAS, the USACE is prepared to present the results of their feasibility study on December 5, 2018 to USACE Headquarters with the recommendation of dredging the Entrance Channel to 58 feet with a margin of 2 additional feet; and

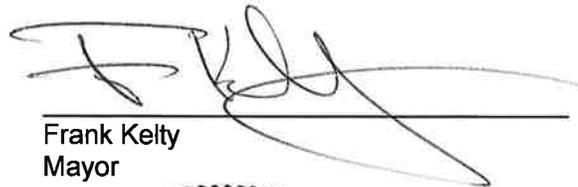
WHEREAS, the City of Unalaska target was a depth of no less than 55 feet at the Entrance Channel to accommodate deep draft vessels and benefit commerce; and

WHEREAS, the USACE proposed depth at the Iliuliuk Entrance Channel considers best practices of navigation and safety margins; and

WHEREAS, the City of Unalaska is confident that the 58 feet plus 2 additional feet will meet the needs of commerce and safety.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Unalaska City Council fully supports the USACE recommendation of dredging the Iliuliuk Entrance Channel to a depth of 58 feet plus 2 additional feet.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by a duly constituted quorum of the Unalaska City Council on November 27, 2018.



Frank Kelty  
Mayor

ATTEST:



Marjie Veeder  
City Clerk



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## MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

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To: Mayor and City Council Members  
From: Peggy McLaughlin, Port Director  
Through: Thomas Thomas, City Manager  
Date: November 27, 2018  
Re: Resolution 2018-68 supporting the United States Army Corps of Engineers proposed dredging of the Iliuliuk Entrance Channel to a depth of 58 feet plus a margin of 2 additional feet

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**SUMMARY:** Resolution 2018-68 is a resolution of support. By passing this resolution, the City Council is supporting the USACE recommendation to dredge the Iliuliuk Entrance Channel to 58 feet plus a margin of an additional 2 feet. This does not commit the City of Unalaska to the design or construction of this project. This does not commit the City to additional funds. It simply provides an approval of the depth recommendation determined through the feasibility study. By supporting this resolution the City Council acknowledges that the depth recommended meets the needs of commerce and safety.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:** City Council funded 50% of the USACE Feasibility Study not to exceed \$1,500,000.

**BACKGROUND:** The USACE selected the Iliuliuk Entrance Channel Dredging as a new start-up project, and entered into a three-year feasibility study with the City of Unalaska. They have completed the study and are prepared to present the results to the USACE Headquarters. This presentation will recommend a dredging depth of 58 feet plus a margin of 2 additional feet. This resolution from the City of Unalaska supports the USACE's recommendation.

**DISCUSSION:** The City of Unalaska entered into a three-year feasibility study with the USACE to the research dredging of the Iliuliuk Entrance Channel. The USACE reviewed a long list of factors to determine if dredging the entrance channel was realistic, including marine mammal activity, the seafloor, potential areas for placement of dredging material, geotechnical information, currents and storm surge impacts. They also ran navigation simulations to determine the depth that would best meet the safety requirements for under keel clearance, and ran those simulations with varying storm surge, wind conditions, and squat calculations.

The Corps of Engineers is approaching the depth decision-making milestone which will be in the form of a presentation to the USACE Headquarters on December 5, 2018. During this presentation, they will review all of the findings of the feasibility study including the information gathered on impacts to front beach, navigation, methods of dredging, and cost of the project.

The USACE is seeking a formal submission of support for the recommended dredging depth of 58 feet plus a margin of 2 additional feet, which is made with consideration to all of the environmental data collected, geotechnical information, and best practices of navigation. This depth will reasonably accommodate transit of any commercial vessel that could realistically call in Iliuliuk Bay or Dutch Harbor proper.

The City of Unalaska began the feasibility study with a desired depth of 55 feet. The USACE was looking at 48 feet. The simulation study really brought home the benefit to the nation by proposing a dredging depth that would accommodate deep-draft vessels. The "sweet spot" is 58 feet. This provides an economic benefit both for vessels that call the port today and for companies with deep-draft vessels in their shipping fleet. This depth also allows the Marine Pilot Association to maintain under keel clearance that supports best practices and safety margins.

The recommendation of 58 feet represents the USACE recommended depth and the additional 2 feet provides a margin of error should the USACE exceed the 58 feet. The depth will not be less than 58 feet and should the additional 2 feet be necessary, would be at no additional cost to the Sponsor (City of Unalaska).

By supporting the recommended depth, the City Council is not committing to the design or the construction of this project. Those steps will come later and individually. The design agreement will come after the feasibility study is finalized and approved. Should the project go to design and is completed, another agreement will be required for construction. The Council is not committing any additional resources to this project by supporting the recommended depth of 58 feet.

The cost of the project is likely to change, but the project on the high end is estimated to be no more than \$30 million with the City's portion to fall somewhere between \$12.5-15 million. This is just a look-ahead estimate and not an absolute.

**ALTERNATIVES:** Council may choose to support, or not to support, Resolution 2018-68; or may modify the proposed resolution.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** The passage of this resolution does not obligate the City of Unalaska to any payments.

**LEGAL:** Not applicable.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** I recommend passage of Resolution 2018-68.

**PROPOSED MOTION:** I move to approve Resolution 2018-68

**CITY MANAGER COMMENTS:** I recommend passage of Resolution 2018-68.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Corps of Engineers presentation.