



NEWS RELEASE

**Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Northeast Region**

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DATE: April 10, 2009

CONTACT: Carrie Webb, DNR water management specialist, 920-662-5453

SUBJECT: Public meeting on lake and bay dredging permits scheduled by DNR
Comments invited on Environmental Analysis and Lawrence University study

GREEN BAY, Wis. -- The Department of Natural Resources will hold a public informational meeting on a study of channel dredging along the shorelines of Green Bay and Lake Michigan in Door County.

Due to low water levels in 2006 and 2007 there was a dramatic increase in dredging applications on the lake and bay. DNR staff felt that low water was a critical time to further study the impacts of this type of dredging to help ensure that the department was making permit decisions that did not interfere with the rights of the public.

The department partnered with Lawrence University to study the impacts of dredging and decided that an Environmental Analysis should be completed. While general permits for maintenance dredging activities and individual permit applications for areas with public uses were still processed, the processing of individual permit applications for private properties was put on hold pending completion of an Environmental Analysis.

The study found that there were biological impacts and a harmful impact on natural habitat to the near-shore area of the shoreline where these channels were dredged.

While the impact from one dredge channel is minimal, the cumulative impact of large numbers of channels could cause irreversible harm to the ecosystem. Based on 2007 aerial photos, there are at least 367 dredged channels on the beds of Green Bay and Lake Michigan in Door County. Alternatives that have less of an impact must be employed to help protect the ecosystem.

The study and the Environmental Analysis will be discussed at a public informational meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 6 at Crossroads at Big Creek in Sturgeon Bay. Crossroads is located on CTH TT just east of the intersection of Michigan St. and Hwy 42/57. Copies of the environmental analysis can be obtained on the department's website at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/es/science/eis/eis.htm>.

Public comments on the environmental analysis, either written or oral, are welcome and must be submitted to Carrie Webb, DNR water management specialist at 2984 Shawano Ave. Green Bay, WI 54313, by phone at 920-662-5453, or email carriea.webb@wisconsin.gov). Comments must be received by 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 16, 2009.

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