

April 14, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, as owners of Wright's Wharf in Portland, ME, write in strong support of the City of Portland and City of South Portland's Port Infrastructure Development Program grant application entitled, *Portland Harbor Dredge and CAD Cell Project*.

Portland Harbor is a critical economic hub for the State of Maine providing public and private infrastructure that supports many diverse industries. The Cities around Portland Harbor are home to the largest population center north of Boston and are a regional financial, retail, transportation, and service hub. For the marine economy, the economic activity and value of the waterfront has been limited and increasingly threatened by the lack of adequate berthing due to the shallow depth between the piers caused by decades of sediment accumulation. Full tide accessible berthing is the foundational resource of a commercial waterfront.

This project addresses these critical issues by performing maintenance dredging around each of the public and private piers in Portland Harbor and depositing the material in a Contained Aquatic Disposal Cell. This project will not only bring the piers themselves into a State of Good Repair, but will improve water quality, both of which will promote commercial economic growth and maintain a working waterfront – a vital aspect of the area.

We own and are located at Wright's Wharf, a 5.5-acre parcel in the middle of Portland's working waterfront which currently berths U.S. Coast Guard vessels on one side. The other side is unusable due to a deteriorated retaining wall and accumulated sediment. We are ready to repair the retaining wall and expand operations on our site, but we can't do so without first removing the accumulated sediment. This dredging work is critical to our ability to continue assistance of U.S. Coast Guard operations and set the stage for new investment on our wharf to support innovative fishing, aquaculture, and marine research ventures.

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We are aware that this project has obtained approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. With these permits in place, the project sponsors, the community at large, and our private business owners are all supportive of the work and are prepared to support the project financially.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you consider this important project for an award. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Perkins', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Donald W. Perkins  
President/CEO