

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 13, 2013

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary
U.S. Army, Civil Works
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Secretary Darcy:

We are writing on behalf of the Town of Yarmouth, Maine, which is seeking a commitment from the Army Corps of Engineers to complete the full maintenance dredging of the Royal River.

Since 1871, the Royal River has been a federally authorized site. Yarmouth officials inform us that the river and its harbor require dredging every seven years to maintain commercial and recreation functionality. However, the Royal River has not been dredged since 1995. We were pleased to see that the Army Corps issued a Public Notice of proposed dredging for the Royal River. Nevertheless, Yarmouth officials remain concerned that heavy shoaling of the river's waters will result in the loss of marine trades jobs, working boatyards, commercial fisheries based in the harbor, and the tourism and commerce associated with Yarmouth's working waterfront.

Town officials inform us that, in Yarmouth's dealings with other federal agencies, it has succeeded in increasing the priority status of certain projects by entering into a funding partnership. Under such arrangements, the town has agreed to fund a specified percentage of a given project's costs. With regard to dredging the Royal River, we understand that Yarmouth officials have indicated to the Army Corps the town's willingness to fund 10 percent of the project's cost.

Ports and harbors are the economic lifeblood for many small or rural communities, such as Yarmouth and numerous other towns in our home state of Maine. These small ports and harbors play an important role in local economies across the country, and there is an ongoing need to address the maintenance backlog to ensure that they are properly maintained and can continue to provide economic benefits locally, regionally, and nationally.

We are well aware of the budgetary challenges the Army Corps faces in meeting operations and maintenance needs across the country. We are interested in knowing how the Army Corps views cost share, such as the one Yarmouth has inquired about, and whether or not providing a cost share could help advance this vital dredging project.

Should your staff need further information, please contact Olivia Kurtz in Senator Collins' office at 202.224.2523 or Chris Rauscher in Senator King's office at 202.224.5344. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Angus King
United States Senator