

October – Q & A with Massport - Boston Harbor Dredging Project

Q: Massport is an organization that impacts the economic lifeblood of the Northeast. Can you speak about its role in the region?

A: The Port of Boston and Conley Container Terminal, which will see the biggest impact from the Boston Harbor Dredging Project, generate \$4.6 billion in economic activity annually, support 7,000 direct jobs and connect 1,600 businesses across New England to the global economy.

New England is home to over 14 million consumers and the Port of Boston keeps the billions of dollars' worth of goods they need and products our local businesses sell, moving efficiently.

Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) owns and operates the Conley Container Terminal, Boston Logan International Airport, Flynn Cruiseport Boston, Worcester Regional Airport, Hanscom Field and a significant amount of real estate in South Boston. We are a financially self-sustaining public authority whose transportation facilities alone generate more than \$15 billion annually and are a critical component of the regional New England economy.

Q: The Boston Harbor dredging project boasts a lot of big numbers. What is the most important fact or figure?

A: This project is a massive undertaking that will provide significant impacts to the regional economy and would not be possible without the support of both the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the federal government. In total, this multi-phase project will cost approximately \$350 million but will provide a significant base for continued growth and investment in the New England economy by keeping the Port of Boston competitive with other East Coast ports as larger ships are becoming more common in major shipping routes.

The most important figures related to this project are the 7,000 direct jobs supported by the Port of Boston, the 1,600 business that rely on Conley Container Terminal to move their imports and exports and the \$4.6 billion in economic activity generated by these facilities each year. The significant investment being made by Massport, the Commonwealth and the federal government will deepen the main ship channel, reserved channel, and outer harbor, and expand the turning basin, to more efficiently and effectively serve the 8,500 TEU ships already calling the Port of Boston, and the even larger container vessels that will call in the future.



Photo courtesy of Office of Governor Charlie Baker

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Q: How does this project size up to others on the East Coast?

A: With the expansion of the Panama Canal, larger vessels are calling the U.S. East Coast. Ports along the East Coast are making similar investments to what we have committed to here in Boston. The Port of New York & New Jersey completed its dredging project and finished raising the Bayonne Bridge to accommodate bigger ships. The Port of Savannah is currently undertaking a similar deepening project.

Q: Who are the lead federal and state agencies overseeing the dredging?

A: The Army Corps of Engineers, the Massachusetts Port Authority.

Q: This project will allow for larger container ships to deliver goods to Northeast. Does that mean less truck traffic and highway congestion?

A: The completion of the Boston Harbor Dredging Project will allow for much larger ships to call on the Port of Boston, which will open up more direct access to New England's only full service container terminal and reduce the number of goods that need to be trucked from the ports of New York and New Jersey, thus reducing the number of trucks on the already congested I-95 corridor and their related congestion and emissions.

Massport has been focusing on making Conley Container Terminal a more customer-focused facility in recent years and significant improvements to efficiency have already yielded results. Even with three years of record-setting growth, Conley Terminal remains congestion-free, with average truck turnaround times of approximately 33 minutes and our sustained partnership with the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) has resulted in a 30% increase in crane productivity.

Conley was recognized in 2016 as The Journal of Commerce's #1 North American port in terms of productivity increases. That increased efficiency and productivity allows for less idling and waiting times for trucks.

Q: As extreme weather events increase in frequency due to impacts of climate change, resiliency for our coastlines is an imperative. Does this project increase Boston's, and really the Northeast's resiliency?

A: The investment in maintaining and deepening the Port of Boston is critical to maintaining and growing the region's economic strength and ensuring the New England economy can continue to compete in a global economy. Economic security and environmental resiliency are not opposing ideas and, by reducing the need to truck goods from other large ports and, in turn, the negative impact their emissions have on our environment, we are investing in both simultaneously. The related upgrades to the infrastructure at the Port of Boston will help our facilities weather more powerful storms and see that they have a smaller impact on the region's economy. Ensuring that the Port of Boston can handle larger container vessels also creates redundancy in the overall freight network.