



## COUNTY OF YORK

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The Honorable Susan Collins  
United States Senate  
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Angus King  
United States Senate  
133 Hart Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chellie Pingree  
United States House of Representatives  
2354 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

*December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025*

On behalf of York County Government, we write to request your immediate assistance in resolving delays that threaten to postpone federally approved emergency coastal protection projects by more than a year.

On January 13, 2024, York County experienced our highest tide in recorded history. Combined with flooding three days earlier, these storms virtually wiped out protective dunes and beaches across our coastline, causing \$40+ million in municipal damages, \$15+ million in damages to homes and businesses, and \$110+ million in damage to protective dunes and beaches. The loss of these natural defenses has left \$660+ million in additional property and infrastructure exposed to future storms.

Despite having secured necessary state and local permits, three FEMA Category B emergency protective measures projects have been held in the agency's Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) review for over six months:

- Saco Project 805950: nearly 8 months in EHP review
- Wells Project 797661: nearly 8 months in EHP review
- Old Orchard Beach Project 753500: nearly 7 months in in EHP review

While we expect these EHP reviews to conclude soon, we now face a compounding problem. FEMA has indicated that final approval will require an additional 60-day Secretarial review period because project costs exceed \$100,000. This administrative requirement will push final approval beyond Maine's late-March deadline for coastal dredging activities. Projects designed to restore beaches damaged in January 2024 would not be implemented until November 2026, nearly three years after the disaster.

Before these delays, these projects were expected to start in November 2025, when Maine's dredging season opened. Missing this winter's construction window leaves our coastal communities exposed through another full storm season, threatening the commercial infrastructure and improved properties these projects were designed to protect.

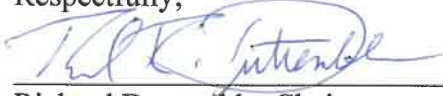
We respectfully request that you engage directly with FEMA Region I leadership and the Department of Homeland Security to:

1. Expedite completion of the EHP review process for these three projects
2. Accelerate the Secretarial approval process to meet Maine's March 2026 dredging deadline
3. Authorize any alternative approval pathways available for emergency protective measures facing seasonal construction constraints

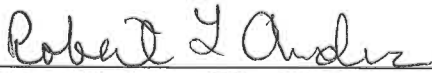
Our coastal communities should not be forced to wait three years for protection from a federally declared disaster. York County Emergency Management Agency stands ready to provide additional technical information or briefings to your staff as needed.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Respectfully,



Richard Dutremble, Chair



Robert Andrews, Vice Chair



Justin Chenette



Donna Ring



Richard Clark

York County Board of Commissioners

CC: York County Emergency Management Agency