

Office of the Lucas County Engineer

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# PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE ENGINEER

August 3, 2021

## NILES DITCH WATERSHED PETITION #1052

### Background

On March 18, 2021, the Board of Lucas County Commissioners and the Lucas County Engineer have were given notice of the filing a petition by Jerusalem Township to place all drainage improvements within the Niles Ditch Watershed under permanent maintenance using a combination of methods provided in the Ohio Revised Code Section 6131.01 (C) 1 through 5 necessary for the disposal of surplus water through the infrastructure hereinafter set forth:

*Niles Ditch: Commencing at a point in the southeast corner of Tax Parcel 33-09877, near the intersection of Cedar Point Road and Decant Road, thence commencing northerly for a total distance of approximately 0.21 miles to its termination at a point on the southern border of the Cedar Point National Wildlife Refuge.*

*Cedar Point Road Ditch: Commencing at a point in the northwest corner of Tax Parcel 33-11793, near the intersection of Cousino Road and Cedar Point Road, thence commencing easterly along Cedar Point Road to the point where said ditch intersects Niles Ditch, for a total distance of approximately 1.0 mile.*

*Decant Road Ditch: Commencing at a point in the southeast corner of Tax Parcel 33-10511, approximately 370 feet north of the Arquette Road and Decant Road intersection, thence commencing northerly along Decant Road to the point where Decant Road Ditch intersects Niles Ditch, for a total distance of approximately 0.45 miles.*

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## **Report**

Ditches in this area are responsible for carrying surface and subsurface drainage for agricultural and residential areas. In addition, water levels in the ditch are heavily influenced by the existing water levels in Lake Erie and are controlled by a series of gates and pumps to prevent flooding of the area due to seiche events on the Lake.

As a result, the backflow of water in the ditches due to the changes in water levels and Lake Erie over a period of decades has resulted in heavy siltation of the ditches which have resulted in loss of grade and outlet to Lake Erie as well as a significant loss of capacity for the movement and disposal of surplus water from a large portion of Jerusalem Township to Lake Erie.

This lack of maintenance has resulted in consistent poor drainage in the watershed along with occasional flooding. In addition, in the near future, significant upkeep of the gates and valves necessary to manage backflow flooding due to high water on Lake Erie will be needed. As a result, we recommend approximately \$20,000 of work is needed in the near term to remove sediment from the channel to be performed when water levels on Lake Erie are lower to enable more efficient removal. In addition, the channels in the Niles Ditch Watershed will require in perpetual routine maintenance in order to function properly and continue to dispose of surplus water.

It is the opinion of the Engineer that the ditch conditions of Niles Ditch, Cedar Point Road Ditch, and Decant Road Ditch should be placed under permanent maintenance.

The benefits and drawback of the proposed project in the opinion of the Engineer are as follows:

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Benefits: Improved drainage, maintenance investment

Drawbacks: Need for future access of property (easements)

It is the opinion of the Engineer that the proposed project is feasible, that it is conducive to the public welfare, that there is sufficient outlet for the improvement, and that the benefits exceed the cost.

Mike Pniewski, P.E., P.S.

Lucas County Engineer