

Respondent:

**Grand Lake St. Marys State Park
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Question From Summit Or From Audience Cards	Response
What is normal pool and how is that determined	Normal pool is a reference point used to measure lake levels. Normal pool for our lake is 870.6 feet above sea level. Normal pool is the elevation at the bottom of the 11” deep notch in the middle of the spillway at the west bank of the lake. This measurement was determined by professional engineers when the spillway was constructed in 1997.
Tell me about the dredging – Do you aim to dredge every day. Why not? Money? Personnel? Priorities?	Yes, the park management team plans to dredge every day that we possibly can. There are many variables however that factor into those plans. These variables include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Normal maintenance and mechanical breakdowns.• Inclement weather, because the dredges can only be moved across the lake to work sites on calm water days. By the nature of their design, neither of the suction dredges can handle waves very well. Sometimes when working at the mouth of a channel that is exposed to waves the dredge has to be moved further up the channel to calm water at the end of the day and back again in the morning. If conditions get too windy then the dredge can not work at the channel mouth at all until the lake settles down.• Even though the budget has been very tight in recent years, especially due to the cost of fuel, there has never been a time that lack of money stopped us from dredging.• Manpower shortages due to staff members on vacation, sick leave, or away at training or a vacant position.• There are times that lack of personnel has reduced our dredging capacity such as

	<p>during this past season when we were short by one to two people for much of the season. One staff member was out with a bad injury and a part time position was in the process of being posted and refilled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our top priorities are to keep the floating suction dredges pumping as many days as possible. In order to keep the dredges pumping there is time required for setup, fusing of dredge (discharge) pipe, moving the pipe, preparing the dredge material relocation areas and fueling.
<p>Where do the spoils go from dredging operations?</p>	<p>In order to dredge there must first be a dredge material relocation area, DMRA for short. Some of our big in- lake DMRA's that were built years ago are filling up and can no longer be used such as the one at Park Grand. In recent years the park dredge operations have used both in-lake DMRA's and also upland DMRA's. We have created large upland areas at Kittle Rd., Liette Farms, and the Gillian Farm. These areas are usually leased and then have to be torn down and leveled after four to five years. This requires lots of time and expense for building and removing the DMRA's. As our lake area becomes more developed it is becoming more difficult to secure locations for the dredge material. Some of the advantages of having dredge material pumped onto a piece of land is that it will enrich the soil and raise the surface of the area once it has dried and been leveled. The park is currently working on plans for three in-lake DMRA's and one upland DMRA</p>
<p>What would you do with a new dredge and the money to operate it?</p>	<p>With our present staffing level the wise choice would be to retire and sell the old St. Marys floating suction dredge (1968 model) and replace it with the new dredge. With a new dredge we would have a modern machine with even greater pumping capacity but smaller size. A new dredge would be more dependable and break down less and would allow the crew to accomplish more each season. We currently pump (or dredge) approximately 100,000 cubic yards of dredge material per year for our entire dredge program. A new dredge would provide the opportunity for increased production at less cost. The new dredges are just so much more efficient, they use less fuel, have fewer breakdowns, are easier to operate etc. With a new</p>

	<p>dredge the plan would be to use it to exceed previous production levels and days spent pumping and clean out more channels. Adding a third dredge to our program is not feasible considering the current staffing levels and financial resources available to the park. The entire Waterway Safety Program within the Division of Parks is facing similar budget and equipment issues.</p>
<p>Where in the lake can dredging take place?</p>	<p>Theoretically dredging could take place anywhere in the lake. However our entire dredge program is funded by the Division of Watercraft with funds that they receive from a boater's gas tax and other related sources. The primary purpose of the dredge program is to foster vessel safety. Years ago, the Division of Parks and Recreation and the Division of Watercraft worked out an agreement that set priorities and criteria for the dredge program around the state. The park management team has to develop a written project request for each dredging project and submit it through our division and then to the Chief of the Division of Watercraft for approval. If the project meets the criteria of the agreement, then it can be approved. I will try to get the dredge criteria document posted on the web site.</p>
<p>It seems that Indian Lake & Fort Loramie receive more attention from "political funding agencies" than does Grand Lake. This can be seen by comparing accomplishments in installation of riparian, dredging & maintenance of state parks & grounds. Grand Lake surely provides greater revenue thru issuance of dock permits, fishing license, taxes, boat license etc. than does "Indian and Fort Loramie" as a comparison. Why is "spending" inproportinate to revenue being generated? Should not the spending be more fair and proportionate to revenue?</p>	<p>Within the past ten years the park has received over \$775,000.00 in grants, \$800,000 in capital funds and over \$15,000 from the Lake Improvement Association. In 2000 the park received \$500,000 in capital money that was used to purchase a new dredge, a new long reach track hoe and a used Komatsu bulldozer. This money was received in response to the strong support that we have received from the Lake Development Corporation, and local legislators. The park is currently in the process of implementing \$300,000 in capital money that will be used to replace our water lines in the camp and office area. This work will begin soon. There is also \$450,000 approved in the capital budget for shoreline protection next summer. I think that Grand Lake St. Marys has done fairly well at receiving funds over the years. The one area that was lacking in the past but is now being addressed is capital funding for shoreline protection. It is very important that we keep receiving capital funding for shoreline protection and that we work our way down the approved Shoreline Protection Plan in order to</p>

	<p>protect our shoreline and contribute to improving the lake and watershed. In reference to what the other parks received, Indian Lake generates more revenue for the Division; however; Grand Lake St. Marys receives more general revenue funding. Keep in mind that the grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence.</p>
<p>Why can't the lake depth be increased or conversely why can't the lake be allowed to return to a swamp?</p>	<p>Open lake dredging is one of the top criteria listed in the agreement between Parks and Watercraft. It is one of the jobs easiest to get approved. The purpose of the dredge program is to foster vessel safety. Most of the open areas of the lake are five to eight feet deep and do not threaten vessel safety. Many of the channels and channel mouths fill in with sediment within five to ten years of being dredged so that is where we put in most of our time and effort. Our top priority has to be maintaining the most critical areas that are already, or are in danger of becoming too shallow for boaters to safely navigate. The mission statement for the Ohio Division of Parks and Recreation is "to provide an outdoor recreational experience for Ohio State Park visitors that exceed their expectations." The lakes primary purpose has been public recreation since the formation of the park in 1949. Even before the establishment of the state park system lake use had switched from providing water to the canal over to mostly recreational purposes. Returning the entire lake back over to swamp would not be in the best interest of serving the public for recreation use. We will however continue to look for select areas within the park that we can return to wetland status by making in-lake or shoreline dredge material relocation areas.</p>