

Progress Report on Regional Sediment Management Planning

Prepared for Lower Columbia Solutions Group

October 10, 2008 Meeting

Background

In January 2007, the LCSG signed a Declaration of Cooperation to initiate work on a Regional Sediment Management Plan (RSMP) for the lower Columbia River to maximize regional benefits (economic, social and environmental) and reduce regional costs associated with dredging activities.

Regional sediment management is the practice of making the best local project decisions within the context of a regional plan that maximizes regional benefits and/or reduces regional cost.

Update on Planning work

At the May LCSG meeting, the Policy Steering Committee, comprised of LCSG members, presented a scope of work to detail RSMP tasks over the coming year. The Committee met in August to review progress to date on the scope of work. The status of work on specific tasks is summarized as follows:

Manage Planning Process: To date this task has been occurring successfully.

Identify and Refine Policy and Technical Questions: Trask and Associates has been working with Jennifer Hennesey, George Kaminsky and Guy Gelfenbaum to explore technical sediment budget questions. A memorandum for this task is in draft form but not yet circulated.

Identify and Assemble Pertinent Literature. The literature search is moving forward successfully. The team is currently underway with a data needs assessment and a draft memo for this task is almost ready for review.

Sediment Physical Conditions Chapter: Currently the chapter is in incomplete draft form. The chapter is focused on what we think we know about sediment physical conditions and processes, and what we would like to know in the future. This is a challenging task because there isn't much information specific to the lower River.

Historical Dredged Material Analysis: The committee received a draft memo for this task prior to its August meeting. The Dredged Material and Beneficial Use Subcommittee met in August to discuss this draft and positive feedback was received. It was agreed by all that the pathways and ultimate fate of material placed upland or in-water is important. Cathy Tortorici suggested a missing piece was permit and royalty dredging. This was needed to better understand the scale of dredging occurring outside of the Corps of Engineers. Several members noted the need to be clear in the introduction about what the document encompasses and what does not. Overall the idea of something similar to a sediment registry was thought to be a good one. However, it raised additional questions such as: Who would house the repository? How would the data be updated?

The Dredged Material and Beneficial Use subcommittee will be meeting again in October.

Regulatory Chapter: The committee received a copy of this draft chapter prior to its August meeting. Discussion revolved around what level the regulatory discussion should focus on, what direction the chapter should take and what are the critical issues that should be addressed on a big picture scale.

Develop and Apply Criteria. Catherine Corbett is working to schedule the first meeting of this subcommittee with plans to assemble them in October.

Next Steps

Immediate next steps include transitioning the work from Trask and Associates to LCREP staff and then continuing with the work. LCREP has decided to take the work back in house rather than using the consultant.

LCSG Actions

The Policy Steering Committee will continue to guide this project as it moves forward, working with LCREP and the science technical advisory committee to resolve policy questions as they arise. The Policy Committee will raise specific issues to the LCSG for input if needed, and report progress at each LCSG meeting. LCREP will continue working directly with LCSG member organizations to carry out the commitments outlined in the Declaration of Cooperation to advance the project.

For more information

If you have questions or suggestions related to this project prior to our October meeting, please contact Bill Blosser, RSMP Project Manager, at (503) 274-1369 or bill@wrb-consulting.com.