

# **Regional Sediment Management Policy Sub-Committee Operating Principles**

**January 2008**

## **A. Background**

The Lower Columbia Solutions Group (LCSG) has entered into a process to develop a Regional Sediment Management Plan (RSMP) for the lower Columbia River. The charge to the Policy Sub-Committee is to oversee the development of the underlying policies guiding the RSMP on behalf of the LCSG. The Policy Sub-Committee is advisory to the LCSG.

## **B. Policy Sub-Committee Scope of Work**

The scope of the work to be undertaken to develop the RSMP is contained in the Declaration of Cooperation signed by the participating agency members. This scope of work is appended to this document as Attachment A.

## **C. Policy Sub-Committee Membership and Chair**

The Policy Sub-Committee is appointed by the LCSG and is composed of representatives of LCSG members and others as defined by the LCSG. The list attached as Appendix B lists the initial membership of the sub-committee, and this may be changed as needed by the LCSG. Policy Sub-Committee members are encouraged to appoint alternates to replace them in case they cannot attend meetings.

The LCSG will appoint the chair of the subcommittee.

## **D. Policy Sub-Committee Member Duties**

The duties of Policy Sub-Committee members include:

- A) Prepare for and attend Policy Sub-Committee meetings. Quarterly meeting dates will be set initially, with other meetings to be scheduled as needed.
- B) Provide advance notice to the Policy Sub-Committee chair when unable to attend.
- C) Provide regular reports to their appointing jurisdictions/organizations.
- D) When a sub-committee member cannot attend a meeting, the Chair will attempt to talk with them on the phone to obtain their views on subjects that will be discussed at the meeting and to convey this to the sub-committee members.

## **E. Technical Sub-Committee**

The Estuary Partnership will develop a technical advisory sub-committee to provide technical input into the planning process. The Policy Sub-Committee will have access to the Technical Sub-Committee as needed. The Technical Sub-Committee's role will be to address specific technical questions raised by the Policy Sub-Committee, Estuary Partnership staff, and the LCSG, not to deliberate on broader policy issues.

## **F. Discussion Draft Process**

The chair and Estuary Partnership staff will assist the Policy Sub-Committee in identifying objectives, addressing the diversity of perspectives and developing substantive, practical recommendations to implement its charge. They will use a Discussion Draft process model to assist the Policy Sub-Committee. Recommendations will be appropriately noted as either: "Working Draft," "Draft," or "Final" as they evolve throughout the process.

## **G. Consensus Decision-Making**

a. Consensus decision-making is a process that allows Policy Sub-Committee members to distinguish underlying values, interests and concerns from stated positions, in hopes of developing widely accepted solutions. Consensus does not mean 100% agreement on each part of every issue, but rather support for a decision, "taken as a whole." This means that a member may vote to support a consensus proposal even though they would prefer to have it modified in some manner in order to give it their full support. Consensus is reached if all members at the table support an idea or can say, "I can live with that." As with all LCSG-related work, the sub-committee will work on the basis of consensus. In the event that consensus cannot be reached on certain subjects, the pros and cons of the issues will be fully documented and presented to the LCSG for further consideration and discussion. It is the intent of the sub-committee to reach consensus on all matters.

## **H. Collaboration Protocols**

A) Meeting Agendas and Meeting Materials: Meeting agendas and meeting materials will be sent electronically to Policy Sub-Committee members at least one week in advance of Policy Sub-Committee meetings. Policy Sub-Committee meetings will begin and end as scheduled.

B) Information and Document Exchange: If Policy Sub-Committee members wish to provide information to other sub-committee members, they are asked to do so with as much advance notice as possible. This can be done by sending it to the chair, preferably two weeks in advance of the meeting. The members also agree to share all relevant information with each other to the maximum extent possible. If a member believes the relevant information is proprietary in nature, the member will provide a general description of the information and the reason for not providing it.

C) Meeting Summaries: The chair will prepare Policy Sub-Committee meeting summaries. They will be provided electronically in draft form to the Policy Sub-Committee for proposed correction and comment within one week of the Policy Sub-Committee meeting.

## **Appendix A**

### **Regional Sediment Management Planning Tasks**

To develop the plan, the following work tasks are proposed to be accomplished over the next three years. These tasks have been designed to fit within the existing funding resources of the signatories to the LCSG's Regional Sediment Management Planning Declaration of Cooperation (signed January 31, 2008), with the understanding that changes in the budgets supporting these organizations may require them to decrease their commitments. The LCSG recognizes that these tasks only provide a beginning to developing a regional sediment management plan and that further work, supported by increased funding, will be needed.

#### **I. I Overall Project Management**

- A. Develop Scopes of Work, solicit proposals, select contractors and manage the contracts
- B. Develop and maintain a web site for use throughout the project.
- C. Develop and work with advisory groups for the technical studies and plan development. Participate in meetings and workshops.
- D. Coordinate with other tribal, federal, state and local programs
- E. Develop an outreach plan to coastal communities and others potentially affected by the plan, utilizing existing organizations to the maximum extent practical to conduct this outreach.
- F. Develop Regional Sediment Management Geographic Information System (GIS)
  - Identify the data and information types and attributes to be collected
  - Establish data quality and format standards for each data type.
  - Establish metadata and error analysis standards and procedures.
  - Write a Technical Memorandum based on the results of this task.
  - Collect data and information
  - Prioritize data gaps

#### **II. II Technical Tasks**

- A. Physical Processes and Conditions
  1. Based on readily available information, characterize the historical and contemporary sediment budget in the lower river and littoral area using existing available literature and expert interviews. Data gaps would be noted, but no new research is included.
  2. Identify and characterize physical sediment processes that influence how sediment enters, disperses and ultimately leaves the lower Columbia River using existing available literature and expert interviews. Describe the sources of sediment in the river.

3. Describe the condition of sediment in the lower river including the presence and extent of known contaminants.
4. Develop a database of entities engaged in maintenance dredging and dredged material disposal in the lower Columbia River. Develop a record in the database for each entity that includes the amount of dredged material disposed over each of the past five to 20 years (depending on what information is readily available), location of disposal (reach scale), and the disposal purpose (i.e., land creation, beach nourishment, etc.).
5. Define dredged material disposal purposes. In general, this will include two broad categories: beneficial uses and non-beneficial uses. Within each of these categories, further delineation would be developed. For example, in the non-beneficial use category, it might include deep water disposal and upland disposal (some upland disposal is considered beneficial use; some is contaminated sediments). A definition of “beneficial use” would be used that does not conflict with existing definitions in policy or law.
6. Assign the quantities of dredged materials disposed of in the past five years (or the period noted above) into the categories defined in Task 5. The resulting product will yield a five-year snapshot of how dredged materials are being disposed in the lower river. Results will be characterized in tabular or graphic format along with methods and background information.
7. Evaluate and describe each of the disposal categories identified in Task 5 in terms of economic and/or ecological benefits.
8. Develop a report containing the technical findings on physical processes and conditions.

#### B. Biological Processes and Conditions

1. Characterize the historical and contemporary biological conditions in the lower Columbia River using existing available literature and expert interviews, and estimate the ecosystem effects of sediment use. Data gaps would be noted, but no new research is included.
2. Identify and characterize alterations to biological processes that influence how sediment performs in the lower river (and vice versa) using existing available literature and expert interviews. This process will include result summaries from recent studies. Identify remaining research questions and data needs regarding sediment impacts on biological communities and vice versa.
3. Develop a database of entities engaged in biological studies and management in the lower Columbia River. Develop a record in the database including any summarized findings.
4. Develop a report containing the technical findings on biological processes and conditions.

- C. Develop a detailed scope of work for completing a sediment budget. Present options and associated resource requirements to the LCSG for decision.
- D. Determine the direct income/cost associated with sediment (not a complete list of all income or cost factors; others will be considered, funding permitting).
  - Income from sediment mining
  - Income from tourism and recreation on the river and littoral cell
  - Income from fisheries (recreation, commercial, tribal)
  - Income from shipping through the Lower Columbia River
  - Income from ports (amount of goods passed through or landed at Lower Columbia River ports)
  - Costs of beach nourishment and coastal protection
  - Costs of developing and maintaining natural areas
  - Costs of dredging sediment from shipping channels, ports and harbors and disposal costs
  - Costs of disposal of contaminated sediments

### III. III Master Plan and Implementation Strategy

Prepare a Master Plan that includes the following:

- Context for the Plan
  - Goals and policies of the plan and other related plans
  - Division of responsibilities among agencies, tribes and the private sector
  - Regulatory requirements and issues (including limitations imposed by the Corps “least cost environmentally acceptable” policy)
  - Funding
- Detailed vision, goals, objectives and principles for the river as a whole and for specific segments (e.g. littoral cell, lower estuary, sediment run-off from the land, etc.)
- Detailed description of sediment and ecological processes influencing the plan
- Recommended action plan by river segment
  - Policies and principles, including whether a precautionary approach should be taken when data gaps are present.
  - Responsibilities for implementation
  - Roadblocks to implementation
  - Priorities and schedule
- Administration, use and implementation of the plan by local, state and federal agencies (i.e. roles and responsibilities)
- Monitoring, plan updating and adaptive management
- Funding of plan actions

## **Appendix B**

### **Initial Membership of the Policy Subcommittee**

Jane Bacchieri, OR Governor's Office  
Kathleen Drew, WA Governor's Office  
Dianne Perry, Lower River Ports  
Brian Lynn and/or Jennifer Hennessey, WDOE  
Scott Robinson, WDNR  
Cathy Tortorici or Robert Anderson, NOAA  
Kevin Brice, and/or Doris McKillip, USACOE  
Audrey O'Brien, and/or Sally Puent (Alternate: Judy Coffman), ODEQ  
Bob Bailey, ODLCD  
Jay Flint, CREST  
Deb Marriott, LCREP  
Jim Neva, Port of Ilwaco  
Larry Pfund, Port of Astoria  
EPA, to be named

#### **Staff**

Bill Blosser, Chair and NPCC staff  
Phil Trask  
Mikell O'Mealy