

PROGRESS REPORT
SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON LITTORAL DRIFT RESTORATION PROJECT

Prepared for Lower Columbia Solutions Group
March 5, 2009 Meeting

BACKGROUND

The Southwest Washington Littoral Drift Restoration Project grew out of efforts by the Coastal Communities of Southwest Washington (CCSWW) to develop a long-term strategy for disposal of dredged sediment in the littoral area north of the North Jetty. A two-day workshop in July 2007 with scientists, technical specialists and policy-makers discussed nearshore physical processes in Southwest Washington, their policy implications for sediment management, and a demonstration project at Benson Beach. A Partners Group was established in early 2008, with Jim Neva, Port of Ilwaco Manager, serving as convener.

STATUS

Until recently, this project had focused on a \$3.5 million demonstration project entailing the placement of dredged materials in an area approximately 1,000 feet north of the North Jetty along Benson Beach in Cape Disappointment State Park. While scientific analysis and environmental clearances are largely complete and there is broad support for this demonstration project, several obstacles are constraining the ability to move forward at this time:

1. Although the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has received a \$1.8 million regional sediment management (RSM) appropriation for Benson Beach, the appropriation apparently allows planning but not placement and thus cannot be used for the Benson Beach demonstration project. Placement authorization language is needed through the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) or another act.
2. Similarly, the RSM appropriation is specific to Benson Beach, restricting the use of the funds for planning at alternative sites.
3. WRDA requires a match for the incremental costs associated with a beneficial use project. A state match of \$1.7 million has been requested.

Since the last report to LCSG in October 2008, the following activities have been undertaken:

Support for WDOE Budget Request

- Partners prepared a request for support by the LCSG for a \$1.7 million 2009-2011 Biennium Capital Project Request submitted by the Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE) for the Benson Beach demonstration project.
- Greg Wolf, LCSG Convener, submitted the letter of support on behalf of LCSG to key Washington state legislators.
- Individual organizations also submitted letters of support, including CCSWW, Port of Ilwaco and Columbia River Crab Fisherman's Association.

Placement Authorization

- Through WDOE, the partners continued to work with Congressman Baird's office to ascertain the best route (authorization vs. appropriation language) to allow current RSM monies to be used for Benson Beach placement. Insertion of language in 2009 appropriation bills appears to be the most viable and fastest route.

Workshop Planning

As a follow-up to the last Partners Group meeting, a planning subcommittee has been preparing a prospectus for two workshops:

- Wave amplification/safe navigation workshop in mid-April 2009; and
- Biological sciences workshop in late May/early June 2009.

Funding and sponsorship are to be provided by CCSSW, WDOE and parties to be determined. A total cost of approximately \$10,000, including the cost of invited experts, is assumed.

The underlying purpose of these workshops is to move forward with the SW Washington Littoral Drift Restoration Project while funding and WRDA authorization issues are being worked out that would allow the Benson Beach demonstration project to move forward. The workshops are intended to provide information needed for designation of alternative nearshore disposal sites. Workshop-specific goals are:

Wave Amplification/Safe Navigation Session

- Build consensus on criteria, models and methodology for assessing wave conditions with respect to safe navigation.
- Identify requirements for new data that would provide meaningful knowledge to decision-makers.
- Develop proposed program for obtaining needed data and for institutionalizing any consensus on physical processes and on criteria, models and methodology.

Biological Sciences Session

- Identify issues and data needs with respect to advancing specific potential nearshore disposal sites. Questions to be addressed: (1) What are the key issues of biological concern in the study area? and (2) What are the potential impacts to biological resources from different types of placement?
- Identify research needed to address those issues in order to permit the projects.
- Develop proposed program for obtaining needed information.

Intended participants include:

- Partners Group for the Southwest Washington Littoral Drift Restoration Project
- LCSG's Science Advisory Team
- Invited technical experts to advise on wave amplification issues and biological needs associated with nearshore placement

LCSG ACTION REQUESTED

- Agreement to sponsor the proposed workshops.
- Agreement to provide LCSG staffing for planning, conducting and follow-through for the proposed workshops, with funding provided by CCSWW, WDOE and other parties.

NEXT STEPS

- Monitor and lobby for WDOE budget request.
- Determine the potential and timing for obtaining WRDA or other act authorization for a Benson Beach placement project.
- Organize and conduct workshops by end of biennium on wave amplification/safe navigation and on biological sciences.

CONTACTS

Questions can be directed to Jim Owens, Project Manager at 503-225-0192 or jim.owens@coganowens.com, or Mikell O'Mealy at the National Policy Consensus Center, at 503-229-6590 or mikell.omealy@state.or.us.