

## **Progress Report on Regional Sediment Management Planning**

Prepared for Lower Columbia Solutions Group

May 1, 2008 Meeting

### **Background**

In January, 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.

Historically, dredged sediment was placed in the most economical locations, which often were on the banks of rivers, or alongside the channel in rivers, bays, and estuaries resulting in submerged features and island formations. More recently, environmental concerns resulted in sediment being put in confined areas both upland and aquatic. In dredging to maintain navigability, an extensive process in the late 1990's was undertaken to resolve concerns over disposal methods and locations. As a result, currently well over one million cubic yards per year of dredged sediment is now put in deeper offshore waters where it is lost to the littoral system. These practices do not necessarily balance what is the best use of sediment from a regional environmental, economic and social perspective. The goal of regional sediment management is to make sure that project decisions are made within the context of a regional plan that maximizes regional benefits (economic, social and environmental) and reduces regional cost.

### **Update on Planning work**

Since January, LCREP and Trask & Associates developed a scope of work to detail RSMP tasks over the coming year (attached). The Policy Steering Committee, comprised of LCSG members, met in early April to review the scope of work, discuss tasks associated with developing a sediment budget, and propose members for a science technical advisory committee to assist the work. The committee feels that the work is starting very well and is very encouraged about the work products that LCREP and Trask & Associates plan to produce.

### **Next Steps**

Immediate next steps include organizing the science technical advisory committee, prioritizing questions associated with developing a sediment budget, and implementing the scope of work, step by step.

### **LCSG Role**

The Policy Steering Committee will continue to guide this project as it moves forward, working with LCREP, Trask & Associates, 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. Trask & Associates 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 May 1 meeting, please contact Bill Blosser, RSMP Project Manager, at (503) 274-1369 or [billblosserpr@yahoo.com](mailto:billblosserpr@yahoo.com).