

August 28, 2008**Members Present:**

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| Kevin Bryce | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
| Judy Coffman | OR Department of Environmental Quality |
| Jay Flint | Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce |
| Deb Marriott | Estuary Partnership |
| Doris McKillip | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
| Todd Welker | WA Department of Natural Resources (phone) |
| Cathy Tortorici | NOAA Fisheries |

Staff

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| Bill Blosser | WRB Consulting |
| Catherine Corbett | Estuary Partnership |
| Phil Trask | PC Trask |
| Sabrina Litton | PC Trask |

Welcome/Introductions

Bill Blosser welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Introductions were made around the room. Catherine Corbett reviewed developments that had occurred since the last Policy Work Group meeting.

Technical Subcommittee Developments

At the Policy Work Group meeting in June, a list of potential subcommittee members was circulated for discussion and feedback. At that time several additional names were suggested for the subcommittees and since then members have been contacted about participating.

The Dredged Material and Beneficial Use subcommittee met on August 5th and the other subcommittees will be meeting soon.

A Work Group member suggested that a revised list of subcommittee members be developed and circulated within the Work Group indicating whether or not the potential members have been contacted or have accepted. Catherine said that the Estuary Partnership would do this.

Update on Planning Tasks

Phil provided an update on the tasks he is currently working on under contract from the Estuary Partnership. The intent is to circulate drafts of memorandums or chapters as early as possible to the Work Group in order to receive feedback and incorporate comments.

Manage Planning Process: To date this task has been occurring successfully. Phil is assisting in the preparation and participation at meetings of various groups and subcommittees.

Identify and Refine Policy and Technical Questions: Phil 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. The initial memo for this task can be expected September 30.

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 group received a draft memo for this task prior to the meeting. Phil described the importance of understanding the history of dredged material disposal in terms of beneficial uses in the lower river. He noted that a database or repository of dredging activities could be an important tool to understanding the various uses and pathways dredged material disposal can take. A registry such as this has been used in other river systems such as the Fraser River in British Columbia.

Phil said that 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 inwater is important.

Discussion was held by the group about the draft document. 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?

Phil told the group that the Dredged Material and Beneficial Use subcommittee will be meeting again in October and please submit additional comments in the meantime.

Regulatory Chapter: The group also received a copy of this draft chapter prior to the 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.

The issue of contaminated vs. uncontaminated sediment in Oregon was raised by Judy as an important driver of permitting in Oregon. Developing a new flowchart to outline the path a dredging project could take was suggested, however, other members noted that doing so might bog the process down as permitting flowcharts can be complicated. Instead it was suggested that the chapter being developed add existing regulatory flowcharts developed by other agencies such as NOAA or Oregon DEQ as appendices.

Other comments included updating the Corps regulatory pathway and removing the permit fee's as they change regularly and can be variable. Kevin Bryce suggested revising the table on page 8 of the document to resemble a matrix that identifies which regulations are triggered for different project types. Several names were listed as contacts for additional useful information.

Develop and Apply Criteria. Phil told the group that Catherine Corbett and PC Trask are working to schedule the first meeting of this subcommittee with plans to assemble them in late September or early October.

October 10 LCSG Meeting

The Policy Work Group discussed the presentation they will be giving at the October 10th Lower Columbia Solutions Group meeting in Ilwaco. It will be about 15-20 minutes and include a PowerPoint with graphics and a description of the available tools.

Wrap-up

The next meeting for the Policy Work Group will be in October or November. A date will be set in the near future.