

PROGRESS REPORT ON COLUMBIA NEARSHORE BENEFICIAL USE PROJECT

**Prepared for Lower Columbia Solutions Group
November 29, 2007 Meeting**

Background

The Columbia Nearshore Beneficial Use Project was initiated in 2005 with a limited demonstration project (30,000 cubic yards) of the enhanced dumping method in the nearshore area off the South Jetty. This test of the enhanced dumping method was intended to measure per-run ocean bottom accumulations to verify projected results and help determine the viability of this method. The purpose of the project is to track deposited sediment movement over time and to determine the extent to which they remain in the littoral zone and help protect the South Jetty.

A Phase II Demonstration Project is proposed that would involve the targeted placement of approximately 150,000-300,000 cubic yards of dredged material within the South Jetty Site, for the purpose of building a discrete feature on the seabed which will be monitored to determine the rate and direction of sediment transport. The LCSG oversees the Columbia Nearshore Beneficial Use Project, project management and staffing is provided by the National Policy Consensus Center, and Jim Bergeron has been serving as convener of the Project Team.

Status

- Successful science-policy workshop in 2005 to define project direction.
- Limited demonstration project (30,000 cubic yards; \$80,000) completed in September 2005. The Port of Astoria was the principal sponsor of this project, including submission of the regulatory documents and contracting for the sediment profile imaging. A report and analysis of the demonstration project indicated the following:
 - Operationally, the project was a success.
 - The sediment profile imagery (SPI) did *not* provide the hoped-for clear delineation and measurement of bottom-accumulation.
 - From a biological standpoint, the dredged sediments appear to be very similar to the natural in-situ sediments in the nearshore area. Almost immediate re-population of the epi-benthic biological community (small surface critters).
- Congressional appropriation (\$300,000) for modeling and research; completed in 2006.
- Proposal for Phase II demonstration project in FY 2007 unfunded.

Next Steps

- Conduct Project Team meeting in mid-December to revisit project.
- Identify potential candidates for a new convenor(s) to replace Jim Bergeron and seek Governor's designation.
- Draft project scope with cost estimates, and organize Technical Team review.
- Define a "regulatory roadmap" with USACOE and EPA.
- Identify potential local match funding sources.
- Meet with Congressional staff to seek guidance on and support for funding request.
- Submit federal funding request.

Contacts

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