

Columbia Near-Shore Beneficial Use Project
Meeting Notes

October 27, 2003
Port of Astoria Conference Room

In attendance:

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Jim Bergeron, Convener | Dena Horton, Rep. Brian Baird |
| Dave Douglas, ODFW | Mindi Linquist, Sen. Patty Murray |
| Rob Cook, Port of Portland | Greg Smith, USFWS |
| Brett Dumbauld, WDFW | Doris McKillip, USACE |
| Dale Beasley, CRCFA | Mike Desimone, Pacific County |
| Kathi Larson, USFWS | Steve Purchase, ODSL |
| Paul Klarin, DLCD | Robert Johnson, Col. Bar Pilots |
| Rod Moritz, USACE | Dave Hunt, Col Riv Channel Coalition |
| Dale Blanton, DLCD | Mack Funk, Port of Ilwaco |
| Brenden, McFarland, WA Ecology | Glenn Grette, Grette Associates |
| Peter Gearin, Port of Astoria | Dave Bean, WA DNR |
| Peter Huhtala, Pac. Marine Cons. Council | Vladimir Shepsis, Coast & Harbor Eng. |
| Bob Burkle, WDFW | Steve Greenwood, facilitator |
| Richard Krikava, Sen. Gordon Smith | |

I. **Overall charge for the group.** (see previous email attachment)

Paul Klarin of the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD): DLCD is helping to fund this planning effort, through the Lower Columbia Solutions Group, in order to “head off a potential train wreck” caused by depletion of the sands off the south jetty of the Columbia River. The four major tasks DLCD would like to see:

- A regulatory roadmap
- Assessment of technical information needs
- A demonstration project in 2004
- Coordination with the Corps and Lower Columbia Solutions Group processes

Susan Brody, Lower Columbia Solutions Group (LCSG): The LCSG is a bi-state organization working cooperatively to plan and improve the management of maintenance dredging material on the lower Columbia River. They have identified this project as a high priority, and have initiated this collaborative planning process to develop a short-term demonstration project for 2004 as well as addressing longer-term solutions.

II. The “Solutions” Collaborative process

Steve Greenwood, Lower Columbia Solutions facilitator: The Solutions process this group will be using involves several principles:

- Begins with a problem or opportunity defined by the community – *The need to address the depletion of sands off the south jetty of the Columbia River and it’s potential consequences, through the use of maintenance dredging material.*
- Chaired by a community convener – *Jim Bergeron, Port of Portland Commissioner*
- Uses a collaborative process involving a team of federal, state, and local governments; business, and non-profits. *Steve Greenwood has been contracted to be facilitator for the Columbia Near-Shore Beneficial Use Project.*
- Works toward an integrated solution that leverages the resources of the team.
- Results in a signed declaration of cooperation.

III. Problems and Opportunities

Jonathan Allan, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries: There has been a significant reduction in the historic flow of sediment from the mouth of the Columbia River (4.3 million cubic meters/year prior to construction of the Columbia River dams, 1.4 million cubic meters/year since the 1960’s). This has caused a depletion in the sands of the Columbia River littoral area, which in turn is affecting areas further north along the coast.

Rod Moritz, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: The loss of sands off the south jetty has made it more susceptible to damage from wave action. The Corps is currently working with USGS to do surveys of the Mouth of the Columbia River area bathymetry.

Vladimir Shepsis, Coast & Harbor Engineering: Have discovered a “natural sump” at the mouth of the Columbia River (Washington side) that is a 95-foot hole, with a capacity of 18 million cubic yards. Disposal of sediments in this sump, if approved, would be significantly less expensive than the deep ocean disposal site now identified, and it would keep the sediments within the littoral system, where they would be subject to gradual dispersal throughout the system.

IV. Questions, Concerns, Interests of the Group

Dave Bean, WA DNR - They have a proprietary interest in the sand, and don't like the deep water disposal site because the sand is then lost to the system.

Dave Hunt, Columbia Channel Coalition – Interested in safe navigation, avoiding the deep water site, nourishing the beaches, and saving money related to sediment management.

Robert Johnson, Columbia Bar Pilots – Interested in navigation safety issues.

Steve Purchase, Oregon DSL – Like DNR, have a proprietary interest in the dredged sand. Also may have regulatory role.

Mike DeSimone, Pacific County Planning - Involved with Benson Beach, concerned about reducing biological impacts from any placement of sediments. Raised concerns about how the Corps' least-cost policy make affect options.

Doris McKillip, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Looking for lowest-cost options, and wants to restore the beach over the long-term. Also, wants to get maintenance disposal issues resolved so we “don't have to keep fighting over disposal”.

Bob Burkle, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife – In favor of keeping sand in the littoral system (out of deep-water site). Likes Vladimir Shepsis' proposal.

Peter Huhtala, Pacific Fishery Conservation Council – Would like to examine multiple sites, including “Vladimir's Hole”. Need to protect the south jetty. Wants to avoid using the deep water site.

Peter Gearin, Port of Astoria - Concerned about maintaining the jetty, and addressing its vulnerability because of the depleted sands.

Brenden McFarland, Washington Department of Ecology - We need to move ahead quickly, particularly if we want to do a demonstration in 2004. Would be involved in the regulatory review and permitting in the site proposed by Vladimir Shepsis.

Kathi Larson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - There will need to be data collection at disposal sites, and long term monitoring.

Dale Beasley, Columbia River Crab Fishing Association - The number one concern should be navigation safety. Would like to see some method of disposal other than “belly dumping” from a barge. Feels that one measure of what is acceptable biologically is what happens during a storm event: approx. one foot of sediment. (Dale also handed out a paper with a list of concerns from his group.)

Brett Dumbauld, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife – Interested in the biology. Concerned that Shepsis proposal may “take us off the hook.”

Jonathan Allan, Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries – Keep sediment within the littoral system and out of deep water site. It is “not a simple process”.

Rob Cook, Port of Portland – Suggested consideration of an option to pump sand from Trestle Bay to the Clatsop Plains.

V. Next Steps

***** Note: there was considerable concern expressed by members of the group about the timeline. If there is to be a demonstration project in September 2004, we will need to move quickly to address regulatory considerations.**

1. Have meeting with appropriate regulatory agencies, determine what permits or approvals are required, process, information needs, and potential for coordination. Look at regulatory needs for both a “demonstration project” as well as long term.
2. Survey appropriate science and technical resources to develop a catalogue of relevant studies/information on the geology/bathymetry as well as the biology of the near-shore environment off the south jetty.
3. Develop a better understanding of what would be involved in a “demonstration project” (i.e. locations, size, timing, criteria for evaluating results, etc.)
4. Ensure coordination with other processes: Corps of Engineers’ Regional Sediment Plan, Lower Columbia Solutions Group’s beneficial use plan, and the Benson Beach project.
5. **Next meeting will be at 1:00 PM on November 25, in Astoria. Location to be announced (we will try to get a larger space).**