MEETING NOTES

Columbia Near-Shore Project Partners Meeting

Tuesday, September 21, 2004 – 1:30 PM
OSU Seafood Lab, Astoria, Oregon

In attendance:

Project partners:

Jim Bergeron, Convener
Doris McKillip, USCOE
Matt Hunter, ODFW
Dale Beasley, CRCFA
Paul Klarin, DLCD
Renee Davis-Born, INR
Mike Desimone Pacific County
Kathy Sellman, Clatsop County
Barb Robinson, Clatsop County
Greg McMurry, DLCD
Robert Johnson, Columbia Bar Pilots
Kathi Larson, ODFW
Theeme Holznagel, CRCC
Peter Huhtala, Col Riverkeeper
Rob Cook, Port of Portland

Interested parties:

Chuck Gale, Southwest Washington Coastal Communities

I. **Announcements – Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant Application**

Convener Jim Bergeron announced that Matt Van Ess will be leaving his position at CREST and moving to the Florida Keys. On behalf of the group, Jim thanked Matt for all of his work in helping this and other projects.

Steve Greenwood reported to the group that the Lower Columbia Solutions Group has applied for a grant from the Northwest Fish and Wildlife Foundation, for $150,000 to help with data collection efforts for the Columbia Near Shore project. Steve said that there were approximately 100 other applications, and we will find out within a month if this application makes it to a “final” application stage, which would be more detailed. Many of the project partners can expect to be contacted if that happens, to help determine the details of the final application. Matt Van Ess volunteered CREST as a possible grantee or administrator of the contracts for data collection.

II. Idea for Limited 2005 Demonstration

Doris McKillip described an idea that she has developed: to conduct a very limited demonstration in 2005 that primarily is designed to measure the per-dump accumulations of the enhanced dumping method.

- The demonstration would take place in the proposed project area
- It would involve 4-8 "passes" of the dredge, with a total of only 20,000 to 30,000 cubic yards of material deposited.
- The accumulations would be measured using sediment profile imagery (SPI)
- Because of the scientific purpose and limited amount of material, the Corps would apply for, and need to receive, relatively quick regulatory review and approval – getting a "take" permit for Endangered Species Act purposes.
- The principal cost of the demonstration would be for the SPI measurements, and the Corps would need to find funding to conduct the demonstration. Doris mentioned the NWFWF grant (above) as a possible source.

There was some discussion about whether this limited demonstration might also be used to track sand transport. Doris said that the additional tracking would cost between $150,000 and $200,000. Tracking will be a major part of the larger 2006 Demonstration Project. Greg McMurry of DLCD said that we should at least look at whether additional money could be found to do some tracking in 2005.

Dale Beasley raised the question about whether different dredges will have different performance in terms of dumping, and emphasized that any testing would need to be done in such a way that other dredges (or at least the ones we expect might be used) would be able to perform in the same manner as in the Demonstration project.

Chuck Gale asked about whether or not this smaller demonstration could be done at Site E. Doris responded that the ocean conditions at Site E are different, and therefore would not be representative of the proposed project area.

Steve said that this proposed limited demonstration could help the group resolve the existing disagreement between those advocating rainbow spraying and those advocating enhanced dumping as the preferred method of dispersal. If the group were to move ahead with this limited demonstration, it would mean that if enhanced dumping were found to be able to apply layers of 3 inches or less, then the concerns about impacts to crab and other shellfish would be answered. If,

however, the results show layers of 5” or greater, then other alternatives, such as rainbow spraying, will need to be considered.

The group was polled, and everyone agreed to try to move ahead with this limited demonstration. However, a number of comments were made during the polling about the larger project:

Rob Cook - Keep the idea of pumping across the jetty on the list of alternatives

Mike Desimone, Chuck Gale, and Kathi Larson – Keep a focus on keeping the sand in the littoral zone, and measuring transport

Dale Beasley – Concerned about 3-ft berm and that we won’t ever see accumulation of sand on beach from dispersal at 40-ft. depth.

Jim Bergeron – Also feels we will lose sand to deep water if dispersed at the 40-ft. depth

**The group decision was to take the next steps to pursue the idea of a limited 2005 demonstration, including more detailed project design and funding.

III. **2006 Demonstration Project**

Because of a number of comments in the previous discussion, Steve suggested that the group focus on clarifying the goals of the project. While there is agreement on keeping sand in the near shore environment, some believe the main goal is protection of the south jetty. Others believe that the main goal is protecting the beaches themselves.

Paul Klarin reminded the group that this project is about trying to address the loss of sand in the littoral zone over the last 100 years. The problem was described in Jonathan Allen’s (DOGAMI) recent paper and the idea is to utilize dredged material to replenish some of those lost sediments in the near-shore environment.

During the course of the discussion, the goals of the project were clarified:

- The main goal is to replenish the lost sediments in the littoral zone as much as possible.

- There are several secondary goals:

    a) Protect the south jetty by replenishing sands in the near-shore environment to disperse the wave energy from southwest storms.

    b) Disperse sands in the near-shore environment using a method that minimizes any short-term impacts to crabs and other important aquatic life.

c) Address concerns about potential navigational safety hazards

One of the key questions to answer, raised during the discussion, is whether or not sediment deposited at the 40-ft depth (identified as the depth at which dredges can safely navigate in this area) will stay in the littoral zone, or be transported out to deeper water (or, potentially, back into the river channel). This is one of the primary questions that the 2006 Demonstration Project is intended to answer.

* Decision: Although a number of project team members expressed concern about whether dispersal at the 40-ft level would be successful, the group was polled again and unanimously said that the 2006 Demonstration project should go forward to help answer that very question. (Mike Desimone was neutral) If the Demonstration shows that this will not work, then other options, including pumping over the jetty into much shallower water will need to be considered.

If everything were to go according to plan, there would first be a limited 2005 Demonstration, to determine the performance of enhanced dumping (approx 20,000 cubic yards). There would then be a 2006 Demonstration that would include a 3-ft berm (approx 150,000 cubic yards), which will look at both transport by wave and current action, as well as biological impacts. If the Demonstration works, then a longer-term and much larger (approx 1.5 million cubic yards/yr) project will be proposed.

IV. **Institute for Natural Resources – Data Collection Plan**

Renee Davis-Born of the Institute for Natural Resources presented the work she has done in developing a data collection plan for the project. She had developed spreadsheets for each of 6 topic areas, showing the information already collected about each topic.

Renee said that she would send the spreadsheets to members of the project team electronically, asking for feedback. She is particularly interested in any studies or information that she may have missed, as well as identifying what additional information will be needed.

Renee also talked about potential topics for white papers that INR will be doing on the Columbia near-shore area. She suggested the following topics and will also be sending an email to the project team to get feedback on this:

- Crab abundance and migration patterns
- Sediment budget and migration patterns
- Razor clams
- Anadramous fish presence and patterns
- Marine mammals

- Current and wave patterns

Greg McMurry suggested also looking at a “social mapping” of the area: i.e. who is using the area for fishing, etc. and when.

V. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be announced soon, after hearing more about the grant application and planning for the 2005 Demonstration. Dale noted that December will be a particularly bad time for him, due to the beginning of crab season.