

Great Lakes Dredging Team Meeting

Meeting Summary

October 3, 2006
Duluth, Minnesota

Formal presentations made at this meeting are available online at
<http://www.glc.org/dredging/scoop/index.html>

Welcome and introduction of new members

Wayne Schloop welcomed meeting participants (see list at the end of this summary) and made note of two new team members: Patricia Fowler of the Minnesota DNR (replacing Mike Peloquin) and John Watkins, Ohio DNR Coastal Program (replacing David Mackey as Ohio alternate). Also, in consideration of potential new dredging windows work, A Great Lakes Fishery Commission representative, John Dettmers, has been added to the listserv.

GLDT Charter Update and Workplan

Wayne Schloop reviewed the proposed changes to the GLDT charter with the team, to which there were no objections. He reminded the team that the GLDT Charter called for being updated every 5 years and that staff would incorporate suggested revisions and circulate to regional agencies for formal endorsement.

Schloop also reviewed the FY06-07 workplan for the dredging team, which includes the following elements.

1. GLDT technical and administrative support
2. Review and edit Five Year Development Plan for GL Navigation
3. Develop tri-fold pamphlet on dredging in the Great Lakes
4. Develop Outreach Campaign for State Officials

Several members commented on the importance of the outreach campaign, which should include a Powerpoint slide show and other informational materials (such as the pamphlet under item #3 and a matrix of state agencies that deal with dredging and dredged material management) and should target existing as well as new Administration officials after an election.

Action: Commission staff will update the Charter to incorporate proposed changes and circulate the document to regional agencies for endorsement

Membership Round Robin

Jim Weakley (co-chair) facilitated this session. Members heard about priority issues in individual jurisdictions/agencies. Some issues mentioned were:

- A common theme among several members was the lack of funding for Great Lakes dredging and that the region doesn't get fair share of federal funds or adequate recognition by Congress. A Dredging Revolving Loan Fund was noted as a possible solution. Discussion ensued on how to get Congress to see Great Lakes system as a whole (and endorse a regional RLF) and not just in terms of the projects in their individual districts. Several members agreed on the importance of developing a presentation on Great Lakes dredging needs that could be distributed to GLDT members to share/present to state agencies, especially DOTs. Also noted along this theme was the need to demonstrate the net long term benefits of dredging, against costs. Access to the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund was noted as a solution for commercial navigation dredging, but it would still leave recreational harbors in need.
- Low water levels create greater need for emergency dredging (e.g., after storm events), but permit process doesn't allow for emergency timeframe. In New York, recreational harbors pool funding and have a regional plan for dredging and a general permit that spans 5 years.
- USFWS noted that the structure and placement of habitat restoration units was of ongoing concern.

- Lack of CDF capacity was a repeated concern. In Ohio, the Port of Cleveland is increasing its CDF capacity at Dike 12; current CDF is 90% full; new CDF cost-share requirements run about \$80 million; something is needed to accommodate the 300,000 cubic yards dredged per year. CDF 14 is being converted to a bird sanctuary even though about 1 million cubic yards of capacity remain. Minnesota and Wisconsin are both facing CDF capacity issues and, in one project, are working together to examine options to market dredged material.
- Pennsylvania noted that the GLDT has been very helpful in providing technical guidance for AOC cleanup and would like the GLDT to play a stronger role in environmental dredging in the future.

Regional Sediment Management/Beneficial Use

- Lynn Martin of the Corps' Institute for Water Resources provided an overview of the RSM concept and the Corps' RSM Program
- Phil Ross of Detroit District highlighted how RSM was used as part of a DMMP analysis which examined littoral pathways and beach suitability and showed considerable financial savings over 20 years by modifying certain dredging practices
- Phil and Lynn discussed a new Corps Beneficial Use Marketing Analysis, which will include a sediment data base, and the development and application of a marketing tool which will assemble data to calculate costs and benefits.
- Craig Forget of Buffalo District noted that the Corps wants the GLDT to help communicate and coordinate with non-federal partners

Bonnie Eleder of U.S. EPA provided an update on past GLDT activities in the area of beneficial use. The team's support for continued work with the Region 5 Center of Excellence in Sustainable Use of Residual Materials did not pan out due to lack of funding.

Environmental Windows

Schloop provided an overview of the importance of environmental windows. The Great Lakes has 138 commercial and recreational harbors, each of which is authorized individually by Congress and each of which is dredged by virtue of individual funding through Congressional "adds" which reflects Congress' lack of regional perspective on dredging. Dredging in the Great Lakes costs on average \$2.50 more per cubic yard. Coupled with weather issues, and intermittent funding, environmental windows add another layer of complexity to the already-challenging framework for the Corps' dredging program. Given that the costs of mobilizing a dredging project is fixed, how can the region become more competitive while complying with environmental and other parameters? One possible solution is a regional approach to environmental windows.

Victoria Pebbles of the Great Lakes Commission staff provided an overview of the Team's past work on environmental windows. That work had three basic elements:

1. Establish Windows Advisory Team
2. Project Scoping to identify several indicator species (walleye, small mouth bass, steelhead), assess their life history and risk, and consider impacts of dredging using certain parameters
3. Study Preparation and Development of Regional Template
 - a. Identify and conduct 2 + field investigations
 - b. Use results of field tests to quantify risks

Only 1 field test was ever completed. The Team was asked to consider a proposal concept to build on this past work and apply results to develop a more regional approach to environmental windows. Several team members indicated a desire to circulate the proposal to their colleagues and reconsider the proposal concept.

Action: The team will reconsider the windows proposal concept during a future GLDT conference call.

Congressional Activities Update

Jan Miller provided an update of Congressional Appropriations for selected Great Lakes programs in the House, Senate and compared to FY06. Differences in House and Senate WRDA reauthorization bills were also highlighted. See <http://www.glc.org/dredging/scoop/index.html>

Dave Knight of the Great Lakes Commission provided an overview of Commission advocacy on selected dredging-related items, which included:

- Continued funding for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway Navigation Study
- Expanding WRDA Section 204 to allow for more types of beneficial use of dredged material
- Funding for a new large lock at the Soo
- Funding for the Great Lakes Dredging under the Corp's O & M program.

State Caucus Report Out

Jim Weakley reported on behalf of the state caucus, which highlighted the following needs:

- More information on non-navigation benefits of navigation infrastructure
- Better understanding of how Corps O&M priorities relate to priorities of the Great Lakes Commission and Council of Great Lakes Governors

Discussion on these items ensued and the Team supported Commission staff to work with the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute to develop and share information on Corps' priority-setting for the region.

Report out from National Dredging Team

Molly Madden of the National Dredging Team (NDT) presented a recap of the recent Portland conference *Managing Sediments in the Watershed* co-sponsored by the NDT and the Subcommittee on Integrated Management of Ocean Resources (SIMOR). The conference was designed to bring together watershed managers and dredged material managers with the objectives of facilitating dialogue between the two disciplines aimed at identifying steps needed to include dredged material management in watershed plans, and conversely, to include a broader watershed perspective in dredged material management planning. The ultimate goal is to reduce sedimentation and contaminant load before it has to be dredged.

Dave Knight reported on his involvement with the Great Lakes contingent at the conference, which also included GLC staff member Gary Overmier, project manager for the Great Lakes Basin Program for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control, and Randy Bournique of the Ohio EPA. The three presented the case study: *Managing Sediment in the Watershed through a Multi-Agency Approach: the Maumee Harbor-Port of Toledo Experience*. They also participated in a regional breakout session to identify potential next steps at the regional and local levels.

Action: Commission staff will explore potential vehicles for integration of watershed planning and dredged material management, such as a conference, research project, framework for best management practices and state briefings. Staff will also explore availability of resources to support such activities.

Report out on Review of Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement Review for Annex 7

Dave Cowgill of U.S. EPA Great Lakes National Program Office provided an overview of the review process of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement related to dredging. Work to date had included a recommendation to merge Annexes 14 and 7, to make any future renditions more action-oriented, to include provisions to explore beneficial use of sediment and to control sources of sediment. He noted that Bonnie Eleder, a longstanding GLDT member, was leading the review of the dredging subgroup. Although the draft review documents are not available to the public, Cowgill encouraged interested GLDT members to contact him or Bonnie Eleder for further information or if they had suggestions regarding the GLWQA review. Workgroup reports are expected to be publicly available at some point in the future after they've undergone further review.

Action: If you are interested in seeing draft GLWQA review documents related to dredging or sharing comments on this process, contact Dave Cowgill or Bonnie Eleder

Wrap Up & GLDT Action

Wayne Schloop noted the following as items that were raised and merit further discussion via GLDT conference calls:

- Corps priority-setting
- Toledo Harbor Beneficial Use
- Environmental Windows (revisit proposal concept)
- O&M funding (state caucus only)

Presentations for the field trips to the Erie Pier Facility and Stryker Bay Cleanup were provided and are available on the GLDT web site under "the scoop".

<http://www.glc.org/dredging/scoop/index.html>

**Meeting Participants
Great Lakes Dredging Team Meeting
October 3, 2006**

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