

Great Lakes Dredging Team Meeting
Summary/Action Items
May 1-2, 2001
Chicago, Illinois

May 1

Great Lakes Dredging Team Meetings and Schedule

The GLDT's state caucus proposed that the full Team have one in-person meeting per year with provision for membership conference calls and special in-person events such as a symposium during the rest of the year.

Action:

It was decided to proceed with the one main meeting schedule beginning with fall 2001 in Milwaukee. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the Great Lakes Commission Annual Meeting on October 10-11 or 11-12. The Team also requested that time be allotted on the Great Lakes Commission's twice-yearly meeting agendas for Dredging Team updates. Staff will also explore Canadian participation in meetings and potential Dredging Team membership for the U.S. Coast Guard.

Stakeholders Meeting

Another issue raised by the state caucus was the idea of organizing a broad dredging stakeholders meeting for the Great Lakes region on an annual basis. Apparently, the Pacific Northwest has such a meeting with good participation. This kind of forum would need involvement of marine contractors as well as environmental interest groups. The purpose of the meeting would be to describe the dredging projects for the coming year and current regional issues (e.g. projected water levels).

Action:

Don Wadleigh, Corps - Chicago District, will inquire of the Seattle Corps District and discuss with GLDT co-chairs and staff a possible presentation for the next GLDT meeting.

Vision of the Co-chairs

Jan Miller, Corps - Great Lakes and Ohio River Division and federal co-chair of the GLDT and Kelly Burch, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and state co-chair of the GLDT proposed for consideration their vision for the next two years. The co-chairs acknowledged the Team's previous work and accomplishments in addressing a number of regional dredging issues. This vision statement included four priority areas for the GLDT to focus on:

- 1) Develop a regional basis for dredging windows;
- 2) Develop a regional version of the Upland Testing Manual, focusing on beneficial use applications;
- 3) Promote beneficial use of dredged material at project-specific and regional market levels, and;
- 4) Continue to develop and expand the outreach program.

Action:

Each member state and federal agency will reintroduce the GLDT to their respective senior management including a review of current priorities/activities and accomplishments to-date.

Public Outreach

Steve Thorp, Great Lakes Commission staff, mentioned that outreach activity since the last meeting in October 2000 included his GLDT presentations at the Michigan Marine Industry Association's Annual Meeting in November, the National Dredging Team's workshop in January and the Great Lakes Captain's Association meeting in February. S. Thorp and Victoria Pebbles, Great Lakes Commission staff, also prepared an article for the current issue of *Great Lakes/Seaway Review* magazine. The beneficial use booklet is in preparation to be published in June and will be distributed widely through GLDT members. S. Thorp also described preparation for the upcoming Recreational Boating and Dredging Symposium to be held in Cleveland on July 16, 2001. This one-day event is cosponsored by the Great Lakes Commission and Great Lakes Dredging Team and is considered an "associated meeting" of the Coastal Zone 01 Conference that follows.

Confined Disposal Facilities (CDFs)

S. Thorp raised the issue of what happens to CDF's when they are filled up or closed by the Corps. He and Wayne Warren, Ohio DNR, described a controversy in Cleveland where some local residents have proposed that the Dike/Site 14 CDF, which was closed by the Corps and is now owned by the local port authority should be turned into a wildlife refuge. Others have indicated that it should be converted to park land. More CDF's may fall into this "limbo" category as they are filled and subject to closure. J. Miller indicated that a CDF white paper he is working on should be ready for GLDT review by the next meeting. Marc Tuchman, EPA-Great Lakes National Program Office raised the related issue of using CDFs for contaminated dredged material from environmental dredging projects. J. Miller noted that CDFs generally are required to be used only for contaminated material from federally-authorized navigation channel maintenance – any change in this policy would require federal legislative action.

Action:

It was agreed that confined disposal facilities and related issues should be a session topic for the next GLDT meeting.

Beneficial Use of Dredged Material

V. Pebbles reviewed plans for publication of a 16-page beneficial use booklet and the Great Lakes Beneficial Use Task Force report. Both are expected to be available in late June. Ellen Fisher, Wisconsin DOT and lead for the Dredging Team's work group on the issue discussed several Task Force recommendations which are proposed for GLDT priority action.

Action:

The GLDT should work through the Great Lakes Commission to expand the Corps' authority under Section 204, Water Resources Development Act of 1992 to expand the limited scope of beneficial uses to include a

wider range beyond aquatic habitat protection/restoration. Note: The Great Lakes Commission unanimously adopted a resolution on May 16, 2001 addressing beneficial use which included support for Section 204 modification. The Commission will work through Congress to implement this change. Another action item was the need to evaluate the role of the federal standard regarding beneficial use and prepare for the issue's inclusion in the next meeting's agenda with appropriate background distributed in advance. Several members were identified to work together on this effort: J. Miller, Bonnie Eleder, U.S. EPA Region 5, and Mike Peloquin, Minnesota DNR. The Great Lakes Commission will also raise this issue through its President's participation on the Chief of Engineers' Environmental Advisory Board. Also, the states were asked to put their own dredging/beneficial use regulations on their appropriate agency web sites. V. Pebbles agreed to spur this process by e-mailing Team members relevant information provided for the Task Force report. A final item pertained to development of regional testing and evaluation guidance for upland disposal and beneficial use (see upland disposal guidance).

Sediment Management

Phil Ross, Corps - Detroit District, made a presentation on regional sediment management. The Great Lakes received funding for a demonstration project (one of eight nationally) to explore ways to enhance sediment budgets along particular reaches of shoreline as well as reduce some forms of shorelands erosion and create or enhance habitat. The study area is between Luddington, Michigan and Michigan City, Indiana on Lake Michigan. This area has 11 federally-maintained harbors.

May 2

Environmental Windows

Doug Clarke, Army Corps of Engineers Engineering Research and Development Center - Vicksburg, MS, S. Thorp and E. Fisher described the environmental windows study underway by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) and the two-day workshop on the issue held in March. The setting of time periods (windows) when dredging has the least impact on biologic resources has become an issue of national interest. Window constraints are complicating the dredging process and have the potential to disrupt timely dredging and deployment of contractor assets. Also a general lack of specific species and habitat dredging impact information may be causing windows to be overly broad or unduly restrictive. The TRB study is aimed at developing a template for devising a regional windows process.

Windows, according to dredging contractors, are causing some problems in the Great Lakes and the problems may get worse. The GLDT has agreed to consider the issue as one of its priorities and through the Great Lakes Commission and the Corps developed a project proposal. The purpose of the project is to develop a Great Lakes-specific regional process for windows by convening an experts group to review current issues and devise one or more scientific studies that would help shape future windows determinations. The proposal was submitted to EPA's - Great Lakes National Program Office but did not get accepted for funding for FY2002. M. Tuchman, GLNPO, indicated the proposal would have had more consideration if it had identified leveraged funds from other sources (e.g. Corps). In preparation for working on the windows issue, the GLDT has identified fisheries experts from its member jurisdictions to serve as a Windows Advisory Team (WAT).

Action:

Great Lakes Commission staff and GLDT members will explore other funding sources during the summer including the Great Lakes Protection Fund and dredging contractors/associations. Additional funds and in-kind contributions from member jurisdictions will be part of a new proposal to GLNPO in 2002. D. Clarke will work with S. Thorp and V. Pebbles to organize communications links among WAT member - including conference calls and a list serve. There is a possibility that a windows session with WAT members could be part of the next GLDT meeting.

Upland Disposal Guidance

J. Miller gave background on the Corps' Upland Testing Manual which is being developed – a working draft should be available in the fall. It will address testing procedures for dredged material in the context of a generalized risk assessment process. J. Miller proposed that the GLDT work with the Corps in sponsoring a workshop on upland testing issues and that this effort be combined with developing regional guidance (regional manual) with an emphasis on beneficial use applications. This point is also one of the Great Lakes Beneficial Use Task Force recommendatons which the GLDT considers a priority.

Action:

J. Miller will prepare a white paper that scopes out the level of effort required for development of regional testing and evaluation guidance for upland disposal and beneficial use. This paper will be sent to the Dredging Team in June, along with recommendations for a workshop on the Upland Testing Manual.

Indiana Harbor Area of Concern and Dredging/Disposal Project and Field Trip.

Monica Krepfl, Corps - Chicago District and Dan Banaszek URS Corporation and consultant to Ispat Inland Inc., made a joint presentation on the Indiana Harbor project. Dredging of contaminated sediments from the ship canal/harbor has been prevented since 1972 because of the lack of an agreed-upon disposal plan. Now a plan is nearly in place that would entail the disposal (beginning in 2005) of these sediments at an old nearby refinery location as part of a RCRA closure process. The disposal site would be built as a confined disposal facility with a 4.7 million cubic yard capacity. The presentation also included a review of the Eddy Pump dredging demonstration project at Indiana Harbor - this hydraulic dredging technology and water treatment may be a model for the planned dredging at the site. A field trip to Indiana Harbor and future disposal site concluded the Dredging Team meeting.