

DELTA LTMS MULTIPLE TECHNICAL WORK GROUPS MEETING

**Department of Water Resources*
1416 9th Street, Room 1142
Sacramento, CA**

Thursday, March 12, 2009
9:00 am - 12:30 pm**

MEETING NOTES

Meeting Attendees

Hilary Applegate – USACE SPK	Scott Kranhold – DWR
Christine Boudreau – Boudreau Associates	Peggy Lee – ICF JSA
Bill Brostoff – USACE SPN	Andrea Lobato – DWR
Steve Cappellino – Anchor QEA, L.P.	Tina Lunt – MBK Engineers
Lori Clamurro – CA DFG	Susan Ma – USACE SPN
Kate Dadey – USACE SPK	Jack Malone – Anchor QEA, L.P.
Leo Flor – Harris & Associates	Al Paniccia – USACE SPN
Calvin Fong – Port of Stockton	Mike Reagan – Solano County BOS/DPC
Darryl Foreman – SDWA-JPA	Tom Scheeler – Port of West Sacramento
Phil Giovannini – CV Regional Water Board	Nicole Suard – Snug Harbor Resort, LLC
Roberta Goulart – Contra Costa County	Erin Taylor – USACE SPK
John Headlee – DWR	Jeff Wingfield – Port of Stockton
Victor Izzo – CV Regional Water Board	Bob Yeadon – DWR
Jagroop Khela – DWR	

INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

- The next TWG meeting date is April 21 from 9:00 to 12:30. TWG meetings will also be held on May 28 from 9:00 to 12:30 and July 9 from 9:30 to 12:30.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULING UPDATE

- Steve C. and Jack reported that they had received 6 responses (of 11 Committee members) from the Management Committee in response to their meeting schedule

request. Unfortunately, in the two week period that was covered, there were no acceptable dates for a majority of the Committee members.

- Discussion ensued about prioritizing Management Committee members in a follow-up attempt to schedule the meeting and advancing the period two weeks.

FUNDING FOR FY09

- Al reported that the omnibus spending bill had been signed and that there was \$235,000 for the Delta LTMS for FY09. He stated that we can continue to meet in this forum but not much else in terms of large contracts.

USACE ECONOMIC STIMULUS FUNDING?

- Roberta noted that we might be able to link the Delta LTMS to “shovel ready” projects to make use of stimulus funds, specifically projects such as Bethel Island and Sherman Island. She is willing to help explore different funding options as the economic stimulus funds become available and move through the system resulting in State funds and bonds loosening up.
- Roberta asked whether it would be possible to take advantage of funds from USACE O&M projects that are linked directly to the LTMS. The consensus from the USACE representatives was that the USACE project managers were unlikely to be willing to do that.
- Roberta informed the group that they put Delta LTMS support at the top of Contra Costa County’s list of advocacy for federal projects.

POTENTIAL CHAIR FOR ALTERNATIVES WORK GROUP STATUS UPDATE

- Bill informed the group that Brooke Schlenker would be able to chair the Alternatives Work Group pending confirmation from the IWG.

DELTA REGIONAL MONITORING PROGRAM UPDATE

- Bill had no new developments to report. He reminded the group that the program’s goal is to consolidate all of the Delta water quality data into a single database that is useful for multiple users in the Delta.
- Bill also informed the group that the USACE and EPA had discussed a draft outline for the Delta LTMS sediment management plan. As a result of that discussion, the draft

outline will be revised and then presented first to the IWG and then to the TWG. Steve C. stated that this process would likely require 2 months to complete. Note: this item appeared on the agenda but was removed and a revised agenda distributed prior to the meeting.

DELTA LEVEES PROGRAM/BACKGROUND WATER QUALITY PROPOSAL

- Bob Yeadon reported that the DWR had solicited proposals for special projects and that they have \$35 million available to fund them. They received requests totaling approximately \$50 million. Steve Michelson (Environmental Risk Services) proposed a characterization study in which the Delta is divided into regions and the sediment and groundwater characterization is performed in each region. Bob stated that if the LTMS TWGs are supportive of such an effort, it would be helpful if they could let the DWR know.
- Bill stated that he had sent an email to Mike M. at DWR stating that the LTMS TWG felt that the project could produce useful information. This topic was discussed in general terms at the previous meeting, which led to the email message of support.
- There was general discussion of a potential project placing Suisun Channel O&M material on Sherman Island. Roberta said that the County is ready to go when Al asked whether there would be problems with the PCA with the USACE. Roberta said that they have had permits from the RWQCB since 2001 but they lacked money or had logistical issues in the past, and now those problems have been resolved. Roberta suggested that the monitoring data would be very useful for the LTMS in looking at similar future projects.
- Cal asked when the project will occur and Roberta replied that dredging is projected to start July 1 but they would prefer to start in June. Environmental work windows are a large concern.
- The dredging portion of the project falls within the S.F. Water Board's jurisdiction and the placement locations fall within the Central Valley Water Board's jurisdiction.
- Bill added that there will be a symposium on the longfin smelt, which was recently listed as a threatened species by the State of California as well as the green sturgeon to help educate interested parties. The symposium would be an opportunity to identify current data and data gaps. There have been similar symposia in the Bay LTMS previously.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Anchor will coordinate with AI to prioritize Management Committee attendees and attempt to schedule the Management Committee meeting again.
2. Bill will coordinate with the IWG to discuss the potential for Brooke Schlenker to act as chair of the Alternatives TWG.

PROTOCOLS WORK GROUP ITEMS

SACRAMENTO DWSC PROJECT UPDATE

- Bill stated that both the Sacramento and Stockton deepening projects are moving forward and that SPN is working on contracting water quality and salinity studies. Bill informed the group that the Sacramento project had been allotted \$957,000 in the FY09 budget.

SEDIMENT TESTING UPDATE

- Kate said that she thought that the sediment sampling had been completed and that the samples were sent to ERDC for testing.
- Steve C. asked whether Cory would present the data to the group and asked when the data might be available. There was a general consensus that sampling had been delayed, perhaps by adverse weather.
- Steve C asked whether Sacramento DWSC placement sites are being identified by the USACE and the USACE responded that potentially they will have a list of placement sites available for the next TWG meeting.
- Roberta expressed her desire to have the USACE DWSC project managers engaged in the LTMS meetings and suggested about potential options like alternative meeting locations (Sacramento or Martinez) or using video teleconference to facilitate participation.

STOCKTON DWSC PROJECT UPDATE

- Steve C. asked whether sediment testing is being planned for the Stockton DWSC project. Sediment testing will be performed but the general consensus is that there are

still questions about project depths and volumes that need to be resolved before sediment testing can be done.

- Al asked about the schedule for the Stockton DWSC EIS/EIR and Susan said that there had been no updates and that they were looking to the Sacramento DWSC to serve as an example of how to proceed.
- Bill reported that the project will receive \$1.34 million for FY09.

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP ITEMS

BETHEL ISLAND PROJECT PRESENTATION

- Hilary Applegate presented Sacramento District's first CALFED Levee Stability Program project information to the group and provided a handout to the group. The Bethel Island-Horseshoe Bend-Little Franks Tract project would redirect channel flow by constructing a bypass channel across Horseshoe Bend. The current channel configuration is eroding the bank on Bethel Island and will eventually lead to levee failure. She stated that they are proposing a cross-cut channel because it will provide a lot of habitat for Little Franks Tract, which is State Parks land.
- Hilary wants to solicit feedback from the LTMS on many aspects of the proposed project. She explained that the DWR is in favor of hydraulic dredging and came up with the channel idea. They suggested use of geotubes for a portion of the dredged material placement as an underwater weir. She pointed out that there has not been a detailed look at the dredging design and considerations.
- Steve C. stated that the geotubes have been used frequently for restoration projects in saltwater in which the tubes break down over time leaving the sediment and restored habitat. Bill added that the ERDC researchers have done work on the geotubes and might be willing to provide technical guidance.
- Al asked why this location was chosen and the response is that a number of potential sites were ranked and the infrastructure protection and habitat needs here are high.
- Roberta asked about the timelines for the project and Hillary replied that their proposed timeline for construction is 2010. There was some concern among the group that such a timeline might not be feasible.
- Christine asked for clarification about overall sediment volumes for the project. Hillary explained that they may have an additional 250,000 CY of sediment produced by the project that would need to be placed elsewhere. Christine asked whether the regulatory

permits specify sediment quality standards for habitat creation versus construction uses, and the response was that it is unclear.

- Al clarified that the LTMS doesn't perform sediment testing or set sediment quality standards.
- Cal asked whether a smaller volume of dredging could accomplish the project goal and potentially create an opportunity to accept additional sediment from other sources.
 - The response was that the channel is used by boaters so they want to keep the depth consistent with Piper Slough.
- Bill suggested that this might be a good pilot project for permit streamlining and asked whether they might be amenable to such an approach. Phil concurred that such coordination would be valuable. There was consensus that engaging the resource agencies will be very important. Some coordination has been done already through the Delta Levees meetings.
- There was a general discussion of the apparent need to conduct sediment characterization sampling during allowed environmental work windows. Overall TWG members have not seen this requirement imposed on other projects.
- There was a general discussion of the general differences between geotechnical sampling and sediment characterization (chemistry and bioassays) purposes and requirements and the general plan to date is to collect both types of data in the same field effort.

DRAFT TABLE AND MAP OF REGIONAL PLACEMENT SITES UPDATE

- Jack informed the group that Anchor continues to collect sediment placement site data to update the draft map and table. Because the structure of the table and map were refined during previous meetings, they will not be presented for review at TWG meetings until they are in a draft final state. The most recent placement site table can be found on the Delta LTMS website.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Bill will provide ERDC geotubes contacts to Hilary.
2. Anchor will add Bethel Island as standing item on the agenda (Russ Rote is the POC).
3. Anchor will add the Levee Stability Program as a standing agenda item as well (Russ Rote is the POC).
4. Roberta provided her contact information to Hilary so she can be updated on the western Delta islands projects and provide support as appropriate.

5. Anchor will add the updated sediment placement site tables and maps to the Delta LTMS website.

PERMITTING WORK GROUP AGENDA

DREDGING GENERAL ORDERS STATUS UPDATE

- Copies of the draft GO and MRP were distributed. Phil provided a brief background on GOs in general and RWQCB permitting at Bill's request.
- Phil explained that 401 certifications are linked with CWA Section 404 Federal permits and WDRs are State approvals linked with placement of dredged material on land where potential effects to groundwater are of concern. The RWQCB staff works with applicants to get their data in order and in a configuration that is likely to meet the Board's criteria and be approved well in advance of the Board meeting.
- He continued to explain that another way to do this is to develop general orders that cover certain classes of activities and locations. Phil discussed the concept of the draft general order in this instance focusing on maintenance dredging of marinas.
- Scott K. asked whether the GO would be applicable for their excavation of sediment from existing flood control channels. Victor suggested that it would be difficult to cover under this draft maintenance GO. Kate asked that the specific discussion of the flood control maintenance be taken offline because it was not pertinent to the topic at hand.
- Victor then asked that everyone take a few weeks to review the draft GO and provide written comments via email or mail. He explained that they are soliciting comments from the LTMS before they make it a tentative GO, which entails public comment for 30 days, and then goes to the Board. It will likely be 2-3 months after it goes tentative before it is available to be used.
- Kate asked how the 100,000 CY volume is applied in the GO. Al followed up by asking whether that volume is specific or just a general starting point? Victor and Phil replied that the volume is intended to be for individual projects so theoretically an applicant could apply every year for the maximum volume or an applicant could apply for a 5-year permit to dredge 20,000 CY annually, totaling 100,000 CY. Phil explained that they are seeking input from other agencies and interested parties like the LTMS TWG and potential project proponents to figure out the most useful ways to divide the sediment volumes.

DRAFT NOI DEVELOPMENT STATUS UPDATE

- Tom reported that Steve Michelson is talking to DWR and other proponents about potentially conducting a characterization study.
- Roberta added that Reclamation Districts must provide resolutions to Mike M. by March 16 authorizing Steve to do the work on their property and supporting the effort. The DWR special projects would potentially fund the study, which focuses on the western Delta Islands.
- Phil stated that the timeline for the project is 2-3 years. Victor added that from his perspective it takes time to do the sampling and analysis and multiple samples over time are required and that they need to make sure it is done correctly so that they have sufficient information to justify decisions based on the data.
- Tom expressed the view that the overall goal is to make it possible to address dredging and disposal not on a case by case basis, as it has been done, but on a more general level. This would greatly facilitate planning and reduce project costs and uncertainties.
- Phil asked whether a letter from the RWQCB expressing their willingness to work with them on the study and stating that they are comfortable with its value would be useful. Jeff and Tom agreed that it would be helpful. Roberta added that the DWR would be critical to the effort and that a letter of support from them would be helpful as well. Victor needs the contacts for the support letters that were discussed with Jeff and Tom.
- Phil pointed out that the Sherman Island and Roberts 1 project will also provide additional data that could be added. Jeff Wingfield told the group that they have been doing a year of background characterization on Jersey Island and have the data now that they can provide.

JPA STATUS UPDATE

- Kate asked Al whether it was sent to the Management Committee and Al replied that it had and that the Delta Protection Commission sent him a letter of support for the JPA. Phil reminded the group that the SWRCB had expressed concerns that the JPA did not include all the information needed by the State. Some of these issues are already addressed in the JPA itself. Some of the potential concerns are only minor issues that can be addressed easily.

DDRMT COORDINATION THROUGH THE IWG STATUS UPDATE

- Phil stated that the RWQCB submitted comments stating that most of the project details are worked out prior to filing of an application. Their concern is that mandating meetings for every application will not be worthwhile or necessary and will be a waste of resources. Phil suggested that meeting with proponents who are seeking feedback would be beneficial. Al suggested that they could work out guidelines for when it would be necessary to meet.
- Kate stated that she feels that the entire concept is no longer worth pursuing because the RWQCB appears not to be interested in participating. Victor and Phil said that characterization is inaccurate, but that they do have specific recommendations. Phil reiterated that they feel that any time a proponent wants to present their project to the combined agencies, that would be beneficial and that there should be regularly scheduled meetings during which the projects could be discussed. Development of guidance (the secondary goal of the DDRMT) could be the main goal of the regular meetings.
- Kate disagreed with Phil's approach; stating her view that such guidance development would be more efficiently undertaken via emails, rather than regular meetings.
- Al asked if Phil could make an effort to revise the MOU to address the RWQCB's comments and concerns and then distribute it to the group because Al thinks they aren't too far apart in their views.
- Christine explained the views of a dredging proponent regarding the value of the group (DMMO-like) approach. She pointed out that there are mechanisms in other similar groups to ensure that small projects are not held to the same requirements as more complicated and larger projects and that the meetings are efficient use of everyone's time. For the DMMO example, there is flexibility in the system so that small projects can be expedited.
- Steve C. suggested that it would be helpful to schedule some regular meetings as a pilot project to determine how useful they might be for project proponents and agencies. Roberta concurred and suggested that the SF Bay DMMO approach would be a good one to consider as an example.
- Victor observed that the SF Bay DMMO deals with a great number of projects whereas in the Delta there have not been very many projects in general. Al stated that the DMMO meets every two weeks and is very busy with all of their reviews. The

consensus is that one reason there are fewer projects in the Delta is that project proponents are wary of the regulatory process to even attempt starting a project.

- Kate asked whether the data collection efforts mentioned previously have used consistent data collection methods and design so that valid comparisons may be made. There was general discussion about the multiple characterization efforts and there was a suggestion that the most constant entity with regard to water quality is the RWQCB.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Bill and Susan will examine their dredging database as a potential way to get an estimate of typical dredging project volumes and episodes that could inform revisions to the draft GO.
2. The TWG will provide written comments on the draft GO and MRP to Phil by **April 6**. They will then review comments and bring the ones that require further discussion to be resolved at the April 21 TWG meeting.
3. Phil G. will try to revise DDRMT MOU with RWQCB concerns.
4. Anchor will remind the group to schedule times to meet as a trial DMMO-like entity.
5. Victor and Phil will coordinate with Tom and Jeff to provide letters of support for the Steve M. study.
6. Tom will coordinate with Steve M. to find out who at DWR would be appropriate to provide their letter of support.