

DELTA LTMS TECHNICAL WORK GROUP MEETING

Tuesday, September 21, 2010

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

MEETING NOTES

MEETING ATTENDEES

Deb Biswas – CVFPB

Bill Brostoff – USACE SPN

Katie Chamberlin – Anchor QEA

Nathan Evenson – DWR

Matilda Evoy-Mount – USACE SPK

Nancy Ferris – USACE SPN

Phil Giovannini – CVRWQCB

Roberta Goulart – Contra Costa County

Ellen Johnck – BPC

Cory Koger – USACE SPK

Gil Labrie – DCC Engineering

Jack Malone – Anchor QEA

Steve Michelson – Applied Water Resources

Al Paniccia – USACE SPN

Brian Ross – USEPA

Tom Scheeler – Port of West Sacramento

Amy Simpson – DWR

Jeff Wingfield – Port of Stockton

Bob Yeadon – DWR

Bill McLaughlin – DWR

Scott Bodensteiner – Weston Solutions

INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Bill started the meeting and suggested that later in the meeting Nancy Ferris give a brief update on developments in the USACE's GIS capabilities.

BUDGET UPDATE

- Al explained that the new FY is quickly approaching and the status of FY 2011 appropriations is that the President's and House's budgets had \$0 for LTMS for FY 2011. The Senate budget identified \$2.5 million for the LTMS for FY 2011, which is a large increase over previous years (previous max was \$500,000). It is unclear when the conference report will come out and the USACE will be operating under Continuing Resolution Authority (CRA) starting on October 1, 2010. Because Delta LTMS is not in

the President's budget it won't be funded under CRA, but it will have enough FY 2010 carryover to keep going for a while.

- There was a general consensus that if significant funds are allocated to the Delta LTMS for FY 2011, the Management Committee should be engaged to approve the priority studies and tasks to be accomplished. Bill and Al have worked on a draft priority list that could be discussed by the LTMS group in advance of a Management Committee meeting.
- Al suggested that it might be worthwhile to revisit the LTMS work plan while considering the list of priority tasks and Brian suggested that we ought to discuss the priority list at the next TWG meeting. Bill reported that Roberta and Ellen have been very involved in the budget funding process.

MEETING REMINDERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Bill updated the group on the status of the fish tracking study and other resource issues and technical studies to be discussed at the October 14 Bay LTMS Science workgroup meeting.
- Brian explained that there are currently interagency discussions about sediment placement on Winter Island and the S.F. Water Board has become more concerned about whether the sediment is effectively contained and as a result Beth Christian is currently allowing only clean sediment to be placed on the island. The end result is that obtaining approval for sediment placement on that site is becoming more difficult. The USACE confirmed that the Sacramento River DWSC (SRDWSC) project is not planning to use that placement site. Jeff and Bill stated that it is not anticipated that Stockton will need to use that site either.
- Brian updated the group on the Programmatic EFH consultation process and said that the EPA will be providing a response letter to NOAA soon. The consultation would cover the S.F. Bay LTMS area and would cover dredging and in-bay disposal activities. Bill explained that this type of consultation would be a high priority for the Delta LTMS should funding be available and that there will be important lessons to be learned from the Bay LTMS process.
- Brian stated that the ESA Programmatic Biological Opinion for S.F. Bay dredging has been drafted and is awaiting internal review at NOAA. It is anticipated that internal review will be delayed. He explained that the resource agencies are not happy with the current sediment testing process and as a result this consultation process in the Bay has potentially large implications for the Delta and other regions.

- Bill reminded the group that next week the Bay Delta Science Conference will be held in Sacramento with several talks and posters of interest to the LTMS.

FUTURE MEETING DATES

- The next TWG meeting will be Tuesday, December 7, from 9:30-12:30.

ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- Jack reviewed the action items from the previous meeting. Bill said that we should continue to work on the DDRMT Operating Procedures.
- Bill and the rest of the group acknowledged Roberta and Ellen's significant contributions in lobbying for funding for the Delta LTMS.
- Ellen reported that she has been working hard to get funds from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to be used for dredging, which is the intended use of the funds.

ECOASTAL REPORT

- Nancy Ferris reported that the USACE San Francisco District is using a new database to organize GIS data. She explained that "eCoastal" is an empty shell that provides a format for data that is consistent among Districts. This year they have collected information about dredging areas, placement sites, coastal structures, and other baseline data. The next step will be to create base maps from the data and organize the metadata to document the data sources. They will eventually develop a public site so that the data can be reviewed by anyone but there are IT security issues to address first. Their GIS group will continue with their ecosystem restoration and flood damage protection programs as well. She explained that everyone should keep her in mind when collecting GIS data and when data needs come up so that information may be shared.
- Bill asked how far up into the Delta they are working and Nancy explained that they have stopped at the USACE S.F. District's Civil Works boundaries except for the Sacramento and Stockton DWSC projects, which are managed through SPN. She has been in communication with the Sacramento District to coordinate with them.
- Tom asked whether they have utility line data and Nancy replied that they have some of that data from Homeland Security but it is considered proprietary and would not be releasable. Tom explained that they had to do a utility survey for the Sacramento DWSC project and that there is a need to organize utility data. Bill reported that as they were searching for sediment placement sites they encountered problems getting access to utility data from the state. Nancy explained that data security remains a challenge for the USACE and she will be working to develop means to deal with the security issue in

coordination with other Districts. Bill mentioned that another example is the vegetation survey data, which has been completed for the Sacramento DWSC project and will be completed soon for Stockton.

- Al asked how long this GIS effort will be continued and Nancy replied that it will be an ongoing effort for at least the next five years. There will be a mix of data collected annually like survey information and project-specific studies.
- Bill asked whether the Bay and Delta sediment testing databases will be incorporated and Nancy replied that the contractors are working on that tool with a focus on the USACE Civil Works projects data. They are working to develop a tool in which data could be accessed by pulling up location-specific data from a map.
- Nancy reported that she is trying to facilitate integration of USACE Regulatory actions and Civil Works projects in the database.

PROTOCOLS TECHNICAL WORK GROUP

SACRAMENTO DWSC PROJECT

- Bill reported that the public release of the SRDWSC EIS/EIR is scheduled for the third week in November. SPN forwarded the draft document package to USACE HQ last week. Bob asked when the dates of the meetings to solicit comments on the document would be set and Bill explained that there is some uncertainty about the dates as they await HQ review of the project documents. Bill stated that they are anticipating holding 1 or 2 public meetings and having a document review period of 30 to 45 days.
- Al asked whether HQ comments have to be addressed before SPN releases the draft. Bill stated that they do have to wait and that HQ was provided electronic copies last week and then requested paper copies to be sent. The administrative draft is pretty much done, which Brian considers an important milestone.
- Bill reported that a few minor corrections will be made to the Salinity Modeling Report which will then be made available for wider distribution and incorporation into the EIS/EIR. Al asked whether the salinity modeling report will be discussed in addition to the dissolved oxygen (DO) issues to be discussed with Pam Creedon when she meets with the LTC DiCiro of the S.F. District. The primary topic of discussion will be the DO TMDL as it relates to Delta projects managed by the S.F. District.
- Bill explained that the sediment placement site/beneficial use evaluation report will be finalized soon and only minor edits remain outstanding.
- Bill reported that the sediment characterization report has been reviewed by Anchor QEA and the majority of the data has been validated. The data tables are being finalized

and the end result is that the most of the data is usable and meets the 90 percent criterion for validation. The report will be an appendix to the EIS/EIR.

- Bill reported that the USASCE is coordinating with the resource and regulatory agencies and will be in the field with the resource agencies tomorrow for a site visit and in addition to observing O&M dredging.
- Bill also stated that the Sacramento District is funding Hg methylation and fish entrainment studies for O&M dredging. The work is being carried out by contractors and may be informative for DWSC analyses.
- Brian requested that there be a presentation on the SRDWSC EIS/EIR at the December TWG meeting. Tom and Bill suggested that it might be possible to conduct a DWSC public meeting on the same day as the LTMS TWG meeting, potentially in City Hall.
- Steve asked whether there will be a meeting on the GO for the SRDWSC project and Bill responded that he is working with Phil on the GO. Bill plans to attend the RWQCB meeting Thursday morning to observe the Board's process and then they plan to get the SRDWSC project on the RWQCB's December meeting agenda.
- Bill suggested that perhaps at the next TWG meeting we could discuss proper preparation of the JPA. Phil said that to date he has not received any completed JPAs for other projects, so this one might be the first. Bill said that the electronic application form itself is easy to use and thanked Anchor QEA for developing it to be user friendly.
- Ellen suggested that she would like to lend her support to the USACE and the Port in moving forward through the RWQCB process. Bill and Phil discussed the best ways for the two of them to coordinate the application review and development of the draft GO at the staff level and how the staff process fits into the Board's review of the project. Phil explained that the Board meets every two months and reviews projects once the staff has worked extensively with the project proponent to resolve technical issues and incorporate staff comments. There was a general discussion of whether it would be beneficial to deliver a brief presentation to the Board to introduce them to the Project before it is up for review.

STOCKTON DWSC PROJECT

- Bill reported that the Stockton DWSC project is approximately 1 year behind the SRDWSC project. They have been conducting a vegetation survey of the potential Stockton DWSC placement sites identified in Steve Michelson's study.
- There has been coordination with other agencies through the LTMS process but not more specific meetings as the project description and design are still in the preliminary stages.

- Bill and Jeff explained that the dredging volumes will be refined as the project moves forward and economic analyses are conducted.

ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP

- Mattie is filling in for Brooke and reported that they had a multi-agency meeting in July for Delta Study and they are currently drafting a meeting summary. They will have a data gaps workshop in October before their next quarterly multi-agency meeting at the end of October.
- They are still working on the 5 LSP projects.
- H&H studies and geotechnical borings are being conducted for the Bethel Island project and that information will be used to inform decisions about the viability of the crosscut channel option.
- Amy reported that the signed project funding agreements for the background conditions study are in hand but Steve reported that they are still waiting on funding. Amy and Bob reported that the funding is currently available, which is good news for the project.

PERMITTING TECHNICAL WORK GROUP

- Phil reported that he has completed the draft New Work Dredging GO and is hopeful that it will be on the Board meeting agenda in December.
- Phil explained that he has been working on the Draft Sediment Reuse GO, which would be structured to address stockpiled material that would be used for various purposes. He stated that he has drafted criteria for sediment to be used for placement in water, sediment placed on land but that would produce runoff, and material that would be placed on land and capped. Phil said that it has been difficult to find consistent criteria to use for each of the chemical constituents, so it wasn't possible to reference any single set of general guidelines. He used the RWQCB's website to research environmental criteria for each constituent based on the proposed use of the sediment.
- Brian said that it sounds like the RWQCB's criteria seem to be focused on water quality rather than human contact and human health or environmental risk. He also suggested that the material types be called something different from "Class" because then it might be confused with landfill designations.
- Phil would like the LTMS group of agencies, ports, and major stakeholders to review the draft criteria and provide comments to him in advance of the next meeting.

- Ellen stated that this effort should be characterized as developing sediment criteria for “beneficial reuse” and she suggested that wetland reuse criteria developed for the Bay (covered or capped and exposed sediment) might be informative for this effort. Brian reported that NOAA is now objecting to those Bay criteria. Phil said that he is not familiar with the specific document articulating these criteria and Brian said that he will send it to him. Phil reminded the group that this GO development process will require a lot of time because of the complexity of the technical issues that must be addressed and that data from the western Delta islands background conditions study would be very informative.
- Scott suggested that cover of the sediment might also be clean sediment rather than harder materials like concrete.
- Ellen stated that she would be happy to facilitate a meeting with Beth Christian and Phil to discuss these issues and Phil said that he thought that such a meeting would be very helpful.
- Al asked Brian for clarification about NOAA’s concerns about sediment reuse criteria and Brian replied that their concerns in the Bay could lead to some inconsistencies in application of criteria in the Delta compared to the Bay.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Bill and Al will include their priority list of studies and tasks at the next TWG meeting.
2. Anchor QEA will distribute the LTMS work plan for review in advance of discussions about FY 2011 tasks.
3. Bill and Katie will work to determine the most appropriate place to post DWSC project technical studies and documents like the salinity study and coordinate with Jack to provide links to the Delta LTMS website.
4. Jack and Katie will coordinate with Nancy to provide GIS information for the Delta and Bay LTMS boundaries.
5. Jack and Katie will coordinate with Bill to prepare a brief (10-20 minute) summary presentation on the SRDWSC Draft EIS/EIR for the December TWG meeting (assuming it is consistent with the public EIS/EIR release period).
6. Jack will coordinate with Brooke/Mattie to determine whether there are any meetings that should be added to the Delta and Bay LTMS meeting calendars.
7. Jack will coordinate with Phil to distribute the draft Sediment Reuse GO criteria and narrative to the appropriate LTMS members but not to the larger LTMS mailing list or through the website.

8. Brian will coordinate with Beth Christian to send Phil the S.F. Bay wetland beneficial reuse criteria for his review and for potential coordination between the Boards.
9. Ellen will coordinate with Beth and Phil to set up a meeting for them to discuss sediment reuse criteria and General Orders.