

URBAN WATERFRONT ACTION GROUP

October 26, 2005

Naval Reserve Basin Dredging

Attendees

Bill Jenkins	Army Corps of Engineers	william.h.jenkins@usace.army.mil
Tom Groff	Army Corps of Engineers	thomas.w.groff@usace.army.mil
Calvin E. Ligons	PADEP SERO	cligons@state.pa.us
Dirk Sears	PADEP	c-dsears@state.pa.us
Kenneth R. Anderson	PADEP SERO	kenanderso@state.pa.us
Pravin Patel	PADEP	prpatel@state.pa.us
Randy Brown	PADEP SERO	rabrown@state.pa.us
Rober Maiden	PADEP	rmaiden@state.pa.us
Ronald C. Furlan	PADEP SERO	rfurlan@state.pa.us
Larry Toth	PADEP CZM	latoth@state.pa.us
Bill Muir	U.S. EPA Region 3	muir.william@epa.gov
John Yagecic	Delaware River Basin Commission	john.yagecic@drbc.state.nj.us
Stephen Park	U.S. Coast Guard	stephen.d.park@uscg.mil
James Walsh	PRPA	jwalsh@philaport.com
Lisa Magee	PRPA	lmagee@philaport.com
Nick Walsh	PRPA	nwalsh@philaport.com
Chris Linn	DVRPC	clinn@dvrpc.org
Greg Tracey	SAIC	traceyg@saic.com
Monica Stillman	SAIC	stillman@saic.com
Sam Insalaco	SAIC	insalaco@saic.com
Amanda Kittelson	Navy	amanda.kittelson@navy.mil
Jason Speicher	Navy	jason.speicher@navy.mil
Nancy Kuntzleman	Navy	anne.kuntzleman@navy.mil
Tim Bramhall	Navy	timothy.bramhall@navy.mil
Tim Driscoll	Navy	timothy.f.driscoll@navy.mil

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.
2. Chris Linn of DVRPC chaired the meeting. Members of the UWAG committee and the applicants introduced themselves.

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3. Mr. Linn introduced Nancy Kuntzleman and Tim Bramhall, Department of the Navy, and Greg Tracey, SAIC, who presented the project to UWAG.
4. Ms. Kuntzleman reported that this project was brought on by the fact that newer ships with deeper drafts will be coming into the basin in 2008, and that the Navy has been making do with the existing depths in the basin for the past 10 years. The goal of the project is to restore the basin to a depth of 30 feet so the basin can handle the newer ships. In addition, the entrance channel has not been dredged since Fall 1984 and is only 24 feet in places, or less.
5. Ms. Kuntzleman stated that the budget for this project is a significant portion of the Navy's entire budget for dredging in 2006. She said that the purpose of the meeting was to determine if there are any "showstopper" issues, so that they could conduct a informed evaluation of contractor proposals.
6. Mr. Bramhall stated that the Navy had chosen to do the project "design-build", which was a first in this part of the country. The "design-build" strategy was chosen because there are so many different ways to do the project. The RFP that they are putting out states the basic parameters for the project. The Navy took many samples from the basin and collected a wealth of data that will be included in the RFP. The RFP will go out on the street in late November and contractors will have 30-45 days to submit proposals. Contractors must describe all their procedures in detail in their proposals. Two separate teams, a "technical team" and a "cost team" will evaluate the proposals. The technical team will choose the proposal that offers the least risk of failure to the govt. A third team melds the two evaluations and chooses the "best value" proposal. An award must be made by March 29, 2006.
7. Mr. Bramhall emphasized that the contractor is responsible for getting all necessary permits and making 3rd party arrangements. From the time of the award, the contractor has 730 days to complete the project. Completion date will be around May 1, 2008. Operations will continue during dredging. Hence, there will be many stops and starts during the project, as ships are moved in and out of areas that are being dredged.
8. Mr. Jenkins asked who would initiate the permit application? Mr. Bramhall responded that the contractors will initiate the permitting process.
9. Mr. Toth asked if testing would be done section by section or all at once. Mr. Bramhall responded that all the testing had already been performed, and that the Navy knows the "hotspots."

10. Ms. Kuntzleman stated that they anticipate a no-dredge window from mid-March to the end of June. The Navy needs any additional input on windows from the regulators. For example, if a contractor needed to build a dock, the Navy would need to know if there would be a window for driving piles. Mr. Muir stated that the placement of material along the Delaware would involve additional windows, but not dredging in the basin itself. Ms. Kuntzleman stated that there is no site designated for the contractor to use for laydown, processing or rehandling. The contractor will have to make those decisions.
11. Mr. Tracey presented SAIC's feasibility study for the project. All of the info in the study will be available for contractors to use to make their jobs easier. Mr. Insalaco highlighted how the basin is a busy and congested place, with the majority of the basin's area covered by ships. Fifty years of operations in the basin have resulted in the deposition of pollutants – oil spills, elevated PCBs, copper, etc. Clean up goals have been determined for the dredge spoils. They anticipate 400,000 cubic yards of navigation material, and 75,000 cy of IR material, plus however much overdredging is required. An extra foot takes the amount of material to 860,000 cy.
12. Mr. Insalaco stated that the Navy often looks for a 2ft overdredge, but because the basin is not in a river channel there is a slow siltation rate. Therefore, there is no requirement for overdredge. They are allowing contractors to overdredge by a foot, if they choose to do so.
13. Ms. Stillman stated that it is hard to know when a contractor may have a permit application ready to submit to the agencies. However, it is the goal of SAIC and the Navy to provide the contractors with as much information as possible in order to speed up the permitting process, but there is a lot of gray area with regard to timing. That is why the Navy needs to know how long the agencies will need to process and turn around permits.
14. Mr. Tracey said that past dredging determines the bathymetry of the basin and where contamination occurs, i.e., some areas may have been "cleaned-up" by past dredging. SAIC performed a lot of screening of their data – the big issues are PCBs and copper. Modeling was performed to extrapolate area-wide contamination profiles from 139 sample points. Mr. Jenkins inquired as to the depth of the vibracore samples. Mr. Tracey responded that the samples go down to glacial till. A map was presented showing sampling locations (see slideshow).
15. The basin is flat-bottomed and has little vegetation. It is a hypoxic environment (even in the winter) and anoxic in the bottom waters during the summer. The entrance channel to the basin acts like a sill and prevents vertical mixing. Fish populations include catfish and white perch. Cormorants fish the basin. Low counts of opportunistic benthic organisms live in the sediments, especially when compared to the open river. D.O. conditions in the basin don't meet EPA criteria – 3.5 mg/L.
16. Mr. Tracy stated that the TCLP test indicated that there are no hazardous materials present in the basin. Mr. Furlan asked which "clean fill criteria" they are using because the management policy was changed in 2004. Ms. Stillman responded that they are using the 2004 criteria. Mr. Furlan remarked that dredging in 1999 had to be shut down because of

sulfides that came up when air was introduced into the sediments. Mr. Tracey stated that the sediments in the basin would have a lot of sulfides because they are highly organic. Mr. Furlan responded that that would kick into hazardous waste. Ms. Kuntzleman stated that testing indicated that sulfide reactivity wouldn't be a problem.

17. Mr. Tracey presented estimates of the amount of material that meets various quality thresholds for reuse. Mr. Anderson asked how they will prevent the mixing of hazardous materials between cells. Mr. Tracey said they have a dredging sequence strategy – i.e. they will remove the most contaminated materials first. Mr. Tracey added that there would be confirmation sampling of all the materials pulled out. Mr. Ligons stated that if a contractor intends to use clean fill materially separately, they need to show how they will take it out without mixing it with contaminated material. Mr. Bramhall said that contractors will likely identify hotspots and remove them with adequate buffer zones. That way, there won't be any cross-contamination.
18. Mr. Tracey discussed disposal options (as summarized in the powerpoint slides). Mr. Yagecic stated that he thought White's Basin was not available for disposal. Mr. Bramhall responded that White's Basin can handle material as long as it complies with its existing permit. They could also get a modified permit to use the basin as a processing area. Mr. Bramhall pointed out that the capacity of all disposal alternatives to accept dredge materials changes on an almost daily basis, so all alternatives need to be considered. Ms. Kuntzleman remarked that New Jersey prefers dredge materials from PA to remain in PA. Accordingly, she was wary of relying on New Jersey sites to accept materials.
19. Mr. Tracey mentioned barging material to Port Tobacco, VA as a disposal option. Ms. Kuntzleman described inefficiencies inherent in barging dredged materials, i.e., it is difficult to offload heavy material from a scow. Another viable disposal option is a near-basin sediment processing facility. Several sites have been identified as possibilities for this purpose (see slideshow). For example, Parcel 9A was identified by PRPA as a potential site. Dredge material would be processed at the site and used as fill. The site would require 300-500k cy fill for development as a container terminal. Material may be hydraulically pumped across the old Navy property to 9A, if allowed. Mr. Furlan asked if each of the sites could handle the total material. Mr. Tracey said that one site could not handle all the material, but could process a large portion of it.
20. Mr. Anderson pointed out that a separate dredging project may need to occur in order to park a boat near Parcel 9A. PRPA confirmed that that area is very shallow.
21. Mr. Tracey stated that landfilling of material is an option, but that it would likely be an expensive one. A temporary laydown area near the basin is an unlikely option because the Navy does not own any of the property around the basin.
22. Mr. Tracey stated that he wanted to check off all the permit requirements so that there are no "sneak-up" issues. Ms. Stillman acknowledged that ESA, NHPA and other requirements will come into play for disposal sites. Mr. Anderson added that if a disposal site requires a dock to be built, the owner of the dock will need to obtain a 105 permit, or

the contractor will need to get the permit as a lessee. Ms. Kuntzleman added that the basin has no T&E issues, but Delaware River work would need to address the short-nosed sturgeon. Ms. Kuntzleman also remarked that Anita Riportella (NMFS) said there would be a no-dredge window from mid-March through June for Anadromous fish. Mr. Anderson asked if these Anadromous fish were the ones that could hold their breath through the “no-D.O.” Ms. Kuntzleman thought that stopping and starting dredging would be more deleterious to the environment than continuing with the project through the no-dredge window once it started. By completing the project as quickly as possible, the time of disturbance would be minimized. Mr. Anderson stated that a “bubbling screen” could be used to scare shad away from the basin and keep them in the Schuylkill River. According to the Navy, not many fish use the basin.

23. Mr. Tracey explained that the basin is divided into 8,000 cy cells. The highest priority cells are located in the entrance channel. The dredging pattern will be from east to west, focusing on the northern half of the basin first. Contamination of the Group 2 cells could go as deep as 35 feet, thereby requiring additional dredging.
24. Mr. Anderson asked about the condition of the bulkhead. Mr. Tracey replied that excess “toe” material will be required to keep the bulkhead stable. A 3 to 1 slope is required for the toe material. Mr. Bramhall stated that there are plans to reconstruct parts of the bulkhead, specifically along cells 7R through 7A. This will create some complications because two contractors will be working in the same area.
25. Mr. Bramhall stated that after the RFP hits the street he expects the agencies to get a lot of questions from the contractors.
26. Mr. Jenkins asked if the Navy is doing an Environmental Assessment for the project. Ms. Kuntzleman responded that the Navy has prepared a draft final EA. However, if the selected contractor selects a disposal site that is not already permitted, the EA will have to be revised to include all of the factors surrounding that location. If a contractor comes up with a new disposal site, Ms. Kuntzleman wondered if it is realistic for a contractor to get all the necessary approvals in place to begin dredging by December 2006.
27. Mr. Toth asked how many contractors the Navy expects to submit bids? The Navy responded five. Mr. Toth suggested that perhaps all the contractors could come in for a UWAG. Mr. Bramhall responded that that wouldn’t work because the contractors would not want to reveal proprietary information to one another.
28. Mr. Muir asked if the Navy tested for the whole suite of possible contaminants? Mr. Tracey responded yes they had done so, and that they had tested for over 230 analytes.
29. Mr. Bramhall stated that the RFP will go out no later than December 17th. Mr. Bramhall stated that the contractors are very aware of the requirements, but he expects a lot of discussion once the RFP hits the street.

30. Mr. Toth asked what kind of permit a contractor would need for the dredging portion of the project? Mr. Anderson replied that they may or may not need a 401 permit, depending on the dredging technique. Ms. Stillman stated that mechanical dredging would not require a 401. Mr. Anderson added that hydraulic dredging would also not require a 401 if a geosock was used and the water was decanted off into the city sewer system.
31. Mr. Groff stated that 300-400k cy of dredge material may possibly be stored temporarily at Fort Mifflin. This would fill up one of their cells. Mr. Groff stated that there were two reasons for wanting to keep materials from the basin out of Fort Mifflin. First, they need to maintain 50 years of capacity for the navigation channel in the Schuylkill River. Second, the disposal of basin materials shut them down in 1995 and they did not want to go through that again. However, Mr. Groff stated that using Ft. Mifflin for temporary disposal would be a cost effective solution and that it should be seriously considered. Mr. Furlan said that Ft. Mifflin could be used for dewatering and then the material could be moved to Parcel 9A. Mr. Bramhall emphasized that he would clarify the RFP to indicate that Ft. Mifflin can't be used for final disposal, but that it can be used temporarily for processing and storage. Mr. Groff said he would talk to his boss to see if Ft. Mifflin could be used as a temporary disposal site. Mr. Anderson added that a 401 cert. would be required to process materials at Fort Mifflin. If the contractor has to construct a dock at Ft. Mifflin they would need a 105 permit.
32. Mr. Furlan stated that a contractor would not need a permit for a mobile modular sediment processing facility if the facility is "nearby" the dredging site. In this case it would be a "permit-by-rule." However, this may be complicated by the fact that the Navy does not own any land around the basin. In the case of Parcel 9A, Mr. Furlan said that this may be an Act 2 site, and that a permit would not be required if the disposal can be seen as part of an approved remediation activity. Mr. Furlan said he would check to see if Parcel 9A is an Act 2 site.
33. Mr. Jenkins asked if the Corps had looked at wetlands on Parcel 9A? Ms. Kuntzleman responded that a sliver of wetlands exist on 9A. The bigger problem is that 9A is in the floodplain. Mr. Anderson pointed out that Parcel 9A used to be part of the Delaware River.
34. Ms. Stillman stated that a lot of GPs they looked at require approved construction plans. This could be a timing issue unless you have a contractor who is already doing a project that needs material. In this case, the contractor would only need to operate under the condition of its existing general permit. Mr. Furlan, added that this situation would be similar to using a landfill, where dredge materials would have to meet the requirements laid out in the landfill's existing waste acceptance plan. Additionally, some landfills, such as GROWS, can use dredge material as cover, and in this case the material is not counted as waste because it is beneficial re-use.
35. Mr. Jenkins asked if one disposal idea was to fill in the area between Piers 122 and 124? Ms. Stillman responded that emphasis had shifted away from that idea to Parcel 9A. Ms. Kuntzleman stated that the permitting for filling in the inter-pier area would not happen within their timeframe/lifetime. Instead, Piers 122 and 124 could be used for handling and

off-loading. Ms. Kuntzleman added that materials would be used on Parcel 9A to raise the elevation, not to fill in wetlands.

36. Mr. Toth said that perhaps the Navy should take another look at the 4-month permit review period. Mr. Toth expressed concern that it would take longer than 4 months to get the necessary permits and that there are too many unknown variables for such a tight schedule. Mr. Bramhall responded that if the contractors don't think they can get the permits in 4 months, they will let the Navy know about it loud and clear. If this did occur, the Navy could put out an amendment to the RFP process.
37. Mr. Furlan stated that an advantage of using a disposal area with an existing permit is that people in the area won't speak out against being dumping upon.
38. Mr. Insalanco asked if a special interagency task force could be developed to address the needs of this project. Mr. Furlan responded that all the players with DEP already have excellent communication among themselves. Mr. Groff stated that he would be happy to answer questions, but they would have to come from the Navy, not from contractors. Mr. Bramhall stated that the Navy would make responses to contractor questions public on their website.
39. The meeting adjourned at 12:40.