

**Annual Meeting of the Great Lakes Dredging Team
July 16-17, 2013
Cabellas Outfitters, Dundee, MI**

Meeting Summary

Tuesday, July 16, 2013

Welcoming Remarks and Call to Order

The annual meeting of the Great Lakes Dredging Team (GLDT) was called to order at 11:00 a.m. EDT by co-chairs Ernie Drott, USACE-LRD and Steve Galarneau, Wisconsin DNR.

Drott and Galarneau welcomed all the attendees to the meeting commenting on the good attendance and thanking the members for taking time from their busy schedules to be at the meeting. Drott briefly reviewed the agenda and described the purpose of the meeting. Drott then asked attendees to introduce themselves and their affiliations.

Welcome to the Great Lakes Dredging Team

Jan Miller, USACE-LRD provided an overview presentation and an introduction to the GLDT. Miller presented the following main points during his presentation.

- The Great Lakes Dredging Team is unique among Regional Dredging Teams because the states have much more of a regulatory role than the states along the ocean coasts.
- Pursuit of beneficial use of dredged material has been a long-time Dredging Team objective, but the GLDT learned early that this approach to dredged material management does not come free, and it does not come easily. Also, it is not something to be done once and walked away from; it requires ongoing commitment and technological advancement.
- Today, navigational dredging and remedial dredging are working together with a common purpose, better than anywhere else in the country; the Great Lakes should celebrate this.
- Regulatory priorities for the GLDT remain focused on policy affecting environmental dredging windows, open water placement of dredged material, beneficial use, and interaction with Areas of Concern (AOCs).
- The GLDT's value is that it provides a forum for ideas and a platform for collaboration; it balances the needs for economic growth and environmental stewardship; all in the context of such emerging challenges as climate change and water level changes.

Miller then listed several current issues (challenges and opportunities) facing the GLDT. These include:

- **Funding** – as federal dollars are diminished, the states and local interests are stepping up to participate in many projects;
- **Fluctuating water levels** – unprecedented low levels are creating a heightened state of urgency regarding dredging;
- **Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) capacity** – with existing confined disposal facilities (CDFs) nearly full and the prospects for new CDF construction unlikely, emphasis must shift to other dredge material management strategies, particularly in locations like Cleveland;
- **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative** – the GLRI is a new potential funding source and offers opportunities for creative thinking.

Visioning a Dredging Team for the 21st Century

GLDT co-chairs Ernie Drott and Steve Galarneau gave a presentation on challenges, opportunities and emerging issues for the GLDT in the 21st Century. The main points raised in this presentation include:

- Among the challenges we face are lack of a common vision for dredging and dredging-related activities. Participants are too often committed to their own interests.
- The GLDT must be a broad partnership/collaboration; it is not a USACE entity.
- The objectives of the GLDT should be based on an agreed to process, with decisions based on sound science.
- The urgency of record low water levels is driving the states toward more flexibility in policy affecting navigation dredging.
- The GLDT should be looking for sustainable solutions that will last beyond our time as current leaders.
- The GLDT should not lose sight of the fact that by facilitating maritime commerce, it is supporting the most environmentally sound, energy efficient, and safest transportation mode.
- An important objective should be to not rely totally on federal government funding support, but broaden the funding streams, increase buy-in among multiple partners, and build a “confluence” of support among shared interests.

After the presentation there was discussion and Q&A time for the GLDT members to present their views. The following points were raised during the discussion.

- The GLDT should always consider ways to address the obstacles that need to be overcome in order to promote dredging in the Great Lakes region and be better supporters of Great Lakes dredging.
- Dredging policy in the Great Lakes has to be better understood that often must be applied on a “project by project” basis.

- Decisions affecting dredging involve three main considerations: science, regulatory policy, and economics; and sometimes the economics is the limiting factor.

2013-14 USACE Great Lakes Dredging Program

Marie Strum, USACE-LRE gave an update on the Corps' Great Lakes Dredging Program. Strum highlighted the following in her presentation:

- The Great Lakes USACE districts have been leaders in seeking regional provisions in the O&M budget, allowing them to direct funds to where they are most needed.
- The 2014 Great Lakes dredging program includes 18 projects totaling 3.1 million cubic yards of material.
- Climate patterns are emerging with potentially significant impacts; water levels have been below average for Lakes Michigan and Huron for the last 14 years, and annual water temperatures and evaporation rates are rising.
- Coastal infrastructure maintenance issues are looming, and the USACE is working with local communities to build awareness of the situation.

Great Lakes Sediment Testing Manual

Richard Price, USACE-ERDC gave an update on sediment research and plans to develop a Great Lakes sediment testing manual. Price made the following points in his presentation:

- The Great Lakes are unique among U.S. coastal ranges for pursuing beneficial use of dredged material largely because of how closely working ports and open waters are configured geographically.
- There are sediment quality testing protocols in place; the problem is they are all over the board.
- It is difficult to apply generic soil and sediment screening values to all projects and locations, because soils and sediments have a unique composition in any given place.
- While specific screening values are important, what is really needed is a process or framework that defines those values for any given state or project.

Dredging technology innovation and research

Joe Kreitinger, USACE-ERDC provided an overview presentation on dredging technology, innovation and research. Kreitinger talked about these issues in the context of open water placement of dredged material an area that he has been working on for many years. Kreitinger made the following points in his presentation:

- Decisions on the acceptability of dredged material are getting harder and harder as the material is getting cleaner; we are getting closer to the knife's edge.
- Regulatory risk for open water placement, to a great extent, can be about the same for using dredged material for habitat restoration in an aquatic environment.

Legislative update

Jan Miller gave a legislative update to the members of the GLDT. Miller commented that the GLDT is forming a legislative committee which will be responsible for tracking the status of federal legislation for the Team. Miller commented on the following bills currently being considered by Congress:

- Re: WRDA – There is nothing specifically for the Great Lakes in the Senate version that has passed, and the House bill is yet to come.
- Re: RAMP Act (Restore America's Marine Promise) for Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund reform – Both House and Senate versions are identical.
- Re: Great Lakes Ecological and Economic Protection Act – Creates formal authorization of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and reauthorizes the Great Lakes Legacy Act.
- Re: Great Lakes Nutrient Removal Assistance Act – Amends Clean Water Act to provide assistance to upgrade municipal water systems discharging to the Great Lakes.

GLDT Participant Round Table

Illinois

- Hurricane Sandy essentially shut down the port of Waukegan; some 100,000 cubic yards were dredged and used as cover material for a brownfield site.

Michigan

- Muskegon is showing progress with next steps in its AOC delisting process; there is also a statewide assessment under way of AOCs and navigation issues.
- Legislation was recently signed that allows open water placement of dredged material under certain conditions.
- The MI DNR's emergency dredging program solicited applications and identified 49 locations that needed urgent dredging assistance, nine more added for a total of 58 projects, for which \$21 million was appropriated in the form of grants-in-aid with 100 percent state funding. Of the 58, 12 are completed, 5 are in process and the rest are in design.
- Lesson learned: The USACE process to partner in a way that allows spending someone else's money is slow. If other states are considering emergency dredging programs, they should start sooner rather than later.
- MDOT successfully inserted a Great Lakes reference to a resolution supporting WRDA passed by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

Minnesota

- Significant progress is being made on the beneficial use/habitat restoration project using dredged material from the Duluth harbor at the 21st Avenue embayment location, the first example of dredged material put back under Sec. 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Ohio

- The ODNR is dredging East Harbor, and has an agreement to pump dredged material under a bordering causeway for habitat restoration.

- The Ohio Lake Erie Commission has added a priority for dredged material management to its Lake Erie Restoration Plan.
- In Cleveland, there will be no capacity left in CDFs by 2014; there is movement on three fronts: 1) the Cleveland Cuyahoga County Port Authority has a plan; 2) USACE has a plan; and 3) the open water placement option remains in play. Beneficial use projects are being considered as the dredged sediments generally meet industrial use requirements. The Cleveland Botanic Society has proposed use of dredged sediment in compost for urban gardens.
- In Toledo, while plans for beneficial use are still being pursued, the summer dredging program has commenced and 100 percent of the material will go to open water placement.

Wisconsin

- Under the state's Harbor Assistance Program, recent dredging assistance awards went to Washington Island (\$5.1 million) for the federal channel to the ferry dock, the mouth of the Root River in Racine (\$700,000) and Manitowoc Harbor (\$750,000).
- Two informational legislative caucus sessions were held for state legislators.
- Some state programs are available and could be modified to support an emergency dredging program similar to Michigan's.

New York

- No Great Lakes emergency dredging activity to report.

Lake Carriers' Association

- The dredging backlog is growing as a result of insufficient funding, resulting in light loading and carriers not operating at full capacity/efficiency.

U.S. Coast Guard

- Shoaling in Cheboygan has impacted operations of the USCG Cutter Mackinaw.

EPA

- The GLNPO goal is to support three projects a year. Current and/or recent activity includes the Calumet River, IL; River Raisin, MI; Sheboygan, WI, Grand Calumet, IN; and the Buffalo River.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

- Habitat restoration units (island building) are being pursued as beneficial use approaches to dredged material management in Toledo harbor.

Service Award Presentation



Recognition awards were presented to the two immediate past federal and state co-chairs of the Great Lakes Dredging Team at the team's annual meeting in Dundee, MI July 16. Holding the awards are immediate past federal co-chair Scott Pickard of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Buffalo District, left, and immediate past state co-chair Gene Clark of the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute. Presenting the awards were new GLDT federal co-chair Ernie Drott of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, far left, and new state co-chair Steve Galarneau of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Office of the Great Lakes, far right.

Day One Adjournment

The first day of the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m. followed by a group dinner at a nearby restaurant.

Wednesday July 17, 2013

Tom Crane, Great Lakes Commission welcomed the group back for day two of the meeting and provided a short recap of the first day activities and summarized the agenda for the second day.

Crane then introduced Sarah Gross from the USACE-LRC to discuss the outreach mission of the GLDT.

Importance of outreach to the success of the Dredging Team

Sarah Gross, USACE-LRC

Gross provided an overview presentation on the outreach goals of the GLDT and the importance of having a consistent message and the need for metrics to evaluation success. Specifically, Gross mentioned the following:

- Overall goals of a communication strategy should include:
 - Increased awareness of the GLDT mission and framework
 - Better strategic view of issues to help focus actions
 - Increased transparency and engagement among dredging interests
 - Continuous feedback
 - Meaningful products

- Messaging: What do we want stakeholders to know? Key messages may include:
 - We are committed to maintaining safe navigation channels, to promoting best practices for environmental protection, and to finding the optimal balance between those two efforts
 - We are effective in conflict resolution
 - We aim to making the dredging process more efficient through continuous feedback, and R&D
 - We acknowledge the need for adequate funding for the GL dredging program

- Getting the word out: Potential activities and products may include:
 - Long term events calendar with speakers, materials
 - Webinars on major GL seasonal calendar days (Start of navigation, etc.)
 - Pitch stories in trade and mainstream news media
 - Leverage existing newsletters and social media
 - Website development tailored to specific stakeholder groups
 - GLDT video

- Evaluation tools
 - Stakeholder feedback from surveys, meeting statements, teleconference Q&As
 - News content analysis

Beneficial use of dredged material

Clark reported on the National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education (CFIRE-sponsored) summit that was held in March of 2013 and proposed the following follow-up activity to be discussed by the technical committee in its breakout session:

- Compiling information (preparing an inventory) on material placed in CDFs. Discussion held at the CFIRE conference focused on the need for more descriptive data on material placed in CDFs, but on a project-specific basis, rather than generally. Such data could be identified by harbors and by projects, with possibly more assistance and support from the states. Ohio is doing work in this area.
- Clark informed the GLDT of the completion of an updated beneficial use brochure in March.
- Clark briefly informed the group of research being conducted by ERDC regarding sediment quality and characteristics and its impacts on fisheries and habitat pertaining to environmental windows.

Great Lakes Dredging Team structure and function

Ernie Drott, USACE-LRC, and Tom Crane, Great Lakes Commission

Tom Crane and Ernie Drott provided an update on the GLDT structure and function.

Crane and Drott reviewed the framework of the Dredging Team, including membership makeup and responsibilities; and the role of the steering committee; and the creation of three standing committee – technical, outreach and legislative.

Crane explained the purpose of the three standing committee generally as:

- Technical Committee: covering beneficial use of dredged material, confined disposal facility management, open water placement and environmental dredging windows
- Outreach Committee: covering the communication and outreach functions of the GLDT; serves as an information clearinghouse, as an educational arm of the GLDT, and communicates accomplishments and activities of the GLDT. Also discussed was the importance of outreach to local communities on such issues as beneficial use.
- Legislative Committee: Responsible for assembling information on legislative activity, defining appropriate actions for the Dredging Team, and generating new ideas for legislative policy impacting GL dredging. This committee is comprised of the non-federal members of the GLDT.

Crane then provided instructions for participating in committee breakout sessions and provided a charge to the co-chairs of the committees to develop draft committee workplans for 2013-2014.

COMMITTEE REPORTS, PRIORITIES and ACTION AGENDAS

The standing committees reported out on the discussion and outcomes from the breakout sessions.

Technical Committee

The breakout session of the Technical Committee was co-chaired by Gene Clark, Wisconsin Sea Grant and Scott Pickard, USACE-LRB. Clark and Pickard agreed to co-chair the committee during 2013-2014 program year.

Clark and Pickard mentioned that there are four main issues that make up the work of the Technical Committee. These are: beneficial use of dredge material; open lake placement of dredge material; confined disposal facility (CDF) management; and environmental windows. Clark and Pickard talked a bit about the use of a sub-committee structure as it relates to the work of the Technical Committee.

The Technical Committee anticipates that several sub-committees will be established to address ongoing priority issues. Discussion occurred in the following areas:

Confined Disposal Facility management sub-committee

There was discussion as to whether this sub-committee should be merged into other sub-committees and consensus was that it should be continued as its own sub-committee as there are several issues coming up specifically dealing with CDF management, including introduction and spread of invasive species and impacts on wildlife.

Beneficial use of dredged material

Clark suggested the following priorities for beneficial use:

- Compiling information (preparing an inventory) on material placed in CDFs. There is a need for more descriptive data on material placed in CDFs, but on a project-specific basis, rather than generally. Expanded partnerships with the ports and the states will be pursued regarding this effort
- A white paper report on the Erie Pier beneficial use success story. Individual white papers highlighting successes will be a good complement to the recently completed beneficial use brochure.

Open water placement

Steve Galarneau, GLDT Co-Chair, Wisconsin DNR, led a discussion on open water placement. Galarneau discussed the need for an open water placement summit opportunity for states to share their approaches to establishing policies. He noted the need for more guidance on such issues as sorting

mixed-grain size sediments, and what percentages of fine grain material are acceptable for nearshore placement.

Galarneau suggested the following action:

- Planning and convening of an open water placement summit, sometime in early 2014, for the states to review their programs and share their approaches for decisionmaking. The Technical Committee will be involved in overseeing the compilation of scientific information (i.e., the scientific basis) that supports open water placement.

Environmental dredging windows

S. Pickard discussed the issue of environmental dredging windows focusing on turbidity impacts as they relate to dredging window policy, noting that based on work to date, windows regulation may have to be site specific. The question has also emerged as to whether dredging windows can be more flexible as they relate to turbidity in a moving navigation channel. Two actions were suggested from this discussion:

- The compilation of existing research in order to help the Technical Committee discern the need for more entrainment studies.
- Once a bibliography of existing studies is compiled, consider convening a conference or summit on dredging windows.

Legislative Committee

Jan Miller, USACE-LRD provided the update on behalf of the legislative committee. The legislative committee is seeking co-chairs to lead the group preferably one state co-chair and one industry co-chair.

In view of emergency dredging funding assistance being appropriated by at least one state (MI), the committee discussed the issue of Corps' legislative authority to accept/allow the use of contributed funds.

Additional issues discussed during the breakout session by the Legislative Committee that may require policy or legislative action, along with GLDT actions to be taken during the next two years, include:

- The lack of flexibility in moving funds between projects is hampering the Corps' ability to effectively manage funds for all Great Lakes navigation projects. The Great Lakes Navigation Sustainability Act of 2013 (HR 2273) would significantly increase the Corps' flexibility in managing Great Lakes navigation funding. The States (Council of GL Governors and GL Commission) have already expressed their support for HR 2273 and the Legislative Committee will monitor progress in Congress.

- The length of time required by the USACE to process an agreement with the State of Michigan to accept State funds for dredging at Federal harbors is of concern to the States. The USACE informed the Committee that a model agreement for contributed funding is being developed. This model agreement should greatly expedite the processing time for future agreements of this type. The Legislative Committee will monitor the approval of the model agreement.
- One way for states and local communities to save money on dredging is to “bundle” dredging projects at several locations under a single contract. The approach can reduce the costs for mobilization and demobilization of equipment and maximize the economy of scale. Miller informed the Legislative Committee that the simplest approach is for a single entity (state, port authority, local government, or non-profit group) to act as the partner with the Corps and for the non-federal partner to have separate agreements with the other harbors to be dredged, as needed. The states should consider if the “bundling” of dredging projects under a single contract is of interest to their harbors and should coordinate with the USACE as early as possible.
- The USACE policy for prioritization of funding for Federal harbors is based on the tonnage metric and does not directly consider other factors such as the presence of Coast Guard stations, ferry service, or other services provided by the harbor that are essential to the community. Proposed legislation (HR 2273) may provide the USACE more latitude in prioritizing the projects that can use O&M funding for the Great Lakes navigation system. The Legislative Committee will monitor this legislation and if enacted track the USACE implementing guidance on this authority.
- The “mining” of confined disposal facilities or CDFs, for dredged material that is suitable for beneficial use is one way to reclaim disposal capacity while providing a productive use of this resource. Current USACE policies and authorities do not appear to encourage the “mining” of CDFs. In particular, they don’t appear to allow the Corps to subsidize any part of the costs for removal or transport of dredged material. The Legislative Committee will evaluate policy and legislative options to address this issue.
- WRDA 2007 amended the USACE beneficial use authority enabling cost-shared projects for using dredged material for shore protection. The USACE has not actively pursued any projects of this type and there is uncertainty about the state regulatory requirements for such projects. The Legislative Committee will work with the Technical Committee to evaluate the opportunities for this type of beneficial use in the Great Lakes and to determine if there are any policy or authority limitations.
- The USACE has shown considerable reluctance in projects that would place dredged material at sites with any contamination history, including former Superfund sites and brownfield sites. The Legislative Committee will work with the Technical Committee to evaluate means by which the USACE liability concerns could be addressed or avoided.

Outreach Committee

The outreach committee breakout session was chaired by Ernie Drott, USACE-LRD and Sarah Gross, USACE-LRC. Sarah Gross agreed to serve as one of the co-chairs and Joe Cappel, Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority, agreed to serve as the second co-chair during the 2013-2014 program year.

The outreach committee discussed the need for a mission and vision statement, communications goals, and products and services to be provided by the committee.

Outreach committee responsibilities were discussed to include the following:

- Identify and maintain an updated listing of stakeholders
- Identify and maintain a calendar for internal outreach committee meetings and potential outreach events
- Organize or act as liaison for updating and organizing content on the GLDT website
- Encourage collaboration among stakeholders to share information, best practices, new technology and other items
- Assess and update current GLDT products and create new products, as necessary

Potential products of the outreach committee were also discussed to include:

- GLDT Fact sheet
- GLDT informational brochure
- Website update and maintenance
- Bi-annual newsletter, content driven by discussions at meetings/webinars
- Quarterly topical webinars, in-between bi-annual meetings (in conjunction with technical committee)
- GLDT poster

The importance of evaluation tools was also discussed by the committee. Ideas included:

- Direct feedback from stakeholders
- Stakeholder surveys for each committee, GLDT priority or product
- Stakeholder surveys by sector
- Q&As sessions during stakeholder-specific teleconferences and meetings
- Update of key messages and talking points based on feedback

Establishing Overall GLDT Priorities and Communicating with the GLDT between meetings

Ernie Drott summarized the GLDT priorities for 2013/2014 and talked about how the GLDT will do its work and communicate between meetings.

Drott mentioned several broad themes that drive GLDT priorities which include: navigation; environment; sustainability; economic viability; safety; innovation; efficiency; partnership; and, transparency.

He mentioned that an overarching key message of the GLDT is to support efficient and economically feasible and environmentally sustainable dredging in the Great Lakes.

Drott mentioned the strengths of the GLDT which include a dedicated inter-agency team with a range of expertise in different professional areas. The GLDT serves as a forum to share information about science, policy and management options to help agencies promote dredging while ensuring the protection of land, air and water resources. He mentioned the need for the GLDT to be a transparent body in its communications with stakeholders to ensure that they fully understand the near and long-term benefits and risks of dredging or dredging-related activities. He expressed his interest that the GLDT be a neutral forum to discuss issues and a venue for all stakeholders to be heard. Finally, Drott mentioned that the GLDT should be a strong voice for the region and a promoter of dredging in the most efficient and responsible way.

Drott commented that the GLDT is adopting a committee structure to provide opportunities for GLDT members to be more active with the GLDT between meetings and to provide a structure for accomplishing the work of the Team.

Drott suggested that three priorities areas for the Dredging Team are the three main thematic areas outlined in the technical committee workplan; beneficial use, open water placement, and environmental windows. Product development and information sharing will be pursued to advance efforts in these three areas. Drott mentioned the plans to hold a summit meeting on open water placement in 2014.

Drott mentioned a renewed emphasis on outreach and communications led by an outreach committee. Drott suggested priorities in this area will be development of outreach products and most importantly, the revamping of the GLDT website to make it a more useful communications tool.

The legislative committee, called for in the 2006 GLDT charter will help the GLDT stay abreast of legislative and policy developments at both the federal and state levels. Drott mentioned the need to track developments surrounding opportunities for a new Water Resources Development Act to address dredging needs in the Great Lakes.

Drott concluded his remarks by saying that the steering committee and GLDT Secretariat (Great Lakes Commission) will be reviewing and updating the GLDT Charter which expired in 2011. The goal will be to create additional operational guidance, formalize the committee structure and provide opportunities for GLDT members to become more involved in the operations of the Team.

Public Comment Period

There were no comments from the public during the public comment period

Adjournment

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m. on July 17

Summary notes respectfully submitted by:

Tom Crane and Dave Knight
Great Lakes Commission
Great Lakes Dredging Team Secretariat