

# Great Lakes Dredging Team

## 2012 Annual Meeting

### May 17-18, 2012

#### Maumee Bay State Park Toledo, Ohio

### Participants:

See registration list.

### Day One: Thursday, May 17

#### Welcome and introductions

State Co-chair Gene Clark emphasized the GLDT's focus on providing scientific data to support policy driving dredging practices and management of dredged material in the Great Lakes. He noted that there are a number of issue areas in play right now affecting dredging and dredged material management, and that GLDT participants, particularly state delegates, should use the team's annual meeting and other activities to identify and take back information of value to their respective states and agencies.

Federal Co-chair Scott Pickard reviewed the two-fold nature of the GLDT's work in dredging policy as it applies to both how dredging is done, and how dredged material is managed. Regarding dredging practices, issues include such details as where to dredge, how budgets drive that function, how contamination and navigation needs factor in, and how federal guidelines, including Sec. 401 of the Clean Water Act, come into play. He identified past accomplishments of the GLDT such as promoting beneficial use of dredged material as sustainable and practical approaches to such projects as Cat Island in Green Bay, Erie Pier at Duluth/Superior, and the port of Cleveland. He noted the GLDT's work in promoting science-based policy for environmental dredging windows, and open lake placement of dredged material. Looking ahead, he reminded GLDT members that development of team's agenda going forward should reflect current needs and priorities of the states and federal agencies involved, saying, "It's up to you."

#### Great Lakes Restoration Initiative projects with dredging components

- Scott Cieniawski of US EPA Region 5 and Fred Leitert presented on the **Ashtabula Harbor** dredging project which included objectives to delist AOC restrictions on dredging activities, maintain channel depths to support commercial and recreational navigation, and provide structural fill for the closure of a former industrial wastewater lagoon. (See Ppt.)
- Steve Galarneau of the Wisconsin DNR presented on the **Sheboygan River** dredging project with the dual objective of removing contaminants and maintaining navigation. (See Ppt.)
- S. Cienawski and Jill Spisiak Jedlicka of the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper presented on the **Buffalo River** project to remove sediments within federal

navigation channels that contribute to the restriction on dredging from Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs). (See Ppt.)

### U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Great Lakes Dredging Program

- Marie Strum and Mike O'Bryan reported on the status of USACE navigation dredging in the Great Lakes, including the President's FY 13 Operations and Maintenance (O&M) budget for the Great Lakes totaling \$85.9 million (down from \$87.3M in FY12), and featuring \$7 million for the Green Bay Cat Islands habitat construction project; \$31 million in dredging (up from \$26.6M in FY12); \$12 million in dredged material management (up from 11.7M in FY12) and \$3.1 million in Soo Locks asset renewal (down from \$5.2M in FY12). The USACE FY13 dredging program identifies 15 commercial ports funded for dredging, and 66 ports/harbors (20 commercial and 46 recreational) with unbudgeted dredging need. (See Ppt.)

### Use of dredged material for habitat restoration

- Dave Bowman of the USACE Detroit District reported on the Cat Island restoration project which will restore and protect 1,200 acres of wetlands and create more than 200 acres of island habitat under Section 204 authority for beneficial use of dredged material. The project is unique for its extensive collaboration among state, federal and local (county) partners, and for the non-federal cost share arrangement. (See Ppt.)

### Toledo dredged sediment management and use

- Joe Cappel of the Toledo Lucas County Port Authority reported that the Ohio Lake Erie Commission was awarded a GLRI grant to create a sediment management strategy/plan for the Toledo Harbor that addresses recommended short-term (1-5 years) options, long-term (30 year) options, funding mechanisms, and timelines for implementation of recommended approaches. A weighted matrix formula considered such criteria as feasibility, ecological benefits, environmental impacts, human benefits, economic benefits and implementation cost. (See Ppt.)

### Evaluating environmental risks of open water placement

- Joe Kreitinger of the USACE Engineering Research and Development Center reported on work to revise and update federal guidance for open water placement of dredged material in the Great Lakes. Objectives for the revision included the need to develop one guidance document for both inland and ocean testing manuals, and to incorporate risk management concepts into engineering approaches for dredged material management. (See ppt.)

### Field trip: Toledo harbor

- Paul LeMarre, below left, of the Toledo Lucas County Port Authority narrated a cruise of Toledo's working port facilities – including bulk and general cargo terminals such as the Nabisco grain elevator, below right – and the development in process of the National Great Lakes Maritime Museum on the Maumee River, bottom right.



## **Day 2: Friday May 18**

### **Delegation reports**

- Ohio delegates Deborah Beck and Roger Knight reported progress at the beneficial use example of the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve, the former confined disposal facility Dike 14, which was turned over to the Cleveland Cuyahoga County Port Authority as non-federal sponsor and recently opened as a restored habitat and bird watching area. An interim dredged material management plant now in development is assessing alternatives for new approaches, as currently used CDFs are projected to reach capacity by 2015.
- Illinois delegate Jim Casey reported that dredging of the Waukegan Superfund site was initiated this year with the dredged material placed upland. The project to import clean, out-of-basin dredged material from Peoria to restore vegetation to the former USS brownfield site has been completed and was apparently a “one-and-done” project.
- Wisconsin delegated Steve Galarneau reported on dredging to remove contaminated sediment from the Area of Concern (AOC) site on the Menominee River at Marinette-Menominee. Sheri Walz reported that Wisconsin's Harbor Assistance Program had received applications from five harbors totaling \$7.4 million, including one for dredging at Washington Island.

- Mary Knapp of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reported on Great Lakes Restoration Initiative projects involving dredging for remediation and use of dredged material for habitat restoration. Also discussed were Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) projects at Ashtabula harbor (which has been in process for 15 years), and Legacy Act sediment remediation on the Ottawa and Duck Rivers in Ohio.
- Floyd Miras of the U.S. Maritime Administration noted that this marks the 16<sup>th</sup> year of the creation of the Great Lakes Dredging Team in 1996, when both he and Jan Miller of USACE were present at the first meeting and are the only two original members still involved. He noted that there is still a need for the group and pledged MARAD involvement.

#### The Duluth-Superior Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC) model

- Gene Clark presented the rationale behind, and operations of the HTAC, particularly as a vehicle to facilitate beneficial use of dredged material to accommodate the significant volume of material generated by maintenance dredging in the Twin Ports. Comprised of some 30 members representing a diverse group of port stakeholders and technical personnel, the HTAC meets quarterly as a forum for harbor related issues, to promote the port of Duluth-Superior's economic and environmental importance, and to provide planning and management recommendations to the Metropolitan Interstate Council. Special emphasis was put on the HTAC's Dredging Subcommittee which focuses on such issues as habitat creation and dredging regulatory guidance. Also reported was the success story of Erie Pier which has been converted from a conventional confined disposal facility (CDF) for dredged material to a processing and reuse facility (PRF). (See Ppt.)

#### Environmental dredging windows: Update on turbidity impact research

- Doug Clarke, USACE ERDC reported on his latest research on impacts on walleye from turbidity resulting from dredging plumes. (Ppt coming)

#### Meeting the challenge of the non-federal cost share for dredging projects

- Jan Miller, USACE Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, reviewed current USACE requirements for cost sharing, specifically for dredged material management including beneficial use. He noted that producing the non-federal match for projects can be problematic when few Great Lakes harbors have a governmental body with taxing authority or a source of revenue. Recreational and low-use harbors are facing a particularly difficult situation where they will have to do everything at their own cost. Options for minimizing cost share requirements were discussed, as were current federal budget trends including the phase-out of earmarks and ongoing across-the-board cuts. (See Ppt.)

#### Action agenda

## Beneficial Use

- Compile case studies, update website, and produce an updated, revised printed publication to replace the existing brochure, with the updated version featuring:
  - Beneficial use projects, at least one in each state
  - Relevant available tools and organizational models
  - Revised or updated guidance documents
  - Other experiential data to promote sustainable beneficial reuse of suitable dredged material

## Environmental dredging windows

- Convene at least two-day workshop for state fisheries biologists, administrators to:
  - Review latest available research on impacts of dredging and dredging plumes
  - Identify data gaps
  - Better inform and coordinate dredging window policy among states and provinces

Roger Knight of Ohio DNR noted that from the perspective of state fisheries management, much more explicit stakeholder involvement is needed. He cited Australia as an example of how that can be done effectively.

## Open lake placement of dredged material

- Use new data to revisit science-based risk models and decision-making frameworks to refine management decisions and work toward updating the Great Lakes Testing Manual

# # #