

**Great Lakes Dredging Team  
2016 Fall Webinar Summary  
December 8, 2016**

**Opening remarks and introductions**

Steve Galarneau (WI DNR) and Marc Tuchman (USEPA) welcomed attendees and thanked them for their participation. Tom Crane (Great Lakes Commission) welcomed participants and gave housekeeping instructions for the webinar. He mentioned that this meeting will be the last for the two co-chairs and that an election committee will be formed later during the day.

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Great Lakes Dredging Program Update**

Marie Strum (USACE-Detroit District) presented the update for the dredging program. She mentioned that WRRDA 2014 had a positive impact on funding for all components and helped improve the development of small harbors.

Strum summarized the navigation funding history, as well as the FY16 funding status. She also presented the FY16 dredging requirements and funding, as well as the FY17 Great Lakes Navigation President's Budget and projects. She also described the dredging funding trends between 2007-2017 and historical funding the Great Lakes low use projects.

Strum described some dredged material management initiatives, like engaging stakeholders and partners in developing innovative long-term solutions, fostering partnership with EPA's programs (GLLA and GLRI), maximizing the use of fill management and facility adaptation, and collaborating with partner agencies to reduce the amount of sediments entering navigation channels. She summarized the current dredged material management situation and discussed two projects: Duluth-Superior and Cat Island.

Strum also talked about the Soo Locks situation. She presented the history of the locks, talked about reliability improvement paths, discussed the long-term plan and described on-going efforts.

**Water Resources Development Act Update**

Jim Sartucci (K&L Gates) presented an update on the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). He mentioned that there were major efforts done in 2016 to develop it. He said the House was voting on it on the December 8, but didn't know when it would happen in the Senate. There were things in it that were upsetting for some Senators and we need to see how everything plays out in the end. This bill includes several things, including drinking water, infrastructure and amendments to the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act.

The 2014 bill had many provisions. It allocated portions of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) among various interests by category, almost all temporary, and these temporary ones would be made permanent in 2016. There would be 10% of all maintenance spending for emerging harbors, and 10% of priority spending for the Great Lakes navigation system. Underserved and energy ports would not be made permanent. The 2014 bill also has spending targets for the HMTF at large, nationwide. Since it has been formed, spending never equaled the amount incoming, and stakeholders made efforts to try to increase spending to match revenue. Targets are set with a percentage of the previous year's revenue, and because of that 2017 would have lower amount because there was a drop in revenue in 2016, the 2016 bill would institute a floor to prevent this situation.

Sartucci also talked about other sections of the new WRDA, including section 1189 that would prevent situations like the one in Cleveland, section 1104 for the inventory and assessment of all breakwater walls and jetties, and section 1133 about information that has to be made publicly available in one location on the website.

When asked about section 1188, Sartucci said that it makes a statement that is important. It encourages to resolve disputes between state and federal partners in accordance with regional plans and involvement of regional body. About section 1122, Sartucci said that it goes hand in hand with sections 1188-1189. WRDA does not change requirement for the Corps to dispose of dredged material in the most cost-effective manner, but there are a lot of other provisions to come up with ways to dispose in a way not necessarily mostly cost-effective but possible. Tom Crane mentioned that the pilot program component of the bill may be of interest for the GLDT and we will think of ways to involve states in selection of projects. We will also ask for the involvement of regional teams when projects are developed.

### **How to work with the federal standard, and other tips from San Francisco Bay area on beneficial use of dredged material**

Brian Ross (U.S. EPA, Region 9) was invited to discuss the situation of beneficial use of dredged material in the San Francisco Bay area. He mentioned that the GLDT seems more organized than what he experiences in the San Francisco area. There are a few dredging teams in region 9, but nothing like this.

The Corps is the biggest dredger in the San Francisco Bay area, with 60-65% of dredging. They dredge 1.5 to 2.5 M yards annually, volumes similar to the ones in the Great Lakes. Most of the time, the federal standard applies, and in some cases, beneficial use represents the federal standard.

In Region 9, there are regional plans. The real issue is limiting disposable volume of dredged material to favor beneficial use, especially since ocean disposal is much more expensive than beneficial use. They have a broad definition of beneficial reuse, and it applies mostly to tidal restoration projects, to raise elevation in areas affected by tides, to restoration of tidal marshes, and helps with sea level rise concerns.

Some of the strategies they use to elevate the cost of disposal vs. reuse are requiring two bid schedules, including any “exigent” (non-contract) costs to the Corps and allowing work outside of the dredging window if sediment is reused. They can also reduce contract cost for reuse with multi-year and/or multi-project contracts and use separate contracts for dredging and transport.

### **Adjournment for lunch**

### **Afternoon session**

Tom Crane welcomed participants back and introduced current co-chairs of the team and of the committees.

### **Great Lakes Dredging Team update**

Crane mentioned that the summary from the annual meeting that was held in Chicago in May had been sent to all webinar participants. It will be posted on the website as soon as possible. He also mentioned that committee workplans are all available on the website. He said that Karen Keil (USACE-Buffalo District) will be giving an update on the status of documents later in the afternoon. Crane also mentioned that a status of the National Dredging Team (and other regional dredging team) will be prepared and shared with members of the GLDT.

In preparation for the 2016 fall webinar, the charter and operations guidance document was reviewed to address some issues. The nomination process for elections was refined to allow voters to add a name to the ballot. Another major change is the reduction of subcommittees. The legislative committee never really established itself and it was recommended we remove it. Legislation will still be covered, but differently. There was also a change in the name of categories of members and other participants to acknowledge people that are not necessarily official members, but are very involved in a committee. The rest of changes was to correct grammatical errors. There was no objection by participants and the document was considered approved.

For the upcoming co-chairs election, a few people have agreed to serve on the nomination committee. Work of the committee will start shortly. Since the Annual Meeting, a new support contract was executed and it will take us through the end of this fiscal year.

Crane talked about the science and policy symposium that was first discussed at the 2015 Annual Meeting in Green Bay. It is currently on hold, mostly because there is no financial support for it. There was a special session in Chicago after the Annual Meeting where over 35 participants discussed several issues, including “how clean is clean”, more opportunities for beneficial use, and habitat and wetland creation. Notes for this event will be made available as soon as possible. Depending on the planning of the 2017 Annual Meeting, there might be another special session planned. Another option is to hold

topical webinars to discuss some of these issues. We will keep on exploring potential funding opportunities to hold an in-person event, like a symposium or a conference.

### **Outreach Committee Update**

Joe Cappel (Vice-President of Business Development, Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority) presented the update for the outreach committee. He mentioned the update and approval of the workplan. Discussions were started at the Annual Meeting in Chicago, and changes were made based on funding and discussion among committee members. The final version is available on the website.

A new issue of the newsletter was published prior to the webinar. He asked participants to send stories and pictures if they want to contribute to the newsletter. The committee will develop a new mean of internal communication, e-news. Staff is currently developing a form to solicit content and the goal is to publish the e-news quarterly. Cappel also reminded participants that we always need more people in the outreach committee and encouraged them to be involved.

### **GLDT Products Updates**

Karen Keil presented the update. The first product she talked about is the Beneficial Use Policy and Projects white paper. The guide was drafted a year ago and was reviewed and commented by the entire GLDT. The document is now available on the GLDT website, and Keil hopes it reflects everyone's opinion and is useful.

The second document discussed was the Beneficial Use Testing Manual, which is under development. A draft version was distributed in October and is currently under review. Keil asked participants to submit comments by mid-January at the latest. A webinar was held on November 18 and seven out of the eight Great Lakes states were represented. During the webinar, there were a few questions raised, and some of them are answered on the last page of the PPT presentation available on the technical committee page on the website. The question of whether or not it has to be published in the federal register was asked, but it is not necessary because the manual does not represent binding regulations. It is an informal guidance document that provides framework and recommendations.

### **Technical Committee Update**

Karen Keil and Jim Sharrow (Duluth Seaway Port Authority) presented the technical committee update. The last committee meeting was held on August 18. The workplan was revised and is now available on the committee page on the GLDT website. The status for each task is:

- Beneficial use lessons learned: Joe Kreitinger will work with collaborators to prepare the document, and Jim Sharrow is helping. They hope to conclude in June and use this document to prepare a peer-reviewed paper.
- CFIRE: Dave Knight and Gene Clark reported that ongoing funding for the International Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research (CFIRE) was not obtained, but alternative funding

sources for follow-on work to CFIRE-supported projects dealing with beneficial use of dredged material are being explored.

- Open water placement white paper: This was an outcome from the summit that was held in Maumee in May 2014. The USACE can't move forward on that topic for now and the paper is on hold until the situation changes.
- Dredging beneficial use impairment restriction lifting: They are developing a list of delisting criteria, but have not taken actions under that issue. The International Joint Commission (IJC) did some work on that, but didn't offer any insight.
- State of the Science and Policy: We are still interested in this issue and would like to hold an event at some point, but there is no activity for now.
- Turbidity impact: State DNRs accepted the fact that they don't have the science that clearly defines what windows are and what they should be. Because of that, they have to choose very large windows. Research funded by Sea Grant is underway and researchers will be reaching to USACE for information.
- Mitigation: All states were asked to give their input, but not all have responded yet. Sharrow will contact the ones who haven't. Minnesota is in the process to review requirements when building small docks under certain permits and once this is finalized, they will share with other states.

### **Member updates**

Pam Allen (Ohio EPA) said that beneficial use rules for Lake Erie will become effective on March 31, 2017. The agency will rewrite permits for uses of dredged material and certain uses will be approved by rule to ease the process. A bill was introduced for dredged material not to be considered waste. She also mentioned she was retiring and Karl Gebhart will be the appointed person in the interim.

Gene Clark (University of Wisconsin-Sea Grant) said they have a proposal with Sea Grant. He also said that Cat Island is finishing with 400,000 cubic yard of material this year.

Jim Killian (Wisconsin DNR) said that they shifted to the center of Cat Island and leaving the west cell because of escaping turbidity. Plants were piled together and used as buffer material. There is an option to put semi-permanent or temporary back wall/leg to stop turbidity. The habitat will be incorporated in design of beach slope. Despite modeling and preparation, this is a large scale experiment, things change seasonally (e.g., wave, water level) and the key is flexibility.

Elisha DeFrain (Michigan DOT) said that an executive order was passed in March and charged DOT to create a report that identifies best practices to modernize the state transportation infrastructure. This includes information on marine freight, port maintenance. It should provide recommendations to governor's office and include a section on the Soo Locks.

Dan Breneman (Minnesota PCA) said that the 21<sup>st</sup> ave project will wrap up next July with 5,000 cubic yards of material. They will then move upstream to the 40<sup>th</sup> ave site and permit for this project should be approved for placement in 2017.

### **New Business**

Save the date

Steve Galarneau invited participants to the GLDT Annual Meeting that will be held in Duluth, in May 2017. Tom Crane added that we are planning on preparing a field trip and working on logistics. An email will be sent to the team with more details. Crane mentioned these dates were chosen because of the annual maritime lunch held on May 22. We will try to start our meeting with a joint luncheon before opening the GLDT meeting.

Nominating Committee

Galarneau said there was a nominating committee created for elections of new co-chairs. Crane discussed the process, and said a slate of candidates would be identified by the committee by March 1. The GLDT team will also be able to provide additional nominations. Elections will be conducted electronically and the elected co-chairs will be announced at the Annual Meeting, when they will start their mandate.

### **Closing thoughts**

Tom Crane and Steve Galarneau thanked the participants and insisted on the importance of having the states engaged and involved. They reminded participants to consider being involved in a committee if they are not already. Crane mentioned that we will try to have summary notes available on the website as soon as possible.

**The GLDT meeting was adjourned**