Technical Committee Work Plan 2018-2019

Supporting efficient and responsible dredging for the Great Lakes region

Overview: The focus of the Technical Committee is on actual operations involving navigation dredging and dredged material management in Great Lakes federally authorized harbors and waterways. Overarching committee priorities include:

- Promote a safe reliable Great Lakes navigation infrastructure through maintenance of adequate channel depth for commercial and recreational waterway users;
- Advance the technology of dredging and dredged material management in the Great Lakes and connecting channels;
- Promote maximum efficiency, cost-effectiveness, sustainability, and timeliness in the dredging process and in the management of dredged material; and
- Support the advancement of best environmental management practices in dredging and dredged material management to protect, restore, and enhance Great Lakes water resource and nearshore and upland areas.

Membership: The Technical Committee is co-chaired by two Great Lakes Dredging Team (GLDT) members representing the federal and state delegations respectively. Committee membership may include other state and federal GLDT members, dredging and dredging R&D practitioners, industry stakeholders, non-governmental organization representatives and other GLDT constituencies as appropriate.

Work plan development: The work plan is based on issues and trends within the Great Lakes dredging environment. Concerns for the Technical Committee fall into major issue areas: 1) beneficial use of dredged material; 2) management of confined disposal facilities (CDFs); 3) Policy and Implementation Tools; and 4) evaluation of environmental dredging windows.

1) Beneficial Use of Dredge Material - Develop new policy, guidance, and implementation strategies to promote and implement beneficial use projects in the Great Lakes.

2) Management of Confined Disposal Facilities - Explore ways to extend the useful life of CDFs though implementation of sediment processing/soil blending operations and on-site beneficial use projects.

3) Policy and Implementation Tools - Develop geospatially referenced tools to identify, evaluate, and track potential beneficial use project opportunities and projects.

4) Symposium: Evaluation of Environmental Dredging Windows - Develop a "state of science and policy" symposium on using the environmental windows approach currently that Duluth is trying

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Activity	Description	Schedule
	Beneficial use of dredged material	
1) Beneficial Use "Lessons Learned" Status: **Ongoing**	1) The USACE Detroit District and Army Engineer Research and Development Center – Environmental Laboratory will develop a "lessons learned" document regarding successful beneficial use of dredged material projects at Duluth Harbor and the St. Louis River Area of Concern. It will include a discussion of the permitting and regulatory frameworks used from both the state and federal perspectives.	This document is expected to be drafted before the next annual meeting. Manuscript in progress; publish before next meeting. Proponents: Joe Kreitinger and Dan Brenneman
2) Conversion of CDFs to processing and re-use facilities Status: **New**	2) A second phase, potentially leading to a demonstration project, is being pursued. Karen Keil's proposal addresses conversion of CDFs; and recovering capacity in CDFs. Initial application for ERDC funds was unsuccessful, but discussions, including within the USACE leadership development program, are continuing.	Proponent: Karen Keil for lead; support and input from states. (this is what Ohio is trying to do; this is what is done at Erie Pier)
3) Regional Beneficial Use Testing Manual (Environmental Evaluation and Management of Dredged Material for Beneficial Use) Status: **Ongoing**	3) This guidance manual will focus on testing and evaluation protocols to determine the suitability of dredged sediments for beneficial uses, including placements consistent with Engineering with Nature. It will include a consideration of environmental programs within each of the eight Great Lake States that may affect determination of suitability for upland beneficial uses. The manual currently lacks recommendations for specific sampling protocols (frequency of sampling, sampling for nutrients, etc.). Additional input from the States and/or ERDC may be needed to include these items. Look at State of Maryland manual (state lead manual)	The draft manual was provided for GLDT review in October 2016, and comments were received between January – March 2017. Goal is to complete revisions by Sept 30, 2018. Next review anticipated this summer. Proponent: Karen Keil
4) Lessons learned paper on direct receipt of USACE dredged navigation materials Status: **New**	Preparation of a paper on the direct receipt by a private contractor of dredged material for in-water placement associated with a harbor development. Jim Sharrow provided some input on the pitfalls and acceptable practices learned during the Pier B project, which accepted about 40,000 cubic yards of dredged material directly	Propose to have some kind of draft write up or guidance before next annual meeting. Proponents: Jen Miller and Hal Harrington

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Activity	Description	Schedule
	from the Corps' dredging contractor. USACE could provide the requirements for the use of a "contractor selected disposal site" which would be useful information throughout the Lakes for similar projects. Issues to consider and discuss include: • Dredged material quality and the contingency plan for material that doesn't meet. (What people think they are getting verses actual properties of the material once it's dredged.) • Design engineers need to be able to define RANGE of properties that are acceptable for the properties needed. • Corps policy and requirements for contractor chosen disposal sites. • Liability and ownership issues: when does the material become "owned" by someone and what about future uses of the material?	
5) Potential Beneficial Use Site Database Development Status: **Ongoing**	Based on ongoing work in Ohio, developing a database/GIS to identify potential beneficial use sites throughout the Great lakes. The database would be a great tool to promote beneficial use and to support systematic and proactive development of projects. Abstract under development by GLC; needs funding support. Next step in evolution of GLC web based tool.	Just starting; anticipated to develop in scope over the next year. This project will need buy-in and commentary from the states as it develops. Proponent: Dave Knight
<u>Environmental dredging windows</u>		
Research on turbidity impact as it relates to windows policy Status: **Ongoing**	ERDC has completed multiple studies and papers on the impacts of suspended sediment and dredging on various species (fish, larvae, other wildlife). ERDC is willing to conduct additional research, but input is needed from technical team members on pressing Great Lakes issues.	ERDC Future Research – not currently defined as a specific activity but potentially to be added. Proponent: Burton Suedel

Symposium: State of the Science and Policy Issues		
Convene a State of the Science and Policy Issues symposium. The goal of the GLDT is to facilitate and promote timely, cost effective, and environmentally sustainable operations of U.S. harbors and channels throughout the Great Lakes. The purpose of this symposium would be to discuss the science and policies behind some of the issues impacting efficient and environmentally sustainable dredged material management decisions.	Potential focus for symposium is Environmental Windows and making science based decisions. The topic is being discussed by Dave Knight, Gene Clark, Port of Duluth, based on the model being used in Duluth to approach windows. Environmental Windows: Can we develop a windows program in the Great Lakes? If the environmental windows are reviewed in terms of dredging schedules: Are there budgetary advantages to consolidating environmental windows? Where is there latitude to dredge outside of the restrictive times?	Duluth is looking at a model stakeholder process to determine windows, based on a paper by the Transportation Research Board. Port of Duluth and Gene Clark are involved with this. Proponent: Dave Knight

Potential informational webinar topics list:

- Mitigation for open water habitat loss (Jim Sharrow)
- Dredging BUI and removing/resolving this impairment (Beth Murphy or other USEPA GLNPO staff)
- Guest discussions from ports in other regions of the country, to expand on topics of interest to the Great Lakes.
- Non-Corps project presentations (remediation/superfund projects for example)
- success stories!
- New England or NE US speaker on coastal resiliency?
- International harbors and their approaches to sediment management?
- Portland district - large volume sediment management on the Columbia River?
- University of Akron has stated that they have topics and presenters that could be of interest
- Direct receipt of beneficially usable dredged material by contractors

Topic identified for Fall 2018 Informational Webinar:

- The USACE "Engineering with Nature" concept as it is being applied to beneficial use of dredged material. Presenter: Burton Suedel, USACE Engineer Research and Design Center (ERDC).