

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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May 7, 1998

TO: COMMISSIONERS AND INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: JAMES RAIVES, FEDERAL CONSISTENCY COORDINATOR
TAMI GROVE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

RE: MANAGEMENT TO CONTAMINATED DREDGE MATERIAL IN
THE LOS ANGELES REGION

A. INTRODUCTION

On October 12, 1997, Governor Wilson signed into law SB 673 authored by Senator Karnette (Long Beach). This legislation requires the Commission and the Los Angeles Region Regional Water Quality Control Board (Board) to establish a multi-agency Contaminated Sediments Task Force (Task Force). It also requires the Commission to actively participate in the Task Force and assist in the preparation of a long-term management plan for dredging and disposal of contaminated sediments in the Los Angeles area. That plan will consider aquatic and upland disposal alternatives, treatment, beneficial re-use, and other management techniques. Additionally the plan will include a component focused on the reduction of contaminants at their source. The legislation supports funding of the long-term plan with annual appropriations of \$100,000 annually to both the Commission and the Board for five years.

The Commission, the Board, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District (Corps) actually established the Contaminated Sediment Task Force before the Legislature approved SB 673. Prior to the passage of SB 673, the Task Force had already drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and investigated several technical issues. SB 673 provides the Task Force with a needed mandate and the first increment of financial support for continuing this initial work and the ultimate completion of the long-term plan.

B. CONTAMINATED SEDIMENT TASK FORCE

The Corps, EPA, Commission, and the Board first established the Contaminated Sediment Task Force on September 26, 1995. The Task Force includes representatives from the Corps, EPA, Commission, Board, Port of Long Beach, Port of Los Angeles, City of Long Beach, Los Angeles County Beaches and Harbors, Heal the Bay, and other interested parties. Since the passage of SB 673, a new impetus has been added to the effort and the structure of the Task Force has evolved into of an Executive Committee, a Management Committee, five Strategy Development Committees, a Technical Advisory Committee, and an Interim Disposal Advisory Committee.

The Executive Committee consists of the head of the four regulatory agencies responsible for managing dredging activities (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. EPA, Regional Board, and Commission) and will conduct annual meeting to assess the progress of the Task Force. The Management Committee is the main evaluation and decision making body for the Task Force and will conduct meetings of the Task Force, which are open to the public. The five Strategy Development Committees are the Upland Disposal and Beneficial Re-Use Committee, Aquatic Disposal and Dredge Operations Committee, Watershed and Source Reduction Committee, Implementation Committee, and Sediment Criteria Committee. These Committees will prepare specific parts of the Strategy. The Technical Advisory Committee will meet on an as needed basis to provide technical support to the Task Force. Finally, the Interim Disposal Advisory Committee will evaluate dredging and disposal project proposed prior to completion of the Strategy.

C. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

As noted above, the Task Force has drafted an MOU creating the Task Force with the primary goal of developing a Long-Term Management Strategy for contaminated dredge material. While most of the interested parties, including the Coastal Commission, have signed the MOU, the Task Force is now circulating a draft amendment to reflect the requirements of SB 673 (Attachment A). The Task Force anticipates completing and executing that amendment by June.

D. ACTION PLAN AND INTERIM MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Task Force is in the process of developing two key documents that will direct its operations for the next five years. The first document is an action plan for the development of a long-term management strategy for contaminated dredge material. The Task Force should have that document completed by mid-May. The Action Plan describes the organization and membership of the Task Force, identifies the goals and objectives, describes the content of the Strategy, and includes a work plan for the completion of the strategy (Attachment B).

The second document is an Interim Management Process. The purpose of this report is to identify protocols and agreements for evaluation and coordination of projects involving

the dredging and disposal of contaminated sediment before the completion of the long-term strategy. This interim strategy establishes an Advisory Committee that will provide review and coordination for specific projects. The Task Force has published a draft of this interim strategy and is seeking comments. The Task Force anticipates completion of this report by June (Attachment C).

E. COMMISSION STAFFING

In order to best position staff for this work, we intend to carry out the Commission responsibilities through a team effort, with one member of the team located in the Long Beach Area Office and the other in the San Francisco headquarters office. Recruitment for these assignments is now underway. Since the passage of SB 673, Tami Grove, Deputy Director, and James Raives, Federal Consistency Coordinator and long-term participant in the Task Force work, have spear headed the Commission's efforts to advance the development of the management plan and establish strong coordination links with the Regional Board.