



Date: April 9, 2002

To: Contaminated Sediments Task Force and Interested Parties

From: The Contaminated Sediments Task Force Advisory Committee

Re: Port of Los Angeles Channel Deepening Project – Final Contaminated Sediments Task Force Advisory Committee Memo

The Advisory Committee (AC, see attached membership list) of the Contaminated Sediments Task Force (CSTF) recently completed a series of four meetings with representatives of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District (LAD) and the Port of Los Angeles (POLA). The purpose of the meetings was to solicit the assistance of the AC in preparing a Contaminated Sediments Management Plan (CSMP) for the Port of Los Angeles Channel Deepening Project. This memo is intended to serve as a record of comments provided by the AC during the meetings and to document project modifications made in response to comments of the AC. It also is a record of key points of agreement regarding dredging and disposal of contaminated sediments, and any areas of continuing disagreement.

The primary purpose of the proposed project is to deepen the inner harbor of the Port of Los Angeles to improve deep-draft navigation safety, to maximize the efficiency of the Port of Los Angeles to accommodate deep-draft commercial vessels and increasing economies of scale, and to maximize the beneficial use of dredged material. The proposed project consists of dredging the Main Channel and turning basins to a project depth of -53' MLLW to improve navigation and disposing of dredged materials in areas designated by the Port of Los Angeles.

The AC is the body set up by the CSTF to review projects that include dredging of contaminated sediments until the CSTF can complete its work and finalize a regional strategy for dredging and disposing of contaminated sediments. The LAD and POLA approached the AC in November 2001 to begin the consultation process for the Channel Deepening Project. The project at that time was referred to as the Recommended Plan by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps). This initial design included dredging of approximately 6.6 million cubic yards (mcy) of channel sediments with disposal in the following sites: 1) 1.5 mcy in the Pier 300 Expansion Site; 2) 1.7 mcy in the Southwest Slip Fill Site; 3) 1.0 mcy in the Cabrillo Shallow Water Habitat (CSWH) Expansion Site; and 4) 2.4 mcy at the LA-3 Ocean Disposal Site.



The series of meetings focused on project modifications. The discussion below will present modifications for each disposal site. Each disposal site was discussed at varying lengths at all meetings. The approach of presenting the results by disposal site is for clarity only and does not reflect any ordering of discussion by the AC. The majority of discussions dealt with the Southwest Slip Fill Site, so that site shall be discussed first.

Southwest Slip Fill Site. The Recommended Plan and the first design submitted to the AC were based on a surface area limitation of 35 acres of fill. The 35 acres was based on mitigation credits available to the POLA. The Southwest Slip Fill Site was divided into two pieces: an East Fill and a West Fill. The basis for this decision was the result of studies conducted for a container terminal in this area and navigation studies conducted to ensure that the project would not impact the nearby liquid bulk terminal at Berths 118-119. The East Fill was approximately 20 acres in size (including 2 acres for the Berth 100 site) and the West Fill was approximately 15 acres in size.

Prior to the first AC meeting, the POLA and the LAD determined to place all sediments unsuitable for ocean disposal into the Southwest Slip Fill Site. Design for this was constrained by many factors, including a maximum land fill size of 35 acres, constraints presented by the navigation study on which areas could safely be filled, the inability, due to its geometry, to use any of the East Fill as a disposal site for sediments unsuitable for ocean disposal, and site topography that included deeper areas constructed for shipyard use that were ideally suitable for disposal of sediments unsuitable for ocean disposal. The resulting design included a ten-acre Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) Site adjacent to the West Fill. This design avoided impacts to the nearby liquid bulk terminal, while providing sufficient volume to dispose of all identified sediments unsuitable for ocean disposal from the proposed project.

Members of the AC expressed concern about the CAD site. Additional studies were conducted by the POLA regarding alternative designs and the availability of mitigation credits. The design presented in the Contaminated Sediments Management Plan (CSMP) expanded the West Fill from 15 to 23 acres in place of the previously proposed CAD. This design met the requirements to contain all sediments unsuitable for ocean disposal, avoid navigational impacts to the liquid bulk terminal, and provided an alternative to placing a CAD site in the harbor.

The design alternative for the Southwest Slip Fill Site as presented in the CSMP was determined to be the most desirable option by members of the AC.

Pier 400 Submerged Storage Site. A disposal or storage site adjacent to Pier 400 was first proposed in the Feasibility Study SEIS/SEIR, September 2000, conducted by the



Corps for the project. The POLA proposes to use the site as a temporary submerged storage site for sediments. Sediments placed within the site could be dredged as needed for future fill within the POLA. Use of this site as a storage area was proposed for sediments that would otherwise be disposed of at the LA-3 ocean disposal site. Three design alternatives were presented to the AC. The design selected represents the best compromise between storage volume and avoidance of the existing Terminal Island Treatment Plant (TITP) outfall. The Pier 400 site, as assessed in the Feasibility Study, was 160 acres in size. The Pier 400 Submerged Storage Site will be approximately 120 acres in size. The site would be undisturbed for the first three years after construction to allow recolonization, after which the material may be reused. The timeframe for reuse was unspecified and is dependent on unknown future uses.

The design alternative for the Pier 400 Submerged Storage Site as presented in the Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) was acceptable to the AC members representing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB), the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the California Coastal Commission (CCC). The AC member representing Heal the Bay did not support this design alternative.

All members of the AC except Heal the Bay agreed that the storage of dredged materials for reuse is preferable to permanent disposal of the materials in an ocean disposal site. It is Heal the Bay's position that the impacts of creating such a site would not constitute beneficial reuse, but would result in the loss of habitat due to periodic disturbance and damage after the initial three year period. Because the POLA is not required to mitigate these impacts under the Safe Harbors Agreement, it is Heal the Bay's position that the storage site would result in the loss of 120 acres of outer harbor habitat. Heal the Bay would prefer ocean disposal of clean sediment to the construction of the Pier 400 Submerged Storage Site.

Malaga mudstone. Formation materials in the channel entrance are classified as Malaga mudstone. These materials were initially proposed to be placed offshore at the LA-3 ocean disposal site in the September 2000 EA. The AC voiced dissenting opinions on this issue. Members from the US EPA, and the LARWQCB disagreed with this option, preferring to see the surplus material kept within the port for future reuse. A proposal to place the Malaga mudstone within the Cabrillo Shallow Water Habitat Expansion (CSWHE) was made. However, as design proceeded it quickly became clear that there would not be sufficient volume within the CSWHE to contain all of the Malaga mudstone that required dredging and disposal as part of the proposed project. To address this, the area directly south of Pier 400 was proposed as a temporary sediment storage site for sediments that otherwise would be disposed of at the LA-3 ocean disposal site. The



design of the Pier 400 Submerged Storage Site places the Malaga mudstone in the bottom of the site, to be overlain by fine-grained sediments removed from the Main Channel. The Malaga mudstone is low in organic carbon and would serve as a poor substrate for recolonization by benthic organisms. The Main Channel sediments are much higher in organic carbon and would be more easily and quickly recolonized following completion of construction.

The location of Malaga mudstone in a temporary submerged storage site as described above was acceptable to the AC members representing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB), the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and the California Coastal Commission (CCC). The AC member representing Heal the Bay did not support this option.

Although Malaga mudstone materials were determined to be suitable for ocean disposal by the Corps, with the U.S. EPA concurring, and have previously been dredged and disposed of within the Outer Harbor and at the LA-2 ocean disposal site, they contain naturally occurring elevated levels of metals. It is the position of most of the members of the AC that Malaga mudstone is suitable for unconfined ocean disposal and that the naturally occurring metals do not represent a threat to the environment. Further, covering the Malaga mudstone with Main Channel sediments will provide additional seclusion from the benthic environment. It is Heal the Bay's position that the Malaga mudstone should undergo bioassay testing prior to any dredging or disposal of these sediments.

Water Quality Monitoring. The CSMP contained a proposed water quality monitoring plan. One recommendation proposed by the AC was made to the monitoring plan. The water-sampling requirement will be changed from a one-time event to once per month during dredging of sediments unsuitable for ocean disposal. Dredging of sediments suitable for ocean disposal would be monitored by the weekly monitoring requirements, but chemical analyses of water samples would not be required. It is estimated that it will take approximately three months to dredge and dispose of the sediments unsuitable for ocean disposal resulting in a total of three water-sampling events

All members of the AC except Heal the Bay found the plan acceptable with the proposed change. In comments addressed to the AC after the last meeting, they expressed the concern that the monitoring plan is not sufficiently defined and a contingency plan of BMPs that will be implemented in the event that monitoring indicates an exceedance of water quality standards has not been developed. Subsequently the POLA is addressing these concerns by providing a more specifically defined plan, including contingency BMPs.



US EPA suitability determination. Due to the numerous modifications of the proposed project, The AC members exhibited some confusion regarding exactly which sediments had been determined to be suitable and unsuitable for ocean disposal. The US Corps of Engineers have made several suitability determinations since the inception of the original project, and the US EPA has made several suitability determination concurrences starting with an initial suitability determination concurrence in 1998. The LAD will be providing the US EPA with a final suitability determination and will request concurrence on the final suitability determination for the proposed project. This will result in a single suitability determination for the entire project and a final suitability determination concurrence, superceding the previous suitability determinations and concurrences. The members of the AC concurred with this course of action.

Contaminated Sediment Management Plan. Members of the AC were provided copies of the draft CSMP for review and comment. The revised CSMP was provided to them as part of the SEA. Except as noted in this memo, all members of the AC concur with the findings and proposed actions contained in the CSMP.

Advisory Committee Membership List

I. Name	Agency
Steven John	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Michael Lyons Region	California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles
Jessica Morton	California Coastal Commission
Mitzy Taggart	Heal the Bay
Bill Paznokas	California Department of Fish and Game