



## **Press Release**

**(March 5, 1999)**

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### **Task Force Agencies Sign onto Memorandum of Understanding to Manage Contaminated Sediments in the Los Angeles Basin**

(LONG BEACH) –

A major step forward was taken this week to deal with the dredging and disposal of contaminated sediments from ports and marinas in Los Angeles County. State and federal agencies responsible for regulating dredging in the Los Angeles region signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop and implement a long-term management plan for dredging and disposal of two and one-half million cubic yards of contaminated sediments over the next five years in Los Angeles County. The agencies that have signed the agreement are California Coastal Commission, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, United States Environmental Protection Agency, United States Army Corps of Engineers, City of Long Beach, Port of Long Beach, Port of Los Angeles, and Los Angeles County.

The California Coastal Commission and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board established the multi-agency *Los Angeles Basin Contaminated Sediments Task Force* in 1998 pursuant to legislation authored by State Senator Betty Karnette. The Task Force began its work last year and has developed consensus among diverse stakeholders regarding the immediate management of dredging and disposal for several current projects. "Getting all the key players together to address the problem of contaminated dredge materials is a major accomplishment," said Peter Douglas, Executive Director of the Coastal Commission.

Los Angeles County includes two of the nation's largest commercial ports and several major marina complexes and small-craft harbors. Periodic dredging is needed to maintain channels and berthing areas, and to expand and modernize ports and harbors.

Human activities, including urbanization of the Los Angeles area, have led to the discharge of pollutants into waterways that lead to the ocean through ports and harbors. Pollution sources include municipal and industrial wastewater, stormwater runoff, aerial fallout, and oil and hazardous material spills. Determining protective and cost-effective disposal alternatives, beneficial re-use, and source reduction and controls are critical issues for managing contaminated sediments.

The Task Force and its various subcommittees meet regularly in the Los Angeles area. Their meetings are open to the public. Also active on the Task Force are the California Department of Fish and Game and the environmental group, Heal the Bay. Additional information on the Task Force and its activities can be obtained from its *December 1998 Report to the Governor and the Legislature* or its web site: <http://www.ceres.ca.gov/coastalcomm/sediment/sdindex.html>.

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