

Delta Long Term Management Strategy Executive Committee Meeting October 24, 2006

Meeting Summary

On Tuesday, October 24, 2006, the Executive Committee of the Delta Long Term Management Strategy (Delta LTMS) met at the Sacramento Convention Center, where the 4th Biennial CALFED Science Conference was also convening. The meeting was called to:

- Present and review the draft Delta LTMS Charter and Framework
- Discuss dredging topics recommended for study
- Receive stakeholder input

Comments from Executive Committee

Col. John McMahon, USACE, welcomed participants to the first meeting of the Executive Committee. A list of attendees is at the end of this meeting summary.

After being introduced by Col. McMahon, each Executive Committee member provided brief remarks on the importance of the Delta Long Term Management Strategy. Karen Schwinn, USEPA Associate Director of Water Division, spoke on behalf of Regional Administrator Wayne Nastri, who could not attend. Karen spoke of USEPA's leadership role in the SF Bay LTMS, which is serving as a model for the Delta LTMS. She encouraged the group learn from the many lessons and successes of the SF Bay LTMS. Lester Snow, DWR Director, stressed how the Delta is becoming the focus of numerous planning efforts, including the Delta Risk Management Study (DRMS) and the Delta Vision process. Tom Howard, CA State Water Resources Control Board Executive Director, spoke on behalf of Chairperson Tam Doduc, who could not attend. Tom said the State Board would like the Delta LTMS to reduce uncertainty about the impacts of dredging and dredged material placement on water quality. Bill Marshall, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, spoke on behalf of Chairperson Robert Schneider and read a statement prepared by him. Bill added that difficult questions regarding dredging and dredged material placement need to be answered in a public forum like the Delta LTMS. Joe Grindstaff, Director of CALFED Bay-Delta Program, commented on the importance of working collaboratively to resolve concerns about Delta dredging. Mike Reagan, Delta Protection Commission, stated that the goals of the Delta LTMS are aligned with those of the Commission, and they are very excited to be a part of this collaborative process.

Delta LTMS Charter and Framework

Arijs Rakstins, USACE, described the history and background of the Delta LTMS effort. He reviewed the proposed structure and process as outlined in the Charter and Framework. The Delta LTMS is organized to include an executive committee, a management committee, and an interagency working group, in addition to a strategy review group (stakeholders), technical work groups, and an independent science review panel. Arijs stated that once the governing boards of the various signatory agencies have approved the language of the two documents, the final

versions will be routed for official signing. He stressed that none of the agencies will be sacrificing regulatory authority by signing the Charter.

Arijs directed the attention of the group to a list of topics suggested for study under the Delta LTMS effort. He asked the audience to consider if the list is complete. Recommended topics are related to: permitting coordination, dredging activities, testing protocols, material placement and reuse, and participation in the Delta LTMS.

Public Comment

Col. McMahon asked the group to provide comment on whether Federal, State, and local agencies should coordinate dredging activities, and if so, how. He requested comments on the list of suggested study topics. Furthermore, the Col. asked attendees what a successful project would look like and what can be done collectively to ensure success. People wishing to address the Executive Committee were asked to fill out Speaker Cards.

Ellen Johnck, Bay Planning Coalition, told the Committee that there is definitely a need for collaboration. She felt the list of topics was complete and accurate. She strongly recommended the formation of a Dredged Material Management Office (DMMO) similar to one that has been formed in SF with the SF Bay LTMS, and this should be an immediate priority. She stated that dredging and keeping commerce flowing is critical. Ellen recommended “marrying” the materials and levee needs. Clarity is needed on the science of how sediment is characterized. She said the Bay Planning Coalition is willing to help find funding. Ellen later asked how to more involve stakeholders.

Alex Hildebrand, South Delta Water Agency, spoke of the ongoing degradation of south Delta channels. The South Delta Water Agency has a plan for dredging that has an inter-district scope (they will be sending their report to DWR). Coordination is key. Alex recommended using dredged material on the landside of the levees.

Roberta Goulart, Contra Costa County Water Agency, expressed her pleasure with the Delta LTMS effort thus far. She asked the Executive Committee to move the Delta LTMS forward without delay to fill in the gaps left by previous efforts to coordinate permitting. Promoting levee rehabilitation and beneficial reuse is a very good thing. This effort must be coordinated with the Delta Risk Management Strategy and Delta Vision process. Short-term solutions are needed. CCCWA is able to secure funding, particularly when supported by solid science, thus the more documentation with proven science, the better.

Tom Zuckerman, Central Delta Water Agency and BDPAC Levees Subcommittee co-chair, asked for immediate action. The situation is urgent, and a great deal of time has already been spent on trying to clarify and simplify the process. It is incumbent upon each agency to make this happen. The difficulty in trying to get a permit to dredge is extreme, and it takes too long. He agrees with the recommendation to set up a DMMO and move to achieve short-term objectives. Use the momentum of Hurricane Katrina, and the impetus of the upcoming elections.

Darryl Foreman, South Delta Water Agency, asked that the South Delta Flood Conveyance Plan and Ecosystem Restoration Program be considered in the Delta LTMS effort. Darryl later commented that the participation of CA DFG, US FWS, and Corps Regulatory is desired.

Walter Yep, Port of Stockton, asked that Col. McMahon be committed to maximizing outputs in the Delta LTMS during his three-year appointment. Cleared channels can be used to move materials, thus reducing truck traffic and air pollution. Corollary benefits to the environment are numerous.

Tom Scheeler, Port of Sacramento, also stressed the urgency of resolving the dredging situation. There is an opportunity to use dredged material to stabilize levees, and make channels navigable, which is vital to California's economy. When California's economy is jeopardized, it is a national problem. Cooperation is very important.

Donn Oetzel, California State Lands Commission, asked the group to consider the relationship of the goals—are they compatible?

Next Steps

Col. McMahon announced that a poster describing the Delta LTMS is on display in the Exhibit Hall downstairs. He thanked the group for attending and providing comments. The next step is to circulate the final versions of the Framework and Charter for signatures. An effort to develop a DMMO and go after "low hanging fruit" will be the group's first priorities. He asked the members of the Executive Committee to make any closing remarks. Tom Howard announced that the State Water Board will discuss the Delta LTMS at their board meeting later that week. Lester Snow re-iterated that a great deal of dredged material is needed to secure levees and islands like Jones Tract. Mike Reagan suggested instituting a "one stop shop" for permits, but disconnections between General Plans should be worked out. Bill Marshall added that the CV Regional Board wants this to be resolved quickly, too. Always functioning in "crisis mode" is not smart. Col. McMahon once again thanked participants and adjourned the meeting.

Attendees

COL John McMahon, USACE
Karen Schwinn, USEPA
Bill Marshall, Central Valley RWQCB
Tom Howard, California State Water Resources Control Board
Joe Grindstaff, CALFED Bay-Delta Program
Lester Snow, DWR
Mike Reagan, Delta Protection Commission
William Brostoff, USACE
Al Paniccia, USACE
Lynn O'Leary, USACE
Jessica Burton Evans, USACE
Irene Davies, USACE
John Headlee, USACE

Brian Ross, USEPA
Sergio Guillen, CALFED Bay-Delta Program
Bob Yeadon, DWR
Sue McConnell, Central Valley RWQCB
Bill Marshall, Central Valley RWQCB
Charles Gardiner, CirclePoint
Pam Jones, CirclePoint
Sonja Wadman, CirclePoint
Roberta Goulart, Contra Costa County Water Agency
Brian Muluey, Kleinfelder
Bruce Thompson, San Francisco Estuary Institute
Walter Yep, Port of Stockton
Teresa Pacheco, Port of Stockton
Alex Hildebrand, South Delta Water Agency
Darryl Foreman, Land Planning+Entitlements Inc./South Delta Water Agency
Tom Zuckerman, Central Delta Water Agency
Ellen Johnck, Bay Planning Coalition
Christine Boudreau, Anchor Environmental
Susan Tatayon, The Nature Conservancy
Tom Scheeler, Port of Sacramento
Linda Fiack, Delta Protection Commission
Donn Oetzel, State Lands Commission
G. Fred Lee, G. Fred Lee and Associates
Ric Murphy, DeltaKeeper
Randy Hanson, USGS
Marcia Brockbank, San Francisco Estuary Institute
Jeff Kaspar, Port of Stockton
John Margowski, Placer Environmental
Phil Giovanini, Central Valley RWQCB
Christy Herron, Marstel-Day LLC
Susan McLain, Stockton Sailing Club
Glenn Gebhardt, RD 2062
George Nichol, CA State Water Resources Control Board
Steven Chappell, Suisun R.C.D.