

CHETCO RIVER GRAVEL REMOVAL
PHASE 2 KICK-OFF MEETING
DSL LAND BOARD ROOM
OCTOBER 17, 2007 (1:00 – 2:30)

ATTENDEES:

Monty Knudsen (by phone), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Michael Tehan, NMFS – Portland Office
Ken Phippen, NMFS – Roseburg Office
Chuck Wheeler, NMFS – Roseburg Office
Larry Evans (by phone), Corps of Engineers, Portland
Judy Linton, Corps of Engineers, Portland
Teena Monical, Corps of Engineers, Eugene Field Office
Yvonne Vallette, Environmental Protection Agency
Jim O'Connor, USGS
Glenn Hess, USGS
Louise Solliday, Department of State Lands
Kevin Moynahan, Department of State Lands
Bob Lobdell, Department of State Lands
Sally Puent, Department of Environmental Quality
Alex Cyril, Department of Environmental Quality
Patty Snow (by phone), Department of Fish and Wildlife, Salem Hdqtrs
Todd Confer, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Gold Beach Field Office
Jay Charland, Department of Land Conservation and Development
Bill Yocum, Freeman Rock
Robert Elayer, Tidewater Contractors
Joy Smith, Umpqua Sand & Gravel
Kelly Guido, Umpqua Sand & Gravel
Chris Doane, LTM
Rich Angstrom, OCAPA
David Pratt, Curry County
Jodi Fritts, Curry County
Molly McCarthy (by phone), Senator Wyden's Office
Terri Moffett, Senator Smith's Office

INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING REMARKS:

The meeting started off with introductions and opening remarks. Larry Evans indicated the Corps of Engineers is very committed to continuing the collaboration with all partners in the issues surrounding gravel removal, not only as they apply to the Chetco River but as the study moves to other watersheds. If studies determine mining can continue in the Chetco River, the Corps will work towards the development of a regional general permit which would be used as a template for other systems. Larry indicated the Corps would look to the gravel industry to identify the next river system to be studied.

Kevin Moynahan echoed Larry's comments and added that evaluating the gravel issue is especially important given that some permits authorized by DSL now require federal permits which in turn trigger other review requirements (such as the endangered species act and water quality certification).

Rich Angstrom spoke in support of continuing the executive and technical teams as was discussed in the April 25, 2007 meeting. Rich stated the gravel industry would like the Umpqua River system to be evaluated next.

DISCUSSION POINTS:

Judy Linton started the discussion by stating the question we are trying to answer is whether mining can continue in the Chetco River beyond current permit authorizations. The term “current permit authorizations” refers to the permits issued in August 2007, to Freeman Rock and Tidewater for mining above the estuary (DSL permits year to year, Corps permits and 401 certifications and BOs expire in 2009). If mining can continue beyond 2009, work will then focus on trying to develop a general permit. If it is determined mining cannot continue, the reasons for coming to that conclusion will need to be spelled out in detail as the Corps will use that information in making future decisions on requests for Department of the Army permits for gravel removal. Such decisions could include permit denials.

Robert Elayer asked if the study will include the estuary as Tidewater was not given a permit to mine their estuary site. It was concluded the study areas (RM 11 to the mouth within the estuary) used in evaluating the Chetco River permit requests will also apply to this Phase 2 effort as there are no operators above the upper Tidewater site. The NMFS representatives all agreed the entire system needs to be looked at as a whole (estuary and upper reaches). We need to take into account all dredging occurring in the watershed, including work being done by the Corps of Engineers and the Port and marinas. For Phase 2 it is important to get the study design and data collection started so we don't miss the 2007/08 winter season.

USGS is interested in participating to the extent possible, but will need to know what information is necessary before determining the agency resources (including time and cost) required. Joy Smith indicated Umpqua Sand and Gravel has gathered much information over the years they have been mining which might be useful to the gravel study efforts; other operators may also be in the same position. Kevin Moynahan offered DSL as a repository for this data. One of the charges to USGS will be to act as a neutral party to interpret existing industry and agency data usefulness and determine what other data will be necessary as well as how to use it all.

Much discussion followed on the make-up of the Executive/Policy and Technical Teams. Questions were raised about who will lead each group and what the charge of each group will be. There needs to be a purpose and need statement for each team as well as a process for communication between the teams. For the gravel industry, Rich Angstrom asked that he plus one industry representative (Joy Smith) be on the Executive Team. For the Technical Team, Rich asked to have Chris Lidstone (consultant contracted by OCAPA) plus one industry rep (Bill Yokum or Robert Elayer). One issue for the Executive Team to discuss will be potential funding for the data collection (USGS work, etc.) and possibly other portions of Phase 2. We talked about how to pull in the counties in response to Curry County's request to wrap their permit process into the state and federal processes— perhaps the Association of Oregon Counties should be at the table. A suggestion was also made that we rotate county representation on the teams depending on the river system being studied. The Technical Team will largely be composed of agency reps who have been working together to draft the Sediment Removal Recommendations paper and now are charged with integrating the IMST review recommendations. Funding and workload issues will need to be discussed for those agency reps to continue working and take on this new charge.

We had a brief discussion about floodplain mining and whether this should be included in the overall evaluation. DOGAMI would be a key player in that discussion. Kevin will contact Gary Lynch to discuss DOGAMI's participation in the Phase 2 effort.

Timelines: The timelines for the action items listed on the agenda are proposed, based on the need to have some decision and product prior to the expiration of authorizations issued to Freeman and Tidewater above the estuary. *Note: If it is determined mining can continue, the focus will be on having no lapse in authorizations to remove gravel; therefore, the end dates of the Corps/DSL permits, 401 certification, and ESA BiOp will drive the date the decision and final product is required.* DEQ and NMFS are concerned we will not have enough time and information from the required monitoring for the existing permits to allow us to make decisions according to the proposed timelines. USGS believes we will not be able to have much information beyond existing with only one season to collection data. Generally more than one season is needed. This enforces need for Technical Team to meet as soon as possible to determine what information needs to be collected.

We concluded by discussing the possibility of using other groups to assist in the study efforts:

- Oregon State University Gravel Symposium: Guillermo Giannico (Associate Professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife) sent an email in early summer asking about interest in putting together another gravel symposium. It appears this may not be possible until March 2008 given other work.

- Oregon Solutions Group: they may be able to help most with facilitation of meetings and figuring out allocation among users. Corps and DSL need to determine if that is worthwhile.

- Portland State University Conflict Resolution Group: Mike Tehan was approached by this group. We may not be at a stage where we need their efforts now, but they may be beneficial in the future if decisions focus on how to allocate gravel resources.

FOLLOW-UP ACTION ITEMS:

1. Schedule meeting of gravel technical team: Monty Knudsen offered to have Janine Castro take the lead.
2. Schedule meeting of Executive Team: Kevin Moynahan will take the lead with the goal of having a meeting the first part of November.
3. Kevin Moynahan will contact Association of Oregon Counties and DOGAMI to inquire about a representative from each participating in teams.
4. Umpqua system data information: Joy Smith will provide a summary of existing information to Kevin Moynahan.
5. Rich Angstrom requested minutes to memorialize this and all subsequent meetings of both teams.