

Taskforce update:

A meeting/conference call of the regulatory agencies workgroup (RW) was held on October 9, 2001. Those RW members participating included Christine Valentine, Tom Melville, Linda Rankin, John Malek, and for the Corps Kim Larson and myself.

The purpose was to discuss issues related primarily to predisposal biological baseline studies for the Deep Water and Shallow Water Sites (Site E expanded) at the mouth of the Columbia River. The Corps had been perusing the possibility of using an outside consultant to convene an expert panel. The consultants estimated cost ranged from \$258,000 to \$175,000 based upon the scope of work. It was felt by the RW that time and funds would be better spent in the field so other options were presented. It was decided that a sources sought announcement would be prepared. A sources sought announcement is issued to facilitate the identification of potential interested firms or organizations capable of performing various work or studies. In this particular instance sources capable of designing and conducting oceanographic studies necessary for the baseline biological surveys for the ocean dredged material disposal sites are being sought. Following this a request for proposal will be prepared. Proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee followed by contract award. Fieldwork would begin in the spring of 2002. Input of the RW and Taskforce is sought at this time in identifying firms or organizations that may be interested in responding to the sources sought announcement. Further input will be requested in developing the biological baseline request for proposal.

This process of sources sought, request for proposal, and contract award will be pursued rather than convening an expert panel for the overall development of baseline and monitoring studies. However, the RW did discuss the possible need of requesting recognized experts to address specific topics. Impact to crab due to dredged material disposal was one topic that the RW felt could be addressed through this process. Additional information will be provided as available.

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