

Gravel Tech Team Mtg  
April 24, 2008, 9-11  
COE office, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor Cascade Room  
Agenda and Meeting Notes (*notes in italics*)

Present: Judy Linton, Jay Charland, Alex Cyril, Don Anglin, Lori Warner-Dickason, Patty Snow. By phone: Robert Elayer and Chuck Wheeler.

1. *Judy started the meeting by providing a recap of the public meeting held in Brookings on April 9<sup>th</sup>. The group discussed the issue of public involvement on the gravel teams by various stakeholder groups, which was repeatedly brought up at the public meeting. The tech team members agreed that participation by stakeholders other than the industry was important, but thought that it might reduce efficiency of the technical work that needed to be done. All agreed that it was a decision for the Exec team. One possible recommendation would be to reduce the tech team participation by industry and expand the Executive Team participation to include all stakeholder groups.*

*Chuck mentioned that he thought one of the prevailing concerns raised during the public meeting was the COE's decision to use the RGP process instead of an IP. A recommendation was made for the Corps to do more outreach in this area. (Follow-up note: the Corps is developing a communication plan that proposes a process for sharing information about the development of the proposed RGP with all stakeholders. The primary means of communication identified would be by posting information on the Portland District Regulatory website and by sending regular updates on progress/status to a project email distribution list.)*

2. Discussion of Executive Team issues - specific to the Chetco River evaluation - (the following is from an email from Kevin Moynahan):
  - a. Consideration of current in-water work period recommendations from ODFW. Point was raised the current in-water work periods concentrate mining activity in short windows not necessarily related to the changing conditions on a particular waterway. This results in greater impacts during the short in-water windows that might otherwise be spread out - with appropriate safeguards to protect habitat etc. - over longer periods - thereby possibly resulting in less impacts and more resource benefits.

*The operators want to be able to work whenever low water allows, allowing them to remove material as orders are generated, rather than remove the maximum amount allowable during the in-water work period so they have enough material for the whole year.*

*The group discussed this extensively. The main objective for restricting in-water work is to limit the turbidity plume events to one per year. There is*

*little concern about allowing work to occur earlier than July 15 or past September 30, if high flows are not expected and if the operators allow for time to do planting and restore access areas. But to allow additional in-water work periods when flows are historically low, may result in more than one turbidity plume per year. The resource agencies agreed that a longer in-water work period could be established based on historical hydrograph information and the extension process could be used for exceeding the end date for any particular year. But, the operators need to reserve time for establishment of mitigation and restoring access ways well prior to high water. Additional in-water work periods would not provide protection of species.*

b. Consideration of current agency required aggregate removal methods including the depth of approved scalping activities. Point was raised the current required mining methods may actually (unintentionally) be doing more harm to the bars than alternative methods - including those previously used - thereby resulting in negative resource impacts.  
(At this point, a detailed study of these issues is not being requested of the Tech team. What is requested is a reasoned consideration and discussion by Tech team members of the relative merits of each issue.)

*The Tech team discussed observations made during the site visit. Chuck mentioned that he did not see a lot of changes in the Freeman bar from last year. The bar did not appear to have gained additional material in the buffer areas and the plantings in the head of the bar did not appear to survive. It is not clear, however, if adequate time for plantings to establish prior to high water would have improved this. On the N. bar of the Freeman operation it appears they lost 30' off the top end. The bar is still not stable. The group hypothesized that the bar may be recovering from past use. The consensus of the team was that more information and time is needed before they can determine whether or not the removal methods are effective in helping to stabilize the bar. The Federal Sediment Considerations paper is still the most current compilation of science and adequate time to see results from implementing these limitations should be allowed. The group also thought they should consider changes in other bars on the system in the analysis. The tech team needs the Geomorphology folks to weigh in on this issue.*

*The group also discussed the idea that reduced recruitment rates exacerbates the accumulation problem at the estuary supporting the need for more removal up river. Chuck mentioned that there is beneficial use of the gravel by fish between these bars and the estuary so this should not be an argument for more removal or methods that increase sediment trapping. NOAA is OK with material removal for navigation and suggestions for how that material could be used by the gravel industry were discussed. Judy will talk with John Craig to see if materials generated from navigational dredging could be used.*

2) *Begin to work towards developing Chetco River RGP parameters – what issues need to be considered? (This also ties into item 1 – the Exec Team is asking us to keep all options open in the beginning.)*

*Several of the parameters were discussed during the course of the meeting: removal methods, minimizing turbidity plumes, requirements for the timeframe for plantings, potential to extend work windows as warranted, suspending mining to allow for bar stabilization, more aggressive stabilization measures.*

3) How do we address biological issues on the Chetco – are further studies required?

*The group agreed that the planned geomorphological studies will provide extensive habitat information which will inform on the biological issues. Alex mentioned that DEQ was assisting the watershed council in their data collection efforts (invertebrate sampling, temperature and dissolved oxygen). The group started to discuss the usefulness of that data, but the parameters of the data collection were unknown. ODFW has a lot of fish data for the river that could be used. The group did not determine what information was needed or whether existing efforts could be used in any way.*

4) Begin to develop cost estimate for Umpqua River work – what are our info needs? (sediment studies, biological studies...) (Joy Smith, Umpqua Sand & Gravel, is preparing a summary of the existing information they have that may assist in this effort)

*Patty reminded the group that Phase I work needed to be done on the Umpqua before phase II should be considered. There was no further discussion.*

5) Schedule next meetings for May, June, July (even if it is only for a quick conference call to check in)

*Next meetings are tentatively scheduled May 20, 9-11:30 in Salem (ODFW office) and June 17<sup>th</sup>, 10-12, in Portland (COE office).*