

PROCEEDINGS

Great Lakes Dredging Team 2019 Annual Meeting

June 10-11, 2019

Buffalo Grand Hotel, Buffalo

Buffalo, New York

Day One

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. EDT on June 10 by Federal Co-chair Karen Keil, USACE Buffalo District; Non-federal Co-chair Tom Rayburn, Lake Carriers Association; and Tom Crane, Deputy Director, Great Lakes Commission

Welcome: A welcome was provided by Mark Wendel, Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation Senior Director of Design. He greeted the GLDT participants and noted his interest in the meeting as his agency is planning to use clean dredged material in a 150-acre redevelopment project on the Buffalo waterfront. Wendel said he looked forward to working with the Corps of Engineers and others in a “great partnership for waterfront restoration.”

Great Lakes Dredging Team Update: T. Crane reported on activities since the last GLDT meeting.

- Election of officers: Election of steering committee co-chairs is to be deferred pending clarification by USACE of Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) criteria for non-federal officers. New co-chairs of the Outreach Committee are Federal Co-chair Jim Luke, USACE Detroit District, and Non-federal Co-chair Jim Killian, Wisconsin DNR. Current Technical Committee co-chairs will remain, with Jennifer Miller, USACE Chicago District as Federal Co-chair and Scudder Mackey, Ohio DNR Office of Coastal Management as Non-federal Co-chair.
- Roster update: New GLDT members include, for Minnesota, Jeff Stollenwerk, Duluth Seaway Port Authority; for New York, Jennifer Street, New York Department of State; for USACE, Monica Ott, Chicago District, and Esther Johnson and Jim Luke, Detroit District.
- Plans are now being finalized for a symposium exploring development of a regional policy for regulating environmental dredging windows in Lake Michigan. The Great Lakes Fishery Trust is providing funding support for the symposium, with matching funds coming from the Illinois DNR, Wisconsin DNR, Great Lakes Fishery Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A planning team will be formed to help develop an agenda for the symposium which is tentatively planned for the first or second quarter of 2020.
- All GLDT committees were convened as required, including the Nominating, Outreach and Technical Committees. GLC staff also facilitated planning and logistics for the GLDT 2019 annual meeting.

GLDT Members Roundtable

- Michigan: Larry Karnes, Michigan DOT, reported that much re-organization was underway among state agencies following the 2018 election of Democratic Governor Gretchen Whitmer, including the former Department of Environmental Quality, which has been renamed the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE). He noted that EGLE, MDOT and USACE have formed an inter-agency group to identify shared interests in new projects. He also reported that the State of Michigan has contributed \$52 million to the new Soo Lock construction project, which will be used specifically for dredging of the upstream channel. T. Rayburn noted that the Lake Carriers' Association sent five bulk carrier captains to the USACE Engineer Research and Development Center to run simulation models of the new lock and provide advice.
- Minnesota: Dan Breneman, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) reported that newly elected Governor Tim Walz appointed Linda Bishop as MPCA Commissioner in January and that she has listed the St. Louis River Area of Concern (AOC) in Duluth as one of her top ten priorities. He also reported that the Harbor Technical Advisory Committee (HTAC) for the Duluth-Superior harbor has been discussing the potential for beneficial use of dredged material in a major Minnesota DOT project to rebuild the Highway 535 interchange in Duluth.
- Ohio: David Emerman, Ohio Lake Erie Commission, reported that the election of new Governor Michael DeWine has resulted in several new state agency department heads in his state as well. He noted that his agency's priority continues to be increased application of beneficial use of dredged material to phase out open lake placement in Lake Erie, and that the agency is working closely with USACE on several project sites. He said that progress has been made over the past year to declassify dredged material as a solid waste. Rules have now been put in place that allow regulators to look at dredged material on a harbor-by-harbor basis and grade it appropriately for its usability.
- New York: David Clarke, New York Department of Environmental Conservation, reported that his agency is working with AOCs and Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs) in the federally authorized harbors of Rochester and Buffalo, and one non-federal harbor on Lake Ontario. Jennifer Street, New York Department of State, reported that much attention is being paid to coastal resiliency plans, particularly on Lake Ontario where high water levels and flooding persist. She noted that the state is always looking for opportunities for beneficial use of dredged material.
- Wisconsin: Jim Killian, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource, also reported on extensive state agency reorganization under new Governor Tony Evers. He reported that several beneficial use projects are underway in partnership with local communities, including habitat restoration at Allouez Bay in Superior and Cat Island in Green Bay. He noted that the Port of Green Bay is seeking a Request for Proposals (RFP) for beneficial use of material dredged from that harbor, and that Wisconsin is interested in the concept of processing and re-use facilities for dredged material, such as Erie Pier in Minnesota, and similar sites that have been legislatively enabled in Ohio.
- USACE Buffalo District: Ron Kozlowski reported that the district continues to work closely with the state of Ohio on several beneficial use projects and with the state of New York on incorporating beneficial use into restoration work on the Niagara River's Unity Island.

- USACE Detroit District: Marie Strum reported that favorable budget appropriations in recent years have supported an increase of activity on several fronts, including the new Soo Lock project, more dredging, and more repair work on navigation structures. She noted that her staff continues to look for innovative solutions for dredged material management, such as have been explored in the Duluth-Superior harbor.
- USACE Chicago District: Jennifer Miller reported that a beach nourishment and habitat restoration project for four communities on Illinois's Lake Michigan coast has been selected for a USACE national beneficial use pilot program under Sec. 1122 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2016. She added, however, that the project has not yet been funded.
- USACE Great Lakes and Ohio River Division: Carl Platz reported that the Division is working with FACA guidance to ensure continuing function of the Great Lakes Dredging Team. He said that the Division office continues to be a strong advocate for beneficial use of dredged material and as such supports the development of the Beneficial Use Testing Manual; coordinating with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on the Great Lakes Testing Manual, last updated in 1998; and integrating the USACE Regional Sediment Management Program with the GLDT. He noted that while record-high lake levels have eased the need for navigation dredging in many locations, they have created other problems and challenges too.
- U.S. Maritime Administration: Tom Crane of the GLC staff reported on the recent retirement of long-time GLDT member Floyd Miras who headed the MARAD Chicago office and recognized Floyd's many contributions to the team over several years. His replacement for the Chicago office has not yet been announced.
- U.S. Geological Survey: Jeff Steevens reported that his agency is looking forward to completion of the Beneficial Use Testing Manual being developed by USACE Buffalo District.

Case Study: Ashland Superfund Site

Brian Hinrichs, Senior Client Manager for Foth Infrastructure and Environment LLC, summarized this remedial dredging project noting that it was one of the largest ever design/build projects of its kind carried out in Wisconsin. The nine-year project was initiated in 2010 on the site of a plant formerly used to produce coal gas. Phase One of the two-phased, multi-year project involved pollutant source control and treatment of some 90,000 cubic yards of soil. Phase Two was construction of a 900-foot breakwater which was completed in nine months, including permitting and construction, and the building of a water treatment plant. The reclaimed site will now be used by the City of Ashland as a marina.

[*\[Slide presentation here\]*](#)

Update on Ohio applications of beneficial use to phase out dredged material placement in Lake Erie

Scudder Mackey, Chief of the Office of Coastal Management for the Ohio DNR, reported that Healthy Lake Erie funding of \$10 million was closed out in 2018 after having provided to \$5.35 million to Toledo beneficial use projects, \$3.65 million to Cleveland projects, and \$1 million to Sandusky projects. Recent state legislation has included HB 529, which provides \$10 million in capital appropriations, and SB 299 providing another \$10 million. These appropriations will support work such as a sediment reprocessing facility in Conneaut; another sediment reprocessing facility in Lorain and in-water habitat restoration;

and multi-cell restoration work at the Cedar Pt. causeway. The recently established H2Ohio Fund will provide \$90 million over the first two years and \$100 million over the next ten years; and will focus mainly on nutrient reduction for the western Lake Erie basin. Mackey outlined Ohio's move toward performing more systematic analysis to identify and qualify near-term and long-term projects. This method uses a GIS database to sequence projects and enable planning for two and three years ahead.

[\[Slide presentation here\]](#)

Great Lakes Dredging Program for 2019

Marie Strum, Chief of Engineering and Technical Services Division for USACE Detroit District, reported on upcoming USACE navigation work for the fiscal year, noting that while the operation and maintenance (O&M) budget for the Great Lakes has steadily increased over the past several years, the FY20 President's Budget of \$88.4 million for O&M reflects a sharp decline from FY19's \$190.7 million which included a \$107.5 million President's budget, plus \$83.2 million in workplan additions. Dredging activity for this year, totaling 12 projects, will thus be down from previous years, and most of the planned O&M work will involve maintenance of the over 104 miles of navigation structures for which USACE is responsible, including piers, revetments, jetties and breakwaters. Construction General project work will focus on the building of the new large lock at the Soo Locks and a new confined disposal facility (CDF) at Illinois's Calumet Harbor. Recreational harbors, which have generally not fared well in years of budget constraint, may again be de-prioritized in favor of CDF construction. Over the years of healthy budget increases since 2014, the dredging backlog in Great Lakes harbors and channels has been reduced from 18 million cubic yards to 13 million. Key O&M projects this year will include installation of barriers on Green Bay's Cat Island to retain fine dredged material placed there and reduce turbidity; the dredging of toxic material and raising of CDF dikes at Indiana Harbor, and the Calumet CDF, for which the City of Chicago has agreed to be a project sponsor. Strum also noted that the International Great Lakes Datum (IGLD), the reference by which Great Lakes water levels are measured, is to be updated for the 2017-23, and adjusted to reflect ongoing glacial rebound. The new IGLD is to be released in 2025 and, based on decisions made as early as this fall, could result in a difference ranging from five to ten inches.

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Field trip: Buffalo Outer Harbor, Unity Island

<https://news.wbfo.org/post/how-reuse-wet-sludge-what-great-lakes-dredging-team-town-discover>

- Andrew Hannes, USACE Buffalo District

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Day Two

Great Lakes Dredging Team Technical Committee Breakout Meeting

Participants:

Federal Co-chair Jennifer Miller, USACE Chicago District
Non-federal Co-chair Scutter Mackey, Ohio DNR
Immediate Past Federal Co-chair Karen Keil, USACE Buffalo District
Dave Knight, Great Lakes Commission Contract Staff
Jason Miller, USACE Detroit District
Esther Johnson, USACE Detroit District
Melissa Bosman, USACE Detroit District
Mike Habberfield, USACE Buffalo
Ronald Kozlowski, USACE Buffalo
Jessie Petit, USACE Buffalo
Shawn McCabe, USACE Buffalo
Neil Miller, USACE Buffalo
Joe Kreitinger, USACE ERDC
Richard Saichek, USACE Chicago
Vanessa Steigerwald-Dick, Ohio EPA
Dan Breneman, Minnesota DNR
David Clarke, New York DEC
Jim Killian, Wisconsin DNR
Elisha Wulff, Michigan DOT
Larry Karnes, Michigan DOT
David Emerman, Ohio Lake Erie Commission
Brian Hinrichs, Foth
Stan Ekren, Great Lakes Dock & Dredge

Update of Technical Committee roster

The most recent committee roster was reviewed to identify participants no longer involved, replacements whom have been named, and vacancies to be filled. A new roster will be posted when names of all current participants are assembled.

2018-19 Workplan updates:

1. Lessons learned: Beneficial use of dredged material projects at Duluth Harbor and the St. Louis River Area of Concern
 - J. Kreitinger noted that in this case study there were two lessons to be learned:
 1. Engineering and science are not always the hurdles to beneficial use projects, but decision making. In evaluating individual projects, the question

that should be asked is “How was each decision made? How did all the factors like engineering, science, politics, etc. play into it?” It would be great for the states to share their experiences on this.

2. There are plenty of “old-timers” around with experience on beneficial use of dredged material, but there are also many new personnel coming into agency positions who need to get educated and engaged in this area. How do we do this?
 - J. Miller suggested a webinar on the decision path.
 - S. Ekren cited the National Reservoir Sedimentation and Sustainability Team supported by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation as a potential resource.
 - S. Mackey suggested a third topic for lessons learned should be implementation. He, J. Kreitinger, D. Emerman and J. Miller voiced interest in convening a separate conversation to pursue this. J. Miller noted that USACE has planning assistance to the states funding; would this cover 408 work? Also, the EPA’s Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) could potentially provide the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funds for longer term planning for coastal management related work?
2. Conversion of CDFs to processing and re-use facilities
 - This topic will be combined with later discussion on Section 408 projects.
 - Ohio EPA indicated that they would end control of the dredged material once it is harvested from the sediment reuse facility. It would not retroactively apply any changes in solid waste regulations to material that has already left a facility.
3. Regional Beneficial Use Testing Manual
 - This topic will be discussed in a special session led by K. Keil following the GLDT meeting.
4. Direct receipt of USACE dredged material for beneficial use by private contractors
 - J. Miller noted that it boils down to NEPA compliance.
 - S. Mackey suggested exploring the concept of broader NEPA authorization for direct receipt, rather than separate authorizations for each individual project.
 - D. Emerman noted that beyond NEPA, there is also the issue of liability. He also suggested that instead of NEPA authorization for each individual site, authorization could be made for categories of proposed uses. He also recommended that the question of liability be answered by science, not legality.
 - R. Kozlowski noted that the liability issue is complicated by the prospect of changing standards for what is clean. Dredged material may be tested as clean enough for beneficial use today, but the standards for “clean” may change and property owners want assurance that they will not assume an unforeseen liability in the future.
 - J. Kreitinger suggested, as a middle ground, shared liability.
5. Region-wide potential beneficial use site database

- D. Knight reported that this project, which would take the Ohio model of a database of all potential beneficial use sites, and extrapolate it to the entire Great Lakes, is still an abstract waiting for a funding source. He requested that the project remain in the work plan.
6. What does failure look like?
- S. Mackey suggested this discussion, noting that, while failure is usually apparent, in projects for beneficial use of dredged material in a Great Lakes setting, success or failure can depend on how expectations are set. If a project is not a failure, by definition, is it then considered a success? If, for example, a project is designed for one lake level, the outcomes can vary significantly as lake levels change. Project designs thus need to plan for different functionalities up front. The group discussed whether the topic of regulatory issues related to beneficial use of dredged material should be included in the regional beneficial use testing manual, for example, the use of “leaky” structures for aquatic habitat creation. J. Kreitinger noted the importance of understanding project goals and objectives for beneficial use in a dynamic environment.
 - This concept will be explored as a potential topic for the GLDT educational webinar series.

Great Lakes Dredging Team Outreach Committee Breakout Meeting

Participants:

James Luke, USACE Detroit District
Jim Killian, Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
Tom Rayburn, Lake Carriers' Association
Marie Strum, USACE Detroit District
Carl Platz, USACE Division
Tom Crane, Great Lakes Commission
Reilly Manz, Great Lakes Commission

The Outreach Committee welcomed new co-chairs James Luke (federal co-chair) and Jim Killian (non-federal co-chair).

Participants discussed the 2018-2019 Workplan. Discussion centered around the potential utilization of social media to increase the visibility of the work of the GLDT. Concerns regarding USACE protocol related to social media were raised.

The group also discussed changes to the Great Lakes Dredging Dispatch format and publication schedule. Specific changes include publishing shorter, more timely articles on a more frequent basis during the period between the annual meetings of the GLDT. It was also recommended that a yearly newsletter be published as a hand-out document to be distributed at GLDT meetings.

Information/Education: Case Studies

Moderator: D. Knight, GLC Contract Staff

- Dredged material treatment with activated carbon to promote the potential for expanding dredged material management alternatives: Paul R. Schroeder, Research Civil Engineer; USACE-ERDC
[\[Slide presentation here\]](#)
- Lessons learned from beneficial use of dredged material at Duluth Harbor: Dan Breneman, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
[\[Slide presentation here\]](#)
- Great Lakes deep draft navigational dredging from an operator's perspective: Kevin McMonagle, Vice President of Operations, American Steamship Company
[\[Slide presentation here\]](#)
- Update on Healthy Port Futures: Passive Sediment Management

D. Knight, reporting for co-principal investigator Sean Burkholder, reported that work with the state of Ohio is still going strong with two projects in Ashtabula and Lorain. In Lorain, the HPF team is helping develop designs for a range of possible sites, most of which are open wetland systems. In Ashtabula, the team is transitioning from feasibility to design and has been working with the USACE Buffalo District to establish a placement method and sequence that will generate the most complex habitat just through the placement process, without excessive site-reworking. Another project with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources is underway at the Illinois Beach State Park, which consists of valuable habitat that is being quickly lost due to erosion. The HPF team is helping with the engineering and design of off-shore structures that are intended to help reduce the erosion and create new in-water habitat. The team is also in discussions with New York State's Port Bay on Lake Ontario and is exploring plans to hold a passive sediment management workshop for western Michigan coastal communities in 2020.

Regional Sediment Management and Coastal Resiliency: Planning for the Future Discussion Session: How Regional Sediment Management efforts can support the GLDT: Opportunities for collaboration

Moderator: Tony Friona, USACE-ERDC

- Kaitlyn McClain, USACE-Chicago

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- Jim Killian, Wisconsin DNR, reported on RSM work in Wisconsin, including efforts to address severe erosion at the Kenosha Dunes, which are losing up to 30 feet of valuable grassland and bird habitat each year. He said a strategy is being sought to avoid having to “harden” the shoreline, but rather use innovative techniques such as offshore wave breaks to build more resiliency into the design.
- Mike Voorhees, USACE-LRB introduced Shawn McCabe and Jesse Pettit USACE-LRB to introduce a GIS tool being developed through the Regional Sediment Management Program to evaluate distances the dredged material may be transported from the navigation channel to a placement site. Transportation costs contribute a significant portion of the overall costs for dredged material management. It would help to understand what a “cost neutral” (relative to the federal standard) transportation distance is in order to visualize prospective beneficial use placement options within that distance from the navigation channel. The group discussed if there was a way to identify potential locations for a dewatering facility along the route (for potential upland beneficial use placements), and consider whether the dredged material off-loading would be hydraulic vs. mechanical, which would affect the space and time requirements for dewatering. While the tool is still under development, there appears to be a potential for cost savings to explore dewatering prior to transportation to the beneficial use placement site.

GLDT Priorities and Action Items for 2019-20

- 2020 Dredging Windows Regional Symposium
- Follow up on Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) clarifications
- Continue support for Technical and Outreach Committee workplans, webinars, and conference call meetings
- Compile and post Annual Meeting proceedings and presentations on GLDT website

Adjourn

The co-chairs provided concluding remarks and the meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m. on June 11.