CSMW Workshop 1
Resource Protection Guideline Development Related To Coastal Regional Sediment Management

Meeting Minutes

18 February 2010
10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
National Marine Fisheries Office, Long Beach

Workshop Participants:

Clif Davenport – California Geological Survey (CGS)
CSMW Project Manager
Heather Schlosser – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District (USACE)
Project Manager
Karen Green – Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC)
Workshop Moderator/BIA Document Project Manager

Jonna Engle – California Coastal Commission (CCC)
Karen Bane – California Coastal Conservancy (Coastal Conservancy)
Bill Paznokus, Department of Fish and Game (DFG)
Allan Ota – US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Brian Ross - EPA
Eric Chavez – National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
Bryant Chesney – NMFS
Bob Hoffman – NMFS
Nick Buhbe, Nautilus Environmental
Karen Martin – Pepperdine University
David Pryor – State Parks
George Nichol – State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
Robert Smith - USACE
Nate West – USACE
Baron Arakawa – USACE, interns
Chadi Wahby – USACE, interns

Note: Some individuals participated in the workshop remotely via teleconference or web conference. PowerPoint presentation materials and handouts were posted to SAICs ftp site and available to individuals that remotely attended the conference.

Note: Received comments or questions and associated responses or answers are listed below according to agenda topic.

Agenda and Discussion

1. Introductions and Background – Karen Green, Clif Davenport

Karen welcomed participants and introduced the workshop sponsor (CSMW) and resource protection guideline development funding agencies (BEACON, USACE). CSMW co-chairs (Brian Baird, California Natural Resources Agency, George Domurat,

USACE), CSMW Project Manager Clif Davenport, and USACE Project Manager Heather Schlosser were introduced.

All workshop participants introduced themselves.

Clif – presented background information on the CSMW mission and goals, the California Coastal Sediment Master Plan, and associated technical studies and data gathering efforts.

Clif described the process for identifying the need for and subsequent contracting with SAIC to prepare the Biological Impact Analysis (BIA) document. He reported that the document was subject to substantial review, was well received, and comments included requests for additional information and a few additional work products. In particular there was interest in preparation of resource protection guidelines, an abbreviated user's guide to the larger reference document, and a work plan to address future recommendations.

Karen described the organization and types of information summarized in the BIA document, which is titled "Review of Biological Impacts Associated with Sediment Management and Protection of California Biota."

The following comments or suggestions were received on the presented background Powerpoint slides or information:

- It was suggested that Armoring-Seawalls be added to the Sediment Sources/Sinks Figure because it represents another factor contributing to sediment loss and is an issue for the CCC.
- Examples were requested of CSMW computer based tools, which were clarified as including a searchable data base (references), spatial (GIS) project database, and numerous technical documents posted to the CSMW website (http://www.dbw.ca.gov/CSMW/default.aspx).
- Areas of Biological Significance should be added under "Protected Areas" on the Potential Guideline Topics slide.
- Concern was expressed over the cost for beach nourishment to protect homes and whether guidelines should be prepared for that type of activity. It was clarified that guidelines were desired for sediment management projects of which beach nourishment was one type of activity. Other activities may include dredging and beneficial reuse of clean sediment from maintenance of bays, lagoons, rivers, and navigable waters. It also was acknowledged that beach nourishment may be desired for shoreline protection of public infrastructure, beach restoration, and may be important to maintaining sandy beach habitat in certain locations or in the future with sea level rise.

2. Workshop Purpose and Objectives

The workshop objectives were reviewed, which included information exchange and transfer relative to guideline topics and format preferences for the user's guide.

3. Resource Protection Guideline Topics

The following categories of potential resource protection guideline topics were reviewed:

a. Coordination
b. Project Design Considerations
c. Impact Evaluation
d. Type of Impact
e. Type of Resource
f. Best Management Practices
g. Monitoring
h. Performance Evaluation

The following suggestions were received relative to these categories:

Coordination

- Include San Francisco BCDC, the Southern California Regional Dredging Team, permitting agencies, and other stakeholder groups (e.g., Audubon, Beach Ecology Coalition, beach/harbor groups, commercial fishermen, NGOs, Surfrider).
- Add Coast Guard Notice to Mariners.
- Clarify that the coordination requirements may vary depending on types of resources of concern.

Project design

- Add beneficial impacts, restoration.
- Also consider borrow and stockpile sites.

Impact Evaluation

- Specific EFH assessment guidance is not necessary since this being covered by NOAA. Both NOAA and DFG agreed that it would be preferable to develop guidelines for broader categories such as habitats, different types of resources, and sensitive species.
- Indirect impacts should address trophic linkages; e.g., shorebirds-beach invertebrates.
- Broaden to include adjacent terrestrial.

Type of Resource

- Include kelp wrack, which is very important to beach ecology.

Best Management Practices

- Appropriate sand sources should be used.

- Timing may be more important than a distance buffer for many species (e.g., mating season).
- Clarify that environmental windows may differ based on location (e.g., northern versus southern California).
- Add spill contingency.

Monitoring

- Thresholds related to potential for impact are needed to guide monitoring, what type of BMPs are appropriate, and whether method adjustments are warranted during construction. It was acknowledged that few thresholds have been defined. It was recommended that interim criteria should be considered (e.g., sound pressure levels for fish), as appropriate. It also was suggested that the guidelines could be used to help make progress towards defining thresholds; e.g., agree on interim levels and revise as appropriate based on monitoring.
- Should be based on ecological concern (e.g., light levels for subtidal vegetated areas).
- Collected monitoring data should be cost effective and practical; e.g., how would it be used to improve project implementation.
- Project duration should be considered. Generally, less impact concern with small projects that do not involve contaminated sediments.
- Reporting should provide feedback to effectiveness of BMPs.
- Project controls are needed. For example, monitoring documented damage to grunion but no change was made to project implementation. Not enough monitoring has been conducted to understand effects of beach nourishment on this species.
- Better understanding of ambient conditions is needed; consider coordination with other programs (e.g., MarineMap, MPA, PISCO).
- At locations where projects are routinely implemented, long term monitoring is needed to better understand biological recovery, benefits, project performance, and potential for cumulative impacts.
- There is a need for critical evaluation of monitoring programs. There is some uncertainty regarding whether monitoring plans have been designed well enough to detect impacts.
- Little is known regarding the efficacy of 401 water quality monitoring requirements.
- Consistency in monitoring requirements is important.
- A central data repository of monitoring data would be helpful.

Performance Evaluation

- Geo-referenced database of where projects are occurring would be useful.
- Need to better understand longevity of beach nourishment benefits. Acknowledge that project performance will depend on several factors, including

site-specific physical conditions, source sediments, and post-project environmental conditions.

- Project performance may become more of an issue with climate change and sea level rise.
- Database of physical project performance would be useful to regulators.

4. Key Considerations Relevant to Guideline Development

The following considerations were introduced.

a. Available Procedural Guidance
b. Tiering Based on Project Type, Size, or Implementation Considerations
c. Impact Concerns
d. Other

The following comments were received relative to the above-listed topics.

Procedural Guidance

- A request was made to clarify reuse of sand for beach nourishment relative to beach closure depth. The importance of site specific information was discussed from a regulatory perspective. EPA clarified that in order to qualify as beneficial reuse, discharge must be within the beach depth of closure. If it were to occur outside the depth of closure it would represent ocean disposal, which requires a separate designation and environmental process. It was recommended that the document clarify that depth of closure is variable and should be specified for specific projects. A geo-referenced database or geographically based tables with beach closure depths would be helpful to regulators.
- Reference the Beach Restoration Regulatory Guide.
- Note - NOAA in process of updating EFH Assessment guidance.
- Note – CCC in process of preparing restoration guidelines.
- Note - The Southern California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy is in the process of being expanded to include appropriate policies state-wide.

Tiering Based on Project Type, Size, or Implementation Considerations

- Organize based on relative concern.

Impact Concerns

- Add "Beneficial Impacts," particularly when part of project is restoration.

Other

- Interested in database tools.
- Mitigation should be separate topic from monitoring.

5. Guideline Priorities

Lists of potential guidelines were distributed as a handout with space for assigning numerical priorities.

The following comments were received:

- It may make more sense to review priorities when habitats are separately discussed at future workshops rather than to fill them out at this time.

The following priorities were noted by participants that filled out the hand out:

<u>Highest Priority</u>

- Data gaps (e.g., before dredge surveys).
- Sensitivity of resource.
- High likelihood of effectiveness.
- Practical (easy to implement).
- Coordination with beach easement holders up and downcoast.
- Coordination with local conservancies, Surfrider.
- Endangered species coordination.
- Sediment compatibility – quality.
- Environmental design, implementation strategy, maintenance frequency.
- Thresholds of significance.
- Direct impacts, cumulative impacts.
- Construction BMPs, equipment operational controls, schedule, mitigation and monitoring (not compensation), notifications (including on-site information/education panels), training (beach ops, lifeguards), construction safety.
- Pre and post-construction monitoring.
- Biological indicators.
- Habitats: Dune/strand, Sandy beach, wrack line condition, sandy subtidal, reefs, kelp beds, surfgrass.
- Invertebrates: Sandy beach and sandy subtidal invertebrate recovery, Pismo clam.
- Fish: Grunion.
- Birds: California least tern, western snowy plover.

<u>Secondary Priority</u>

- Agency coordination (essential fish habitat assessment, marine protected areas).

- Coordination with fishing organizations.
- Indirect impacts.
- Monitoring standardization considerations that need to be locally adjusted.
- Mitigation effectiveness.
- Database tools.
- Habitats: Eelgrass.
- Invertebrates: Rocky intertidal and subtidal invertebrates, lobster.
- Fish: Tidepool and subtidal reef fish.
- Birds: Skimmers and other terns, wading birds.

Least Priority

- Available procedural guidance.
- Consistency with other relevant guidelines.
- Essential fish habitat assessment.
- Habitats: Bays.
- Invertebrates: Sea urchins.
- Fish: Pacific herring, salmonids, bottom-dwelling fish, nearshore water column fish.
- Birds: California brown pelican, gulls, waterfowl, seabirds.
- Marine mammals: sea otter, pinnipeds, dolphins, porpoises, whales.

6. User's Guide Organization

The following suggestions were made relative to format or organization of the abbreviated user's guide.

- Important to define goals of guidelines.
- Include background understanding of technical issue to clarify need for resource protection guideline.
- Clarify appropriate use of guidance – how it may be used from management context.
- Consider adding examples of implemented small, medium, and large projects - walk through with review of issues, permits, how impacts were avoided and minimized, and required monitoring. Because projects vary on a case by case basis this may or may not be representative.
- Consider organizing guidelines by habitat.

- Suggest flow chart presentation for habitats that facilitates constraint identification, sensitive species, impact issues, relevant resource protection guidelines, monitoring considerations.
- Include cross-reference to sections in main document where more detailed discussions are presented.

7. Workshop Process and Products

The following agreements were made relative to future workshops.

- Relevant sections of the BIA document or other information will be distributed prior to future to workshops.
- Workshops will be scheduled on Tuesday or Thursday if possible.
- The workshop schedule will be spread over a few months to reduce potential schedule conflicts and increase participation.
- Three workshops will be habitat-based with three sets of habitats addressed at each of those workshops, as follows:
    - Sandy beach, sandy subtidal, dune/strand.
    - Rocky intertidal, rocky subtidal, surfgrass, kelp beds.
    - Bays, lagoons, eelgrass.
- One work shop will address other considerations such as monitoring, performance evaluation, database tools.
- Technical experts may be invited to participate in the workshops.

8. Next Steps

Next Meeting, Sacramento, February 24, 2010 – agenda provided.