

## IDEAS, ISSUES AND COMMENTS

from the

Santa Barbara / Ventura County Public Outreach Workshops

on the

California Coastal Sediment Management Master Plan

April 8 & 9, 2004

- The City of Ventura's City Attorneys office has substantial reference material regarding sand sediment movement and water quality in and around Ventura Harbor, which should be evaluated as part of the Sediment Master Plan. Keyes litigation ~ 1998.
  
- Other studies of interest to the Sediment Master Plan include: Jim Bailard's work in the 1980's; Moffatt and Nichol Engineers Opportunistic Sand program; managed retreat program at Surfer's Point (information at the City of Ventura); Beacon beach monitoring at Goleta Beach; Flood control data related to debris basins shared with Boating and Waterways economic consultant previously; Beacon's planning studies, Environmental Impact Report and biennial profiles of beaches; and a study of Santa Barbara Harbor to evaluate the best placement sites for dredged sand.
  
- The Beacon opportunistic sand program is a particularly interesting initiative that should be closely followed by the Sediment Master Plan. The program will involve 6 replenishment and stockpile sites and streamlined permitting for upland sand sources meeting agreed upon criteria. It is intended to encourage placement of sand at beaches that would otherwise not be able to be used because of timing or cost problems.
  
- The pollution potential of sediment should be considered in the Sediment Master Plan.
  
- Material removed from debris basins is most times sold as fill. On average, about 82,000 tons / year of material is taken from the basins. This practice should be modified for beach compatible material so it has the opportunity to be used as beachfill if details could be worked

out. The Beacon opportunistic sand program will address this and the results should be considered in the Sediment Master Plan.

- There is an interest in a Memorandum of Understanding between the State and Ventura county such that Ventura's ongoing emptying of debris basins (when they reach 25% capacity) could look at stockpiling materials, knowing that they would eventually be moved to the coast.
  
- Grading of the beaches disrupts habitat and plants used by the Snowy Plover.
  
- Cobble has been used as back beach protection in the Ventura area. This tactic should be considered in the Sediment Master Plan as a strategy for more natural protection of sea cliffs than sea walls, and as a way to conserve sand for the most strategically important locations.

Debris / detention basins can serve as a source of sand when they trap it. In most situations, debris basins are not needed for flood control and trap sandy sediment that then has to be transported to the coast at significant cost to serve as beach replenishment material. The Sediment Master Plan should consider the feasibility of removable debris basins so that sediment can flow to the coast in most situations. Winter rains after summer fires result in most of the need for debris / detention basins for flood control and could be established in appropriate years and then removed until needed again. This could be part of integrated watershed management plans that would have multiple benefits for a number of public policy issues.

Communication with watershed managers (primarily counties) is important so they can know the Sediment Master Plan goals for coastal sediment and integrate them into upland watershed management actions. Ventura River highly impacted; watershed management wants SMP recommendations on his radar screen.

- Soil Conservation Service installed flood control drop structures in the 1940s; it is believed that structures, sediment aggradation has caused problems. There is probably usable beach sand located below flood control drop structures that should also be evaluated in the Sediment Management Plan. The drop structures can also be removable to increase flow of sand to the coast in appropriate years.

- Sand mining for construction aggregate has been halted on the Santa Clara River, but pressures to begin again will build. The Sediment Master Plan should evaluate the impacts of sand mining and recommend policies and restrictions if appropriate.
  
- A related tactic is to require the recycling of concrete to reduce the need for sand in construction aggregate.
  
- Pipeline placement related to Harbor Dredging beachfill placement can be disruptive to recreation, coastal wetlands water flow, and to species like the snowy plover. Projects should be better planned and staged to minimize or eliminate these concerns.
  
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- Flood plain setback policies to eliminate building in flood plains will help the natural flow of sand to the coast because it will decrease the need for flood control structures that trap sediment. This strategy should be considered in the Master Plan.
  
- Federal and state policies and regulations related to water quality work to prohibit erosion (zero discharge) and will end up withholding sediment from rivers and streams and ultimately from the beaches. This is a critical coordination issue that the Sediment Master Plan should address. The NPDES process needs to understand that erosion is not necessarily a bad thing. The SMP should document what is happening naturally to establish that such a goal is impracticable.
  
- The definition of finer sediments – what can be used as beach replenishment and what cannot – is a key technical issue that the Sediment Master Plan should address.
  
- Wildfires result in significantly increased sediments in watersheds in specific time periods after the fires. National Forest Service studies in the Santa Barbara / Ventura Counties area indicates a 20 fold increase in sediment availability after large fires. This information should be used to inform management strategies in the Sediment Master Plan.

- The Corps of Engineers disposal criteria for Harbor dredging should be evaluated to support placement of sand at the best locations rather than at locations that would not increase project costs.

- The Sediment Master Plan should work to modify California Environmental Quality Act procedures to define changes in coastal sediment delivery to the littoral zone by a project as a significant impact that would require mitigation when such development changes delivery of sands to the littoral zone. This would result in serious evaluation and public discussion and decisions which will consider the coastal sediment benefits and costs of upland development and watershed management activities.