

**Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
HARBOR TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Summary

September 6, 2006

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Duluth, MN

HTAC Voting Members Present		HTAC Voting Members Absent	
Organization	Representative	Organization	Representative
City of Superior	Jason Serck (Vice-chair)	City of Duluth	Chuck Froseth
Duluth Seaway Port Auth	Jim Sharrow (Chair)	Douglas County	VACANT
Industry-Coal sector	Marshall Elder (alt)	St. Louis County	Barbara Hayden
Industry-Harbor Engineering	Ted Smith	Industry-General Bulk	Mike McCoshen
Industry-Pilots/ Vessel Operations	Bob Libby	Industry-General Cargo	Gary Nicholson
Industry-Recreation	Joel Johnson	Industry-Grain sector	Mick Sertich
Isaak Walton League	Gary Glass	Industry-Harbor Services	Ed Montgomery
MIC	Nick Baker (alt)	Industry-Ore Sector	Tom Steele
MN DNR	Pat Collins (alt)	Save Lake Superior Assoc	John Pegors
MnDOT	Dick Lambert	USDA-NRCS	Paul Sandstrom
MPCA	Pat Carey	US EPA	David Cowgill
NWRPC	Jason Laumann	WLSSD	Jack Ezell
St. Louis River CAC	Ted R. Smith		
Army Corps of Engineers	John Larson		
USCG Marine Safety Office	Scott Stoermer (alt)		
US Fish & Wildlife Service	Dave Warburton		
WI DNR	Duane Lahti		
WisDOT	Martin Forbes		

Others Present (Non-Voting)			
Organization	Name	Organization	Name
ARDC	John Chell	SEH Consulting	Colin Reichhoff
JGP Group	Lisa Neitzel	Technical Advisor	Bill Majewski
MIC Staff	Ron Chicka	UMD-GLMRI	Eil Kwon
MIC Staff	Andrea Diamond	UMD-NRRI	Dan Breneman
MIC Staff	Robert Herling	UWS-GLMRI	Richard Stewart
MIC Staff	Andy McDonald	UWS student	John Bendlin
MIC Staff	Rondi Watson	US ACOE	Dave Bowman
MPCA – St. Paul	Judy Crane	US Customs Service	Barbara Lambus
MPCA – Duluth	Brian Fredrickson		
MPCA– Duluth	Marc Hershfield		

1. Agenda Review / Introductions

HTAC Chair Jim Sharrow called the meeting to order at 9:07 am. All participants introduced themselves. No changes to the agenda were put forward. Ron Chicka

explained that David Cowgill from the Chicago EPA office, who had been set to give a presentation at today's meeting, had to cancel due to a schedule conflict and hoped to reschedule at a later date. He thanked the first three presenters for filling in at the last minute.

2. Committee Business

- **June 7, 2006 HTAC Meeting Summary**

Chair Jim Sharrow called for changes to the Meeting Summary as presented. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve.

Motion by Jason Serck/Joel Johnson to approve the June 7, 2006 Meeting Summary as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Port of Superior Projects Update

Jason Serck, Planning and Port Director for the City of Superior, presented information about three current projects in the Superior port. The BNSF/General Mills Dock Wall Reconstruction project is on track, although unexpected underwater structures had created a few delays in the project and increased the cost from the estimated \$1.35 million to \$1.58 million. The additional costs were borne by General Mills. The rehabilitation of the Hallett Dock # 8 was also proceeding according to plan. The installation of sheet piling also involved dredging the 800-foot adjacent vessel slip to a depth of 28 feet to tie it to the navigational channel. He noted that the neighboring C. Reiss Coal company had expressed concerns about the ownership of the vessel slip, as well as concerns that the dredging might undermine their existing structure. He reported that discussions between both companies, city staff and the DNR had helped to allay these concerns. Finally, he reported that the Cutler-Magner (CLM) company was investing \$36 million in its facility by constructing a fifth kiln to process lime to meet market demand. He noted that this increase in capacity created a need for increased storage space, and that the company had approached the city about applying for Wisconsin Harbor Assistant Program (HAP) funds to accomplish this. Due to the large scale and potential cost of the project, they were working with the two adjacent companies, Elkhorn and Lafarge, to apply jointly for a combined project grant from the HAP fund.

4. Duluth Seaway Port Authority Initiatives

Matt Bolf from the SEH consulting firm gave an update of the Helberg Drive Project, located in the Port Terminal Area on Rices Point in Duluth. The \$4.9 million roadway realignment, funded by federal TIP funds and two state rail funding sources, will improve both road and rail access to several maritime facilities, including docks C and D

and the Clure Public Marine Terminal. The new road will also serve an important safety function by providing a second access route out to Garfield Avenue.

He then described the complex and time-consuming process of lining up funding sources and the subsequent work to acquire 32 parcels of land, determine rights-of-way, address site contamination concerns, make construction and maintenance agreements and finally to design and then redesign the project to the satisfaction of the BNSF and CP Rail railroad companies, all within the timeline mandated by the federal Transportation Improvement funding source. He noted that the final option chosen would potentially accommodate a larger multimodal facility and half a unit train and would construct 4,032 feet of new public roadway 6,346 feet of private track and 11 railroad crossings. He added that due to the redesign delays, the project should be about half completed by the end of this year with a planned completion date of late summer 2007.

5. Arrowhead Region Projects Update

John Chell, Director of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission in Duluth, discussed the problems of wetlands policy as it impacts development in Minnesota's Arrowhead region. He explained that state-wide, 60 percent of original pre-settlement wetland acreage has been lost, leading to the "no net loss" approach enacted into law in 1991 to maintain the wetland resource. He noted, however, that the majority of the state's remaining wetlands are found in the forested and lake regions of northern and northeastern Minnesota. He stated that 96% of pre-settlement wetlands still exist in this area, and of these, 80% are located on county, state and federal lands. Therefore, any proposed highway projects and commercial/industrial/ housing construction in this part of the state unavoidably impacts these wetlands. Private industries, especially mining companies, are further hampered because they cannot conduct compensatory mitigation on public lands. He argued that the "no net loss" policy disproportionately and negatively affects this part of the state by creating an undue regulatory barrier for some otherwise-viable projects. He further noted that at present no policy dialogue is taking place at the state level and asked the various agency representatives on the HTAC for their thoughts.

Duane Lahti (WisDNR) responded that similarly, the lack of a comprehensive wetlands plan had hampered the review process for proposed developments in the Superior area. He noted that the Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) was created to assist developers while preserving these wetlands, and might serve as a resource or reference point for policy discussions in northeast Minnesota. Jim Sharrow asked if any benefit would be gained from having the HTAC bring a resolution forward to the MIC on this topic.

6. GIS-Based Sediment Quality Database-Phase 4

Dr. Judy Crane, from the St. Paul office of the MPCA, presented information about the recently completed Phase 4 of the GIS-based Sediment Quality Database for the St. Louis River Area of Concern. She explained that the purpose of the project was to provide a broad-scale assessment of contaminated sediments in the SLRAOC, with the ultimate goal of being able to de-list this AOC. She reviewed the process by which the data had been identified for inclusion in the database and evaluated for data quality, and demonstrated how to split out data. She also highlighted the new GIS features included in Phase 4. She demonstrated how queries in the Access database can be linked to mapping projects in ArcView, to assist in identifying contaminated areas, geographic features, water quality, etc. She noted that one significant aspect of this project was that she was able to overcome funding roadblocks to obtain data for the entire AOC without regard to state lines. She added that the project is now almost complete, requiring mostly data maintenance from this point forward. She closed by inviting participants to stay for the workshop she was holding immediately after the HTAC meeting to review the GIS features in more depth.

Dave Warburton, of the US Fish and Wildlife Service in St. Paul, stated that the agency was making significant investments to support aquatic habitat and populations and that they would be relying heavily on this database. Andy McDonald noted that the Dredging Subcommittee plans to make use of it, as well.

7. Subcommittee Reports

- **Advocacy Subcommittee**

Subcommittee Chair Ted Smith reported that he plans to hold a meeting of the Advocacy group in October to continue to formulate the direction of the Great Lakes Advocacy Coalition. He added that he wanted to bring this input forward to the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force which meets in November.

- **Dredging Subcommittee**

Andy McDonald announced that the Wisconsin Sea Grant program was sponsoring two tours of the Duluth-Superior harbor on the research vessel LL Smith to view projects of interest to the Harbor Technical Advisory Committee. Scheduled for Tuesday, September 26th and Thursday, September 28th from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., interested HTAC members may attend by RSVPing to him by Friday, September 22.

John Larson described the work conducted this summer by the Army Corps of Engineers at Erie Pier, with the intent of shifting its function from a confined disposal facility for dredge materials to a materials reclamation facility. He added that the Corps had made a significant investment in the site, restructuring it to create three staging areas with a

planned conveyor system and washing pond. They are working with the MPCA to obtain a discharge permit to address the critical issue of filtering and dewatering, and are seeking to establish a business plan to market the materials including the silt. Possible uses could include general construction, mine reclamation efforts, WLSSD soil remediation projects and daily cover at the City of Superior landfill. He added that he would be working with the Dredging Subcommittee to develop and produce a marketing/management plan.

8. Project Updates / Roundtable Discussion

- **Andy McDonald** noted that HTAC agenda items are determined in large measure by the interests and suggestions of committee members. He distributed a list of topics presented to the HTAC for the last several years. He requested that members respond to his call for presentations email, which is sent out about six weeks prior to each meeting, with ideas for topics and more importantly, with contact information for suggested speakers.
- **Jim Sharrow** commented that the draft of a General Management Plan for the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore was currently open for comment through September 25. More information is available through the National Park Service website at www.nps.gov.
- **Lt. Cdr Scott Stoermer** reported that the German cruise vessel Columbus was scheduled for two visits to Duluth, at the end of September and in early October, and will be docked in an area behind the DECC.
- **Joel Johnson** displayed a recent Waterways Guide publication for large yachts that featured Duluth on its cover.

9. Adjourn

No other items were brought forward for discussion and the meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rondi Watson
MIC Secretary