

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

Meeting Summary

June 4, 2008

Superior Public Library Conference Room, Superior, WI

| HTAC Voting Members Present | | HTAC Voting Members Absent | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Organization | Representative | Organization | Representative |
| City of Superior | Jason Serck (<i>Chair</i>) | City of Duluth | Chuck Froseth |
| Duluth Seaway Port Auth | Jim Sharrow | Industry-Grain sector | Mick Sertich |
| Industry-Coal sector | Marshall Elder (alt) | Industry-Ore Sector | Tom Steele |
| Industry-General Bulk | Mike McCoshen | Industry-Pilots/ Vessel Ops | Bob Libby |
| Industry-General Cargo | Denise McDougall | NWRPC | Jason Laumann |
| Industry-Harbor Engineering | Ted Smith (<i>Vice-Chair</i>) | Others Present | |
| Industry-Harbor Services | Ed Montgomery | Organization | Representative |
| Industry-Recreation | Joel Johnson | City of Duluth | Chris Kleist |
| Isaak Walton League | Gary Glass | MIC | Ron Chicka |
| MIC | Ed Anderson | MIC | Andy McDonald |
| MN DNR | Patty Fowler | MIC | Lora Skarman |
| MnDOT | Dick Lambert | MIC | Rondi Watson |
| MPCA | Pat Carey | MPCA | Marc Hershfield |
| Save Lake Superior Assoc | Nancy Paisley | St. Louis River CAC | Julene Boe |
| St Louis County | Scott Smith | Technical Advisor | Bill Majewski |
| St. Louis River CAC | Ted R. Smith | Technical Advisor – US EPA Region 5 | John Haugland |
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | Steven Brossart | USCG Marine Safety Office | Larry DiDomenico |
| USCG Marine Safety Office | CDR Gary Croot | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | Dave Bowman |
| USDA-NRCS | Danny Weber | UW-Superior / GLMRI | Stacey Carlson |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | Dave Warburton | Western Great Lakes Pilots Association | Don Willecke |
| WI DNR | Nancy Larson | WI DNR | Megan O'Shea |
| WisDOT | Martin Forbes | WI Sea Grant | Gene Clark |
| WLSSD | Jack Ezell | | |

1. Agenda Review / Introductions

HTAC Chair Jason Serck called the meeting to order at 9:36 am. All participants introduced themselves. Jason recognized new members Nancy Larson, replacing Duane Lahti from the Wisconsin DNR, and Danny Weber from the Natural Resource Conservation Service. CDR Gary Croot, head of the US Coast Guard Duluth Marine Safety Unit, was also recognized as this was his last HTAC meeting before moving on to his new assignment in Washington DC.

Marc Hershfield introduced John Haugland from the US EPA Region office in Chicago, who is now serving as the EPA liaison to the St. Louis River Area of Concern.

No changes to the agenda were put forward.

2. Committee Business

March 5, 2008 HTAC Meeting Summary

Chair Serck called for changes to the previous month's Meeting Summary as presented.

Motion by Dick Lambert/Ted Smith to approve the March 5, 2008 Meeting Summary with no revisions. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Dredged Material Management Plan

Dave Bowman from the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) presented information about the newly-approved update to the Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) for the Duluth-Superior harbor. The update was prompted, in part, by the fact that Erie Pier's current capacity is just about at the end of its useful service life as a confined disposal facility. He explained that a DMMP is developed by the ACOE and specifies approved dredging projects for the next 20 years. It also allows the Corps to reliably program funds for future dredging efforts. He noted that the cost to develop the DMMP is 100% federal; design and implementation costs are shared 65% federal /35% local. A non-federal sponsor (NFS) for the DMMP is also a requirement—there can be more than one, sharing different roles which include owning project land, agreeing to operate and maintain the site after it is filled, and providing the non-federal share of project costs.

The current (1998) DMMP is out of date in terms of the projects it includes and because it no longer identifies dredged material management capacity for the next 20 years. In late 2007 the City of Superior, the Port Authority and the MIC coordinated a request that the Corps undertake an update to the current DMMP as an alternative to the lengthy and costly process of developing a new one. The HTAC and its Dredging Subcommittee could provide a mechanism for obtaining local stakeholder input for possible new projects, including a wetlands restoration project at the 21st Avenue West site; a mineland reclamation project; a capacity expansion at the Sky Harbor airport; and expansion at the CN/Lakehead Ore dock site. Dave added that the Corps is also proposing a new dredge material storage facility at the estuary flats area on the Superior side of the harbor with a capacity of roughly 2.9 million cubic yards of dredge material.

He added that the process of choosing projects for the DMMP will be an open forum, the Corps won't insist on one alternative and will include an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). He added that they must also consider no-action and open-water disposal alternatives, although controversial; adding that they are increasingly looking for beneficial reuse options.

There will be an initial 5- or 6-month period to brainstorm project options, after which the Corps will conduct site evaluations and develop a recommended plan, which will include a combination of projects to attain the 20 years of capacity.

Jim Sharrow commented that by participating as we are in the development of this plan, the process should be less lengthy and will insure better buy-in and will be “approvable” by both states.

Ted R. Smith cautioned that although we are likely to have some disagreements with the Corps in the development of this update, he commended their continued involvement and openness to local input and new alternatives that are being put forward, such as transitioning Erie Pier from a traditional disposal site to a Processing and Reuse facility.

4. Duluth-Superior Harbor Corrosion Study

Jason Serck, Planning and Port Director for the City of Superior, presented an update of current activities to address the corrosion problem in the Duluth-Superior harbor. He noted that funds have been allocated from several different sources to support a variety of research activities.

\$130,000 from two new State of Wisconsin grants will fund new corrosion studies to begin this summer. A \$100,000 state Harbor Assistance Program (HAP) grant for the Cenex Harvest states project will provide coffer dam construction, in-situ painting, and coatings on new sheet pilings—hoped to be preventive measure for many years. They will be utilizing a European product with extreme longevity even in our ice conditions. \$30,000 from the Wisconsin Coastal Management program was awarded to test methods to protect new or existing underwater steel structures. A demonstration project has been initiated to evaluate 5 coatings currently in use in the harbor; also looking at pilot studies for non-coating solutions.

Jim Sharrow reported that an additional \$280,000 in federal funding to the US Army Corps of Engineers will support new testing or continuation of current research efforts. The Army Corps is studying coupons that were put out last fall with several different coatings to be examined for ice effects. They are following up on earlier tray installations, working with AMI Consulting Engineers and receiving assistance from a construction engineering research lab in Illinois, expert in steel coatings. Dave Bowman is in charge of the overall project. He mentioned they are still trying to obtain historical water quality data from '70s, if such a thing exists.

The GLMRI-sponsored research project at UMD looking at microbiologically influenced corrosion has also isolated a specific organism associated with the corrosion; that data is currently being peer-reviewed.

Gene Clark at the Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute will be coordinating this data in a GIS format—a good comparative science tool.

5. St. Louis River Area of Concern (AOC) Delisting Process

Julene Boe, Executive Director of the St. Louis River Citizens Action Committee (SLRCAC), gave a presentation about the delisting process for the St. Louis River Area of Concern (AOC), one of 43 severely degraded geographic areas designated within the Great Lakes. The St. Louis River Citizens Action Committee (SLRCAC), along with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, have developed targets or benchmarks for removing the nine identified impaired uses (associated with the loss and degradation of habitat, pollution from sources such as contaminated sediments, sewage wastes, and surface runoff).

These draft targets will undergo further stakeholder and public review in July and August. The final list of targets will be submitted to the EPA by the end of 2008 and will serve as the roadmap for actions that will eventually lead to delisting the St. Louis River as an Area of Concern on the Great Lakes. These actions will include cleaning up existing contaminated sedimentation, restoring high quality habitat areas and protecting the river from further threats. Ultimate benefits to the surrounding communities will include positive environmental, health and economic impacts.

6. Subcommittee Reports

Dredging

Gene Clark announced that the Dredging Subcommittee recently had a 5-hour discussion on the DMMP alone, with Dave Bowman present. The issue of managing purple loosestrife and other noxious weeds is creating the greatest barrier to moving forward with the transition of Erie Pier from a disposal site to a processing and reuse facility. Jim Sharrow noted that the county and state agencies which deal with noxious weed control don't really have defined best practices—it has been difficult to obtain answers.

The GLMRI-sponsored Erie Pier Cost and Market Analysis at UMD is now in the business planning phase and should be wrapping up by the end of summer

Advocacy

Ted Smith commented that from his interactions with our local senate and congressional representatives and their staff, they work very hard on our behalf. A current key issue is the harbor maintenance trust fund; the tax on this industry is not being dedicated back to that specific purpose.

He also commented that although the '08 dredging budget was a big improvement, the '09 budget is "a disaster" – Rep. Obey commented that they are not going to attempt to negotiate with current administration – will operate instead on a continuing resolution.

7. Roundtable Discussion / Project Updates

Jason Serck noted that Governor Jim Doyle recently announced in May that he has nominated the St. Louis River in Northwest Wisconsin to become the 28th National Estuarine Research Reserve. If NOAA approves the designation, the 15,000-acre St. Louis River site will become the second reserve in the Great Lakes.

Stacey Carlson announced that the GLMRI call for proposals went out in May, due June 5, to be announced in September. She also announced that GLMRI is looking at similarities between the Great Lakes and Baltic regions; they are organizing a trip for which registration has been extended through June 13. Their annual meeting will be held in September; will hold an event at the Bong museum.

Joel Johnson asked about proposed federal ballast water regulations which could apply to recreational vessels as well as large commercial ships. CDR Croot stated that per current Coast Guard regulations under review, small recreational boats would be exempted from regulations for water discharges from bilge pumps, showers, outboards or engines. Ted Smith commented that MPCA really has no desire to permit every single recreational boat.

CDR Croot announced that Duluth-Superior will receive an award of excellence for coast guard inspections-- and that we should expect more coast guard personnel to arrive in this harbor for training.

8. Adjourn

No other items were brought forward for discussion and the meeting was adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rondi Watson, MIC Secretary