



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Portland District
Operations Division
PO Box 2946
Portland, OR 97208-2946

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE: November 10, 2003

CLOSING DATE: December 11, 2003

REFERENCE NUMBER: NWPOP-CWR-F04-001
Maintenance Dredging of Old Mouth, Cowlitz River

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District, plans to perform work in navigable waters of this District under the Provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 and in accordance with Regulation 33 CFR parts 335-338.

Comments: Comments on the described work, **noting the reference number**, should reach the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, no later than the expiration date of this Public Notice to become part of the record and to be considered in the decision. Comments should be mailed to the following address:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District
ATTN: CENWP-OP-NW
P.O. Box 2946
Portland, Oregon 97208-2946

Purpose: Continued maintenance of the Old Mouth Cowlitz River channel at the Federally authorized depth of 8 feet by periodically removing restricting shoals consisting of naturally occurring sedimentary material. For this action, a depth of 8 feet plus up to two (2) feet of allowable overdepth dredging will be accomplished.

Location: Old Mouth of the Cowlitz River, Cowlitz County, Washington. (See attached drawing)

Work: The proposed work involves the redistribution of sedimentary material from the entrance to the Old Mouth of the Cowlitz River, an authorized Federal project channel. The authorized channel is 8 feet deep, 150 feet wide, and approximately 3000 feet long. The channel is generally dredged to a depth of 10 feet to ensure that the authorized depth is maintained between dredging operations. The typical work area is shown on the attached drawing. Approximately 15-25,000 cubic yards per year will be removed by clamshell dredge. The work may occur at any time of year to prevent restrictive shoals from developing.

Sediment analysis of the material (September 2003 sampling) in the area to be dredged indicates that it is predominantly silty sand near the entrance becoming silty further upstream, but with extremely low volatile solids. This is consistent with recent flood events on the Cowlitz River washing volcanic ash into the Columbia River system. Shoal formation at the Old Mouth of the Cowlitz River tends to happen relatively quickly. Under the criteria established in the Dredged Material Evaluation Framework, Lower Columbia River Management Area, the material is acceptable for unconfined placement in-water. Sediment evaluation reports, including sample locations, grain size, and chemical testing results are available for review by interested persons.

The areas proposed for subsequent placement of the material are shown on the attached drawing. These sites have been used in the past. Reviewers seeking detailed information on specific sites are encouraged to consult the DMMP for this project or contact the Portland District Corps of Engineers, Waterways Maintenance Section, at (503) 808-4341. Inclusion of detailed drawings of each site in this notice are not practical due to the size of the project, the practical scale of the maps, and the number of proposed sites.

Other Related Dredging: The Old Mouth of the Cowlitz River navigation channel is a side channel to the Columbia River deep draft navigation channel. The deep draft channel is dredged annually, but not necessarily with the same dredging equipment nor with the same proposed disposal areas.

Work by Others: Other individuals/corporations may mine the main channel under this maintenance public notice at the discretion of the Corps of Engineers, Portland District. Mining of Federal channels to the maintenance depths is a beneficial use of dredged material. Those mining in the channel will be subject to the same conditions and restrictions for channel dimensions, over-depth allowances, safety considerations, and environmental concerns as the Corps' dredges and contractors. Persons wishing to dredge under a maintenance permit must first contact the Corps of Engineers at the address listed on the front page of this notice. After meeting the requirements of the Corps, the Oregon Division of State Lands, and the Washington Department of Natural Resources for the mining, the requestor will be issued a limited duration license for specified river reaches. Stockpiling and sale of the material are subject to the leasing and royalty requirements of the Oregon Department of State Lands and/or the Washington Department of Natural Resources and may be subject to other Federal requirements. It is the requestor's responsibility to meet all other requirements.

Project Sponsors: The local sponsor for the Old Mouth of the Cowlitz River is the Port of Longview. Local sponsors for this project are responsible for obtaining Federally required lands, easements and rights-of-way for disposal areas and for diking of upland sites, when necessary.

Clean Water Act Compliance: A Section 404 (b) Evaluation is being prepared to address the proposed discharge of dredged material into a water of the United States and will be available for review at the Portland District. State Water Quality certification will also be obtained as required under Section 401 of the Act. The above requirement shall not be construed as affecting or impairing the authority of the Secretary of the Army to maintain navigation.

Cultural Resources: The proposed action is the continuation of ongoing activities. The project has been dredged to the described depths previously and the proposed inwater disposal sites have been previously used. The dredged material will be redistributed from the inwater sites through the action of the Columbia River. No impacts to cultural resources from either the dredging or disposal are anticipated. Should future reviews indicate evidence of significant archaeological or historic resources, additional appropriate action will be taken.

Endangered Species: The Corps has consulted with both the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the NOAA Fisheries regarding potential impacts of the proposed work to threatened and endangered species. In a letter dated February 24, 1998, the USFWS concurred with the Corps conclusion that the maintenance dredging activities as described in the DMMP are not likely to adversely affect listed species under their jurisdiction, provided specific recommendations are followed for the protection of bald eagles and Columbian white-tailed deer. In a letter dated September 15, 1999, NMFS determined that the proposed activities as outlined in the Biological Assessment for Columbia River Navigation Channel Operation and Maintenance are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the listed species under their jurisdiction, provided specific terms and conditions are met. The Old Mouth of the Cowlitz River is included in these consultations as a side channel of the Columbia River. Copies of these documents are available for review in the Portland District office. New consultation with both USFWS and NOAA Fisheries has been initiated and will be completed prior to the expiration of the current Biological Opinion (September 2004).

Environmental Coordination: The proposed work will be coordinated with the following Federal, State, or local agencies:

Federal

US Environmental Protection Agency
US Fish and Wildlife Service
National Marine Fisheries Service

State of Washington

Washington Department of Fisheries and Wildlife
Washington State Department of Ecology
Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Washington State Historic Preservation Office

State of Oregon

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Oregon Division of State Lands
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

Statement of Policy for Operations and Maintenance Dredging: The Corps of Engineers undertakes operations and maintenance activities where appropriate and environmentally acceptable. All practicable and reasonable alternatives are fully considered on an equal basis. This includes the discharge of dredged or fill materials into waters of the US or ocean waters in the least costly manner, at the least costly and most practicable location, and consistent with engineering and environmental requirements (33 CFR Part 335.4). The least costly alternative, consistent with sound engineering practices and selected through the 404(b)(1) guidelines or ocean disposal criteria, will be designated the Federal standard for the proposed project (33 CFR Part 336.1(c)(1)). Public Notices for Corps operations and maintenance activities are normally issued for an indefinite period of time and are not reissued unless changes in the disposal plan warrant re-evaluation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act or Section 103 of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (33 CFR Part 337.1 (a)). Resource agencies listed in the COORDINATION paragraph will be informed each year of specific project requirements.

Public Interest Review: The decision whether to perform the work will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact of the described activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit that reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered; among these are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, historic values, fish and wildlife values, flood damage prevention, land use, navigation, recreation, water supply, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

Public Hearing: Any person who has an interest that may be affected by the disposal of this dredged material may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within 30 days of the date of this notice and must clearly set forth the interest which may be affected and the manner in which the interest may be affected by this activity.

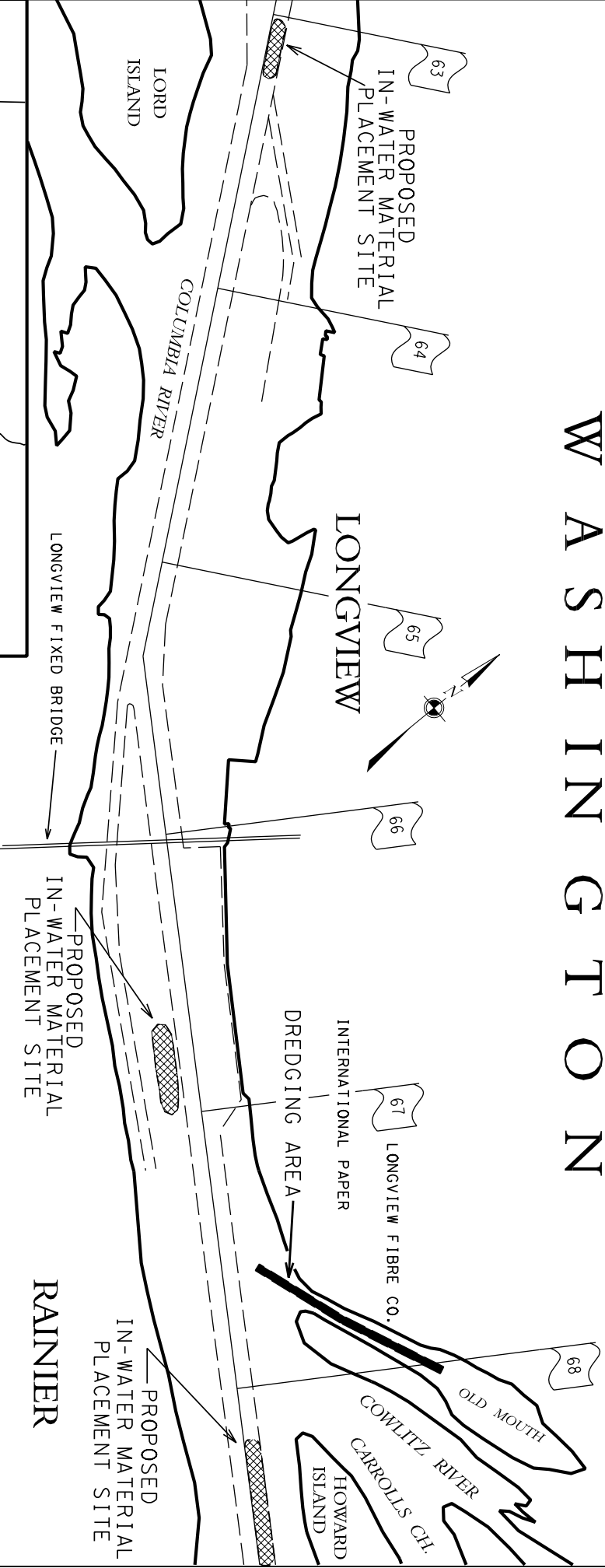
EIS Determination: A preliminary determination has been made that an Environmental Impact Statement is not currently required for the described work. An Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) were prepared (March 1992) to address the work described by this Public Notice and are on file at the Portland District Office Library, 333 SW First Avenue, Portland, Oregon, for review.

Comments on the described work, with the reference number, should reach this office no later than the closing date of this Public Notice to become part of the record and be considered in the decision.

Additional Information: Additional information may be obtained from Jon Gornick, Channels and Harbors Project, Waterways Maintenance Section, at the above address, telephone 503/808-4341, email: jon.m.gornick@nwp01.usace.army.mil.

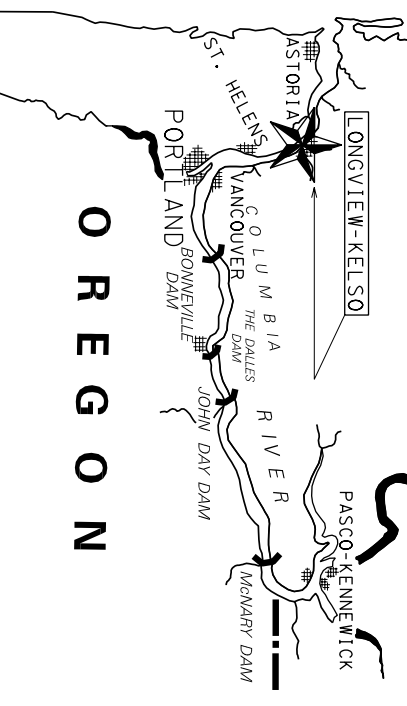
David C. Beach, P.E., P.L.S.
Operations Manager
Channels and Harbors Project

WASHINGTON



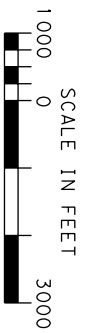
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PN# NWP0P-CWR-F04-001

OLD MOUTH COWLITZ RIVER
PROPOSED MAINTENANCE DREDGING
COWLITZ COUNTY, WASHINGTON