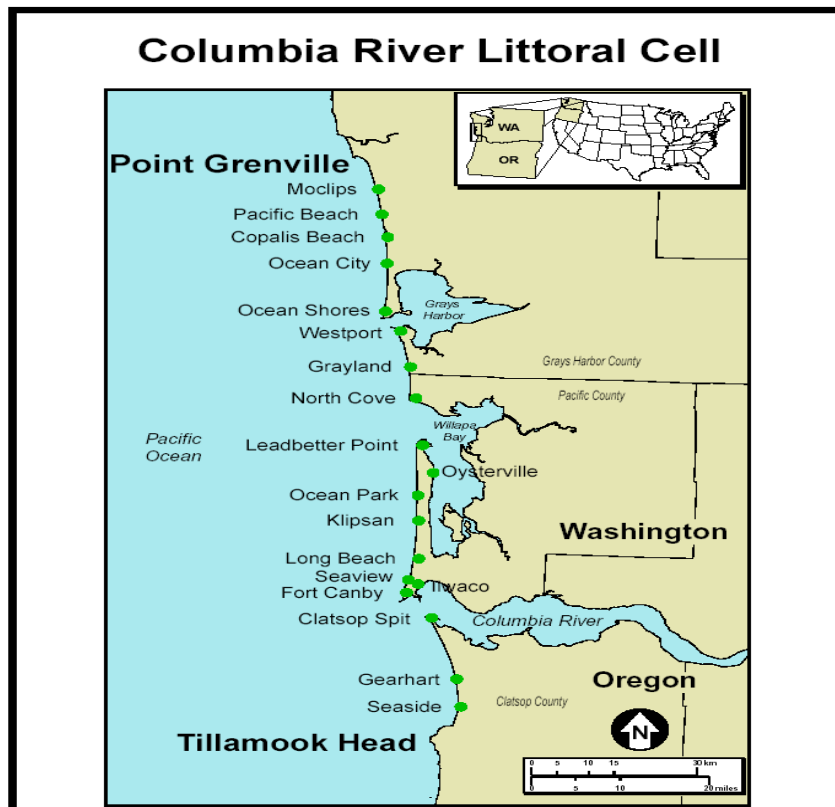# The Mouth of the Columbia River
Regional Sediment Management Demonstration Initiative

Stakeholder Involvement Component
Phase 1 Report

Results from the Stakeholder Conversations and
Stakeholder Collaborative Learning Training Workshops

Presented to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Portland (OR) District

Columbia River Littoral Cell

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February 2004

**The Mouth of the Columbia River
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This report presents the results of two Regional Sediment Management Demonstration Initiative stakeholder activities: conversations with stakeholders and Collaborative Learning training workshops for stakeholders.

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Acronyms
LCR: Lower Columbia River
MCR: Mouth of the Columbia River
NGO: Non-government organization
RSM: Regional Sediment Management Demonstration Initiative
RSM-CL: Regional Sediment Management Collaborative Learning work
SH: Stakeholder(s)
SIT: Stakeholder Involvement Team

RSM Stakeholder Conversations Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mouth of the Columbia River Regional Sediment Management Demonstration Initiative includes as one of its objectives, the incorporation of "a multi-stakeholder process for strategic planning and project coordination." To address this objective, the Portland District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contracted with Walker Consulting of Corvallis, Oregon to apply a Collaborative Learning approach to stakeholder engagement.

Phase One of the Stakeholder Involvement Project features conversations with stakeholders and two one-day Stakeholder training workshops on Collaborative Learning.

71 people participated in the stakeholder conversations. Most of the conversations were one-on-one, some occurred in pairs or small groups. 35 people participated in the Collaborative Learning training workshops.

A number of **key points** emerged from the conversations and training workshops:

People are uncertain about RSM
  – RSM need to be defined and explained
  – Goals, objectives, decision space need to be clear
What will RSM do? Who will fund RSM work?
Corps needs to demonstrate that this is not "business as usual"
State and Federal agencies need to coordinate their efforts.
Agency personnel need to be involved
Even those trust could be better, stakeholders are optimistic that RSM can bring parties together

One goal of Phase One was to assess the **collaborative potential** of RSM. Based on the stakeholder conversations, the stakeholder training workshops, and relevant USACE materials, RSM has good collaborative potential. Many stakeholders are optimistic and would like to work together. RSM's collaborative potential depends on:

Clear and significant decision space.
Defining and communicating the nature and function of RSM
Identification of the relationship of RSM to other Lower Columbia River efforts.
Adequate resources: time, people, money, technology.
Trust
The need for a strategic vision or plan
Stakeholders perceiving reasons to participate (incentives)

RSM Stakeholder Conversations Report

THE REPORT

1. Introduction

This report presents the results of two Regional Sediment Management Demonstration Initiative stakeholder activities: conversations with stakeholders and Collaborative Learning training workshops for stakeholders. The report includes the methods employed for gathering information about stakeholder views related to regional sediment management (RSM) and Mouth of the Columbia River (MCR) issues and policies.

2. The Regional Sediment Management Demonstration Initiative

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) manages the waterways of the United States, including sediment or sand management. USACE has typically focused on managing sand at coastal projects on a project-by-project basis. This approach to sand management has not always adequately considered the cumulative impacts of individual projects on down drift projects. In response to this concern, the USACE has initiated efforts to assess the benefits of managing sediment resources as a regional scale resource rather than a localized project resource. The concept of Regional Sediment Management (RSM) grew out of May 1998 meeting of the Coastal Engineering Research Board. As a management method, RSM Includes the entire environment, from the watershed to the sea. RSM should account for the effect of human activities on sediment erosion as well as its transport in streams, lakes, bays, and oceans. In the last four years, USACE headquarters staff have identified ten project areas for RSM demonstration initiatives, including sites in the Jacksonville, Mobile, Los Angeles, Detroit, Vicksburg, and Portland Districts. The Portland District site is the Mouth of the Columbia River.

A goal of the demonstration program is to change the paradigm of project specific management to focusing on a regional approach in which the USACE as well as state and local agencies stop managing projects and begin "managing the sand." Specific objectives of the demonstration program are:

1.   Implement regional sediment management practices.
2.   Improve efficiencies by linking projects.
3.   Apply new technologies.
4.   Identify and work though bureaucratic obstacles to RSM.
5.   Manage in concert with the environment.
6.   Incorporate a multi-stakeholder process for strategic planning and project coordination.

To address the sixth objective, "incorporate a multi-stakeholder process," the Portland District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has contracted with Walker Consulting of Corvallis, Oregon to apply a Collaborative Learning approach to stakeholder engagement.

3. The Collaborative Learning Approach: A Brief Synopsis

Collaborative Learning is an approach appropriate for natural resource, environmental, and community conflict and decision-making situations with two fundamental attributes: complexity and controversy. Complexity refers to the following features: multiple parties, deeply held values, cultural differences, multiple issues, scientific and technical uncertainty, and legal and jurisdictional constraints. Controversy may include strong emotional attachments, competitive frames, varied tensions and incompatibilities (e.g., history, jurisdiction, culture), and significant symbolic and personal issues (e.g., identity). CL emphasizes activities that encourage systems thinking, joint learning, open communication, constructive conflict management, and a focus on appropriate change.

To address complexity, Collaborative Learning draws upon work in systems thinking, particularly soft systems methodology (Wilson & Morren, 1990). To deal with controversy, CL incorporates ideas from the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) areas of conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation (e.g., Moore, 1996; Deutsch, 1973). Systems thinking and conflict resolution practices are integrated through experiential, adult learning (Kolb, 1986; Senge, 1990).   This active learning approach emphasizes five fundamental values with the acronym of FAITH: fairness, access, inclusion, transparency, and honesty.

Collaborative Learning operates on three levels: (1) as a **philosophy** or orientation, (2) as a **framework**, and (3) as a set of **tactics or techniques**.   The following characteristics of CL pertain to all three levels:

Re-defining the task away from solving a problem to one of **improving a situation**.
Viewing the situation as a set of **interrelated systems**.
Defining improvement as **desirable and feasible change**.
Recognition that **considerable learning**--about science, issues, and value differences--will have to occur before implementable improvements are possible.

As a public participation or planning team decision-making approach, Collaborative Learning encourages people to learn actively, to think systemically, and to learn from one another about a particular problem situation. The first stages of CL workshop project, for example, emphasize common understanding. Activities might include information exchange, imagining best and worst possible futures, and visual representations of the situation, perhaps through the use of "situation maps." In middle stages, CL participants focus on concerns and interests regarding the specific situation,

and how those concerns relate to other concerns. Out of these concerns, CL parties identify possible changes that could be made; "situation improvements." In latter stages, the participants debate these improvements, addressing whether or not they represent desirable and feasible changes in the present situation. Sets of improvements may be organized as action plans.

Throughout the CL process, participants talk with and learn from one another in groups of various sizes. For example, a CL community workshop process may use a "1-2-6" approach to discussing situation improvements. After each CL participant has developed an improvement, she or he discusses that improvement with one other person. Those two join four others and talk about each person's improvements. Within these discussions, active listening, questioning, and argument are respected. People clarify and refine their improvements through dialogue. Collaborative Learning emphasizes "talking with" rather than "talking at."

Collaborative Learning asks the relevant decision authority and convening organization(s) to participate, not as the facilitator or intermediary, but as a major player. For example, an agency may be the decision-maker in the problem situation, but, within a CL process, does not function simply as an arbitrator. Agency leaders clarify to both internal and external constituents the nature and scope of the decision space. Agency personnel participate in CL activities as citizens and as representatives of the agency. Agency participants, just like others in the CL process, share their knowledge and expertise about the situation, ask questions, listen, and debate. Doing so does not compromise the agency's decision authority, but does allow agency personnel to speak from their values and beliefs both as employees and as citizens.

An organization may use Collaborative Learning processes internally, within its organization, or externally, with other organizations and interested citizens. The organization may convene and sponsor Collaborative Learning activities for partnership development or public involvement. When using CL with the public, facilitators must not also be players. CL typically works best when those who direct the process are impartial about the concerns expressed and the improvements proposed.

Collaborative Learning presumes that situations are dynamic, systemic, and changing. CL is a framework that can be adapted to a particular situation to generate:

#	**Dialogue** between diverse communities: scientific, public, administrative.
#	**Improved understanding** of the specific problem situation.
#	**Integration of scientific and public knowledge** about the problem situation.
#	**Increased rapport**, respect, and trust among participants.
#	Clearly articulated **systems-based concerns** about the problem situation.
#	**Tangible improvements** in the problem situation.

Collaborative Learning, while beneficial within an complex and controversial policy situation, is no panacea or "silver bullet." It is one of possibly many frameworks that can involve people in meaningful learning and discussion about challenging management and decision situations. It values emergent consensus, but is not consensus-driven. It does stress learning, understanding, and the development of improvements in the situation. CL does not foster the development of a group "mentality" or "recommendations." Rather, CL encourages parties to make progress on improving the situation as they work through issues, values, and concerns.

4.   The Stakeholder Conversations Method

As noted earlier in the overview of Collaborative Learning, the first step in a CL project is situation assessment. Consequently, the USACE Portland District contract with Walker Consulting included stakeholder conversations. Through these conversations, the RSM situation could be appraised. To accomplish this task, a stakeholder involvement team (SIT) was created.

4.1 Stakeholder Conversations: Objectives
Conversations between Walker and USACE staff members McKillip and Cook generated a number of stakeholder conversation objectives.

Discover what SHs know about RSM.
Identify RSM and MCR issues.
Learn about SH perceptions and expectations of the USACE.
Learn from SHs what they think is important in as RSM stakeholder involvement process.
Assess the collaborative potential of the RSM situation.

This last objective is particularly critical when considering a Collaborative Learning approach for stakeholder involvement and RSM. For a collaborative process like As Daniels and Walker (2001) explain, for Collaborative Learning to be viable, stakeholders and the decision authority need to perceive that there is collaborative potential in the situation. This perception is based on two factors. First, stakeholders (including agency staff) believe that there is a possibility for meaningful, respectful communication interaction among the various parties. Second, stakeholders believe that a mutual gain or integrative outcome is possible, that is, that the fundamental structure of the situation offers the potential for both or all sides to achieve more of their objectives than would be likely in some other venue (Lewicki et al., 1999).

Consequently, the assessment of collaborative potential is two-fold: first, can stakeholders interact with one another in a constructive, and civil manner; and two, can stakeholders participate in the development of decisions that will benefit the parties more than if a party chose to act alone. The assessment determines: (1) the current potential for collaboration, and (2) the extent to which certain aspects of the situation

need to be changed in order to establish good potential for collaboration. There is no specific "formula" to this assessment process. Rather, the analyst has to assess the situation as comprehensively as possible given available resources to do so, such as time, access to people for interviews or conversations, review of documents, and so on. In policy decision situations, though, the willingness of parties to try to work together and the degree of decision space the relevant decision makers are willing to share are key factors.

4.2. Stakeholder Conversations: Procedure

With the RSM stakeholder conversations objectives in mind, Walker developed an conversations protocol. The protocol included a conversation narrative and eleven questions. The narrative and the questions were reviewed and refined by USACE personnel. The eleven questions appear in Table 1.

Table 1. The Stakeholder Conversations: Questions/Discussion Points

1. What do you know about regional sediment management demonstration initiative at the mouth of the Columbia River? Are you familiar with this US Army Corps of Engineers' effort?

2. What issues are an important part of developing a regional sediment management strategy for the Lower Columbia?

3. What are your concerns about these issues and about regional sediment management?

4. What obstacles do might stand in the way of developing a regional sediment management strategy for the Lower Columbia and the mouth of the river?

5. Do you see any connections between the development of a regional sediment management strategy and other Lower Columbia River issues?

6. Who are the important stakeholders (organizations, businesses, agencies, individuals) who should be involved in this regional sediment management demonstration project effort?

7. What relationship does the US Army Corps of Engineers have with major stakeholders?

8. Where Lower Columbia River issues are concerned, how is the US Army Corps of Engineers perceived?

9. As part of the RSM demonstration project, we are tentatively planning on holding five or six community workshops on regional sediment management issues. What advice or concerns do you have about the regional sediment management workshops that will take place in late fall and early winter?

10. What are things that you think we (the consultants) should know about the current situation as we begin to work with the US Army Corps of Engineers?

11. Are there any people, organizations, or groups that you recommend we talk with as part of this interview process?

As the RSM-CL Stakeholder Involvement project director, Walker recruited a team of seven current and former OSU students. In early September, Walker and senior facilitator Corcoran trained the SIT members to conduct the stakeholder conversations. The training included a review of the Regional Sediment Management Demonstration Initiative, background reading material on RSM, and an explanation of the stakeholder conversations procedure.

Team members discussed each of the conversation questions. Walker and Corcoran also guided the team members through the conversations narrative. SIT members were reminded that they were to conduct the stakeholder conversations as impartial individuals on RSM, MCR, and LCR issues.

In mid-September the Stakeholder Involvement Team received names of stakeholders and contact information from USACE personnel. Three members of the team attempted to contact stakeholders via phone and/or email. These three team members asked stakeholders if they would be willing to participate in a conversation and if so, when they would be available. SIT members' schedules were then coordinated with stakeholder availability.

The team members who attempted the initial stakeholder contacted called and/or emailed 112 people from the list the USACE provided. Of these, only 59 could be reached. A minimum of three attempts were made to contact each party not reached. 8 people declined to participate in the conversations. As a result, conversations took place with 51 people from the original list. In addition, SIT members contacted individuals recommended by stakeholders. As a result conversations were held with ten individuals not on the USACE list. SIT members also talked with USACE personnel, either individuals or in groups. In sum, 71 people participated in conversations. The conversations ranged in length from 30 minutes to 2 and one-half hours. Their average length was about an hour. The conversations took place in September and October 2003.

5. Results from the Stakeholder Conversations

The 69 conversations generated over 300 pages of notes. Three members of the team, including Walker, read through the interview notes. The readers analyzed the conversation notes qualitatively, examining how stakeholders addressed the conversation questions and identifying themes, patterns, and unique ideas.

5.1 The Stakeholder Conversation Questions
Discussion of the conversation questions relies principally on the analysis of Erin Haynes and Gregg Walker. The direct quotes have been compiled by Erin Haynes.

Question 1. *What do you know about regional sediment management demonstration initiative at the mouth of the Columbia River? Are you familiar with this USACE effort?*

Q. 1   Summary Points
\#   Some SHs were not aware of RSM and wanted to know what it is.
\#   While many SHs had heard about RSM, they did not know details.
\#   Most SHs talked about MCR or LCR issues.
\#   Some SHs wanted to know how RSM differed from other activities the Corps conducts.
\#   Some SHs wondered how the RSM was defined geographically (e.g., why does it not extend further upriver).

Q. 1   Comments
Many of the stakeholders heard something about the RSM Demonstration Initiative, either from the introductory letters that we had sent them, or from mention at meetings they had attended. Very few expressed great familiarity with the effort, however.

Several of the SHs commented that they knew about RSM because of the USACE's involvement in the Benson Beach project.   SHs most familiar with RSM were generally from government agencies. SHs least familiar with RSM were generally affiliated with local community groups and NGO's.

Question 2. *Which issues are an important part of developing a regional sediment management strategy for the Lower Columbia?*

Q. 2 Summary Points
Stakeholders devoted considerable time and comment to this question. While the list of issues may seem long, the issues correspond to one of three dimensions of the "Progress Triangle" (Daniels & Walker, 2001): substance, procedure, and relationship. Some of the issues are presented here as questions because that is the way in which stakeholders presented them.

Substantive Issues include:

\#   Channel improvement or deepening
\#   Sediment disposal: Sand should be placed carefully so as to help halt erosion, but so as not to disturb habitat or cause dangerous wave amplification)
\#   Sand management; sediment use: quantity, quality, moving it
\#   Benson Beach
\#   Crab fisheries, crab studies, habitat
\#   Marine safety
\#   Beach and jetty erosion
\#   Protection of local economies

\# Shoreline protection
\# Salmon (including spawning habitat)
\# Tidal flats
\# Tern management
\# Tourism
\# Needs of the small ports
\# Restoration
\# Navigation
\# Geomorphology
\# Protection of the environment, including threatened and endangered species

Procedural Issues include:

\# Agencies send different messages
\# Corps' program authority is not clear
\# Some agencies are easier to work with than others
\# The least-cost alternative method should account for long-term, cumulative effects
\# Need to address scientific knowledge holes
\# Need to examine the connections between issues
\# Are Tribes/Indian Nations involved? They should be on a government-to-government basis.
\# How does RSM to the work of other government organizations (e.g., CREST)?
\# How does RSM relate to other MCR and LCR initiatives (e.g., Lower Columbia Solutions Group)?
\# What will RSM do? Is this another Corps activity so that it can do what it wants?
\# What is the decision space? What decisions come out of RSM?
\# Partnership opportunities need to be pursued.
\# Time: How long will RSM take?
\# What will RSM produce?
\# What will RSM efforts cost and who pays?
\# RSM needs to incorporate a long term vision of sustainability

Relationship Issues include:

\# Trust is important, and lacking
\# Corps favors the big ports
\# Agencies contradict each other
\# Congressional delegation needs to be involved
\# Coastal communities' needs ignored
\# Benson Beach: Locals worked together but the goal was not achieved
\# Corps needs to be a partner rather than the central authority or leader

Q. 2 Comments

This question seemed to elicit the same or similar responses to those of questions three and five, all of which encouraged respondents to focus on specific issues surrounding sediment management. Respondents who differentiated between questions two and three tended to list all of the general concerns surrounding RSM they could think of for the second question and then narrowed their scope to give specific details about their own concerns for question three. Many respondents did not give separate answers for these two questions, however.

Several people mentioned the decision-making process as an important RSM issue, expressing concern about possible conflict due to personalities, positions, history, and limited trust. Respondents with commercial interests were concerned about erosion, sediment disposal sites, and the crabbing industry. Some respondents mentioned the need for erosion and habitat studies, and for dissemination of information resulting from those studies.

Government agency respondents voiced strong concerns about the beneficial placement of dredge materials, halting beach erosion, maritime safety and navigation, maintaining open shipping channels in the Columbia River, long-range planning, and meeting environmental standards. Some also mentioned the fishing and crabbing industries, as well as project sustainability and environmental protection.

Respondents associated with local community groups and NGO's emphasized the protection of natural resources and minimizing environmental impacts. Many also mentioned the need for maritime safety and navigation, as well as supporting local economies. Some talked about erosion, beneficial sediment disposal, crab and salmon habitat, and the fact that MCR estuaries are filling up.

Question 3. *What are your concerns about these issues and about regional sediment management?*

Q. 3 Summary Points
- RSM needs to be clearly defined and distinguished from other initiatives
- Role of the Corps needs to be clear
- Some people will always oppose channel deepening
- Agencies sometimes send contradictory messages
- Why should SHs get involved? What's in it for them?
- Corps needs to work better with coastal communities. Will RSM promote that?
- Ecological impacts of RSM
- Need better communication
- What are other RSMs doing?

Q. 3. Comments
Responses to question three were very similar to question two, or were sometimes absent entirely.   In addition to the summary points noted above, some respondents

expressed concerns about proper beach nourishment, the sustainability of local communities and their economies, the need for a long-term view, and cost issues.

Question 4. *What obstacles might stand in the way of developing a regional sediment management strategy for the Lower Columbia and the mouth of the river?*

Q. 4. Summary Points
Unclear purpose
Unclear decision space
Agency rigidity
Lack of trust
Funding
Skepticism, cynicism
History
Insufficient data and knowledge

Q. 4 Comments
Funding and cost issues came up as the most frequent response among all groups to this question. Many respondents cited stakeholder polarization as a major obstacle to developing a collaborative RSM strategy for the MCR. Some respondents thought that a lack of scientific studies and/or knowledge would limit progress. Many respondents commented on agency talked about agency rigidity (particularly the USACE), often voicing a perception about the Corps' traditionally non-inclusive decision-making processes.

Some respondents, particularly from agencies, felt that stakeholder perceptions of agencies and stakeholder resistance to agency projects could become an obstacle to RSM. Some noted that conflicts within groups and communities could be a detriment. A few noted differences in goals and views of the big and small ports. Some respondents thought that the USACE was too driven by projects with commercial benefits. Other respondents expressed concern about where the money would come from for this project. Some referred to the rigidity of the USACE, industry, and other stakeholders. Some respondents were frustrated that a few stakeholders make assumptions about sediment without consulting scientific studies.

Some consultants cited USACE's least-cost rather than long-term approach to problems as an obstacle, and like other groups, felt that funding, lack of knowledge about the subject, and the rigid polarization of some stakeholders could impede the process. One consultant said that the fact that there is less sand in the river than previously could also prove problematic.

Both government agencies and government representatives overwhelmingly responded that cost would be this project's greatest obstacle. Government agency respondents

also highly ranked USACE limitations and lack of studies and general knowledge about key RSM issues (such as sediment movement's effects on crab and salmon habitat).

While the NGO group had the most negative comments about the USACE's sincerity and commitment, their largest response to this question was stakeholder polarization. Many people felt that too many conflicting views would impede this process. They also talked about the difficulty of deciding where sediment placement would be the most beneficial, funding, and scientific disagreements. One respondent said that the EPA's ability to override USACE decisions would make if difficult to reach an executable decision. The tribal respondent talked about knowledge gaps in response to this question.

Question 5. *Do you see any connections between the development of a regional sediment management strategy and other Lower Columbia River issues?*

Q 5. Summary Points
Many people could not answer this question because they did not know enough about RSM.
Some SHs turned this question back on the questioner. They asked:
    – How will RSM connect or relate?
    – Will RSM be more comprehensive?
    – Will RSM be consistent?

Q. 5 Comments
Many respondents did not discuss this question independently; they either had no response, or felt that they had already covered it in questions two or three. One concern often expressed dealt with the interconnectedness of the entire watershed, up-river actions and concerns, and the potential loss of small ports.

Other connections that a few respondents (not necessarily the same few) noted were the crabbing industry impacts and other RSM/MCR issues. Some people connected protecting small ports, fisheries, and coordinating sand control and erosion control efforts. Others associated all Columbia River interests with water flow and water quality issues. Some respondents focused on up-river concerns including dams, sediment flow, and endangered species protection (both land and water species affected by the river). In contrast, other participants talked about the connection between RSM and economic development and navigation, including barges.

Question 6. *Who are the important stakeholders (organizations, businesses, agencies, individuals) who should be involved in this regional sediment management demonstration project effort?*

Q. 6 Summary Points
A long list...frequently mentioned were:

\#   The urban Ports
\#   The small Ports
\#   CREST
\#   Working groups, advisory groups (e.g., parties in the Lower Columbia Solutions Group)
\#   Federal agencies
\#   State agencies
\#   Fishing interests (e.g., crabbers)
\#   Elected officials
\#   Commercial interests
\#   Advocacy groups

Q 6. Comments

Some people identified general groups in response to question six (e.g., crab fishers, county officials, port authorities, local business groups, etc.). Some referred to CREST as good bridge builders out on the coast. :Many respondents answered question six in the same way they responded to question eleven: with names of specific parties.

Question 7. *What relationship does the USACE have with major stakeholders?*

Q. 7 Summary Points

\#   The USACE needs to build trust
\#   The Corps needs to communicate well with stakeholders and communities
\#   Corps works well with the large ports
\#   Corps has a good relationship with other agencies, both federal and state
\#   Corps relationship with some small ports and coastal communities could be a lot better
\#   Sometimes legal action is needed to get the Corps' attention
\#   Corps has some really good people...relationships are more with Corps people than with the Corps
\#   Commander mobility/rotation thwarts good relationships.

Q. 7 Comments

A lot of respondents commented on the matter of trust with the USACE. Though many respondents noted that they had a good relationship with the Corps (most often defined as a relationship with specific Corps personnel), they said that the USACE would have to work on building both trust and communication with communities involved in RSM for this project to have success. Respondents from all groups also urged the USACE to improve communication between the Seattle and Portland districts, and with other government agencies (such as the EPA). Stakeholders who stated that they have had poor relations with the USACE also observed that the relationship was improving, and they hoped the RSM project would demonstrate the USACE's sincerity to be more collaborative and work with stakeholders. However, others had very bad experiences with the USACE, or with USACE individuals, and doubted its ability to change.

Some stakeholders commented that the USACE has very good relations with the ports. Several respondents said that the USACE has very poor relations with other government agencies. They reported a history of distrust. A small number of respondents said that the USACE is perceived as both authoritarian and as having suspicious motives.

Government agency personnel voiced mixed feelings about the USACE. Many government agency respondents said that they had a good working relationship with USACE staff on a personal level, but others said that USACE has its own agenda, doesn't listen, is tough to deal with, and is not receptive to research. Respondents reported both the USACE's bureaucratic and its militaristic orientation as impediments to establishing good relationships with stakeholders.

Non-government respondents reported the most dissatisfaction and frustration with the USACE. Not surprisingly, they claimed that stakeholders don't trust the USACE. While some respondents in this group said they had very good relations with the USACE, others asserted that the USACE is heavy-handed, above the law, slow, unresponsive, uncommunicative, uncooperative, and traditionally shows no commitment to the environment. Many people from this group remarked that the USACE presents projects to stakeholders with its mind already made up about its course of action, and does not listen to their suggestions.

Question 8. *Where Lower Columbia River Issues are concerned, how is the USACE perceived?*

Q. 8 Summary Points
Corps doesn't care about the coastal communities
Corps does not care about non-technical issues, or issues beyond its program
         authority (e.g., community economic viability, tourism)
Corps responds most to the needs of the big ports
Corps cares about commercial/industrial river activity
Corps wants to deepen the channel above all else
Corps has good personnel...good technical expertise

Q. 8 Comments
Many people answered this question in the same way they answered question seven, or they condensed the two questions. Quite a few respondents said that the USACE is seen as untrustworthy, uncommunicative, and uncooperative concerning Lower River Columbia issues. Even some who stated that they have a good working relationship with the Corps observed that the USACE is often perceived as inflexible, authoritarian, unfriendly, and suspiciously motivated. They said that the USACE is seen as a proponent of deepening, and favors urban areas. Although some respondents asserted that stakeholders resist USACE projects because the agency is harsh, rigid, and doesn't

listen to feedback, a few were optimistic that the Corps' relationship with stakeholders is improving based on better communication.

Question 9. *As part of the RSM demonstration project, we are tentatively planning on holding five or six community workshops on regional sediment management issues. What advice or concerns do you have about the regional sediment management workshops that will take place in late fall and early winter?*

Q. 9 Summary Points
#	The reason for meetings should be clear
#	What will these meetings produce?
#	What's in it for SHs?
#	Involve many and diverse SHs
#	Meet on the coast
#	Not just weekday meetings in Portland
#	Get Corps people to participate and not stand at the back of the room
#	Communicate effectively; listen
#	Need impartial facilitation
#	Include public hearings (some people like them)

Q. 9 Comments
This question generated a lot of comments. Almost every respondent seemed eager to offer suggestions about how the RSM initiative could succeed (even though many did not fully understand RSM and were skeptical). Comments generally emphasized involving as many stakeholders as possible, communicating openly with stakeholders about the RSM purpose and agenda, and about USACE limitations or constraints. Respondents hope that Corps personnel will really listen to what people had to say and will incorporate their suggestions into the planning process and products. Several respondents advocated addressing local needs, utilizing local knowledge, as well as informing stakeholders of scientific studies and information.

Many respondents strongly recommended having meetings at convenient times in neutral places, though no consensus emerged on when that should be (whether afternoon or evening, weekend or weekday. Some wanted short, interesting meetings, using local resources, and addressing USACE limitations. Several respondents stated that information and issues should be personalized, and that locals should be able to receive training on technical issues. Others recommended creating coastal community partnerships, and instituting small projects that everyone can get behind. Many people were concerned that the purpose of the meetings specifically and RSM generally be clear and communicated well. A lot of respondents across groups recommended the use of facilitators. Respondents from non-government groups overwhelmingly suggested building trust (in part by starting with small projects that involve local people), communicating all relevant information to stakeholders, setting clear goals, and getting locals involved.

Question 10. *What are things that you think we (the consultants) should know about the current situation as we begin to work with the USACE?*

Q.10 Summary Points
Been through this before
Too many meetings, too much talking, nothing gets done, or the decision has already been made
Trust is a big issue
Maintain independence to gain credibility
Continue the conversations
The Corps should not drag RSM out
How will the results of these conversations be reported?

Q. 10 Comments
In response to this question, many respondents cautioned bureaucratic and regimented nature of the USACE, stating that it would take a long time to get anything done. Some people said that the key is talking to the right people within the USACE, and understanding that it is very compartmentalized organization. Some respondents observed that the RSM effort has to overcome the USACE's poor reputation among stakeholders and the USACE bureaucracy.

Many agency respondents stated that the USACE is under-funded. They suggested talking to upper-management, being open-minded, and being wary of the USACE's political motivations. They also warned that legal battles may slow down the RSM process. The consultants were encouraged to talk to people with the authority to make decisions. Some agency respondents remarked that the USACE is very knowledgeable, and focuses well on the issue at hand.

Non-government respondents were generally less optimistic about working with the USACE. They suggested talking to the right people, including those not motivated by politics, and warned that commander mobility and compartmentalization may make it difficult to implement plans.

Question 11. *Are there any people, organizations, or groups that you recommend we talk with as part of this interview process?*

Q. 11 Summary Points
A long list; many names of organizations and people
Conversations should continue
Listen to more than just the Corps

5.2. General Observations; Central Themes

A number of themes emerged from reading the conversations notes. These themes are summarized below. Some of the narrative repeats points made during the discussion of specific questions. Rob Williams' analysis is featured here.

Concerns about RSM. Many of the respondents either had not heard of the RSM demonstration project, or had limited knowledge of it. Much confusion was evident concerning the issue of dredging and how RSM was larger than this issue. A number of stakeholders wondered if this was *just another Corps project* and an attempt to utilize a new process as a *justification for dredging*. Related to that theme was the fear that many people were *already burned out* and the stakeholder involvement process and structure of the process therefore needed to stand out from attempts that mottled a suspect history. On top of this history of past project difficulties many respondents projected a fundamental concern that the geographical scope of the project conflicted with any effort to take a holistic ecosystem management approach because many influences existed much further upstream than Mile Post 7.

Opportunities for RSM. Aside from the concern over geographic boundary limitations, many participants did embrace the idea that the RSM could be a successful attempt for the USACE to develop a new management approach that was more holistic and not just focused on dredging. Some respondents stressed the fact that past conflicts had moved all players into a box or defensive position and a different management approach and stakeholder involvement approach could allow participants to *move out of their box.* This movement could *improve relationships* between many players, could *reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies* that would funnel more project and mitigation dollars to the ground, and allow for the mutual discovery and implementation of many solutions. This holism could also allow the Corps to move beyond a least cost pricing scenario to costing that included more factors.

Call for Action. Many respondents referred to a long history of major impacts on the landscape and the concern that these consequences are soon coming due. A few SHs specifically referenced the problems in the Chesapeake Bay and mused that the RSM could serve not only as a *vehicle for continuing and implementing scientific research* (i.e. testing theories on a larger spatial scale), but could also serve as *proactive action to avoid ecosystem failure* and the enormous price tag that comes with massive restoration attempts at that time.

Trust. Trust was an issue for many. Common themes of polarized participants, strained relationships, burnout, and people working from their worst-case scenarios often boil down to the issue of trust. Many respondents were concerned that little trust existed between many parties, but the idea of the RSM as a new project did have the potential to build trust.

Improve Likelihood of Success through Management Projects, Clear Decision Space, and Transparent Procedure.   One of the ways the RSM could build trust and become successful was to start small and build momentum through a series of accomplishments. Even if those accomplishments were considered small, the positive effect could be large. At the same time there is an *inherent tension* in the RSM to not only build success through small projects but to simultaneously build a large scale holistic approach. Different respondents identified a variety of variables that together could build a successful RSM project that incorporates this tension:

\#   Think through what a successful RSM looks like
\#   Come to meetings prepared to articulate this vision in a way that seems inclusive and provides participants a way to envision their participation (i.e. be structured but not too rigid and heavy handed)
\#   Determine what the objective is
\#   Determine what agency is responsible for what action or resource
\#   Determine under what legislative authority the project is operating
\#   Determine who has decision making authority
\#   Clarify the decision space
\#   Communicate clearly to SHs where their ideas and actions matter
\#   The Corps needs to articulate what they want out of the process to alleviate concerns

5.3.   Some Sample Statements from the Conversations
As part of her analysis of the conversations, Erin Haynes compiled a set of representative statements:

\#   *"'Regional' is larger than government project boundaries. We need to have a regional approach broader than one project by looking at the thing with a holistic approach."* [interview #57].

\#   *"[I am] intrigued to see how two groups, black vs. white, can make improvement that's not just grey."* [interview #32]

\#   *"If this [process] is perceived as a facade, people won't participate."* [interview #59]

\#   *"Sometimes public testimony scares away people."* [interview #63-64]

\#   *"Good faith efforts like these [RSM activities] show credibility."* [interview #56]

\#   *"When it comes to doing things, the Army Corps tend to develop something and then present it to stakeholders saying, 'here's what we're going to do.'"* [interview #19]

\#   *"USACE has expert knowledge."* [interview #67-68]

6.   The Stakeholder Training Workshops: Ideas about RSM Stakeholder Involvement

In addition to stakeholder conversations, the RSM-CL Stakeholder Involvement effort has included Collaborative Learning training. As part of the training component, citizens/stakeholders were invited to participate in a one-day Collaborative Learning training workshop. Two identical workshops were held, on inland and one on the Southwest Washington coast. About 35 people participated in one of the training days.

As part of the CL training, participants were asked to voice concerns and/or improvements regarding the RSM stakeholder involvement process. Via a worksheet, training workshop participants were asked "what are your concerns about the RSM stakeholder involvement process?", and "how can the RSM stakeholder process be improved?" Key responses are presented below.

Concerns
\#   Honesty is essential
\#   All parties must commit to the process
\#   Need to include the political actors, e.g., legislators
\#   What is the product? A process is no good without a product
\#   Be clear about the ultimate goal
\#   Encourage innovation but balance with realism
\#   Safeguard against a stakeholder who comes in at the last minute and disrupts the process
\#   USACE staff need to participate rather than stand at the back of the room
\#   What/who is a stakeholder? This needs to be defined
\#   Business and industry need to be valued
\#   What are the boundaries of the process?
\#   What are the criteria for success?
\#   People need to see direct results of their time and efforts
\#   Be inclusive
\#   Foster and maintain good communication

Improvements
\#   Issues should be clearly framed
\#   Use the best science
\#   Sessions should be recorded
\#   Decision must be defined early and clearly
\#   Establish issues; set a substantiative agenda
\#   Provide necessary technical information
\#   Include a broad and diverse set of stakeholders
\#   Include the Tribes

Develop a framework for stakeholder interaction and get them all together
Organize a technical committee
Create a glossary
Publish a newsletter and develop a website
Present early and clear any "givens" or "sideboards"
Include upriver stakeholders
Build trust
Bring in partners
Develop a shared problem statement
Develop clear objectives and principles
Follow the training sessions and community workshops with a formal "agreement to collaborate."
Get media coverage
Increase the RSM geographic area

As these ideas indicate, citizens want RSM clearly defined, both in substance and in procedure.   Of all these points, the need for clear decision space was voiced most often. Citizens have indicated that, while they see potential in the RSM effort, they want to know where there ideas may matter and what decisions will emerge. As one training workshop participant and prominent stakeholder wrote:

> Overall, I believe that the [RSM-CL] process has great potential of breaking through the lack of trust barrier–if the key parties commit to the process . . . [It] will help break the logjam and provide solutions not previously understood or addressed.   [It must be] a very inclusive process that is facilitated.

7. Next Steps?

7.1. Phase Two
Phase One of the RSM-CL Stakeholder Involvement project has featured stakeholder conversations and stakeholder training workshops. Phase Two will likely involve a greater number of stakeholders and citizens in Collaborative Learning events. Possibilities include:

Community Workshops
Scientific and Technical Forums
Ongoing reporting of products and progress
A Strategic Communication Plan

Design ideas related to some of these activities feature:

Collaborative Learning Community Workshops
Address substantive issues

\#   Each workshop should feature multiple issues, but not all issues
\#   Schedule technical talks
\#   Include small group discussion
\#   Offer each workshop twice; once inland and once on the coast
\#   Weekdays and Saturdays

Science/Technical Forums
\#   An evening meeting, right before a day workshop
\#   Technical talks with question, answer, discussion
\#   Some non-agency speakers

Other Ideas?
\#   Field trips?
\#   Study Groups?
\#   Need for a communication plan?

7.2 What About a Phase Three?

\#   Collaborative Learning Stakeholder Events
\#   Strategic Planning Workshops
\#   Strategic Project/Action Workshops
\#   Steering Committee
\#   Technical Teams
\#   Study Groups
\#   Ongoing reporting of products and progress

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Appendix 1

The Conversations Narrative and Questions

USACE Regional Sediment Management Demonstration Initiative Collaborative Learning Stakeholder Involvement Project (RSM-CL Project)

Tentative Conversations Protocol
(Recommended topics for inquiry and discussion)

Introduction
The Portland District Office of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers is initiating a regional sediment management **demonstration initiative** at the mouth of the Columbia River. This demonstration project includes the Columbia River Littoral Cell, from Tillamook Head, Oregon, to Point Grenville, Washington and into the Columbia River to approximately river mile 7. The Regional Sediment Management Demonstration Project involves the development of a multi-stakeholder **long-term** management strategy for addressing sedimentation issues in the Lower Columbia River, particularly at the mouth of the river.

A significant component of the RSM demonstration initiative planning effort is the involvement of stakeholders. RSM planning is a multi-party effort, with stakeholders coming from state agencies, other federal agencies, local communities and their governments, commercial organizations, and interest groups.

The stakeholder involvement component of the RSM project will use an innovative approach for public participation, "Collaborative Learning." The CL approach will include community workshops on regional sediment management issues, opportunities for stakeholder to participate in a CL training, and conversations with stakeholders to learn about the regional sediment management situation.

I am a member of the RSM Collaborative Learning Stakeholder Involvement team, directed by Gregg Walker and Pat Corcoran of Oregon State University. I, along with all the team members, appreciate your willingness to participate in a conversation about the Lower Columbia regional sediment management situation.

All comments are confidential, with your identity known only to the CL project team. Conversation comments will be summarized and a list of conversation participants will be included in a report to the Portland District office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. No statements, though, will be attributed to specific people. The identities of individuals who participate in the conversations, in terms of comments made, will remain private and confidential.

Conversation Questions: Inquiry and Discussion Points

1.	What do you know about regional sediment management demonstration initiative at the mouth of the Columbia River? Are you familiar with this US Army Corps of Engineers' effort?

2.	What issues are an important part of developing a regional sediment management strategy for the Lower Columbia?

3.	What are your concerns about these issues and about regional sediment management?

4.	What obstacles ~~do~~ might stand in the way of developing a regional sediment management strategy for the Lower Columbia and the mouth of the river?

5.	Do you see any connections between the development of a regional sediment management strategy and other Lower Columbia River issues?

6.	Who are the important stakeholders (organizations, businesses, agencies, individuals) who should be involved in this regional sediment management demonstration project effort?

7.	What relationship does the US Army Corps of Engineers have with major stakeholders?

8.	Where Lower Columbia River issues are concerned, how is the US Army Corps of Engineers perceived?

9.	As part of the RSM demonstration project, we are tentatively planning on holding five or six community workshops on regional sediment management issues. What advice or concerns do you have about the regional sediment management workshops that will take place in late fall and early winter?

10.	What are things that you think we (the consultants) should know about the current situation as we begin to work with the US Army Corps of Engineers?

11.	Are there any people, organizations, or groups that you recommend we talk with as part of this interview process?

Appendix 2
The Stakeholder CL Training Workshop Worksheet (Condensed)

Regional Sediment Management (RSM) Demonstration Initiative
Collaborative Learning Training Workshop

Name_____Phone_____email_____

Improving RSM Stakeholder Involvement

Think about the RSM Stakeholder involvement process map that we have just considered. Share your concerns about the situation and propose an action that would improve it.

1. What are your concerns about the RSM Stakeholder involvement process?

2. How can the RSM Stakeholder involvement process be improved? What specific action, practice, policy, or design idea would increase the effectiveness of the RSM Stakeholder involvement process?

3. Why is your improvement desirable?

4. How is it feasible?

5. What possible impacts would your improvement have on other RSM Stakeholders or parts of the process?

Appendix 3
Stakeholder Conversations Participants List

Ackerman, Sybil	The Audubon Society
Allan, Jonathan	Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries
Bell, Nina	Northwest Environmental Advocates
Bergeron, Jim	Port of Astoria Commission
Berquam, Taunja	US Army Corps of Engineers, Portland
Blosser, Bill	Consultant
Brody, Susan	National Policy Consensus Center, PSU
Cawley, Lanny	Port of Kalama
Collson, Todd	CREST
Cook, Bill	Port of Astoria
Cook, Marci	US Army Corps of Engineers, Portland
Davies, Brent	EcoTrust
Degans, Sebastian	Port of Portland
Doern, Martin	Office of US Senator Gordon Smith
Ebner, David	US Army Corps of Engineers, Portland
Edwards, John	Chinook, WA
Ehlers, Paula	WA Department of Ecology
Ellis, Stewart	Intertribal Fish Council
Englund, Jon	Englund Marine Supply
FICA, Steve	Salmon for All
Frat, John	Port of Vancouver
Funk, Mack	Port of Ilwaco
Gale, Chuck	Pacific International Engineering
Gearin, Peter	Port of Astoria
Gilden, Jennifer	Pacific Fish Management Council
Glick, Michael	Columbia River Bar Pilots
Grigg, Judy	Port of Longview
Haubner, Daniel	US Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville
Hermans, Marcel	Port of Portland
Hicks, Laura	US Army Corps of Engineers, Portland
Holznagel, Theeme	Columbia River Channel Coalition
Horton, Deena	Office of US Representative Brian Baird
Huhtala, Peter	Columbia Riverkeepers
Hunt, David	Columbia River Channel Coalition
James, Dan	Ball, Janik
Jay, David	Oregon Graduate Institute
Jewell, Paul D., CPT	US Coast Guard
Jolly, William	WA State Parks and Recreation Commission
Larson, Kathi	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Linquist, Mindi	Office of US Senator Patty Murray
Luce, Liz	Office of US Senator Maria Cantwell
Marg, Ron	US Army Corps of Engineers, Portland
Martin, Stephen	US Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle

Mast, Jim   Port of Wahkiakum County
McFarland, Brendon   WA Department of Ecology
McKillip, Doris   US Army Corps of Engineers
McNair, Fran   WA Department of Natural Resources
Mead, Markus   Surfrider
Moulton, Robert   Port of Portland
Nelson, Gary   Port of Grays Harbor
Nudelman, Debra   Resolve
Paulson, Larry   Port of Vancouver
Priest, George   Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries
Randall, Loree   WA Department of Ecology
Ranker, Kevin   Surfrider
Richardson, Ann   Office of US Representative David Wu
Ritchie, Norma   NW Steelheaders
Shepsis, Vladimir   Coast and Harbor Engineering
Snyder, Sid   Long Beach, WA
Swain, Chris   Columbia Swim
Terry, Diane   Coastal Storms Initiative
Todd, Daniel   Port of Chinook
Tortorici, Cathy   NOAA Fisheries
Van Ess, Matt   CREST
Varness, Kevin   Grays Harbor County Dept. Of Public Services
Warren, Robert
Westerholm, Jon   Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union
Wheaton, Gerry   NOAA
Willis, Robert   US Army Corps of Engineers
Windsheimer, Rian   Office of US Senator Gordon Smith
Wolf, Greg   National Policy Consensus Center, PSU

Notes:
1. Some individuals participated in one-on-one conversations. Others, such as a number of USACE personnel, participated in group conversations.
2. Conversations ranged in length from fifteen minutes to two hours. The average length of a stakeholder conversation was 55 minutes.

Appendix 4
Members of the RSM-CL Stakeholder Involvement Team

Project Director: Gregg Walker, Corvallis, OR
Trainer and Facilitator: Pat Corcoran, Astoria, OR
Trainer: Steve Daniels, Logan, UT
Conversants/Questioners: Brian Blankespoor, Corvallis, OR
                                      Kelly Collson, Corvallis, OR
                                      Kathleen Ellyn, Corvallis, OR
                                      Erin Haynes, Dallas, OR
                                      Todd Jarvis, Monmouth, OR
                                      Christina Kakoyannis, Corvallis, OR
                                      Rob Williams, Portland, OR