

DMMIWG

Memo: DMMIWG

From: Jim Tripp and Tom Wakeman, Co-chairs

Re: May 2, 2001 meeting

Date: April 26, 2001

The next meeting of the DMMIWG is scheduled for this coming Wednesday, May 2, 2001, at the HRF, 40 West 20th Street, 9th floor, starting at 9:30 a.m. Subsequent meetings will take place on **June 13, July 11 and August 1**. The focus of this coming meeting will be on all things relating to dredging. We are asking a number of individuals (Seebode, Houston, Wakeman, Pabst, Borsellino, Baier, Gimello, Baron, Voros, Hector, Matsil, Genn, Suszkowski, Ludwig et al.) to provide updates, status reports and assessments as to where we are and what we are doing relating to **DREDGED MATERIAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES - STATUS & UPDATES:**

1. **Current Dredging Projects**

- **45-foot KVK/Newark Bay**
- **41-foot Port Jersey Channel**
- **41-foot Arthur Kill Channel**
- **50-foot Harbor Navigation Project**

2. **Disposal Options/Beneficial Use**

- **HARS Remediation**
- **Remediation Material Workgroup (Brownfields, Landfills, Superfund Sites)**
- **Newark Bay CDF**
- **Bayonne Golf Course**
- **HMDC**
- **Decontamination Pilots**
- **Mine Remediation, Pennsylvania**

3. **Environmental Dredging**

- **Hackensack River**
- **Hudson River**
- **Passaic River**
- **Gowanus Canal**

4. **Planning Activities**

- **CPIP**
- **CPIP-EIS**
- **PIDN**
- **Float Bridge/Tunnel**

5. **HEP Activities**

- **CCMP Chapter**

- **CARP Progress**
- **Habitat Issues**

6. **Environmental Concerns**

- **Windows**
- **Essential Fish Habitat**
- **Wetland Losses**
- **Grants to facilitate environmental integrity**

The discussion at the April 4 DMMIWG meeting included the following:

1. Pennsylvania mineland reclamation demonstration project. Status update by Wakeman. Pennsylvania DEP has not opened Bark Camp for the season. There is a meeting April 6 with Hector et al to talk about New York projects. There is 70,000 cy at Port Elizabeth. 164,000 cy is already in place. Reaches B,C and D should produce another 200,000 cy. NY candidate projects are Red Hook flats and US Gypsum.

2. Navigation-related erosion – new work group. Matsil reported. Erosion of edge habitat is occurring in the Arthur Kill, the KVK and Jamaica Bay. Causes include development of headwaters, sediment, wave wash, channelization and others. We have to unravel the regulatory issues since DEC's position appears to be opposition to filling in shallow waters even they have resulted from erosion of wetland habitat. The proposal is to set up an ad hoc work group within the Habitat Work Group to look at erosion control, edge habitat restoration, beneficial use of dredged material and regulation issues. The two States, NYC, the PA, the Corps, EPA, EDC, NMFS, USFWS and other members of the Habitat WG should participate. We should ask the two States to nominate representatives. We should also ask USFS and NMFS to participate. Seebode added that, at the Harbor Operations committee meeting, the Corps reported on projects in the queue, including the AK, and brought up the subject of wake wash. The USCG agreed to help.

3. Windows – new work group proposal. The National Academy of Science work group on dredging windows is scheduled to complete its final draft report in mid-June. Our proposal is to set up another ad hoc work group to deal with windows in this region. Windows are times when you can dredge. Dredging projects are becoming more and more constrained. The recommendation is to form a stakeholder work group, to identify end species of concern, to look at dredging projects and to consider trade-off's. Seebode added that the windows issue has become a very significant issue. When coupled with other issues, including closed buckets, removing decanted water off of scows and upland disposal, with windows, we have turned the dredging program into micro-surgery. Can we do the job? We need to look carefully at how we integrate windows into the dredging program. We should put together a team to develop empirical data about habitat resources relevant to dredging decisions and restoration opportunities.

4. Freight rail.

Presentation by Jack Guinan, NY DOT, director of the passenger and freight rail section, accompanied by Norm Schneider, director of the freight and economic development division, and Doug Carry, the Region 11 regional commissioner. When Norfolk Southern and CSX wanted to take over Conrail, they sought a letter of support from NY for the Surface Transportation Board. NYS did not provide such a letter since the State wanted competition in NY that the railroads were unwilling to offer. The STB did provide some competition by giving Canadian Pacific access to downstate NY.

What would it take to bring trailers on flatcars into NYC, including the Harlem River Rail Yard (HRRY)? There are six bridges with clearance problems. Varick Street Bridge in Yonkers is being raised 6 inches so that trailers on flatcars could get through. The MTA agreed to lower the clearance requirement to 4 inches on the condition that the State help raise the bridges. The railroads have also wanted a second intermodal track in the HRRY. This project is proceeding.

NY DOT organized a joint user study to define all of the needs on the line coming down the east side of the Hudson River. The question addressed is: what kinds of services do Metro North, Amtrak and the freight railroads need? What physical improvements are appropriate? What would be the cost? Who pays? The cost of the study was \$900,000, with all contributing. The capital cost of constructing the link to the Oak Point Yard that opened in 1998 was \$185 million. The south end of the Oak Point Yard is the HRRY. The State leased the Yard to Harlem River ventures. The second intermodal track is moving forward. The link across the Hellgate Bridge to the Freemont Branch needs to be double-tracked with speed limits raised from 10 to 30 mph. We are looking at needs at Fresh Pond. The Bay Ridge line has clearance impediments. Clearances need to be raised to at least 17 feet 9 inches that will permit containers on flatcars or trailer on flatcars. We want to be sure that these lines on the east side of the Hudson River can carry 286,000 pound cars vs. 263,000 pound cars, the current limit. This would allow more rail cars to come down from Canada. We also want to complete the connection of the SIRR to the Chemical Coast line.

DOT has budgeted \$21 million for the first phase development of the Pilgrim State Hospital site that would be connected to the LIRR main line. It is a great site. It will be available initially for bulk services. We need to look at clearances. State Senator Trunzo has been supportive of the State appropriating \$500,000 for the Pilgrim feasibility study and \$300,000 for the clearance study.

We very much need more yard space. NY DOT has just started looking at the Phelps Dodge site. Rob Gottheim asked about the HRRY in this context. The HRRY has 28 acres set aside as a rail yard. The failed paper plant was to occupy 25 acres. Since we have a desperate need for yard space, what about recovering this 25 acres for yard use? Guinan pointed out that the State has a 99-year lease with the leasee such that DOT is constrained. A question was raised about the possibility of condemnation? The East of Hudson Task Force is looking at opportunities for more yard space, including land adjacent to the Oak Point Yard. At the next NYMTC freight advisory task force meeting

on April 25, DOT will make a presentation on other potential yard spaces. Do the railroads consider the HRRY space to be desirable? Connie Eristoff commented that, if we could get more land at the HRRY, that would be very good. Let's get all of the agencies and interests together to look at other yard space options. The public sector will have to act if we are to address the problem of truck traffic.

Presentation by Alice Cheng, Andrew Genn and Sheri Colburn of EDC. EDC is very interested in competitive freight rail service in NYC and the downstate region. EDC's near-term projects including 65th Street in Brooklyn and improved freight rail service to the Hunts Point food market. The latter is one of the largest generators of truck trips in NYC. EDC is working with the State to match \$2.5 million in State funds for improvements to the distribution tracks in the Market. Construction is about to begin.

The City acquired the 25-acre 65th Street site in Brooklyn in 1982. EDC has just completed construction of the new float bridges. The CP Railroad has been selected to operate this facility under a three-year contract. CP's contract at the HRRY is expiring, and it is moving to the 65th Street site. This site is the backyard for the Bay Ridge line and the LIRR entry point on the east side of the Harbor. EDC is also looking at a dedicated truck ramp to the Gowanus. EDC is investing \$70 million into South Brooklyn, Red Hook and other freight rail facilities in Brooklyn. It has established a rail float bridge facility at Red Hook primarily for cocoa and bulk loading facilities where the Port Authority is EDC's partner. EDC is pursuing an on-dock rail project at the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal (SBMT) and nearby streets. EDC is programming federal and state dollars to realign these tracks. EDC has hired a consultant to do the design work. The hope is to make the SBMT more attractive. EDC has put out an RFP for the SBMT with a response deadline of May 15, 2001. We want to reactivate the berths that are underutilized at Red Hook and the SBMT.

Since the City Department of Sanitation would like the solid waste brought to the new Fresh Kills transfer facility to be containerized and moved by rail, and the Port Authority is working on the Chemical Coast connection, the City is extending the Travers line one mile south to Fresh Kills. EDC is also working on an expansion of the Arlington Rail Yards with the Port Authority. The State has contributed \$2 million to the Howland Hook Arlington Rail yard improvements.

The Cross Harbor Freight MIS Study found that there are enormous benefits to the construction of the freight rail tunnel. It recommended proceeding with a full EIS RFP. We have tentatively selected an environmental engineering firm to prepare the EIS. Then we expect to start the scoping process. We hope to complete the EIS within two years. An objective of the EIS will be to develop a clearance plan for the Bay Ridge line etc. Modern intermodal cars cannot move up and down this 12-mile long line. It used to accommodate 600,000 rail cars per year; it now handles 6000 per year. Clearance improvements on the Bay Ridge line are the key. The IDA is expressly prohibited from investing in rail projects with the result that NYC may not help finance rail spurs. Industrial businesses would like to hook up to the Bay Ridge line, Port Morris in the Bronx and the SIRR. The City has a bill in Albany to allow the IDA to do tax-exempt financing for such projects. The float bridge system has a capacity imbalance since three

of the four float bridges in the Greenville Yards in NJ are closed, and the other is antiquated.

The City has not been able to find a funding source to acquire the Phelps Dodge site. EDC hopes to work with the State and Port Authority to develop this project. A question is whether we can dedicate some tolls revenues for freight rail projects. Can the State help to fund the Phelps Dodge acquisition and improvement project? Those who commented at the meeting all consider the purchase of this site to be critical to the future of freight rail on the east side of the Harbor.

Don Lotz, Port Authority. Lotz made a presentation with overheads on improvements in intermodalism. Landside access is critical to move cargo in and out of the region. Trucks deliver most cargo today. Water transportation is a small substitute for highways. The west side of the Hudson River has double-stack express rail connection to the national freight rail system. Red Hook has no rail access. There is no doublestack rail east of the Hudson.

Most rail destination today's involve hauls greater than 500 miles. The shortest route, the one to Worcester, is 294 miles. Montreal is 394 miles. Chicago and other midwestern destinations are greater than 500 miles. Most of the Port's import and export cargo begin or end within the region. Over 80% of the trade through the Port flows to and from the region. Warehouses must be located at the first point of rest.

Port express rail is growing. Port Elizabeth express rail on-dock is 70% of all rail business in the port, hauling 178,000 TEUs last year. The first quarter of this year has been about 20% ahead of last year. Annualized, the March 2001 rail express tonnage represents about 220,000 containers. 1998 was 155,000 TEUs and 1993, 56,000 TEUs by express rail, respectively. Today we have three trains in, three trains out, seven days a week. The Port has already exceeded its rail volume forecast. Rail is the fastest growing component of the Port business, rising faster than Port business. Ten years ago rail handled 4% of Port traffic; today it is 13 to 15%. We think that the rail share of Port business, including all rail facilities, such as express rail, can grow to 25-30% within 10-20 years. This increase is predicated on improvements in the freight rail system. The Port Authority has a \$200 million program today; it has just acquired the Proctor & Gamble site adjacent to Howland Hook. The PA will build an on-dock rail facility there. The PA is building the Chemical Coast connector to connect Howland Hook with the rail network. It is in the preliminary design phase. The Board of the PA has authorized \$35 million to be spent for this purpose with 2 ½ years to completion.

In general, the PA is actively engaged in discussions with stakeholders. On the New Jersey side, NJDOT has a work group that has identified freight needs to accommodate port cargo plus other cargo. Infrastructure projects include the Chemical Coast connection, the Port Reading junction, the Lehigh line, the Waverly Yard Loop, the Oak Island Yard, the Lehigh connection, the P & H line and the Marion Connection. This entails mostly putting back double tracks and connections that existed before Conrail.

On the New York side, major projects include improvements to the Bay Ridge line, Fresh Pond Yard, the Maspeth transflow, the Maspeth Terminal, the Hellgate line, Phelps Dodge, the Oak Point yard, the Hunts Point Market and HRRY. All these improvements would be connected to the 65th Street Yard via the Bay Ridge line that needs its tracks and clearances to be improved. The Phelps Dodge site is probably the largest available industrial space in Brooklyn and Queens that is reasonably available with characteristics that would make it a good rail yard. We are in discussions with the two State DOTs, NYC and the Governors' offices. There are other rail projects on LI outside of the Port District that has a 25 mile radius around the Port. It is just as important to improve the upland freight rail facilities as the float system itself. The float workshop focused on what improvements really need to be done. The PA is beginning to look at the capacity on the NJ side in Greenville.

Full build-out today, with the connectors, Phelps Dodge, Port rail projects and other NY/NJ projects requires about \$1 billion (without the tunnel). This investment would provide capacity for tractor on flatcar. Double stack capacity east of the Hudson River would be very considerable. Bridge clearances and third rail clearance issues are also important. The Bay Ridge line is dedicated to freight only. It has no third rail problem. The mayor problem is the East NY tunnel plus bridge clearances. The East NY tunnel is the biggest obstacle. The on-dock express rail projects for the Port and connectors have a capital cost of \$200 million. On the New Jersey side, the railroads and the State have identified \$100 million in needs. This totals \$300 million. EDC has identified \$500 million in ancillary freight rail improvements (Cheng). This does not include First Avenue improvements. The Port Authority is in discussions with the Governor's office. The PA has no line item budgeted for Phelps Dodge.

John Hummer, NJTPA. NJTPA is the MPO on the New Jersey side of the the River. Hummer attended the CPIP meeting last week. LA Long Beach is the largest port in the region. If SE Asian traffic were to come to North America via the Suez Canal, we would be handling electronic goods, toys and textiles from much of Asia. As the commodity profile changes here, there is a need for value added warehousing close to the Port and intermodal rail facilities. 9000 TEU mega-ships are being designed for trans-Pacific traffic.

The land-side impacts of Port development will be very important. New Jersey is the distribution platform for the metro region. While Red Hook may be handling 100,000 TEUs, the big impacts are in New Jersey. NJTPA has questions about the PIDN. When you transport cargo to PIDN destinations, economic activity takes lace out of the region. In Allentown and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, there is burgeoning warehousing. It is trucked there and back. Thus, we experience a double truck move. Pavement wear is a big issue in NJ, but Pennsylvania gets the jobs. We need to lower truck VMT. NJTPA has a brownfields project to identify warehousing capacity close to the Port. We have identified 800 acres along the Portway alignment. We are looking at opportunities to handle containers between the Port and freight rail yards, i.e., Croxton.

We need to concentrate warehousing distribution events that are truck intensive away from residential communities. We have to look at brownfields in areas from South

Kearny to the east side of the Hackensack River. We need to persuade communities that the northern NJ region has plenty of shopping malls. Warehousing is labor intensive. The Barnes & Nobles warehouse off of exit 8A has 700 employees. We need to look more at impacts on the NJ side that will remain the distributional center for the region. If you think that we have truck traffic now at 2.5 million TEU per year, what will happen at 10 or 20 million TEUs? Let's look at realistic planning horizons – 20 years. In Union County, we are looking at the global freight village, with revitalized infrastructure linking warehousing, trucking and rail, i.e., inter-dependent, inter-linked, low truck VMT supply operations.

Gimello commented that the CPIP is really focused on the next 10 to 15 years. The big question for brownfields is assessing the extent of contamination. Can we use PIDN in connection with warehousing and value added functions? We need close connections to intermodal facilities for longer-term moves. Genn added that the bulk of the population lives east of the Hudson River. Yet, New Jersey suffers the brunt of the truck traffic. New York can help handle a larger portion of this traffic. Hummer responded that there is rail line capacity north to Albany and Buffalo, with the possibility of warehousing and value added jobs. The west-bound routes going out of New Jersey are capacity constrained. If we have to solve the Port productivity problem through PIDN, a lot of that will be truck moves to out-of-region destination, such as Harrisburg, with truck moves back into the region.

5. Lower Passaic River. Discussions are underway.

6. Remedial Material Work Group. Pabst reported that we were hoping to meet the March 30 deadline for revisions to the bioaccumulation protocols for the HARS. EPA is in discussions with the Corps. EPA and Corps experts are getting together later this week. All ideas will be made available to the peer reviewers.

7. CCMP drafting chapter. We have a consultant to help flesh out the scope of this chapter.

8. CPIP. The stakeholders group meeting is set for April 18. It is designed to let members state their concerns.

9. Penn & Fountain demonstration project. Genn reported. If there is to be port development in the region, we need places for disposal of dredged material. The Penn & Fountain landfill with its closure demonstration project is a candidate. We need to find three mcy of capacity. ESDC funds are helping to finance this project. We have completed nine sampling projects at nine locations slated for dredging. We are testing for conformity with geotechnical soil specifications. Within one to two months we have to have the testing results. In mid-March we went on a bus tour to NJ sites with the community CAC. A question was raised about the integrity of liners at Penn & Fountain. John McLaughlin of DEP pointed out that the Penn & Fountain liner is low density and thus has more flexibility than the high density liners at the Fresh Kills landfill.