

PORTLAND HARBOR SEDIMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

APPENDIX C

PUBLIC OUTREACH CONDUCTED DURING PLAN PREPARATION



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Table of Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	C-1
2.0 OUTREACH ACTIVITIES DURING PHSMP DEVELOPMENT.....	C-1
2.1 Internal Informational Updates	C-1
2.2 Public Involvement Plan Workgroup.....	C-1
2.3 Public Information Updates	C-2
2.4 Agency & Tribal Coordination Activities.....	C-2
2.5 Planned Public Information Activities.....	C-3
2.6 Grant Available to Facilitate Community Review of PHSMP	C-3
2.7 Public Outreach Materials Developed	C-3

Appendix C

Public Outreach Conducted During Plan Preparation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Since November 1998, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has been meeting with a variety of stakeholders about the Portland Harbor Sediment Management Plan (PHSMP) and to discuss how to address contaminated sediment issues. The purpose of these meetings was to:

- Educate and inform stakeholders about Portland Harbor and the sediment management plan being developed;
- Listen to concerns and issues so that they could be addressed in the draft PHSMP; and
- Gather information and recommendations from stakeholders about how they would like to be involved in the process and informed of activities underway in the Harbor.

Several concerns and issues were raised during these meetings, which DEQ has documented and will address on an ongoing basis throughout implementation of the PHSMP.

2.0 OUTREACH ACTIVITIES DURING PHSMP DEVELOPMENT

The sheer number and diversity of interested stakeholders in the Portland Harbor project has made it a challenge to reach a large number of people within the short development time of the PHSMP (November 1998 through May 1999). DEQ has implemented a variety of outreach activities to insure stakeholders are informed and have the opportunity to provide direct input into development of the PHSMP. Coordination of information and communication with stakeholders were accomplished in a number of ways.

2.1 Internal Informational Updates

Updates on the status of the project were submitted to the Governor's Office throughout the process and on a bi-weekly basis to the Portland Harbor Group and interested government agencies. Weekly meetings between DEQ and the Portland Harbor management teams were held to discuss issues and major activities related to the project. DEQ staff and managers meet on a weekly basis to insure everyone has the opportunity to discuss issues and report on the status of Portland Harbor activities. DEQ had site project managers in the Harbor area meet on a monthly basis about integration of their work with elements in the PHSMP.

2.2 Public Involvement Plan Workgroup

DEQ formed a public involvement workgroup that reviewed and discussed public outreach activities and strategies related to Portland Harbor. The workgroup meets on a bi-weekly basis and provides recommendations on the draft public involvement plan for Portland Harbor.

2.3 Public Information Updates

- A web page was developed for the Portland Harbor project and updated throughout the project. Future documents and information will continue to be added to the web page on a regular basis.
- A press release was distributed to announce the development of the PHSMP and the agreement reached between DEQ and the Portland Harbor Group. Press releases will be initiated as the project progresses.
- Interviews with newspaper reporters and TV networks were held to discuss issues related to the Portland Harbor project.
- Several meetings were held with congressional representatives to update them on the status of the project and provide them an opportunity to ask questions.
- Presentations on Portland Harbor were given to a variety of stakeholders who requested information about the project. Some of the groups requesting presentations by DEQ in conjunction with their meetings included: Portland City Club's Growth Management and Environment Committee; Port of Portland's meetings on Channel Deepening Project with environmental groups, government agencies, and elected officials; Emergency Communications for Hazardous Operations; and the Oregon Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association.
- Group presentations and meetings have been held with a number of environmental and community groups in the Portland area about issues and questions they have about the Portland Harbor and the PHSMP. Some of the most frequently asked questions/concerns are described in Section 11 of the PHSMP. The organizations that DEQ has met with include: Willamette Riverkeepers, Urban League of Portland, Oregon Environmental Council, NW Environmental Advocates, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club, Environmental Law Education Center, Gayle Killam from River Network, and the Environmental Justice Action Group. Meetings in the near future are scheduled with the Coalition of Black Men, Audubon Society, and the NW Environmental Defense Center.

2.4 Agency & Tribal Coordination Activities

- Several briefings were held with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) about the PHSMP, and Oregon's cleanup program and projects. Key issues for follow-up were identified during these meetings.
- Numerous discussions, and individual and group meetings have been held with other agency representatives such as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Oregon and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to discuss issues related to the Portland Harbor. These agencies have also been represented on the technical workgroup that was formed to develop the sediment assessment methodology (Appendix G of the PHSMP).
- A meeting was held with the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission to discuss the PHSMP and their potential interest and involvement in the implementation process. Written information about the PHSMP has been sent to the Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and the Yakama Indian Nation.

2.5 Planned Public Information Activities

- DEQ has been attending and speaking at neighborhood association meetings, primarily in neighborhoods that border the west and east banks of the Willamette River, and informing residents about the PHSMP, the public review period, and their potential involvement and interest in the implementation process. DEQ will continue to meet with neighborhood associations and provide updates and coordinate information through these groups. Fact sheets and a map of Portland Harbor were distributed at the meetings. Fact sheets describing the project and other materials of interest on Portland Harbor were mailed to neighborhood association offices when DEQ did not speak at their monthly meeting.
- DEQ conducted an open house to provide the public an opportunity to ask questions and meet various parties involved in the development and implementation of the PHSMP.
- DEQ also elicited public feedback on the PHSMP, which will be released for public comment prior to the open house. A 30-day public comment period was held to provide the public and all interested parties to comment on the proposed PHSMP.
- DEQ is working with EPA on developing a joint fact sheet that explains activities underway in Portland Harbor and related environmental concerns, the Superfund program and how the public can get more information. This fact sheet will be distributed to the public.

2.6 Grant Available to Facilitate Community Review of PHSMP

DEQ made funding available to a non-profit organization to facilitate community review, understanding of, and input to, the draft PHSMP that was released for public comment in mid-April. The non-profit agency was to identify and work closely with potentially affected communities to increase their understanding of the plan and their ability to review even the most technical sections of the PHSMP.

2.7 Public Outreach Materials Developed

DEQ has developed a number of materials about Portland Harbor for interested parties and stakeholders. The following list includes documents and letters used at public outreach activities and mailed to interested parties prior to completion of the PHSMP.

- Fact Sheet on Portland Harbor sediments. Fact sheet is updated on a regular basis
- Portland Harbor map with 17 sites and sediment sample locations
- Presentations
- Outline of PHSMP
- Fact Sheet on Ross Island
- Initial survey letter and form
- Letters to environmental groups
- DEQ contacts sheet
- Mission and goals statement of PHSMP
- Copies of newspaper articles on Portland Harbor/Ross Island