

**SUBJECT: DMMP RECENCY EXTENSION DETERMINATION FOR PROPOSED MAINTENANCE DREDGED MATERIAL FROM THE SNOHOMISH RIVER, EVERETT (CENWS-OD-TS-NS-35, DATED JULY 20, 2011) FOR UNCONFINED OPEN-WATER DISPOSAL AT THE PORT GARDNER NONDISPERSIVE SITE OR AT AN APPROVED BENEFICIAL USE OR UPLAND SITE.**

1. **Introduction.** The following summary reviews the recent history of sediment testing and Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) suitability determination memorandums (SDM) for maintenance dredged material from the Snohomish River. The DMMP agencies include the Corps of Engineers, Department of Ecology, Department of Natural Resources, and the Environmental Protection Agency. The purpose of this review is to evaluate a recency extension request made by the Corps Snohomish River Project Manager. This recency determination evaluates an extension of the recency to September 2012. This would be a two year extension for the Upper Snohomish River, and a one year extension for the Lower Snohomish River.
2. **Project.** The Snohomish River project consists of deep and shallow-draft navigation channels and two settling basins to serve Everett Harbor and the Snohomish River (Figure 1). The Corps routinely maintains the lower 6.5 miles of the river channel and settling basins with dredging to authorized depths and placement of the dredged material at approved upland, beneficial use or open-water disposal sites. The Snohomish River project is characterized by rapid and routine shoaling that requires frequent dredging to maintain safe navigation, and its sediment is thus considered "homogenous" for DMMP purposes.
3. **Background.** Several suitability determinations have been issued for maintenance dredging of this federal navigation project (Table 1). The entire project was last characterized in 2003 - 2004, in two separate events (DMMP 2004a and 2004b), and supplemented with a dioxin survey in 2009 (DMMP 2009). The entire volume has repeatedly been found suitable for open-water disposal. The project was ranked low-moderate during all previous characterizations, which provides for a 5 – 7 year recency period before further characterization is required. Recency periods expired in September 2010 (Upper Snohomish) and March 2011 (Lower Snohomish). A full characterization of the entire project is presently underway, with sampling scheduled for September 2011. Results of the characterization are not expected, however, until after the beginning of the fall 2011 dredging season, and thus this extension was requested.

**Table 1. Project Characterization Summary**

Characterization	SDM Date	Rank	Volume (cy)	Suitability
Lower Snohomish (Settling Basin and River Channel)	5 April 1993	LM	462, 243	All suitable for OW
Lower Snohomish (Settling Basin and River Channel)	14 November 1996	LM	300,437	All suitable for OW & BU
Lower Snohomish (Settling Basin and River Channel)	28 January 2004	LM	271,210	All suitable for OW & BU
Upper Snohomish	1 October 2004	LM	430,000	All suitable for OW & BU
Supplemental Dioxin – entire project	3 October 2009	LM	801,849	All suitable for OW & BU

4. **Evaluation.** Maintenance dredging of the project occurs annually, though the entire length is not dredged in any given year. In general, dredging of the upstream settling basin and associated navigation channel shoals is alternated every other year with dredging of the lower settling basin and associated channel shoals. By continually removing the sediments that build up in the settling basins, the need for dredging the navigation channel outside the settling basins is reduced. Shoaling on the Snohomish occurs in a fairly predictable pattern with gravels and larger sands accumulating in the upper settling basin and navigation channel, and finer sands accumulating in the lower settling basin. All characterization events have found this grain-size pattern along the river.

Potential sources and development along the river have not altered notably since the previous suitability determinations were issued. There have also been no known spill events or other changed conditions in the project area.

5. **Determination.** Due to the well-documented history of suitable sediments along the length of the Snohomish navigation channel, the unchanged nature of potential sources, and the imminent characterization event, the DMMP agencies agree that extension of the recency period to September 1, 2012 is acceptable.

This recency extension is contingent upon no significant perturbations occurring in the sediment quality at the project site between the date of this memorandum and the time of dredging. In addition, should unanticipated results from Fall 2011 testing indicate a change in sediment quality, agency staff will reconsider this recency finding, consistent with current DMMP requirements

6. **References.**

DMMP, 2004a. *Memorandum for Record: Determination on the Suitability of Proposed Federal Operations and Maintenance Material from the Lower Snohomish River Settling Basin and Adjacent Navigation Channels Evaluated Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for Open-Water Disposal at the Port Gardner Nondispersive Disposal Site or Beneficial Use.* Prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the DMMP Agencies, January 28, 2004.

DMMP, 2004b. *Memorandum for Record: Determination on the Suitability of Proposed Federal Operations and Maintenance Material from the Upper Snohomish River Settling Basin and Upstream Navigation Channel Evaluated Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for Open-Water Disposal at the Port Gardner Nondispersive Disposal Site or Beneficial Use.* Prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the DMMP Agencies, October 1, 2004.

DMMP, 2009. *Memorandum for Record: Supplemental Determination Regarding the Suitability, with Respect to Dioxin, of Federal Operation and Maintenance Dredged Material from the Snohomish River, Everett, Snohomish County, Washington Evaluated Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for Beneficial Use or Unconfined Open-Water Disposal at the Port Gardner Nondispersive Site.* Prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the DMMP Agencies, October 3, 2009.

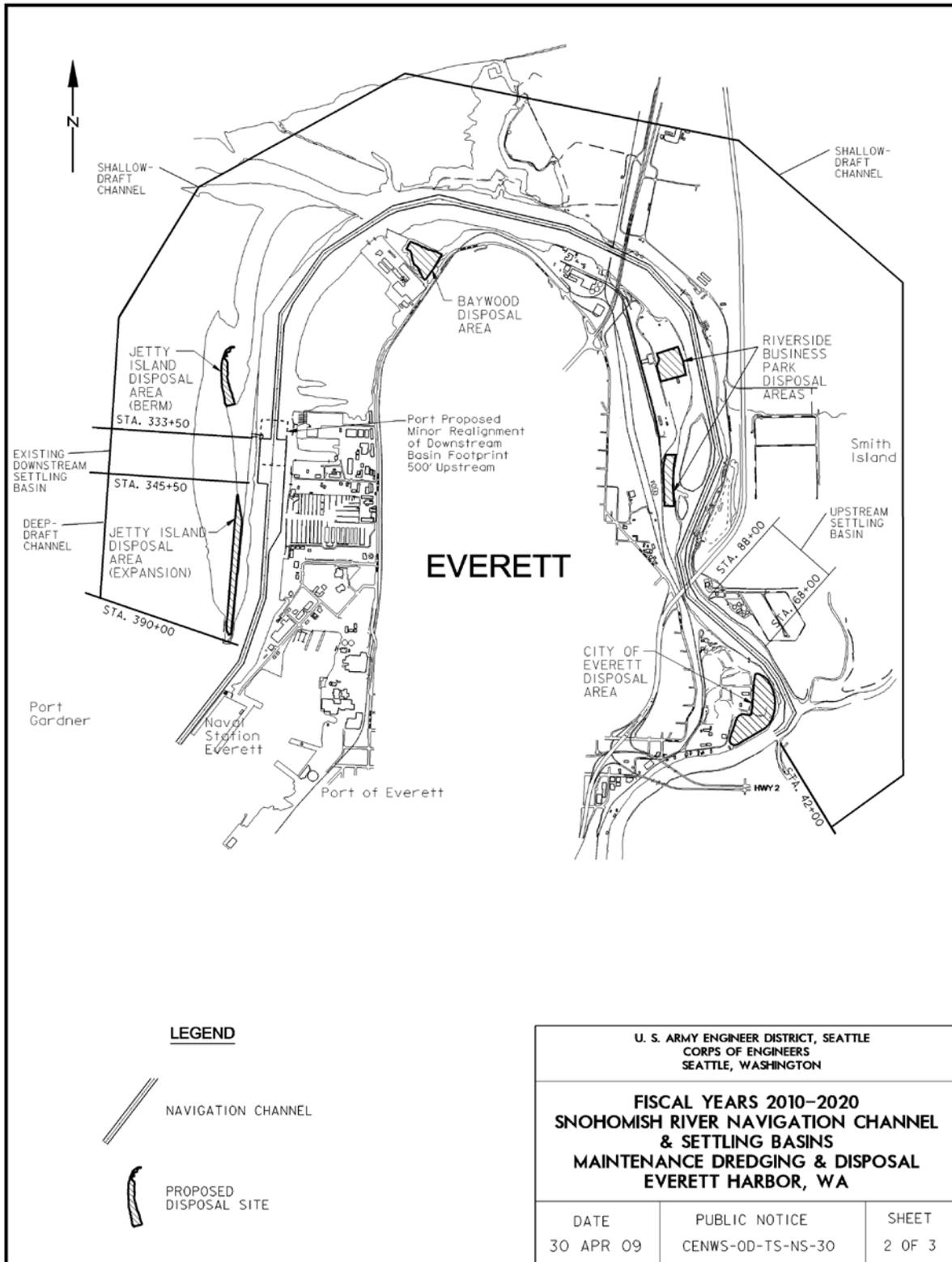
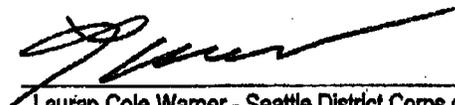


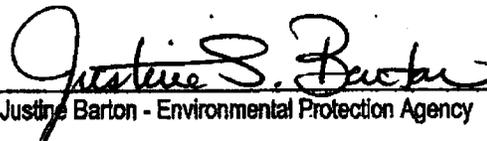
Figure 1. Project features

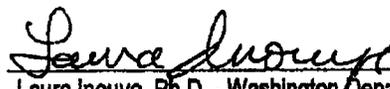
7. Agency Signatures.

**SUBJECT: DMMP RECENCY EXTENSION DETERMINATION FOR PROPOSED MAINTENANCE DREDGED MATERIAL FROM THE SNOHOMISH RIVER, EVERETT (CENWS-OD-TS-NS-35, DATED JULY 20, 2011) FOR UNCONFINED OPEN-WATER DISPOSAL AT THE PORT GARDNER NONDISPERSIVE SITE OR AT AN APPROVED BENEFICIAL USE OR UPLAND SITE.**

Concur:

9/27/11  
Date   
Lauran Cole Warner - Seattle District Corps of Engineers

9/28/11  
Date   
Justine Barton - Environmental Protection Agency

09/27/2011  
Date   
Laura Inouye, Ph.D. - Washington Department of Ecology

9/27/11  
Date   
Celia Barton - Washington Department of Natural Resources

Copies furnished:

DMMP signatories

John Pell, Seattle District Navigation Section

Ken Brunner, Seattle District Environmental Resources Branch