

San Francisco Bay LTMS
Environmental Windows Work Group Mission Statement
("Manifesto")

Context: The LTMS

The Environmental Windows work group is part of the ongoing LTMS program, building on the LTMS goals and the overall approach to regional dredged material management established by the EIS/EIR (1998) and Management Plan (2001). Relevant concepts from "Special Report 262" of the Transportation Research Board, National Research Council (NAS, 2001) provide additional important guidance for the work group's efforts. The LTMS goals are to:

- Maintain in an economically and environmentally sound manner those channels necessary for navigation in San Francisco Bay and Estuary and eliminate unnecessary dredging activities in the Bay and Estuary
- Conduct dredged material disposal in the most environmentally sound manner
- Maximize the use of dredged material as a resource
- Maintain the cooperative permitting framework for dredging and disposal applications

Issue Statement

How can we complete dredging in a timely manner while meeting the LTMS goals?

Work Group Goals

- To minimize environmental impacts of dredging and dredged material disposal on important biological resources, and in particular to fully protect threatened and endangered species
- To identify how this protection may be achieved while allowing necessary dredging projects to be completed with the most flexibility possible, in compliance with all relevant state and federal laws

Objectives

Short-Term. Facilitate immediate dredging needs by considering whether/how existing data and technologies may allow more flexibility for individual projects or groups of projects that have difficulty working within the existing windows. This may be done in the context of the project-specific informal consultation process set forth in the Management Plan.

Longer-Term. Recognizing that the existing programmatic windows rely mainly on avoidance based on present knowledge – and uncertainty – about sensitive species and potential impacts of dredging and disposal operations, the longer-term effort will:

- Identify key scientific data gaps which if filled may allow modification of the programmatic windows themselves; consider potential funding mechanisms for investigations to fill the key data gaps identified
- Evaluate new or emerging technologies or operational measures (including monitoring) that may allow unacceptable impacts to be avoided even when target species are known to be present; consider possible pilot projects (possibly in collaboration with the NAS) to demonstrate promising technologies or operational measures
- Identify other factors related to dredging projects that if resolved may allow more projects to complete dredging operations during established work windows

Desired Process

The work group is open to all LTMS interested parties. It is important that each LTMS agency, and the resource agencies (USFWS, NOAA Fisheries, CDFG) actively participate in order for progress to be made. Key work group meetings should be facilitated whenever possible, with summaries that include any action items or consensus on issues distributed to all interested parties. The work group should identify how “Special Report 262” may best be used as a reference for its efforts. The work group will ultimately report to the LTMS Management Committee any recommendations that are within the agencies’ authorities to implement.