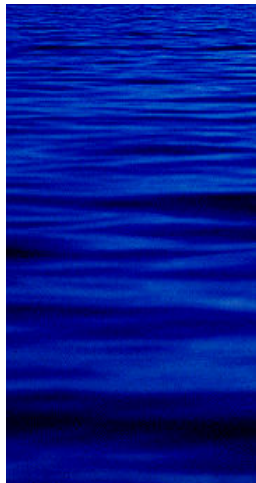




PNWA's goal:
Maintain safe
and efficient
navigation on the
Snake River



Snake River Programmatic Sediment Management Plan (PSMP)

Background

The Snake River dredging lawsuit was settled late in 2005 with the following provisions:

- An agreement allowed the Snake River navigation channel and adjacent ports to be dredged to 14 feet. That dredging was completed in March of 2006.
- The Corps will complete a Programmatic Sediment Management Plan (PSMP). The PSMP will result in an Environmental Impact Statement that will consider a variety of options for reducing the amount of dredging required while maintaining the federally authorized navigation channel.
- The Corps may dredge again if the channel is less than 14 feet at MOP (Minimum Operating Pool) and barge traffic is impaired. Ports will have the ability to dredge their facilities if needed in the future. The normal NEPA process must be followed in either case.

PNWA and its attorneys at Stoel Rives LLP represented the Inland Ports and Navigation Group (IPNG) in the 2005 settlement agreement. Navigation was restored to a full 14 feet on the Snake River in March of 2006 for the first time since 1999. With this dredging, the full economic efficiency of navigation on the Columbia and Snake River system was restored. Barges were able to fully load to 14 feet with containers, grain, forest and agricultural products headed downriver for export and petroleum products and other commodities heading upriver for inland distribution.

The PSMP

The objective of the PSMP is to produce an Environmental Impact Statement for alternative actions to reduce sedimentation entering the Snake River, and to reduce the need for dredging while maintaining navigation in the Lower Snake River. Among the alternatives to be examined are sediment management and removal, modifying system operations and structural changes.

Structural options include: modify navigation infrastructure, maintain the navigation channel at less than 14 feet, and relocate port, marina and water intake facilities.

System operations options include: raise pool levels to increase water depth, modify flows to flush sediment, and drawdown of the Lower Granite reservoir to below MOP to flush sediment downriver.

Many of the alternatives under consideration would eliminate or impair navigation. Other authorized project purposes, including hydropower production, water supply and recreational boating would also be affected.

Next Steps

PNWA and IPNG are engaging in the public process to ensure that navigation and other authorized purposes are represented.

To fulfil its commitment in the settlement agreement, PNWA and IPNG are working with the Corps and Congress to ensure that there is sufficient funding to complete the plan in a timely fashion. The PSMP is expected to be completed in late 2012.

Funding

PNWA is seeking \$1.109M in FY2012 to complete the plan.

For more information, see PNWA's website at www.pnwa.net.

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