

Columbia River Levee Repair and Accreditation Project

Oregon Solutions Team Meeting Notes

(Online at <http://orsolutions.org/osproject/MCDD>)

**Bureau of Development Services
1900 SW 4th Ave Portland, OR
Room 2500 A**

March 3, 2015

Convener Welcome and Introductions

- Convener Jules Bailey welcomed team members to the meeting and noted the considerable work that has taken place since the last meeting to address issues raised on the Declaration of Cooperation, and also the work to develop a public outreach and communications team.

Additional Modeling Results

- Multnomah County Drainage District's (MCDD) consulting engineers (Cornforth Consultants and WEST) reported on the results of the additional modeling on PEN 1 and PEN 2 requested by the Oregon Solutions Project Team. They looked at the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Authorized Design Water Surface Elevation (DWSE) which is approximately a 470-year level flood for most of the levee sections in PEN 1 and PEN 2.

Overall, additional modeling has demonstrated very positive results with the majority of levee sections in PEN 1 and PEN 2 performing well even if the water elevations near the 0.2-percent-annual-chance event (500-year flood). No additional significant problems were identified beyond those identified in their earlier 1-percent-annual-chance event (100-year flood) modeling.

For more details, including the Executive Summary with a summary of findings, the PEN 1 and PEN 2 engineering results presentations, and the aerials of the additional modeling, click here: <http://orsolutions.org/osproject/MCDD>

Declaration of Cooperation

- Through the Declaration of Cooperation (DoC) work sessions, we have heard more from various organizations about how to work together in Phase II, including:
 - First and foremost our goals should focus around flood protection and how to achieve that according to FEMA's accreditation process and USACE's RIP standards.
 - The criteria for alternatives development are not ready to be codified in the DoC. Before we develop alternatives we need to understand values and discuss risk and desired level of protection. Criteria should be developed after we have a baseline understanding of the environmental, economic, and community values in the Districts.
 - There is an interest/need to proactively engage with regulatory agencies.

- In addition, there were some “aha” moments during the discussions since the last meeting:
 - The number and level of improvements are less than anticipated in PEN 1 and PEN 2.
 - FEMA is highly unlikely to remap PEN 1 and PEN 2 by themselves; they are more likely to map all four Districts, and potentially a larger region. Based on the duration that investigations and modeling have taken for PEN 1 and PEN 2, it is clear that Multnomah County Drainage District (MCDD) and Sandy Drainage Improvement Company (SDIC) need to begin their levee engineering assessments to address certification and accreditation by 2017 (the year their certifications expire).
 - Some problem areas will be less impactful and solutions could be more cost effective if we take a system-wide approach and discuss the opportunities of accrediting the levees in all 4 Districts as one regional system. For example, the cross levees would not count towards certification or accreditation if the Districts were consolidated into one entity in their accreditation application. However, deficiencies within the cross-levees would most likely need to be addressed for the USACE’s RIP, but this program has more discretion than certification / accreditation standards. More discussion with federal partners is needed to understand all the implications of taking a system-wide approach.
- In light of these discussions, there were two significant changes in the work plan presented to the group:
 - Expansion of the project scope to include a more regional approach and inviting MCDD, SDIC, and Sauvie Island Drainage Improvement Company (SIDIC) to join the Oregon Solutions Project Team (as well as the affected municipal jurisdictions). The SDIC and MCDD Boards have already sent letters to the Oregon Solutions Project Team requesting to be part of the process moving forward. In addition, Oregon Solutions staff will reach out to the cities of Gresham, Fairview, and Troutdale to discuss their level of interest in signing onto the DoC.
 - While the engineering investigations begin in MCDD and SDIC, the project team proposes moving forward on developing current condition assessments of the districts in the following areas: environmental, economic, community assessments, and climate change. These studies will help set the baseline for the development of alternatives to address identified deficiencies in the full system during the next phase of the project. See Sara Morrissey’s presentation here: <http://orsolutions.org/osproject/MCDD>

Although there were a number of questions and concerns raised about the impact of expanding the scope, the group approved moving forward to proactively reach out to the affected districts and jurisdictions.

Committees and Partner Report Out

- Technical Advisory Committee: The PEN 1 Board raised some flags about moving forward with conceptual options to address the railroad embankment deficiencies and the Railroad Embankment Subcommittee has been responsive by not moving forward until more agreement is reached about the next steps in the process.

- Communications Committee: Steve Greenwood provided the charge to the group and Joel Schoening shared the outline of needs based on the Oregon Solutions Team January discussion about raising public awareness through outreach materials and activities for spring and engaging the community in discussions about their values. Thank you to the organizations who sent staff to participate—the group remains open for more participation.
- Legislative Update: HB2277 was introduced in January and was assigned to the House Rural Communities, Land Use and Water Committee and was heard February 26th. The bill amends ORS 547, which applies to PEN 1, PEN 2, and MCDD, to clarify that the Districts have the authority to undertake flood control activities as they have already been doing for 80 years. The amendment will also allow the Districts to enact ordinances and to establish fees, fines and charges in the Districts. The bill makes flood protection an urban service within Metro boundaries (under ORS 195) requiring coordination on land use decisions with Metro, cities, and the county. The districts are working to amend the bill so that the ordinance authority and other authorities will be an opt-in process for drainage districts. An amendment would also incorporate some changes based on feedback the districts received on the bill. Staff and the legislative team are working with partners to build support for the bill and to educate legislators and others in Salem about the districts and their unique needs.

In addition to the bill amending ORS 547, there are two other items in play this session that could affect levee accreditation and improvements. First, the Governor’s budget has requested \$300,000 be set aside through the Regional Solutions process for investigation of levees in MCDD and SDIC. Second, Senator Johnson has introduced a bill (SB 306; also introduced in the House as HB 2436) adds levee projects as a qualified project in the Special Public Works Fund (SPWF) operated by the Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA) Business Oregon, which houses the IFA, has requested \$7 million in Lottery bonds be added to the SPWF to finance levee project loans and grants. The bill would also create position in OWRD to assist with engineering certification for levees. The bill will also make Drainage Improvement Companies eligible for IFA funds. The next meeting of the Oregon Solutions Team is scheduled for April 28.

Attendance:

Allan Berry	City of Fairview
Angela Carkner	MCDD
Bob Sallinger	Audubon
Bob Wiley	W. Mult. Soil & Water Conservation Dist.
Bobby Lee	Regional Solutions
Brad Hermanson	GEI Consultants
Brian Vincent	City of Portland
Carla L. Kelley	Miller Nash Attorneys
Christine Lewis	Multnomah County
Christine Shirley	DLCD

Christine Svetkovich	DEQ
Corky Collier	Columbia Corridor Association
David Fortney	Metro
David Peters	Water Bureau
Derik Vowels	
Dick Springer	W. Mult. Soil & Water Conservation Dist.
Hong Huynh	Miller Nash Attorneys
Jackie Dingfelder	City of Portland
James Hagen	WEST Consultants
Jennifer Richman	
Joel Schoening	MCDD
Jonas Biery	City of Portland
Commissioner Jules Bailey	Multnomah County-Convener
Kelly Sherbo	MCDD
Kevin Brice	USACE
Kimberly Tallant	City of Portland
Lise Glancy	Port of Portland
Mark Wigginton	PEN 1 Board
Martha Johnston	Interested Neighbor
Maryhelen Kincaid	East Columbia N.A
Michelle Mishoe	PacifiCorp
Mike Abbate	City of Portland
Mike Meyer	Cornforth Consultants
Nancy Hendrickson	City of Portland
Nathan Phelan	PEN 1 Board
Phil Ralston	Port of Portland
Reed Wagner	MCDD
Rick Mogren	Center for Public Service
Ryan Kilgren	Tetrattech
Sandra Ruckwaudt	USACE
Sara Morrissey	MCDD
Scott Van Hoff	FEMA

Shane Cline	HDR Engineering
Skip Klarquist	Sauvie Island Drainage Improvement Co.
Steve Fancher	City of Gresham
Steve Greenwood	Oregon Solutions
Steven Ernst	USACE
Sunny Simpkins	MCDD
Tanja Miljeriv	USACE
Thomas Braibish	ODOT
Tim Couch	Sauvie Island Drainage Improvement Co.
Tom Archer	PBS Engineering
Vic Stibolt	Jubitz Corporation