

DREDGING

INTRODUCTION

Dredging is the removal of earth from the bottom of a stream, river, lake, bay or other water body for the purposes of deepening a navigational channel or to obtain use of the bottom materials for landfill. A significant portion of all dredge materials are deposited either in the water or immediately adjacent to it, often resulting in problems of water quality. Proper disposal of dredge spoils within the Snohomish River Estuary has been a growing problem in the last few years and the need has developed to establish suitable long-term dredge spoil disposal sites in this area.

POLICIES

1. Regulate and control dredging to minimize damage to existing ecological systems and natural resource of both the area to be dredged and the area for deposit of dredged materials.
2. Designate and require the use of specified long-range sites for the disposal of spoils and provide for the periodic review of site designations.
3. Identify, with the assistance of the State Departments of Natural Resources, Game and Fisheries, spoil deposit sites in water areas.
4. Allow deposition of dredge materials in water areas, except as provided for under Landfills and Solid Waste Disposal, only for habitat improvement, to correct problems of material distribution adversely affecting fish and shellfish resources or where the alternative of depositing materials on land is more detrimental to shoreline resources than depositing in water areas.
5. Dredging of bottom materials for the single purpose of obtaining fill material should be discouraged.
6. Encourage utilization of spoil transfer sites which can be used on a continuing basis.
7. Approve new dredging projects only when accompanied by an acceptable plan for the long-range disposal of dredge spoils created by the project and its continued maintenance.
8. Provide for a periodic review of existing dredging projects.
9. Prohibit dredging in or the disposal of spoils on archaeological sites which are listed on the Washington State Register of Historic Places until such time as they are released.

REGULATIONS

General

1. Applications for dredging permits shall include the following information (at a minimum):
 - a. Physical analysis of material to be dredged: material composition and amount, grain size, organic materials present, source of material, etc.;
 - b. Chemical analysis of material to be dredged: volatile solids, chemical oxygen demand, (COD), grease and oil content, mercury, lead and zinc content, etc.;

- c. Biological analysis of material to be dredged;
 - d. Information on stability of bedlands adjacent to proposed dredging and spoils disposal;
 - e. Dredging procedure: time of dredging, method of dredging and spoils disposal;
 - f. Spoils disposal area: location, size, capacity, and physical characteristics.
2. New dredging projects shall, in addition to the above, provide all of the following information with their application:
 - a. Total initial spoils volume;
 - b. Frequency and quantity of project maintenance dredging;
 - c. Area proposed for initial spoils disposal;
 - d. Plan for disposal of maintenance spoils for at least a 50 year period.
 3. Dredging shall only be permitted for the following purposes and only when other alternative are impractical:
 - a. To improve water quality or aquatic habitat;
 - b. To maintain and improve navigability and water flow;
 - c. To mitigate conditions which could endanger public safety;
 - d. To create or improve public recreational opportunities.
 4. Dredge spoils shall be deposited at dumping sites which are consistent with the Master Program
 - 5.a. Prior to commencement of disposal operations, the disposal site's dikes shall be improved such that no spoils bearing discharge water may escape. The site's dikes shall be kept in this condition throughout any disposal operations.
 - b. The inlet and outlet shall be so located so as to prevent any short circuiting.
 - c. The settling area within the dikes shall be maintained sufficiently large so that return water carries a minimum of suspended sediment. The outlet pipe shall be moved from time to time as may be necessary to comply with this requirement.
 - d. Normal drainage patterns within the project area shall not be adversely affected by the conduct of spoils disposal.
 - e. Notice shall be given to Snohomish County, in writing, at least two weeks prior to the commencement of any disposal operations;
 - f. Any spoils removed from the site shall be taken out of the flood plain unless they are used in a project for which a valid Shoreline Management Permit has been obtained.

- g. Existing vegetation on the site's dikes and on adjacent lands shall not be disturbed during the usage of the site.
6. Spoils transfer sites shall be managed to meet the conditions of 5a through 5g above and the following:
- a. Within the established area and height limitations (and when not in conflict with other provisions of this permit, spoils may be deposited and removed from the site as necessary or desirable during the period of this permit;
 - b. Removal of spoils materials from the site shall not be done in a manner that would disturb the perimeter dike except at points of ingress and egress;
 - c. Trees such as shore pine, poplar (quaking aspen), birch, or other approved local species shall be planted within six (6) months of the issuance of the permit and maintained around the perimeter of the site to act as a visual buffer for the site: Such planting shall typically be naturalized clusters of evergreen trees in a triangular spacing of 15 feet on center and/or deciduous trees planted in naturalized clusters. A planting plan, reflecting the above minimum conditions, shall be submitted for review to the Snohomish County Planning Department within three (3) months of the issuance of this permit.
7. Dredge spoils may be utilized in beach enrichment projects provided that the spoils would result in a benefit to the beach disposal area and that water quality would not be subject to a significant adverse effect.

Natural Environment

- 1. Dredging and dredge spoil deposition are not allowed in the Natural Environment.

Conservancy Environment

- 1. Dredging within the conservancy environment shall be limited to the maintenance of existing navigation channels and facilities.
- 2. Dredge spoils shall not be disposed of within the Conservancy Environment, EXCEPT that dredge spoil deposition at designated Department of Natural Resources underwater sites is allowed.

Rural Environment

1. Dredging in the Rural Environment is permitted subject to the General Regulations.
2. Dredge spoil disposal is permitted in designated spoils disposal areas within the Rural Environment. Any such disposal areas shall be identified by the Master Program.
3. Applications for spoil disposal areas must show that ultimate use of the site will be for a use permitted within the Rural Environment.

Suburban Environment

1. Dredging and dredge spoil disposal shall be allowed in the Suburban Environment subject to the General and Rural Environment Regulations.

Urban Environment

1. Dredging and dredge spoil disposal shall be allowed in the Urban Environment subject to the General Regulations.