

Water site, and supporting documentation.

General Criteria (40 CFR 228.5)

1. Minimal Interference With Other Activities

The first of the five general criteria requires that a determination be made as to whether the site or its use will minimize interference with other uses of the marine environment. For this proposed rule, a determination was made to overlay individual uses and resources presented in the technical exhibits to the EIS and SEIS onto a base map containing the bathymetry and location of the proposed disposal sites. For purposes of assessing this criterion, EPA assumed that the more interactions between various uses and limited resources, the more critical the area's potential for interference. The overlay process was used to visually determine where maximum and minimum interferences with other uses of the marine environment could be expected to occur. The Shallow Water site and Deep Water site viewed against this criterion showed minimum interference with other activities. Both proposed sites avoid areas intensively utilized by the Dungeness crab fishery.

2. Minimize Changes in Water Quality

The second of the five general criteria requires that locations and boundaries of disposal sites be selected so that temporary changes in water quality or other environmental conditions during initial mixing caused by disposal operations anywhere within a site can be expected to be reduced to normal ambient seawater levels or to undetectable contaminant concentrations or effects before reaching beaches, shorelines, sanctuaries, or geographically-limited fisheries or shellfisheries. The proposed sites will be used for dredged material disposal of suitable sediments as determined by application of national and regional testing protocols (e.g., then-current *Dredged Material Evaluation Framework*). No significant contaminant or suspended solids releases are expected. Based on previous sediment testing and evaluations at the MCR by the Corps and EPA, disposal of either sandy or fine-grained material would not have any long-term impact on the water quality. No water quality perturbations will occur that could reach any beach, shoreline, marine sanctuary, or known geographically-limited fishery or shellfishery. Bottom movement of material deposited at the Shallow Water site is generally expected to show a net alongshore movement and

will contribute to the existing littoral system. Material deposited at the Deep Water site is expected to stay in the Placement Area.

3. Interim Sites Which Do Not Meet Criteria

There are no interim sites to be considered under this criterion. Sites A, B, E, and F were designated on a final basis in 1986. The proposed Shallow Water and Deep Water sites are not interim sites as defined under the Ocean Dumping regulations.

4. Size of Sites

The fourth general criterion requires that the sizes of ocean disposal sites be limited to localize for identification and control any immediate adverse impacts and to permit the implementation of effective monitoring and surveillance programs to prevent adverse long-range impacts. Size, configuration and location is to be determined as part of the disposal site evaluation or designation study. For this proposed rule, the IFR/EIS and SEIS were relied upon to determine size, configuration and location of the ODMDS to propose. The proposed Shallow Water and Deep Water sites have been sized to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate material dredged from the MCR federal project as well as future material from the improved Columbia River navigational channel. The sizing of the proposed sites has factored in the ability to implement effective monitoring and surveillance programs, among other things, to prevent mounding of dredged material which could result in adverse wave conditions as has been experienced at the originally designated sites and to ensure that navigational safety will not be compromised. Bathymetric surveys are planned as an important component of the SMMP. The results will be used to document the fate of the dredged material and provide information for management in the future to prevent adverse long-range impacts.

5. Sites Off the Continental Shelf

The fifth general criterion requires EPA, wherever feasible, to designate ocean dumping sites beyond the edge of the continental shelf and other such sites that have historically used. Potential disposal areas located off the continental shelf are at least 20 nautical miles offshore in water depths of 600 feet or greater, with the exception of the Astoria Canyon, which is 11 nautical miles offshore. The haul distance to an "off-shelf" disposal site is much greater than the 4.5 nautical mile average operational limit of the MCR project,

making an off-shelf site not feasible for maintenance of the MCR project. The proposed Shallow Water site, if designated, will encompass the footprint of the historically used Site E, however, continued disposal in this area is desirable because the dredged materials are placed into the nearshore littoral transport system, a system that functions with largely non-renewable quantities of sand in Oregon and Washington.

Specific Criteria (40 CFR 228.6)

1. Geographical Position, Depth of Water, Bottom Topography, and Distance From the Coast

The proposed Shallow Water site would incorporate and appreciably expand the existing EPA-designated Site E and would include the Corps' 1997 selected Section 103 "Expanded Site E." The site is located off the end of the North Jetty and would be 11,500 feet long and expand in width from 3,100 feet to 5,600 feet wide, encompassing a total area of 1,198 acres. The proposed site is located to the north of the Columbia River channel. The bottom topography slopes from the north to the south along the south side of Peacock Spit. Water depths in the proposed site range from 45 to 75 feet. Material placed at the Shallow Water site is expected to erode out, move north and northwest, and feed Peacock Spit.

The proposed Deep Water site would be located about 4.5 miles west of the entrance to the Columbia River navigation channel and extend westerly to about 7 miles west of the entrance. The bottom topography is featureless and gently slopes away from shore. Water depths at the proposed site range from about 180 feet to about 310 feet. Overall site dimensions proposed are 17,000 feet by 23,000 feet as an outer boundary (the Disposal Site including Buffer), that consists of an inner rectangle that measures 11,000 feet by 17,000 feet (the Placement Area) and which is surrounded on all sides by a 3,000-foot Buffer. The proposed site would encompass a total of 8,976 acres or 10.5 sq nmi. Disposal of dredged material would only be allowed within the inner rectangle (Placement Area), which has a total area of 4,293 acres or 5.0 sq nmi. EPA anticipates that material placed at this site would raise a stable mound approximately 40 feet high over the estimated 50 ± year life of the site. No direct disposal of dredged material would be allowed anywhere in the Buffer; however, dredged material sloughing off the developing mound or drifting during placement may extend into the Buffer zone. The Buffer zone