

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – MARINA DEL REY DREDGING

What is dredging and why does the Marina need to be dredged?

The dredging taking place in Marina del Rey harbor is a routine removal of accumulated underwater sediment from channel beds in order to maintain the appropriate depths of navigation channels, harbors, marinas, boat launches and port facilities. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (The Corps) defines maintenance dredging as that which is conducted regularly (at least once every five years) for navigational purposes and typically does not include any expansion of the previously dredged area. The dredging is usually conducted by heavy machinery that scoops mud and other debris from the channels, loading the sediment on a barge for disposal or placement elsewhere.

The Corps is dredging the Marina del Rey entrance channel as part of its maintenance dredging program, which is conducted regularly (generally at least once every five years) for navigation purposes and typically does not include any expansion of the previously dredged area. The Marina needs to be dredged due to a severe build-up of sediment in the entrance channel. The sediment build-up has reduced navigation for boaters and poses a safety risk for first responders in the area, including the United States Coast Guard, Los Angeles County Lifeguard Baywatch and the Marina del Rey Sheriff's Harbor Patrol. These agencies are charged with responding to emergencies throughout Santa Monica Bay.

How much sediment is going to be dredged and what will be done with it?

About one million cubic yards of sediment is available to be dredged from the Marina del Rey harbor entrance. Approximately 500,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment will be dredged and transported by barge to the Port of Long Beach for use in the Middle Harbor Redevelopment Project. Additionally, 140,000 cubic yards of clean sediment will be deposited near shore at Dockweiler State Beach. The Corps will also dredge 160,000 cubic yards of clean sand from the Marina's north entrance and barge it to a point just offshore at Redondo Beach, southwest of the Topaz jetty. About 75,000 cubic yards of the sand sediment will then be placed onshore between the jetty and the beach area at roughly Ruby Street. The remaining 85,000 cubic yards will stay offshore for any renourishment needs in the near future.

Is the sand going to Redondo Beach and Dockweiler Beach safe for the environment?

Yes. Only clean sand sediment will be deposited on the beach and offshore. All material has been sampled, reviewed, and approved for beach placement by regulatory agencies: the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, The Corps, the California Coastal Commission, and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. Members of the regional Contaminated Sediments Task Force (EPA, Coastal Commission, Regional Water Quality Control Board, the California Department of Fish and Game, Heal the Bay and other environmental groups) have reviewed the test results and concur that the sediments are safe for placement on the beach and offshore. The sand deposited on the beaches may appear darker than the other sand at first. That is because it has been under water for some time. An odor also may at times be associated with the wet sand. The dredged sand will quickly dry and become indistinguishable from the other beach sand.

How is the dredged sand deposited offshore at Dockweiler and Redondo beaches, and what will the onshore placement involve at Redondo Beach?

With the offshore sand placement at both Dockweiler State Beach and Redondo Beach, the dredged sand is transported by a scow – a large flat-bottomed vessel – and is dropped through an opening at the bottom of the scow into water about 15 to 30 feet in depth at Dockweiler State Beach and 30 to 50 feet in depth at Redondo Beach. In Redondo Beach, the sand placed offshore will be deposited in an existing underwater pit located 500 yards from shore for use in future beach nourishment efforts. The offshore sand deposits will be made twice a day and take about a half-hour to complete.

Sand placed directly onshore at Redondo Beach will be pumped from a barge anchored about 1,000 feet offshore through a plastic pipe running along the sea bottom from the barge to the beach. The onshore beach nourishment project will take place over 40 days beginning in August 2012. The clean sediment will flow slowly but continuously from the mouth of the pipe, which measures 16 inches in diameter, at a rate of about 2,000 cubic yards a day — the equivalent of 200 dump truck loads per day. During daytime hours, a bulldozer will be used intermittently to evenly distribute the sand on the beach. The pipe will be moved regularly to allow sand to be pumped onto different sections of the beach between Ruby Street and the Topaz jetty. Temporary fencing around the pipe will cordon off small sections of the beach while the sand is pumped in those areas.

Will the sand placement in Redondo Beach be noisy?

Work crews will strive to minimize noise disruption to residents and beachgoers during the beach nourishment and will adhere to city noise ordinances. During offshore placement, noise from the tugboat and the scow releasing sand into the pit about 500 yards from shore may be audible during the twice-daily deposits lasting about 30 minutes. The noise disruption from the onshore sand placement should be limited to the intermittent sound of a bulldozer used to spread the sand during daytime hours.

Will the new sand make the beach bigger?

Yes, the dredged sand deposited onshore will increase the size of Redondo Beach over a 450-yard-long (1,350 feet) stretch of beach between Topaz jetty and Ruby Street, elevating parts of the beach to make it uniformly level and increasing the width of the driest part of the beach by 60 to 100 feet, depending on location. Overall, the dry part of the beach will appear higher and wider.

What is the Port of Long Beach Middle Harbor Redevelopment Project?

The Port of Long Beach Middle Harbor Redevelopment Project will combine two aging shipping terminals into one modern terminal to improve cargo-movement efficiency and environmental performance. The project will upgrade wharfs, water access and storage areas, as well as expand an on-dock rail, all while cutting air pollution and adding approximately 14,000 jobs in Southern California.

What's the timeline on the Marina del Rey dredging project?

Dredging at Marina del Rey began in April 2012. The Redondo Beach placement portion of the project is scheduled to begin in August and be completed by October. All sediment removal and placement associated with the Marina del Rey dredging project is scheduled for completion by October.

Will the Marina del Rey dredging project be noisy and what time will they be dredging?

The dredging project will be a 24/7 operation. The Los Angeles County Beaches and Harbors Department will work with the dredging contractor to mitigate noise. However, it is not anticipated that the dredging will take place close enough to residences such that it would result in nighttime noise disturbance.

What depth will the Marina's harbor entrance be after the dredging?

Upon completion of the project, it is anticipated that the depth of the harbor entrance will be 20 feet Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW), or a depth of 20 feet during low tide.

What is the cost of the dredging project and how was it funded?

About \$13 million in federal and County funds has been made available for the project. The County portion of the dredging costs will be paid with \$5.3 million in motor vehicle license funds. On November 15, 2011, Los Angeles County 4th District Supervisor Don Knabe announced an agreement with the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the Port of Long Beach to remove contaminated sediment from the Marina del Rey harbor entrance. On December 16, 2011, the City of Long Beach approved the County/Port of Long Beach Memorandum of Agreement which secures the disposal of contaminated dredged materials from Marina del Rey into the Port of Long Beach Middle Harbor Redevelopment Project.

Is there a dredging hotline I can call if I have questions or concerns about the project?

Contact USACE Public Affairs Specialist Greg Fuderer at (213) 479-8698 or
gregory.a.fuderer@usace.army.mil

When will the dredging project be completed?

It is anticipated the Marina del Rey harbor entrance dredging and the Redondo Beach sand restoration will be completed in October 2012.

Will the dredging and sand placement disrupt breeding activities of sensitive species?

All dredging is monitored to assure that there is minimal impact to the foraging and nesting periods of the California Least Tern, as well as all other sensitive or endangered species.

Sand placement activities will be suspended during predicted grunion runs and will not occur at times or close to where grunions are spawning.