

DREDGING

Dredging is the removal or displacement of earth such as gravel, sand, mud, or silt, and/or other materials or debris from any stream, river, lake, or marine water body, and associated shorelines and wetlands. Dredging is normally done for specific purposes or uses, such as constructing and maintaining canals, navigation channels, turning basins, harbors, or marinas, sub-marine pipelines, or cable crossings; for obtaining material for fill or construction as part of an Aquacultural operation; or for dike repair and maintenance. Dredging may also be used for underwater mining activities.

Dredge spoil is the material removed by dredging. Dredge spoil disposal is the depositing of dredged materials on land or into water bodies for the purpose of either creating new or additional lands for other uses or disposing of the by-products of dredging. Dredge spoil disposal on land is also subject to the landfill policies and regulations of this program.

Exemptions:

Pursuant to WAC 173-27-040, the following actions are exempt from the requirement for a Shoreline Substantial Development Permit:

1. Operations, maintenance, or construction of canals, waterways, drains, reservoirs, or other facilities that now exist or are hereafter created or developed as part of an irrigation system for the primary purpose of making use of system waters, including return flow and artificially stored ground water from irrigation lands.
2. Operation and maintenance of any system of dikes, ditches, drains, or other facilities existing on the effective date of the 1975 amendatory act which were created, developed, or utilized primarily as part of an agricultural drainage or diking system.

Actions exempt from Substantial Development Permits are still required to comply with the Shoreline Management Act and the County Shoreline Master Plan. DOE/Army Corps of Engineers notifications of dredging proposals will be reviewed by the County to determine whether or not the activity is exempt from the requirement for a Substantial Development Permit and to insure

that a proposed action is consistent with the intent, policies, and regulations of the Act and this plan.

A. Policies

1. Include long range plans for the deposit and use of spoils on land. Spoil deposit sites in water areas should also be identified by local government in cooperation with the State Departments of Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife. Deposition of dredge material in water areas should be allowed only for habitat improvement to correct problems of material distribution adversely affecting fish and shellfish resources.
2. Dredging and dredge spoil disposal should be located and conducted in a manner which minimizes damage to existing ecological values, natural and cultural resources of the area to be dredged, and the disposal site.
3. Dredge spoil disposal in water bodies should be discouraged, except for habitat improvements or where depositing dredge spoil on land would be more detrimental to shoreline resources than deposition in water areas.
4. Long-range plans should be developed for the deposit and use of spoil on land. Spoil deposit sites in water areas should also be identified by local governments in cooperation with the State Departments of Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife.
5. When dredge spoil has suitable organic and physical properties, dredging operators should be encouraged to recycle dredged material for use in agricultural areas, for beach feeding or shore rehabilitation, or for use as construction material.
6. Dredging operations should be planned and conducted to minimize interference with navigation and adverse impacts to other shoreline uses, properties, and values.

B. Regulations

1. Applications for shoreline dredging and disposal shall provide, at a minimum, the following information:
 - a. Physical, chemical, and biological analysis of material to be dredged, including material composition particle size distribution, volume and amount, organic content, source of material, volatile solids, chemical oxygen demand (COD), grease and oil, oxygen and heavy metals, nutrients, sulfides and biological organisms, both permanent and migratory/transitory;
 - b. Dredging technique, frequency, timing and procedures;
 - c. Method of disposal, including the location, size, capacity and physical characteristics of the spoil disposal area;
 - d. Location and stability of badlands adjacent to a proposed dredging area;
 - e. Hydraulic analyses, including tidal fluctuations, current flows, direction and projected impacts. Hydraulic modeling studies may be required for large scale, extensive dredging projects, particularly in estuaries, in order to identify existing geo-hydraulic patterns and probable effects of dredging; and
 - f. Assessment of water quality impacts.
2. In evaluating permit applications for any dredging project, the adverse effects of initial dredging, subsequent maintenance dredging, and dredge spoil disposal shall be considered. Dredging and dredge spoil disposal shall be permitted only where it is demonstrated that the proposed actions will not:
 - a. Result in significant damage to water quality, fish, shellfish, and other essential marine biological elements; or

- b. Adversely alter natural drainage and circulation patterns, currents, river and tidal flows, or significantly reduce flood water capacities.
3. Proposals for dredging and dredge spoil disposal shall include all feasible mitigating measures to protect marine habitats and to minimize adverse impacts such as turbidity, release of nutrients, heavy metals, sulfides, organic materials or toxic substances, dissolved oxygen depletion, disruption of food chains, loss of benthic productivity and disturbance of fish runs, and important localized biological communities.
4. Marshes, bogs, and swamps shall not be disturbed or altered through excavation, filling, dredging or disposal of dredged material unless it is demonstrated that there are no feasible alternatives and that the proposed development would preserve or enhance wildlife habitats, natural drainages, and/or other valuable functions of wetlands (as discussed in U. S. Army Corps of Engineers 33 CFR 320.4(b)).
5. Dredging and dredge spoil disposal shall be carefully scheduled to protect biological productivity (fish runs, spawning, benthic productivity, etc.) and to minimize interference with fishing activities. Dredging activities should not occur in areas used for commercial drift net fishing during a fishing season.
6. Dredging below the ordinary high water line shall be permitted only:
 - a. For navigation or navigational access;
 - b. In conjunction with a water-dependent use of water bodies or adjacent shorelands;
 - c. As part of an approved habitat improvement project;
 - d. To improve water flow or water quality, provided that all dredged material shall be managed so as to prevent it from reentering a water.

- e. For mining and/or mineral extraction, as provided in the regulations on Mining; or
 - f. In conjunction with a bridge, navigational structure or waste water treatment facility for which there is a public need and where other feasible sites or routes do not exist.
7. Dredging shall not occur in the following locations:
- a. Along net positive drift sectors and where geohydraulic processes are active and accretion shore forms would be damaged or irretrievably lost;
 - b. In shoreline areas with bottom soils that are prone to sloughing, refilling, and continual maintenance dredging;
 - c. In officially designated fish, shellfish, and wildlife spawning, nesting, harvesting, and concentration areas as defined by the Washington Marine Atlas (DNR), as amended, and other official documents of local, state, and federal resource agencies;
 - d. In floodways, other than the Columbia River, except for gravel bar scalping; or
 - e. Where currents and tidal activity are significant, requiring extensive maintenance dredging.
8. Dredging for the primary purpose of obtaining material for landfill, construction or beach feeding is not permitted, except for emergency shoreline stabilization and flood protection measures. (Further option: limited gravel bar scalping in streamways is permitted under Mining regulations.)
9. Depositing dredged materials in water areas shall be allowed only (a) for wildlife habitat improvement, (b) to correct problems of material distribution adversely affecting fish and shellfish resources, (c) for beach feeding, or (d) when the alternative of depositing materials on land is more detrimental to shoreline resources than depositing it in water areas.

10. Dredging use limitations in shoreline environments:

NATURAL-Prohibited
CONSERVANCY-Conditional Use
RURAL-Conditional Use
COMMUNITY-Conditional Use
URBAN/INDUSTRIAL-Permitted