

REGIONAL SEDIMENT MANAGEMENT

COPRI Policy Statement 01

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Policy

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) supports a policy of regional sediment management. Regional sediment management is an approach for managing projects involving sand and other sediments that incorporates the principles of integrated watershed resources management, coastal protection and improved dredged material management. It recognizes sediment as a resource, and the need to consider projects and actions affecting sediment in a regional context.

Sediment, considering its quality and quantity, should be managed as a resource by developing regional sediment inventories and sediment budgets that consider inputs, movements, uses, and outputs throughout the system.

Issue

Contaminated sediments present special challenges and regional approaches can contribute to innovations in managing these sediments associated with navigation channels and other projects. Regional teams of stakeholders, including regulators, resource managers, engineers and other stakeholders with expertise in sediment management can help identify best management practices for sediment removal and management.

Regulatory agencies are writing requirements for many waterways, usually on a regional scale, to control the adverse effects of erosion, sediment deposition, and contaminants carried by some sediment. Development of these requirements may overlook the value of sediment as a resource in a region. Regional sediment management strategies can help inform the process and contribute to the implementation of these new requirements.

Rationale

Regional sediment management is important to achieving the goal of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's shorelines and waters. It is integral to effective implementation of the watershed approach to managing our nation's water resources.

Effective implementation of regional sediment management will contribute to the restoration of vital hydrogeomorphologic processes and regimes on our nation's waters with concomitant ecological benefits.