

# Peninsula ports dredging up sediment solutions

## Ilwaco seeks a new location to dispose of dredge spoils

By **KATIE WILSON**  
*EO Media Group*

ILWACO, Wash. — Port managers in Ilwaco and Chinook say they are lucky to have landed a commitment from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to dredge federally managed channels — crucial to both ports’ continued survival — for the second year in a row, but that doesn’t mean all of their problems are solved.

Despite the dredging the Corps completed last year, the Port of Ilwaco’s Baker Bay is already filling back up and will likely need work well into the future. Meanwhile, a dredge disposal site at the far end of the marina is nearing capacity and port commissioners will have to come up with a new way to dispose of or disperse the material dredged from the river and the marina.

At a meeting with congressional representatives and employees with the Corps April 2, port staff and commissioners listened to an informal presenta-



**DAMIAN MULINIX — EO Media Group**  
**A dredge pulls up a load of sediment during local work last year. Additional work is expected later in 2015.**

tion by Vladimir Shepsis, a coastal engineer with Coast and Harbor Engineering. After examining a variety of possible solutions, Shepsis said that, from an engineering point of view, the port’s best option would likely be to use a flow lane dispersal system where dredged material is dumped in naturally occurring depressions or holes on the river bottom. The strong flow of water that already scoops

out these holes scatters the excess sediment.

Shepsis said the sediment comes from the Columbia River and should, preferably, go back into that ecosystem.

### Finding good holes

He said he had some trouble finding good, deep holes in places he’d otherwise except to see them near the port, but

he and other staff did locate two eventually: one near the marina and one near the Cape Disappointment Coast Guard station.

Such a system has been successfully implemented at the Port of Willapa Harbor in north Pacific County. “But,” said Port Manager Rebecca Chaffee, “and there’s always a but...”

She said they did have some trouble working out how to manage a floating pipeline that feeds the material towards the underwater dispersal site.

That port also decided to place the system in an area somewhat shallower than Shepsis would normally prefer.

It was worth the risk, Chaffee said April 2. “We probably would have lost Bay Center (marina) and Tokeland (marina) if we didn’t have flow lane disposal.”

The process was just more complicated than they thought it would be, she told the people gathered in the Port of Ilwaco’s conference room.

The Port of Ilwaco’s current disposal site, a strip of land east of the marina, is filling up and the port has not successfully found a way to move the material elsewhere. Under permits from the state Department of Ecology, the port can use dredge spoils for “beneficial use,” using

the material on its own lands or possibly giving it to other entities. The material coming out of the marina is considered “clean.”

### Sediment management

However, efforts to use or get rid of the material have not been successful.

But taking care of the sediment is one of the port’s major concerns. Not much more than a decade ago, Baker Bay did not need the constant attention it seems to require now. Many things could be influencing the build up of sediment and much of the sediment could technically be coming from across the river.

But, as Shepsis said, “You can’t say to Oregon, ‘Take your sediment back.’”

From an engineering perspective, the flow lane disposal would likely work for Ilwaco, Shepsis said. It doesn’t mean it is the best solution, he added, since he is not aware of what other issues surrounding those areas — habitat concerns, politics — might make such a use less feasible if not impossible. That is information he will look to the Ilwaco Port Commission to provide.

Port Manager Guy Glenn Jr., said he and the commission will likely discuss these things at a port meeting this month.

# Data center security flaws from 2012 still not fixed

By **HILLARY BORRUD**  
*Capital Bureau*

SALEM — Three years after state auditors identified security weaknesses at Oregon’s main data center in Salem, the state has yet to fix some of the problems.

The vulnerabilities were outlined in a secret March 2012 letter to Michael Jordan, who was at the time director of the Department of Administrative Services, which manages the data warehouse. The facility stores data for multiple state agencies.

The extent of the problem remains unclear, because the agency declined to release the letter in response to a public records request from the EO Media Group/Pamplin Media Group Capital Bureau. Auditors are in the midst of another periodic review of security at the center and they expect to complete the report this summer.

State agencies have struggled for years to keep Oregonians’ data secure. Earlier this month, the EO Media Group/Pamplin Media Group Capital Bureau reported that outdated security protocols on state websites left Oregonians vulnerable to attackers when they paid child support, filed unemployment claims and completed other online transactions.

One reason the Department of Administrative Services does not want the public to see the 2012 letter is that attackers could take advantage of security weaknesses at the data center that it has not fixed.

Matt Shelby, a spokesman for the Department of Administrative Services, wrote in an email that “...there is little beyond the header that we would release because it discusses past and current security issues at the State Data Center.”

Nonetheless, Shelby said in an interview Tuesday that according to state Chief Information Security Officer Stefan Richards, employees have addressed approximately one-third of the security issues cited by auditors.

“The other two-thirds, we’ve made significant progress,” Shelby said. “By that, I mean 50 percent to 75 percent of what we think we need to do.”

Shelby said the Department of Administrative Services agreed with all the auditors’ recommendations, which called for the agency to purchase new tools as well as define and document its security processes.

Hackers recently accessed data at the center, Gov. Kate Brown revealed last month, but Shelby said that breach was unrelated to the security problems auditors identified. However, Shelby said one of the of the suggestions auditors laid out in the letter would have helped IT staff to more quickly assess which types of data attackers accessed.

The state data center had not yet installed centralized log management software, which would have allowed employees to more quickly assess the scope of the data breach, Shelby said.

“You find out that the door’s unlocked, or a window’s open,” Shelby said. “The next step is to find out if anything’s been taken or moved.”

The data center is now in the process of installing the central-

ized log management software, an improvement that was planned before the breach. IT employees ultimately learned hackers had accessed metadata about the movement of information across the state computer network.

The public portion of the 2012 data center security audit only hinted at the security vulnerabilities that auditors found. It focused on improper handling of media tapes and incomplete or not fully tested recovery programs used after events such as major computer crashes.

The only mention of weaknesses that could leave the center vulnerable to hackers was a single sentence that stated findings of a security review, one of the two objectives of the audit, were summarized in the confidential letter to Jordan.

The report was unusual because state auditors usually provide at least a general description of the range of problems they found and analysis of the causes. For example, a 2010 audit of security at the data center clearly stated there were problems.

“In our prior audits of the (state data center) we identified significant security weaknesses that collectively heightened the risk that applications hosted at the (state data center) could be compromised,” auditors wrote. “During this audit we confirmed that most of these security issues continued to exist.”

A spokeswoman for Brown, who was secretary of state and oversaw the Audits Division in 2012, referred questions about why the 2012 security concerns were kept secret to the current Secretary of State Jeanne Atkins. Tony Green, a spokesman for Atkins, said it would require a fair amount of research to figure out why auditors disclosed security concerns in 2010 but not in 2012.

“But generally speaking, auditors weigh the security risks known at that time against the best way to get the recommendations implemented,” Green wrote in an email. “Between 2010 and

2012, the risk/benefit analysis produced different answers.”

The Secretary of State’s Office also declined to release the 2012 letter.

“If you publish a report that says this agency is vulnerable to a hack that’s kind of like printing an invitation to hack it,” Green wrote.

Brown’s communications director Kristen Grainger said that as secretary of state and now as governor, Brown has also shared the concern that identifying security weaknesses could make it easier for attackers to access Oregonians’ data.

“I think to a certain extent she wants to be very careful not to bring this to the attention of hackers or people who would do harm to the state’s IT efforts,” Grainger said.

However, Grainger said Brown wants to address what has become a “long line” of data breaches at state agencies — hackers accessed databases at the Secretary of State’s Office and the Oregon Employment Department in 2014 — and that is why the governor wants to hire an independent expert to review state IT management and vulnerabilities.

*The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.*

# Sen. Johnson says state will fund Amtrak line

By **PETER WONG**  
*Capital Bureau*

SALEM — One key legislator says Oregon will continue state-supported passenger rail service between Portland and Eugene, despite press reports suggesting otherwise.

Sen. Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, says lawmakers will come up with enough money to continue twice-daily runs in the Willamette Valley.

“There is no story here,” says Johnson, who’s the Senate co-chairwoman of the Legislature’s joint budget subcommittee on transportation and economic development.

On Dec. 1, former Gov. John Kitzhaber’s budget package proposed \$10.4 million in subsidies from the general fund to Amtrak to operate the service. That’s in addition to around \$18 million the state kicks in from non-general fund sources.

So far, the Legislature’s budget framework proposes just \$5 million in state general funds.

But without the full \$10.4 million, “we will



**Courtesy Oregon Department of Transportation**

**A top Democratic lawmaker says the Legislature will come up with the \$10.4 million necessary to fund passenger rail service in the Willamette Valley.**

likely have to end passenger service,” says Shelley Snow, a spokeswoman for the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Johnson said that’s not going to happen.

The elimination of the service would prove embarrassing to state officials who in 2009 used \$38.4 million to buy two locomotives and passenger cars for two trains to service the Oregon corridor. They began service in 2013.

Oregon contracts with Amtrak to provide the ser-

vice, and has relied on federal subsidies to pay for part of the cost. But those subsidies have now ended.

In the next two-year budget cycle starting July 1, the state will have to pick up the full cost of the service after ticket sales, which cover about two-thirds of the bill.

But before that happens, Johnson says Amtrak has to do something about the schedule to make the service more appealing to riders.

The first train leaves Portland at 6 a.m. on weekdays, too early for potential commuters bound for work in Salem. Prior Jan. 1, 2014, the first train left at 9:30 a.m. — too late for commuters.

“It’s all messed up,” Johnson says.

According to the Oregon Department of Transportation, only 5,529 riders took the early morning train south in all of 2014, compared to 45,858 who boarded in Portland at 6 p.m. for the last southbound run.


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