

Community Involvement in Beneficial Uses Planning for Chambers County

Getting to the Heart of the Issue

Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Workshop
Linda Shead
November 6, 2012



What's the problem?

Economic, Safety, and Recreational losses are occurring from inadequately maintained channel depths in the five navigation channels in Chambers County.





What's not working well for the channels?

- Don't know the usage
- Treat channels individually
- Benefit/cost not working in the Corps process
- Small projects overwhelmed by Federal channel process
- Small projects take too long in the regulatory process
- Local landowner issues



What opportunities have been missed for Chambers channels?

- Private funding for shorter timing
- Public/private partnerships
- Marine Highway designation (\$\$)
- Focus on high spots instead of whole channels
- Beneficial uses at GBF property at Oak Island
- Include federal /state agencies for funding partners
- Proactive early on public outreach
- Capitalize on oyster benefits



So, where did these ideas come from?

FOR CHAMBERS COUNTY:

Dredging / Beneficial Uses Workshop

Thursday, August 30, 2012 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. FWS Chenier Plain Visitor Center 4017 FM 563 Anahuac

This workshop is being presented in cooperation with the Chambers County Greenprint Project of Texas Coastal Partners and with the Chambers Recovery Team. Funding is provided by a grant to Texas Coastal Partners from the Coastal Coordination Council pursuant to a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grant award.

TO RSVP FOR LUNCH, OR FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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You are cordially invited to a free workshop on maintenance dredging, with the beneficial uses of dredge material, for Chambers County channels—Anahuac, Cedar, Double, Liberty, Smith Point.

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend!

- · Current Issues for Chambers County Channels
- Corps and Congressional Processes for Dredging
- Examples of Beneficial Use Projects
- Dredge Material Management Plans
- Marine Highway Designations
- Design and Permitting of Beneficial Use Projects
- Strategy Alternatives for Chambers County Channels

- From a workshop in Chambers County on 8/29/2012, with...
- Purposes to address the pressing channel issues in the County, while also introducing the concepts of beneficial uses.



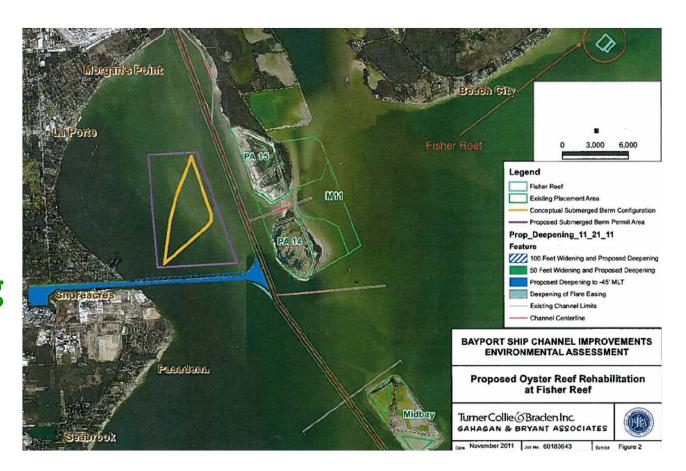
Why this subject at a BU workshop?

- Because community involvement can be the Achilles heel or the saving grace for beneficial uses projects.
- Because community involvement stems from recognizing and addressing community needs.
- Because community involvement is tricky, and must be carefully considered in order to be successful.



Achilles Heel...?

The Bayport
Channel BU
plan was
abandoned
after suffering
from major
public outcry.





Yet, local support abounds elsewhere...



USFWS slides



Why the difference?

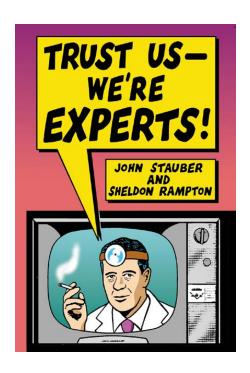
I would argue that it's a function of how the decisions are arrived at and who's involved...













Positive Group Process

 Collaboration = a way of working together that respects differences while working toward common goals that are more likely to be achieved together than working alone.

• <u>Consensus</u> = a way of making decisions that results in general agreement with a sense of group solidarity.



Defining Participants

Collaboration and consensus are more likely to be successful when all stakeholders are involved in the process.

 A stakeholder is any person, group, or organization... with an interest or concern in, or who can affect or be affected by... the actions, objectives, or policies that are the outcomes of the process.



So, who participated in the Chambers County workshop?

Channel Users

- Industrial Peninsula
- Recreational TMCA
- Seafood Industry Jeri's
- Educational Waterborne

Regulatory Agency

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Channel Sponsors

- Cedar Bayou Nav. District
- Chambers-Liberty
 Counties Nav. District

Beneficial Use Projects

- Engineers G&B
- Nonprofit GBF
- Agency FWS Coastal Program



Attendees:

- Channel sponsors
- County elected officials
- County government staff
- Environment/Education organizations
- Engineers
- Biologists
- Recreational boaters

- Federal regulatory agencies
- Fishing industry
- Heavy industry
- Petrochemical industry
- Federal resource agencies
- State resource agencies



What was the effect of such diverse and widespread involvement?

- Common themes emerged across different channels and very different user groups.
- Smaller entities recognized the potential for strength in unity.
- Agencies heard some of the additional hurdles faced by these user groups – beyond just \$\$\$.
- Beneficial uses was recognized as a (nontraditional and) potentially useful tool to meet local needs.



What are the strategies for future action in Chambers County?

- Look for local *i.e.*, non-federal partners.
- Determine beneficial-use placement areas.
- Identify and address channel hot spots.
- Coordinate locally for a regional plan, with public participation from the larger community.
- Develop a federal program for regionalization of smaller channels.
- Establish a clearinghouse and regular meetings.
- And more...



With the right approach, BU projects can benefit all user groups













Thank you!

