Project

Our dredging expertise helps client meet tenant needs and maintain environmental stewardship

Summary

- Haley & Aldrich's environmental compliance services team helped the Port of Oakland meet tight sediment investigation deadlines, keep its maintenance dredging program on schedule, and qualify dredged material for beneficial reuse.
- We employed a thorough, efficient, responsive approach, and we coordinated seamlessly with multiple stakeholders to conduct the sediment quality assessment in a limited timeframe.
- Our extensive experience enabled us to quickly prepare data-backed reports that were readily approved by regulatory agencies.
- As a result, our client continues to meet tenant needs with uninterrupted dredging operations, while maintaining its reputation as an environmental ally.

Client challenge

The Port of Oakland is the fifth largest port in the country and the third largest in California. It's one of the fewports in the United States deep enough to handle cargo vessels more than 1,000 feet long. The port must dredge yearly to meet its obligation to its shipping terminal tenants, ensuring port terminal berths can accommodate deep draft cargo ships carrying up to 14,000 containers to and from Asia, Europe, and Australia. Annual dredging is critical. Without it, ships calling on the port's tenants would be forced to carry fewer containers — which would significantly impact port revenue, as well as local, California, and other state economies.

The port's annual maintenance dredging must be completed within a six-month environmental work window to comply with regulatory requirements governing the protection of sensitive species. Regulations also require the port to beneficially reuse 40% to 80% of dredged sediment as fill for construction of Bay Area wetlands restoration projects. The port must demonstrate to five different regulatory agencies that sediments dredged from its tenants' berths will not cause adverse environmental effects within the wetlands — a crucial step to ensure those sediments can be approved for beneficial reuse by the time the work window opens. The project is a considerable challenge every year due to the limited window to conduct the sediment quality assessment, the technical complexity of the process, and the number of regulators and other stakeholders involved.

> *"Haley & Aldrich staff have an excellent understanding of the regulatory process and excellent working relationships with owners and agencies that result in a collaborative process. They are responsive to our needs and helped us accomplish our project objective: Start our dredging project as soon as the window opens."*
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> Imee Osantowski, Principal Engineer, Port of Oakland

Haley & Aldrich has established a trusted relationship with the port by reliably providing environmental compliance services to support various operations throughout its facilities, including site characterization of soils and groundwater. The port partners with Haley & Aldrich on the annual dredging work due to this existing, trusted relationship, as well as our specialized expertise in marine sediments, dredged material management, and our deep understanding of applicable regulations.

Our approach

The Haley & Aldrich team knows that, in order to meet the Port of Oakland's annual dredging deadline and to successfully qualify the dredged material for beneficial reuse, each year we need to be thorough, hyper-efficient, and responsive at every step. To do so, our team relies on its technical excellence, as well as the ability to collaborate and coordinate with stakeholders at every step — including with all regulators, multiple laboratories, wharfingers, and the port.

Haley & Aldrich's sediments team, comprised of both toxicologists and chemists, not only quickly prepares high quality Sampling and Analysis Plans, but also ensures they are readily approved by five regulatory agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. EPA, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Our field scientists — tapping into their extensive sediment sampling experience in accordance with strict quality assurance protocols — collect samples while

minimizing the introduction of field-related interferences such as cross-contamination. Once samples are collected, our project manager coordinates closely with the various laboratories that perform the chemical and toxicological analyses.

Our team's deep understanding of sediment quality data and our ability to quickly interpret analytical results related to potential aquatic and wetlands impacts is crucial. This allows our in-house sediment quality experts to efficiently prepare comprehensive, data-backed reports for regulators. Our data analysis and recommendations for sediment reuse suitability are trusted by the regulators — assuring their confidence in the port's dredging plans.

We have established trust between the port, Haley & Aldrich, and Bay Area regulators due to our ability to consistently provide reliable data and sophisticated assessments of potential impacts. These relationships, our thorough and detailed reports, and the immediate responsiveness of our sediments team have ensured the Port completes its annual dredging on time and meets all sediment quality criteria for wetlands. As a result, the port has continued to meet the needs of its tenants with uninterrupted dredging operations while further establishing its reputation as an environmental ally.

Value delivered

- Meet tight sediment investigation deadlines to keep the nation's fifth largest port's maintenance dredging program on schedule
- Obtain regulatory approval to beneficially reuse Port dredged sediment to restore critical wetland habitat
- Facilitate collaboration and coordination with the Port, regulatory agencies, surveyor, wharfingers, and multiple laboratories
- Keep the project on budget and on time with smart planning

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