

Navy Sediments Overview

The assessment and remediation of contaminated sediments has been an ongoing issue for the Department of the Navy. Currently, sediment sites comprise approximately 30 percent of the Environmental Cleanup budget for the Navy. Sediment Investigation and Cleanup is more complex than other media such as soil, surface water and groundwater since Navy Installations are often adjacent to water bodies that exhibit complex hydrological and sediment dynamic processes. Source identification is difficult due to commingling of contaminants. Source identification is also difficult due to contribution from both Navy and non-Navy sources. Innovative investigation and remediation approaches for sediments are often in development stages or have not been proven in the field. Navy sediment sites where the water body is owned by the Navy is a recent issue to be addressed.

The Navy has developed Sediments Policy as well as Implementation Guidance to aid RPMs in cleaning up Sediment sites. The Navy will identify issues experienced when characterizing and remediating sites, and indicate technology needs to help to improve the management of contaminated sediments. Some of the issues are unique to the Navy while others are similar to those encountered by the regulatory community and other PRPs. Many of the technology needs are immediate, intermediate or long-term; therefore, selection of appropriate remediation tools is key in approaching the solution of cleaning up sediment sites. Also, many areas in assessing and remediating contaminated sediments warrant further research and demonstration, and prioritizing these areas to address the most relevant data gaps, in the most cost efficient way, is necessary.