

ABSTRACT

Monitoring studies of a small maintenance dredging operation in Coos Bay, Oregon, showed that significant decreases of benthic infaunal abundance immediately after dredging extended at least 100 m from the site of actual dredging. The infauna re-adjusted to pre-dredging conditions within 28 days in the dredged area and within 14 days in the adjacent areas. At the spoil site a similar decrease was followed by a 2-week recovery period. The authors suggest that an area subjected to maintenance dredging is also subjected to frequent disturbances from ship movements and other harbor activities and that the infauna is well adapted to this. Thus, maintenance dredging is a relatively normal event and should not be expected to have catastrophic effects.

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