US Army Corps of Engineers®

PLANNING ahead

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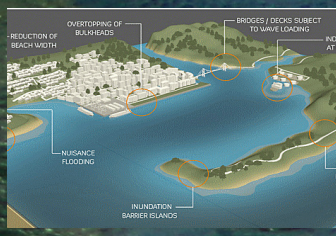

PLANNING COMMUNITY

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KNOW YOUR PCX:

Deep Draft Navigation

LEADING THE DDNPCX IS GENERAL C. DAVID TURNER, SAD COMMANDER, ALONG WITH MOBILE DISTRICT COMMANDER COLONEL JON J. CHYTKA. THE SAD PLANNING CHIEF, MR. WILBERT PAYNES, SERVES AS THE DDNPCX DIRECTOR ALONG WITH MR. DANIEL SMALL AS ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY, AND MR. TODD NETTLES OVERSEES THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS AS THE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR. ALONG WITH MR. NETTLES, THE CORE STAFF IN MOBILE CONSISTS OF: MRS. KIMBERLY OTTO, THE DDNPCX TECHNICAL

SPECIALIST AND REVIEW MANAGER; MRS. JULIE MCGUIRE, AN ECONOMIC ANALYST; AND MR. WALKER MESSER AND MS. CAITLIN SCHWALL WHO WERE JOINED THE DDNPCX IN OCTOBER 2014 AS DA INTERN GRADUATES.

The National Deep Draft Navigation Planning Center of Expertise (DDNPCX) provides technical leadership in deep draft navigation planning, performs Independent Technical Review services, executes Agency Technical Reviews, conducts and manages Review Plans, facilitates model certifications, provides training, and produces economic analyses for navigation studies.

The DDNPCX has been housed in the South Atlantic Division (SAD) since 2003; the core staff is physically located in Mobile, Alabama, but coordinates with a virtual team across the country. In 2008, the Small Boat Harbor Program was added as a sub-unit of the DDNPCX.

The goal of the DDNPCX is to deliver quality projects, products, and services in accordance with Planning Modernization and SMART Planning principles. Keeping with this goal, the DDNPCX worked to certify the HarborSym model for corporate use in deep draft navigation studies in 2012. The Center is currently working with the Corps' Navigation Economic Technologies (NETS) program to approve the Economic Reporter, a results post-processer designed to generate various useful tables and graphics typical of a feasibility study using the outputs from the HarborSym model. This application benefits planners by adding transparency to the process while reducing cost and personnel resources necessary to develop a report.

Additionally, the DDNPCX has been supporting Planning Project Delivery Teams in their development of deep draft studies. For example, the Charleston Harbor Post 45 study was re-scoped in 2012 to determine the feasibility of deepening and widening the harbor. By engaging the vertical team at the charette and continuing throughout the study process, the DDNPCX reduced uncertainties to the point that the PDT was able to efficiently and effectively reach several milestones in the SMART Planning process. The Charleston Harbor Post 45 study is now on track to have a Civil Works Review Board in June 2015.

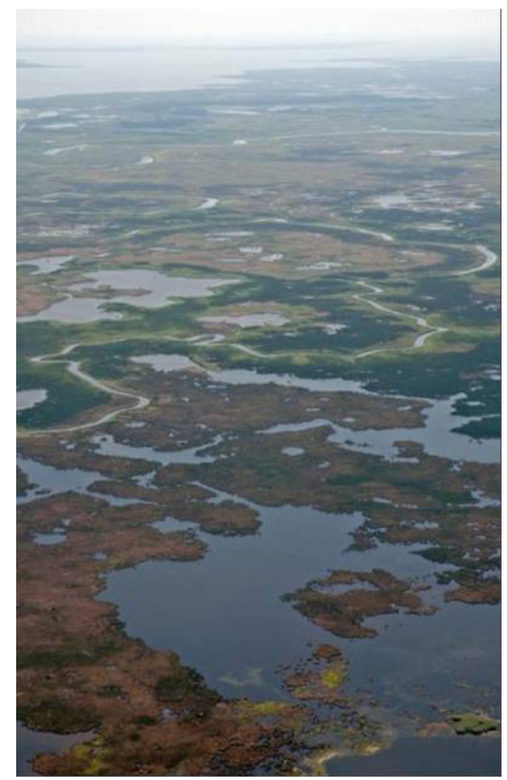
If you would like to learn more about the DDNPCX or have questions for us, please visit: http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/NationalCentersinMobile/DeepDraftNavigation.aspx

> COMING SOON

GUIDE TO SMART PLANNING:

Coordination with NMFS and FWS

Shortly after the inception of SMART Planning, the Planning Community of Practice reached out to the Washington level staff at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to begin dialog on Planning Modernization efforts underway. The dialog was initiated as a means to engage and educate the Services and to establish working relationships vital for the successful implementation of SMART Planning studies across the Nation.



The Services have been working with the HQUSACE on several endeavors over the past two years to educate staff throughout their respective agencies. Together the agencies have developed shared talking points, held joint agency webinars that focused on the critical role of the Services in SMART Planning, and discussed the nationwide portfolio of feasibility studies so both the Services and the Corps could understand each agency's priorities.

The latest initiative is the development of a guide for staff across all three agencies to become familiar with the SMART Planning feasibility study process, specifically highlighting opportunities for engagement and coordination during the course of the study. The guide will focus on key environmental laws such as the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), as these laws are typically considered in most feasibility studies and tend to involve more extensive coordination and consultation with the Services. The agencies have worked together to align the consultation and coordination processes and statutory timelines for these laws with the SMART Planning process, and developed flow charts for these time frames.

The release of the guide is critical as the Corps begins the feasibility study process for the FY14 and FY15 new start studies. These are truly the first studies to go through the SMART Planning process from start to finish. The Corps needs full engagement and support from the Services, and all three agencies agree that early coordination is key to success. Engaging the Services to have their input when studies are initiated, and support as alternatives are formulated, will reduce issues at the end of the study process. The guide also highlights the importance of regional portfolio discussions where MSCs are encouraged to work with their districts and appropriate FWS or NMFS regional office to ensure a common understanding of regional and agency priorities, resource constraints, and expectations.

EARLY ENGAGEMENT WITH THE SERVICES MAY RESULT IN ALTERNATIVES THAT AVOID IMPACTS TO LISTED SPECIES AND CRITICAL HABITAT AND THUS AVOID THE NEED FOR FORMAL CONSULTATION.

› Once released, the guide will be placed on the Planning Community Toolbox.

Feature News Items

THE CULTURAL EVOLUTION:

PARTICIPATION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES SPECIALISTS IN SMART STUDIES AND TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Chris Koeppel is the Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) Archaeologist and Tribal Liaison, and the Program Manager for the MVD Hurricane Storm Defense Risk Reduction System program and the Louisiana Coastal Ecosystem Restoration program. Chris shares his insights and lessons learned on various assignments with Corps Headquarters (HQUSACE) in support of Planning Community of Practice (CoP), the Cultural Resources sub-CoP Agency Technical Review (ATR), and support to the Tribal Nations CoP.

In 2012, I participated in a HQUSACE initiative to: 1) improve the Cultural Resources sub-CoP's understanding of unique, specialized qualifications of the nationwide cultural resources specialists to match ATR team needs to the most qualified and available specialists; and, 2) to improve the quality of ATR team comments generated by cultural resources specialists for Project Delivery Teams (PDTs). Reaching out across the Planning CoP, we formulated criteria to certify sub-CoP members to participate in ATRs. We now have a roadmap to certification with recommendations depending on the skills and experience of the individual, including mentoring by other members that have experience with the ATR process or suggested training, including Planning PROSPECT classes.

In 2012, while co-facilitating a Tribal Consultation meeting with several federally recognized tribes, a Tribal Historic Preservation Officer voiced serious scepticism about SMART Planning, and I realized that I did not know enough about the process to effectively address his concerns. When I returned to MVD, I sat down with Susan Smith, the Deputy of Planning and Policy at that time, to develop a SMART Planning training module for the USACE Tribal Liaisons. Since then, I have presented this training at several of the annual Tribal Nations CoP meetings. *Note:* This presentation was adapted and given as part of the PCoP Webinar Series on April 2, 2015 and is available on the Planning Community Toolbox.

Applying SMART Planning approaches has resulted in Tribal Liaisons eliciting tribal input on potential "sensitive areas" early in the scoping phase of the planning process, identifying known and/or suspected significant resources, sacred sites or other concerns. Concurrently, we are helping tribes articulate their concerns in the form of risks and uncertainties that will inform the PDT, vertical team and others through utilization of the Risk Register, Decision Management Plans and additional planning documents.

In 2014, a HQUACE working group updated USACE cultural resources sub-CoP operational procedures to better compliment risk informed decision-making throughout a SMART feasibility study, while complying with the 3x3x3 rule. This required implementing measures to more efficiently comply with cultural resources laws, modifying standard operating procedures to better support the decision-making process early in the Scoping phase, and tailoring the level of detail to fit each SMART milestone by relying - where possible - on existing data, predictive modelling and programmatic agreements. Supporting this effort is not only about educating ourselves, but also communicating to the State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs), Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, and historic preservation groups on the decisions to be made during the study. It is important that they understand that while we will initially be asking them to comment on broadly defined study areas, the process will lead to more specifically defined areas and actions by the Tentatively Selected Plan milestone, with enough detail provided to make informed estimates of impacts.

> "EVERY USACE STUDY OR PROJECT INTERSECTS SOMEHOW WITH TRIBAL CULTURAL OR NATURAL RESOURCES WHETHER ON TRIBAL TERRITORIES OR ANCESTRAL LANDS, AND THE TRIBES ARE INCREASINGLY BECOMING IMPORTANT CUSTOMERS AND SPONSORS IN OUR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS."

Be Part of the Cultural Evolution:

> PDTs should work with your Tribal Liaison to ensure understanding of, and respect for, tribal customs and culture.

- Tribal concerns must be understood early in the process, and consultation should occur often as alternatives are formulated, data analyses are refined, and risks are better understood.
- Take advantage of the multiple opportunities for engagement with Tribes and SHPOs before and during each Decision Milestone.

- Place emphasis on helping our Tribal and SHPO partners in articulating their concerns in the form of risks and uncertainties to better inform the planning process.
- Corps Tribal Liaisons and cultural resources staff should attend public scoping meetings and ensure that the presentation elicits public comments on cultural resources.
- USACE's government-to-government consultation procedures with Tribes are the same, and consultation may occur at any point.
- Early information by the Tribes and SHPOs on what to avoid will help effectively formulate and/or screen measures/alternatives before unnecessary analyses are implemented.

Upcoming Planning Community Webinars

> The Planning Community of Practice (PCoP) webinar series offers Planners and their colleagues an opportunity to share information and learn more about trending topics.

Recent topics include:

- Section 7001: Preparing the 2015 Annual Report to Congress
- CWRBs and SMART Planning: Lessons Learned and Looking Ahead
- An Open PCoP Panel Question and Answer Forum
- Getting to know the 4Ps of Planning Modernization

Webinars are held the first and third Thursday of each month from 2-3 pm Eastern. Presentations and the Question and Answer sessions from each webinar are archived on the Planning Community Toolbox.

IDEA FOR A WEBINAR?

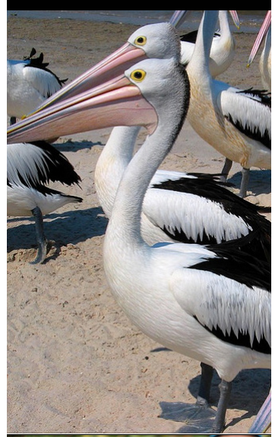
If there is a topic you believe the PCoP would benefit from, please email your ideas to hqplanning@usace.army.mil.

HELPFUL LINKS:

PROPOSAL FORM

LEGISLATIVE LINKS

2014 REPORT TO CONGRESS



A WORD FOR OUR SPONSORS:

PREPARING FOR THE ANNUAL REPORT ON FUTURE WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Section 7001 of WRRDA 2014 requires that the Secretary of the Army annually submit to Congress a "Report on Future Water Resources Development." The report identifies completed feasibility reports, proposed feasibility studies, and proposed modifications to authorized projects or studies and is provided to the Corps' authorizing committees: the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

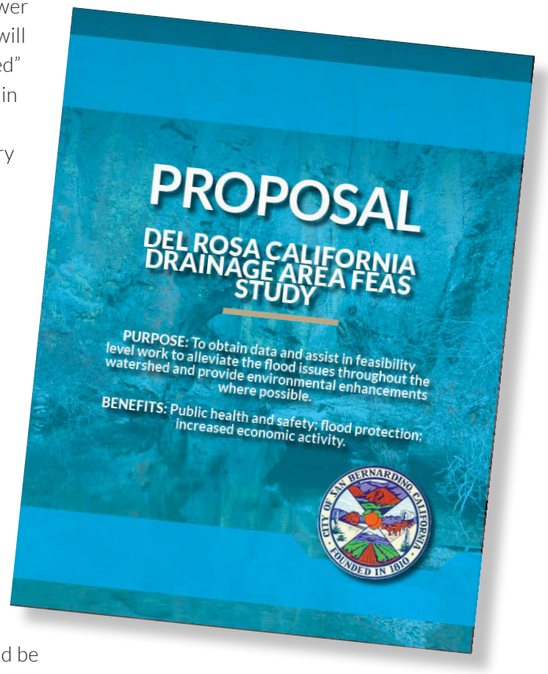
Each year, the Corps must publish a Federal Register notice requesting proposals for inclusion in the Annual Report. During proposal period – open for up to 120 days – non-Federal interests, including current and potential study and project sponsors, can submit proposals. This year, the Federal Register Notice was published on 26 May. Non-Federal Interests still have 120 days to submit proposals – until 23 September.

Headquarters has revised the process for collecting and evaluating proposals for the 2015 report, whereby potential sponsors will be able to submit their proposals online rather via the mail. What is not changing is the required information for each submission. In order to be considered complete, each proposal submitted must include:

1. The name of the proposal;
2. The name of all non-Federal interests planning to act as the study or project sponsor, including any non-Federal interests that have contributed or are expected to contribute toward the non-Federal share of the proposed feasibility study or modification;
3. Whether the proposal is for a feasibility study or a modification to an authorized USACE water resources development project or feasibility study and, if a modification, the name of the authorized water resources development project or study;
4. Clearly articulate the specific project purpose(s) of the proposed study or modification. Demonstrate that the proposal is related to USACE mission and authorities and specifically address why additional or new authorization is needed. USACE missions and authorities are primarily focused on flood and storm damage reduction, commercial navigation, or aquatic ecosystem restoration. Following long-standing USACE practice, related proposals such as for recreation, hydropower, or water supply will be considered for inclusion if undertaken in conjunction with such a project or effort;
5. An estimate, to the extent practicable, of the total cost, and the Federal and non-Federal share of those costs, of the proposed study and, separately, an estimate of the cost of construction or modification;
6. A description, to the extent practicable, the anticipated monetary and non monetary benefits of the proposal including benefits to the protection of human life and property; improvement to transportation; the national economy; the environment; or the national security interests of the United States;
7. A description of local support for the proposal;
8. Confirmation of the non-Federal interest's financial ability to provide for the required cost share;
9. Letter or statement of support from each non-Federal interest.

Additionally, Section 7001 requires that the Secretary certify that the proposals included in the annual report to Congress meet the following criteria:

1. Are related to the USACE missions and authorities. USACE primary missions are navigation, flood risk management, and aquatic ecosystem restoration. Recreation, hydropower and/or water supply will be considered "related" when it is performed in conjunction with one or more of the primary mission(s);
2. Require specific congressional authorization;
3. Have not been congressionally authorized;
4. Have not been included in the main table of a previous annual report; and
5. If authorized, could be carried out by USACE.



Proposals that do not meet the above criteria are included in an Appendix to the Report.

If you have a sponsor – or potential sponsor – that is interested in submitting a proposal this year, please work with them to understand the submission requirements and what inclusion in the report means - and doesn't mean – for the future of a proposed study. For example, it is very important for sponsors and potential sponsors to understand that inclusion in the Report does not equate authorization or Corps recommendation of a specific proposal.

For more information, please see the June 18 PCoP Webinar; email questions to wrrda7001proposal@usace.army.mil. The 2014 report and all submitted proposals are available on the Corps Headquarters website.

Planning Ahead is a quarterly publication of the Army Corps of Engineers Planning Community of Practice. Views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Army Corps of Engineers or the Department of Defense.

North Atlantic Coast

Highlights of the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study

USACE was tasked with assessing current and future flood risk affecting coastal communities and ecosystems and incorporating lessons learned from the October 2012 Hurricane Sandy event. The team was required to complete the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study (NACCS) within a two-year timeframe, and demonstrated the ability of the agency to form a diverse and high-performance team of experts, including interagency subject matter experts, to complete the effort on schedule.

The NACCS was different from a typical comprehensive or regional study because it does not specifically identify flood risk management projects for further investigation or implementation. Rather, the NACCS developed a common methodology to evaluate coastal storm risk across all levels of government, incorporating the USACE six-step planning process, FEMA's Disaster Recovery Framework, and state hazard mitigation planning. Additionally, the various products developed as part of the NACCS support the methodology presented in the NACCS, along with an initial application at the North Atlantic scale with results presented by each state.

> Coastal storm risk management is a shared responsibility, and we believe there should be shared tools used by all decision makers to assess risk and identify solutions. This report provides those tools. – Brig. Gen. Kent D. Savre, Commanding General, USACE North Atlantic

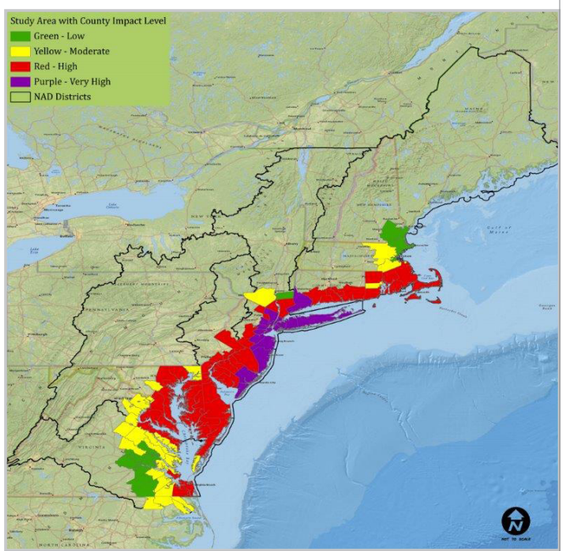
Existing and future trends evaluated in the NACCS provide a roadmap for future coastal storm risk management evaluations, including effects of climate and sea level change, the variable socioeconomics of coastal zones, and the resulting impacts these changes will have on the environment. The NACCS recommends that coastal communities consider a system of comprehensive, resilient and sustainable coastal storm risk management measures by employing three primary strategies: avoid, accommodate, and preserve. To do so, a combination of structural, natural and nature-based features (NNBF), and nonstructural measures, along with policy or programmatic measures such as floodplain management, zoning, and appropriate land use planning, should be included as a systematic approach to form resilient, redundant, robust, and adaptable risk management strategies based on local site conditions and societal values.

One key element of the NACCS is the Coastal Storm Risk Management Framework (Framework) to address flood risk for the numerous and diverse coastal communities across the region using a nine-step adaptable process. The Framework is implementable at smaller watershed scales and able to incorporate State and local priorities, refined data sets, and site-specific analyses. The Framework relies on team development of models, tools and analyses to assist in the decision-making process including:

- An analysis of sea level and climate change scenarios, and a discussion of how coastal populations, infrastructure, ecosystems, and implementation of flood risk management strategies may be affected;
- An analysis of flood exposure and risk;
- Significant advancements in coastal hydrodynamic modeling, economic benefit considerations, and analyses of NNBF;
- A list of areas warranting further analysis; and
- A synthesis of institutional and other barriers to implementing management measures along high risk coastal areas.

Federal assistance grants to address coastal storm risk management measures are available through several different programs and initiatives. For USACE programs, the NACCS identified nine coastal flood risk focus areas for potential feasibility studies to assist state and local partners. USACE expertise could also be used to assist coastal communities with the application of the Framework via the Floodplain Management Services Program or through Planning Assistance to States as determined by States, local governments and Native American Tribes. In addition, any Federal building, refuge or Department of Defense facility with coastal flood risk could apply the Framework.

The NACCS is a showcase of exceptional teamwork across the organization, applying SMART principles, including early vertical team integration for timely and risk informed decision-making throughout the study. The NACCS demonstrates how USACE can lead and integrate diverse expertise and solutions from within the agency, as well as between Federal, state, regional, tribal and non-governmental entities. More detail on the NACCS is available in the April 2015 edition of the USACE Flood Risk Management Newsletter. The full report and study products are available online at http://www.nad.usace.army.mil/CompStudy.aspx.



PLANNING AHEAD: PLANNING COMMUNITY **NEWSLETTER**

PLANNER SPOTLIGHT

Leigh Skaggs,
Plan Formulation Lead,
South Pacific Division

Leigh, you've been around quite a while -- how many years have you been a planner with the Corps, and what positions have you held?

I've been a planner with the Corps 27 years now... One of the reasons "time has flown by" is because of how interesting our jobs in Civil Works planning are... never a dull moment! I started with the Institute of Water Resources (IWR) as a Geographer and a Community Planner, then Jacksonville District as a Plan Formulator on Everglades Restoration projects and as Socioeconomics Chief, then Headquarters Office of Water Project Review (plan formulation policy reviewer), then SPD as Plan Formulation Lead and Temporary Planning Chief.

You've worked in Corps District, Division, Headquarters, and "Lab" offices. Do you have any insights into the "life of a planner" in the various levels of the organization?

I feel fortunate to have experienced the Corps from several vantage points, both geographically and "vertically" within the organization. But wherever you start your career, I think it is invigorating and enriching – to yourself and the agency -- to move around.

At the District, obviously, you are closest to the realities of the projects and to the stakeholders; you learn what it's like to be part of a functioning, interdisciplinary PDT; and you actually get to develop the decision documents that will lead to real solutions to whatever water resources problems you are tackling. I think there's a lot of "pride of ownership" when that Feasibility Report (or CAP study, GRR, EIS, etc.) is completed and yours is one of the names on it!

I have found the Division (MSC) office to be "middle ground." You aren't developing the decision documents as much as you are working with PDTs to improve those documents (through Quality Assurance review, In Progress Reviews, preparation for milestone meetings, etc.). You often get involved in charettes to help PDTs scope their studies and instill from the outset SMART planning principles. At the MSC, you also get the opportunity to mentor and provide training. I've really enjoyed teaching a variety of Planner Core Curriculum courses over the years – it's a great way to keep current with the agency's latest policies and procedures, and you have the opportunity to meet planners nationwide.

At HQ, you are a bit more removed from project development, but a real advantage of SMART planning has been the increased vertical engagement by HQ in studies from the beginning, and on a recurring basis. A terrific aspect of working as a planner at HQ is the national perspective you get – the way problems or issues are resolved in one region may be applicable to another.

I think a huge plus of being a planner at one of the Corps labs, like IWR, is having the time to think. Since you are removed from the schedule and budget constraints of delivering a water resources project, you can take a step back, take a longer-term view, and seek solutions that have broader (perhaps national) applicability. Planners at IWR are able to assist both HQ in the development of tools, procedures and policies; and Districts in the application of those tools to their studies and projects.

In sum, all levels or offices within the Corps have their own set of positive career experiences for planners – that's why I recommend moving about and getting experience from different parts of our varied organization!

Can you describe some of the changes you've seen in Corps Civil Works planning over the years? Do you think those changes are for the better or worse?

Indeed, we have changed greatly over the years. One of the changes is greater diversity. I was really struck by how white, male, and older the USACE (and Planning) workforce was when I started in the late 1980's– our demographics have changed dramatically: more women, more people of color, and younger people. We have greater acknowledgment of LGBT diversity as well. Planning has always attracted professionals of various academic backgrounds, but we now seem to have folks that have risen through the planning ranks from even more varied backgrounds – besides our traditional engineers, economists, and biologists, we have geologists, ecologists, landscape architects, recreation planners, sociologists, historians, archeologists, watershed planners, educators, MBA's... even geographers! This is a terrific development in terms of the types of skills and expertise brought to the table for our multi-disciplinary teams.

Our missions have also grown compared to when I started. Ecosystem restoration, watershed planning, and dam and levee safety have really grown in terms of Corps missions over the last 20-30 years. That's a good thing for the agency in terms of the potential number of projects we can partner with sponsors to develop or deliver.

Another change is that we are more streamlined – planning at all levels is "leaner and meaner." This has its challenges in terms of managing and keeping up with the workload, but I think it also means you have the opportunity to work on a greater variety of studies, you'll likely have some developmental opportunities, and hopefully the ability to progress faster in your career.

Finally, I can't close without mentioning the changes introduced by Planning Modernization and SMART planning. Yes, we are all still evolving and going through a transition phase, but the changes are already manifested. The increased vertical team (VT) engagement in study development is terrific (even if exhausting to the VT)! Some of our new tools and techniques are very efficient and helpful (e.g., the charettes for scoping, the Report Synopses, Decision Management Plans, Risk Registers, and Decision Logs as in-progress decision documents). The general concept of only collecting the information you need when you need it and making risk-informed decisions through the course of the planning process is indeed liberating, if also embraced by decision-makers. Getting a handle on our portfolio of studies and better integration of Planning and Programs is also a long-term improvement.

My greatest concerns are related to the three-year and $3 million limits. It is extremely challenging to complete many Corps Feasibility studies in three years. I worry about burn-out and the stresses experienced by PDT members in trying to meet such a deadline for every study, and the high hurdles erected when exemptions to the 3x3x3 rule are needed. I'm also concerned PDT's will constrain their plan formulation "problem-solving" by seeking water resources solutions that can be achieved more easily within three years and $3 million (i.e., "scaling down" their recommendation to simpler solutions). But as long as we recognize these potential issues and try to pro-actively do something about planner burn-out and "down-scaled" solutions, 3x3x3 is a laudable goal. We just need some flexibility.

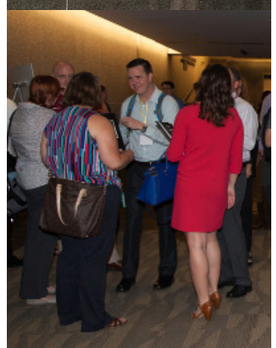
Any closing advice to those planners closer to the start of their careers?

Cultivate relationships – you may have no idea now how developing healthy and honest professional relationships can advance the planning and project delivery processes later. Be open to change. Do what you say you will. Don't take things personally. Be a team player – others are usually counting on you to do your part. And most importantly, always do your best.

OUR GOAL IS FOR ALL ELEMENTS OF THE PLANNING ORGANIZATION TO BE FULLY ENGAGED IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF "PLANNING MODERNIZATION" INTO THE ROUTINE OPERATION OF CORPS PLANNING: OUR PEOPLE, PROCESS, PROJECTS AND PROGRAM

WORKING TOGETHER TO ALIGN, DELIVER AND SUSTAIN PLANNING

2015 NATIONAL PLANNING COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE TRAINING



We had a successful Planning Community of Practice Training in Atlanta! A big thank you to all who made it possible and all those who are bringing and sharing the information with colleagues who stayed behind to keep the planning work moving.

All attendees now have the important task of "Taking Back" the training information to their colleagues both inside and outside of planning. Please work with other attendees to share this important information. Some MSCs or Districts may have identified strategies on how to share the information.

The PowerPoint presentations, session hand-outs, and notes from the workshop's "Take Back Forms" are all available on the Planning Workshop SharePoint site for participants to share this information at their district or MSC.

If you were not able to attend, please participate in any "Take Back" sharing sessions given by attendees from your organization. Ask them how and when they will be sharing the information. You are welcome to review the training materials at the link below.

PCoP Workshop 2015 Training Materials:

https://cops.usace.army.mil/sites/PLAN/PCoPtrn/default.aspx

NEW FEASIBILITY STUDIES IN FY15

This Fiscal Year the Corps is initiating ten new start feasibility studies, the first to begin since the Water Resources Reform & Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014 eliminated a separate federally-funded reconnaissance phase. In addition, nine reconnaissance studies started in FY14 will be moving into feasibility.

These 19 studies are the first that will be – from start to finish – following the SMART Planning process of decision-based milestones and subject to the 3x3 rule (completion within 3 years, $3 million).

While initial feasibility steps will be slightly different between the FY14 and FY15 new starts (for FY15 new starts, the Corps and the Sponsor will work together to develop the scope and schedule of the feasibility study after a Feasibility Cost Share Agreement is signed), each of these study teams will learn from each other and demonstrate core SMART Principles of:

› Balancing the level of uncertainty and risk with the level of detail of the study. The level of detail required to make planning decisions will grow over the course of the study, as the study team moves from an array of alternatives to a single recommended alternative.

› Ensuring early and ongoing vertical team engagement of decision makers to move the study forward.

Congratulations to these study sponsors and teams as they join the Corps' active planning portfolio of risk-informed, SMART Planning studies.

FEASIBILITY STUDIES

› FY15 New Start Feasibility Studies:

Navigation

Three Rivers, AR (SWD)

Manatee Harbor, FL (SAD)

New Haven Harbor Deepening, CT (NAD)

San Juan Harbor Channel Improvement Study, PR (SAD)

Flood Risk Management

Des Moines Levee System, Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, IA (MVD)

DuPage River, IL (LRD)

Fairfield and New Haven Counties, CT (NAD)

Ecosystem Restoration

Proctor Creek, GA (SAD)

Kaskaskia River Basin, IL (MVD)

Dungeness River, WA (NWD)

› FY14 New Starts Moving into Feasibility:

Navigation

Houston Ship Channel, TX (SWD)

Port of Long Beach, CA (SPD)

Seattle Harbor, WA (NWD)

Flood Risk Management

Coastal Texas Protection and Restoration, TX (SWD)

Lower Santa Cruz River, AZ (SPD)

Satilla River Basin Watershed, GA (SAD)

Ecosystem Restoration

Chesapeake Bay Comprehensive Water Resources and Restoration Plan (NAD)

Dry Creek (Warm Springs Dam) Restoration and Coyote Valley Dam Restoration, CA (Section 1135) (SPD)

Yuba River, CA (SPD)

› **The Planning Community Toolbox has a new section of Single Phase Feasibility Study Resources, including Implementation Guidance for WRRDA Sections 1001 (3x3) and 1002 (elimination of reconnaissance phase), fact sheets, webinars, useful templates and forms and more.**

PLANNING AHEAD: PLANNING COMMUNITY **NEWSLETTER**

Feature News Items

PCP NEWS FLASHES

PLANNING COMMUNITY NEWS

PCoP Hot Topics

Can't wait for the next edition of Planning Ahead? Get the scoop on People, Process, Projects, and Program key initiatives and information from Headquarters in the new monthly Hot Topics. Find the latest in your email inbox or on the Planning and Policy SharePoint.

New Planning Essentials Course

The new Planning Essentials PROSPECT course was launched in July. The course combines self-directed learning with three live virtual sessions over a 6-week period. Spots are available for future classes, with the next session starting in October. Prior completion of the PROSPECT course "USACE Civil Works Project Development Process" is highly recommended.

Plan Formulation and Evaluation Capstone Launched in August

The inaugural class of the all new Plan Formulation and Evaluation Capstone Course held in August. This is the third of the new Planning Core Curriculum courses and is our face-to face experiential model. This interactive course builds on the Planning basics learned in Civil Works Project Delivery and Planning Essentials. This course is geared towards new to mid-level planners with a few years of experience. We intend to include this as a standard PROSPECT course in the Purple Book for FY16.

WRRDA Implementation Guidance

Headquarters continues to develop implementation guidance for the provisions in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014, in coordination with the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works). These guidance memorandums, when published, provide the policies and procedures to be used in implementing this key law. Keep an eye on the Planning Community Toolbox – several sections will have a significant impact on Planning!

Are you Up-to-Date in the Planner Database?

The online Planning CoP Subject Matter Expertise database records, organizes and reports the knowledge, skills and abilities of USACE Planners in each of the sub-Communities of Practice. Update your experience and training or search for planners based by division, district, or categories such as level of experience, business expertise or training – all in an easy-to-use online tool. Login today at http://sme.planusace.us/

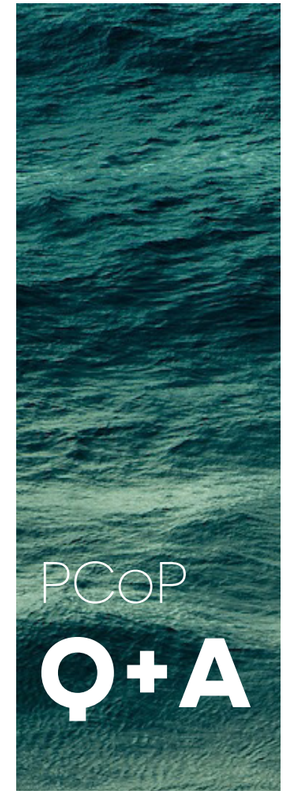
Online Risk Register and Other Planning Tools

Now your entire team can access your study's Risk Register and other study documents, including the Decision Management Plan and Decision Log, in an easy online format. The Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Suite is being developed to facilitate the use of these tools by Project Delivery Teams, review teams, and project advisors. Explore the tools, including a Test Study, online at http://www.iwrmsuite.us/

Recent Chief's Reports & Civil Works Review Boards

Congratulations to the project teams that saw Chief's Reports signed since the last Planning Ahead: The Port Everglades Harbor, FL, Navigation Improvement Project team• West Shore Lake Pontchartrain, LA • Upper Des Plaines River and Tributaries • Green and Barren River Locks and Dams Disposition, KY • Manhattan, KS levee feasibility study • Portsmouth Harbor and Piscataqua River Navigation Improvement Project • New Hampshire and Maine, and Armourdale and Central Industrial District Levee Units, Missouri River and Tributaries at Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas.

Willamette River Environmental Dredging • Encinitas – Solana Beach, San Diego County, CA, Coastal Storm Damage Reduction Project • Mill Creek, Nashville, Tennessee Flood Risk Management Project • Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration, CA • Upper Turkey Creek, Johnson and Wyandotte Counties, KS, Flood Risk Management Project teams all held successful Civil Works Review Boards . Essayons!



At a recent Alternative Milestone meeting, the Vertical Team was looking for a lot of detailed information about the Future Without Project condition, especially about economics and H&H. How do we satisfy reviewers and the Vertical Team while also maintaining the schedule?

If that economics or H&H information / analysis is a key aspect of existing conditions in your study, and you don't have baseline data, then that is a legitimate concern for the Vertical Team.

If the issue is that you have the base data but you haven't forecasted forward or done a formal forecasting or formal modeling of future changes, that is a discussion of uncertainty. It's a discussion that begins with: Here's what we have collected. Here's what it tells us. Here's what it shows us about trends and events or factors that alter those trends, how things are changing on the ground, what's happening with soil and water and whatnot, what's happening with people and property and the other things that econ will worry about, and coastal or flood risk. A Navigation or Ecosystem Restoration study would be variations on that theme.

Think of establishing future without project (FWOP) conditions as a four-part process. First, you need to have information about existing and historical conditions; second, you need to evaluate that history for the trends and the factors or events that will alter those trends in conditions for the future (such as construction of an authorized project; natural events; shifts in social or economic behaviors); third, you need to state a set of assumptions based on those trends, factors, and events; and fourth, you quantify future conditions that result from those stated assumptions.

The first three items are key to supporting a good discussion of FWOP conditions at the Alternatives milestone. The fourth step is necessary for the evaluation and comparison of alternatives prior to the TSP milestone, but is an optional item for the Alternatives milestone, as long as sound formulation can occur without the formalized estimates of FWOP conditions.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, CONCERNS, ANXIETIES — IF YOUR QUESTION CAN HELP FELLOW PLANNERS, SUBMIT IT ONLINE AND MAYBE YOU'LL SEE IT HERE.

What's New on the Planning Community Toolbox

You have questions? We have answers. We have added a new Frequently Asked Questions section of the toolbox. If you have a question, let us know – hqplanning@usace.army.mil or submit it online.

•A new collection in the "Planner's Library" of Fact Sheets, including new fact sheets on USACE Planning Portfolio Profiles: New Feasibility Studies and Civil Works Study and Project Partnerships.

•A new section of Single Phase Feasibility Study Resources, including Implementation Guidance for WRRDA Sections 1001 (3x3) and 1002 (elimination of reconnaissance phase), fact sheets, webinars, useful templates and forms and more.

•The latest on the 2015 Planning Community Training is on the Planning Community's SharePoint site, with a link from the front page of the Toolbox.

•Learn from the Community – the latest Planning Community Webinar presentations with a summary of the Question and Answer sessions from each webinar are on the toolbox – follow the link from the front page or on the Training tab.

Visit the Toolbox online at www.corpsplanning.us

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