



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

PLANNINGahead

SUMMER 2016 - Issue 03

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Proposals for Potential Water Resources Studies and Projects – WRRDA 7001

Section 7001 of WRRDA 2014 requires that the Secretary of the Army annually submit a report to Congress that identifies, for potential congressional authorization, completed feasibility reports, proposed feasibility studies, and proposed modifications to authorized projects or studies that meet five criteria established by Congress. Proposals from non-federal interests are due September 19, 2016.

Submitted proposals will be evaluated against the five criteria by Districts and MSCs in support of the development of the Report to Congress scheduled to be submitted by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) in February 2017.

Recently Signed Chief's Reports

Congratulations to the following study teams for their recently signed Chief's Reports: Craig Harbor, Alaska; Encinitas-Solana Beach, California; American River Common Features, California; and

West Sacramento, California. These Chief's Reports fulfill our commitment to deliver essential and enduring water resources solutions to the nation through partnerships and innovation. Essayons!

Water Resources Certified Planner Program Launched

The Water Resources Certified Planner program was officially launched this spring. The Certified Planner program recognizes a standard of excellence for the water resources planning profession and strengthens the quality of USACE planning capabilities and

products. The first group of Certified Planners will be announced this fall, and a schedule set for the 2017 nomination process.

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 monthly Hot Topics. Find the latest in your email inbox or on the Planning and Policy SharePoint.

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: an overview of the FY17 Planning Associates Program; using IWR-APT Assistance

to Planning Teams online tools; lessons learned and contrasting dam safety modification studies to feasibility studies; planner training opportunities including PROSPECT courses; and watershed planning fundamentals.

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.

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

FIND MORE WEBINARS AT: <http://planning.usace.army.mil/toolbox/resources>





CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2013-2015 OUTSTANDING PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENTS



**2013 OUTSTANDING
PLANNING
ACHIEVEMENT
AWARD: THE GREAT
LAKES AND MISSISSIPPI
RIVER INTERBASIN
STUDY (GLMRIS)**

The Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) Project Delivery Team (team) utilized a multi-agency collaborative approach to consider an array of management options and operational controls that could reduce the risk of transfer of aquatic invasive (non-native) nuisance species between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins through aquatic pathways. The

MS. JO-ELLEN DARCY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR CIVIL WORKS MEETS WITH THE GREAT LAKES AND MISSISSIPPI RIVER INTERBASIN STUDY (GLMRIS) TEAM. PHOTO CREDIT: USACE

GLMRIS team of planners, economists, scientists, engineers and other national and regional technical specialists and subject matter experts included representatives from 17 Corps districts, divisions, labs and other offices and installations.

Study leadership actively consulted with local, state and federal stakeholders within the two basins. Stakeholders and regulatory agencies were kept up to date with study issues and study process,

and were part of facilitated discussion on complex technical and legal issues with regulators. Study leadership established an Executive Steering Committee that included stakeholders from more than 20 governmental and regulatory agencies from the two basins. Three federal agencies (USEPA, USFWS and USCG) signed letters of cooperation and one more (USGS) signed a memorandum of understanding with the Corps for their involvement in GLMRIS. This

*The **OUTSTANDING PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD** provides honorary recognition to a Civil Works team within the Corps of Engineers for the accomplishment of an outstanding planning activity in a district. This award is designed to recognize the achievement of any team or group of civilian employees of the Corps of Engineers serving in Civil Works professional planning positions that have worked together toward a common goal to produce a better planning document, planning product, or to enhance the planning process in support of the Civil Works Strategic Plan. MSC Planning Chiefs provided a description of why these teams deserve the Outstanding Planning Achievement Award.*





coordination effectively integrated key agencies into the GLMRIS planning process.

The GLMRIS Team issued quarterly newsletters and embraced social media, establishing one of the first project-dedicated Corps Facebook sites and Twitter feeds early in the process. A rollout plan was developed for each interim product that coordinated GLMRIS messaging and highlighted opportunities to engage stakeholders through various types of media.

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Two planning charettes conducted during the study focused on the screening of 90-plus measures to reduce the risk of transfer of 13 aquatic nuisance species, and the development of decision criteria for study alternatives. The outcome of the charettes informed the plan formulation and evaluation process for the range of alternatives, consistent with the principles of SMART Planning.

A high level of stakeholder engagement was planned for and maintained throughout the study. The team completed this complex study within 18 months and produced a report that has been well-received by lawmakers and the public.

2014 OUTSTANDING PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: NORTH ATLANTIC COAST COMPREHENSIVE STUDY (NACCS)

Devastation in the wake of Hurricane Sandy revealed a need to address the vulnerability of populations, infrastructure, and resources at risk throughout more than 31,200 miles of the North Atlantic coastal region. On January 29, 2013, President Obama signed into law the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-2) to assist in the recovery of the North Atlantic region in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. As part of the legislation, Congress directed the Secretary of the Army to conduct a comprehensive study to address the flood risks of vulnerable coastal populations in areas affected by the hurricane. The resultant North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study (NACCS) included an area encompassing ten states and the District of Columbia, from the Virginia/North Carolina border to Maine. The Corps was appropriated \$20 million (\$19 million after sequestration) with the direction to deliver a final report for submission



COASTAL FLOODING FROM HURRICANE SANDY DEVASTATED COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE NORTHEAST. PHOTO CREDIT: USACE

to Congress within two years of the date of the legislation.

The NACCS Project Delivery Team consisted of over 220 Corps employees led by the Baltimore District, assisting the New York and Philadelphia Districts during post-hurricane emergency operations and rehabilitation to damaged projects and infrastructure. New England, Philadelphia, Norfolk, Wilmington, and Jacksonville Districts also provided tremendous support to the NACCS study, as did the Corps Institute for Water Resources, Engineer Research and Development Center and many contractors.

The report, tools, and products produced by the NACCS team includes a nine-step Coastal Storm Risk Management Framework and an extensive geographic information system

database to be used by communities, states, tribes, and the Federal government to help identify coastal risk and development strategies for reducing those risks. In addition, the study offers a number of conclusions, including several findings, outcomes, and opportunities helping to guide future coastal flood risk reduction efforts at all levels of government.

The NACCS report provides a risk management framework that supports resilient coastal communities and coastal landscape systems. The framework is intended to consider the impacts of sea level rise and climate change, and manage risk to vulnerable populations, property, ecosystems, and infrastructure. Ultimately, a systems approach to coastal planning and management will seek to combine natural and nature-based features, non-structural



measures (e.g., floodplain management, etc.), and structural measures (e.g., seawalls, etc.) across the coastal landscape. Jo-Ellen Darcy, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works stated: “The NACCS is an unprecedented effort by the Corps in collaboration with our partners to develop a coastal plan that considers future sea levels and climate change. The report provides a framework for communities that will arm them for the reality of future extreme weather.”

The tremendous efforts of the NACCS team have advanced knowledge about coastal processes and produced many tools and datasets that can be shared with and used by other agencies, governments and the public; all in less than two years from the date of the legislation and \$5 million under budget.

2014 OUTSTANDING PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: CENTRAL EVERGLADES PLANNING PROJECT

The Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) study was one of five national pilot studies that tested streamlining the Civil Works Planning process, as a precursor



THE CEPP TEAM WITH MG WALSH, WHEN THE DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL WAS VISITING JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT. PHOTO CREDIT: USACE JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT

to the SMART Planning process. The CEPP Project Delivery team conducted the study while under intense scrutiny by the public, multi-stakeholder interests, Federal, tribal, state and local agencies, and the Federal South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force developing a broadly-supported large-scale ecosystem restoration plan for the central flow-way of the Everglades.

The South Florida Everglades ecosystem is an extremely complex ecosystem comprising multiple biological (lakes, estuaries, freshwater marshes, mangroves, endangered species), cultural (recreational use; indigenous tribes and cultural practices), and physical (flood protection, aquifer protection, agricultural/tribal/municipal water supply) elements. Water management infrastructure, operations, and responses are highly interdependent. The

Everglades lie at the center of a complex South Florida regional water management system spanning over 16,000 square miles.

The CEPP team developed adaptive management plans at multiple scales, from sub-regional to project-specific, that included monitoring, triggers and thresholds, and response options to address the uncertainties associated with an ecosystem restoration project of this scale. The CEPP team employed a new and innovative inverse hydrologic model, where inputs to the model are desired target water level depths and durations throughout the ecosystem and outputs are the optimized combination of structures and operations that provide the overall best fit to meet established hydrologic targets. The modeling and formulation approach facilitated the development and screening of thousands of combinations of

measures by sub-region, proceeding from upstream to downstream flow in an orderly and systematic manner to assist in the development and screening of alternatives.

With this approach, the CEPP team was able to utilize a robust and rigorous screening analysis to evaluate, optimize, refine and finally group components and options. Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis was used to organize the formulation and selection of options to move forward into more detailed evaluation of alternatives and identification of the most viable, well-vetted, and cost effective solutions. As a result, the National Academies of Sciences Committee for the Independent Scientific Review of Everglades Restoration Progress recognized significant progress in this area of Everglades ecosystem restoration in 2014 and applauded the CEPP adaptive management plan as “the most complex and sophisticated to date.”

The team incorporated an extensive public engagement process throughout the study, fully involving members of the public, leaders and staff from multiple agencies, Native American Tribes,





and interested stakeholder groups. CEPP team leaders were able to instill an “if you’re in the room, you’re at the table” attitude during formulation, which built trust with stakeholder groups, the public at-large, and agencies that normally have lesser roles in Everglades planning studies due to resource limitations. The CEPP team conducted numerous project sub-team team meetings, 26 interagency PDT meetings, 15 public workshops and 12 public meetings over a 29-month period which resulted in broad support of the formulation approach and the selected plan.

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2015 OUTSTANDING PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: MIAMI HARBOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

The Miami Harbor Construction Project was no easy mission. It was one of the nation’s most highly publicized, scrutinized, and prioritized projects located directly adjacent to Biscayne National Park, and wholly within a State of Florida designated “Aquatic Preserve/ Outstanding Florida Water,” a designation that comes with the highest protective water quality standards. Congress authorized the



ENGINEERS ON THE MIAMI HARBOR DEEPENING PDT POSE ABOARD A DREDGE VESSEL DURING A SITE VISIT. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, THE ENGINEERS ARE RANDY MURRAY, JOE GAILANI, JEFF BERGEN, STEVE CONGER AND MARIANNE GRUBER.

shipping channel deepening project in 2007 to improve navigation inefficiencies and maximize transportation cost savings. Without this project, next generation post-Panamax container vessels would be unable to call, resulting in dwindling economic benefits to the region and the nation.

The State of Florida and non-federal sponsor provided 100% of the funding required to construct the project using an alternative financing approach. The team had to balance the competing needs of the customer’s budget and schedule with Corps regulations and policy, and also deliver a product to the nation in the most environmentally and economically sustainable manner – all while routinely responding to congressional inquiries.

The project area contains abundant seagrass beds and the navigation channel crosses coral reefs inhabited by state-listed and federally-protected coral species. These challenges presented planning, construction management, adaptive management and communication opportunities which were very well-executed by the multi-disciplinary Corps team. The team worked in consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to devise and execute a plan to collect and propagate endangered corals while dredging fossilized coral sediments and coral reefs in order to repopulate coral reefs in the vicinity of the project. The team developed a plan to use mined lime rock boulders of varying sizes placed at intervals along the seafloor to create a 9-acre

artificial reef. The project also included transplanting harvested seagrass to create a 14-acre seagrass bed in Biscayne Bay.

The project removed five million cubic yards of limestone rock and sand within a working Port. Effective daily team communication was required to inform the dredge operators, the United States Coast Guard, and local pilots and ensure human health and safety, as well as uninterrupted traffic flow over the course of the two-year construction contract. The team also discovered an 18th century cannon in the dredging footprint that now is on display at the state’s National Historic Preservation Office.

Considering the policy, environmental, legal, technical, and public relations challenges faced by the team throughout the project, the completion of this project within a timely and cost effective manner is an extraordinary achievement! The team continues to work to better understand and learn how projects of this magnitude affect the localized in-water environment and ecological systems. These lessons will be applied to similar projects in the future.



2015 OUTSTANDING PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: THE LOS ANGELES RIVER ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

THE LA RIVER PROJECT DELIVERY TEAM IS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING DELIVERY BY COL. KIRK GIBBS, LA DISTRICT COMMANDER. PHOTO CREDIT: USACE LOS ANGELES DISTRICT

The Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study team addressed significant policy challenges that required extensive Corps vertical team coordination to demonstrate the value of restoring floodplain connections and riparian habitat while reworking 20th century infrastructure to fit 21st century water resource needs in the second largest city in the U.S.

The team successfully worked through the engineering complexity of incorporating unique ecosystem restoration measures into this highly urbanized and channelized river system. The Corps is

responsible for operation and maintenance of the existing flood risk management project, but the team didn't lose sight of the overall goal of evaluating and selecting a restoration plan to restore the ecosystem while maintaining existing flood risk management parameters.

In addition to the technical complexity associated with restoring native vegetation and ecological connectivity within an urbanized flood risk management project, the team had to manage intense public and media interest. The team utilized a systems approach, relying on close collaboration with stakeholders and partnering with other agencies to use risk-informed decision making and communication, innovative financing, adaptive management,

and state-of-the-art technology to develop an effective water resources solution. Early involvement and close coordination with the vertical team was integral throughout the study.

The team worked long days and handled high stress to identify Federal interest in this ecosystem restoration project, and show that Los Angeles River restoration was in fact feasible. They rose to the challenge of coordinating and communicating a costlier Locally Preferred Plan (LPP) and the unusual cost-sharing arrangement for the LPP that was accepted by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

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.

Previous issues of Planning Ahead can be found on the Planning Community Toolbox: <http://planning.usace.army.mil>





CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2013-2015 PLANNING EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

The **PLANNING EXCELLENCE AWARD** provides honorary recognition to an outstanding Corps of Engineers district employee in a professional planning position. This award is designed to recognize an individual's contributions to advance the state of the art of the practice of Civil Works water resources planning. The Planning Excellence Award recognizes innovation, analytical sophistication, and creativity in the development of a planning product that achieves the principles of the Civil Works Strategic Plan. MSC Planning Chiefs provided a description of why these individuals deserve the Planning Excellence Award. The award is a plaque signed by the Director of Civil Works that recognizes the "Planner of the Year."

2013 PLANNING EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENT:
PATRICE MOREY

PATRICE MOREY

is an accomplished editor and graphics specialist for the Jacksonville District Planning Division, and continues to be an invaluable asset to the District, Division, and nationally as well. She is a planner by training but naturally gifted as a skilled communicator. She possesses the unique skill to transform individual and team ideas and concepts, report documents, and complex briefing information into understandable and user-friendly products. Patrice has been responsible for, or at least integral to, the unique use of report graphics that efficiently display information on a single page and make a complicated story somewhat easy-to-understand.



Patrice was awarded the 2013 Planning Excellence Award for her creative and collaborative efforts developing presentations and products in support of four civil works studies greatly contributing to the Corps Headquarters' approval of those studies. She also assisted teams in making significant progress on other nationally and internationally significant projects, including support to team efforts for the Kingdom of Bahrain and the U.S. Agency for International Development in Haiti. Through her efforts, Patrice built trust

and enhanced Corps credibility with agency partners, stakeholders, and the public.

Patrice is brilliant at what she does, and is leading the way to help transform how the Corps communicates complex decision information through user-friendly content shared at public meetings, and in our documents, reports, and briefings helping to inform other agencies and decision-makers in the process. It's not just what she does that makes Patrice so deserving of recognition; it's *how* she does what she



does. Patrice is kind, warm, genuine, and respectful. She exhibits unequalled loyalty to her District, Division, the Corps nationally, and our missions. She anticipates what is required for us to be successful and does her work, often working long hours and weekends to be sure deadlines are met. Patrice is consistently respectful of others, and welcomes all perspectives (and will coax it out of you!) She collaborates across all organizational lines to ensure that our work products are accurate, precise, clear, and compelling. Patrice demonstrates the highest personal standards of quality and integrity, unquestioningly providing the extra effort to ensure that work performed meets her own standards and those of everyone else involved.

**2014 PLANNING
EXCELLENCE AWARD
RECIPIENT:
NICHOLAS APPLGATE**

Economist, national webinar presenter, lead instructor for planning core curriculum courses, independent external peer review expert, integral team member on the preparation of a flood risk management best management practices and lessons learned



NICK APPLGATE (FOURTH FROM LEFT) REPRESENTED THE CORPS AT A 2-WEEK FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP IN BRASILIA, INVOLVING GOVERNMENT STAFF FROM MANY OF BRAZIL'S WATER-RELATED AGENCIES.

workbook, and facilitator for a two-week flood risk management workshop for the Brazilian government in Brasilia, Brazil - **NICK APPLGATE** is an Economist and Planner supporting a variety of Corps efforts! He is a superlative Regional Economist and Supervisor with a vast knowledge and understanding of the planning process and is a recognized leader on his teams. It is a testament to his intellectual capacity, workload management, and stamina that Nick was able to serve as the Lead Economist on all three of Sacramento District's 2014 final report submittals and Civil Works Review Boards, while also providing briefings to the Office of Management and Budget and the Assistant Secretary

of the Army for Civil Works staff multiple times for each study. Nick Applegate is the recipient of the 2014 Planning Excellence Award to recognize his astounding accomplishments and contributions made during this year.

Nick embraced Planning Modernization and enthusiastically tackled the issue of finding new ways to determine appropriate levels of detail using risk based decision making and working with the full vertical team. Because of his commitment to the Planning Community of Practice and recognition of the importance of knowledge communication, Nick made time to share lessons learned with others through teaching of multiple Planning Core Curriculum

classes and national webinars.

Nick was the lead economist for the now authorized Orestimba Creek, Sutter Pilot and Truckee studies, a coach to his economics staff who completed draft and final economic reports in support of the American River Common Features and West Sacramento GRR's leading to successful Civil Works Review Boards and signed Chief's Reports. His work has also been recognized by at least one non-Federal sponsor, who called him to thank him personally for his outstanding work and dedication in resolving key issues and achieving a Civil Works Review Board milestone. Nick's accomplishments are also a function of his robust



executive and technical abilities. He has recruited and maintained a highly regarded Economics workforce supporting studies, Corps risk centers of expertise, agency technical reviews, dam and levee safety programs, and international support for Institute for Water Resource’s programs. He was recognized by his District peers by receiving the Sacramento District “George Weddell Professional Excellence Award” for displaying the highest level of performance and professionalism within his discipline. His leadership and expertise in risk-based flood risk management has been recognized by the District Commander, MSC Commander, and the Government of Brazil.

From 2014 to 2015, Applegate worked with an international team from Brazil to author FRM best-practices and lessons learned documents to help accelerate their flood risk management efforts and educate about the potential for environmental synergies in such efforts. This effort culminated with Applegate’s facilitation of a 2-week FRM conference and workshop in Brasilia involving government staff from many of Brazil’s water-related agencies and the development of a “roadmap”

for the future execution of their flood risk management related efforts.

2015 PLANNING EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENT: REBECCA WEISS

REBECCA WEISS is one of those highly sought after individuals within the Corps Planning Community of Practice who understands the requirements of not only plan formulation and the planning process, but also the intricacies of environmental compliance and how these need to work in concert with one another to produce the highest quality decision documents. She recognized a broad gap in understanding of how NEPA integrates into the new planning paradigm and that vertical alignment from Corps Districts, Divisions and Headquarters to deliver a well-articulated process was essential to addressing the issue.

The initiative to reach out across the three levels of the Corps and engage directly with the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to show how NEPA and other environmental compliance is addressed in the planning process gave ample reason for the selection of Rebecca



Weiss for the 2015 Planning Excellence Award.

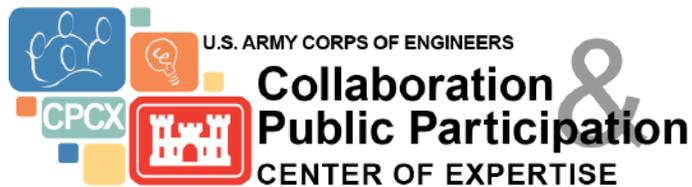
An effective team effort often requires one person to be the catalyst for informed decision making, taking action, and to ensure products are of the highest quality. Rebecca was that catalyst and became the spokesperson for the development team that delivered several key products for Corps, USFWS and NMFS use, such as the ‘cheat sheet’ placemat that overlays compliance actions with SMART Planning milestones. This resource provides planners and others with an easily understood process and timeframe guide for the integration of NEPA and other environmental compliance into the planning process.

Rebecca reached out to NOAA and USFWS regional offices to offer the training to improve their understanding of the updated planning process and the integration of compliance roles within Planning study documents. She developed and led a workshop on SMART Planning to a group of 50 USFWS staff as part of their national training program and was invited to provide the training to two other USFWS regional offices in 2016. In addition to this significant contribution to the Community, Rebecca plays a key role in ensuring environmental compliance is effective within Northwest Division study products. As a committed reviewer, she continues to provide technical and policy advice to District compliance staff and has assisted in editing report documents.



COLLABORATIVE PLANNING IN USACE

AND THE COLLABORATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION CENTER OF EXPERTISE



Collaborative planning is the process of communicating, coordinating, and collaborating with internal and external customers early and often in the SMART Planning process. This includes communication, coordination, and collaboration within study teams, the vertical chain, and external customers such as Tribal Nations, sponsors, stakeholders, resource agencies, and the public. Collaborative planning involves public participation from those who live, work and play in the study area from start to finish in the planning process.

The mission of the Collaboration and Public Participation Center of Expertise (CPCX), located at the Institute for Water Resources (IWR), is to ensure that the interests of the public are addressed in the decision making process and to help U.S. Army Corps

of Engineers (USACE) staff anticipate, prevent, and manage water conflicts.

The agency's ability to collaborate throughout the planning process is critical. Does conflict need to be present to engage the public? No! Studies show that involving the public in a study or project at the onset, early and often, actually reduces costs and minimizes delays. According to the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, 81 percent of surveyed participants of collaborative processes are more likely to work together in the future, and 80 percent believe the process led or will lead to a more informed public action or decision.

Effective methods to communicate, coordinate, and collaborate can be developed and enhanced through training, experience, and guidance offered by the CPCX. The CPCX believes that alternative dispute



FEBRUARY 2016, THE CADRE OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SPECIALISTS MET IN PORTLAND, OREGON TO CONDUCT THEIR ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, SHARE INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC, ENHANCE THEIR KNOWLEDGE RELATED TO MULTI-PARTY NEGOTIATION, AND MAINTAIN THEIR SKILLSET TO BETTER SERVE YOU.

resolution, and collaborative planning tools and techniques can and should be used to prevent and minimize conflicts, rather than just employed once conflict emerges. In 2014 the CPCX selected a cadre of Public Involvement Specialists who represent each Division and whose purpose is to serve as subject matter experts and provide services that support facilitation, collaboration, communication, public engagement, and so much more. The cadre assists with the development of communication plans and public participation plans for a variety of projects and studies across the varied agency missions.

The agency puts great value on public participation and engagement. Contact our team to learn how we can assist your team with collaborative planning efforts, stakeholder engagement, and positive public participation.

Additional information about the center can be found at <http://bit.ly/2aQMR11>.

For information on Public Involvement Specialists, and to locate a specialists, please visit http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/Portals/70/docs/CPCX/PIS_Fact_Sheet.pdf





PCoP Q+A

Dear PCoP – Now that you have announced the Planning awards, what can we expect in FY16?

With the announcement of the FY 13, FY14, and FY15 Planning Achievement and Planning Excellence Awards, the Planning and Policy Division is looking forward to getting back to regular order in FY16.

In October, each Division will be invited to prepare one nomination for each award for submission in November. Nominations will be evaluated by a panel of Division Planning Chiefs and Headquarters Planning leadership, who will make a recommendation to the HQ Planning & Policy Chief.

The Planning Excellence Award recognizes an outstanding Corps district employee in a professional planning position. This award is designed to recognize an individual's contributions to advance the state of the art in the practice of civil works water resources planning. This award recognizes innovation, analytical sophistication, and creativity in the development of a planning product.

The Outstanding Planning Achievement Award recognizes a team or group of civilian employees of the Corps serving in civil works professional planning positions in a district,

working together toward a common goal to produce a better planning document, planning product, or to enhance the planning process.

In addition to these two flagship planning awards, the Planning Community of Practice will also begin recognizing the day-to-day contributions that planners make with a "PCoP Hat Tip." Any District or Division Planning Chief can nominate their planners for a Hat Tip. The PCoP Hat Tips (H/T) are intended to be an informal and timely way to acknowledge a person for their contributions. Eligibility for a H/T is very broad, and anyone within the PCoP embodying the Spirit of Planning can be acknowledged with a H/T. The Hat Tips will be announced in the Monthly Hot Topics and/or PCoP Webinar series. From the pool of H/Ts, Sue Hughes will select a Champion of the Quarter that we will include in an upcoming Planning Ahead.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, CONCERNS, ANXIETIES — IF YOUR QUESTION CAN HELP FELLOW PLANNERS, EMAIL US AT HQPLANNING@USACE.ARMY.MIL AND MAYBE YOU'LL SEE IT HERE.

What's New on the Planning Community Toolbox

> The Planning Community Toolbox is the "go to" website for current Planning policy and guidance and links to the tools that support planners and planning decision making.

Recent national policy changes and updates published to the Toolbox include direction from the

ASA(CW) on information that must be shared with the sponsor at the Agency Decision Milestone meeting and a new Engineer Regulation (ER) on studies of water resources development projects by non-federal interests.

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.

Looking to spread your wings? Job openings across Planning are frequently posted on the Toolbox's home page

under Notices. The latest information on the newly launched Water Resources Certified Planner program and FY17 Planning Associates program is also on the Toolbox.

Visit the Toolbox online at www.corpsplanning.us