

PLANNING AHEAD

Notes for the Planning and Policy
Community



US Army Corps
of Engineers

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A Note from the Leader of the Planning Community of Practice

Things continue to move at a brisk pace at Headquarters, and I continue to be impressed with the talent I see around the country in the planning community. Katrina continues to dominate our agenda and will likely mark a turning point in water policy for the future. We have been directed by the Congress to evaluate alternatives to increase the level of protection in southern Louisiana and to do it right. That means we will do a holistic, integrated, collaborative approach. However, our direction is that this will be done “exclusive of normal policy”. This effort will involve a regional and national team and will challenge the Corps to accomplish world class planning in an accelerated way. Stay tuned for the outcomes of this effort and support it if asked. The results of this study will likely inform future water policy for the Nation.

Here are some of the things going on in our program:

We continue to emphasize our strategic direction of a watershed or regional approach to water resources problem solving. The leadership is serious about this. We believe there is tremendous value in projects having a context within a larger framework such as a basin, a watershed, or a region. Our General Expense budget for 2006 included \$4.5 million to invest in the watershed approach. We will be soliciting proposals from the MSCs for high-payoff watersheds that meet the goals and objectives of our strategic plan. Look for this solicitation for proposals and criteria that will be published very soon.

The longer that I am here at the Headquarters, the more I see that we must make the “one Headquarters” concept a reality in terms of resources in the planning community. We are actively searching for methods and opportunities to extend our Headquarters planning and policy team out to the MSCs.

My previous articles have addressed the need for our Community of Practice to maximize technology to ensure that we are all connected and sharing and working together. Recently we have made tremendous progress in improving our web portal that will accomplish this. Stay tuned – good things are coming.

You all should be aware that Gary Loew and I have made a significant move to shore up the Continuing Authorities Program in the Headquarters. We have reassigned Russ Rangos as the Planning and Policy Leader for the Corps. Russ and the programs team will make a tremendous difference in the management of this critical program.

I continue to stress that improving our processes must be a part of our mission. As part of that initiative, in January we will be conducting AARs on our policy review process in each MSC. The objective will be that the field and the Headquarters achieve a common understanding of what constitutes a successful policy review and also how our process can be improved to achieve this.

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We have several other initiatives to improve our processes that are still in the planning phase, but these alone will never be sufficient. I ask that each of you assist us in rooting out bureaucracy for bureaucracy's sake when you see it. Question it, challenge it, attempt to correct it at your level, and when necessary and appropriate, elevate it.

To strengthen the Corps' relationship with the Authorization Committees and to improve the Planning and Policy CoPs' support to them, we will be realigning our internal processes. The Program Integration Division will continue to serve as the primary point of contact to the Appropriations Committees. Jan Rasgus and Wes Coleman will be the primary points of contact for the House T&I Committee. Letmon Lee continues as the primary Corps liaison with the Senate EPW Committee. Jennifer Greer will maintain her role of senior oversight of all Congressional interaction. Jan, Wes, Jennifer, and I will be meeting with the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee staff next week to discuss the realignment of functions.

I want to close by wishing you all a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season. We are closing out an extraordinary year, one full of tragedy, but also full of victories. It has been a good year for the Corps, and 2006 promises to be even better.

Thank you all for what you do every day. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

Tom Waters , Planning CoP leader
Planning CoP Leader
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FEATURED ARTICLES

***Planning Community of Practice Conference 2006:
"Collaboration for Integrated Water Resources Management"***
Bruce Carlson, Institute for Water Resources

Here's more information about the upcoming Planning CoP Conference, scheduled for May 9-11, 2006 in San Francisco:

The theme for the 2006 conference is "Collaboration for Integrated Water Resources Management." Integrated management of water resources has been the central theme in both of Planning's previous "Economics and Environment" conferences – emphasizing planner's roles in identifying solutions that are beneficial for both the economy and the environment, and in considering problems at a systems-level rather than at a site-specific scale.

Effectively implementing an integrated approach to water resources management requires greater collaboration among stakeholders and partners. Collaborative planning involves coordinating the authorities, capabilities, and financial investment of multiple partners to solve water resources problems in a more holistic and sustainable way.

Collaborative planning engages not only a traditional non-Federal cost sharing sponsor in partnership with the Corps, but also representatives from other Federal, State and local agencies as members of the study team and bringing their expertise, programs and projects together with the Corps. Collaborative planning is encouraged for traditional project scale planning and is essential to the success of watershed scale planning

The purpose of this conference, then, is to demonstrate how Corps planners fit into this collaborative environment and to address how we can maximize the effectiveness of our collective talents, authorities, and resources in helping the Nation solve its water resources problems.

The conference will be structured to provide a forum to discuss plan formulation, economic and environmental topics related to the Corps' primary mission areas. Over three days, this joint Planning conference will address a wide variety of topics related to plan formulation, environmental evaluation and economic analysis, and other planning topics presented in a mix of joint and concurrent sessions. The conference will emphasize interactions among economists, environmental scientists, engineers, and other planners. The format will allow for discussions of lessons learned, case studies, and current and potential future issues facing the Corps. Topics relating to the full range of Corps activities including problem identification, plan formulation and evaluation, engineering and construction, operations and maintenance, and adaptive management and monitoring, may be discussed. Sessions on policy, professional development, and communities of practice are

also being developed.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS – DEADLINE 10 FEBRUARY, 2006:

A key element of the conference will be Corps field planners introducing their work and sharing their experiences by making professional presentations. We're interested in spotlighting planning excellence that demonstrates innovation and value-added in addressing real problems, while fully complying with all applicable laws and policies.

Presentations are most successful when they focus on a particular aspect of a study or analysis, rather than trying to encapsulate an entire study or process within a brief presentation.

Presentations should focus on how challenging issues in planning (plan formulation; economic and/or environmental analysis; planning in a collaborative environment; etc.) have been met, and how this work may be instructive to others.

Topics that illustrate applications supporting any of the Corps' various mission areas are encouraged. Proposals in multi-purpose settings are also welcomed, as are those involving special aspects of plan formulation, partnering or stakeholder involvement. Presentations highlighting field/lab cooperative efforts are also encouraged, and should be submitted by the District proponent wherever possible.

Specific topics of interest in this call for abstracts include, but are not limited to:

- Planning in watershed contexts
- Collaborative planning
- Advances in economic cost and benefit analysis
- Advances in measuring ecosystem restoration outputs/benefits
- Scenario-based planning
- Applications of risk and reliability analyses
- Effective characterization of the significance of restoration outputs
- Consideration of the four accounts (NED/EQ/RED/OSE) in collaborative planning
- Plan formulation for ecosystem restoration
- Plan formulation for combined NED/NER plans
- Evaluation and comparison for combined NED/NER plans
- Advances in environmentally-conscious project design
- Nonstructural approaches
- Monitoring and Adaptive Management partnerships and successes
- Planning under the new guidance (ER's 1105-2-405 through 409)

Presentations of "Field Applications" will be made in concurrent sessions, 15 minutes per paper with a 5-minute discussion period. Proposals should include a summary/abstract not to exceed 200 words, plus a brief biographical statement about the presenter(s) including: applicant's office, job title, degrees held, years of experience, and areas of professional interest (again, not to exceed 200 words). Selected presentations will be given using Powerpoint. Written papers supporting the presentations are not required.

Before submitting proposals, please discuss your ideas with your supervisor, and be sure you will be able to attend the conference. Submittals will be accepted by email only, and should include the words "Planning Conference Proposal" in the message header. The primary mission area associated with the project should be included in the email text (ex: flood/storm damage reduction; navigation; ecosystem restoration; watershed/multi-purpose; etc.) All proposals are due by COB 10 February 2006 – early submittals will be appreciated. Applicants will be contacted no later than 30 March 2006 regarding the status of their proposals.

Abstract submittals and questions about the Planning CoP Conference 2006 should be directed to the Conference Chair, [Bruce Carlson](#). Watch future issues of Planning Ahead for updates on Conference news, including the launch of the conference web site in January.

Planning Models Improvement Program (PMIP) and Model Certification: Are We There Yet?

Lillian Almodovar, Institute for Water Resources

The publication of EC 1105-2-407 marked the official start of the implementation of the Planning Models Improvement Program but not the end of the work for the PMIP team. Since the EC was published, the team has been busy developing and publishing draft protocols for model certification. In developing the protocols, the team looked to industry and academic standards, practices of other agencies, and the Corps Labs' existing processes for assuring model quality. A draft of the protocols report is currently under review by the Planning Centers of Expertise, Headquarters, Corps laboratories and other Corps offices. The protocols report provides detailed information on the model development process, the certification process and the criteria to be used for model certification. Technical quality, system quality and usability are the three primary requirements addressed by the proposed criteria.

The next step is to test the certification protocols on existing planning models currently in use. The results of this test will be used to finalize the protocols and provide them to the Centers of Expertise for implementation of the Program. Three models were selected for the test: HEC-FDA (developed by HEC), BEACH-FX (under final development by IWR) and IN-STREAM (developed by Mobile District). The certification team will be comprised of outside consultants and representatives of the Planning Centers of Expertise. Results of these "pilot" certifications are expected to be available by the end of March 06.

Thus, the answer the question "are we there yet?" is "almost". But what should the field do in the meantime? EC 1105-2-407 states that the requirements to certify all models will be enforced when Headquarters completes the programmatic PMP for the PMIP. The programmatic PMP will be a compilation of the PMPs under development by the Planning Centers of Expertise. Upon completion of the programmatic PMP, pending issues, such as funding for certification of National models, should be resolved and a timetable for certifying the backlog of planning models should become more clear. In the absence of certification, until the programmatic PMP is approved, the option is to continue performing independent technical review (and, where warranted, external peer review) to confirm the quality of the models used in planning studies.

POC: Lillian Almodovar (CEIWR-GW) and Bruce Carlson (CECW-PC)

OMB Reviewing Civil Works Public Survey Package

Stuart Davis, Institute for Water Resources

OMB is conducting the triennial review of the Corps of Engineers Civil Works Public Survey Compendium. A backlog of work has delayed review of the Corps authority to conduct public surveys, which was to have expired on 30 November 2005. OMB is expected to act on the questionnaire package by mid-January. Use of the previously approved survey package can continue in the meantime under an extension of authority requested by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). The normal procedure for a ten-business day approval continues with the requirement to submit requests for each public survey effort of ten or more non-Federal people. Requests should be sent through your division office to OMB, OSD, with copies furnished to headquarters and IWR. Details of the submittal process and the currently approved questionnaires can be found on the IWR website at: <http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/iwr/omb/ombhomea.HTM>. The OMB clearance number, 0710-0001, should be printed on each survey form. Do not include an expiration date on the form until a new expiration date has been assigned.

The survey package under review contains over 70 surveys in eight categories. The Corps is requesting authority for over 10,000 burden hours from 112,000 surveys administered per year. The bulk of these surveys deal with recreation management. The largest number in the survey authority request was for the Recreation Use Onsite Survey, with 25,000 responses requested for the three-minute survey. Some surveys have been revised and eleven new surveys have been added to the package. Topics of the new surveys include emergency response, transportation choice, lock closure effects on carriers and shippers, watershed planning, habitat needs assessment, institutional analysis for floodplain management and non-structural flood damage reduction, and beach recreation

Dealing with Externalities (Non-Standard Benefits) in Navigation Projects

Margaret Johanning, Headquarters

With the publication of the new planning guidance, EC 1105-2-409, Planning in a Collaborative Environment, it is timely to make some clarification of externality benefits. Which of the non-standard benefits are conceptually allowable as NED benefits under Principles and Guidelines (P&G), and how should they be treated in formulation, plan justification and plan selection, under the new planning guidance?

EC 1105-2-409 indicates that Corps planning studies will evaluate, display, and compare the full range of alternative plans' effects across all four P&G accounts (National Economic Development (NED), Environmental Quality (EQ), Regional Economic Development (RED) and Other Social Effects (OSE)). The guidance indicates that planning reports will include a full discussion and display of the beneficial and adverse effects of each plan and a comparison of costs and effects among plans, as well as cumulative effects. As an example, the guidance indicates that the evaluation of inland navigation improvements should not only address effects on transportation savings but also security, safety and environmental advantages or disadvantages with respect to other modes of transport. Plan selection would be based on considering a plan's beneficial and adverse effects across all four accounts with a plan that has on balance (based on analyses and collaborative judgment) net beneficial effects.

The Corps planners should continue to formulate plans, for Corps implementation, in navigation studies in accordance with the primary missions of navigation and ecosystem restoration. Optimization should be based on the traditional mission-related benefits to determine the NED plan. In the case of a navigation study, the basis would be the standard navigation benefits enumerated and described in the P&G. The non-standard benefits (externalities), where measurable, would be displayed in the appropriate account (NED, EQ, RED, and OSE) and be used in plan evaluation and plan selection. Any conceptual or technical concerns with the measurement of the externalities should be discussed in the report and considered when in the evaluation and plan selection process.

The use of the four accounts in plan evaluation and selection dictates that planning reports attempt to measure and display all beneficial and adverse outputs of plans. The identification and display of externalities are encouraged but with the recognition of the current limitations and uncertainties in measuring these outputs.

Until we are able to pursue additional research through IWR and coordination with stake holders, at this point, the externality benefits (and costs) that a district may display as NED benefits should be limited to changes in land side travel times.

For further information, contact Steve Cone or Richard Worthington, HQUSACE.

Estuary Habitat Restoration Program

Ellen Cummings, Headquarters

The Estuary Habitat Restoration Program was authorized by the Estuary Restoration Act of 2000 (Title 1, PL 106-457). It is not a typical Corps program in that an interagency Estuary Habitat Restoration Council (Council) solicits project proposals and then provides a prioritized list of recommended projects to the Army for funding consideration. The Council consists of representatives from the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Environmental Protection Agency and Army. The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Army (Civil Works), Mr. George Dunlop, currently chairs the Council.

In response to an initial solicitation for proposals published in the Federal Register this spring, 16 proposals were received and evaluated by an interagency working group representing the Council members. At its October 24th meeting, the Council recommended five projects for funding. Army has concurred in the Council's recommendation. Three of the proposed projects are located in NAD and one each is located in NWD and SAD. Previously, three proposed projects have been funded under this program but these were selected from proposals submitted for other programs and not from a formal solicitation. One of these projects is in NAD and two are in SAD.

The ongoing and proposed projects reflect a variety of activities including seeding submerged aquatic vegetation, backfilling mosquito drainage ditches, increasing the size of culverts linking a small tributary to the ocean and restoring the hydrology of a backwater slough.

Initial funds were provided by Congressional adds but the program was included in the President's FY2006 budget. The FY 2006 appropriation includes \$ 1,000,000 in additional funds for the program. There is the possibility that a new solicitation for proposals will be published in the early spring of 2006.

Information on the program is available on our web site <http://www.usace.army.mil/estuary.html> where you may also sign up for the ERA list serve. Or contact [Ellen Cummings](#), CECW-PB at 202-761-4750.

Environmental awareness is for the birds! ... and everyone else

JoAnne Castagna, New York District



East Inlet Island (Provided by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Long Island Field Office).



Piping Plover (Provided by USACE).

A flock of young shore birds spread their wings and fly away from their nests on East Inlet Island in the Long Island Intracoastal Waterway in New York, for their first major flight south for the winter. A few years ago, this wouldn't have occurred because many of these birds are threatened and endangered. It's a reality now because several agencies put their minds together and created a project that not only benefits wildlife but their team players as well.

In 2002, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District in cooperation with several environmental, state and local agencies created a wildlife habitat on this island for threatened and endangered bird species using dredged sand from the waterway. Sand is regularly dredged to ease boat travel.

This sand was placed on the mainland in the past, but Long Island's growing residential and business developments has limited land space, so the team of agencies had to think of another location and they decided on an environmentally beneficial one.

For the past few years shorebirds, such as least terns, common terns, piping plovers and roseate terns have colonized, nested and breed on this island, demonstrating just one example of how the Corps is collaborating with partnering agencies to produce successful environmental projects.

"In the past our dredging projects were criticized by the public for affecting endangered shorebird habitats," said John Tavolaro, Chief, Operations Support Branch. Tavolaro led the wildlife habitat project.

"Once the Corps proposed creating a bird habitat with the same dredged sand, we received enthusiastic support. Some of our most vocal critics turned around and actually supported the innovative things we were doing."

Tavolaro said that performing environmentally friendly projects is hard at first but is beneficial to all involved in the end. Following are the benefits that can be expected:

-Strengthens customer relationships: When customers, such as environmental agencies, see the positive results of environmentally aware projects this increases their trust. As a result, these customers who may have been wary originally may be more open to providing additional ideas for improving the project.

-Builds public trust: When the public realizes that their quality of life has been enhanced in ways above and beyond the ones originally envisioned for the project this increases their trust and support of the project.

-Saves time and money: Performing environmentally aware projects is harder at first, but it gets easier. In the beginning you may find yourself educating and convincing your organization of the benefits of environmentally aware projects. You will also have to build trust with environmental groups and agencies so that they agree with what you want to do.

-Once you have a project success story, your efficiency will increase because it is easier for you to do the project. For example, there will be less difficulty in securing permits from locals and greater local support for the project. Being more efficient saves money and time.

-Expands engineer's skills: You will experience a wider breadth of professional experience of the environmental field and gain personal satisfaction that you are doing good things, smart things.

-Produces better projects: When a project is successful this increases customer support of it and it's produced more efficiently. Customers who are happy with the project will be open to providing additional ideas and suggestions for improving it and will work to remove any potential project barriers, such as securing permits, saving the project time and money.

Want to be more environmentally aware? Tavolaro suggests the following:

-Talk & Listen: Talk to the locals and resource agencies to get to know them and to find out what they value and find out about their top issues. Put your heads together with whomever has any ideas on how to make your project more environmentally friendly. This not only brings fresh ideas into the mix but also improves your relationships with these individuals and groups. Tavolaro said that this process has made him a better listener.

-Research: It also doesn't hurt to check out the websites of the major agencies or groups that you plan to work with to see what their mission and priorities are. It might give you ideas.

-“Being environmentally friendly in projects is an innovation,” said Tavolaro. “It requires creative thinking. As with any innovation or creative endeavor, it helps to have input. You cannot do this without including other folks who do not look at the world as you do.”

He continued, “This is the hard part – gaining trust and making a diverse group productive. Group dynamics are the key management challenge.”

[Dr. JoAnne Castagna](#) is a technical writer/editor for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District.

Historic spawning area opens to fish on the Batsto River after 100 years

Mark D. Eberle and Merv E. Brokke, Philadelphia District

Restoration project earns 2005 Coastal America Partnership Award for Philadelphia District and its Partners

For its innovative partnership and project success, Coastal America Director Virginia K. Tippie and John Paul Woodley Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, presented the Philadelphia District and its partners with its 2005 Coastal America Partnership Award during a ceremony on the Batsto River October 17.

“It is indeed an honor to receive this prestigious Coastal America award. I am proud of the work accomplished by the professionals on this team. They are true stewards of our land. Partnerships are what makes the Corps of Engineers the premier public engineering organization it is. This partnership has constructed a project that will benefit the river ecosystem, the fish, and the thousands of visitors to Batsto State Park for years to come,” said Lt. Col. Robert J. Ruch, District Engineer for the Philadelphia District.

Along with the non-federal sponsor the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection there were other federal and non-federal partners who honored for the contributions to the project: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, New Jersey Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, Pinelands Preservation Alliance, American Rivers, Alden Research Laboratory, and the contractor Kuhnel Company.



Coastal America's 2005 Partnership Award is presented to the Philadelphia District's Project Delivery Team during a ceremony beside the Batsto Fishway Restoration Project October 17, 2005. From left to right are: NJDEP Commissioner Bradley M. Campbell, Lt. Col. Robert J. Ruch, Project Manager Mark D. Eberle, Don R. Martinelli, John Paul Woodley Jr. Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Charlie L. Nicholas, Jennifer L. McGivern, Robert P. Strange, Denise M. DeTitta, Chuck P. MacIntosh, and Charles F. Sutphen.

The Batsto River is a tributary of the Mullica River located in Burlington County, New Jersey, approximately two miles upstream from the confluence of the Batsto River and the Mullica River and the dam is located in what is now Batsto Village, a restored historic village located in Wharton State Forest.

Due to its location in an historic village, considerable coordination with the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office was completed to insure the design was compatible with the historic nature of the site. The fishway design was selected to meet the goals of fish passage and to blend in with the existing New Jersey State historic park.

With the installation of the permanent fishway, anadromous fish now have unimpeded access around the dam and to about eight miles of stream for the target species of alewife and blueback herring.

The project will also improve the upstream river system by adding to the food web dynamics of the Batsto River. The fish-eating birds, mammals, and fish will benefit from future Spring spawning runs of river herring that will pass upstream. Local anglers will reap the benefits of an increase river herring population. Additionally, the unique location offers environmental education regarding the ecological importance of anadromous fish to a large number of park visitors.



A view of the fishway turning box. This area provides the fish with a resting place as they make their ascent up the fishway. For instance, river herring can only swim up a 20-ft section of steepass before needing a rest. Steepass is pre-fabricated aluminum structures that resemble a slide with baffles.



From left to right, Construction Manager Charlie L. Nicholas and Project Manager Mark D. Eberle, discuss project details during the construction of the fishway.



Looking downstream at the Batsto fishway with wood decking in place. The wood decking allows the fishway to blend-in with the other historic structures at the project site.

LRD's Planner of the Year award goes to Jon Brown of Buffalo District

The Great Lakes & Ohio River Division (LRD) held their semi-annual Planning Board Conference November 29 to December 1. Members of the LRD Regional Integration Team, HQ Reviewers, and LRD Planning staff joined the Planning Chiefs, LRD Regional Technical Specialists and LRD Planning Associates in discussing policy review, outreach, new Planning ECs, workload and execution.

One of the highlights of the three day meeting was a message from LRD's Commander, BG Berwick, and the presentation of a plaque and Commander's Coin to Jon Brown as LRD's Planner of the Year. Jon is an economist with the Buffalo District, an LRD Regional Technical Specialist and a 2003 graduate of the Planning Associates Program. Jon received this award for his superior efforts in leading the International Joint Commission's (IJC) Recreational Boating/Tourism Technical Working Group. The IJC was tasked to conduct a \$20 million, comprehensive five-year study to assess and evaluate the current criteria used for regulating water levels on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. This was the most comprehensive study every undertaken by the IJC. Jon was recognized for bringing together a bi-national group of diverse experts from government, academia, native communities and interest groups representing the geographical, scientific and community concerns to investigate the relationship of water levels on the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River system to the economies of recreation boating and tourism. Jon's leadership and dedication to the project exemplifies the spirit behind USACE 2012 and the Planning Community of Practice by fostering cooperation between diverse governmental and non-governmental entities and sharing his talent and expertise beyond the Buffalo District to the region, the nation and the international community.



BG Berwick presents LRD's Planner of the Year award to Jon Brown of Buffalo District.

Teleconference with the Planning Centers of Expertise

Margaret Johanning, Headquarters

A teleconference was held on 9 November 2005 among representatives of the various Planning Centers of Expertise (PCX), HQUSACE, HEC and IWR. These six Planning Centers, their location, Directors and Technical Points of Contact (TOC) are:

Inland Navigation, Great Lakes and Ohio River Division

Director: Theodore Brown
TOC: Dave Weekly and Paul Hanley

Deep Draft Navigation, South Atlantic Division

Director: Wilber Paynes
TOC: Ken Claseman

Flood Damage Reduction, South Pacific Division

Director: Thomas R. Kendall (acting)
TOC: Clark Frentzen

Hurricane & Storm Damage Prevention, North Atlantic Division

Director: Joe Vietri
TOC: Larry Cocchieri

Ecosystem Restoration, Mississippi Valley Division

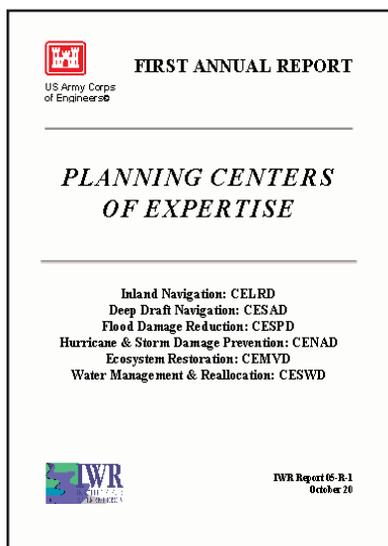
Director: Rayford Wilbanks
TOC: Dave Vigh

Water Management & Reallocation, Southwestern Division

Director: JoAnn Duman
TOC: Peter Shaw

The purpose of the conference was to follow up on assigned items from the June 2005 National PCX Meeting, to discuss other on-going activities and what is next in the way of required meetings. Each of the centers provided a brief summary of their activities underway. Generally each center mentioned the impacts of the lack of resources (people and/or funding) as challenging to their success and if they can perform up to expectations. Much discussion also centered on Internal Technical and External Peer Reviews, the development of lists of experts, certification and the updating of their PMPs to reflect the new ECs. Discussion also considered the need for additional teleconferences, face to face meetings and opportunities to participate in national conferences. The group agreed that the upcoming May Planning Conference would be an ideal time to explain the workings of Centers.

For additional information on this meeting please contact [Ms. Margaret Johanning](#).



1st Annual Report Planning Centers of Expertise Ted Hillyer, Institute for Water Resources

The 1st Annual Report of the Planning Centers of Expertise has been published as IWR Report 05-R-1, dated October 2005. This report was prepared to formalize all the good work that has been and is being performed by the Centers. While this report covers the first two years of effort by the Centers, now that the Centers are up and running the intent is to publish reports hereafter on a yearly basis. This report can be found on the Planner's Resource Web under "Plan Centers of Expertise" at: <http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/iwr/plannersweb/>

For additional information on the Planning Centers of Expertise or to offer to provide an article on the Centers, for Planning Ahead, please contact [Ted Hillyer](#).

Meet the 2006 Planning Associates



Planning Associates 2006

(Back row): Jason Needham – HEC-Davis, Alicia Kirchner – Sacramento District, Martin Gonzalez – Jacksonville District , Clarke Hemphill – Alaska District, Vechere, Lampley – Nashville District, Shawneen O’Neill – Tulsa District, and Jeremy Weber – Portland District.

(Front Row): Randy Campbell – Huntington District, Barbara Blumeris – New England District, Dana Needham – Little Rock District, Joanie Lanier – New Orleans District, and Maria Chin – Mobile District

Since our last submission, we have awarded our 2005 PAs as have completed the PA Program and have chosen the 2006 class.

The PAs, course managers and HQ management met in early November for Orientation and the first of the course modules in St. Louis. The first day, all were together in order to meet one another and get acquainted. Two days were spent with course owners in one room discussing and polishing their agendas for their up and coming courses with the Planning Associates, while the PAs and HQ management were in another room going over the PA Handbook and discussing the objectives and goals for the year.

The following days, the PAs started their first of several courses with Cultural Resources and Tribal Affairs with folks from the St. Louis District and HQs. In the next Planning Ahead, one of the PAs will write about their adventures with this course as well as their Team Building, Team Leadership and Communications Course they will be taking in Ft. Lauderdale, FL in early January 06. Till then, Happy Holidays !!!



Course Owners and HQ Management for the Planning Associates

(Back Row): Tom Pfeifer – Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction – NAN, Ken Claseman – Deep Draft Navigation - SAM, Brad Thompson – Ecosystem Restoration - MVR, Chris Pulliam – Cultural Resources – MVS, and Joy Muncy – IWR – Program Manager and DC Experience Course Manager.

(Front Row): Harry Kitch – HQ – Overall Program Manager, Andrea Walker – Hydropower, Water Supply, Endangered Species Act and Recreation – NWD, Judy Morrison – Program Facilitator and Course Manager for Team Building, Team Leadership and Communications, Carl Borash – Small Boat Harbors & Intergovernmental Coordination – POA, Valerie Hansen - Hydropower, Water Supply, Endangered Species Act and Recreation – NWK, Sam Arrowood – Watershed – SWD, Dave Weekly – Inland Navigation – LRH, and Roberta Hayworth – Tribal Affairs - MVS

Missing from picture: Paul Rubenstein and Georgeie Reynolds – Cultural Resources and Tribal Affairs - HQ

PLANNING WEBS AHEAD

BLOG, BLOG, BLOG

The Corps is standardizing on a common feel and look for our 325,000 web pages. Within a couple of months all regional and district home pages should be similar. POD, SAD, NWK, NWS, NWP and NWW have already adopted the new banner.

New Web Page Guidance: <http://www.spd.usace.army.mil/cwpm/public/plan/pdguide/Internet%20Guidance.pdf>

Pacific Ocean Division: <http://www.pod.usace.army.mil/>

South Atlantic Division: <http://www.sad.usace.army.mil/>

Seattle District <http://www.nws.usace.army.mil/>

Portland: <http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/home.asp>

Walla Walla District: <http://www.nww.usace.army.mil/>

Kansas City District: <http://www.nwk.usace.army.mil/>

Little Rock District's Springfield Missouri Feasibility Study's Web Page comes up fourth on a search engine for--Corps of Engineers Planning.

Little Rock District's Springfield Missouri Feasibility Study:

<http://www.swl.usace.army.mil/planning/feasibilitystudy/>

Headquarters' Gary Hardesty is leading a team to develop a web planning portal and roster. The team—mostly 2005 PA grads—is actively seeking ideas and suggestions.

Blog, blog, blogs, short for weblog formally web log, are becoming a source of information for many people. A Pew project estimates that over 25% of internet users read blogs. Are bloggers “reporting” on our projects? where do we find out, as it's very time consuming even to keep up with the traditional press. Technorati is a web site where people register their blogs and a recent search for—Corps of Engineers Planning yielded almost 3,000 posts. The main problem for bloggers is being read, where Blogdex and Daypop also provide searchable databases. As expected Katrina and New Orleans are common subjects for blog postings.

PEW: <http://www.pewinternet.org/>

Technrati: www.technrati.com

Blogdex: <http://blogdex.net/>

Daypop: <http://www.daypop.com/>

The Planning Community of Practice (PCoP) will have a web page for the May 2006 Conference in San Francisco.

http://www.spd.usace.army.mil/PCoP_Conference2006/

Space photographs are easy to obtain and are being utilized as an inexpensive and useful planning tool. Two web giants have competing sites and Space Imaging has an interesting image of the week archive.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Environmental Credits Generated through Land-Use Changes: Challenges and Approaches

A workshop on the environmental credits generated through land-use changes will be held March 8-9, 2006 in Baltimore, Maryland. The workshop will be used to study and discuss the challenges that arise when market-based mechanisms are used to encourage changes in practices on the land in order to achieve environmental goals. The primary focus will be on carbon sequestration and nutrient run-off reductions, though lessons will be applicable to a wide range of environmental issues.

The workshop is jointly sponsored by Texas A&M University, Environmental Defense, and The Environmental Trading Network, with funding from US EPA. Participants will include stakeholders, practitioners, policy makers, and analysts. The workshop will inform participants about trading mechanisms and the challenges that arise when credits are generated by land-use changes. Policies and approaches that might be used to respond to the specific challenges that arise in such programs will be discussed. A main goal of the workshop is to bring together those facing such issues in both greenhouse gas/carbon sequestration and water quality settings to learn from each other about approaches that might be taken to overcome the difficulties in these markets. A distinguished set of speakers will be used to introduce topics and share the latest thinking on these issues.

Additional information is available at: <http://www.envtn.org/LBcreditsworkshop/>. Space is limited. For more information, to reserve a spot, or to ensure that you receive updates on the program, contact Richard Woodward at rwoodward@tamu.edu, 979-845-5864. A nominal registration fee will be charged.

Vacancy Announcement

Interdisciplinary GS-***-15 vice: Getzen scheduled to open 16 Nov thru 31 Dec 05 (6 weeks). There are two announcements - one for internal Current Federal Career Conditional & Reinstatement Eligibles - NCFL05952884 and one for All Sources - NCFL05952884D. Announcements are available for review under www.cpol.army.mil and www.usajobs.opm.gov/.

PLANNING CoP CALENDAR

Planning Ahead submission deadline.....third Friday of every month

Planning Advisory Board Meeting hosted by SWD..... 2006

Env Credits Generated Through Land-Use Changes: Challenges and Approaches Workshop.....8-9 Mar 2006
(see [Announcements](#) section)

Planning CoP Conference.....9-11 May 2006

If you would like to post an item to the monthly calendar, please contact Monica Franklin at Monica.A.Franklin@usace.army.mil.

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO PLANNING AHEAD?

This newsletter is designed to improve the communication among all the planners and those we work with throughout the Corps. We hope that future editions will have mostly information and perspective from those of you on the front lines in the districts. We hope that these notes become a forum for you to share your experiences to help all of us learn from each other. We can't afford to reinvent the wheel in each office. We welcome your thoughts, questions, success stories, and bitter lessons so that we can share them on these pages. The articles should be short (2-3 paragraphs) except in some cases where you just have to say more, and should be a MS Word document. We highly encourage you to send pictures to accompany your article.

The deadline for material to be published in the next issue is: **Monday, January 23, 2005.**

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(Editor's Note: In the email address, the character following the @ sign is a lowercase "l". This is also true for the single line of text. The character immediately following "subscribe" is also a lowercase "l". If these are not typed correctly, you will receive an error message.)

To obtain a 'help' file, send only the word 'help' in the text of the message (nothing in the subject line) and address it to majordomo@usace.army.mil.

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