



US Army Corps
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PLANNINGahead

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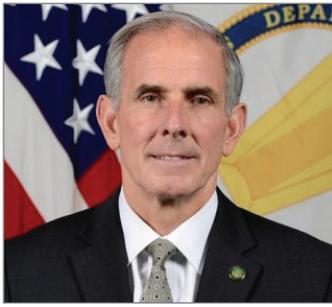
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Mr. David J. Leach, P.E., is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Project Planning and Review. He entered the Senior Executive Service in 2011 and currently serves as the principal advisor to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) [ASA(CW)] on USACE water resources projects and on its planning and review processes. Mr. Leach is responsible for providing objective and independent evaluation of USACE projects and determination of policy compliance for engineering soundness, economic justification, and environmental acceptability.

What was your path to becoming the Deputy ASA(CW) for Project Planning and Review?

I started out in civil works as a student trainee doing water resources design and construction of dams and channels with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service (today the Natural Resources Conservation Service). Early in my career, I had the opportunity to be part of the construction teams for three dams. After seven years, I moved to USACE and worked in military construction. Most recently, I served as

FROM THE ASA'S OFFICE

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY ASA(CW) FOR PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW

the Programs Director for North Atlantic Division (NAD) where I oversaw a diverse portfolio of civil works, military construction, and international and interagency work. It feels like I've come full circle, since now I'm reviewing water resources projects to recommend to Congress for authorization and appropriation.

How did your job in NAD prepare you for your current position?

As Programs Director at NAD, I was involved in a lot of regional politics and coalition building with states and congressional members. NAD has a very active political delegation, and we were engaged with them in building congressional support for the Hurricane Sandy supplemental bill. Those prior relationships have helped me here, along with the relationships I had built within the Office of the ASA (OASA(CW)) and USACE.

What are the top 3 things you'd like a Planner in the District/MSD to know about OASA(CW)?

First, we have a common mission and goals. Ultimately, we're trying to achieve the same thing, which is to bring water resources projects to fruition that will serve the Nation. Second, we're one team, and everyone has a role to play in accomplishing

our mission. I think USACE's "3x3x3" policy for the planning phase of project development should really be "3x3x4" to include OASA. Effective communication and collaboration throughout the vertical chain are key as we drive those schedules and budgets. Third, awareness of political nuances, not just at the local and project level, but at the national level, is instrumental to success.

Is there a recent study you've reviewed that exhibited particularly successful coordination among vertical team members? Are there any lessons from that study you can share with the wider Planning community?

The Everglades Agricultural Area Storage Reservoir study was a Section 203 study recently completed by the South Florida Water Management District. It exhibited successful collaboration among the sponsor, the District, the Division (MSC), Headquarters, and OASA. This was a "pilot" study in the sense that it was the first one to go through the 203 process [where a feasibility study is developed by a non-federal interest and submitted directly to the ASA(CW)], and it demonstrated the need for close coordination to identify and achieve an agreeable vision, schedule, and budget.

For all feasibility studies, it is critical for our project sponsors to be at the table from the beginning, and to feel that their input is valued. Transparency and communication are key to these partnerships. As our program grows, I would encourage USACE to leverage competent non-federal interests and industry to enable the execution of USACE programs, particularly in the context of the significant budget increase we are experiencing related to the 2018 Supplemental Appropriations for Disasters. If we can lean forward and embrace these partnerships, we will have the opportunity to both become a better organization and deliver on our promises to Congress and to the Nation.

What is your favorite thing about your job?

Helping project delivery teams (PDTs) identify solutions to challenges, including political obstacles, they are facing during the project delivery process. The earlier OASA can engage with the vertical team in the planning phase of a project, the higher probability of success the study will have. I also enjoy mentoring individuals to help them reach their career aspirations, and to help them expand their professional capabilities and competencies.



Feature News Items

PCoP NEWS FLASHES

PLANNING COMMUNITY NEWS

Supplemental Execution Update

All 38 planning activities funded under the Long Term Supplemental program are underway, with many Alternative Milestone meetings scheduled this winter. Huge kudos to our study teams! Planning study teams are meeting to engage federal partners, scope the studies, and conduct initial iterations of the risk-informed six-step planning process. New guidance, factsheets, and other resources for study teams continue to be published to the Planning Community Toolbox under the Emergency Supplemental Single Phase Feasibility Study Resources page.

New Implementation Guidance on One Federal Decision

Director's Policy

Memorandum 2018-12, Implementation of Executive Order (EO) 13807 and One Federal Decision (OFD) within Civil Works Programs, and the attached guidance memorandum, Implementation Guidance for Feasibility Studies for Executive Order 13807, Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects provides specific guidance for feasibility studies, and is available on the Planning Community Toolbox. The implementation guidance provides further direction for conducting concurrent and coordinated environmental reviews for feasibility studies for projects meeting the definition of "major infrastructure project" under the EO.

USACE Planner Database

Start off the New Year by updating your profile in the Planner Database, including training taken during the last fiscal year and your updated skills and experience. The Database is used by study PDTs and review management organizations (RMOs) across the agency to identify planners with needed skills and agency technical review (ATR) experience, as well as by Headquarters to report on training and skills metrics.

Climate Preparedness and Resilience CoP Resources

The Climate Preparedness and Resilience Community of Practice's (CPR CoP) Climate Assessment ATR Standards of Practice is a useful guide for all study teams to better understand the mandatory technical review of climate

change impact assessments when a study involves inland hydrology, coastal analysis, and/or a boundary condition impacted by sea level. The CPR CoP has also published a quick reference guide to climate considerations – check it out on the Planning Community Toolbox!

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 PCoP Hot Topics. Find the latest in your email inbox or on the Planning and Policy CoP SharePoint. To be added to the newsletter email distribution list, email us at hqplanning@usace.army.mil.

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► 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 can support planners and planning decision making.

The Toolbox contains helpful resources for planners who are getting started on Emergency Supplemental studies. The Emergency Supplemental Single Phase Feasibility Study Resources page contains recently released

guidance, useful factsheets, and other informative documents for PDTs.

Recent national policy changes and new guidance applicable to planning are available on the front page under Policy and Guidance Updates. New additions to the Toolbox include the recently signed Water Resources Development Act of 2018, new Planning Bulletins on exemption procedures for planning studies exceeding cost

and schedule limits, clarification of existing policy for USACE participation in nonstructural flood risk management and coastal storm risk management measures, a memo announcing changes to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's review rating process, and more.

Interested in taking a deep dive on a specific planning topic? The Training tab contains links to the Planning Community Webinar

Series – and other CoPs' webinars, information on the Planning Corps Curriculum and other PROSPECT courses, the Planning Associates program, and more.

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

Visit the Toolbox online at www.corpsplanning.us.



PLANNER PERSPECTIVE: BUILDING LOCAL PLANNING EXCELLENCE



JASON STANDING AT A COMPLETED CAP SECTION 14 PROJECT. SOURCE: JASON GLAZENER, WILMINGTON DISTRICT

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Jason Glazener, Wilmington District, was recognized with a FY 2017 USACE Planning Excellence Award. Jason is a lead Community Planner in Wilmington District's Planning and Environmental Branch and was recognized for setting a regional standard for innovation and integration of risk-informed planning and decision making to advance project delivery. In particular, he was acknowledged for his significant contributions in the Continuing Authorities and Flood Plain Management Services programs in FY 2017.

Including the first several years I spent as a part-time student trainee and then as an intern, I have worked a total of nine years in USACE Civil Works Planning at the Wilmington District. Despite this length of experience, I sometimes feel like a new employee in the building who is still feeling his way through how to navigate studies and projects. There certainly is an endless volume of information to learn and understand between all the missions and programs, and the learning curve is steep. Being a USACE Civil Works planner is a difficult

profession to master, and I certainly haven't mastered it yet. I'm not an engineer, but I'm certain that the principles of engineering and the laws of physics on which they are based do not readily change. However, USACE planning policy and guidelines continue to evolve, and mastering a moving target can be challenging.

I've been fortunate in that early on in my career (the intern days) I was placed in leadership positions on multiple Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) studies at their beginning

stages, an experience that was outside of my comfort zone at the time. It was sink or swim, but some of my best learning moments have been from missteps and finding a path forward to correct them. Those experiences have given me skills that I continue to apply.

The following are some of the lessons learned from my CAP endeavors that I try to apply as a planner or study manager. These are based on my CAP experience, but certainly have some usefulness for other project types as well:



JASON BRIEFING A COMPLETED PROJECT TO THE DIVISION COMMANDER. SOURCE: JASON GLAZENER, WILMINGTON DISTRICT

1 Each Study Needs a “Champion.” I think of a champion in this case as someone who drives the study, sees the big picture of all the moving parts, knows the applicable guidance, and holds themselves accountable for all the coordinating leg work between the PDT members. Projects need continuous attention to make sure things are on track, the right people are talking to each other, and that the PDT is anticipating data needs and requirements in advance. Without a champion on the PDT, there is greater chance the study will languish.

2 Build Realistic Schedules. Building realistic schedules is critical because they are what the PDT is measured against, and they are what leadership and stakeholder expectations are based on. Schedules

can get off track because of legitimate, unavoidable problems. However, schedules can often run into preventable problems because:

- We make “optimistic” schedules – this is human nature. We sometimes don’t account for unexpected interference, and some team members can put pressure on themselves to project a quicker timeline than they really think can be accomplished.
- Last minute schedules – sometimes we put schedules together too quickly, and fail to capture certain tasks or get adequate input from the full team.

In contrast, build a realistic schedule by giving yourself and the team enough time for

thoughtful input, and make sure it’s not a “best case scenario” schedule.

3 PDT Communication. Positive and frequent communication with the PDT is important to keep them engaged. PDT members are busy with other important work in addition to what you are working on together. As a planner, you should have a vision of the big picture. Help each PDT member know what you know: What’s the big picture with the funding situation? What’s the schedule timeline and consequences of failure? How do PDT member tasks interconnect? What is the sponsor saying? Do not simply communicate these things at PDT meetings, but have frequent informal one-on-one chats with different team members to help prepare them and position them to succeed.

4 Re-read Current Planning Guidance. You need to read and re-read the latest guidance at the outset, and then periodically throughout a study. There are moments when something in the guidance suddenly jumps out at you on a second or third reading. You want to avoid a schedule setback because of a requirement you missed in the beginning.

5 Build Experience Across Your Team. Specific to CAP, one key to successfully driving a project to the finish line is having experience with the whole process. This experience makes it easier to apply the previous four lessons learned, allowing an individual to build upon experiences offered in oversight of studies or a specific program, such as CAP

Even as Civil Works Planning continues to evolve in the era of risk-informed planning, the above suggestions will continue to hold true. As for the career itself, being a USACE planner is certainly not dull. It is enjoyable to work within a teamwork structure and deliver helpful services to the customers you serve. I look forward to all the learning experiences I know are still to come; maybe even one day, I can master this dynamic profession.





2017 PLANNING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNER: NORFOLK COASTAL STORM RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY, NORFOLK DISTRICT

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The Norfolk Coastal Storm Risk Management PDT was recognized as a FY2017 Planning Achievement Award winner for its commitment to addressing coastal storm risks in the Norfolk, Virginia region of the Atlantic Coast.

After Hurricane Sandy in October 2012, Congress passed the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, a portion of which in part directed USACE to prepare a comprehensive study to address the flood risks of vulnerable coastal populations in areas affected by Hurricane Sandy within the boundaries of the USACE North Atlantic Division (NAD). The resulting preliminary analyses in

The Norfolk Coastal Storm Risk Management Project Delivery Team (PDT) was selected for the FY2017 USACE Planning Achievement Team Award – Enterprise category. The Outstanding Planning Achievement Award provides honorary recognition to a USACE team 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 serving in Civil Works professional planning positions working 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. The Enterprise award category specifically recognizes a team's contributions to a feasibility study or similarly-scaled life-cycle or enterprise-level planning effort.

the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study (NACCS) identified nine high risk areas (“Focus Areas”) on the Atlantic Coast for an in-depth analysis, including the City of Norfolk.

Norfolk, part of the Hampton Roads area in Virginia, is second in the nation only to New Orleans in its vulnerability to relative sea level change. Over the 50-year life of the proposed coastal storm risk management project, the relative sea level is projected to rise a foot and a half; the project is projected to provide a 60 percent reduction in damages to property. That risk reduction will be provided by four coastal storm surge



FLOODING IMPACTS IN A NORFOLK NEIGHBORHOOD FROM HURRICANE JOAQUIN ON OCTOBER 5, 2015. SOURCE: CITY OF NORFOLK OFFICE OF RESILIENCE.

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barriers, over five miles of flood walls and levees, pump stations, tide gates, non-structural measures including elevation and acquisition, and natural and nature-based features including living shorelines and oyster reefs. Those measures will also improve the life safety situation for much of the population of approximately 250,000 residents by reducing risk to both private property and much of the critical infrastructure and evacuation routes in the city.

This engaged PDT paid close attention to the constraints of a diverse and thriving metropolitan area – including environmental

concerns, historic structures, defense considerations, and socioeconomic conditions. While managing these considerations, the team found a plan that is complete, efficient, effective, and acceptable.

Throughout the study, there was also active participation from the U.S. Navy to ensure the interests of Naval Station Norfolk were considered in plan formulation. The team stressed public involvement throughout this process, holding multiple public meetings beyond the mandatory National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements in order to ensure the citizens of the

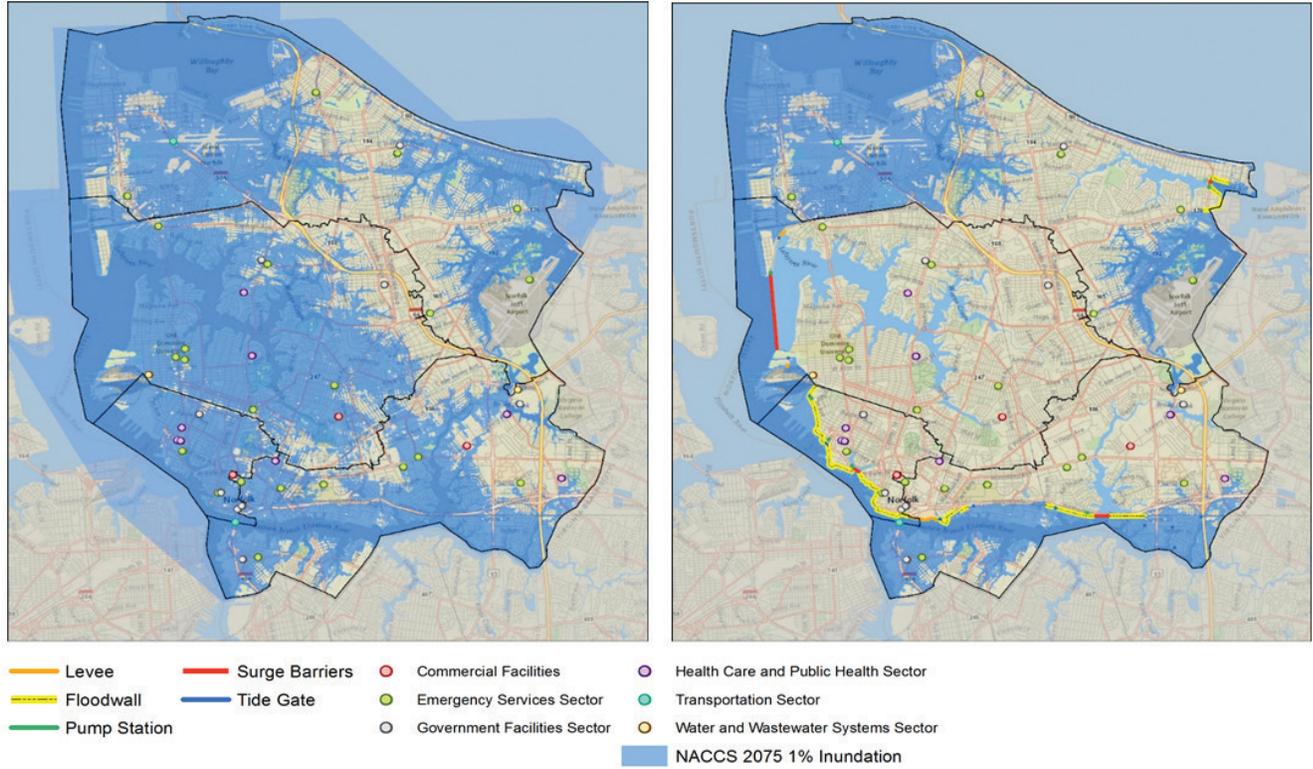
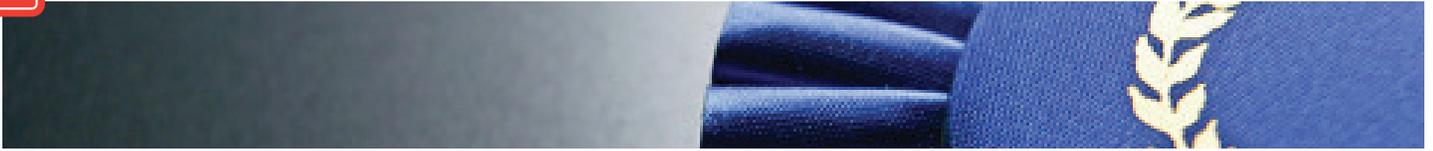
City Norfolk had a voice in the future resiliency planning of their city.

Naval Station Norfolk, the largest naval base in the world, will benefit from improved conditions along many of the roads leading to the installation, including Hampton Boulevard which is within the area that will benefit from the Lafayette Storm Surge Barrier.

The Norfolk PDT has made many risk-based decisions to advance the study – enabling the project to move forward faster and with less data and analysis during early phases of the study. For example, the team used the parametric

costs from NACCS to develop rough order of magnitude cost and benefit estimates for the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) selection. This allowed the team to meaningfully compare huge alternatives which were substantially different on a limited schedule and budget.

In addition, the team utilized expertise from around the nation to accomplish the work, including HEC-FDA analysis led by the New Orleans District, cost estimating through the Baltimore District, and the BeachFX model run by the Jacksonville District.



PROJECTED WATER LEVELS IN 2076 IN THE FUTURE WITHOUT PROJECT (L) AND FUTURE WITH RECOMMENDED PLAN (R) SCENARIOS WITH A 1% ANNUAL CHANCE OF EXCEEDANCE EVENT OCCURRING. CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE AREA IS HIGHLIGHTED. SOURCE: USACE NORFOLK DISTRICT.



PDT MEMBERS PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AT A MEETING. SOURCE: USACE NORFOLK DISTRICT.

One of the largest challenges the PDT faced was developing the draft report and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for public release immediately following the TSP milestone,

an “Environmental Concerns 2,” signifying that although there were environmental concerns about the project due to unknown information at that time in the study, there were not significant

with limited data on the impacts of the alternatives considered. The team effectively assessed a range of values and maximum potential impacts to quantify and communicate the expected impacts. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rated the EIS as

objections and the EIS was not unsatisfactory.

Throughout the duration of the project the City of Norfolk, the non-federal sponsor, remained flexible, adaptive, and receptive to ideas for continued adjustments to the plan – including fluctuations in the costs and benefits that are a reality of an iterative planning process. Their wealth of local knowledge and forward-thinking in local resilience brought an innovative mindset to the team, which ensured that the project was always in-line with the desires of the sponsor.

The team strived from the start to recommend a complete and holistic recommendation for the entire City of Norfolk – cognizant that in order to have a bright future, this coastal city in south east Virginia must have a comprehensive plan for living with increased future water levels. Currently, the team is on track to deliver this project within the required three year, \$3 million, and three levels of vertical integration (3x3x3) planning study standard, a standard not easily met with a study recommendation plan of approximately \$1.4 billion.



MCX SPOTLIGHT: REAL ESTATE AND CIVIL WORKS PLANNING

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: www.corpsplanning.us.

The Real Estate Community of Practice (CoP) supports both military and civil missions, from project inception and planning, to construction and management and operations through fiscal close out. Real Estate transactions are conducted by our non-federal partners or our USACE Real Estate Contracting Officers to acquire permanent and temporary interests in land, provide leaseholds, and to outgrant rights to others to use project lands.

District Real Estate is responsible for preparing a report appendix as detailed as the rest of the main report, analyzing the proposed project's real estate requirements, estimated costs, and execution timeline. Particular attention is given to complications that attach to corporate owners, railroads, relocation assistance required for businesses and residential owners, and bridge, road, or other utility or facility relocations.

the team in order to properly complete the planning analysis. For example, when will the team identify the utilities and facilities that might be adversely affected by the proposed project? Do we require certain hydrology data in order to determine if a takings analysis is needed? When will a list of the mitigation land requirements and the disposal sites be available? The list varies depending upon the type of project, and the PDT needs to be sure all of the products are identified and on schedule to feed into a successful and complete Real Estate Plan.

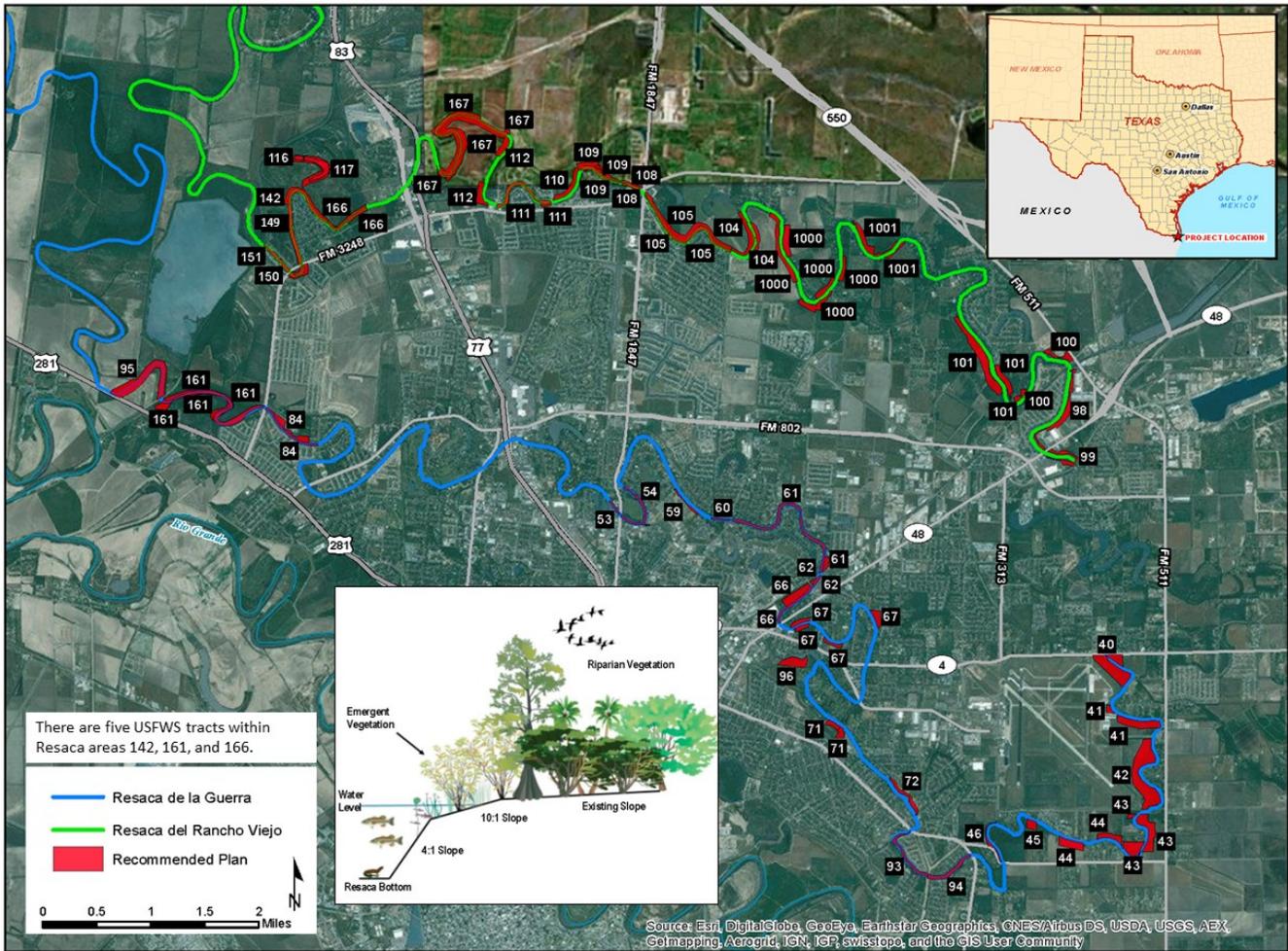
Civil Works Planning is a particularly challenging specialty for Real Estate. It is imperative that our Realty Specialists are incorporated into the PDT early in order to inform the various alternatives being considered. Early Real Estate input may consist of providing land values informed by the market, business and residential relocation data, areas of navigation servitude, information on issues of non-federal sponsor jurisdiction to own property, or possible non-standard situations to be avoided. As the planning study progresses, District Real Estate will become more and more involved, particularly once a plan is selected.

The District PM and PDT can assist Real Estate in efficiently preparing a thorough report in three key ways:

- 1** Make sure Real Estate team members are engaged early and provided all relevant information on future without project condition and alternative impacts that may affect waters and related land resources. This includes consideration of alternative impacts in a proposed project footprint, as indicated in the partial list of questions in the next key item.
 - 2** Provide a regular venue for the PDT members to identify and provide status updates on the products Real Estate will need from
 - 3** Fund Real Estate. The bulk of our effort comes toward the end of the study as one of the last requirements to be completed, and often other functional elements have used most of the available funds. Real Estate needs to be fully funded rather than with whatever is left over.
- The Division Real Estate team should serve as part of the vertical oversight throughout the course of a planning study. The primary functions of the Division team members are to assist the District with policy questions, serve as



WINTER 2019 FRONT COVER CAPTION – FREEPORT, TEXAS, UPLAND PLACEMENT AREA FOR COMMERCIAL NAVIGATION CHANNEL DREDGE MATERIAL. SOURCE: REAL ESTATE COP.



RESACAS ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT RECOMMENDED PLAN MAP. SOURCE: WILMINGTON DISTRICT.

an extension of the District’s technical expertise, provide quality review, and to be an advocate for the District with Headquarters by way of endorsement and preparation to respond to any questions. The Division is also a stop gap when the District Real Estate team faces funding challenges, has been left out of product development, or has otherwise been unsuccessful in getting the support needed to complete a quality project.

Headquarters Real Estate has promulgated regulatory

guidance for the CoP (RE PGL 31) so that we can be more responsive to accelerated Civil Works Planning timelines. The guidance focuses on two of our most time-consuming planning efforts – the completion of the gross appraisal and the analysis of the utility/facility relocations. In addition to providing guidance, Headquarters Real Estate may participate on a senior leader team to review and approve a decision document and make any necessary policy decisions or elevate them to the Deputy ASA(CW).

One recent successful planning effort occurred within the Galveston District and Southwestern Division, resulting in a signed Chief’s Report for the Resacas Ecosystem Restoration Project for less than \$3M and completion close to the three-year target. This is a specifically authorized ecosystem project targeting restoration of former channels of the Rio Grande River considered to be unique, rare, and endangered habitat. Some of the real estate challenges the team had to address included lands

valued at greater than the 35 percent non-federal cost-share, lands owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, expected utility relocations, and a non-standard estate (permit) that will be required from the National Park Service. These items affected the cost estimate, the implementation schedule, what lands could be included in the USACE project and counted for benefits, and are required to identify the full responsibilities of the non-federal sponsor once the project is authorized.



PCoP Q+A

I'm the PDT lead for a new study. What can I do to ensure our initial planning charette is efficient and effective?

Productive charettes are key to kicking off a successful feasibility study. The following tips and recommendations can be used by PDTs getting started on an Emergency Supplemental or any other new study:

- Review previous efforts, not only on the study but on previous charettes to avoid repeating the same mistakes, especially if the same stakeholders and resource agencies will be attending.
- Hold a vertical team in-progress review prior to the charette to reveal and discuss issues that should be added to the charette agenda or worked outside the charette setting.
- Coordinating before the meeting between the planner/project manager and facilitator to set the agenda and expectations is key to achieving a successful result at the charette.
- Plan charettes for two days as opposed to three or four. PDT member time is valuable, and if charettes stretch more than a few days you may miss out one of the key decision makers.
- Schedule charettes on-site or as close to the project location as possible to ensure participation from the local stakeholders and to provide an opportunity for PDT members to see the area in person.
- As the facilitator, make sure you understand obstacles, points of contention, and others' points of view going into the charette so that you can ask the necessary questions.
- Rehearse at least once without the sponsor; official charettes are not the appropriate place for PDT members to question the process.
- Anchor and focus the discussion by preparing draft problems, opportunities, objectives, and constraints before the charette.

- Prior to the charette, have a virtual meeting to introduce participants to the study background and purpose and the risk-informed planning process so that everyone enters the charette with the same basic knowledge.
- Work with the sponsor before the charette to try and achieve a common understanding of the existing conditions; use available materials to draft out the future without project scenario.
- Involving the resource agency at the charette pays dividends; the difference in ease of coordination post-charette tracks pretty well with early involvement.
- Build in time to discuss the "path forward" at the end of the charette to not only talk about next steps for moving forward, but to establish a common set of expectations.

There are variety of resources available to planners and PDTs as they work through the initial stages of a feasibility study and beyond. Planners can visit the Planning Community Toolbox for guidance and factsheets, as well as the PCoP Lessons Learned and Examples page on the PCoP SharePoint site to read about study process recommendations and tips for success from other Districts and MSCs.

Thanks to Judy McCrea, SPD, Jason Norris, LRH, and Jeff Herzog, POH, for contributing to this Lessons Learned!

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.