Overview and Use of the Feasibility Report Format and Content Guide
2 December 2021
Q&A Session

This webinar provided an overview of the [Feasibility Report Format and Content Guide](#) – a new tool that has been produced by a team of experts within USACE for nationwide use. Presenter Ray Wimbrough (HQUSACE Senior Policy Advisor) discussed the contents of the guide, which contains a suggested format, typical content for each section and subsection, and general notes for development of reports. The guide is envisioned to be helpful to beginner as well as experienced planners, provides a general starting point for any feasibility study, and can also be used as a reference/checklist to assist in technical and/or policy review.

This summary of the Question / Answer session of the webinar is not a transcription; questions and responses have been edited and reordered for clarity.

Feasibility Report Guide Layout and Sections

Why are the problems, opportunities, objectives, and constraints (POOCs) sections listed before the existing conditions section? How can planners fully know the POOCs before knowing the existing conditions?
The Guide's format is based on following the steps in the planning process in order and is intended to help planners effectively tell their story through the feasibility report. Problems and opportunities (and objectives and constraints) are defined before the inventory and forecast step occurs and are used to help identify those attributes that should be targeted in the existing and future without project conditions.

Is the structure of the guide based on the steps of the planning process or the order of actual analysis?
The Feasibility Report Guide structure is based on the order of the sequential 6-step planning process. As more is learned about existing conditions, study teams should revise and reassess the POOCs.

Does the guide include specifications or guidance for maps and figures?
The guide does not discuss maps or figures specifications. However, the it does suggest consistent use of the same map as a base throughout the report for clarity, especially when discussing alternatives. Using the same map allows for a clear understanding of the location of critical infrastructure, natural resources, and other relevant attributes in relation to the study area.

Incorporation of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Guidance

There seems to be potentially conflicting guidance between this guide and information that has been presented in prior PCoP webinars on the new NEPA page limit guidance. Do the page limits include both the Feasibility Report and NEPA documents, or are the NEPA sections counted separately?
The guide provides a brief discussion of the specific NEPA page and content requirements. The guide's authors coordinated with the Office of Water Project Review to ensure there were no discrepancies. The

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA page limit regulations apply to specific content in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement, which is integrated into the overall Feasibility Report. In addition, the Feasibility Report Guide specifies page *goals*, not page *requirements*, for each section of the report.

Please reference the revised CEQ NEPA regulations published July 2020, ER 200-2-2: Procedures for Implementing NEPA, or the current version of Appendix C of the Planning Guidance Notebook for further guidance. Additional questions or comments about discrepancies related to the Feasibility Report Guide should be submitted to Ray Wimbrough.

Why was the environmental assessment (EA) decoupled from the feasibility report in this guide?
Based on direction from the HQUSACE Chief, Planning and Policy Division, planners should work to integrate the EA and the feasibility reports, unless authorized to do otherwise.

<u>**Applicability of the Guide**</u>

Does this guide apply to both General Investigations and Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) projects?
This guide was not written with CAP in mind; although it could potentially be used as a starting point for a CAP study, it is more detailed and complex than what is needed for most CAP projects. If the guide is used as a starting point for a CAP study, it would need to be pared down and planners would need to be careful to eliminate extraneous items from the report. Instead, planners should use Chapter 2 of EP 1105-2-58: Continuing Authorities Program, which details all of the requirements for CAP reports.