

Civil Works Review Board (CWRB)  
Project Summary

Project Reviewed: Bloomsburg, PA

Date of CWRB: 22 September 2005

CWRB Members: MG Griffin (DCG); Gary Loew (representing DCW); Tom Waters (Planning CoP); Don Basham (Engineering and Construction CoP); and Jerry Barnes (LRD RIT Leader).

Key Participants:

HQUSACE: CWRB Members, Ed Theriot (NAD RIT Leader), Office of Water Project Review (Colosimo, Einarsen, Warren, Fitzsimmons), Policy and Policy Compliance Division (Leef), Office of Counsel (Bayert) & Groska (NAD RIT).

NAD: Col Kiosich (VTC), Joe Vietri, Pete Blum,

NAB: LTC Hand, Robert Pace, Jim Jones, Jeff McKee, Scott Johnson & Mark Mendelsohn.

ASACW: Terry Breyman

OMB: None

Sponsor: George Turner (former Town Councilman), Mike Conway (PA Dept of Environmental Protection, and Ken Criswell (Magee-Reiter)

OWPR Recommendation: Approval of the report for release for State and Agency review and filing of the EIS in the Federal Register subsequent to the following changes to the final report:

1. Add summary table comparing impacts of alternative plans (CEQ Reg);
2. Add responses to NEPA review comments on the DEIS (CEQ Reg);
3. Further address the non-designation of an Environmentally Preferable Alternative (CEQ Reg);
4. Add cross-references for the environmental statute compliance information (CEQ Reg);
5. Explain the coordination with USFWS and the lack of any Coordination Act Reports and;
6. Include recent SHPO letter and add information on known historic structures and sites, and describe the cultural resource mitigation feature.

CWRB Decision Made: Approval of release of the report for State and Agency review and filing of the EIS in the Federal Register following OWPR approved changes (as noted above).

Vote: Unanimous.

Key Issues/Questions Raised by the CWRB (in no particular order):

1. The effect of prime and unique farmland on project formulation was discussed.
2. Who handled the Independent Technical Review? The district explained that it was conducted with in-house staff as it was completed prior to the issuance of the new EC. LTC Hand indicated that future studies would have ITR conducted with other NAD personnel.
3. The CWRB questioned why there were so many policy compliance comments on what seemed to be a straightforward project. The district explained that there were a multitude of reasons, including report writing that focused on narration instead of summation, turnover of staff and young staff.
4. It was noted that the Report Summary did not consistently provide benefit and cost information related to the proposed project and would need to be reworked accordingly.
5. The differences between Alternatives 4 and 8 were not clear to the CWRB. As a result, it was difficult to confirm that the NED plan was recommended. The district indicated that the Benefit-to-Cost ratios of the two plans are similar, but that the Net Benefits of Alternative 4 was larger than the Alternative 8, and as a result, Alternative 4 was the recommended plan (and the NED plan). The district agreed to ensure the report clearly explains the differences between the plans to demonstrate that the selection is supported.
6. Did the district coordinate with the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation? The district indicated they had conducted appropriate coordination and that the results of that coordination would be better summarized in the final report.
7. The CWRB expressed concern about deferring some of the geotechnical investigations until preconstruction engineering design phase and the potential effect on the project cost estimate. The district indicated that the deferred investigations were not expected to impact plan selection. Further, the district indicated that the confidence in their cost estimates remained high and that appropriate contingencies were included in items where there was some uncertainty. OWPR indicated that this would be addressed further in the final review but it appears at this point to be a presentation problem rather than a lack of adequate analyses.
8. The CWRB inquired about the need for a value engineering study, particularly if costs could potentially increase to the point that the sponsor could no longer afford the project. The district indicated that value-engineering studies are a standard part of NAB work and would be incorporated appropriately.
9. OWPR noted that without an FSM or AFB, OWPR is just now seeing for the first time whether the PDT really understood the required actions resulting from the draft report review. This situation makes the final report vulnerable to changes. The CWRB indicated that FSM and AFB meetings need to occur to facilitate plan formulation, effective use of resources and the preparation of quality decision documents.

Other Issues of Note: OWPR forecast the need for more changes as the final report review continues concurrent with the S&A review. OWPR also said most of the issues raised in the previous draft report review probably could have been avoided by a more thorough ITR. OWPR noted that ITR's nationwide are not addressing whether the

presentation of assumptions, analyses, decisions, and supporting rationale are adequate to enable the public, agencies and decision-makers to concur in the report recommendations.

Attachments: Powerpoint handouts (including District Engineer, Division Engineer, Sponsor and Office of Water Project Review briefs); Project Summary; DE Transmittal Letter; and Draft Chief of Engineers Report.