

WHAT IS PLANNING?

- Planning offers a structured, rational approach to solving problems.
- For the Civil Works program, everything begins with planning. Planning is the start of the “pipeline” for addressing water resources needs. Without fruitful planning, creative, cost-effective solutions to these needs cannot be found. All projects start with planners answering the questions: “Can we?” and “Should we?” Planners help decision-makers identify water resources problems, conceive solutions to them, and compare the importance of the inevitable conflicting values inherent in any solution.
- Planning is a creative process requiring unequal measures of experience, analysis, intuition and inspiration. The more the process is used the better one gets at solving complex problems. Planning typically involves a very broad knowledge base and operates in a creative, dynamic manner.
- Planning is not a solitary pursuit. Planning is best done by an interdisciplinary team. Good planning involves the knowledge, skills and insights of professionals from many of the natural, social and engineering sciences.
- Planning requires men and women with knowledge, imagination, and skills, and a commitment to critically examine and act on objectives concerned with the improvement of the human condition. Planners must respond to complex and interrelated processes of social, economic, cultural, environmental and political change at every scale from the local to the global. Their specialized expertise derives from their ability to relate scientific and technical knowledge to action in the public domain. No one discipline prepares a person to be a planner. Planning is intrinsically an interdisciplinary process.
- Planning is not report writing or the technical work done by experts working on a planning study. Great hydrology, great economics, great biology, or a great anything is not planning. Great planning weaves these inputs into a successful solution.
- Planning comprises all the work associated with the six-step planning process:
 - Specify Problems and Opportunities
 - Inventory and Forecast Conditions
 - Formulate Alternative Plans
 - Evaluate Effects of Alternative Plans
 - Compare Alternative Plans
 - Select Recommended Plan

Planning Functions

In trying to develop a strategy to maintain the Corps' planning capability and technical expertise, it is important to first identify those functions and knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) that are essentially unique to the Planning process and are important to maintaining the Corps' planning competency. A general summary of the functions of the traditional planning elements of plan formulation, economics, environmental resources and public involvement are shown in the following list. More details on the key planning KSAs that form the foundation for the technical planning function are presented in Appendix G.

Plan Formulation

- Lead Planning Process
- Set Planning objectives
- Define existing condition
- Define future with and without project conditions
- Problem identification
- Development of alternatives
- Trade off analysis
- Cost Sharing
- Project Authorization Document, Division Commanders Notice, Chief of Engineer's Report
- Technical Integration (integrating the various technical products into a report and project)
- Facilitate review process and issue resolution.

Economics

- Risk Analysis
- Optimization
- NED Analysis
- Cost Allocation
- Regional Economic Analysis
- Financial Capability
- Damage Assessment
- Social Impact Analysis
- Project Accomplishments (benefits)

Environmental

- Environmental Analysis (EA)
- Environmental Impact Analysis (EIS)
- Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
- Record of Decision (ROD)
- Endangered Species Act, Section 7 Consultation
- HEP Analysis
- Cultural Resource (SHPO, etc.)
- Native American Support
- Government to Government consultations with Native Americans
- Research (fish, etc.)
- USFW Coordination Act
- Compliance and Documentation required by State laws.

Public Involvement

- Consensus Building
- Coordination with public, resource groups and other agencies
- Conduct of public meetings and workshops
- Strategic Communications
- Information Brochures
- News Releases

Maintaining Planning Capabilities

Maintaining, as well as strengthening the Corps' planning capability requires building the planning career field so the Corps can attract good young talented recruits, train them and develop them, and then hold on to them as they gain the experience to really help the Corps address the unmet water resource needs of the nation. It is crucial that we invigorate our Civil Works planning efforts. This would involve enhancement of the role of plan formulation in the Project Delivery Team Process. Further, it involves ensuring that we maintain technical capabilities in all the planning functional areas.

Bottomline... it is important that the people who are in planning know how to plan.