

# 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***

I would like to kick off this edition by congratulating our most recent graduates of the Planning Associates Class of 2006. These are outstanding people who have sacrificed both professionally and personally to complete this challenging program. They are already involved in leadership in their districts and division offices and are sure to be future leaders of the Corps. We now have 54 graduates of our renewed Planning Associates class. All are doing well, making significant contributions and having a positive effect on our Planning and Policy Community of Practice. Please join me in congratulating:

Barbara Blumeris (New England District)  
Randy Campbell (Huntington District)  
Maria Chin (Mobile District)  
Martin Gonzalez (Jacksonville District)  
Clarke Hemphill (Alaska District)  
Alicia Kirchner (Sacramento District)  
Vechere' Lampley (Nashville District)  
Joanie Lanier (New Orleans District)  
Dana Needham (Little Rock District)  
Jason Needham (Hydrologic Engineering Center)  
Shawneen O'Neill (Tulsa District)  
Jeremy Weber (Portland District)

My additional thought for all of you this month is that I would like to encourage you to review the recent Engineer Circulars that were published in 2005 for planning and policy (EC-1105-2-406, 407, 408, and 409). As you formulate your studies, it is important to understand that Headquarters and ASA(CW) are serious about the directives prescribed by these circulars. A key point to remember in your formulation of projects is they will be done in a collaborative, integrated, comprehensive, and holistic manner. A systems approach is imperative. Remember that EC409 prescribes a maximum time frame of three years for planning studies. We expect that you will engage the Centers of Expertise to coordinate and conduct Independent Technical Review and External Peer Review. Also, you will need to engage your district engineers early recognizing that he or she will ultimately present the study before a civil works review board. We understand that there are challenges and difficult realities associated with all of these directions. However; those realities should not preclude you from formulating projects in accordance with these goals which represent the strategic direction with the Corps of Engineers.

As I make my rounds to the various division and district offices, I am encouraged and excited about the tremendous talent we have and the accomplishments that are occurring by all of you. Thanks to all for what you do everyday.

*Tom Waters*  
Planning CoP Leader  
[Thomas.W.Waters@usace.army.mil](mailto:Thomas.W.Waters@usace.army.mil)

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### **OMB Grants Generic Clearance for Civil Works Public Surveys**

*by Stuart Davis, Institute for Water Resources*

The Office of Management and Budget has granted generic clearance for the Corps' grouping of Civil Works Public Surveys. "Generic clearance" involves getting advance approval for various types of questions, and greatly streamlines the process for the Corps to collect necessary data for executing its Civil Works program. The surveys and conditions for their use are available on the IWR website: <http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/inside/products/pub/surveys.cfm> Guidance issuing the newly approved surveys is being prepared at this time and will be posted as soon as possible.

The generic approval is good through 30 September 2009, and all surveys should have that expiration date along with the same approval number, OMB 0710-0001, and a privacy act statement. It will still be necessary to submit each individual survey collection to OMB under the ongoing 10-day approval process. **NO SURVEY MAY BE CONDUCTED UNTIL FINAL APPROVAL IS RECEIVED FROM OMB. READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPROVAL PROCEDURES.** All surveys should continue to be submitted through your division office per the guidance listed on the IWR survey page. Copies of all planning survey submittals should continue to be sent to Bruce Carlson, CECW-PC and myself. Judy Rice has retired, so copies of all recreation management survey submittals should go to Scott Jackson, CEERD-EE-R, and myself.

The current approval includes all of the surveys that were in the previously approved compendium, except for two instruments on employment impacts, and one water systems questionnaire. New survey instruments with the following titles have been approved and will be added to the website shortly:

- Emergency Response Questionnaire
- Carrier Closure Survey
- Lock Closure Survey
- River Transportation Choice and Needs Survey
- Habitat Needs Questionnaire
- Hazardous Materials and Waste Storage Survey
- Beach Recreation Visitor Survey
- Watershed Questionnaire
- Beach Questionnaire
- Beach Recreation Visitor Survey

OMB-directed changes to the previously approved surveys will also appear on the website shortly.

Stay tuned for further guidance on the survey procedures, and revisions to the website of approved surveys.

### **Green River, Kentucky Sustainable Rivers Success**

*Michael Turner, Louisville District*

Green River Lake became the first Corps project to receive approval for permanent operation for ecological benefits downstream of a Corps reservoir as part of the Sustainable Rivers Project, a joint effort of the Corps of Engineers and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Division approval was granted on May 16, 2006. Brigadier General Bruce A. Berwick, Division Engineer, personally announced the news at a meeting with the staff and board members of the Kentucky Chapter, TNC, district personnel, and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, John Paul Woodley.

This approval was the culmination of a collaborative effort that had its beginnings with a fall 1998 meeting between the district and TNC. Working together, TNC and district staff identified a more ecologically compatible water-release schedule by delaying fall reservoir releases until after the spawning period for certain fish and mussel species. This and other changes provide significant ecological benefits while maintaining all authorized purposes of the lake. The changes actually extend recreational season on the lake by more than a month. Experimental operations according to the revised water-release schedule were evaluated for three years prior to the change becoming permanent.

Green River is one of the top four river systems in the United States in terms of its aquatic biodiversity. Few streams rival the 151 species of fishes and 71 species of freshwater mussels in its system. Among these are 12 endemics (including the bottle brush crayfish pictured below) and more than 35 aquatic species that are considered imperiled. Other imperiled, threatened or endangered species depend on the river and its tributaries for their survival. Examples include eastern hellbender, American eel, and gray and Indiana bats. Green River forms the base level for on-going development of the Mammoth-Flint Ridge cave system, the longest mapped cave system in the world. The endangered endemic Kentucky Cave Shrimp is one of many species dependent upon this subterranean habitat created through dissolution of the watershed's underlying limestone bedrock.



Actions, such as this change in operation, that carry out conservation of listed species are permissible per Section 7(a), Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Positive impacts to threatened or endangered species of mussels were identified during the three-year experimental period. Malacologists with Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources have identified juvenile mussels, 2 to 3 years old, of three endangered species.

Physical changes within the stream channel (i.e. stream banks) have been noted, especially within the first 32 river miles. Greater movement of bedload sediments, large woody debris, and braiding of gravel bars has been observed and is associated with higher releases during fall drawdown. The effect of these is a return to more naturally occurring stream processes within this reach of river. This is a positive impact with regards to maintaining and restoring some portion of downstream channel and in stream habitat lost to vegetative encroachment over 33 years of operations under the previous operational guide curve.



Monitoring of Green River is conducted by a multi-agency partnership including the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, several units of the Geological Survey, Natural Resource Conservation Service and six universities in addition to those already mentioned. Personnel from many of those are pictured herein sampling fishes and mussels.

Two other Corps lakes on tributaries impact upper Green River albeit to lesser extents than Green River Lake. The Louisville District will be considering the possibilities of changes in their operations over next few years and their addition to the TNC/Corps Sustainable Rivers Project.

## ***Environmental Management Project Celebrates 20 Years***

***by Justine Barati, Rock Island District***

Since being authorized under the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, the Environmental Management Program has completed more than 40 projects that have restored more than 75,000 acres of backwater habitat. These accomplishments were celebrated at a dockside recognition ceremony in La Crosse, Wis., on Aug. 23.

Speakers at the ceremony included Rep. Ron Kind, and Dick Larson, from Rep. Gil Gutknecht's office, Col. Robert Sinkler, District commander, Kevin Szcodronski, director of parks and preserves for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, as well as speakers from the Wisconsin DNR, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Minn. DNR, the Missouri Department of Conservation, the National Audubon Society, and the Upper River Services.

One of a series of postcards created to recognize the Environmental Management Program showcases the logo created for its anniversary. As part of the 20th anniversary of the EMP, the District created a series of postcards focusing on the project as a whole, as well as some of the individual projects. Angie Freyermuth, Programs and Project Management, designed and created the postcards, which have been distributed to all the agencies involved in the EMP.

The EMP is a federal-state partnership designed to restore, protect, and monitor the natural resources of the Upper Mississippi River System. For 20 years, the program has made a positive effort toward understanding and restoring large rivers. The EMP also provides decision makers with information about the river system through monitoring the river's health and researching the river's ecology.

The EMP involves two elements: Long Term Resource Monitoring and Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects.

The Long Term Resource Monitoring portion of the EMP is lead by the U.S. Geological Survey and has provided decision makers with information about the river system by monitoring the river's health and researching the river's ecology.

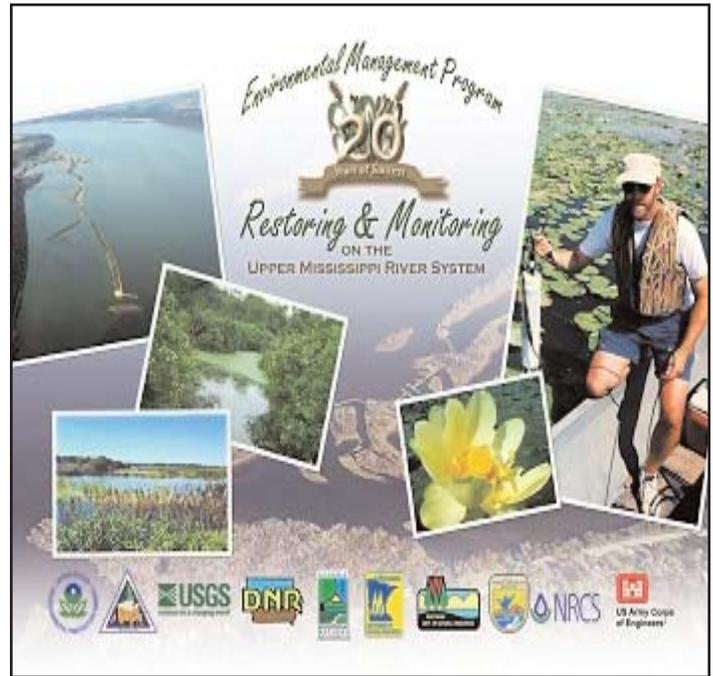
"In fact, the Long Term Resource Monitoring Program established the first comprehensive large river system natural resource monitoring network in the world," said Marv Hubbell, Programs and Project Management. Hubbell is the EMP program manager for all three upper districts of MVD.

Research studies focus on answering specific questions about the Upper Mississippi River System and its ecology, including habitat requirements of important species such as paddlefish and sturgeon. Monitoring information also helps resource managers address a wide range of river issues. "For example, invasive Asian carp were detected by monitoring the fish community," said Hubbell.

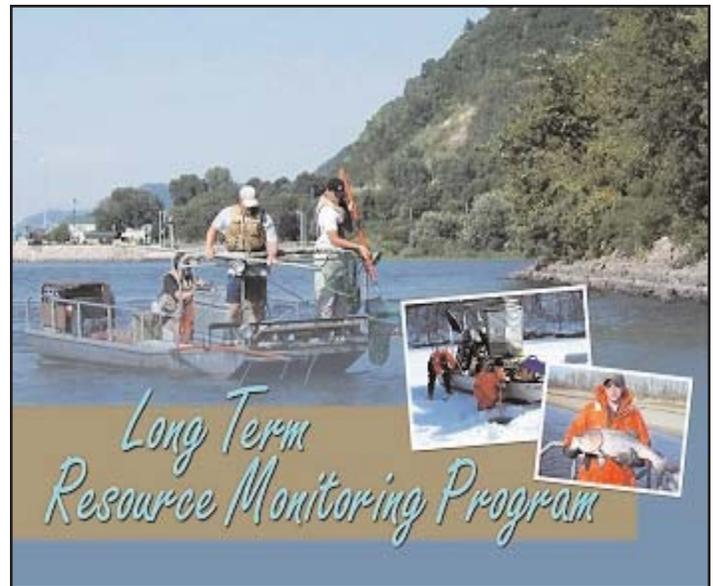
The front of this postcard created by the District showcases the long term monitoring program part of the EMP. Graphic design by Angie Freyermuth.

"Because of the EMP, there is now a wealth of data, including aerial photographs, maps, scientific reports, and water depths available. This information helps river managers make important decisions about where and how to distribute resources," said Sinkler during the ceremony.

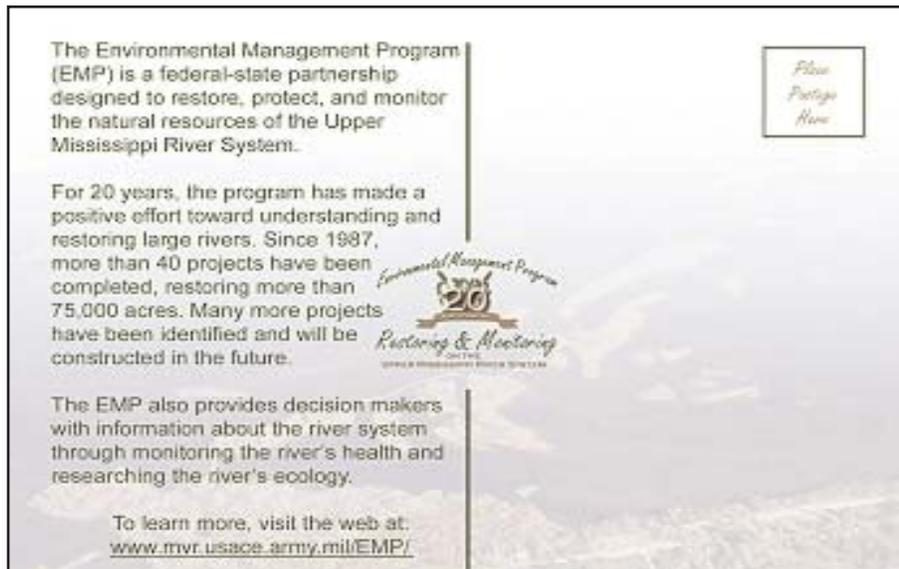
The second component of the program is the creation of the Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects. These are



One of a series of postcards created to recognized the Environmental Management Program, this card showcases the logo created for its anniversary. As part of the 20th anniversary of the EMP, the District created a series of postcards focusing on the project as a whole, as well as some of the individual projects. Angie Freyermuth, Programs and Project Management, designed and created the postcards, which have been distributed to all the agencies involved in the EMP.



The front of this postcard created by the District showcases the long term monitoring program part of the EMP. Graphic design by Angie Freyermuth.



**This is the back of the main EMP postcard, which features information about the front graphic and additional information about the program. Each EMP postcard features this kind of information. Graphic design by Angie Freyermuth.**

designed to benefit fish, waterfowl, and other wildlife by restoring lost habitat or protecting existing habitat. Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Projects have provided the foundation for large river habitat restoration efforts on the Upper Mississippi River System.

"Prior to this program, there was not a coordinated or systemic approach to the planning and implementation of habitat restoration efforts on this river, or any other large river system in the world," said Sinkler.

Under the leadership of the Corps, the projects are planned and designed by teams of individuals from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Corps, and the natural resource or conservation agencies from Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin. Private citizens and organizations also play an important role in this planning process.

"Completed projects are monitored to measure their performance and to improve future project designs," said Hubbell. "Many new techniques for restoring large rivers have been developed through the EMP."

Projects use a variety of tools to restore or protect fish and wildlife habitat, including island building, backwater dredging, shoreline improvements, structures to regulate water flow, and water level management.

"An example of backwater river improvements can be found in the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge's Island 42 project near Weaver, Minnesota," said Sinkler. "This project involved installing two huge gated culverts and creating a channel hundreds of feet long to provide dissolved oxygen in the backwater. Seven acres were also dredged to create deeper wintertime fish habitat. This was the first EMP habitat project completed. Since its completion, native grasses planted along the channel have expanded the area's plant life for the benefit of a wide variety of wildlife. The project has also reestablished a historic wintertime fishery," said Sinkler.

"Fish and wildlife response to these projects has been excellent," said Hubbell. "Sampling at several project areas has shown the number of adult bluegill and other fish species has increased one hundred fold. The use by waterfowl and other bird species has also greatly increased in the project areas.

"Although a lot has been accomplished during the last 20 years, there is still more to be done," said Hubbell. "While we have improved nearly 80,000 acres of habitat, that represents only about three percent of the floodplain of the Upper Mississippi River System. We have another 54,000 acres of habitat that are scheduled for improvement in the future."

On The 'Net  
[www.mvr.usace.army.mil/EMP/](http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/EMP/)  
[www.umesc.usgs.gov/ltrmp.html](http://www.umesc.usgs.gov/ltrmp.html)

## **A “Couple” of Views on Developmental Assignments**

*by Joe and Kerry Redican, Jacksonville District*



**Kerry and Joe Redican.**

We recently completed two month developmental assignments working for the Planning Community of Practice (PCoP) at the Headquarters office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (HQ USACE) in Washington, DC. In Jacksonville District, Joe is a project planner in the Ecosystem Restoration Section of Planning Division while Kerry is a program manager in the RECOVER Branch of the Restoration Program Division. We are both working on the implementation of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

We both started our careers as project planners in New York District's Planning Division and for us, coming back to work and live in a city for a few months has been both a great experience and a lot of fun. When the request for applicants was posted by the PCoP we did not really know what the developmental assignment would entail, so we inquired of numerous people about it and were told that it would be a good experience for us, our District, and Headquarters.

Upon arrival, we both reported to Harry Kitch, Deputy Chief of the PCoP, and Margaret Johanning; then immediately told that the main focus of the assignment was to expose each of us to as many things as possible while we were at Headquarters. This was a very welcomed message and full advantage was taken of this opportunity. Our work assignments included such things as developing and reviewing flood damage reduction policy, participating in and leading reviews of updates of multiple appendices of ER 1105-2-100, and reviewing and revising peer review guidance. Along with these and other assignments we were also exposed to dozens of people, meetings, conversations and presentations for Corps work across the nation. For example, we were able to attend two Civil Works Review Board briefings, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) briefings on Fiscal Year 2008 budget requests, a presentation by the National Academy of Science on the progress of CERP, and the “Critical Think” presentations from the 2006 class of the Planning Associates Program. We were also able to meet and discuss our careers and goals with numerous Corps leaders including Tom Waters and Major General Riley.

Some things that we learned during our assignments that will benefit our District, Headquarters and others are:

- 1) Do not be afraid to ask questions about such things as guidance, policy, etc., as long as you do your homework first. Guidance and policy are written to cover a broad array of projects and they do not always fit every situation perfectly;
- 2) Remember who your audience is. As guidance and policy are developed, the end user, usually the District, should be kept in mind, and when reports are written or summaries are provided the vertical team should be kept in mind; and
- 3) The expertise in Planning is getting smaller so if you have something to add to help develop new planners, please take the time to do so.

The most important thing that we were able to gain from our developmental assignments was the opportunity to establish and build many relationships that will be with us throughout our careers. We learned many valuable lessons and developed a broad range of skills that we will take back to our co-workers and projects at our District. We both consider our assignments at Headquarters to be our best training to date. If you are interested in this type of opportunity, we recommend that you update your Individual Development Plan and make inquiries to your vertical chain. If you wish to learn more about the PCoP and its role in the Corps planning community you can refer to the redesigned and updated web page that Kerry helped develop at <http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/cecw-cp/index.html>.

## **Barriers to Collaborative Planning in Corps Studies**

*by Darrell Nolton, Institute for Water Resources*

The Corps of Engineers has a long history of involving the public in issues and projects that affect them. Public Involvement requirements permeate the entire organization, to include Planning, Regulatory Affairs, Engineering, Real Estate,

Construction, Military Construction, Operations and Maintenance, Public Affairs, Legal Counsel and Emergency Management. The Corps also has a long history of collaborating, to some extent, with other entities (i.e., Federal, non-Federal and local agencies, NGOs, interest groups, etc.) in the development and implementation of water resource projects. A renewed emphasis on collaborative planning has prompted the need to develop guidelines and procedures for successful collaborations. One component of this effort is to identify existing barriers to collaborative planning in order to determine required changes in policy and procedures to enhance the capabilities of field practitioners. Collaborating with other entities presents many challenges and requires much commitment from study managers and teams.

On-going efforts to identify barriers to collaborative planning include the examination of actual studies from each MSC covering the major mission areas of Flood Damage Reduction, including Coastal, Navigation, Ecosystem Restoration and Multi-purpose studies. The purpose of this effort was to determine the level of collaborative planning that is going on in the field and to identify what works well and what barriers may exist. While these case studies are providing good information, they still represent a very small pool of respondents. Our next step is to pool field planners or practitioners to gain a broader perspective.

In an effort to specifically identify what those barriers are and ultimately, to develop options to remove or remediate those barriers, IWR has designed a questionnaire survey to identify how frequently collaborative planning (working with interested parties to identify problems, develop alternatives and make decisions) is used. Some of the questions included are: What types of studies are using collaborative planning (i.e., GI, CAP, other)? What are the objectives for collaborative planning? Are there barriers and what are they? What can the Corps do to enhance your ability to effectively use collaborative planning? The survey will be placed on a website so that individuals may access the site, complete the questionnaire online and submit it anonymously. The questionnaire is designed to take very little of your time.

An e-mail notice will be sent to all planners when the questionnaire is ready and posted on the web site. Please take a few minutes to participate. If you have questions, please contact Darrell Nolton 703-428-9084 or E-mail: [Darrell.G.Nolton@usace.army.mil](mailto:Darrell.G.Nolton@usace.army.mil).

## ***IWR Website Has Useful Features for the Planning Community***

***by Rich Whittington, Institute for Water Resources***

The new IWR web site has a number of useful features for the Planning Community, for example:

Our virtual Library provides online searches and bibliographies of IWR reports published between 1962 and today, including the following searches and bibliographies:

- Search by Author
- Search by Report Number
- Search by Title (alphabetic)
- Search by Title (keyword)
- Report Listing by Title
- Report Listing by Report No.
- Report Listing by Year

Similar searches and bibliographies are available for the Gilbert F. White and Arthur Maass collections, which were donated to the Corps and are available for on-site use in the IWR Maass-White Reference Room and the Office of History library. The IWR virtual Library also provides links to HEC and NDC publications and to other valuable publications resources, including the Planners Resource Web. Visit the new IWR web site and its virtual Library and see for yourself.

- IWR web site: <http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/index.cfm>
- Virtual Library: <http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/inside/products/pub/publications.cfm>
- Maass-White Reference Room: <http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/inside/products/pub/maasswhite.cfm>

Rich Whittington (703-428-6051 or [richard.w.whittington@usace.army.mil](mailto:richard.w.whittington@usace.army.mil))

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

*by Paul Rubenstein, Headquarters*

How often have I heard people in our profession say “yeah it’s that one percent thing that we can never figure out!” That “one percent” thing is a result of language in Section 7a of the Archeological and Historical Preservation Act of 1974, Public Law 93-291, 16 U.S.C 469.

Section 7a has been around since 1974, and, like many historic preservation provisions in law, was prepared through a collaboration of some well-meaning congressional staffers and even better meaning professional archeologists who wanted to do good. Over time though, the provision has produced far more problems and misunderstandings than its creators could have ever contemplated. Why is this one provision in law so vexing? In part, the answer lies in the countless attempts at explanation since its passage and the continuing failure to get its meaning completely translated.

The Reservoir Salvage Act (RSA) came along in 1960 and then there was the venerable Historic Preservation Act in 1966. But along with all the good words, Congress failed to provide for all the good money. In 1974, with considerable prodding by such notables as Bob McGimsey and Hester Davis of the Arkansas Archeological Survey, Congressmen Moss and Bennett sponsored a bill to amend the RSA by, in part, providing the authority to fund Federal preservation efforts. They cast their sights on several pieces of existing environmental legislation that contained one percent funding set-asides and thought this would be an appropriate funding level for preservation activities. There is a well-worn myth that the lawmakers just swiped one percent out of the air and plunked it into the bill. There was, however, a bit more method to their law-making.

Now, we all know -- or at least 32 years ago we all knew -- if you wanted a government preservation professional you had to go to the Department of the Interior. The framers of section 7a allowed all us poor cousins to transfer “not more than 1 per centum of the total amount authorized to be appropriated . . .” to Interior so they could help us out of all the jams we were in. These appropriations were identified as being “non-reimbursable” which has since been interpreted to mean a full Federal cost. It turns out that the framers knew their Latin, they just didn’t know how cultural resources management would work in the government. Along with their newly legislated ability to appropriate cultural resources dollars, agencies considered their need to transfer these appropriations to Interior and, more often than not, elected to hire their own specialists to manage projects and programs in-house.

In the period between 1974 and 1980 agency hires soared, as did expenditures for cultural resource compliance work. It was not long, though, before agency specialists and managers observed a serious problem: one percent of the Federal cost of a project for cultural resource compliance was lasting through resource discovery and usually through resource evaluation but it rarely carried the agency through resource mitigation. Agencies were consistently failing to complete their work before the one percent ran out.

In 1980, Congress acted again to amend section 7 in several important ways. The National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 carried important provisions regarding section 7. First, planning and evaluation costs associated with cultural resources efforts would not be charged against the “1 per centum” dollar figure; only mitigation costs were eligible. Second, the “1 per centum” amount was an accounting level, not a funding limit. The one percent level could be exceeded if the head of an agency determined the need to exceed the level and sought concurrence, through the request of a waiver, from the Secretary of the Interior.

Better but not great. Agencies like the Corps and others developing water resources and other national assets were finding that mitigation within large geographic areas such as river basins was proving problematic. Some projects had little or no cultural resources mitigation while others had massive mitigation requirements. Waivers were still being required at an unmanageable pace. Interior eventually issued guidance in the mid-1980’s suggesting ways to consider the one percent accounting that would include the consideration of mitigation needs for an entire river basin. In this way, the one percent amount could be based on the Federal expenditures within an entire geographic area rather than the individual projects within that geographic area.

Relief yes, but total clarity no. The proverbial waters were once again muddied with the passage of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986. Along with the more momentous change to our business practice brought about by the inclusion of non-Federal sponsors, the Corps struggled with questions concerning the treatment of the one percent, its relation to our partners and how to cost share the one percent and any overage given the new rules imposed by the 1986 legislation. Meetings with staff at the highest level of the Corps and Army Secretariat were held, legal opinions were formulated

and counter opinions were offered. In the end, a compromise was struck and a general rule was formulated using a combination of statutory language and discretionary policy. For cost shared projects involving a non-Federal sponsor, the first one percent of mitigation would be a full Federal expense; any amount over the one percent would be shared with the non-Federal sponsor and a waiver would be approved by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works).

This worked and continues on largely intact today (albeit with some distinctions and fine points in our model cost sharing agreements) but still, in the late 1980's there were persistent questions about what activities contributed to the one percent accounting. It was not until the late 1990s that the Department of the Interior once again helped to refine our thinking. Pittsburgh District was working on a Monongahela River project that was largely devoid of archeological considerations but a number of historic structures in a historic district required treatment and mitigation. The work negotiated with the State and Advisory Council required well over one percent of the Federal appropriations and the Corps needed to move rapidly on a waiver. A large and comprehensive package was prepared by the district and moved through the chain of command. It cleared the Assistant Secretary's office easily and went to Interior for concurrence. Not long after, Interior sent the Corps a letter tinged with astonishment. Their finding was there was no need for a concurrence on a waiver because no waiver was required. The mitigation of historic structures was completely acceptable to Interior but none of that contributed to the one percent accounting. Unknown to that point to the Army and the Corps, the Solicitor of the Department of the Interior had prepared a legal opinion finding that ONLY data recovery, or the intensive excavation of archeological remains, was subject to the section 7 one percent accounting.

Close, but not quite the end of our one percent woes. We knew, and continue to know, that data recovery of archeological properties is a full Federal cost up to the one percent level of Federal appropriations and that all data recovery expenditures over the one percent will be shared if a non-Federal sponsor is participating in a project or program. There are, however, legitimate and important questions that continue to be generated about mitigation that is not data recovery. When a non-Federal sponsor is participating in a project or program, mitigation costs are fully shared consistent with other environmental and mitigation costs.

Before leaving this issue, some readers are working at Corps operating projects and are wondering how they account for all this. In the distant past (otherwise known as the early 1980s), the Corps was issued a blanket waiver from Interior for all mitigation efforts undertaken at our operating projects. The one percent rule does not apply to those lands that we administer and our cultural stewardship is defined only by the annual budgeting process. We mitigate or conduct data recovery to the level required and budget for the work accordingly.

Does that cover it all? I wish it did but there is still the "is it part of Total Project Cost or not?" debate and all the fine points created by our unique authorities. In the end, I suppose I should be more appreciative of all the policy challenges presented by section 7, it's the gift that keeps on giving - - that is, up to one percent.

Essays.

Paul Rubenstein  
CECW-CP

## PLANNING CENTERS OF EXPERTISE

*by David Vigh, Mississippi Valley Division*



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is chairing the 2nd National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration (NCER). This conference will be April 22-27, 2007 in Kansas City, Missouri with U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) as co-chair. The 1st NCER was held in Orlando, Florida in December 2004. The NCER conferences developed from a 2002 Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) suggestion to the Chief of Engineers that ways to better integrate and share scientific information and communication for use in water resource management decisions was needed. The EAB was meeting in 2002 to provide input on large-scale ecosystem restoration projects, particularly the Florida Everglades. The Corps and USGS recognized the opportunity to merge planning,

policy and science into a conference; and the NCER was conceived.

The purpose of 2nd NCER, as was the first, is to provide a forum for physical, biological, and social scientists, engineers, resource managers, planners and policy-makers to share their knowledge and research results concerning ecosystem restoration throughout the United States. The public forum will exchange information and "lessons learned" on opportunities for and challenges of achieving ecosystem restoration through partnership. Conference participants will have the opportunity to learn about large-scale ecosystem restoration programs (e.g., Missouri River, Great Lakes, Everglades, San Francisco Bay/Delta, Chesapeake Bay Columbia River, Louisiana Coastal Area, Puget Sound, Mississippi River) as well as smaller scale efforts, and what has contributed to success, and lessons learned from these programs. The roles of policy, planning and science in establishing goals and performance expectations for achieving successful and sustainable ecosystem restoration will be explored. Successful partnerships and means to leverage resources will be an important component of these meetings.

Web link to the 2007 NCER is <http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/NCER2007/>. Web site will contain more meeting information including abstract, poster and registration information as well as accommodations and events.

## PLANNING ASSOCIATES UPDATE

*by Martin Gonzalez, Jacksonville District*

It was with mixed emotions that twelve planners checked into their hotel at Davenport, Iowa for the final trip of a journey that began almost a year ago in St. Louis, Missouri. While the year of travel, learning experiences and invaluable camaraderie has been nothing short of outstanding it has also meant lots of work coupled with some inevitable separation anxiety from loved ones and the ongoing projects at our Districts. Last but not least on our Planning Associates course agenda for this trip are the two arenas where the USACE has, in relatively recent history been forging a path, ecosystem restoration and watershed management. But before that, we worked on our presentations for our upcoming critical think pieces that were to be briefed at Headquarters, Washington D.C., in September, just prior to our graduation exercise. Jesse Vazzano of Act II consultants and Joy Muncy, IWR, Planning Associates Course manager extraordinaire, provided feedback as we presented our slide shows and honed our presentation skills.

Our class on ecosystem restoration was hosted by the Rock Island District, of the Mississippi Valley Division (MVD), MVD is home to the ecosystem restoration Center of Expertise. Rock Island, Illinois is located immediately across the Mississippi River from Davenport, Iowa. The district is led by Colonel Robert A. Sinkler who remarked to the class about how planning within the Corps has become more complex than ever. Colonel Sinkler emphasized collaboration with our partners and the importance of delivering the best plan possible to the American taxpayers; as a prelude to our class he noted how one of the Corps biggest challenges is to integrate ecosystem restoration within our normal business practices.

A very comprehensive flow of information followed; as many as thirty-four instructors from diverse backgrounds and agencies made for a rewarding learning experience. Terry Breyman, Assistant for Water Resources Development for the ASA (Civil Works) Office in Washington, D.C. led us through the evolution of the Corps ecosystem restoration authorities beginning with the overall mood in the nation post-Vietnam. Approximately 10 years after NEPA, WRDA 86 kicked off with most notably the Section 1135 program. Subsequent WRDA's all provided several authorities that dealt with ecosystem restoration efforts; WRDA 2000 was noteworthy as it provided for a wide range of efforts from the very small, Section 106 (Small Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Projects) to the very large, Section 208, which authorized the \$8 Billion dollar plus Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. Camie Knollenberg, Ecosystem Restoration CAP manager for Rock Island District, went on to next discuss the similarities and differences of plan formulation for ecosystem restoration vs. other Corps missions, such as, flood damage reduction and navigation. Ecosystem restoration as an objective to the planning process is a relatively new concept to the Corps that is very challenging due to the limited history available and lack of unique, consistent measurements for outputs and their value. Brad Thompson, senior planner also of Rock Island District followed up with more specifics on how to conduct plan formulation for Ecosystem Restoration projects. Camie and Brad, together with Jodi Staebell, Rock Island senior planner who was lead facilitator for the course, and all-around problem solver, were the course owners.

Les Tong, Senior Environmental Planning Program Manager for the South Pacific Division, led the class through a very entertaining exercise that highlighted how resource significance is used within the planning process. The determination of technical, public and institutional significance of resources proposed to benefit from restoration efforts is crucial to the evaluation and justification for Corps restoration efforts. Susan K. Smith, business line manager and senior planner for the MVD



**PA Class of 2006 at temporary disposal mounds for maintenance dredging along Mississippi River, Pool 8. Material is later moved to site accessible by public for haul and use.**

talked about Performance Budgeting Criteria. Due to limited funds and in an attempt to maximize benefits to the Nation, ecosystem restoration projects are scored in five areas: scarcity, connectivity, special status species, plan recognition and self-sustainability. Several successful restoration efforts were discussed including the Lake Belle View Section 206, the Kankakee River at Stateline project and the Emiquon TNC (The Nature Conservancy) Restoration where the sponsor is attempting to blend use of Corps authorities and a Wetland Reserve Program sponsored by the Department of Agriculture to restore a present day fallow agricultural property that was once a large, diverse lake ecosystem nourished by the Illinois River. Leigh Skaggs of IWR provided an informative discussion and facilitated an exercise that clearly demonstrated cost effective and incremental cost analysis techniques.

Among the many highlights of the course was a field trip to Pool 8 along the right descending bank of the Mississippi River in Wisconsin, just downstream of Brownsville, Minnesota. Yes, many states and agencies participated in



**Terry Breyman, ASA Office, lecturing on history of Corps involvement in ecosystem restoration efforts since NEPA.**

this endeavor. The trip to the site was long but worth the ride. The project is an environmental restoration effort that is recreating many of the islands in Pool 8 that had eroded or completely disappeared as a result of the navigation project. They are located within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The loss of the islands increased wind fetch and associated turbidity in the backwater areas resulting in loss of valuable aquatic plant beds that migrating canvasback ducks use for food. We traveled to several of the recreated islands via boats captained by project team members from various agencies who provided detailed project information while we toured. Using dredged materials to provide topsoil and creating some "seed" islands out of rock resulted in the restoration of several islands providing for the reestablishment of aquatic plant beds and deepwater habitat. This project is currently in Phase III. Phases I and II together received the Environmental Award of Excellence from the Chief of Engineers in 2004 among other honors. Five phases are planned. What was very evident watching and listening to the project team members was the obvious collaborative spirit that was largely responsible for the overall success of this project. This effort involved the Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, both the Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources and local interests from the five states that border the Mississippi in this area. By constructing in phases and applying adaptive management a more effective construction resulted in the later phases.



**Vechere Lampley, PA from Nashville District, at our on-site briefing and tour of recreated/restored islands within Pool 8, Mississippi river.**

There was also a very informative presentation followed by a panel discussion of four of the largest ecosystem restoration efforts underway by the Corps; comprehensive overviews of the Louisiana Coastal Area (Troy Constance, Chief Coastal Restoration Branch, New Orleans District); the Ecosystem Component of the Upper Mississippi River Navigation Study (Ken Barr, Chief, Economics and Environmental Analysis Branch, Rock Island District); Mid-Chesapeake Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration Project (Kevin Luebke, Acting Economic and Environmental Program Manager, Baltimore District); and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (Eric Bush, Chief Ecosystem Restoration Branch, Jacksonville District). This presentation and question and answer period of these four major watershed projects provided an excellent segue into our final course on Watershed Planning sponsored by the Southwest Division and which was held in San Antonio, Texas.

We were greeted at San Antonio by the course owner, Sam Arrowood, the Southwestern Division CAP manager, (former senior planner at Little Rock District) and blistering 101 degree weather. The weather did not dampen the enthusiasm of the class to both learn about the newest approaches to the study of watersheds within the Corps and tour one of the bet-

ter known flood control efforts that has proven to be a significant economic engine for the city of San Antonio, their famed Riverwalk. We were welcomed to the class by the Division Commander, Brigadier General Jeffrey J. Dorko. Jo Ann Duman, Chief of Planning and Policy Community of Practice for Southwestern Division provided an overview of the Division and its many projects and responsibilities. Watershed management is an important concept in ecosystem restoration efforts for the Corps. It results from a comprehensive watershed approach, leading to a study (in which the Corps does actively participate) and culminating in what is essentially a non-federal, ongoing institutional activity that is also agency specific.

Tom Waters, Chief, Policy and Policy Compliance Division at HQ, always a strong supporter of the Planning Associates Program, provided a presentation on the “12 Points” guidance that has been adopted by the Corps that emphasizes communication and professionalism in public service while embracing an integrated water resources mission.



**Tom Waters, Chief, CECW-P, providing hands-on support at the Watershed management class.**



**Joining Vechere at Cibolo Creek, San Antonio are Shawneen O'Neill, Tulsa District (left) and Maria hin, Mobile District (right)**

Class was taken on two field trips; one was at Cibolo Creek where representatives from both the USGS and the NRCS joined USACE staff to discuss the joint monitoring efforts of water entering aquifer to determine impact of removal of strands of ashe junipers. Hands on removal of some of these invasive tree species that accelerate the transpiration of water by drawing in high amounts of water through their root systems that is then lost via evapotranspiration into the atmosphere. Another field trip was to the proposed extension of the San Antonio Flood Control project.

A watershed planning report differs from traditional studies in key areas; there is no PMP, no plan formulation, no alternatives development, no project justification, no recommendation and therefore no NEPA compliance requirements. The concept is innovative; the study may not lead to any Corps projects. Given these differences the class was required as an exercise to develop a tailored review process for watershed studies for HQ to consider as an option to their current review for all other Corps studies. After some brainstorming, the class decided that a process that somewhat resembled the logic of the current stream of documentation would work best. Class recommended an initial Watershed Scoping Meeting with all agencies and interested collaborators wherein all information, plans, recommendations, drawings, etc. would be assembled and further requirements determined. Once decisions and recommendations were made by all then a draft final would be reviewed by HQ and a Watershed Guidance Memo would results. Watershed management plan formulation would then focus on best actions for the watershed with no determination as to actions to be taken on any individual projects recommended. Intermediate meetings similar to our current In Progress Review and

Issue Resolution Conferences can be held as needed. The class concluded that collaboration with the various Federal and State agencies, as well as local interests and stakeholders, was extremely critical to the success of a Watershed Plan. These recommendations were subsequently presented to Corps planning chiefs at a meeting in New Orleans by Ms. Joanie Lanier the Planning Associate from New Orleans District, for their consideration.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements this month.

If you would like to publish an announcement in *Planning Ahead*, please send it to the editor, Monica Franklin at: [monica.a.franklin@usace.army.mil](mailto: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: **Friday, October 27, 2006.**

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