



Public Involvement Specialists FY14-15 Pilot Program

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

Vision

USACE prioritizes public involvement within Civil Works, Military, Operations, Regulatory and Readiness mission areas in order to achieve sustainable project solutions, better meet schedules and cost limitations, and reduce the risk of controversy and litigation.

Mission

Public Involvement Specialists improve USACE's capacity to engage the public and agency partners at the county, state and federal levels. PI Specialists specifically support the stakeholder engagement components of SMART Planning, USACE Infrastructure Strategy and Watershed-informed Budgeting.

Role

Public Involvement Specialists serve as internal consultants within the Districts/Division for Civil Works, Military Programs, Regulatory and Readiness missions to enhance two-way communication and collaborative problem solving with stakeholders. Activities include assessing the need, timing and approach to public engagement, developing public involvement plans, designing effective public involvement forums, completing public involvement activities, and supporting public involvement in current [Flood Risk Management Pilots](#). Specialists disseminate public involvement best practices in their district and address needs for training and technical assistance. They advocate for the value of meaningful public involvement and mentor colleagues in public involvement techniques. Early and strategic public involvement helps achieve sustainable solutions and better meet project schedules and costs. Public Involvement also improves USACE products and reduces the risk of controversy and litigation.

The cadre of Public Involvement Specialists fosters cross-MSC and cross-district exchanges relating to USACE public involvement. The specialists participate in monthly calls organized around peer coaching for their district projects and spend time building their public involvement skills. Specialists not already in Public Affairs coordinate their activities closely with the PA Office.

Background

In FY14, the National Flood Risk Management Program and the Conflict Resolution and Public Participation Center of Expertise are sponsoring 16 Public Involvement Specialists. The concept of a cadre of Public Involvement experts is a recommendation from a post-Katrina program "Actions for Change" calling for USACE to improve public involvement in flood risk management. Some districts have community outreach specialists but this is not consistent across the Corps. Public involvement demands are different from district to district, as is the structure of the USACE organization. For these reasons, the implementation of the Public Involvement Specialists program varies from district to district and across divisions.

Public Involvement Specialist	Location
Lynn Greer Outreach Specialist	LRD - Buffalo District
Brandon Brummett Outreach Coordinator	LRD - Louisville
Mary Weidel Project and Program Manager	LRD - Detroit
Jerica Richardson Project Planner and Environmental Justice Coordinator	MVD - New Orleans District
Kevin Bluhm Economist and Outreach Specialist, Planning Branch	MVD - St. Paul District
Rebecca Soileau Geologist, Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch	MVD - St. Paul District
Jennifer Salak Outreach Specialist, Planning Branch	NWD - Omaha District
Amy Echols Deputy Chief for Public Affairs	NWD - Portland District
Athline Clark Project Manager and Environmental Coordinator Civil and Public Works Branch	POD - Honolulu District
David Apple Chief, Watershed Planning Section Planning and Policy Division	SAD - Jacksonville District
Jeff Morris Team Leader, Plan Formulation and Economics Branch	SAD - Savannah District
Eileen Takata Watershed Program Manager	SPD - Los Angeles District
Joél Benegar Senior Project Planner, Plan Formulation	SPD - San Francisco District
Chris Baker Economist, Southwest Division Regional Planning and Environmental Center	SWD - Tulsa District
Kate Alcoba Biologist, NEPA Coordinator	NAD - New York District
Julia Battocchi Environmental Munitions Design Center Engineering Division	NAD - Baltimore District
Program Contact	Location
Hal Cardwell Director, Conflict Resolution and Public Participation CX	Institute for Water Resources, VA
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