



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Institute for Water Resources

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CPCX & District Experts Plan Next Steps for Public Involvement Specialist Program

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. During the first week of February 2015, the Conflict Resolution and Public Participation Center of Expertise (CPCX) and the designated Public Involvement (PI) Specialists from across USACE met at the Risk Management Center's (RMC) Denver offices to discuss the evolution of the PI Specialist Program and to learn how PI Specialist's can help USACE reduce risk and improve the agency's relationship with the public through the enhancement of public involvement initiatives.

The Public Involvement (PI) Specialists program was created as a result of a high-level recommendation from a post-Katrina report on improving public participation in USACE decision-making. This is a district level position in which PI subject matter experts provide direct support to district activities. Since CPCX inaugurated this pilot PI Specialist Program in FY14, the pilot has grown to 19 designees across all Civil Works divisions.

During the PI Specialist meeting, the US Institute of Environmental Conflict Resolution (USIECR) provided a collaborative leadership training to help the PI Specialists better support their districts with engaging stakeholders. RMC representatives met with the PI Specialists to discuss how to improve public involvement and risk communication in the Dam and Levee Safety Programs, with specific attention to the upcoming Levee Safety Action Classification roll-out. PI Specialist Working Groups continued developing tools and templates that can be used USACE-wide to promote the value of Public Involvement. CPCX also identified challenges the PI Specialists are facing and the types of support needed to continue to strengthen the PI Specialist Pilot Program.

The peer networking and discussions around the PI Specialists' field experiences coupled with the USIECR training fostered connections and learning that will be directly applied to improve public involvement and risk communication in district activities. The PI Specialists will continue to work together to find , as one PI Specialist put it, "the pockets of greatness" throughout the Corps to identify the primary factors contributing to that 'greatness' and replicate that district's or project's success in public involvement to other parts of the Corps.

Learn More

For more information, visit IWR www.iwr.usace.army.mil or
PI Specialist Program http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/Portals/70/docs/cpc/PI_Specialist_Fact_Sheet_Sept14.pdf
CPCX <http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/cpc>