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WORKING PAPER #9

Alternative Dispute
Resolution Series

AN ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS IN REGARD TO PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES

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ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE
RESOLUTION SERIES

AN ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF THE U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS IN REGARD TO PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES

by

Stuart Langton

SEPTEMBER 1996

IWR REPORT 96-ADR-WP-9

Foreword

As national public engineers the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides a variety of services to the Public and the Military services such as; water resources management, infrastructure investment and management, emergency and disaster relief, construction and real estate services. In the best tradition of democratic government, the Corps delivers these in open, transparent, and accountable public forums. In the best tradition of financial accountability, it delivers them in accordance with clear performance measures. Today there are increasing demands by a variety of publics and interests to have a say on Corps activities. Thus, the importance of public involvement and building consensus are becoming even more important.

In the past, the Corps has been recognized as a leader in applying public involvement o its programs. This examination of public involvement in the Corps of Engineers was undertaken to assess the Corps' past performance in this area and determine what changes the Corps must make to better fulfill its responsibilities to the public in the future.

In 1992 the North Pacific Division (NPD) published a timely and thoughtful report titled, Building a Public Involvement Strategy for the North Pacific Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Conversations about that report between members of the Corps of Engineers, Institute for Water Resources (IWR) and Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI) led OSI to host several meetings in June and July 1992 to discuss the Corps' public participation posture. In addition to representatives of OSI and IWR, representatives from the Public Affairs Office (PAO) and Engineer Strategic Studies Center (ESSC) attended these meetings.

The consensus of the participants was that a current assessment of the Corps' public participation activities was needed. It was further agreed that the study should be done by a recognized authority in the field of public participation and that the expert selected should be independent of the Corps. This study has been undertaken for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers under a general order

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contract with N. J. G., Inc. Dr. Langton is a nationally recognized leader in the field of public participation who has some knowledge of Corps public participation activities through past reviews. However, he also brings the necessary objectivity to the study since he has not previously consulted with the Corps to develop any of its public participation activities or training programs.

Stuart Langton, Ph.D., as an independent consultant, conducted the study. Stuart Langton has been a consultant to 200 organizations. For ten years he was the Lincoln Filene Professor of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Tufts University. In 1978, he chaired the National Conference on Citizen Participation in Washington, D. C. He has directed the National Citizen Participation Research and Development Project sponsored by the Ford Foundation. He is the founding editor of *Citizen Participation Magazine* and his books in the field of public involvement include *Citizen Participation in America, Citizen Participation Perspectives,* and *Citizen Participation in Public Decision Making*. He is now the Director of Challenge to Leadership in Boston, one of the most unique community leadership initiatives in the nation.

Acknowledgments

This study represents the collective efforts and insights of many individuals and was written through an exclusive effort by Dr. Stuart Langton. The scope and direction of the assessment was guided by a Corps Steering Group composed of Jerome Delli Priscoli, Ph.D., Insitute for Water Resources (IWR); James Waddell, P.E., Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI); COL Miguel Monteverde, Public Affairs Office (PAO); Mark Dunning, Ph.D., Institute for Water Resources. The Corps project management team included, Michael Kingsley, OSI; Rick Sinclair, IWR; Carol Sanders, PAO; and Steve Reynolds, Engineer Strategic Studies Center.

Special thanks is given to the Chief of Engineers Strategic Steering Group (SSG) for their attention and input to this assessment through several in progress review meetings. At the time of completion and approval of the assessment the SSG was chaired by the Chief of Engineers, LTG Arthur Williams, and composed of MG Peter Offringa, MG John Sobke, MG Pat Stevens, COL Doug Brown, MG Stanley Genega, Mr. Carry Jones, Mr. Al Carton, Mr. Richard Armstrong, Mr. Nellie Dunnam, Mr. Charles Schroer, Mr. Herb Kennon, Mr. John Elmore, Mr. James Bates, Mr. Don Cluff, Dr. Robert Oswald, Mr. Barry Frankel, Mr. Ralph Lochialpo, Mr. Les Edelman, Mr. John Wallace, COL Miguel Monteverde, and COL Hap Gonser.

Our very special thanks is extended to those Division and District team members who took time from their busy schedules to interview with Dr. Langton on this subject:

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Executive Summary

This report represents one of three activities undertaken as a part of the Public Involvement Assessment Project of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (The Corps). The study described in this report involves an organizational assessment of the Corps in regard to public involvement practices and challenges. Another project activity includes a historical profile(Appendix B) of major initiatives to promote public involvement within the Corps since 1970. Also, three case studies have been undertaken to identify lessons from projects that are illustrative of issues the Corps is likely to deal with more frequently in the future.

The term "public involvement" refers to the ways in which the Corps includes and consults with the public in planning and decision-making. The public may include individuals, groups of citizens, organizations, government agencies, or elected officials who are interested in or may be affected by plans and decisions. Public involvement may include formal and informal methods. Among the ways in which the Corps involves the public are informal meetings, advisory committees, public meetings, conferences, workshops, and written comments, et al. In the process of public involvement, the Corps also informs the public concerning issues, plans, and decisions that may affect them. Informing the public supplements and supports the public involvement process, but in and of itself, is not public involvement.

Public involvement is not the same as public affairs, although the two are related. Public Affairs is concerned with how the Corps communicates with the public (public relations), how the Corps relates to the community on an ongoing basis (community relations), and how the Corps informs and involves citizens in particular projects (public involvement). Public Affairs personnel within the Corps may play a prominent or supporting role in regard to public involvement activities depending upon the policies and approaches of each Corps district and the way in which each project unfolds. As a general practice, public involvement is a shared responsibility within Corps districts. The management of public involvement usually is in the hands of project managers from one of the functional branches, and public affairs personnel provide a consultative or assistance role.

This study examined the experience and opinions of Corps personnel in regard to public involvement. The aim of the study was to determine how influential Corps personnel viewed the Corps experience, present capacity, and future challenges concerning public involvement. To obtain a cross section of opinion, eleven district offices in different parts of the country were visited. The Districts that were visited were Albuquerque, Baltimore, Ft. Worth, Jacksonville, Little Rock, Los Angeles, Memphis, Mobile, New Orleans, Sacramento, and St. Louis. Two Division offices were visited at Vicksburg and Omaha. Also, the USACE Headquarters office was visited and interviews were conducted with ten officials. More than 100 persons were interviewed for this study. The sample of persons interviewed included officials involved in the various functional areas of Corps activity (Planning, Regulatory Affairs, Engineering, Real Estate, Construction, Military Construction, Operations and Maintenance, Public Affairs, Legal Counsel, and Emergency Management).

Almost all of the interviews were tape-recorded. The project consultant guaranteed each person interviewed that their comments would be treated confidentially, although he informed each person that quotes (without identifying from whom) would be included in the final project report.

This report summarizes the major conclusions drawn from the study. It also includes a series of recommendations proposed by the project consultant based upon the trends, critical issues, and organizational challenges identified by those interviewed. Appendix A includes 35 pages of selected quotes from the interviews that support the conclusions and recommendations The quotes are organized according to the twelve key interview questions which are listed in Appendix A.

It should be emphasized that this report draws conclusions about public involvement within the Corps based upon the perceptions of selected employees. That is a strength and a limitation. It is a strength in that those interviewed were intimately aware of the Corps' public involvement experience and the institutional forces that influence practice. It is a limitation in that the conclusions are not based upon the views of persons from outside of the Corps who have experience in regard to Corps public involvement initiatives. However, this limitation is offset by the fact that many persons from outside the Corps were interviewed in preparing three case studies following the completion of this report. As it turned out, the views of those persons confirmed and reinforced the findings of this report.

The major conclusions of this study are as follows.

Commitment to involving the public in its various functions is widespread throughout the Corps.

There is considerable unevenness in the level of commitment and ability of Corps personnel to effectively involve the public from district to district and project to project.

The Corps needs to undertake system-wide efforts to assure that it can effectively relate to and involve the public in the future.

The major conclusions identified above are further supported by the Historical Profile and the three case studies. For example, the *Historical Profile* summarizes how public involvement has evolved as an important activity within the Corps since the 1960s and has become widespread. The *Profile* identifies many directives within the Corps, as well as regulations from other agencies, that have encouraged or required public involvement — especially since 1970. The *Profile* documents the concerted effort of the Corps during the 1970s and early 1980s, with particular support from the Institute for Water Resources, to strengthen the Corps' capacity to conduct public involvement activities. As a result of ongoing efforts including training programs, technical assistance, action-research, and distribution of materials, capacity to conduct public involvement among Corps

personnel was increased and by the 1980s public involvement was widespread throughout the Corps. The *Historical Profile* also indicates how public involvement values and practices have been reflected in related Corps initiatives such as Alternative Dispute Resolution and Partnering.

While the *Historical Profile* illustrates the roots and growth of public involvement within the Corps, the three case studies indicate the kinds of challenges the Corps is likely to encounter in the future. One case involves efforts to deal with a significant hazardous and toxic waste problem in constructing a new navigational lock at the Winfield Locks and Dam site on the Kanawha River in West Virginia. In this case, the Corps had to deal with citizens' organizations and a number of community leaders who became distrustful and critical of the Corps. The second case chronicles the experience of the Corps in addressing the problem of low dissolved oxygen, which posed a threat to a world-class trout fishery, downstream from the Bull Shoals Dam on the White River in Arkansas. In this case, the Corps was challenged by recreation interests and the State of Arkansas. Consequently, the Corps joined with others in establishing the White River Dissolved Oxygen Committee to attempt to manage the problem. The third case describes the Corps role in helping the Army prepare for the reuse of Fort Ord in California. In this case, the Corps worked on behalf of the Army in preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (E. I. S.) and in undertaking hazardous and toxic waste clean-up activities. The E. I. S. was particularly difficult because of time limitations imposed and complex community dynamics. While the Corps experience in working with the public in developing the E. I. S. involved considerable tension and conflict, public involvement in regard to hazardous and toxic waste clean-up efforts progressed smoothly and without public disagreement.

The three cases reinforce and illustrate the major conclusions and observations made in this Organizational Assessment. For example, the cases reflect how the public has become more sophisticated; how public involvement has become more complex and requires dealing with citizen groups, other agencies, and elected officials; the significance of technology in relation to public involvement; and the importance of informal public involvement processes.

The organizational assessment which follows offers recommendations in five areas. These proposals, which are further justified by case study findings, are as follows.

Clarify Policy. The Corps needs to articulate and communicate anew its understanding, vision, and commitment regarding public involvement. It needs policy and guidance documents to clarify and communicate policy.

Strengthen Capability. The Corps needs to assure that personnel have the knowledge and skills to successfully manage public involvement today and tomorrow. Case studies, guidebooks, and updated training programs are needed to do this.

Promote Quality. The Corps is uneven in its capacity to manage public involvement and should address public involvement as a quality management issue. This will require identifying performance standards, encouraging evaluation, and organizing quality management issue groups in each district.

Reinforce Commitment. The Corps should identify public involvement management as a criteria for performance evaluation and promotion. It should also create recognition programs. A reward system is needed.

Assure Leadership. The Corps should clarify who is responsible for assuring the quality of public involvement. It is recommended that the Chief of Engineers and Division and District Commanders provide leadership to assure sufficient commitment and outstanding performance. A Public Involvement Council should be established at headquarters.

Organizational Assessment

Introduction

Since the 1960s, demands to involve the public in developing plans and policies among federal agencies have continued to grow. Four important forces that have driven the demand for greater public involvement are as follows:

First, American political culture has changed. Public distrust of government and the decline of mediating institutions such as political parties, and the rise of interest group politics, has made it more difficult to define public consensus. As a consequence, government agencies cannot assure political support from the public, legislative authorities, or government administrative leaders in regard to policies and plans. Therefore, on a case by case basis, government agencies must test and forge support for their action. Public involvement is critical to this process.

Second, public involvement is now a requirement based upon legislation such as the National Environmental Protection Act and hundreds of other laws established since 1969. The public expects to be involved and Congress requires it in major programs. So, as a matter of compliance and expectation, agencies must involve the public.

Third, as a practical matter, government agencies have found that it is cost-effective to involve the public at the outset of any initiative and to a sufficient extent. As a matter of prudent business practice, agencies have learned it is a wise investment to involve the public to avoid litigation or costly delays due to public opposition.

Fourth, in many instances, citizens have provided information and suggestions that have saved costs or improved upon project plans. Public involvement, therefore, often includes helpful and constructive contributions.

The Corps has developed a reputation since the early 1970s as a leader among federal agencies in public involvement. One reason for this is that the nature of its construction activities in civil works and its regulatory responsibilities in regard to wetlands have a direct and visible impact upon the public. In the early 1970s, the Corps made a strategic decision to address public involvement challenges following the passage of N.E.P.A. in 1969. The Corps' response to this challenge was focused, extensive, and well supported. The Offices of the Chief Engineers provided considerable intellectual and regulatory guidance; planning and public affairs officials throughout the Corps were involved in the development of a comprehensive initiative; the Institute of Water Resources (I.W.R.) was given responsibility to provide guidance and support; and training, publications, technical assistance and other support resources were made available through I.W.R.

By the early 1980s, Headquarters' strategic commitment to public involvement had weakened. In part this reflected the lack of interest in public involvement by the Reagan administration. One example of this was the forced disbanding of the Federal Inter-agency Council on Citizen Participation. Another example was an administrative directive by President Reagan to reduce advisory committees among federal agencies. As a result, over 80 advisory committees within the Corps were disbanded. In 1981, the Corps' Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) expressed concern about the Corps' commitment to public involvement. While the Chief of Engineers at the time reaffirmed the Corps' commitment, Headquarters' attention to public involvement as a priority corporate concern has been scant since that time.

Despite the lack of emphasis from Headquarters, public involvement practices have been widespread in the field since the early 1980s. In part, this is a result of federal regulations as well as increasing demands and expectations from the public. Many interviewed for this study have suggested that ongoing commitment to public involvement has been enhanced by a generation of executives who were well trained in the 1970s and early 1980s. Others observe that younger staff naturally understand the necessity for public involvement. Another force that has encouraged public involvement is the expansion of Corps missions into areas that demand a good deal of public communication and interaction. Additionally, it has been suggested that there has been significant advances in public involvement under other names such as Alternative Dispute Resolution, Partnering, etc.

This report concludes that all of these forces have been present for the past decade. As a consequence, and as many Corps officials have suggested, public involvement is now well integrated as a value and practice within the organizational culture of the Corps. Further, there is evidence of considerable experimentation, pride in performance and commitment to public involvement. Yet, there is also a corresponding concern about uneven quality and commitment in dealing with the public. On balance, however, the Corps has been strongly committed in its promotion of public involvement over a 20 year period. By comparative standards, the Corps may provide more public involvement opportunities than any other federal government agency in the world; and, among federal agencies in the United States, the Corps' efforts may exceed or be equal to that of any other major agency.

Beyond expressions of commitment and the widespread presence of public involvement practice, two critical evaluative questions need to be considered: **How effective is the Corps in its present public involvement practices**, and **How well positioned is the Corps to address future public involvement challenges?** This report concludes that, in regard to present practice, the Corps is uneven in regard to performance. Quality enhancement and control are critical issues. In considering future challenges, the Corps needs to provide greater attention to and support for promoting public involvement. At present, the Corps is living off a legacy of the past and has not addressed future demands adequately. The Corps needs to develop a renewed public involvement

philosophy, strategy, and corporate support system. The philosophy must reflect changing political and technological dynamics. The strategies must address fundamental organizational needs within the Corps. The support system must be adequate, economical, and smart to assure impact. The discussion which follows addresses these issues.

Significant Public Involvement Changes and Trends

Many changes have taken place in regard to public involvement within the Corps in the last decade. As the Corps has changed in significant ways since the early 1980s, so has public involvement practice. Ten of the most significant changes that have taken place or are occurring are summarized below. For the most part, these developments are viewed positively; however, their positive cast should not obscure the challenges they offer for the future. Accordingly, each of the summaries include a description of an associated challenge described in *italics.*

1. The public is more sophisticated and demanding. Today the public expects to be well informed and involved in regard to issues that affect them. Environmental consciousness and participatory inclinations are widespread among American citizens. The public is more aware of public involvement requirements and are more ready to pressure public officials if a government agency is not responsive to their concerns. They are more rational and less confrontational, yet NIMBY (Not-In-My-Backyard) sentiments are very strong. Interest groups are better organized and funded as a rule. They are more selective in their advocacy and tend increasingly to utilize research to buttress their positions. Environmental groups are frequently willing to build ongoing relationships; however, they often want to postpone their response or commitment to a project to the later stage of a planning process. There are differences throughout the country and among districts in regard to the attitudes of interest groups toward the Corps. In different districts, farmers, environmental groups, Native Americans, recreational interest groups, etc., may be more or less supportive or critical of the Corps based on tradition or the role and responsibilities of the Corps. This means that the socio-political role of the Corps differs among districts. Yet in each district, the Corps must respond to the growing sophistication and demands of interest groups and the general public.

The Corps needs to assure that its employees in every district who interface with the public have the commitment and skills to work effectively with the general public and interest groups within their region.

2. Interpretations of how the public is defined has expanded. Since the 1970s, the Corps has encouraged a very inclusive definition of the public. Today, there is widespread commitment to a very broad interpretation. In addition to identifying people who might be impacted by a project

or interest groups in a geographic area, heightened sensitivity is focused on local political leaders; administrators of relevant local, state, and federal agencies; and elected state and federal officials.

The Corps has learned that a positive effort to involve the public may be undermined if other government agencies with responsibilities related to a Corps initiative are not involved sufficiently from the outset.. Also, some elements of the public may appeal to elected officials if they are not satisfied with a decision even though they have been involved in its development. These dynamics require multiple, integrated and sophisticated approaches to public involvement at the district level. Consequently, public involvement requires three considerations today in most Corps projects: **citizen interest strategy,** an **inter-agency strategy,** and an **elected officials strategy.**

Corps personnel who are responsible for the design and management of public involvement require understanding and skills not only in dealing with citizens, but also in dealing with other agencies and elected officials and their staffs. Knowledge of organizational behavior and political processes are now a necessity for those responsible for the design and management of public involvement.

3. The scope of public involvement activities has expanded. During the 1970s and early 1980s the greatest demand for public involvement was in planning for civil works projects and in regulatory programs concerning wetlands. Today, the demands have expanded into many other mission areas that have grown in the past decade. These areas include clean-up of Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive waste (HTRW), military base realignments and closings, environmental restoration, work-for-others, outdoor recreation on rivers and reservoirs where the Corps has operational responsibility, and emergency management in responding to floods, hurricanes, and other natural disasters.

Expansion into these mission areas poses new and intensified public involvement demands for the Corps. For example, HTRW clean-up requires educating the public about risks and alternative treatment options. Emergency management and recreational site management often involves working with volunteers, a growing area of public involvement. Increasing demands on Corps operated water resource sites calls for managing competing demands from homeowners, fishermen, hydropower interests, outfitters, etc.

The Corps has previously studied, documented, and provided considerable training in public involvement in the areas of civil works planning and regulatory affairs. However, practical research, case-studies, and focused training about public involvement are limited in the growing mission areas identified above.

The Corps needs to develop state-of-the-art knowledge and training opportunities in regard to public involvement in expanded and expanding mission areas. Prospect courses provided through

the Huntsville Division, and other training programs, must remain current with these developments. New case-studies need to be prepared and made available.

4. Technology is influencing public involvement performance. Computers and related technologies have influenced the performance of public involvement in many ways. Maintenance of mailing lists is enhanced by the use of computers. Desk-top publishing software makes it easier to produce reports, newsletters, and brochures of higher quality and often at less cost. Computer networks make it possible to interact with others involved with a project or a common interest. Telefacsimile technology allows information to be shared immediately, thus reducing misunderstandings as a result of delay. Compugraphic technology contributes to more effective slides and charts that are produced more quickly and economically. Satellite technology makes it possible to photograph terrain and monitor natural resources and changes which helps the public to better understand a situation. Decision support technology such as the program used in the Corps National Drought Study, help all participants to better understand and assess options.

All of these technologies are being used throughout the Corps in dealing with the public to a lesser or greater extent. However, the use of technology in public involvement has not been documented, evaluated, or widely shared.

A challenge to the Corps is to help their personnel responsible for public involvement understand and develop skills in the use of communication technologies to increase their productivity and effectiveness.

5. Management approaches to public involvement have become more diverse. Until recently, Corps personnel have been completely responsible for the design, management, and control of public involvement projects. This tradition is changing as the Corps takes on more work-for-others and as a result of the amendments to the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 which requires cost-sharing in civil works projects. Whether undertaking a project on behalf of another agency, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, or planning a civil works project with a local sponsor, a Crops district may now assume a variety of roles in regard to public involvement. The district may be given total responsibility or it may have more or less depending on the wishes or capacity of its sponsor. Then again, the district may share responsibility on an even basis with a co-sponsor.

Each of the management arrangements between a Corps District and partners involves unique challenges and dynamics. For example, how does a district influence a sponsor that may want to manage public involvement but has limited experience or a poor track-record? Which are the best management procedures for a shared public involvement initiative? Because diverse public involvement management arrangements are fairly recent, there is limited collective knowledge about them. As a practical matter, it is important to know how to best manage public involvement under

alternative relationships because the credibility and performance of the Corps is at stake even when the Corps' level of control may be modified.

The Corps needs to develop and share state-of-the-art knowledge about alternative management approaches to public involvement with sponsors. District personnel need to develop understanding and skill to assure effective leadership under different arrangements.

6. Informal interactive public involvement processes are preferred today. In the 1970s, public hearings were a predominant form of meeting with the public. Today Corps personnel indicate opposition to public hearings except in occasional circumstances where a more formal approach may be appropriate. Even in such cases, it is suggested that a hearing be used to augment other activities that have provided opportunities for more open and interactive dialogue. In civil works planning projects, public workshops which allow for discussion on a one to one basis or in small groups has evolved as a popular involvement medium. In regulatory affairs, informal pre-application discussions are widely preferred. In operations of recreational facilities, surveys with users, meetings, and advisory groups are used frequently. In general, the Corps has found approaches such as these to be more "user friendly," but also they provide better vehicles for exploring alternatives and dealing with conflicts.

The Corps needs to document, evaluate, and share information about various public involvement procedures used in different kinds of activities. District personnel who work with the public need to know of "best practice" models and how to implement them.

7. Public involvement training is influencing practice. The Corps' long-standing investment in public involvement training has been beneficial. Those interviewed for this project who have previously participated in a public involvement training program developed by I.W.R. (about 60%), were almost universally positive about what they learned and how the have been able to apply their learnings. Senior officials who received training in the 1970s indicated that it has influenced how they plan and manage projects. Mid-career personnel who have taken the prospect courses offered through the Huntsville Division indicate that the planning procedures and methods they learned about were helpful. A number noted that they utilized an interactive workshop format they learned about in their training experience. A third area of training, of more recent vintage, includes seminars on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) developed by I.W.R. using many lessons from earlier public involvement training and sponsored by the Office of the Chief Counsel. These programs are also highly rated and of practical use to those who have attended.

Two elements of training are regarded as particularly helpful. One is the use of realistic cases, and the other is leadership from people outside the Corps who understood the Corps' organizational culture but have a broader perspective.

The Corps needs to continue to provide meaningful training programs in public involvement that is of practical benefit to personnel.

8. Leadership rather than regulation is the preferred strategy for promoting public involvement. A popular strategy among federal agencies and within the Corps during the 1970s was to provide strong and specified regulations for public involvement. Such regulations often included enumerating methods to use and frequency of use. Today, Corps officials view this approach as unrealistic and inappropriate because it does not address the uniqueness of different situations. Further, the view is widely held that promoting change and enhancing performance must be nourished rather than regulated.

A common view among Corps officials is that public involvement is best promoted through leaders who espouse its values, establish corresponding policies, practice its principles, and reward employees who do the same. These factors are frequently identified as things that influence and have a lasting impact on performance because they are integrated into the culture and operating system of the Corps..

Corps leaders need to articulate the importance and values associated with public involvement, provide examples through their own commitment, and create incentives and rewards for employees in the area of public involvement.

9. There is growing recognition of the relationship between community relations and public involvement. A frequent theme among those interviewed for this study was that public involvement in particular projects is often influenced by previous and ongoing relationships between the district office and the community. If a district had previously experienced contentious relationships in several projects or in a project with high visibility, it was reported that it was far more difficult to develop a positive public involvement project. Conversely, a number of districts report that ongoing community relations efforts contribute to and make it easier to create productive public involvement programs.

A number of officials are of the opinion that public involvement must be thought of as elements of an ongoing community relations strategy of a district. They propose that public involvement must be viewed more systemically rather than episodically to promote quality and effectiveness. Examples of community relations efforts that are reported to positively nourish public involvement include the following: the establishment of Advisory Committees or Councils that meet with district officials to discuss mutual concerns, attending conferences sponsored by interest groups, a speakers program to inform community groups of the Corps' resources, values, and concerns; volunteer programs to assist schools and other community institutions; public workshops that provide information on district activities; and informal visits with government officials, the media, and leaders of community organizations.

The Corps needs to increase awareness among all districts of the positive relationship between community relations and public participation. Information and training opportunities should be made available to encourage senior leadership in every district to develop community relation strategies and activities.

10. Many Corps initiatives compatible with public involvement have been developed. Many management initiatives have been developed within the Corps since the 1980s that are compatible with public involvement values and practices. These initiatives include "customer care" which stresses responsiveness, satisfaction, and accountability in the work the Corps does with and for others. "Partnering" emphasizes good communication, cooperation, and collaboration with others who work with the Corps in the delivery of services. "Army Quality Management" (AQM), an Army-wide initiative adopted in some districts, is relevant to public involvement in that it advocates participation among employees as well as those served to enhance the quality of services. "Alternative Dispute Resolution" (ADR) addresses one of the most challenging issues in dealing with the public — how to reduce and resolve disputes and achieve workable agreements. Finally, recent Headquarters emphasis on "communication" and on "relationships" as major corporate themes parallel core values related to public involvement.

The Corps could benefit from an examination of its many initiatives regarding its relations with its many publics. A coherent and updated philosophy that shows connections between initiatives, strategies to build synergy, and benchmarks for improvement could increase commitment, cost-effectiveness, and performance.

Critical Issues

The changes and trends identified above suggest a number of needs that should be addressed if the Corps is to continue to maintain and strengthen its capacity to manage public involvement in the future. In addition to these changes and associated needs, this study has identified a number of critical issues that must also be addressed. These issues are particularly important because they deal with the capacity or lack of capacity of the Corps to respond to changes concerning public involvement and their related challenges. The issues are as follows.

1. Unevenness in quality and commitment. While public involvement is widely undertaken within the Corps, great discrepancies in effort and quality exist. The situation varies from district to district, among functional divisions ("stovepipes") within districts, and among projects or activities in a division.

Although Corps personnel tend to speak very positively about the importance of public involvement and their commitment to it, the following factors are mentioned frequently as impeding the quality and value of public involvement to the public and the Corps.

- A minority of Corps personnel are opposed to public involvement because they view it as a challenge to their authority and expertise. The proportion of personnel who maintain this posture is viewed as having declined over the past 20 years.

- Many personnel who must interact with the public are not effective in listening to or communicating with the public. Some are perceived as arrogant and defensive when questioned by the public. One or two cases of such behavior can undermine an otherwise positive public involvement effort.

- Often the Corps does not involve the public early enough in planning or policy-making. As a result, the Corps is viewed as having decided what to do and then organizing public involvement activities merely to gain public compliance. In such cases, the public views the Corps as manipulative or rigid and considers public involvement to be a waste of time.

- The Corps sometimes conducts public involvement in a pro-forma or haphazard way. Little effort is made to identify or reach-out to publics that may be affected by a plan or policy. Public concerns and suggestions are not seriously considered, and follow-up contacts are not made with the public.

There is no current guiding corporate philosophy regarding public involvement and no coherent guidance system. Each "stovepipe" is responsible for training its people and managing its own public involvement activities. Quality management tools such as standards of excellence, performance guidelines, and evaluation are seldom utilized. Occasionally evaluation of personnel may involve criteria related to public involvement. There are few rewards or incentives for undertaking or managing public involvement effectively. There is no "designated center of excellence" for public involvement as is the case in regard to many other important operational matters in the Corps.

The present situation within the Corps is that public involvement is at the discretion of district commanders, division heads, and project managers. While there are many desirable features of this practice, including flexibility according to need and the capacity of personnel, the Corps needs to place greater emphasis on the importance of public involvement and increase corporate guidance.

2. Lack of state-of-the-art information. With the exception of developing case studies and other materials in the area of Alternative Dispute Resolution, the Corps has not undertaken studies or published many materials concerning public involvement for over a decade since the last series

of I.W.R. publications. An exception is the first and recent ten year reader in public involvement, published by I.W.R., for which a considerable demand is reported. Practical research and publications are particularly needed today to address public involvement issues in new mission areas, the use of technology, alternative project management models, community relations, and productive methods.

Strong interest has been expressed in such material (especially case studies) by many interviewed in this project. Presently, there is no organizational unit that has the assignment or a budget to develop such materials as was the case with the I.W.R. in the 1970s and early 1980s.

3. Inadequate training system. At present training in public involvement within the Corps consists of Prospect Courses offered through the Huntsville Division and programs made available through functional divisions, "stovepipes." The present system is inadequate for meeting present and future training needs in four respects First, many who want to participate in Prospect Courses find they cannot because of other training requirements and reductions in budgets for training. This is reflected in declining enrollments and a recent course cancellation. Second, the amount of attention devoted to public involvement in each functional area is limited and there is no coordination at all among them. Third, training opportunities have not been created to address changes and trends such as the use of technology, alternative management, new missions, etc. Fourth, there has been no systematic update by Corps public involvement experts since public involvement courses were assigned to the Huntsville Division.

The root of the Corps training problems are similar to the lack of updated field research and publications. No unit or person is assigned to manage these issues and no budget is available. Further, there is no mechanism for connecting training needs and interests among "stovepipes." This points to the need for a designated "Center of Excellence" within the Corps.

4. Dilemmas regarding Public Affairs Officers. There are great differences among districts regarding the roles and responsibilities of Public Affairs Officers, and this is reflected in the variety of ways that P.A.O.s relate to public involvement. Models vary from district to district and are influenced by such factors as tradition, the rank and ability of P.A.O. staff, the approach of each district commander, and the ability of other staff in designing and managing public involvement activities.

Among the roles that P.A.O.s may undertake in public involvement are as planners and strategists, media representatives, coaches to staff in developing public presentation skills, writers and editors, meeting consultants, and meeting managers.

Because public involvement is so critical to the Corps' success, it is important that the role and abilities of Public Affairs Officers be examined. Three related issues deserve particular

attention. First, the ideal role and responsibilities for P.A.O.s regarding responsibilities in public involvement should be clarified. A standard is needed to guide the field. Second, efforts should be made to assure that staff who are competent to assume these responsibilities are retained or hired. Rank and salaries commensurate with role and responsibility should be provided. Third, a thorough and comprehensive training program is needed to assure that P.A.O.s possess the knowledge and skills to handle public involvement responsibilities in the future.

In considering the future role of P.A.O.s in regard to public involvement, several points should be considered. One point is that some P.A.O.s now deal with public involvement only as a public relations issue. A related point is that some P.A.O.s serve merely as apologists for their district or division. To serve future public involvement challenges, P.A.O.s will need to transcend these limited perspectives. They will increasingly need to become wise strategists, advisors, and advocates in helping the Corps to relate to the public in the broadest sense of determining the public interest.

Related Organizational Challenges

In addition to the issues identified in the previous section, the Corps faces related organizational challenges that are relevant to the future of public involvement practice. These challenges include matters that are essential to the mission and integrity of the Corps as an institution. Since public involvement reflects and is influenced by these considerations, it is important to understand how they are related.

Turnover among district commanders. Public involvement considerations are among the most immediate and visible matters confronted by a district commander. At present, district commanders are assigned for two years and in a few cases they stay three years. District staff and a number of commanders indicate that this is detrimental to effective public involvement because it takes a commander at least a year to learn about a district, and once the commander builds relations with community leaders, he leaves. This high turnover rate contributes to lack of continuity and inability to deal with fundamental attitudinal or structural problems regarding public involvement within a district. These dynamics suggest that longer appointments and/or more corporate guidance regarding public involvement would be beneficial. The current situation suggests the need for reinstating the two-day training program in public involvement for all district commanders that was provided in the 1970s.

Implications of reorganization. The proposed Corps reorganization plan will reduce or eliminate planning staff in a number of districts. Since planning staff have historically been at the forefront of public involvement, there is concern among districts that will lose these staff that the district's public involvement capacity will suffer. It is predicted by some that planners who are

located at greater distance will not understand community political dynamics or build the kind of relationships that nourish good public involvement. Other officials propose that good training, adequate field visits, and appropriate use of technology can compensate for changes resulting from reorganization. Whatever the case, the issue of how public involvement can best be promoted under reorganization plans should be addressed.

The promotional dilemma. Successive administrations have prohibited the Corps from engaging in marketing activities concerning its services. In large measure this is a policy to assure that the Corps does not compete with engineering firms in the private sector.

The Amendments to the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 make it more important for the Corps to make their resources in areas of civil works known to local officials even though this cannot involve marketing as such. This situation reinforces the importance of community relations and positive public involvement activities. As a practical matter, the Corps will encourage more potential local co-sponsors for projects as a result of outstanding performance of public involvement. In this regard, public involvement may be one of the best demonstrations of the Corps' ability to serve the public interest.

Balancing centralized and decentralized approaches. The Corps is a complex organization that seeks to balance headquarters guidance and selected control with discretionary authority at the district level. In each decade, and according to various management issues, a balance must be crafted between central influence and decentralized discretion.

In the early 1970s, Headquarters exerted considerable direction regarding public involvement. By the 1980s, public involvement had become essentially a decentralized consideration. Today, there is a need to resurrect headquarters guidance, not necessarily as a control force, but rather as a facilitating mechanism to assure quality and networking among districts. The Corps needs to assure that an acceptable level and quality of public involvement is present in every district. This will not take place without Headquarters' leadership.

The Corps needs to determine how to promote, strengthen, and assure quality in public involvement-building upon its headquarters resources and its decentralized field tradition. An important resource in this equation, as it once was, could be the Institute of Water Resources. Another important resource that may be influential are division commanders. Their potential role in advancing public involvement should not be overlooked. Additionally, the Corps may need to create a new organizational entity combining headquarters divisions to promote and coordinate public involvement interests. Further, a network representing field and headquarters interests may be helpful as a group to meet occasionally and communicate continuously using the best available technology.

Connecting "Stovepipes." The Corps has developed a system of specialized areas of expertise, referred to as "stovepipes." These areas include planning, engineering, regulatory affairs, operations, public affairs, legal counsel, et. al. This specialization of functions has contributed to quality enhancement in each area. A present challenge to the Corps is to maintain the benefits of this system while assuring better corporate connections and integration among them. In the area of public involvement, it is critical that each "stovepipe" reflect a coherent corporate commitment and approach. If any area is lax in this regard, it will undermine the reputation of the Corps as an organization. As the saying goes, the weakest link can break the chain.

The Corps needs to assure that each of its functional units is committed to and capable of dealing with public involvement challenges. At the same time, as a matrix organization, connections need to be made between functional areas at the level of headquarters, divisions, and districts. Because public involvement is not the exclusive responsibility of any one "stovepipe," strategies and processes are needed to assure that public involvement needs are attended to and connected between "stovepipes" at all organizational levels.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Three major conclusions can be drawn from this study. One is that public involvement is a critical and necessary activity that will influence the reputation, performance, and future work of the Corps. Second, the Corps has achieved considerable success in promoting public involvement activities: however, quality is uneven and an acceptable standard of performance needs to be identified and achieved throughout all districts. Third, the Corps must create a system-wide initiative to upgrade knowledge and employee skills to address new and emerging dynamics associated with public involvement.

To address the public involvement needs and challenges within the Corps, five strategies are recommended. These strategies can be stated simply as follows:

- **Clarify Policy**
- **Strengthen Capability**
- **Promote Quality**
- **Reinforce Commitment**
- **Assure Leadership**

What these strategies suggest as possible actions are described below.

Clarify Policy. It has been twenty years since the Corps has undertaken a major effort to define its values and approach in involving the public. Such an effort is needed today because public involvement challenges have grown in regard to areas of application and complexity. Further, many of the values associated with public involvement are served by other programmatic initiatives such as AQM, ADR, Partnering, etc. Also, the connection between the need for community relations and public involvement needs to be clarified today in theory and in practice. Accordingly, the following actions are proposed.

- **A policy document** should be created that provides an updated philosophy of the Corps in regard to public involvement. The document needs to offer a coherent model for dealing with the public, explaining how public involvement, community relations, ADR, partnering, etc., are related and reflect essential Corps values. The document should define and communicate a corporate ethic to guide all Corps employees in their interactions with the public.

- **A guidance document** (or series of documents) should be developed to assist district offices in carrying out the Corps' public involvement philosophy without regulations. The guidance document should describe and illustrate preferred approaches to public involvement and list criteria that district offices could use to plan and evaluate efforts to involve the public.

  Representatives from various headquarters divisions and representatives from field divisions and districts should actively participate in the creation of the above.

Strengthen Capability. The Corps should update and expand its efforts to help personnel better understand and manage public involvement activities. This can be done in the following ways.

- **A series of case studies** and guidebooks should be developed to describe "best practice" public involvement approaches. The series needs to focus on public involvement in the numerous mission areas of the Corps. Additionally, attention should be given to productive methods, use of technology, and alternative management approaches.

- **A coordinated training strategy** should be designed and implemented that cuts across all "stovepipes." A project should be undertaken to assure that training activities in each "stovepipe" includes a common core body of learnings about public involvement.

- **New training courses** in public involvement should be designed and required for all new district commanders. Also, a program similar to the model developed for ADR training

should be initiated. Required training workshops in public involvement should be conducted for senior personnel within each district.

Promote Quality. In addition to the other proposals in this section, a number of things can be done, and at reasonable cost, to promote quality in the design and implementation of public involvement. In particular, the following three initiatives are recommended.

- **Identify performance standards** and criteria in involving the public in each functional area. Such standards should apply to organizational units as well as executive officer performance. This will provide professionals in different functional areas with a clear understanding of what should be achieved as a result of public involvement activity. Standards and criteria should be explained and reinforced in training programs in each functional area.

- **Encourage evaluation of public involvement.** A norm should be promoted in each district to evaluate public involvement activities within each functional division on a regular basis. Peer review techniques and the performance standards proposed above can serve as useful tools. Simple methods such as recording major learnings and problems can be used to advance state-of-the-art knowledge in each functional area.

- **Organize quality management issue groups** within each district. These groups can serve several functions. They can monitor project evaluations and develop reports that document major learnings and common problems. The group can provide consultation to divisions or particular projects within the district. They can also undertake a comprehensive assessment of public involvement activities within the district and offer recommendations to promote quality performance.

Reinforce Commitment. To reinforce commitment to public involvement, the Corps must develop procedures that reward personnel for their commitment and performance. Two ways to do this are proposed below.

- **Establish performance and promotion criteria.** Management of public involvement should be an important criterion in evaluating the management performance of Corps personnel who must work with the public. This criterion should be included in the annual evaluations of Headquarters Division Chiefs, District Commanders, Division Commanders, and other staff who have important responsibilities in regard to relating to the public. Additionally, demonstrated public involvement management abilities should be important considerations in hiring and promoting managers.

- **Establish recognition programs.** The Corps should recognize officials who demonstrate exemplary leadership in public involvement. Awards honoring excellence should be made

in functional division areas ("stovepipes") annually. Also, each district should identify and recognize exemplary performance on an annual basis.

Assure Leadership. A major problem in assuring effective public involvement within the Corps is that it is everyone's responsibility in general but no persons responsibility in particular. This is one reason why quality is uneven and the Corps is not well-positioned to meet emerging challenges. Therefore, the following actions are proposed.

- **The Chief of Engineers and Division and District Commanders must provide leadership** in assuring sufficient commitment and outstanding performance in public involvement practices. The Army leaders within the Corps must accept responsibility and hold themselves accountable for the capacity of the Corps to relate to the public. While it may seem paradoxical that military men trained in a tradition of authority should become stalwarts in the promotion of administrative democracy, such are the challenges of leadership today.

  Public involvement leadership and management needs to become an important consideration in the selection, rating, and promotion of Army personnel within the Corps. While civilian managers will always be responsible for implementing public involvement, authority and accountability must clearly reside with the military officers who dominate senior leadership positions. Clearly, responsibility for public involvement must be shared between military and civilian officials, but Army officers need to be the source of accountability.

- **For Public Involvement to work, the people in contact with the public must have the authority to negotiate in good faith.** If the solutions they work out in cooperation with the public are routinely overturned or altered by headquarters, there can be no meaningful public involvement. The Corps must create a system in which headquarters has confidence in its districts to establish agreements with the public.

- **Create a Headquarters Public Involvement Council.** The Corps needs an organizational structure to provide leadership in the area of public involvement within Headquarters. A Public Involvement Council is proposed as a mechanism to provide such leadership. To create integration in public involvement practice, the Council should include representatives from the functional divisions and units within headquarters.

  The Public Involvement Council should provide leadership in acting upon the proposals advanced in this report and/or alternative actions. The Council should be provided with sufficient resources (budget, staff, and consultants) to carry out its work. A unit within the Corps, as I.W.R. once did, should be provided with the assignment and resources to serve as a "center of excellence" with guidance from the proposed Council.

- **Conduct Annual Audits of Public Involvement within Districts.** Each district should be expected to audit and assess its public involvement strategy, procedures, and activities annually. The audit and assessment should determine what changes, if any, are needed and how to achieve them. Each district would be expected to develop its own plan for promoting and enhancing quality in the area of public involvement.

Case Studies

Preface

The following three case studies have been prepared as a part of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Public Involvement Assessment Project. The purpose of the project is to assess the Corps' effectiveness in involving the public in planning and decision making. The project goal is to suggest how the Corps can provide effective public involvement in the future. In addition to the case studies, the project includes an organizational analysis of the Corps in regard to public involvement practices and a historical profile of Corps efforts to promote public involvement since 1970.

Three case studies were selected that represent the kinds of projects and issues which the Corps is likely to encounter more frequently in the future. One case involves attempts to deal with a significant hazardous and toxic waste problem in constructing a new navigational lock on the Kanawha River in West Virginia. Another case is concerned with attempts to deal with low amounts of oxygen below the Bull Shoals and Norfolk Dams on the White River Basin in Arkansas that threatens a major trout fishery. The third case is about the effort of the Corps to provide services to the Army in planning for the reuse of Fort Ord in Central California.

Each case study examines projects that could provide enough information for a book. However, the guidelines for these cases established a limit of 10 to 12 pages in the interest of the reader and for purposes of economy. Consequently, each case seeks to highlight the major issues, developments, and learning in the case. While the major technical and operational matters in each case are summarized, the focus of the case is on issues and dynamics related to public involvement.

The three cases were investigated and written by the project consultant, Stuart Langton, Ph.D., an authority on citizen participation. He visited each case site and interviewed 12 to 20 persons. His interviews included Corps personnel, representatives of other agencies, elected officials, reporters, citizens, and leaders of interest groups. In each case, Dr. Langton's aim was to identify important learnings that could benefit personnel within the Corps of Engineers who will deal with similar challenges. Accordingly, each case identifies seven suggested learnings.

Case Study #1 - Public Involvement Related to HTRW Problems Associated with the Expansion of the Winfield Locks and Dam

Background

The busiest navigation locks in the United States in terms of number of lockages are the Winfield locks located on the Kanawha River near Charleston, West Virginia. The Winfield Locks and Dam, completed in 1937, are one of a series of three such navigational facilities along the river which allow barges to travel to the Ohio River. Traffic through the Winfield locks has grown dramatically as demand has increased for low-sulfur West Virginia coal which is transported in barges on the river. Between 1985 and 1992 lockages increased from 16,000 to 22,000 annually. As a result of increased use, barges wait in turn for up to 24 hours to pass through the locks which increases cost for producers, the navigation industry, and consumers. Assuring timely barge traffic is important in its environmental implications since to transport the equivalent of one barge would require 58 trucks and a typical 15 barge tow would require 870 truck loads.

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) which operates the Winfield Locks through its Huntington, West Virginia, district office began planning efforts to construct an additional lock in 1982. In 1986, authorization was signed by the President for the Corps to proceed with engineering and design and land acquisition activities to construct an additional 110-foot by 800-foot lock at the Winfield Locks and Dam. The Corps schedule for completing construction of the project was 1996, and the estimated cost was $210 million, half of it provided by the Inland Waterways Trust Fund.

In 1987, the Corps initiated efforts to acquire 44 tracts of land totaling 338 acres in order to build the new lock. Among the properties to be acquired was a 22 acre property owned by A.C.F. Industries and used as a rail car service and repair facility. Between 1956 and 1986, A.C.F. maintained and serviced a fleet of up to 47,000 rail cars used for solid and liquid chemicals transport. In 1986, A.C.F. discontinued operations at the site.

On 30 November 1988, the Corps initiated environmental investigations to determine if hazardous and toxic wastes were present on the A.C.F. property. On 1 December the Corps met with company officials to discuss environmental testing. On 5 December the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources (WVDNR), responding to a public complaint, conducted an investigation of the site. On 14 December an initial site reconnaissance of the property was conducted by the Corps. However, follow-up scheduled environmental testing was not conducted because A.C.F. would not allow additional entry or sampling on the property.

In February 1989, the WVDNR conducted an inspection of the site and observed various drums of waste material and areas of the property devoid of vegetation. A.C.F. agreed to sample the

drums and designated soil areas. In May, under order from WVDNR, A.C.F. had a study undertaken by Allstates Environmental Services, Inc. which defined areas of soil contamination and identified a number of chemical contaminants. In June, A.C.F. informed the Corps they wanted to clean up the site at their own expense. In October 1989, WVDNR ordered A.C.F. to clean up areas identified as contaminated. On 6 December 1989, WVDNR approved a site work plan to be undertaken by Allstates for A.C.F.. Two days later, the Corps filed a Declaration of Taking in U. S. District Court.

By 11 April 1990, Allstates completed their clean-up work for A.C.F.. On 1 May, the Corps took possession of the property, and on 7 May the WVDNR issued an order stating that A.C.F. had satisfied the requirements of its order of the previous October.

Following a storm later in May 1990, representatives of the Huntington, West Virginia, District Office of the Corps observed discolored water seeping through the walls of an excavation pit that had been dug for A.C.F. by Allstates Environmental Services. The Corps proceeded to conduct tests on the site as well as from the water wells of Eleanor, West Virginia, an adjacent community of 2,500. While no contamination was found in the town wells, seepage from the pit walls had high levels of contamination. The Corps proceeded to inform A.C.F. that they believed the company was still responsible for remaining contamination of the site. On 14 August 1990 A.C.F. responded that the clean-up of the site was completed as required by the WVDNR and the company would not return to conduct additional testing or clean-up work.

Triggering Events

On 17 August 1990, an equipment operator for a Corps contractor became ill from fumes from the ground while digging a utility trench to the Operations Shop Building. The Corps issued an order to cease work and initiated additional testing for contamination. The Nashville District Office of the Corps, the office within the Corps' Ohio River Division designated for specialization in dealing with Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste (HTRW) was called in to help. In September, personnel from the Huntington and Nashville district Corps offices and Nashville's contractor, TCT-St. Louis, began testing the site using soil-gas surveys, soil and water sampling, and groundwater monitoring wells.

In December 1990, at a meeting with regional E.P.A. officials, it was determined that the Corps as an agency of the Department of Defense, rather than E.P.A., would be responsible for site clean-up because the A.C.F. site had become a federal facility but was not designated on the National Priorities List (NPL). Consequently, it was determined that the Corps would be responsible for site clean-up under the provisions of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) and pursuant to the National Contingency Plan (NCP) regulations (Code of Federal Regulations, 40, Part 300, July 1, 1991).

Throughout 1991, the Corps continued to conduct tests on the A.C.F. site. Successive tests on different sections of the property indicated widespread contamination. By late November, a total site study led to the conclusion that there were 61,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil at the property, including 130 types of organic compounds and 10 forms of dioxins, furans, and metals — "a witch's brew of chemicals," as one West Virginia regulatory official commented. To illustrate the severity and complexity of contamination on the site, one area had in excess of 19,000 parts per billion of dioxin whereas the acceptable E.P.A. level is 2 parts per billion, and there were 140 types of contaminants identified, whereas most super-fund clean-up sites have only two or three.

As the severity of contamination at the A.C.F. site became increasingly clear during 1991, the Corps increased attention to ways of cleaning up the site and informing and involving the public. The protocol in regard to these two needs was framed by federal regulations established by CERCLA. The process required under CERCLA included the following: 1) Maintaining an Administrative Record, copies of which must be made available to the public; 2) preparation of an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) report that analyzed the nature of contamination, identified alternatives, and proposed preferred actions; 3) Public notice regarding the EE/CA and a 30 day period for written comments from the public; and 4) The preparation of an "Action Memorandum" including a description of proposed actions and a summary of public comments and responses to them.

In late November 1991, the senior public affairs officer of the Huntington District completed a proposed public affairs plan to meet the public involvement requirements of CERCLA. Among the elements of the plan was a proposal to keep all concerned parties informed of "major findings, activities, and decisions in an effective way." In addition, the plan recommended to, "provide local residents, concerned interest groups, local and state officials, and congressional delegation with the opportunity to comment on remedial action alternatives before final selection of a remedy." The intent of this proposal was to obtain public involvement prior to publishing the EE/CA report.

Critical Decisions and Their Impact

As events transpired, the Corps proceeded to prepare the EE/CA without preliminary public comment on remedial action alternatives. On 5 May 1992, the Huntington District released the EE/CA prepared by the Nashville District and announced it would cost approximately $100 million to clean up the contaminated soil. The report identified eight clean-up alternatives: Physical/Chemical Solidification (mixing and forming soil into a solid form that can be disposed in a landfill), off-site disposal in a secure Class I landfill; thermal treatment (incinerating) soil on-site; washing soil on-site; vacuum extraction of gas from dry wells on-site; bioremediation (using microbes that multiply and degrade contamination); off-site incineration; and on-site disposal. The report proposed "on-site thermal treatment" among the alternatives. "This alternative," the report

noted in summary, "can be instituted within a reasonable time frame to avoid delays in the lock construction schedule."

Public reaction to the Corps' proposal to incinerate contaminated waste on the former A.C.F. site was immediate and strong opposition . Opposition to incineration had previously been suggested in informal conversations between public affairs staff and community leaders. As one environmental leader offered, "we will accept incineration when donkeys fly." In the weeks following publication of the EE/CA, there was widespread concern among citizens and elected officials that the 30 day comment period for public comments on the EE/CA was too short. Citizens signed petitions to extend the date and many wrote letters to the Huntington District office.

The mayor of Eleanor asked the Corps to send representative to a meeting at the Town Hall to discuss the EE/CA on 22 May. Senior officials at the Huntington District advised the District Commander not to attend and instead to send a representative. The rationale for this advice was that the District Commander should wait and make a public presentation at a formal meeting organized by the Corps.

The 22 May meeting was a severe public relations setback for the Corps. As it turned out, 150 people from Eleanor and surrounding communities heard about the meeting and showed up. A *Charleston Daily Mail* article reporting the meeting was captioned, "Army Corps Credibility Called a Problem." *The Charleston Gazette* characterized the meeting with a headline, "Residents Criticize Incineration Project." The Corps representative was quoted as saying, "At the very least large amounts of carbon dioxide will be admitted into the atmosphere...But we know of no other way to get rid of it." Among the points made by citizens at this meeting was a lack of trust in an agency that would purchase a piece of property without knowledge of the extent of contamination, a request to extend the period for public written comment beyond 30 days, and proposals for the Corps to explore other methods of disposing of contaminants.

Prior to the 22 May meeting with the Mayor of Eleanor, the Corps had made plans to convene a major public meeting although this was not required by CERCLA. The meeting was scheduled for 11 June, at the Eleanor Middle School. As the Corps planned for the meeting, it also extended the period for public comment on its EE/CA until 5 July. The 11 June meeting was attended by over 200 people. The District Engineer made a presentation with the use of slides. The public then commented and, for the most part, comments were critical of the Corps and in opposition to the proposed incineration proposal. The meeting lasted until 12:30 a.m. as the District Engineer was particularly concerned that everyone present have an opportunity to speak.

Changing Situation

On the day of the 11 June 1992, public meeting, the local congressman from the district, Bob Wise, called the District Engineer (DE) to express concern about the need for more and better public involvement in regard to plans to clean-up the A.C.F. site. In the conversation, the DE, Colonel James Van Epps, and the congressman agreed that it would be beneficial to create a citizens advisory committee and to seek $50,000 to provide technical assistance for such a group as is the case in the E.P.A. Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) program at Super-fund sites.

Several days later, on 16 June, Congressman Wise met with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Nancy Dorn, and several Corps officials in Washington. He expressed concern that the Corps was rushing the process of dealing with contamination at the A.C.F. site without public involvement. He proposed the establishment of a citizens advisory committee and asked the Corps to provide a $50,000 grant to provide technical assistance. He then proposed that the Corps and the community might be best served by "bifurcating" the removal and remedial stages of clean-up efforts. He suggested that the Corps could excavate and store the contaminated soil so as to remain on schedule in their work on the new lock. This would also provide more time to evaluate remedial alternatives in cooperation with a citizens advisory group. Secretary Dorn said the Corps was open to considering such an alternative if E.P.A. and WVDNR would also agree. Eventually they did.

On 27 June and 1 July 1992, the Corps sponsored two eight-hour public workshops in Eleanor, each attended by approximately 50 people. The format of these informal meetings included the presence of technical experts on various subjects available at tables set up in the town hall for conversations with the public. Among the experts made available was an E.P.A. consultant expert on incineration. At the July 1 workshop, an EPA representative discussed dechlorination as an alternative to incineration for the treatment of dioxin. While several Corps officials concluded the meetings were beneficial in informing the public, newspaper accounts suggested otherwise. One such account had the headline, "Consultant Recommends Burning Dioxin-Contaminated Soil." The article quoted the consultant to say, "Only incineration will take the dioxin away." The article also included the following quote from a citizen, "This is exactly what we expected from the Corps. There's nobody here to talk about alternatives to burning. All this was set up for was to dispel fears of incineration."

By the 27 June workshop, the West Virginia Citizen Action Group had organized a community group to oppose incineration. The group, called P·R·O·T·E·C·T·(People's Response Organization Tackling Environmental Concerns through Teamwork), had representatives at the 27 June workshop who requested, and were given permission to set up a table.

In early July, the Corps extended its deadline for public comments for another 30 days in response to public concern. Meanwhile, P·R·O·T·E·C·T· attempted to sign-up members in the community. On July 18, Congressman Wise held a meeting with 100 residents to discuss the situation at the A.C.F. site. One consequence of the meeting was an agreement to ask the Assistant Secretary of the Army to visit the site. A citizen committee was also organized to evaluate threats to the water supply in Eleanor, since the possible contamination of the water supply was of growing concern among the public.

By early August 1992, the Corps arranged to provide alternative water supply for Eleanor. On 3 August, Assistant Secretary of the Army Nancy Dorn visited Eleanor. Secretary Dorn held a public meeting and press conference and announced the Corps would pay for alternative water sources for Eleanor and conduct further monitoring of water wells in the town. She also announced the Corps would decide on whether to bifurcate the clean-up and disposal process within 60 to 90 days.

New Dynamics

On 21 September 1992, A.C.F. held a public meeting in Eleanor to present the findings of a study of the site it had commissioned Burlington Industries to undertake. By this time, it had been publicized that the Corps, through the Justice Department, was likely to sue A.C.F. to recover costs for cleaning up the site. The study said the Corps cost were grossly exaggerated. The amount of contaminated soil they claimed was 8,950 rather than the 61,000 cubic yards and their cost estimate was $10 million rather than $100 million.

In October 1992, P·R·O·T·E·C·T· sponsored a public meeting in Eleanor. Approximately 50 people attended. Six representatives from the Corps attended, including the newly assigned District Engineer. A speaker discussed the dangers of toxic wastes and dioxins. According to a Corps summary of the meeting, the audience "stated that they did not resent the Corps efforts and trusted the Corps' position to be closer to the truth than A.C.F.'s."

By early November 1992, Congressman Wise proposed a structure for a Winfield Lock and Dam Advisory Group including the mayors or their representatives from Eleanor and five other surrounding communities, citizens at large from each of the communities, the County Commissioners, four state delegates, three representatives from P·R·O·T·E·C·T·, four state representatives, two state senators, a representative from local fire departments, and the Putnam County Emergency Service. On November 9, Congressman Wise sent a letter inviting representatives to join what he referred to as an "umbrella organization" and promised to set up an organizational meeting.

In keeping with CERCLA requirements, in September 1992, the Nashville and Huntington Districts of the Corps published an "Action Memorandum" and on 9 December 1992, it was signed. The Memorandum did not propose incineration as had the earlier EE/CA and instead recommended the "bifurcation" which included removal and storage of the soil and further studies to "thoroughly examine all available technologies." Public reaction the Action Memorandum was positive. In a press release, Congressman Wise commented, "I am most encouraged by the Army Corps' promise to open up a second phase of the clean-up process, to conduct a feasibility study of all methods for final disposal of the hazardous wastes and to allow for additional public involvement in the process."

Following the publication of the Action Memorandum, public unrest regarding the A.C.F. site diminished. The "Umbrella Group" was called together for its first meeting in January 1993. Congressman Wise chaired the initial meeting. Subsequent bi-monthly meetings were chaired by Susan Small of Congressman Wise's Charleston office. The Umbrella Group organized committees to address issues such as citizens' health and safety, emergency response systems, project monitoring, and technology evaluation. Corps representatives attended meetings once a month with the group.

On 24 February 1993, a symposium was held in Huntington, West Virginia, for approximately 100 officials from federal, state, and local agencies and members of the Umbrella Group. Plans were explained for continuing the necessary construction of the new lock while removing and storing contaminated soil as called for in the Action Memorandum. In planning the symposium, some senior officials of the Huntington office argued against including Umbrella Group representatives. However, when the meeting was discussed with staff from Congressman Wise's office, they inferred the Umbrella Group would be included. After considerable disagreement and discussion within the Corps and among all parties, it was decided to include the umbrella group.

On 15 May 1993, the Huntington District of the Corps sponsored a "Partnering Workshop" at the Eleanor Town Hall "to build cooperative relationships, etc." Among the partners were the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, the Umbrella Group, Towing Industries, Town of Eleanor, and others. The agenda for the workshop included developing a name, goals, and mission statement for the partnership. While some Corps officials expressed satisfaction with the meeting, several persons outside of the Corps said it was "a waste of time" and "an attempt to create another group." Representatives of the Umbrella Group declined to sign the partnering agreement.

In the summer of 1993, the Umbrella Group elected officers, and a local resident became Chairman of the group. In August, Dames and Moore completed a report on the *Preliminary Exposure Scenarios for Potentially Exposed Populations.* On 24 August, the Umbrella Group met with Dames and Moore's representatives and suggested several corrections. Reportedly, the consultant said they would not change the report. A member of the Umbrella Group wrote after the meeting: "Their concern appeared to be in defending their report rather than soliciting input from

members of the Umbrella Group...We came to the meeting prepared to discuss our concerns, and left thoroughly disillusioned."

The Umbrella Group intends to continue to work closely with the Corps and its consultants in the future. "We don't want to bond with them, but we want a good working relationship," comments a member. "I have found them to be accessible and willing to provide information when asked. And, the Colonel and his staff seem to be making a real effort."

An important need of the Umbrella Group is to have independent technical assistance available to them. West Virginia University has provided some assistance through an appropriation sponsored by Senator Robert Byrd. Recently, the state of West Virginia, through the office of the Governor, has made a $25,000 grant to the group. An appropriation for another $100,000 sponsored by Congressman Wise may also be available to the Umbrella Group in the future. "Given the complexity of the issues here," says a group member, "we need a lot of technical assistance. That is the only way we can be real partners with the Corps."

Perspective and Outcomes

This case represents one of the most, if not the most, complex and serious Hazardous and Toxic Waste problems that the Corps has had to address. Addressing the problems of the A.C.F. site was an ancillary challenge for the Corps. Its primary and ongoing focus was to construct the new lock at the Winfield Dam. Throughout this case, the Corps provided ongoing and timely communication with navigational interests which provided financial support for the project. The fundamental and recurring issue for the Corps in relation to the project was to maintain its construction schedule.

The problems associated with the A.C.F. site increased over time as the Corps recognized the severity of pollution on the site. As public concern increased, the Corps had to devote more attention to public involvement in relation to the A.C.F. site. Consequently, a navigational construction project became a major hazardous and toxic waste clean-up challenge that would cost half as much as the total construction expenses of the new lock. Further, the public involvement challenges escalated from a supportive public to a public that was fearful and distrustful.

The outcome of this case remains to be seen. An interim solution has been achieved by "bi-furcating" the process. For now, the A.C.F. site will be excavated and the polluted soil will be stored until a final solution is agreed upon for its disposal. The new Winfield lock will be built, which was the original goal of the Corps that has always been supported by the community.

The public involvement challenges of the Corps in dealing with the public and their elected officials will continue for many years to come in regard to disposing of or treating contaminants from

the A.C.F. site. It is ironic that the Town of Eleanor, West Virginia, adjacent to the A.C.F. site is called "the Cleanest Town in West Virginia." This lovely and active community named after Eleanor Roosevelt was developed as a planned community during the Great Depression. The challenge to the Corps and the community is to work together to assure that its motto is restored.

Suggested Learnings

What should the Corps learn about public involvement from their experience in developing plans to clean up the A.C.F. site at the Winfield Locks and Dam? This question was asked of a number of Corps officials, citizens, and public officials, and others familiar with the project. The most frequent suggestions are as follows.

1. **Involve citizens and public officials actively and as early as possible in weighing alternatives.** It would have been wise and cost-effective to involve the public prior to publishing the EE/CA. "The Corps made a mistake," commented one official, "in dealing with the EE/CA as a technical document while not anticipating and addressing its potential political impact on the community." "An ounce of prevention would have been worth a pound of cure in this instance," says another Corps official.

2. **Be aggressive and pro-active in communicating with the public.** "My impression of the Corps," a reporter observes, "is that they try to be open, but they very often find themselves in a reactive and defensive position." Several Corps officials suggest that the Corps should not assume the public will be patient or ready to hear from the Corps when it is ready to communicate. "In retrospect, it would have been better if the District Engineer had gone to the meeting with the Mayor of Eleanor." concluded a senior official.

3. **Provide sufficient time or flexibility in a schedule for adequate public involvement.** "Civil works projects are schedule-driven," comments a Corps official. He and several colleagues suggest that an important criteria for advancement within the Corps is, "to be on time and on budget." In this case, that dynamic was perceived to be at work by many public officials and citizens as the Corps developed plans to remediate the A.C.F. site. In the long run, several Corps officials suggest, that by not taking time to provide for greater public involvement more time was actually lost on the project schedule. "The Corps takes all kinds of time and spends all kinds of money on engineering studies, but they short-cut and short-change dealing with the public and this undermines the Corps' image and schedule."

4. **Stress listening as much as communicating to the public.** Many people within and outside the Corps acknowledge the quality of much of the written and visual material provided by the Corps in this case. They also acknowledge that the Corps made available experts to answer questions at public meetings and workshops. "This was good, but it had the down-side of seeming like a

dog and pony show," one person observed. Another observed, "The Corps was geared up to provide answers to defend their plans and not to really listen. They need to figure out if they don't know how to listen, don't want to, or can't for political reasons."

5. **Streamline and clarify the decision making process.** A number of citizens and non-Corps officials point out their confusion and frustration in regard to understanding and dealing with the Corps' decision-making process in this case. "You go through this incredible bureaucracy, and deal with so many people who can't make a decision, you feel like you're getting blown off or getting screwed," says one citizen. Another adds, "We never could get straight whether Nashville, Huntington, or the Cincinnati Division Office or Washington was making this or that decision. It seemed like they didn't know." "We liked most of the people from the Huntington Office, but decided they were message carriers after awhile. This was not fair to them." says a member of the Umbrella Group. Another person added, "We imagine they wouldn't let a Colonel make a hundred million dollar decision, so we decided to go around them and go right to the top."

6. **Develop adequate public involvement strategy and coordination.** "It is not for lack of trying," summarizes a Huntington official in characterizing the District's effort in public involvement. The several district engineers involved throughout this case, the Project Manager, the Engineering Specialist who managed HTRW issues, and the public affairs officer are given high marks for their effort, commitment and openness by persons in and outside the Corps. "Our project management system was not enough in this case," reflects a senior official, "What we could have used was a strategy team and a good strategy in addressing the many complex and delicate problems in dealing with the public." Another official suggests that in addition to strategy, a better system of ongoing coordination of public involvement was and is needed because of the many entities involved within the Corps and the fact that there has been and is a lot of turnover in personnel associated with the case.

7. **Assure all staff and consultants who meet with the public have the appropriate skills.** In particular, three skills have been suggested. "We should always be sure that anyone who meets with the press knows how to handle the situation," is one suggestion. Another is to provide technical people who can communicate with the public. "We are not stupid and we don't like technocrats to talk down to us. We like clear explanations," suggests a citizen. Third, it is important to have people who represent the Corps who listen and reflect respect and empathy. "One arrogant speaker can undo the positive contributions of five others. People do not forgive or forget arrogance," advises a Corps official.

Conclusions and Questions

The technical and public involvement challenges associated with dealing with HTRW problems at the A.C.F. site were enormous. This case raises serious questions about Corps procedures in acquiring sites that may have HTRW problems or in depending upon a state agency to provide regulating assessment. It is encouraging that both of these issues have since been addressed in new Corps regulations.

A critical question in this case is: should the Corps have purchased the A.C.F. property in the first place? A related and important question is: should the Corps have been more aware and forthcoming about the environmental problems at the site, even if its purchase was unavoidable? Among those interviewed for this case, several reported that the Corps had been informed prior to the purchase of the A.C.F. property of the potential of pollution problems. Further, while the purchase was being completed and shortly thereafter, several Corps employees indicated their concerns about the extent of pollution at the A.C.F. site. It has been reported that their concerns were not adequately considered. "By the internal rigidity exhibited in not listening to environmental concerns voiced by technical staff," one person observed, "we didn't have a prayer in formulating a successful public involvement process in dealing with the HTRW issue."

This case took place during the tenure of three District Engineers. From all reports, each desired strong and open public involvement efforts. The Public Affairs officer provided plans consistent with this approach, and the Project Manager and HTRW manager were eager to comply. Guidance, as reported to have come from the Division and A.S.A. level, to not actively involve the public prior to the EE/CA exacerbated problems with the public. Senior staff guidance to discourage the District Engineer from attending a meeting with the Mayor of Eleanor compounded problems. It was all up-hill from there. Once Congressman Wise joined in, the equation changed. Whether the Corps should have altered its approaches to its planned public meeting and workshops at that point is a good strategic question. Should the Corps have altered its approach or was it capable of so doing?

The visit of Assistant Secretary Nancy Dorn served to convince the public of how seriously the Corps considered this case. Should more have been done to follow-up and should stronger connections have been forged with Congressman Wise as he proceeded to develop the Umbrella Group? Was the partnership workshop necessary and, if so, how might it have been differently planned and structured in relation to the Umbrella Group? What should the Corps have done or do to assure that its contractors relate effectively to the public? These are difficult questions for an organization that has or does face difficult challenges in this case. The Corps should be encouraged that so many of its district personnel remain well regarded. A final question is how to best relate to this situation in balancing centralized and decentralized approaches in dealing with the public?

Case Study #2 - The Experience of the White River Dissolved Oxygen Committee

Background

The White River begins in the Ozark Mountains in northwest Arkansas, flows into southwest Missouri and returns to north central Arkansas where it continues south through the state until it joins the Mississippi. In the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed six flood control dams, five with hydroelectric generating capacity, along the White River and three of its tributaries, the North Fork, Black and Little Red rivers.

The Construction of these dams created large reservoir lakes: Beaver and Bull Shoals on the upper White River in Arkansas; Table Rock on the White River and Clearwater on the Black River in Missouri; Norfork on the North Fork and Greers Ferry on the Little Red River in Arkansas. These dams resulted in the loss of smallmouth bass fisheries due to the release of cold water. To partially mitigate this loss, trout were stocked once it was determined they could live in the release. Recreational demands on these lakes has grown dramatically in the last two decades. The tailwaters below the dams have also spawned great recreational interest. The reason for this is that the reservoir lakes stratify—with cold, nutrient-rich water settling on the bottom. When released at the base of each dam, the water is sufficiently cold to support trout. Consequently, the upper White River and its tributaries have become world-class trout waters which support stocked rainbow and cut-throat trout, as well as brown trout that have been successful in reproducing. The largest federal trout fish hatchery in the nation was, therefore, created along this river. In recent years, the world record brown trout was caught in the Little Red and trout over 30 pounds have been taken from the White River. Today, the value of trout fishing to the State of Arkansas is over $143 million annually making it one of the single largest revenue producing industries in the state.

There is a problem that does occur in relation to the tailwaters below dams. Quite simply, in the late summer and fall the amount of oxygen at the bottom of each reservoir lake becomes deficient until water re-circulates or "turns over" as it does annually in early winter. As a result, the amount of oxygen in the water that is released at the base of each dam to generate electricity is deficient in oxygen. When there is less than 6 parts per million (ppm) of dissolved oxygen (DO) in the water, it may be stressful to trout, below 4 ppm, they will be impacted and possibly die, and below 2 ppm, they are likely to die. In some years, this problem is worse than in others. When low dissolved oxygen is a problem, those interested in trout want hydroelectric facilities to reduce the level of water they release, and, if possible, to add air to the discharge. Hydropower interests have historically been reluctant to do this because they will produce less electricity at such times and lose revenue.

Tensions between hydropower and trout interests have been growing for years throughout the nation. On the White River alone this tension was exacerbated by fish kills in 1954, 1963, 1964, 1971, & 1972. (Opinions differ on the causes of these events.) The protagonists in this case were the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) which maintained the dams and produced hydroelectric power along with the Southwestern Power Administration (SPA), a federal agency, which markets and transmits hydroelectric power. In opposition to the Corps and SPA were state fish and wildlife agencies, a state environmental and tourism agency, sport groups (such as Trout Unlimited), and commercial establishments and outfitters that catered to trout fishermen.

The position of the Corps and SPA for many years was that they were maintaining reservoirs within their mandates to provide flood control and hydropower while also trying to give fair consideration to recreational, fish, and wildlife concerns. The Corps and SPA maintained that the world-class cold water trout fishery on the White River and its tributaries was made possible by the dams and was supported by the federal trout hatchery. The position of opponents was that the federal government, through the Corps and SPA, were undermining the trout fishery resource it had created and was supporting. They argued that the Corps should be required at dam sites to meet federal Clean Water Act requirements with minimum requirements of 6 ppm of dissolved oxygen. The Corps argued that in previous legal cases it had been determined that reservoir releases are not considered point-source pollutants and they are exempt from requirements of meeting state water quality standards on dissolved oxygen.

Triggering Event

In October 1990, a number of stocked trout, as well as some naturalized brown trout, were reported to have died downstream of the dam at Bull Shoals reservoir. Testing by state officials indicated the water below the dam to be less than 2 ppm. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) asked the Corps to reduce the level of released water. The Arkansas Department of Pollution Control and Ecology (ADPCE) issued an order citing the Corps and SPA as violating state water quality standards. The Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism (ADPT) and Trout Unlimited also initiated action to intervene with ADPCE to compel the Corps to reduce discharges at the dam.

The Corps and SPA did reduce outlet flow and vented turbines in early November. They established an operating target of 4 ppm which was claimed to allow trout to survive while not seriously curtailing hydropower operations. Temporarily, this brought the conflict to an impasse.

On 27 November, then Governor Bill Clinton requested a meeting of Corps officials from the Little Rock District, the SPA, the AGFC, the Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission, the ADPCE, and the ADPT. He requested that representatives of all the agencies establish a committee to develop short and long-term solutions regarding the dissolved oxygen issue.

At about the same time, as a result of citizen action by resort owners below Bull Shoals dam, both U. S. Senators from Arkansas also requested the Corps to participate with state agencies to work out a solution. All parties agreed to do so.

The "Ad-Hoc Committee on Project Operations—White River" was organized following the meeting with a representative of Governor Clinton. The Committee consisted of representatives of the Corps, the SPA, and the four state agencies. The Committee was organized into two functional groups—an "Operational Committee" and a "Long-Term Solution Committee." Each group was chaired by a Corps representative. The membership of the committees were overlapping, and as a rule, when the committee members met they would split their meeting time between considerations of short-term "operational" issues and long term considerations.

Initial Agreements

By June 1991, the "Ad Hoc Committee" had completed an inter-agency agreement for dealing with the dissolved oxygen problem below the Bull Shoals and Norfork Dams for the 1991 season. The agreement required compromise from all parties and was not achieved without conflicts among the representatives. "We brought a history of distrust among the agencies into the group" observed one participant. "We had to learn a lot about the practical and technical concerns of each agency," commented another member of the group.

Among the elements of the agreement achieved by the Ad Hoc Committee for the 1991 season were the following. The Corps and the U. S. Geological Survey (U S G S) would monitor the levels of oxygen in the reservoirs and below the dams. The information would be shared through the Corps' online computer program, allowing all agencies to monitor oxygen levels simultaneously. The costs for the monitoring were to be shared. When DO levels fell to 6 ppm the Corps would alert other agencies, recommend reduction in the amount of water release, block open vents on the turbines to add oxygen to the water, and spread the reduced hydropower load over several turbines to increase air intake as well as downstream DO levels. The AGFC would cease stocking trout immediately below the dams during such periods. When the DO level reached 5 ppm, the Corps would calculate when it might reach 4 ppm, requiring a further curtailment in the release of water, so that SPA could notify its customers of a potential reduction in electric generating capacity.

The operational plan to hold turbine releases to a 4 ppm target was implemented successfully between July and December, 1991. There were no major fish kills and operational arrangements between the agencies proceeded as agreed. Meanwhile, explorations of long-term solutions made it clear that the major options would be very difficult and costly. One option was for the Corps to undertake a major study of the White River basin, or at least part of it, to identify alternative remedial actions, their costs and impacts, and make recommendations to Congress, possibly altering policies and procedures for managing reservoirs on the river basin and their outflows. Half of the

cost for such a study would have to be borne by the state of Arkansas. A combination of factors, including cost and uncertainty regarding the results, made this option unattractive to the state agencies. The other options included filing legislation with Congress or filing a court suit against the Corps to change policy and procedures. The Corps, not surprisingly, could not be party to such action against itself. The state agencies were reluctant for reasons of cost and their ongoing desire to work with the Little Rock District of the Corps to pursue remedial action. Consequently, attention to long-term solutions was devoted to the exploration of technological options.

In January 1992, the Ad Hoc Committee met to evaluate the first years implementation of their joint agreement. A representative from one of the Arkansas state agencies described the progress of the group as follows:

"When the committee sat down in February 1992 to evaluate the operation plan experience, it was a different group than was brought together in the Governor's Conference Room in November 1990. Each member had a better understanding of the other's obligations and clientele. They had more appreciation for the technical discipline of the other members and more confidence in their collective ability to develop and share accurate information. Communication between technical and administrative elements in each organization improved. SPA quantified the cost to utility customers from generation restrictions imposed by the operational plan and cautioned that we could not always depend on favorable weather or no shut-downs at other plants in their system. COE found that turbine venting and load reduction did not cause the damage to vanes and bearings which they had feared. AGFC detailed the extent of trout stocking deferred because of low DO but experienced little negative reaction from anglers and resort owners because of effective public involvement and information efforts. The experience gained eased the way for a 1992 operational plan which was equally successful."

Additional Progress in 1992

The 1992 operational plan included a continuation of the 1991 agreements. Additionally, the Committee agreed the state would undertake a fish monitoring study to better understand the impact of low DO on rainbow and brown trout. Part of this study was a project to insert radio transmitters in a small sample of trout to track their behavior during low DO periods.

During the period of low DO between September and mid-November 1992, water discharges were curtailed and electrical generating capacity was reduced to less than 50% of capacity at Bull Shoals Dam. While no fish kills occurred below Bull Shoals in 1992, a minor kill occurred below Norfork dam on October 24-25 due to low DO levels at night following several hours without any hydropower release. An agreement was quickly reached among all parties to provide additional water releases at night and no further fish kills occurred during 1992.

In early October 1992, many of the members of the Ad Hoc Committee traveled to Knoxville, Tennessee, to learn about efforts by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to deal with the DO problem. "The trip was helpful in three respects," commented a participant. "It gave many of us a chance to get to know each other better. It introduced us to some promising technology, and it demonstrated a comprehensive approach undertaken by TVA in dealing with reservoir management issues."

Following the TVA visit, the Corps Little Rock District investigated the possibility of utilizing a technological innovation at Bull Shoals and Norfork dams used at several TVA dams. The technology involved the use of hub baffles on power plant turbines to pull more air into the turbines to increase DO levels. As events occurred, the Corps canceled tests related to the potential use of hub-baffles because the Bull Shoals reservoir was beginning to "turn over" and Corps officials feared the tests would be inconclusive. This event upset a number of Committee members. "Whatever the reasons, this slowed our progress," commented a participant, "and it gave the perception—whether fair or not—that the Corps was dragging its feet or not able to get through its bureaucracy to make a timely decision."

The controversy over the cancellations of the hub-baffle tests was aired at a 2 November 1992 meeting of the Committee. It was agreed that "lack of communication" caused the controversy. The Corps representatives committed to provide the Committee with the proposal from its Waterways Experiment Station (W.E.S.) to undertake tests at a future date.

1993 Developments

In January 1993, all of the participating agencies agreed, in concurrence with the Arkansas Governor's office, to formally combine the short and long-term committees into a single committee known as the "White River Dissolved Oxygen Committee." The new committee also included two agencies from the state of Missouri, the Department of Conservation and the Department of Natural Resources. While the previous short and long-range committees had been chaired by representatives from the Corps, the representative from the SPA was elected as chair of this new committee.

The revised or reformulated committee, while including two new agency representatives, included most of the individuals who had previously represented their agencies. The revised committee identified three study sub-committees that had been developed in the previous two years. An Operations Sub-Committee was responsible for developing an implementation plan for dealing with DO during 1993. A Biological Sub-Committee was responsible for research concerning the biological effects of DO. A Public Affairs Committee was responsible for preparing, reviewing, and coordinating press releases.

In early February 1993, Senator Dale Bumpers asked to meet with Committee representatives to review progress in addressing the DO issue on the White River. The meeting was prompted by a request from resort owners who perceived that sufficient progress was not being made. It was agreed that the Corps would prepare a report in the fall of 1993 describing turbine venting modifications at Bull Shoals and Norfork to increase oxygen below the dams during low DO periods.

By August 1993, the White River Dissolved Oxygen Committee had agreed upon an operational plan for this low DO season for the third year in a row. As a result of Committee efforts, additional DO monitoring stations had been established. The Corps had undertaken preliminary tests and had installed hub-baffles on turbines at Bull Shoals and Norfork dams to conduct additional tests.

Public Involvement

This case demonstrates the complexity and changing nature of public involvement within the Corps. In regard to the DO problem at Bull Shoals reservoir in particular and other White River reservoirs more generally, the Little Rock District had to relate to three publics: other agencies with particular interests in the situation, public interest groups including trout fisherman and resort owners, and elected public officials including a governor and two U. S. Senators.

The essence of the public involvement strategy of the Little Rock District (LRD) was to work with and through the Dissolved Oxygen Committee. The Committee itself was the vehicle for the Corps to work with the agencies, but it also became a vehicle for relating to interested citizen groups and elected officials. In the later instances, responsibilities were shared among agencies. For example, the AGFC provided written information for fishermen and resort owners. SPA communicated with electrical users. Several joint press releases were developed to inform the public. Representatives of the Corps and other agencies spoke to groups such as Trout Unlimited. Informal visits were made to resort owners. In the beginning, Trout Unlimited was invited to attend Committee meetings, but eventually they decided to remain informed and involved in other ways.

Outcomes and Perspective

For three years, the Corps LRD in concert with the other agencies has demonstrated the ability to develop cooperative operational procedures to manage the DO problem at Bull Shoals and Norfork dams. Further, the agencies initiated studies regarding trout behavior and technological approaches in relation to the DO phenomenon. In addition, the agencies have worked together to inform and involve interested citizens and elected officials.

Long-term permanent solutions have been more elusive. This is understandable for many reasons. One reason is that the issue of DO is a broader national policy concern, especially in

relation to the Corps. The Corps operates hundreds of reservoirs and dams throughout the nation that are exempt from federal Clean Water Act regulations. The dams constructed by the Corps were created in an earlier era for purposes of flood control and energy production. Increasingly, for several decades, public interest has grown in recreational amenities provided by the reservoirs and dam tailwaters. While the Corps has attempted to come to grips with these changes and competing demands, neither Congress nor successive administrations have provided clear policy guidelines regarding these matters. While the Corps, and each of the districts, attempt to accommodate the growth in recreational interests, it has no clear mandate or particular guidance.

Because of this situation, the Corps was cautious in this case. It was cautious in proceeding in regard to potential costs and in regard to establishing a precedent. It was cautious because of the need to ascertain damage or accelerated wear that turbine venting might have on turbine equipment. It was also cautious because of a potential law suit from the State of Arkansas, which has remained as a threat throughout the process and is illustrated by the fact that the Arkansas Department of Pollution Control and Ecology, which originally filed a legal action against the Corps, was never willing to be a signatory for the three annual agreements developed by the interagency committee.

The dilemma for the Corps, in regard to these long-term considerations, is poignantly reflected in the following statement included in the 1993 plan of the Committee: "It is recognized there are legal and technical considerations for each agency that go beyond the goals of the short term action plan for 1993. The participation by an agency representative in the development of the 1993 plan does not preclude that agency from pursuing any action deemed appropriate relative to its long term needs and goals."

What is most remarkable about this case is that so much could be achieved in the short-term with a longer-term perspective that is reflected in the statement quoted above. It is a tribute to all of the individuals involved on the Committee that so much incremental progress has been achieved. It is a tribute to the LRD of the Corps to proceed with the potential of legal threats. It is a challenge to all concerned to seek a broader and constructive resolution of the DO issue and related concerns in Arkansas and throughout the nation.

Suggested Learnings

The experience of the White River Dissolved Oxygen Committee illustrates the capacity of the Corps to work actively with other agencies to address an issue of critical public concern. The successes achieved in this case were significant, albeit not easy to achieve. The experience of the White River Dissolved Oxygen Committee suggests many learnings for the Corps, other agencies, and the public in establishing policies and practices. Among the lessons suggested by those familiar with this case are as follows.

1. Be Willing to Share Control and Responsibility: An important factor in the success of the Committee was that control and responsibility were shared. Different agencies took the lead in various activities and also were willing to share costs. At the outset, the Corps exerted control and chaired the short and long range committees, but over time determined that this was neither in the Corps' nor the Committee's interest. "We like to have control," observed one Corps official. "Our inclination is to take over because we feel we have to balance our interests and the competing interests of others. This gives the perception that we are dictating. One of the things we learned was that if you are going to build a real partnership you have to let go and share control."

2. Establish a Common and Achievable Objective: A key building block for the Committee at the outset was the clear objective of a shared operational plan for increasing DO at Bull Shoals and Norfork for the 1991 season. "There were times in the beginning when we got real frustrated with each other," said one participant. "But we finally put a lot of the turfing and posturing behind us to get a plan adopted."

3. Share Information openly. The sharing of information contributed to the success of the Committee. At the outset, a number of persons reported, it was necessary for the Committee members to learn about the technical and political concerns of each agency. "We could not have proceeded without understanding where each of us was coming from, "said one participant. This takes time, but we moved ahead when people were more forthcoming." A Corps official added, "It goes beyond willingness to share information. What I found is that you had to volunteer it, anticipating the concerns of other agencies."

An important role regarding shared information was the sharing of online technical data available on DO from the gauging stations established at Bull Shoals and Norfork dams. "This meant nobody had a black box or could manipulate data," commented a member. "With equal access we could have equal responsibility in carrying out the operational plan."

4. Utilize Work Groups. The establishment of sub-committees to deal with technical, biological, and public affairs issues were helpful in several respects. It was an efficient way to organize and carry out Committee tasks, but, as one participant observed, "this was a good vehicle for team-building. It furthered communication and appreciation for a lot of the people involved. You just got to know each other better than in the big group meetings."

5. Build Upon Success. The success of the Committee grew incrementally over a three year period. Having achieved an operational plan for 1991, the Committee did so again in 1992 and 1993, expanded its range of activities and the scope of its agreements. While a permanent "long-range" solution has not been achieved, the Committee has continued and increased its capacity for joint action. "Achieving operational plans for three seasons has generated both pride and confidence in our ability to work together," commented one member. Another observed, "Our trip

together to TVA gave us a boost. It gave a lot of us a chance to know each other personally. It also gave a lot of us some ideas how the DO issue might be addressed longer term and on a basin wide basis."

6. Establish Effective Mechanisms for Involving the Multiple Interests within the River Basin. One Corps official has suggested that, "If we had better dialogue among the agencies back in 1990, we probably would not have had the DO problem the way we did." At that time, however, the Corps did have a White River Coordinating Committee in existence which met annually. "The limitation of that group," it has been suggested, was that it was primarily a sounding board for the District rather than an agenda setting or trouble-shooting body." The role of that Committee was to listen and advise on what the District wanted to do rather than what needed to be done," observed one person. While the White River Coordinating Committee continues to exist, the Little Rock District has recently created a White River Basin Ad-Hoc Work Group designed specifically to develop new operational plans for the management of reservoirs that respond to the competing needs among the many users of the White River.

7. Manage the Gap between Intent and Perception. One Corps employee noted that, "We have a problem in wanting to do the right thing but not doing it quite right." He went on to say, "Some of our people want to deal in an open, timely, and flexible manner. Others want to hide behind Congressional authority issues. And others can't budge from their preferred technical approach no matter what others think." Others perceive the Corps in these ways. "Some of the Corps' people are terrific," said one agency representative, "but they are like a fragmented system. They overwhelm you with a lot of people, but no one seems to have the authority to make a decision." "Their approach is slow," said another person, "they are like a dinosaur." A related comment from another person was, "They act like it was still the 1950s, they have difficulty accepting new realities and situations."

Whether these comments are accurate or fair are important questions that cannot be answered fully here. Clearly, the Corps made a significant commitment in this case, they did in fact alter practices, and they made structural changes in equipment. Yet, in so doing, some people, including Corps employees, perceive the Corps was not "doing it quite right." Such a perception is important to accept and appreciate in regard to its implications. It points to the need, as one Corps representative suggests, "to manage the gap between out intentions and how they get perceived by others." This implies the importance of such management approaches as: speaking with one voice, clarifying decision making processes, assuring timely decisions, and appearing open and sensitive to the concerns of others.

Conclusions and Questions

The experience of the White River Dissolved Oxygen Committee was a good example of a successful interagency effort to address a critical public policy issue. It was an important case for the Corps in that it addressed the DO problem, a long-standing and controversial issue throughout the nation. The Committee experience demonstrates the positive outcomes that can be achieved when the Corps chooses to develop a strong and collaborative partnership with other agencies. Because of changes in public interests and expectations in regard to reservoirs and their tailwaters, it is likely that Corps districts will increasingly need to enter into arrangements such as those represented in this study.

This case illustrates that strong participatory practices that require collaboration are not easy to achieve. They require time, willingness to take risks, and the capacity to change. This is not altogether easy for the Corps because it is a large and complex organization that must balance the interests of multiple constituents and is bound by both congressional authorizations and administrative oversight. Further, the Corps itself at the District, Division, and Headquarters levels experiences tensions among those assigned to serve planning, engineering, operational, legal, regulatory and public affairs interests. These factors make it more difficult for the Corps to change and respond in a timely manner to matters that they do not consider to be an emergency. Yet, as this case illustrates, the Corps is willing and capable of responding to a critical public concern in concert with others and with effectiveness. While the Corps response time may make this task more difficult, as their reputation promises, they can get the job done.

Several questions arise from this case. In retrospect, could the White River Coordinating Committee, in existence since the 1980s, have been used more effectively to place an issue such as the DO problem on the agenda of the Little Rock District? In the process of this case, could the Corps have done anything more, or have done it differently? The case seems to be a success story, could it have been a success with greater impact? In prospect, what should the Corps do in regard to its corporate strategy to address the DO issue throughout the nation and in addressing the growing recreational interests associated with the reservoirs it operates, without breaking its covenant to the original flood control and power customers?

Case Study #3 - The Fort Ord Reuse Case

Background

Fort Ord (the Fort) is a large Army base located in Northern Monterey County, California, adjacent to the Pacific Ocean. The Fort is 44 square miles in size and is bordered by five small cities (Del Rey Oaks, Marina, Monterey, Sand City, and Seaside). Other cities in close proximity to Fort Ord are Pacific Grove and Salinas.

Established in 1917, Fort Ord has been the headquarters for the Army's 7th Light Infantry Division. Over 17,000 military personnel and 5,000 civilians were employed at the Fort in 1992.

Fort Ord has three major developed areas. The Main Garrison is the major housing, administrative and support area for the installation. It includes office buildings, a commissary, a hospital, troop areas, executive housing and schools, as well as recreational and training facilities. The East Garrison includes barracks, storage and repair facilities. The Fritzche Army Airfield was an airfield and light industrial complex with storage and maintenance facilities for aircraft.

In 1990, two important federal government policy decisions were made regarding Fort Ord. The Defense Department announced plans to reduce military activities and personnel at the Fort. The EPA also declared the Fort as a Superfund site and put it on the National Priorities List (NPL) to receive funds for hazardous waste clean-up.

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) has been actively involved at Fort Ord since 1990 in several respects. On a contractual basis, the Corps is managing hazardous waste clean-up activities as well as responsibilities associated with the closure of Fort Ord as an infantry training and staging facility. Through its Sacramento District office, the Corps is managing hazardous waste clean-up locations with Fort Ord, it has prepared an Environmental Impact Statement required for base closure, and it is managing the transfer of various parcels of property to state and local institutions and for private sale. The Corps has selected and oversees the work of private companies in these various activities and must inform and involve the public in the process. The nature and major learnings associated with the experiences are summarized below.

Triggering Events

In January 1990, the Defense Department (DOD) released a list of bases it was studying for realignment and closure. DOD announced it intended to close Fort Ord and move the 7th Light Infantry Division to Fort Lewis, Washington. This announcement reflected the commitment of the

federal government to "downsize" many military installations to save money and as an adjustment to the end of "Cold War" military competition.

In February 1990, Congressman Leon Panetta sponsored a meeting of local leaders to oppose the reduction in force of Fort Ord. A Task Force of elected and government officials, as well as concerned citizens was formed. Within six weeks the Task Force prepared a report arguing that "downsizing" or closing Fort Ord was an unwise plan in terms of defense interests and it would have a terrible economic impact on surrounding communities.

The efforts of the Task Force, Congressman Panetta, and others to save Fort Ord from being closed down as a major military installation were to no avail. By April 1991, over 100 military installations throughout the country, including Fort Ord, were identified for downsizing or closure. The Defense Department's plans for Fort Ord included moving its infantry operations (the 7th Infantry unit) to Fort Lewis in Washington State, retaining a few military-related functions within of the property, and turning over the majority of the land to the community to be used for purposes the community would determine.

Following the decision of the Defense Department, the Task Force redirected its energies to prepare for the eventual closing of Ft. Ord. Accordingly, Advisory Committees were organized to address considerations concerning Economic Development, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing, Land Use, Pollution clean-up, utilities, and infrastructure.

By June 1992, the Fort Ord Community Task Force, which involved over 350 citizen volunteers, had prepared a 760 page report. It was called a "strategy" report because the Task Force members acknowledged that their efforts were advisory in nature and that final decisions regard the disposition and future use of Ft. Ord would rest in the hands of the Defense Department and elected officials at the state and local levels. The "strategy" of the Task Force was to create "A statement of community consensus regarding the reuse and development of Fort Ord to include a series of prioritized alternatives."

In October 1992, Monterey County and the cities of Del Rey Oaks, Marina, Monterey, Sand City, Seaside, and Monterey County established the Fort Ord Reuse Group (FORG) as an intergovernmental organization to coordinate planning for the reuse of Fort Ord. An office was opened and a coordinator was hired. The mission of FORG was to develop a plan for the reuse of Fort Ord land and facilities and to develop community support for its implementation.

The Role of the Corps in Preparing an E. I. S.

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) provide support services to Army installations. The Sacramento District Office of the Corps managed and continues to manage a large

number of planning, design, construction, and environmental documentation efforts at Ft. Ord. Therefore, in 1990, when the possibility of closing Fort Ord was announced, the Corps was asked to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement (E. I. S.) of the Fort for the Army. Because community leaders opposed the closing of Ft. Ord, they also opposed work on the E. I. S. As a result of opposition from the Task Force, Congressman Panetta and other community leaders, work on the E. I. S. was limited to collection of base line data that could be used to continue to operate the base, realign missions, or to close the base.

After the Defense Department announced its final decision to close Fort Ord in 1991, the Corps again was asked by the Army to conduct an E. I. S. The Corps' client was with Forces Command (FORSCOM) in Atlanta. FORSCOM, one of the major commands of the Army, is responsible for active duty troop units in the Untied States. Among its responsibilities is overseeing base realignments and closures of bases under its jurisdiction. The Sacramento District Office of the Corps has been responsible to FORSCOM as well as to the Fort Ord Garrison Command, and to the Headquarters of the Corps and the Department of the Army in Washington, D. C. for various assignments relating to realignment and closure. FORSCOM has been responsible for the closure of Ft. Ord.

An E. I. S. of the scope required for Fort Ord would normally require approximately 2 $^1/_2$ to 3 years to complete. However, in a rider Congressman Panetta had added to a Congressional bill, Congress directed the Corps to complete the E. I. S. in 18 months and to address social and economic impacts as well as environmental impacts.

In February 1992, the Corps published its notice of intent to conduct an E. I. S. and in March 1992, a public scoping meeting was held. Shortly thereafter the Corps proceeded as quickly as possible to conduct an E. I. S. on an accelerated schedule in order to meet its mandate of completing it within 18 months.

The Function of the E. I. S. was to determine the impacts on the economic, physical, and social environment according to alternative plans for the disposal and reuse of Fort Ord. When the Corps began to work on the E. I. S. in April 1992, the Task Force of community leaders was still completing their report which was completed in June 1992.

The history of relations between the Corps and the Task Force until this time was marked by tension. Many community leaders opposed earlier efforts by the Corps to conduct an E. I. S. and viewed the Corps as one of the agencies of the Army that posed economic and social threats to the community in closing and realigning Fort Ord.

Although relations between the Corps and the community were strained, Corps officials met with the Task Force as early as the Fall 1991 and continued to do so throughout the preparation of

the E. I. S. Likewise, although strained relations developed between the Corps and FORG, meetings were held regularly between officials. However, two dynamics compounded efforts to work together. One was that there were substantial differences among the many communities and local governments regarding reuse preferences for Fort Ord. A related factor was the fast-track 18 month schedule with which the Corps had to comply in completing the E. I. S.

Public Involvement and the E. I. S. Process

The Corps made a variety of efforts to involve the public in preparing its E. I. S. In the first half of 1992, public meetings were held in each of the surrounding and adjacent communities to identify concerns and obtain suggestions regarding future uses of Fort Ord. A mailing was sent to governmental and non-profit agencies regarding their potential interest in use of the property. As a result, approximately 5,000 agencies and individuals were informed and/or involved in the E. I. S. process, and 100 agencies expressed interest in converting, using, and building facilities on all but 3,000 of the 28,000 acres of Fort Ord. Discussion and negotiations ensued with the various agencies in selecting those that were eventually identified in the final E. I. S. Also, on an ongoing basis the Corps met with the Task Force and FORG.

In June 1992, the Task Force completed its strategy report. This report was reviewed and described as one of the alternatives in the E. I. S. In December 1992, the Corps released a draft of the E. I. S. prepared for FORSCOM by the consulting firm it had retained, Jones and Stokes. Nearly 800 copies of the E. I. S. were disseminated. At the time the draft E. I. S. was distributed, it was announced that a public hearing would be held on 11 February 1993, and a comment period would run until 22 February 1993. The objective of the Corps, at that time, was to receive public input to be considered in revising the E. I. S. so that the final E. I. S. could be completed within the 18 month schedule and a record of decision (ROD) could be achieved by August 1993.

On 11 February 1993, a public hearing was held in Monterey to receive comments on the E. I. S. The hearing which was announced in the local media was attended by 66 people, of whom 23 made comments. By the end of the comment period on 22 February 1993, 64 letters of comment were in receipt from organizations and interested citizens.

In March 1993, FORG published a 114 page *Initial Base Reuse Plan*. A preliminary draft of the plan had been shared with the Corps and other Army entities in December 1992. Between December 1992 and 15 February 1993, the preliminary plan was reviewed by many citizen groups. Revisions were made and between 2 March and 16 March 1993, the five cities and Monterey County which sponsor FORG, approved the plan as a point of departure to develop a reuse plan.

After the FORG *Initial Base Reuse Plan* was published, FORSCOM determined that the E. I. S. already had a very wide range of alternatives, and the FORG plan could not be implemented,

because it did not reflect the request from federal and local agencies for land, and because of the significant impacts resulting from the extensive development proposed in the FORG initial plan. The Army decided not to attempt to integrate or reconcile it with the E. I. S., because it would slow down the process of reaching a ROD by August. The Army offered to do a supplemental E. I. S. for a revised FORG plan if FORG made changes to make it workable. A report was prepared for the Army by the Corps in April 1993, concluding that the FORG *Reuse Plan* was unworkable.

Tensions Between the Army and the Community

In May 1993, tensions between FORG and the Corps were exacerbated at a meeting in which the Corps anticipated resolving differences with FORG. Instead, the Corps was challenged, under media scrutiny, in a public meeting. Nonetheless, before and following this meeting, Corps and FORG representatives continued to meet together bi-weekly. An accommodation suggested prior to the May meeting was further developed following the May meeting and in anticipation of the final release of the E. I. S. The accommodation was that while the Corps should not substantially alter the E. I. S, a supplemental Environmental Agreement could be developed by the Corps, FORG, and other appropriate parties. In June 1993, the Corps, other Army representatives, and FORG met and agreed to develop a partnering arrangement and work together in advancing future plans for the reuse of Fort Ord.

In July of 1993, President Clinton issued a five point Plan for Revitalizing Base Closure Communities. The plan had the two-fold effect of supporting and accelerated process while assuring community leadership in the planning process. The practical impact of this plan was to strengthen the leadership responsibility of FORG and to promote a cooperative ethos between the Army, the Corps, and FORG.

In June 1993, the Army released the E. I. S. for the Disposal and reuse of Fort Ord. The E. I. S. proposed establishing a 1,500 acre Presidio of Monterey (POM) annex to support military services remaining in the area, a 12 acre complex to support Army reserve activities, and to dispose of the remaining property. All but approximately 3,000 acres of the property to be disposed would go to federal and local agencies in support of their programs at little or no cost.

The E. I. S. examined six reuse alternatives for Fort Ord and 3 sub-alternatives. The alternatives ranged from high-intensity mixed use to low-intensity mixed use to open space preservation. The E. I. S. included a preferred Alternative 6R. Anticipated Reuse (Revised), which included the establishment of the POM, an Army reserve center, and turning over approximately 23,500 acres to a variety of local, state, and federal agencies that had been identified through the real estate screening process. An additional 3,000 acres would be "disposed to private entities without the Army determining future use." The preferred alternative would provide for developing approximately 14% of undeveloped land and a corresponding buildout population of about 22,800.

This contrasted to a high-density proposal from some local entities to develop 65% of the undeveloped land for a buildout population of 250,000.

On 23 December 1993, the Army released the Record of Decision (ROD) concerning Ft. Ord. The ROD reflected a compromise between the Army's desire to dispose of property as quickly as possible while allowing surrounding and nearby communities time to complete their reuse plan. In announcing the ROD, Michael W. Owen, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army said the following: "Because the local communities' reuse plan has not been finalized, the Army does not adopt a specific plan in this ROD"

The ROD summarized the various alternatives for reuse that were examined in the E. I. S. which was released in June 1993. While not adopting a reuse plan, the ROD said that it is anticipated that the resulting reuse plan will be consistent with a scenario it attached to the ROD and which essentially reflected the preferred scenario in the E. I. S. However, the ROD then immediately stated, "The local communities will develop and adopt general plans to guide reuse."

Public Involvement in Environmental Clean-up

Prior to and simultaneous with the E. I. S. process, the Corps was also involved in environmental clean-up activities at Fort Ord requiring public involvement activities. While the Corps encountered difficulties and experienced conflict in dealing with the public in the E. I. S. process, public involvement related to environmental clean-up has proceeded positively and with little to no conflict.

In February 1990, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) placed Fort Ord on the National Priorities List as a Superfund site because of the threat of groundwater contamination and other environmental problems. A Federal Facilities Agreement (FFA) was developed with appropriate federal and state agencies under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). Under this agreement, remediation efforts were directed to address soil and groundwater contamination on multiple sites at Fort Ord including: three landfill areas, two vehicle maintenance facilities, a used equipment cannibalization areas, two fire drill areas, and 14 other areas of potential concern.

The Corps was given responsibility by Fort Ord to manage the clean-up process under CERCLA. The Sacramento District of the Corps retained the firm of Harding, Lawson, and Associates to manage the clean-up, including public involvement activities.

The Community Relations Plan developed by Harding, Lawson and Associates in compliance with CERCLA has included the following: a Community Relations Coordinator has managed and overseen public involvement activities; information repositories have been established at the Fort

Ord Post Library and Seaside Branch Library; and public meetings and comment periods have been made available in regard to each clean-up activity.

One of the most exemplary features of this public involvement effort has been the creation of a series of fact sheets and information papers. They are very clear and understandable to the average citizen because of their style, the use of graphics, layout, and photographs. The public involvement effort has also included active efforts to communicate with the press and the establishment of a Technical Review Committee to review documents and evaluate progress. The Committee includes representatives of appropriate local, state, and federal agencies. The presence of public involvement staff, on site, working on a day to day basis with base officials, has proven to be successful in connecting the efforts of consultants with Army staff at Fort Ord.

In many respects, the public involvement activities associated with environmental clean-up at Fort Ord is a model of success. If there is any concern among those involved, it is in attracting more public interest. However, according to one theory of public involvement, modest participation may be a reflection of community confidence. In this case, given the quality of planning efforts, materials, and management, modest public involvement and the lack of conflicts may be a reflecting of an outstanding public involvement initiative.

Perspective and Outcomes

The combination of planning for the reuse of Fort Ord and the environmental clean-up activities being undertaken have been complex and demanding. While considerable controversy and conflict between the Army and the public have occurred concerning reuse, environmental clean-up has proceeded with relative accord and modest public interest.

The conflicts and tensions regarding reuse are understandable. The closing of a major military installation like Fort Ord impacts the community with a triple "whammy." First, the decision is a profound economic and emotional shock to the community. Second, planning for reuse draws out competing community values and visions for the future use of the property that must be resolved. Third, the communities and their leaders must work with some of the most complex bureaucracies in the nation (e.g. Army, E.P.A., et. al.) and a host of complicated regulations.

From the perspective of the Army and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, the experience in preparing for the reuse of Ft. Ord has been made more complicated by the imposition of a 18 month schedule mandate for preparing an E. I. S. The development of simultaneous reuse plans, the Army's E. I. S. and the FORG Initial Reuse Plan, was less than a desirable situation in regard to economy of effort and public involvement. While the Corps completed its E. I. S. on schedule, its proposed ROD was delayed four months, and the final ROD turned out to be a study with a recommendation rather than a plan. At the same time, the community had not agreed on a final plan

at the time of the ROD. Nonetheless, beyond earlier conflicts, the Corps, the Army, and FORG strengthened their relationships and by the time of the ROD established a relatively strong partnering arrangement. It remains to be seen what the final outcome of planning and implementation for the reuse of Fort Ord will be. At the same time, it is not inappropriate to consider how much more might have been achieved in the same amount of time if the Army, the Corps, and the community had established a strong partnering relationship from the outset.

By way of additional perspective, there were a number of other dynamics that complicated this case. One was that federal government and Army policy changed during the process. Initially, the policy was to close or dispose of property as quickly as possible, under the Army's military commands, and to sell some real estate to make money to cover the cost of environmental clean-up. This policy changed under a new administration when President Clinton issued his five point program stressing a community oriented planning process.

Another significant dynamic was disagreement among local communities. The communities of Seaside and Marina, for example, preferred a more intensive level of development, but this was not consistent with the preferences of other communities. Whereas, the Community Task Force developed a relatively low-density community strategy plan, FORG initially proposed a plan of more intensive development. Some communities liked the FORG plan, while others felt it was unrealistic in not dealing with the environmental and physical constraints identified by the Task Force and by the Army. The Corps was asked to write a report challenging the original FORG plan. This increased tensions between the Corps and FORG. However, as a result of many meetings and communications between October 1992 and December 1993, FORG revised elements of their plan to consider environmental and physical limitations. FORG also participated in developing a hybrid disposal/reuse plan that was attached to the ROD.

A further dynamic in this case was that the Corps was working for FORSCOM. "At many points," observed a Corps official, "the Corps was being instructed by our customer to do certain actions, or to do them in a certain way that was both supported or opposed by different parts of the group of affected communities composing FORG." The Corps also had to deal with local communities that had autonomous land use authority as well as with FORG or an ad-hoc coordination group without government charter to do more that coordinate and work when all elements of the represented communities agreed. The Corps clearly was in the middle in this case.

Suggested Learnings

This case is important in that it represents one of the first experiences in planning and guiding the reuse of a major military facility that has been essentially closed except for modest continuing military activities. The associated environmental clean-up activities are also instructive as an example of a CERCLA related effort. Those interviewed in regard to this case were clear, forthright,

and constructive in suggesting learnings relevant to others in similar circumstances. Following are a series of descriptions of important learnings from the Fort Ord experience that may be instructive to others in regard to public involvement.

1. Undertake the E. I. S. in partnership with community leaders. The major learning from the Fort Ord case is that it is preferable to coordinate all resources in developing one E. I. S. and reuse plan. "We should have been connected at the hip from the outset" advises one official. Another official suggests, "It is dysfunctional to create one approach from the Army and another from the community. We should have worked together from day one." Several of the following points have been made to reinforce this key learning.

2. Create a vehicle for coordination and partnering at the outset. It has been suggested by a number of persons that it is wise to devote the necessary time to establish a group of leaders representing the Army, the community, and others would agree to work together in planning and implementing reuse activities. "Front end time in assuring collaboration saves silly time lost in fragmentation later on," advises one Army official. A community leader proposes, "One legitimate structure needs to be established at the outset. Everybody should buy into it. If we create alternative vehicles, we will crash at a later intersection and we will all be damaged in our progress."

3. Avoid the tyranny of time. Demands and expectations of time seem to be an important force in this case. The prescription to "avoid the tyranny of time" was suggested by one official. However, the issue of time and deadlines is viewed from multiple perspectives. "It is good to have a deadline," suggests a community leader, "but it must be realistic and manageable. It should not force one party off to do their own thing." A number of persons related to this case comment that an 18 month deadline for the E. I. S. undermined the quality of the process. "What you need," proposes one official, "is a realistic timetable that all the players agree to, and is not imposed from outside." This issue, a number of persons have observed, must be resolved according to the complexity of issues and players involved." The schedule must be realistic and obtainable," suggests one leader, "or the process will self-destruct."

4. Be proactive and encourage early public involvement. Several Corps officials and consultants in this case advise that the key to effective public involvement is to actively identify key leaders and institutions and build relationships with them. "We need to be aggressive rather than casual in attracting participation," advises one official. He adds, "sending a notice is not enough, we need to get in dialogue and encourage people and institutions to be active partners." Another official advises, "This is not a consumer invitation, it is a request for real involvement. We need to make this clear from the get-go. We also need to be prepared to accommodate them as real partners."

5. Connect with regulatory agencies at the outset. A number of officials point out that state and regulatory agencies are critical to the public involvement process. "Other agencies define the agenda and have their own needs and expectations regarding the public," advises a Corps official. A consultant adds, "Agencies represent public interests and want to see that public interests are represented. They need to be factored in as a part of the public involvement process from early-on. Otherwise they can side-swipe you. They must be partners."

6. The Corps must appear as user-friendly as possible. Several community leaders observed that Corps representatives in committee meetings and public presentations have a distinctive impact on them. "Some of the Corps people are very effective and inspire confidence" observes a community leader. The leader further observes "some technical people are a total turn-off. They are arrogant or seem like they are from outer-space and don't give a hoot about anything other than their lofty opinions." Another suggests, "Some Corps people need a Dale Carnegie course. They just do not know how to influence people."

7. The Corps should be a facilitator. Two important points were raised in the case regarding the role of the Corps in base reuse dynamics. The first point was that the nature of base reuse efforts forces the Corps into the business of community organization. "The Corps" suggests a local leader, "needs to become a catalyst and facilitator. They cannot act like a big engineering company that wants to roll over us. They must establish themselves as our helper. Otherwise, they are the enemy." The second point is that the Corps must help local communities to come together. "The Corps has to be effective in the community empowerment business," proposes one official. "They cannot assume the community is ready to be a good partner. They have to be able to help the community get their act together. Otherwise," he adds, "the community might bite off their toes."

Lessons, Questions, and Conclusions

Beyond the learnings suggested above, this case illustrates two important lessons for the Corps that may be relevant to the future of public involvement practice. One lesson is that when "doing work for others," as in this case, the nature of how the Corps deals with and is perceived by the public may be significantly shaped by their "customer." This may create problems for the Corps in cases where they may prefer to deal with the public in ways in which a client does not. How can the quality of public involvement be nurtured by the Corps in its work with customers? Are there principles and procedures that should be negotiated at the outset? Should there be processes for evaluating public involvement concerns and activities jointly? To what extent, if any, will the Corps compromise quality in public involvement practice, to serve and at the direction of a customer? These questions are relevant to the future reputation and capacity of the Corps in its dealing with the community.

The second lesson in the Fort Ord Case, which is also evident in the other cases undertaken in this project, is how much public involvement can be influenced by political dynamics. The political dynamics in this case ranged from differences among local communities to substantial changes in national policy. This case was about more than an E. I. S. It was also about local differences between economic development and environmental values, and it was about the extent of community influence versus that of the Army in base reuse and closure decisions.

The Corps is not immune from cases such as this that are politically charged and complex. It is more rather than less likely that the Corps will need to deal with strong and complex political dynamics associated with future projects. These dynamics influence public involvement practice. How can the Corps best plan public involvement initiatives in relation to political dynamics that shape and influence each initiative? Do most project managers have the skills to relate effectively to influential political forces, and if not, what must the Corps do to promote greater sophistication among managers to do so? Finally, what must the Corps do to adequately manage politically charged cases between the district, division, and headquarters levels?

This case, in concert with the other activities associated with the Public Involvement Assessment Project, illustrates the importance of the question cited above to the future of the Corps. While the Corps has much to be proud of regarding its commitment to public involvement, it must renew and expand its capacity for the future. As the Organizational Assessment suggests earlier in this document (p. 21), this will require a commitment by the Corps to clarify policy, strengthen capability, promote quality, reinforce commitment and assume leadership in regard to public involvement. To not address these challenges adequately will weaken the Corps as an institution and reduce its viability for future service to the nation.

Appendix A - Selected Opinions

The following quotes represent the opinions of over 100 Corps officials interviewed for this project regarding public involvement within the Corps. These quotes represent opinions, analysis, ideas, and suggestions that have helped to shape this report.

The quotes relate to 12 issues and questions that were asked in interviews conducted in this project The issues and questions are as follows and are listed in chronological order.

I. Effectiveness: How effective is the Corps today in working with the public?

II. Changes in Public Involvement: How have public involvement practices and procedures changed over the past 20 years?

III. Changes in the Public: How has the public changed in regard to public involvement in the past 20 years?

IV. Defining the Public: How is the "public" defined today?

V. Needs and Problems: What are some of the problems the Corps has today in regard to public involvement?

VI. Organizational Factors: What are some of the organizational features and forces that influence the capacity of the Corps to involve the public?

VII. Technology: In what ways is technology influencing public involvement practice within the Corps?

VIII. Water Resource Development Act of 1986: How has the WRDA of 1986 influenced public participation within the Corps?

IX. Suggested Principles and Strategies: What principles and strategies should be employed to promote effective public involvement within the Corps?

X. Suggested Methods and Approaches: What methods and approaches should be employed to promote effective public involvement within the Corps?

XI. Public Affairs Role: What should be the role of public affairs offices and their staff in regard to public involvement?

XII. Training: What kind of training strategies and resources are needed to promote public involvement in the future?

I. EFFECTIVENESS:

How effective is the Corps today in involving the public?

"Public involvement has changed for the better because it's not pulled out and identified as something you have to do. . . . Public involvement is now a way of life for almost everything we do."

"Public involvement is one of their problems. They are old fashioned and tend to ...don't like to be challenged. They are dealing with the public as a challenge to their technical capability--which is a big mistake."

"You hear about districts that are good in public involvement. But when we visited one that had a good reputation, the public we talked to said they were not involved."

"The people I work with are becoming far more aware of its [public involvement's] importance. The Corps has become much more sophisticated. So, I think it s a good opportunity right now to make public involvement systematic within the Corps."

"Even some of the people who were skeptics [of public involvement] have been won over. . . They see this is not inhibiting and no cost [especially in utilizing public affairs assistance].

"We have been able to convince study managers that E.I.S. works. N.E.P.A. works. We are doing more environmental assessment because of positive public involvement."

"The Corps of Engineers has always been a far more public agency than other D.O.D. agencies . . . or other federal agencies, and now, we are thrust into being even more public than we have in the past because the public knows what we are doing. . . ."

"Environmental awareness has forced us into a different posture as to how we deal with the public."

"We are now having [managers] who are actually having fun interacting with people on projects. Its like . . . if you want to really know what's going on in a study area, ask the people who have lived there for thirty years."

"New District Engineers realize that public participation has to be there. I think that is a mind-set and new realization that the new District Engineers have. . . . They're a lot more sensitive to having the public a part of the process. I think that carries over to project and study managers."

"Generationally, younger people today are better equipped to deal with the public. They have a stronger sense of accountability to the public than an earlier generation."

"Army folks know they have to do a good public involvement effort. They run a lot of workshops, meet with people, and keep it going. I get involved in a lot of things even though my time gets real strained, but I think this is a major part of our work."

"We have not done as well with public involvement in other parts of our business such as operations and recreation."

"When it comes to public participation, alternative dispute resolution, and partnering, no one can dispute that the Corps has been anything but a leader in the field."

"Every single one of the comments we receive in a public involvement process is reviewed and considered. We may aggregate them, but we look at each one through a team that reviews everything."

"It is not uncommon from the beginning of a project through a draft E.I.S. that three or four changes will be made as a result of public involvement."

"Because we are able to do better public involvement, we have to do fewer Environmental Impact Statements (which are more costly), and can do Environmental Assessments which are less costly."

"In our planning division, public involvement is a priority, and I'm proud of the quality of work we do."

"We have some real good experiences in public involvement, and some that were not so good. In the latter, I think the nature of the problems we faced were such that it was hard to get an outcome that pleased everyone."

"Sometimes we don't follow through enough on public involvement. Sometimes we do. But it is often never quite enough in terms of performance."

"Public involvement is not being handled in the right way especially in areas like engineering, design, construction and operations, and I do not think it will until it is overseen by people who really know what public involvement means."

"The approach in dealing with the public in relation to many of our plans is to "sell it" to the public. We are not going to have real participation although we will have public meetings, brochures and everything we do with public involvement programs. . . . But it is a facade. If there are real concerns from the public, we don't really change things substantially, we will just ignore it.

"The bottom line when you get done with a study today is did you get a project. If you didn't get a project, maybe, part of the problem may be poor public involvement. . . . I believe public involvement is more important and will become more important. . . . We have to evaluate its importance."

"The Corps needs to be sure that we do not run public involvement as a concocted process. We need to be sure to show how and why we made changes as a result of public involvement."

"We are getting a lot better in our efforts in involving the public. Today there is more readiness and openness. We trust the public more today."

"Our philosophy of management, which is not a traditional philosophy, is to get work done with people. And this works because our division manager totally supports this approach."

"In the areas of natural resources, we have tremendous needs and opportunities for public interface. So, we have a rigorous and strenuous public involvement process, especially in regard to regulatory issues."

"We do more public involvement, we are more conscious of the various public entities, and we are doing it at the proper time. . . . We have learned to meet with the public to tell people what we are thinking at the outset. to get their advice before we get very far into engineering."

"In the last five years, we have been doing a very good job with public participation and are involving people early on."

"In the District I come from, we had a lousy reputation with the public. One big reason is that we don't answer letters on time or not at all. This creates critics who are either antagonistic or apathetic when invited to get involved later on."

"We have experimented with a lot of public involvement methods and have continued to increase our capacity in many different types of projects and activities."

"Our district is good at public involvement in part because of the geography of the area. Without the Corps and the levees we maintain, the city and area wouldn't survive. So, we are forced to deal with the public around issues of great concern to them and about which they view us as a helping resource."

II. CHANGES IN PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:

How has public involvement practices and procedures changed over the past 20 years?

"In the end of the 80s, we were more organized and cognizant of public involvement. We designed public involvement up front, it was a line item study cost estimate, we had specific procedures. . . . We all took the Synergy training course. . . ."

"I think things have changed positively. In the early 70s, we were dealing with activism, splash and flash, but that group of people have grown up as we have and become more knowledgeable. They have better things to tell me now and a better basis rather than gut feelings. It has been an educational process."

"The scope of public involvement has expanded a lot today to include activities such as alternative dispute resolution, multiple party mediation, partnering activities, etc."

"People are far more concerned about the federal dollar today. People want to know what we are spending money on, what it will do for them and should be doing."

"Public involvement used to be a courtesy thing, . . . but not anymore. Now we have stuff on the table and they dig deep. Now they have their stuff together. They have groups and committees. They go to other agencies and ask about us. They are into it heavily. This is good for us. It really makes our check and balances come out."

"Some of the abuses, so to speak, that led to the public clamor for involvement in public works planning no longer exist. There is much greater sensitivity today to things in addition to engineering considerations. We no longer have people beating down our door, and they trust the Corps to a much greater extent, relatively speaking."

"The districts are much more accepting of public involvement today. What you will see is that public involvement activities are a routine, line-item in putting together a study work-plan. What used to be difficult to do, is easier because now we have p.i. strategies and budgets up-front. We have consultants available to help and we have different kinds of people in the organization who are accepting of public involvement."

"A part of what we see today in terms of the lack of visibility for public involvement is that it has become a routine activity. Now this doesn't answer the question as to whether it is done well. I would say the Districts are somewhat selective today in terms of how much effort they put into it for several reasons. One is that on some relatively straightforward non-controversial projects, they have discovered that there is limited benefit of return on investment. On studies that are difficult because of controversy and competing interests, they will be inclined to up-front commitment for more substantial efforts. And that probably makes sense."

"When I first got here, the public meetings were raucous to say the least, but now the meetings are very calm. In most cases, people don't get up and shout at us anymore. I think good community relations has a lot to do with that."

"In general, people have a much better understanding of the Corps today and they tolerate a lot more of what we do than before."

"In recent years, we have reduced the number of public hearing-type situations in permitting [sic] by having a better informed public . . . . The meetings we have had throughout the District have helped."

"One change I have noticed is that we are not as afraid to drastically modify or deny projects as when I came to work in [regulatory affairs] 14 years ago. . . . It seems like most permits are modified today."

"1970s participation was more canned. It didn't accomplish near as much as the workshop type things we have today. . . . The things we are doing today are so much smarter than years ago."

"Back then [in the 1970s], public involvement consisted of a couple of mandatory public meetings the purpose of which was to fulfill a requirement or regulation. The attitude was that we surely must have a public meeting, but we won't let that interfere with anything we want to do. . . . There wasn't a lot of public interest then. . . . The post-N.E.P.A. era changed the public's and Corps attitude. . . . The Corps has matured over the past 20 years, and the Corps attitude toward public involvement demonstrates that more than anything else. Now we look at public involvement as something real and something of value."

"The positive value is that people who live and work in a local area probably have a better feel for the subtleties of a situation. Also, it keeps you out of court."

"It used to be that industry groups would send only one representative or a letter. Now, the various industry groups are getting more involved in providing data."

"Most of our work with hazardous and toxic waste cleanup is reimbursable work for others . . . involving split responsibility, including public involvement."

"Before N.E.P.A., we were like dictators. We would listen to the states because we needed their support, but not the public. But the requirements of N.E.P.A. forced us to deal with the public and provide involvement. The Water Resources Development Act of 1986 cranked this up even more and forced us to be more accountable to the public. Now we have to satisfy people at the local level who are paying part of the cost."

"Today just about every district has an environmental branch or group to work closely with environmental interests."

"The 1981 regulations curtailing advisory committees forced us to disband our river basin coordinating committee. That cut down on our on-going communication and support from the many states with which we must work."

III. CHANGES IN THE PUBLIC:

How has the public changed in regard to public involvement in the past twenty years?

"Most of the people I deal with (and I deal with the environmental community), have changed their attitude a lot. They have learned what the Corps can and can't do. We are greener in our outlook as far as they are concerned."

"The people we dealt with in the late 60s and early 70s were fairly polarized, and the Corps in the early days would be on the side of economic interests, very strongly. Although we had to take everything into account, this was the Corps tradition. . . . Our credibility with the environmental community was poor. Today it is more balanced and we have gained the respect with environmental groups over the last 10 years."

"The public has gotten better educated. They are a lot smarter. They know the N.E.P.A. rules as well as government agencies. The public therefore is asking more questions and expects better answers from civil servants."

"People have come to expect more involvement in government. . . People want to know a lot about what's going on that effects their lives."

"The most dramatic change I have seen is the amount of information the public has . . . part of that is that the public has forced government to provide more information."

""A lot of the technical areas that used to be accepted as gospel are now open and scrutinized publicly."

"It is very evident, particularly with suburban lakes, that local governments as well as local publics expect more public involvement. So, there is very definitely a need to train our people better in that."

"Citizens associated with the huge environmental programs that I am more actively involved with are being much more informed and educated on environmental considerations."

"The public has become more organized--especially the interest groups. They become involved more early and are more vocal."

"It becomes a very political game now . . . you have to deal with all the politics involved at the city staff level, then they go to the Council which is very much politics, and then you also have the public. This is further complicated by many interest groups--including environmental ones."

"Indians have changed. They make their demands known in very organized ways. A number are well educated now. They used to hire consultants and attorneys, but now they have their own who are tribal people. These people are so accepted that there is an internal openness that has developed in the last decade."

"The tribes are participating in rural water supply systems and making demands on the Corps to provide them with assistance for water inlets. This will effect operations."

"The documents that Indian tribes present today are technically sophisticated and very well researched legally."

"An issue here is the right to return tribal lands taken for reservoirs . . . While the demands are not enormous, they have a lot of implications because they are shoreline lands."

"Things are different today because of education and the media. Most folks today expect to be more informed and involved."

"In some cases, working with farmers and recreation interests can be as difficult as working with environmental groups."

"The public is not satisfied with being told what is happening. They want to be a part of deciding what happens. They are pushing harder and then getting more. There's a lot more congressional interest, and that is how the public is getting to us today to get our attention."

"In this day and age of instantaneous communication, of relatively small constituencies or special interests having access to mass audiences through technology ... you cannot ignore public involvement, and you will not survive if you go back to old days of closing the doors and pulling the shades. We are in a fishbowl. The public and the special interests are far too sophisticated for us to go back to the old ways."

IV. DEFINING THE PUBLIC:

How is the "public" defined today?

"I define the public as everyone outside the building; the mayor, the property owner, the environmentalist, the guy that wants to ride a bike on top of a levee. Its a very broad range."

"Farmers are a very big part of our public. They liked us pretty good until the wetland delineation manual came out back in the 1980s. Then they hated us and now they are trying to figure out where we and they stand."

"Environmental groups have a lot of meetings in our district and we always try to attend the major ones."

"We define anything we do with anyone outside this office as public involvement."

"When someone talks about public involvement, I don't know where you cut it off. I don't know how you identify the public and say somebody is excluded. There is no person who is not a part of our public involvement."

"I separate the general public and special interest groups. The special interest groups show up everywhere even if it's not in their backyard. The general public have the property adjacent to a project. Usually what they are concerned about is entirely different."

"It is important to establish ongoing relations with other agencies, environmental groups and other public interests. I've found it effective to attend their conferences and meetings. They are important parts of the public."

"It is important to consider Congress and the administration as part of the public. Also local and state elected officials are important."

"Because our projects takes so long and go through so many phases, the public of interest changes over time. So, you have to keep asking who else should we try to inform and involve."

V. NEEDS AND PROBLEMS:

What are some of the problems the Corps has today in regard to public involvement?

"One of the areas we need to do better in is feed-back mechanisms after we collect information. We need to find more innovative ways."

"We find the situation is further complicated . . . because our feasibility studies are two to three years in length and usually during that time you are going to have a turnover in the City Council and maybe the mayor, so who started the process is not ending the process."

"A particular need or problem area in regard to public involvement is when it gets to the construction phase. It seems that efforts are not kept up to keep the public involved during this period."

"We have not put enough effort into making sure our people understand the changing dynamics of the public and how you have to deal with them."

"We in the Corps wait too long to get people involved."

"Some resistance is subtle. Some is overt. There is the old Corps attitude that the media is out to get you and the public is out to challenge you. If we could operate differently and be more open, the public would not challenge as much."

"The public perceives us as a technically, extremely competent agency. We are also perceived as a bunch of arrogant assholes. We have to work to get rid of this image."

"We still look at public involvement as something that happens external to the organization. We are not yet ready to have the publics sitting here at the table with us as we strive to determine alternatives, etc."

"As with most plan formulations groups across the country, we have a very high turnover rate, and most of our people are very inexperienced. One of the first required courses I send them to is the basic public involvement, and then we include the advanced public involvement, and the

third which I like very much is negotiating, bargaining, and conflict management, which I feel is an extension of those."

"We have a good reputation in our district, but it seems that some of the decisions that are made up there, at headquarters, tend not to support a good reputation. Like we're supposed to be the greening agency -- the environmental agency -- but some of the decisions they make don't support that when it comes back to the district."

"There are cells of resistance to public involvement around."

"There are still pockets of resistance here and there, but they will catch up once they run into serious problems with the public."

"Engineers find public participation more difficult because they are brought up not to criticize the designs of another engineer. So when they face criticism or second-guessing or a different approach from the public they are often uneasy."

"To some extent, we get locked into the engineer mentality. We think there is one right answer to everything. We are sufficiently cognizant that society is dynamic and you can't do a one time scan of something and think the solution will apply all the time."

"Years ago, we took people with the greatest innate ability and assigned them public involvement responsibilities. Now we do not have those kind of resources, we are not as staffed up. . . Now each study manager is responsible for public involvement. If he has innate ability, it is to our benefit. If not, the agency suffers, we take our hit."

"We still have too much of compliance mentality about public participation because of section 102 of N.E.P.A. You have to do an E.I.S., an E.A., and have public involvement. Unfortunately, we seem to have lost the meaning of Section 101 that we should live in harmony with nature. The Clear Water Act the same way. Exactly fifteen days of the application you will issue a public notice and then you will or must, etc."

"Community affairs is done as an ad-hoc thing within the Corps."

"The demands on the organization for public involvement and public affairs just continues to go up. So, if you don't resource that community appropriately, you cannot catch up."

"District Engineers don't really get involved much in dealing with public involvement. Now they may want to be sure a public meeting is run well. But to provide any directive or to say my first priority is to push public involvement, no, you're not even close to this."

"Bureaucracy and greater centralization in decision making in Washington gives a poor image to the concept of public involvement. It really taints the Corps, saying we can't really move things. . . . We do lose some credibility for sure."

"The situation with public involvement in the Corps is like implementing TQM, Total Quality Management. Under that concept, it must start at the highest levels, it has to come from the top. But I don't think it is. It is getting lost or swamped by other things. To some degree it's working, but it is not getting enough attention."

"Our District faces pressure in civil works to get more projects or to face cutbacks and downsizing. So, public involvement does not get the attention it deserves, or it gets caught up in our need to drum up more work."

"We need better public involvement within the Corps emanating from the Chief's office. We need think of the employees and the Congress as the public. The lack of public involvement, in my opinion, is what has created problems with the reorganization."

"We do not get the leadership we need from District Engineers. They are looking ahead to their merit assignment and their performance appraisal which comes in the first two years. So, they don't look far enough ahead to deal with what is needed for the Corporation. And they don't really get involved with the public."

"We have too much interest in the outcomes of proposed projects to have a meaningful public involvement process."

"Until success and failure in each district is measured by different outputs rather than how much did you build last year . . . until we are retooled to not think that way, public involvement is not going to work."

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS:

What are some of the organizational features and forces that influence the capacity of the Corps to involve the public?

1. About the Organizational Culture of the Corps

"Our study managers today are much younger, and they are bringing to the job much more of a people-orientation than we used to have."

"The Corps is a very conservative organization."

"The Corps is excellent in terms of technical competence."

"Each one of the Districts is like an empire unto itself."

"The system has changed. The [Corps] has become less bureaucratic. . . As things have evolved they are far more attracted to public involvement and customer satisfaction."

"When I first laid eyes on the military during Vietnam, it wasn't too different from M.A.S.H. You had draftees of the lowest common denominator environment. Over the years, it has changed and become more professional."

"It does seem that we spend an inordinate amount of time shifting our gears to accommodate . . . differences between commanders rather than focusing on our mission."

"In working with the military, whoever is the proponent of the action takes responsibility for public involvement."

"Our greatest problem is with people who want the status quo and oppose any change."

"I am a strong believer in decentralization so long as the corporate headquarters holds very closely the following things: structure, corporate message, resource allocation, and performance measurement systems. We aren't doing these things."

"In a big and complex organization like the Corps, each level must have a very clear understanding of its roles and responsibilities. We have particularly lost sight of that at Headquarters. Goals and objectives belong to headquarters, along with defining basic organizational structure, resource allocation and policy and guidance. We are not doing these things, we have abdicated them to the field."

"I am concerned that we have no corporate code in the field. . . People are doing things on their own. I'm not sure we are using our resources best, or conveying an appropriate corporate message."

"Corps people, like people everywhere, would like a level playing field all the time. But, if that's where you want to be, it's not going to happen working for the federal government. There will never be level playing ground. We move one way for awhile, and then we may move into the

opposite direction or even another direction. This is particularly frustrating for young people in the Corps."

"People in the field see a niche and want to fill the niche. They still do not understand clearly the basic governmental system we work in. They do not understand that the Executive branch has certain powers and prerogatives and that the Congress has others, and Congress often sees things differently from the administration. They tend to want to work for whichever serves their purpose, but they work for the administration."

"The senior civilian leadership of the Corps probably has more influence over this organization than any other single aspect. We have a thin veneer of military types, but the stability and institutional memory for good or for bad is largely with the civilian leadership."

"A persuasive and critical public involvement problem is that there has been a tremendous centralization of control and decision-making back in Washington--so much so that we cannot speak with confidence about the outcome of almost anything we do these days. Local cooperation agreement have to be signed in Washington and they are nit-picked to death. . . . There is a growing trend that people are leap-frogging the district and division and going straight to Washington."

"The system has gotten overloaded in Washington. They will tell you that is not true, and they have to do this because of poor quality work, which is sometimes true. They will also say that we are too close to the public. They say that a part of what we exist for is to nurture customer satisfaction, but this has almost no meaning today."

"When the agent interacting with the public at the local level is perceived as powerless to make any decisions, then it really limits the relevance of public involvement at the district level."

"There has been a tendency to try to manage the Corps of Engineers by the budget process . . . by defining the mission of the corps much more narrowly. . . . What is frustrating to us down here is that there is almost a complete lack of any reconciliation between what the Congress wants the Corps to do and what the administration is willing for us to do, and the system has deteriorated into gamesmanship."

"The Corps of Engineers is going down hill. We have developed too burdensome a bureaucratic process for review. We have too military a mentality which doesn't quire fit in the area of civil works. We will see more small projects, but we are not making adjustments to expedite them more quickly."

"If the Corps thinks it is adjusting to the changes it must face, it is not. They do not look at the whole process. They just make the change and try to fit in it."

"Our district is one of the several desirable ones for District Engineers because of the amount of work we do and our reputation. So, we attract the cream of the crop who are more futuristic, and they see and understand the importance of involving the public. . . . If you look back, a lot of innovations in public participation in the Corps came out of desirable districts like Baltimore, New Orleans, L.A., Mobile, etc.

2. Leadership and Management

"One can't say that planners are more open to public involvement than engineers. It depends on the persons. Planners, in many cases, may be more possessive -- especially on longer studies. If they started their contact with the public earlier it might eliminate possessiveness."

"The younger and newer people caught on quickly to public involvement because the negative paradigm was not well established."

"The District Engineers are younger, even physically younger. . . their imprinted differently with their exposure to the military. These guys didn't see Vietnam. . . . They have a different view. They are more oriented toward a corporate army.

"Project managers today are more attuned. They are a different generation and they know very well that if a project is not done to a person's satisfaction, there probably won't be more coming."

"You owe it to me as a 20-year career employee to keep District Engineers in the same place for three years minimum."

"Our people have better communication skills than they have ever had. But we are restricted somewhat in authority in being able to bring those skills to bear to the degree that we need to do."

"Two things are happening with study managers. They are much younger, and they have better skills. Plus, they end up working with interdisciplinary teams of 6 to 8 people, representing backgrounds as diverse as environmental studies, archeology, biology, economics, cultural resources, real estate and design. As a result, they do not just focus on engineering issues, but provide a much broader focus on people and social issues."

3. Missions and Future Work

"Despite rosy colored predictions that we are going to be doing all new and innovative things like Magnetic Levitation, Hazardous Toxins remediation,, and cleaning up the world, in my judgment that will be extremely limited. The Corps will be doing what its doing now. It will have to do it smarter."

"I think it would be wise to get the Corps involved in infrastructure rebuilding. Let's face it, that's what we are good at."

"To be involved in infrastructure construction will be difficult because historically its been done by state and local governments using consultants. They don't want the federal government coming in and taking over a lot, making decisions... Districts that have not worked on cost sharing with local governments ... will find it difficult."

"There will be no less regulatory activity as environmental protection is a key value of the nation and the Corps... As population increases there will be a need for regulation related to water use."

"We do know that environmental regulations have grown and grown, and will continue to do so."

"What we are told by the Army is that they will be concentrating on HTRW work, modernization of living facilities for soldiers, and improvements to family housing. . . ."

"The military projects that hold the greatest challenge in dealing with the public are the HTRW projects at formerly used defense sites."

"In areas where the Corps is building up work, like in the HTRW areas, in cleaning up superfund sites and in FUDS programs, the public will be more involved than they ever were. Let's not kid ourselves, those are the things that scare the daylights out of people. In that area, I don't think we have begun to scratch the surface about what public participation means."

"I think the Corps will continue to face constraints, some changes in mission, and be downsized. We will do more environmental type things, we obviously will not build many more dams, we will refurbish the navigation infrastructure. . . . We will have on-going operations and maintenance programs, more environmental planning and design, and some construction, and about the same level of HTRW on the civil side and a little more on the military side."

"An area in which the Corps should become more involved is comprehensive storm water management. . . E.P.A. has come out with regulations and local governments are now developing plans. This is an area of potential that will also require a lot of public involvement."

"[In terms of new missions], I wish we could use the tremendous resources of the 49,000 or so people in the Corps to help serve the needs of our country in math and science education. . . . We are not authorized to do this, although we do on a volunteer basis in the adopt-a-school program."

"We have to work closely with state and federal agencies that have a role in water resources management."

"The Corps of Engineers was not set up to run parks. . . It is something we got into sideways. So, lacking a mission statement or legislative interest, it is going to be an arena of a lot of maneuvering."

"I think [the natural resources management mission of the Corps] needs to be clarified, legislatively clarified, because the structure of the Corps is so fragmented now. . ."

"One thing the Corps' natural resources management function has never had is an advocate--the Parks Service has them, the Forest Service does. . . I think it would be very useful."

"We get a mixed message from Washington telling us to be careful about how you go about looking for opportunities for work and not infringing on work that should go to private industry. It's not a well-defined line."

"We are reaching out more . . . including to the different elements of the military."

"We walk a fine line when it comes to new work. We are not supposed to market, but in reality, we must to survive."

"We get a mixed message . . . We can't market to compete with private industry, yet we have to survive and let people know about our mission and capability."

"At the district level, we must run a fine line in responding to mixed messages from Washington. The Assistant Secretary for Civil Works for the Army says we can't market. Yet, we get messages that our survival is based on getting more cost-sharing contracts. So, we have to get out and educate local officials about what we might do to help them, but we can't call this marketing."

"Our approach today is like a sales organization. We go out and meet with local directors of public works and talk with them about their needs and problems right now and how we can help."

"Although Congress and successive administrations have said we do not want the Corps of Engineers involved in recreation . . . but for whatever reasons, Congress continues to keep us in this business."

"The situation is simple but crazy. We are not supposed to market, but our district must market or be given new missions or it will die. . . ."

"As we look to the future, competing demands and greater expectations for more and stronger public involvement on properties we mange will intensify."

"The Corps of Engineers is providing more recreational use than any other agency of government and on only 2% of the land."

4. Reorganization

"We were heading in the direction of having a good strong basic philosophy for the Corps, but the reorganization has been killing us in every way under the sun. Yet, without a reorganization, things will not play out well."

"From the division perspective, reorganization will probably mean much less hands-on public involvement for our division. . . . Districts are going to have to think more globally . . . responsibility the division has now."

"We have to determine how divisions are going to fit into the policy review process in the reorganization."

"Whoever will become a technical center will have to make an extra effort to communicate with the public in another district. . . . People have to go and learn about the culture and leaders. It's going to make it harder and it's going to take time and effort. Those who don't do a good job will not be successful which is probably the reason a lot of districts are closing because if they were so good they wouldn't be closing."

"You have to have a special effort, extra effort, a double effort to be cognizant of the needs and problems of that local area. . . It will require a stronger push for public involvement. . . . It will take more time and money."

"In some cases, having planners move to another district makes little difference because of the great distances in our district. I have to send people to places far from our office as it is now."

"I think the biggest mistake the reorganization made is to take out a planning expertise in some districts. They have no way, they are cut off, they have buried those people. There is no way to get new work in studies and programs."

"It's not just marketing, it's taking away the wherewithal and how to. Most people don't know how to get things going or started who are not in planning . . . to take out planning is the death-knell for a district."

"There could be a real impact on our regulatory program, if some outside people come into our office . . . if they don't have to deal with the public as we do . . . the program could suffer . . . because you might get people working in this area who have no experience."

"It isn't clear about how this might effect the support services we need in regulatory affairs."

VII. TECHNOLOGY:

In what ways is technology influencing public involvement practices within the Corps?

"Project managers have a lot of schools they go to . . . on the technical aspects of projects. I see no reason why public involvement training units wouldn't be a good idea. Likewise, the military guys in their command and staff college now have a public affairs unit . . . but I'm not sure that they get public involvement training in that."

"Because of the advent of word processing and low-level technology like that . . . it is a whole lot easier for us to publish reports and modify and change them a number of times."

"Technology has helped a lot. Some of the information we put out, the brochures, the things with computers, automation, and electronic communication make it much easier. If you have to coordinate a news release or public notice with your sponsor, you can fax it right away to check it. It speeds up our process."

"Immediacy of information is one of the biggest changes. The fax machine is the greatest invention we have had in the 20th Century. In 30 seconds, we can distribute a press release."

"It is hard to believe we have gotten by without a fax . . . When we want to get a quick turnaround on a national permit we fax materials to other agencies. . . . Because some regulators have such a short response time, this helps."

"VCRs, dual-screen remote control presentations and better computer graphics are good. . . We exchange information when in a hurry by telephone and fax."

"You have to use different techniques depending on the sophistication of the public in question. . . . Audio visual techniques are good for communicating. . . One of the new things we are using more is Computer Aided Drafting and Design Equipment (CADD). We use a tool called Geographic Information System (GIS) and use the CADD for loading this. . . This is a great marketing tool. . . . We can carry a map to a meeting which identifies peoples' house and property in relation to a proposed project."

"We use fax and with private interest groups, like environmental groups, we are able to send them information that they may want that keeps a problem from arising. Just last week, we had a number of questions faxed from a potential local sponsor where they had questions they wanted surfaced in a forum, and it enabled us to prepare a little better."

"We haven't used much except desk-top publishing and so when we get there, we have better handouts."

"We have used computer-generated slides."

"Fax speeds everything up and provides quick access to information."

"Another technology that can really help to educate the public is their local access channel which can provide a good summary of a proposed project, alternatives, etc."

"Digital terrain mapping is a technology that really helps to explain things to the public. It can graphically show the threats to an area, options and how it will effect an area in general and a homeowner's property."

"Technology has helped us in our capacity to creative computer generated slides that describe the project in some detail and highlight issues like cost-benefit analyses."

"A thing that works very well with the public is for a study manager to be able to clearly describe with maps, charts or slides, the nature of the project and the alternatives that have been identified and are being considered."

"The use of computerized mailing lists, which need to be regularly updated, is a major technological contribution to our work in regulatory affairs."

"Communication technology is driving increased demands for public involvement. . . . Marshall McLuhan's idea of the global village is coming true, people are wired together and they want to pick up the phone and get an answer now."

"We can produce a report today very quickly and have it on someone's desk in minutes."

"Through the use of satellites, we can now monitor the stage of a river on and up to the minute basis."

"Computer graphics, especially in areas like hydraulics and economics, makes it easier to explain things more clearly to the public today."

VIII. WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1986:

How has the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 influenced public participation within the Corps?

"There are implications for change in the 1990 Water Resource Act also that require you to do public involvement in any reallocation proposals, if you are to change how to operate a facility such as changing from water storage to hydropower, etc."

"A city manager, mayor, county official, director of a port authority must have the support of their government and public to budget cost-sharing. So, in order for projects to go you've got the have local money, and to have local money, you better have local public involvement."

"Cost sharing has added a different dimension to public involvement from several perspectives. Sometimes the locals want to restrict public involvement. Sometimes they don't want to spend any money. We might say to do this right, this is what we think we need to do, and they say they will handle that local issue."

"One of the things that might be driving us in a bad direction is study cost sharing... When you sit down with people who have to sign up for 50% cost sharing for one of our studies and tell them you're going to spend $300,000 to $400,000 for public involvement in a $3 million study, then they are much more likely to challenge the need for that money than if you tell them you are going to spend $300,000 to $400,000 for hydraulic modeling."

"With cost sharing, the public is now the customer; and with the whole customer orientation, everyone is changing. All the engineers now aren't just looking at people to get out of the way so they can do their work. But now they see that these are the people who are going to determine

if the work is going to be approved... whether or not they are going to have jobs... Joe Blow is now Mr. Customer."

"We have more workshops as a result of cost sharing."

"In some cases we find that our co-sponsors have a very prominent role in public involvement."

"Involving people in the reconnaissance phase is the best business strategy in the world."

"Because of cost-sharing, we attend local city council and county commission meetings and make presentations -- a lot more than ever before."

"Sponsors will participate with us at the meetings ... help us to find a place to meet, help with the mailing list and identifying interested partners, but they still rely on us because we have more resources to organize things."

"Cost sharing has made the Corps realize that partners must be kept informed about any changes in projects. In small communities, coming up with 25% of costs, that's a big burden for small towns. So, to get the public involved, we have worked more and more with our partners to get the public involved in early stages."

"Now that communities are putting more in, they scrutinize expenses, including public involvement more. And we answer more questions about project costs now."

"The Corps of Engineers has been brought into public involvement dragging and screaming because of the Federal Water Resources Development Act of 1986."

"The 1986 Act and later ones are forcing us to get out and work with a broader constituency of people and network with them."

Since the 1986 FWRA amendments, . . . local sponsors are more involved because during feasibility studies they have to come up with 50 percent of the money. It's turned out from being a Corps project to "our project," and that's changed things a lot. So now there is a two-tiered system of public involvement. The local sponsor is now a partner, and you now have the public to deal with in a partnership."

"The 1986 Water Resource Act Amendments have changed the public participation equation by putting more pressure on local entities to gain public support and approval. Now that they are having to spend money, they have to relate to their publics."

"The 1986 Act is ancient history. It hasn't effected anything. It hasn't slowed down our projects any."

"I have made a major effort on my part to get major cost-sharing partners to participate and do in-kind activity. But very rarely do they want to do that. They say you have the manpower and the expertise. Here is our 50 percent. Do it."

"Most partners say to use public participation. They don't lose interest. We have management committees and they are always involved, but they do not want to do the work."

"When we started doing cost-sharing, we saw a greater need to deal with sponsors. . . . Since we are spending other than federal money, we need broader involvement. Things have changed dramatically and positively."

IX. SUGGESTED PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIES:

What principles and strategies should be employed to promote effective public involvement within the Corps?

1. In Dealing with the Public

"Be sure people who carry out public Involvement know and understand the meaning of it...If people do not understand that it is central to make the project go, you have the wrong people. You need to believe it will help you and is as important as getting water quality samples or anything else."

"We monitor newspapers and we see more scrutiny of the costs of all environmental projects and not just Corps projects."

"Early involvement of the public and use of non-traditional methods. No one likes to go to public meetings and just sit there. They are totally non-productive. They are typically emotional. You cannot argue with the person who is stating what they are stating. You wind up with half truths as gospel... We should look at every possible way to get out of such meetings."

"We are not going to really get the public involved until they participate in all of our activities, until we can internalize them as a part of our teams. We have a reluctance to do this. Now I don't think they should come to every team meeting, but the team meetings where you are exploring alternatives, it would be helpful to have public participation."

"Whatever works best is the best approach."

"Our feeling is that if you listen to the public you wont have controversy, and if you don't have controversy you don't have the requirement for resolving issues."

"If you go the public and ask them something, you must follow through. If you stop, you have done more damage than good."

"If people know in advance what we are doing, they don't ask so many questions and we don't have to spend a lot of time answering questions that are based upon false rumors."

"I think we have to continue the way we are going and have an open dialogue with the public. We have set a standard in the last five years...we have to maintain it ....If we reduce it we will suffer the consequences in future years because you will not have a good reputation."

"Public involvement is like a bowling ball. You try to keep it between the alleys but you don't know where it is going to go."

"Public involvement is not a hocus pocus, PhD-level thing. It is very simple. Our project managers, they go out and ask people what do you think about this."

"We have been light on our feet, and creative with the public [in attracting new work]. Those creative things cannot be done without public understanding and public involvement."

"If we do our homework and talk to people, it is impossible to have any unwarranted assessment go out for thirty days and receive no comment except thank you for sending it to us."

"Every single comment made regarding an E.I.S. is looked at and responded to in the E.I.S."

"We have had some very good projects with volunteers, and volunteers turn into the very best advocates."

"You can do it right or wait to the end and have to start all over again."

"The key is to inform as many people as early as possible. The success or failure of a project we design is very contingent upon dealing with the public."

"Do not let the politicians get out of the loop. Keep them informed. Keep them up to date. As you go along, get the general public to remember what it was like to get flooded a few years ago. Give them some benefit, like recreation. And also provide them with the best visuals you have."

"My recommendation is that we continue to be real open to the public in our dealings in military design and construction. There is no need for us to keep anything we do secret with the exception of a rare and occasional project. Public involvement in our projects can add nothing but a positive stroke to military projects."

"We have found in our District that it is very helpful to have quarterly meetings between the Corps and other regulatory agencies to review major needs, changes, issues, challenges and relational concerns."

"It would be ideal to have engineers and economists participate in public meetings. But it is a risk, since in some cases they can be a liability rather than an asset. Ideally, if they have good public relations skills, they can be a tremendous resource. How to assure this is a great challenge."

"The public is not so hard to deal with if they have all the facts. . . . We do not have very broad authorities to educate the public and that limits us."

"We need to listen and listen well. We bring a lot of baggage to the situation. . . . We have preconceived notions of what will and won't work. Do it systematically, logically and analytically. Ask questions, shut up, create a blank slate and listen to the answers. Only then can you capture what the public is saying."

"We have to go beyond public involvement and alternative dispute resolution approaches to achieve a common ground, a consensus between all the people who live within our river basin as to its use and management."

"If we don't do public involvement and don't do it correctly, then there is the potential of really messing us up."

"What is needed [in environmental remediation programs we undertake with E.P.A.] is a much more aggressive role, using the expertise we have, in hosting public awareness events and setting up information facilities on site that fully explain what we are doing and have an aggressive outreach program to keep people informed."

"You can have the best technical study in the world, but if the people who have to accept your study do not accept the methodology, you have no study. You just spent millions of dollars for nothing."

"When they took out formal regulations for meetings and made it like you design something good, useful and do it. So we slowed down a lot of the big formal public meetings. Nevertheless, we still have one. Before we finish a report, we expose it even though there is constant on-going

public involvement and coordination. There are scoping meetings, workshops, etc. But I still like to have a major meeting where we say look folks this is where we came out. What do you say, last chance, give us you views. What do you think about it?"

"It is very beneficial to get all interests in the same room at the same time. They become less abusive and gain an understanding of other people's needs as well."

"A key to the success of public involvement is to build and maintain positive relationships with other agencies. This is critical in specific projects in which you must give and take with each other in responding to their concerns and the concerns of the general public."

"It is important in dealing with the public in a project to explain the process and the rules at the outset and to be prepared to continue to do this as people join the process."

2. In Organizing and Managing Public Involvement Functions within the Corps

"We need to recognize there is cost involved in public involvement as well as exposure to risk. We should invest in equipping people to do it. That might involve more public affairs resources and training of personnel in how to deal with contentious audiences."

"I don't think public involvement should be in the performance standards of the study manager...nor should there be specific regulations."

"I think public involvement should be more standardized coming up with ideas to get us out of formal approaches and get ideas for exchanging information without just telling."

"Now that we have project management, it's time to make public involvement systematic, and it is not."

"If you do the right planning there is hardly any reason to have to do an E.I.S. today--especially since we aren't doing that many big projects."

"We have a line item for public involvement in all of our studies."
"The complexity of a study, the issues involved, political sensitivity, environmental concerns--that drives how much emphasis you give to public involvement and how you go about it."

"I know it is costly to do public involvement with the budget cuts and all--but it is more important to do it today than ever before."

"The role of project managers are more critical today now that we have separated them from the technical elements."

"I don't think that the proper way is to put requirements in public involvement because each study or project is going to require a different level. You may run across more that have no opposition, therefore public involvement can be handled in terms of news releases and that sort of thing. But on very controversial issues you will have to go tot he opposite extreme. There are so many variables. . ."

"In the area of public outreach, our district engineer always makes public affairs a part of whatever team might be approaching a particular subject matter or group."

"Public service and involvement is required in regulatory affairs. But we try to go beyond this, as able with limited resources, in outreach programs to inform the public about our programs and ground rules."

"We have developed an approach that works well within our district. Different study managers assist each other in designing and conducting public workshops. In this way, we learn from each other in our section since at least three of us are needed in each workshop."

"We find it is best to have local sponsors host meetings, provide an updated mailing list and mange public meetings."

"Because we have manpower constraints within our district, we need to and do use contractors to manage our public involvement activities. We have been able to attract very competent individuals to do this."

"We have felt very comfortable and satisfied in working with the same public involvement consultant over many years. He understands our district, and we know he can manage public participation activities well. He has been involved in our largest project for many years. So, we view him as a resource and an adjunct member of our team."

"Who does public involvement, how its managed and how often it takes place is so situation-specific as to not lend itself to general rules."

"It takes more time and money to do public involvement, but I have seen where you can do a desk study up in an ivory tower, spending half a million dollars and end up throwing it in the trash. We try to avoid that and find if there is public support, need and local interest."

"When the regulations were structured--like you will have three public meetings--we followed that, but I didn't like the simplistic approach. I like it to be where there is constant communication and involvement with the people."

"If you carry out a simplistic, formal approach, you can't operate it in our district. We have too much interest."

3. In Promoting / Reinforcing Public Involvement within the Corps

"What would be most helpful if people could go see what is most helpful in other places."

"There has been less of an emphasis on formal meetings and this has been real good since it has allowed us to use other vehicles. . . It has allowed our folks to experiment with different techniques and find out what works and doesn't work... It gives your people a feeling of empowerment when they can do something they have thought of and not been constrained by the system."

"I think what your going to get when you're told to do something is non-interest in doing it because you have to. The public knows when you're interested doing and when you're not."

"I would like to see some things that other districts have done."

"Do not burden us with regulations, or anything like that, but just as you have a requirement to review your budget, you should have a requirement for reviewing cost-sharing public involvement. Leave this up to these guys [project managers], they're creative, they're smart, they're on top of a project. Leave it up to them to decide how to do it as long as they do it."

"Public involvement is real world. More encouragement and recognition would be good."

"I think that public involvement of the Corps is always going to be alive and well and have a good future. . . . I think it is time to breathe life back into the program and say by the way we have gotten away from some of the more formal practices of public involvement and now it's time to revisit those."

"To strengthen participation in the Corps, we need to overcome some institutional restraints, like the prohibition against advisory committees."

"An important thing we have learned in our alternative dispute resolution activities was from some of our smart people who said if we can resolve a dispute why can't we learn to avoid a dispute . . . This has led to a growth in interest in partnering . . . This is a natural extension of the concept of working together with people you have to live with and avoid conflicts."

"For public participation to be successful it has to be institutionalized. Much of it has been today, especially in civil works . . . . There may be new methodologies, a need to tweak it, and attempts to perfect it in new mission areas."

"The ideal way to deal with the public is to make all people feel accountable to the public, sensitive to the dynamics in dealing with public, and provide appropriate authority. It is not something you can write a rule-book for. It is a state of mind that they understand that they are accountable and must be free and open with them at all times.

"If a district like ours is involved in a TQM initiative, it would be excellent to have a process action team to address the issue of public involvement."

"Public involvement needs to be led at the District level. To survive, a local district has to do good public involvement. You need to build a constituency, you need to listen. In the old days, you used to shove it down their throats. . . . Today you need to build partnerships."

"The key to having a meaningful public outreach program was having District Engineers who had a vision and provided resources to back it up."

"[To assume quality in public involvement] we would have to rely on Divisions to provide oversight of their Districts."

"Ideally, public involvement has to become an ethic . . . like safety and what we are trying to do in environmentally sustainable development."

"Under the Army's Total Quality Management Program (Total Army Quality)...that stress lets do things right the first time, the problem is process and not people. So, I think that sometime in the future, one of the business processes that is going to be identified is public involvement. There may be process action teams looking at the Districts' public involvement program making recommendations. That is one thing I think you will see in the next few years."

"We need more direction and guidance in improving public involvement. . . . We need more advocacy from management and better resources available to help us to continue to improve."

"Our public affairs community is uneven in terms of quantity and quality, and public involvement reflects similar characteristics. That is because so much autonomy has been given to District Engineers to form themselves as the system demanded. . . . Today, we need to insist on more common standards and grade levels."

X. SUGGESTED METHODS AND APPROACHES:

What methods and approaches should be employed to promote effective public involvement within the Corps?

"We are strong advocates of interdisciplinary team approaches and when we have public involvement we include people representing different disciplines."

"We do everything possible to avoid public hearings if possible and develop more informal interactive methods."

"The Open House format where we set up seven tables with experts on different issues that people can speak too informally is one of the best procedures I have found."

"Get with the audience. Get off the podium. Get down front. Mix with people."

"Where we couldn't get good feedback at a reservoir, we sponsored a facilitated meeting that involved only facilitators and residents with no Corps personnel present. It worked great. The people really opened up. We got good feedback. The issues were taken back to an advisory council who acted on it."

"We had a 1 ½ day workshop with environmental leaders to guide and direct us. Most importantly we provided them with feedback on what we did with their direction. It is probably time to do this again in relation to the 1992 Water Resources Development Act."

"We feel community relations is very important. The Corps in particular needs it, more so even than a military installation...Community relations brought about good public involvement because people knew what we did... Because of it we have good attendance at public meetings."

"Community relations impacts public involvement in that the point of contact is with the person. Through people contact, they have a face or a person they can identify with... to get one on one information or help from people who have come out to their community."

"We do evaluation of all public comments (related to permits). We may not agree with what the commenter wants us to do, but we consider it. They may request to hold a public hearing. If there is some way that we can resolve the comment issue informally, we will try to do that first. We have been able to do that pretty successfully."

"A lot of what drives having a public hearing, from our perspective, is if we need it to get more information about the project or proposal."

"What we get as input on a permit request can range from a letter to a petition signed by 5,000 people. But one letter will sometimes be as good. It is not a voting process. It is weighing the public interest versus a proposal as the District Engineer sees it."

"We used to have a more formal and structured approach... it has shifted now to workshops which we have on a more regular basis."

"My view is that frequent workshops are better than infrequent public meetings."

"I like workshops and frequent contacts as basic principles to keep people involved... Formal structures are not as useful and cost too much."

"We have not changed since the early 1980s except for going from a more formalized approach to a less formalized approach."

"Something I would like to point out...people have a long history in this area in dealing with Commanders, here they call them Colonels, and therefore, you have to have some formal meetings with the Colonel. They want that formal interface, they demand it in some cases."

"I would like informal interface with the public. We get much more on one on one."

"We set up project study management teams that meet about once a month including other agency representatives....and interest groups works well."

"When we do a workshop we like to start at noon and go to eight o'clock to cover the working people who can't get there otherwise. We had real good luck with people coming by. This provides one-to-one contact with people and gets them involved in the nuts and bolts of the study. They feel good about it, they learn us by name and feel good about calling up afterward."

"In each study, we have a requirement that the manager must brief by telephone their Division counterpart weekly and their co-sponsor monthly."

"Formal type meetings are a show. We tell people what we think, and the proponents and opponents tell their story, and its over. I don't know what it accomplishes but having a meeting. What we prefer is a meeting to really address concerns."

"We do all the standard things that we are required to do in the District, but we have to do much more."

"The procedure we used to use was a formal public meeting ... We still do that and they serve a purpose, but real public involvement is done through much more smaller groups and one on one meetings with various interest groups throughout the study phase."

"We are in our seventh year of the drought and we have changed our approach since the beginning. . . . We used to have formal public meetings . . . sometimes the public was numb and sometimes confrontational. We have tried some way to reduce conflict and achieve real communication, and we have found the workshop format to be very successful."

"There are two problems with the workshop format. First, it doesn't provide an opportunity for someone to share their views in front of the public. . . . Second, they are used to this, it is what they expect. . . . Some people want a public hearing so they can be heard and hear what their friends have to say."

"As far as meetings go, we run the gamut--it depends on the situation and what the needs are."

"It used to be that we would stand at the podium and then let people come up and make comments. That was the least effective method."

"We almost have a standard reconnaissance study standard--have a public notice, have some type of public meeting or workshop . . . and at the end of the study report back to the public . . .In between, study managers are in the field dealing with the local groups and collecting information."

"The use of a citizens advisory group has helped us to work smarter and harder to assure a project that responds to the needs and concerns of the community."

"We find public hearings are not functional because most people, except special interests, do not want to speak in front of a large group. Workshops are better because people must listen and talk with each other in small group discussions. This is a good way to get special interest groups to blend with the general public and government agencies in seeking common ground."

"Our interdisciplinary teams have workshops where they invite knowledgeable people in to work with them. Its scoping, like E.I.S., you send stuff to experts and interested people. But I don't think you can very successfully invite and impose on people's time and expenses to come to your office and help you with a study voluntarily."

"The study team meets monthly and reviews E.I.S. comments from the public."

"A valuable exercise we have found is after dealing with an emergency disaster is to sit down with those affected and those with whom we worked and identify lessons learned."

XI. PUBLIC AFFAIRS ROLE:

What should be the role of public affairs offices and their staff in regard to public involvement?

"Our job in public affairs is as an advising agency in public involvement. Many public affairs officers fear getting involved as 'duty dummies,' in setting up chairs, etc. We look at ways to help in design."

"In our district, the technicians do not talk to the media. The public affairs officer does. Technicians do not understand the media, sound bites, or do they speak plain English. They brief us, and we try to interpret it to the media."

"We try to review script and visual aides for a public meeting in the public affairs office ahead of time."

"The District Engineer meets every morning with his three chief deputies. As P.A.O., I also attend. . . . Public involvement issues often pop up . . . and I can be a public involvement monitor."

"We assist the planning branch when they have a public meeting by handling the media, notification of media. We field general questions at meetings and arrange for engineers to address technical ones."

"I would imagine that the majority of public affairs people do not believe in community relations as such. Most stick to their own town or city and don't reach out."

"Our policy is if it is a general question, we let the PA office answer it. If it's a technical question, there are a few people in each office that we permit to talk to the media. We have select people who know how to relate to the media. We meter inquiries to the professional, but the right professional, and I feel you don't make mistakes that way."

"We have an outstanding relationship with P.A.O. from top to bottom. . . . They provide whatever assistance we need . . . managing interface with the media is the primary role they assume."

"As a PA office, we are getting more and more requests to help with public involvement in our district."

"Our P.A.O. assist other units in public involvement. At the district level we are a real partner."

"As the public becomes more demanding and sophisticated, the requirements for our district are going to exceed the abilities of project managers and study managers, and that is where the expertise of public affairs comes into play."

"Our public affairs community is uneven in terms of quantity and quality and public involvement reflects similar characteristics. That is because so much autonomy has been given to District Engineers to form themselves as the situation demanded. Today we need to insist on more common standards and grade levels."

""It's not a good idea to have public affairs offices take over public involvement because there are a lot of technical types that have to be brought into the public involvement process that need to be handled by program and planning people. But in so far as public involvement is an exercise in the way of communication . . . that's where the public affairs office can lend expertise."

"I think we probably have to rethink how we use public affairs as we evolve into more varied missions and responsibilities."

"On complex and sensitive projects, incumbent upon the project managers, public affairs should be more involved."

"We need to clarify the role of the Public Affairs Office in public involvement across the Corps. Maybe it is that they should have the expertise to tell us how to go about presenting things to the public. . . . The P.A.O. function needs to be totally reworked, its missions and objectives clarified. . . . We are getting killed with communication problems in our district and P.A.O. isn't helping us to deal with them. They are reactive and marginal, but we need more than that."

"We have a lot of people who are very inexperienced in communications in dealing with the public. There the P.A.O. can and should provide the monitoring, coaching, and direction for those people. This is a required element we need in the planning process."

"As far as getting public affairs people involved in public involvement, it depends on the personality and ability of the P.A. officer."

XII. TRAINING:

What kind of training strategies and resources are needed to promote effective public involvement in the future?

"Public involvement training should be mandatory for all P.A. Chiefs."

"I had a lot of training early on in public involvement in the 1970s and 1980s as a ranger, and that has been a good thing. I think we could use more of it. I see the need increasing as a result of working with diverse constituencies."

"The program associates course is excellent and should involve public involvement."

"You build on success stories. That is why case studies are important to undertake. They provide lessons that others can use."

"There is little training made available to rangers now . . . with the budget crunch going on and so many new rangers in . . . there are a lot of other courses they need first . . . so public involvement is pushed to the back burner . . . . There is competition for very scarce training hours."

"I think basic training at the lowest level should be afforded to everyone who work with the public."

"I have taken several internal Corps public involvement courses. Some of them have been conducted by consultants which is a good thing . . . a continuation of that would be good."

"Because of our commitment to total Army Quality Training, we have less time available for other training."

"Guidance material, case studies, examples of successful public involvement--things you can use here at the office would be useful since only so many can attend training."

"Public involvement has to be emphasized in the training that project and study managers receive."

"We have no training in these new political dynamics. . . . It is trial by fire."

"Training that includes case studies is very effective."

"The idea of case studies is an effective way to bring to life things that have been done in the past particularly if you can demonstrate the lack of public involvement and the assumed failure of a project and how public involvement successfully brought a project from here to here."

"I took the two prospect courses on public involvement and they were excellent."

"Huntsville is putting out some good public involvement courses. Those are really good. They use study groups, case studies, and stuff you can really take in."

"A lot of the public involvement courses have gone by the board."

"I have heard that the public involvement course is a good one, even though I haven't been to it."

"I like the approach of the Department of Defense Public Affairs training programs in Indianapolis because they use a lot of resource persons from outside the military and they bring a broader perspective."

"Last year, we had someone train our regulatory staff and others in our district on interviewing techniques."

"It used to be that when we came on board 14 years ago, there used to be a course on public involvement. I don't recall it being in the curriculum lately."

"We have 4 or 5 courses for regulatory people, and a couple of them have some attention on public involvement to a minor extent."

"We used to have a course or resolution of conflict. I never took it, but I would like to if I can get around to it."

"We have had people come in to give short courses on communication and how to give presentations."

"One of the things I believe is important in managing public involvement is active listening."

"The prospect schools have a lot of good information about what is working and what isn't working."

"I don't think we have had a lot of training in public involvement. We have had some. There's a course on that and we've gone to a course on negotiation and conflict management. The public involvement focused on structure of public involvement but was not as valuable as the conflict management. It would be good to get one that wrapped it all together."

"In our system, there's very little opportunity for training unless you're a P.A.O.."

"The Corps in the last six years has sent more and more public affairs specialists to the Defense Information School at Ft. Harrison, Indiana. . . . It's a joint service program . . . so we are more in line with the Army public affairs doctrine of maximum disclosure and minimum delay."

"If I have just so much money for more PA staff, I'm going to send them to the Defense Information School."

"Folks in the planning and regulatory branch needs to go to Huntsville to learn how to deal with particular publics. The Defense Information School teaches how you deal with the masses."

"If your district is involved in TQM programs, and the demands it places on your budget, there is little money left over to support other training needs."

"Guidance materials and case studies about public participation would be helpful today, particularly focused on changing missions, since fewer people can be supported to be involved in training."

"There should be more training for study managers in public involvement. It should be secondary, however, to training in plan formulation or budget management. . . . If training is a scarce allocation, then it may be more prudent for the agency to name one person as the public involvement specialist and then train him or her."

"A problem with training in this era of cutbacks and proposed reorganization is that people are afraid to be away from their job for fear their bosses may think they can get along without them."

"There needs to be some uniformity in the Corps in both public affairs and public involvement. There needs to be uniformity in training so that we can assure that certain standards are established and met. . . We need to be certain that Districts insist that people participate in training."

"We need practical case studies that tell us what does and doesn't work in dealing with the public."

"We are linked electronically on Corps mail, our E-mail system. We occasionally may discuss issues and seek discussion and feedback. . . . It might be possible to use this as a useful training tool."

"We have a Corps-wide regulatory conference and that might be a good place to do some training."

"We need training for everyone involved in public involvement. . . . It would be best to be done as a team in the district. This would be less costly, it would help with team-building and it would be more practical in focusing on existing or potential problems."

"I was disappointed in the prospect course offerings for FY1993. I wanted to take the advanced course on public involvement water resource planning, but they didn't offer it presumably because of lack of interest. That shocked me."

"One thing I have found that is not positive is that once a person has taken a public involvement course, they think they have taken care of it. If they had a class in 1975, they think they are covered. A common response is that I know how to do it. But public involvement changes like anything else, and you really need to keep up-to-date. I believe every person should have formal training and at reasonable intervals have refresher courses to keep up with the state-of-the-art. We do that in engineering."

"We have information overload today. So, I think the best training today would be shorter seminars on-site for our staff. This would be more cost-effective which is an important consideration today."

"The four hour segment on public involvement in the introduction regulatory course is not enough and the 40 hour course on participation in regulatory affairs was overkill. Today, I think we need more training on communication skills, meeting management skills, and dealing with the media."

Appendix B - Historical Profile

Public Involvement in the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

Key Milestone since 1960

by

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USACE Public Involvement Assessment Project

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Preface: About this Report

This "Historical Profile" is one of three activities undertaken as a part of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Public Involvement Assessment Project. The purpose of this document is to identify key milestones in the evolution of public participation efforts within the Corps since the 1960s. The other activities in this project include an organizational assessment to determine how Corps officials view the experience, present capacity, and future challenges of the Corps in regard to public involvement. In addition, three case studies have been undertaken to identify lessons from projects that are illustrative of public involvement issues that the Corps is likely to confront in the future.

By design, this "Historical Profile" is selective. The guidelines for its development call for "developing a historical chronicle (short paragraph descriptions) of major public involvement activities and accomplishments (10 to 15 pages)." It should be made clear that this document is not intended as a comprehensive historical study of public involvement within the Corps of Engineers. It is rather an attempt to summarize relevant developments concerning to public involvement activities and regulations. It also identifies federal regulations that have influenced the conduct of the Corps in undertaking public involvement activities.

This document is organized chronologically. The sections summarize highlights from successive five year periods. A brief introductory statement to each section identifies influential socio-political forces during the period and major trends within the Corps relevant to public involvement.

In selecting items for inclusion in this profile, priority has been given to plans, regulations, and activities of system-wide significance to the Corps. While an attempt has been made to identify a number of initiatives within Corps districts that are relatively well recognized throughout the Corps, scores of other successful district efforts could be identified beyond the scope of this report.

Introduction

Public involvement has become increasingly important to government agencies since the 1960s. The decline in the influence of political parties and the rise of interest group politics has made it difficult for government agencies to define the public interest and achieve consensus. Public involvement refers to the variety of ways in which public agencies seek to inform and involve the public to assure a workable degree of consensus in relation to their mission and proposed activities, to improve their policies and plans, and to increase public appreciation and trust.

Since 1970, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has devoted considerable attention and resources to involve the public in planning and policy-making activities. While this commitment to public involvement has coincided with that of other federal agencies, states, and local governments, Corps public involvement and public affairs activities are unique in three respects. First, is the amount of investment. One estimate, for example, suggested that in 1978 the Corps spent as much as $80 million on public involvement activities, more than any other federal agency (Rosenbaum, 1979). Second, is the range of public involvement activities including such diverse areas as civil works and military construction, wetlands regulations, recreation management, and environmental clean-up activities. Third, is the variety of support for public involvement through regulations and guidance directives, training programs, research, publications, and technical assistance.

This paper identifies milestones that profile the historical development of public involvement policy and practice within the Corps since the 1960s. The milestones include such things as legislation and regulations, demonstration projects, meetings, research, district projects, training programs, and publications. The milestones include actions by the Corps as well as by Congress and the administration that influenced public involvement procedures and practices within the Corps.

This report is organized into eight sections. The first section identifies milestones prior to 1960 and the subsequent sections are organized according to five year segments from 1960 to 1989. A short concluding section addresses the period 1990 to 1993. Each section includes a brief overview of selected influential political or social events or forces for each period. A five page bibliography is included as an appendix.

Public Involvement Prior to 1960

Context

Since its founding in 1802, the Corps has served many of the military and civil engineering needs of the United States. The nature of its engineering and regulatory assignments have required considerable cooperation with Congress, federal, state, county, and local government agencies. Until the 1960s, the experience of the Corps in dealing with the public was oriented principally to working with and through elected and appointed officials. This is not to say that there were not instances in which particular attention had to be given to the concerns of landowners, business interests, and others. However, such attention was episodic, relatively limited in scope, and subsequent to the opinions of public officials.

By the 1960s, changes in American political culture forced the Corps to involve the public more fully and directly. One such force was the environmental movement, initially referred to as the

"conservation movement." In interviews conducted during this project, many Corps officials observed that the environmental movement was influential in demanding and requiring more public involvement opportunities in Corps planning and regulatory activities. A number of references are made to developments in the environmental movement in this report to illustrate how they coincided with efforts to increase public involvement within the Corps.

In the 1920s, the Corps experienced its first significant conflict with conservationists over the Currituck Sound in Virginia and North Carolina. This event presaged later encounters the Corps would experience with environmentalists as well as with other citizen interest groups. At issue was the fact that the Sound, an exceptional Black Bass fishery and waterfowl area, was being salinized and polluted by a canal from the Chesapeake Bay. Conservationist led by the Izzak Walton League wanted a lock built, but the Corps refused. Eventually, the conservationists won out through successful lobbying with Congress and the President, and the lock was constructed in 1931.

For the next 25 years the Izzak Walton League, the largest and most influential conservation group of the period, the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society, lobbied to make the Corps more responsive to their interests. In 1934, their efforts were reflected in the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act which required the Corps to consult with the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries before constructing dams and reservoirs (Robinson, 1989, p. 14f.).

While the Currituck Sound experience forced the Corps into an action it did not want, in the 1940s it experienced its first case of environmental interests stopping the construction of a dam it proposed to build at the Mill Creek on the Clarion River in Western Pennsylvania. The Mill Creek experience illustrates how a combination of sportsmen groups, a state legislature, and local elected officials could mobilize influence to stop a project proposed by the Corps (Robinson, 1989, p. 17f.).

Following is a list of five selected regulations and proposals from the end of World War II to 1960 that illustrate the beginning of a trend toward greater involvement of other agencies and the public in Corps planning.

Milestones: 1945-1959

1945

The River and Harbor Act of 1945 called for state involvement in the development of Corps Plans: "Investigations which form the basis of . . . plans, proposals, or reports shall . . . give to the affected state or states . . . opportunities for consultation regarding plans and proposals, and to the extent deemed practicable by the Chief of Engineers, opportunity to cooperate in the investigations." (P. L. 79-14,Sec.1(a).

1946

In a proposal that presaged the creation of the Environmental Advisory Board in 1970, Col. Clark Kittrell, division engineer of the Upper Missouri Division suggested to Lt. Gen. R. A. Wheeler, Chief of Engineers that officials of conservation groups "sit in conference" with the Chief and, "clear the air and to carry out exploratory conversations." Wheeler declined the suggestion claiming the Corps gives "all interested parties full opportunity to make known their views and participate in the formulation of our civil works program." He promised to provide advance notice of all public hearings. [Robinson: 189, p.22]

1946

The Administrative Procedures Act of 1946 provided (and still provides) a general series of requirements for all federal agencies to inform the public of proposed policies and procedures through notice in the *Federal Register*, and to provide opportunities to participate in rule-making through submission of written material (see Langton, 1981).

1946

The Fish and Wildlife Act of 1946 included provisions that the Corps must coordinate with relevant state agencies as well as the Fish and Wildlife Service in civil works activities.

1958

To better inform other agencies and the "public generally," a manual was distributed (EM 1165-2-108) 17 December 1958, *Water Resources Policies and Authorities: Coordination of Public Construction Programs.* The manual directed District Engineers to prepare and distribute a project sheet including a map illustrating plans for each authorized project. A sample letter was provided for transmittal to public agencies concerned with each project.

1960 to 1964

Context

The early 1960s was a period of significant social and political change in the United States. The election of John F. Kennedy as President represented a generational shift in American politics. A major feature of this change was the rise of interest group politics represented by the civil rights movement and the development of the environmental movement. One result of the civil rights movement was the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, referred to as the "War on Poverty." One feature of this legislation was a requirement for the "maximum feasible participation" of the poor in programs that might affect them. This regulation reflected a growing demand and expectation among all elements of the public to have opportunities to be informed and involved regarding the plans and polices of government agencies that might affect them.

The environmental movement gained momentum during this time influenced by the publication of two influential books: Stuart Udall's, *The Quiet Crisis* in 1962, and Rachel Carson's, *Silent Spring* in 1963. Concerned about the lack of coordination in water resources management, President Kennedy established the Water Resources Council in 1961. In 1964 the Water Resources Research Act was passed establishing water resources research institutes at Land Grant Universities and clarifying responsibilities for coordinating research among agencies.

This was a period of growth challenge for the Corps. Between 1954 and 1964, Congress authorized over 690 Corps managed water resources projects costing more than $9 billion (Moore and Moore, 1989:19). Concern about flooding in areas developed after World War II grew within Congress. The Senate Select Committee on National Water Resources proposed an active planning and regulatory approach for entire river basins to control flooding.

Milestones: 1960 to 1964

1960

The Flood Control Act of 1960 (Section 206) authorized the Corps to provide information to local communities about floods and flood control damage and to provide technical assistance to them in regard to flood plain management issues. The Corps organized a Flood Plain Information Services program to inform local communities on flood related issues.

1962

Senate Document 97 established interagency standards in planning water resource projects. It required that all views be heard in adopting plans and that multiple objectives and needs, including economic, environmental, and social, be weighed.

1963

Eugene Weber, Chief of the Civil Works Planning Division proposed a greater involvement of conservation groups: "the participation of such conservation groups should begin at the outset of every planning effort and should be continuous through the project formulation and evaluation process." (Robinson, 1989:26)

1964

Guidance regarding "Participation in locally organized meetings" was provided in Section IX, Public Hearings, in an Engineers Manual (EM 1120-2-101) entitled *Survey Investigation and Reports, General Procedures*, published 12 October 1964. The manual advised, "utmost caution and discretion in participating in meetings initiated by local interests. . ." It further

advised, "Participation in a meetings from which the press or any interested segment of the public is excluded, except for reasons of security are not condoned."

1964

The Secretary of the Army, Cyrus Vance, appointed a Civil Works Study Board to determine ways in which the Corps should change to adapt to changes in the water resource environment. The intent of this action was to determine how the Corps could be more efficient and effective in comprehensive planning functions [Moore and Moore, 1989:80*f*.].

1965 to 1969

Context

The period between 1965 and 1969 was a time of significant unrest in American society. Opposition to the Vietnam War was one of many expressions of public distrust and disaffection with government leadership and performance. The Corps received much criticism during this period because it proposed many large civil works projects that were strongly opposed by elements of the public.

Anticipating the growing distrust in government authority, President Lyndon Johnson issued a directive to all federal agencies in 1965 to improve their communications with the public. This led to a study undertaken by the Technical Liaison Office of the Corps in 1967/68 and the initiation of a demonstration communication-participation project in the Susquehanna River Basin in 1968.

During this period, the environmental movement grew substantially. Almost all national environmental groups increased membership and income. Further, a host of new environmental organizations were created including the Environmental Defense Fund (1967), Friends of the Earth (1969), the National Resources Defense Council (1970), and Environmental Action (1970).

Meanwhile, the Corps became embroiled in a host of environmental controversies including the Tocks Island Dam on the Delaware River, the Trinity River Seaport Project in Dallas, the Cross-Florida Barge Canal Project, and the Dickey-Lincoln School Lakes project in Maine, among others. The Corps experienced pressures from within and without during this period to improve management of planing issues. As a result, planning divisions were required in Corps division and district field offices. A new headquarters Policy and Analysis Division was created to strengthen the analytical ability of the Corps in policy development.

Milestones: 1965-1969

1965

Congress passed the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965 (P. L. 89-80). Section 2 specified that "water related initiatives be conducted on a comprehensive and coordinated basis by the Federal government, state, localities, and private enterprise with the cooperation of all affected Federal Agencies, states, local governments, individuals, corporations, business enterprises, and others concerned."

Through this Act (Section 101), the Water Resources Council was given legislative authority to coordinate water resources efforts among federal agencies, establish river basin commissions, and develop standards and procedures for the operation of the Commission. [Reuss, 1991, p. 27; Stevens, 1975, p. 8].

1966

On 22 March the Chief of Engineers required that Corps field division and district officers create planning units "parallel to and of stature equal with the engineering function."

1966

On 26 July, a Policy and Analysis Division was created in the Directorate of Civil Works in the Office of the Chief of Engineers to strengthen policy-making functions throughout the Corps and to improve coordination within other branches and levels of government [Moore and Moore, 1989:83*f*.].

1968

The Technical Liaison Office (forerunner to the Public Affairs Office) of the Office of the Chief of Engineers published a report of a two year study on how to improve *Communication with and Services to the Public.* While the term "public involvement" was not used in the study, many references to "communication" referred to what later was called "public involvement." Among major findings of the study were: internal communications within the Corps needed to be strengthened, a proper balance was needed to assure coordination between centralized and decentralized units, reservoir personnel needed better training in how to relate to the public, and the growth in recreational properties managed by the Corps meant, "the Corps must face up to the fact that it is in the recreation business." (p. 56) Engineers, it was found, considered public hearings to be more of a tool of public relations than engineering and instead they recommended, "closer rapport with opposition and proponent groups through individual contacts." (p. 31)

1968

The Corps undertook an experimental program in open planning, participation, and communications utilizing strategies and methods from the emerging field of Applied Social Science. The project, conducted in the Susquehanna River Basin, was assisted by consultants from Rensis Likert's Institute for Social Research and the School of Natural Resources at the University of Michigan. The project involved methods such as outreach to identify relevant parties of interest, descriptive documents designed for the public, and the use of small groups to obtain opinions and suggestions from the public.

1969

In April 1969 the Corps established the Institute of Water Resources (IWR) to undertake "research in all phases of water resources planning to evaluate existing networks, procedures, and criteria, and to develop new and innovative techniques." [Reuss, p 5] Immediately, IWR became the headquarters resource in developing public participation policies, research, and technical assistance.

1970 to 1974

Context

Between 1970 and 1974 the environmental movement became institutionalized in American society. Environmental laws, regulation, and government agencies created to provide environmental protection were expanded. Environmental groups experienced great membership increases, and public concern about the environment grew significantly.

The early 1970s was a period of dramatic growth in requirements for public participation among federal agencies. For example, strong requirements for public participation were included in the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (1972), the Coastal Zone Management Act (1973), the Highway Safety Act (1973), and the Crime Control Act (1973). To illustrate the growth of federal public involvement mandates, seven were published in 1966/67, but in 1970/71, 23 were published, and in 1972/73, 81 were published (U. S. Federal Regional Council, 1978).

During this period the Corps of Engineers launched an unprecedented effort to promote public involvement. Initiated under the leadership of Lt. General Frederick T. Clark, an extensive program of training, publications, research, and technical assistance was carried out by the Institute of Water Resources under the leadership of Bernard Dodge, David Aggerholm, and James R. Hanchey.

Milestones: 1970-1974

1970

Congress passed and President Nixon signed the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4231). A major provision of this historic legislation required federal and local sponsors of public works projects to assess the impacts upon the environment. In commenting on the legislation, the President said it establishes a new dimension for citizen participation and citizen rights. Prior to N.E.P.A., Corps studies were based primarily on technical and economic criteria. By requiring "Environmental Impact Statements," N.E.P.A. provided a basis for the public to raise broader quality of life issues.

1970

On 2 April 1970, Lt. General Frederick T. Clarke established the Environmental Advisory Board consisting of six environmental leaders from throughout the nation. Among the functions of the Board were to: 1) Examine existing and proposed policies, programs, and activities from an environmental point of view to define problems and weaknesses and suggest remedies; 2) Advise on how the Corps can improve its relations with the conservation community and general public; 3) Review problems or issues pertinent to specific plans or projects. The EAB has continued to function since 1970. [Reuss, p. 7]

1970

The Institute for Water Resources published a "concept report" for developing public participation programs: A. Bruce Bishop, *Public Participation in Water Resources Planning.* Bishop's report reflected the influence of applied social scientists at this time such as Warren Bennis and Ronald Lippitt who emphasized the importance of participation in planning efforts to change institutions, communities, and society. Bishop's report also adapted earlier work he provided for the California Bureau of Roads and the Division of Highways while a graduate student at Stanford University. The report became one influential resource for I.W.R. in developing suggestions for Corps policies and strategies regarding public involvement.

1970

On 1 September 1970 the Corps published an Engineering Circular (EC 1120-2-55) entitled *Investigation, Planning, and Development of Water Resources. Public Meetings in Planning.* In a cover memo, Major General F. P. Koisch, Director of Civil works explained the circular, "concerns itself with the holding of formally arranged meetings, which is a departure from public hearings terminology..." He added, "other means of fostering participation should also be pursued." Changes reflected in the circular included, "a new tone to encourage informality and a sincere, meaningful, two-way communication." In an

internal memo, B. H. Dodge, of the Institute of Water Resources, criticized the proposed circular noting, "the only changes from past experience were to promote new names for public hearings and notices and to add one other meeting to the established pattern of two or three." Dodge added, "the most serious objection is that it gives the impression of flying in the face of, or at best ignoring, all that we have learned from the Susquehanna efforts." (Dodge, 1970).

1970

On 30 November 1970 the Office of the Chief of Engineers published *Environmental Guidelines for the Civil Works Program of the Corps of Engineers* (ER 1165-2-500). This document expressed the Corps' commitment to address environmental factors and effects in planning, development, and management and obligated the Corps to insure public participation.

1971

The first Corps "Short Course on Public Participation in Water Resources Planning" was held at Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia, February 1-7. Participants included both planning and public affairs officials from each division, district, centers, and headquarters. Lt. General F. J. Clark, Chief of Engineers, said to participants, "I consider public participation in planning of critical importance to the Corps' effectiveness as a public servant. It is . . . an area I won't be satisfied with until we can truly say the Corps is doing a superb job." [Dahlgren: 4.0.H-A, p. 2]

1971

On 28 May 1971 the objectives, policies, procedures, and responsibilities of the Corps' public participation activities were published in EC 1165-2-100, "Water Resources Policies and Authorities Public Participation in Water Resources Planning." The three objectives outlined were: "to insure that solutions to water resource problems satisfy the needs and preferences of the public to the maximum degree possible; to seek a clear consensus ... by facilitating the resolutions of a controversy; and to build confidence and trust in the Corps' planning process." The document required that public participation plans be an integral part of each Plan or Survey. In regard to instructions, the document advised, "there is no single best approach to public participation. Program plans must be targeted to the particular 'publics' concerned."

1971

The Institute for Water Resources (IWR) initiated a Technical Assistance Program (TAP) to provide thirteen districts and two divisions which volunteered to participate with assistance from consultants to assist in expanding and improving public participation activities. The TAP program was overseen by James R. Hanchey, a design engineer from the New Orleans

District who had recently spent two years of graduate study at Stanford University. Mr. Hanchey assumed primary responsibility for managing IWR efforts to promote public involvement activities for the next five years.

1972

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (P. L. 92-500) provided requirements for public participation. These requirements were made explicit for EPA and the States, and indirectly apply to the Corps. (Section 101 (e)). Section 404 granted authority to the Corps to issue permits for the discharge of dredged or fill materials and required notice and opportunity for public hearings.

1972

The Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act authorized the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, to dump dredged material in the ocean. The authority required public notice and opportunity for public hearings

1972

On 26 May 1972, Brigadier General K. B. Cooper, Deputy Director of Civil Works, sent a memo to Division and District Engineers urging continued and greater efforts to promote public participation. He particularly urged that every District and Division develop and maintain a "current and comprehensive list of interested organizations and individuals who should be involved in a specific planning effort."

1972

The importance of public meetings as a public participation procedure was stressed in an Engineering regulation published on 4 December 1972, ER 1105-2-502, *Planning: Public Meetings.* The regulation stated, "all interested individuals and agencies are to be informed and afforded an opportunity to be fully heard and their views considered. . . Formally organized and announced public meetings provide one important means of accomplishing this objective. . . They are not, however, a substitute for other desirable public participation and information measures." Similar to the 1970 circular on public meetings, this regulation emphasized a stronger level of public involvement at meetings and encouraged other methods as well.

1972

The Seattle District utilized "Fishbowl Planning" process as a part of a re-study of flood control plans for the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River basin. The project was unprecedented because it was sponsored jointly by the Seattle Districts and the Department of Ecology of the State of Washington. The Fishbowl process was designed to be highly visible, open and participative. The process involved four procedures: workshops, a study

brochure which was revised several times and became a public workbook, public meetings, and citizen committees. By the late 1970s this approach was adopted by the Seattle District for all studies. [Sargent, 1972, pp. 54-57, and Mazmanian and Nienaber, 1979, pp. 132-157]

1972

The Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (P. L. 92-463) provided guidelines for advisory committees to assure balance in representativeness.

1973

The Water Resources Council published its, *Principles and Standards for Planning Water and Related Land Resources.* Reflecting its authority and the intent of the 1965 Water Resources Planning Act, the "principles and standards mandated that environmental quality be given equal consideration to economic development in water resources planning." The Principles and Standards also included requirements for public involvement. [Reuss, 1991, p. 32, Moore and Moore, 1989, p. 105].

1973

The first training course in Public Involvement led by outside consultants was sponsored by IWR. The course was conducted by Synergy Services and a manual was prepared for the one-week course. The origin of this course is interesting. According to James R. Hanchey, the course resulted from a response to a RFP published in *Commerce Business Daily* in 1971 for consultants to assist in the proposed Technical Assistance program. James Creighton of Synergy Services wrote a letter indicating that he was not interested in doing consulting, but recommended consideration of a training program designed by his firm. Hanchey met with Creighton and decided that a training program would indeed serve the needs of IWR and the Corps. During the next three years IWR sponsored 10 to 12 public involvement courses annually throughout the nation.

1973

IWR contracted with Thomas Wagner and Leonard Ortolono of the Civil Engineering Department of Stanford University to field-test and evaluate an open and iterative planning process in addressing flooding problems in the San Pedro Creek in Pacifica, California. The project was conducted between the Fall of 1973 through 1975. The results were published in 1976 by IWR (Wagner and Ortolono, 1976).

1973

The Technical Assistance Program (TAP) and the public involvement activities of the Seattle and Rock Island District were evaluated by James F. Ragan, Jr. through a contract with IWR. The scope of the evaluation was expanded once field work began to review public involvement at the district level using TAP as only one influence. Ragan's conclusions were

that public participation efforts were minimal in most districts, except Seattle, and that public meetings, "remains the principal - and frequently the only - method that field offices employ to inform and obtain comments from the public." [Ragan, 1975, B, p.1]

1974

The Comptroller General of the United States published a report to the Congress, *Public Involvement In Planning Public Works Projects Should be Increased.* The report reviewed public involvement activities of the Corps of Engineers, Federal Aviation Administration, and Federal Highway Administration. The report recommended that the Corps revise its regulations to require that citizen potentially affected by a water resources project be identified and directly notified of involvement opportunities. It also proposed that district engineers provide "public involvement activities before the issuance or reissuance of permits for structures or work in navigable waters."

1974

The Freedom of Information Act of 1974 (P. L. 93-502) established policies to encourage Federal agencies to be responsive in making public documents available to the public.

1974

On 5 July 1974 the Corps published "Proposed Policies and Procedures" for an Urban Studies Program to assist urban areas with water resource planning. Detailed guidelines for public involvement were described - including ongoing monitoring and adjusting of public involvement efforts.

1974

By 1973 and 1974, a resident scholar, Jeanne Nienaber conducted a study of the Corps ability to adapt organizationally to address environmental issues. Her study identified the strong link between environmental concerns and public participation: "Public participation and environmental concerns were thus a two pronged attack on the old way of doing things." (Nienaber, 1975, p. 13). Her findings indicated that by 1973 interdisciplinary study teams in Corps district offices had grown significantly, but that positive and ongoing contacts with representatives of environmental groups was minimal.

1975 to 1979

Context

Public involvement initiatives in federal agencies reached a peak during the Presidency of Jimmy Carter (1977-80). Not unlike the Corps of Engineers, almost every federal agency developed

training programs, manuals, and technical assistance to promote public involvement in this period. In 1976, the Interagency Council on Citizen Participation (ICCP), an association of over 100 federal employees with responsibility for public involvement activities, was created. In 1977, ICCP sponsored a conference and published a report, *At Square One*, to encourage development and professionalism in dealing with citizen participation. In 1978, over 800 federal employees and leaders from throughout the United States attended the National Conference on Citizen Participation in Washington, D. C. (Langton, 1979).

On September 26, 1979, President Carter issued a Consumer Executive Order (Executive Order 12160), the strongest requirement for public involvement ever issued by a President. Among its requirements were a Consumer Affairs Council to coordinate participation efforts, revisions and updating of participation requirements of every federal agency within 90 days, and information to be submitted with budget requests to the Office of Management and Budget indicating what resources would be devoted to informing and involving consumers in agency proceedings.

Milestones: 1975-1979

1975

On 2 April 1975 an Engineering Regulation was published (ER 1105-2-800), *Planning: Public Involvement; General Policies.* The regulation updated and expanded the Corps approach to public involvement in all civil works activities. An important addition to this regulation was the requirement that each report should contain a summary of how public involvement influenced the decision of any study.

1975

On 10 November 1975 an Engineering regulation was published (ER 1105-2-000), *Planning Process: Multiobjective Planning Framework.* The regulation emphasized the importance of an "early and active" program of public involvement. It also called for the use of interdisciplinary teams throughout the planning process.

1975

IWR published a report to encourage a more systematic and sequential approach to public involvement. The document, *Public Involvement in the Corps of Engineers Planning Process* by James R. Hanchey was reported to be the most widely requested IWR publication, according to IWR sources. The report provided direction in relating public involvement activities to the three stages of Corps planning. While not prescribing specific methods, the report suggested approaches and alternatives in communicating with the public

and obtaining citizen input, informing and educating the public, monitoring and evaluating public involvement, and organizing and budgeting.

1976

In 1976, leadership for IWR efforts to promote public involvement within the Corps was transferred from James Hanchey to Dr. Jerome Delli Priscoli. In addition to continuing many of the efforts of the early 1970s, Dr. Delli Priscoli established working relations with other agencies (he was the first chairman of ICCP), and published a number of articles describing the public involvement activities of the Corps.

1976

The first Executive Course on Public Involvement was sponsored by IWR. A workbook was created and the training was undertaken by Synergy Consultation Services under the direction of James Creighton. The course concentrated on the selection and implementation of a variety of procedures to serve different public involvement objectives.

1979

IWR sponsored a seminar, "Public Involvement in the Regulatory Program" in cooperation with the Jacksonville District. A manual was published and made available for the course (Delli Priscoli, Ballantine, and Creighton, 1979).

1979

A study of public participation practice in 33 of the 37 Corps districts was conducted by Charles Crist and Ronald Lanier of the Colorado Water Resources Research Institute of Colorado State University. Responses to a survey questionnaire indicated:

- The average cost of public involvement activities in most studies was 9% to 12% of the budget and 16% in urban projects.
- Less than half of the study managers utilize OCE guidance materials on public involvement, and only 3 of the 33 districts indicate the establishment of specific guidelines for their district.
- The most frequent references to procedures used were: informal contacts, public meetings, workshops, written materials, and citizen committees.
- Workshops and informal contacts were identified as the most successful methods.
- The groups most dominant in public meetings were environmental interests (55%), local elected officials (40%), and landowners/affected public (35%).

1979

Daniel Mazmanian and Jeanne Nienaber's book, *Can Organizations Change? Environmental Protection, Citizen Participation, and the Corps of Engineers,* was published. This work described and evaluated the effects of the Corps during the 1970s to promote public involvement. It concluded: "the Corps is already doing better than most other federal agencies, even with its modest requirements for public participation in planning. We strongly suggest, however, that only outside pressure of the sort generated in the late 1960s and early 1970s will prompt the agency to institute an agency-wide open planning program . . . or seek dramatically different forms of public involvement." (Mazmanian and Nienaber, 1979, pp. 190-191.)

1979

An Evaluation of a project to develop a general permit at Sanibel Island, Florida, was published (Rosener, 1979). The evaluator, Dr. Judith Rosener, determined that the Corps and citizens have very different goals, objectives, and criteria for evaluating the success of a public involvement activity. Whereas, the goals of the Corps were primarily concerned with the process, the goals of local citizens including residents, developers and environmentalists were concerned more with impact or substance of a decision.

1979

The Corps adopted a "project / study manager approach" to overseeing civil works projects through a number of phases (Reconnaissance, Feasibility, and Planning) which were previously overseen by different managers. This organizational innovation is widely viewed as helping to provide continuity in public involvement and providing greater accountability.

1980 to 1984

The election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 was followed by a decline in the extent and intensity of public involvement activities among federal agencies. In most federal agencies, participation requirements and activities were reduced and staff who worked in participation programs were reassigned to other tasks or let go. The Interagency Council on Citizen Participation was ordered to disband by Consumer Affairs Secretary Virginia Knauer in 1981.

The early 1980s were marked by ongoing tensions between the Reagan administration's desire to reduce regulations and the need to implement the unprecedented variety of environmental legislation passed in the 1970s. The actions of Interior Secretary James Watt and EPA Administrator

Anne Gorsuch Buford, while threatening to environmental groups, had the effect of increasing their membership and financial support and forced groups to collaborate. As a consequence the environmental movement grew significantly in strength and influence during this period (Langton, 1984, p. 2f.).

During the early 1980s, three long-standing issues within the Corps grow in intensity. The first was an attempt to achieve greater centralized authority to assure more uniformity in policy implementation at the district level. The second was to increase productivity and reduce "red tape" in Corps studies. Under the leadership of William Gianelli, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, the Water Resources Council was eliminated and its *Principles and Standards* were revised in 1983. The third issue, which would not be resolved until 1986, was to require greater cost-sharing in civil works projects to increase efficiency and reduce waste (Reuss, 1991, p. 81f.).

The emphasis on these policies had the effect of reducing attention to public involvement at the federal level, although demands were considerable at the regional and local levels. In 1981 the Environmental Advisory Board reviewed the public involvement activities of the Corps and made a series of recommendations for improving them.

Milestones 1980-1984

1981

In preparation for the Environmental Advisory Board meeting in July, 1981, the Institute of Water Resources sent a Public Involvement Questionnaire to 40 Corps districts and divisions. Among the major findings of the questionnaire were the following:

- Of the 40 divisions and districts responding, 93.5% agreed or agreed strongly that "on balance, public involvement in the Corps has been successful."

- Major positive benefits of public involvement were identified as increased public confidence in the Corps, better understanding of the Corps' process, and more effective relations with the public.

- The major negative effects of public involvement were increased costs and time and some groups using forums for their own ends.

- The most common recommendations for changing Corps Public Involvement were: encourage informal approach, encourage workshop format, and more training for staff.

1981

Public Involvement was a major issue of attention at the 14-17 July 1981 meeting of the Environmental Advisory Board in San Francisco. A total of 21 recommendations were made by the EAB for improving public involvement within the Corps. Among the recommendations were:

- Review and update Guidance Statement on Public Involvement.
- Develop public involvement program in all functional areas.
- Recognition for effective use of public involvement.
- Reporting on public involvement in project reports.
- Corps-wide and district-wide evaluation of public involvement.
- More effective identification of publics.
- Better feed-back to public.
- Encourage more informal public meetings and contact.
- Prepare a public involvement reader.
- OCE should sponsor a Corps-wide Public Involvement Conference.
- The Corps should re-establish a public involvement R & D program.

1981

On 28 September 1981, Major General E. R. Heiberg, III, Director of Civil Works sent a memo to all Corps units to discontinue over 50 advisory committees at the direction of the Department of the Army responding to directives from the Reagan Administration.

1982

On 5 February 1982 the Corps published an Engineering Pamphlet (EP 1105-2-35) entitled *Planning Public Involvement and Coordination.* The pamphlet distinguished and explained the differences between public involvement and public information. It urged that the District Public Affairs Office (PAO) should be a participant in any study, and "the responsibilities of the study manager and PAO should be defined early in the process." The pamphlet continued to reflect the policy of earlier Corps documents urging flexibility in approach and

design. It encouraged strategic approaches to public involvement, early "scoping" activities to identify critical issues, and a high degree of coordination with other agencies.

1982

On 5 April 1982, the Office of the Chief of Engineers delivered an "OCE Response to EAB Recommendations on Public Involvement." The OCE responded to each of the 21 recommendations of the Environmental Advisory Board, identified proposed actions, and provided a rationale for each action.

1982

A case study review of six Corps public involvement projects was published by IWR (Langton, 1982). Among the findings of the review was that despite the effectiveness of public involvement, interagency relations and dynamics may have an equal or greater effect on project outcomes, especially with EPA.

1983

IWR published a document highlighting its experience with public involvement since the early 1970s. The nearly 500 page document, *Public Involvement: A Reader of Ten Years Experience at the Institute for Water Resources* (Creighton, et. al, 1983) included material from its training and research activities. The five page Introduction by James R. Hanchey provided a historical summary of the initiatives of the IWR to promote public involvement since the early 1970s.

1985 to 1989

Context

Between 1985 and 1989 the Corps' headquarters efforts to promote public involvement were considerably reduced. The Institute of Water Resources, with sponsorship from the Office of Chief Legal Counsel, concentrated its efforts in promoting the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) procedures within the Corps.

In 1986 the Installation Restoration Program (IRP) of the Department of Defense was established under the Superfund Amendment and Reauthorization Act of 1986. Under the IRP, the Corps assessed and remediates hazardous waste sites at defense installations. Public involvement was required in all IRP projects.

Also in 1986, the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 was passed. The Act required cost-sharing by local partners in water resource projects. Public involvement was required by the Act. Local sponsors were allowed to manage public involvement activities as an in-kind cost-shared contribution to projects.

Milestones 1985-1989

1985

On 11 December 1985 the Corps published regulation No. 1130-2-432 which provided policy guidance in accepting the services of volunteers. The regulation, entitled Project Operation *The Corps of Engineers Resource Volunteers (CERV) Program,* RCS DAEN-CWO-72, reflected authorization by Congress in P. L. 98-63 to authorize volunteering within the Corps. This legitimized another dimension of citizen involvement within the Corps.

1986

In an IWR report on *The Future of Intergovernmental Relations and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers*, Mark Sickles raised questions concerning how cost-sharing projects may effect public involvement activities within the Corps in the future (Sickles, 1986, p. 71). The report suggested that the Corps might have to share authority in managing public involvement activities in the future with co-sponsors.

1986

IWR offered its first training program on "Conflict Management and Negotiations." A manual was prepared by Christopher Moore and Jerome Delli Priscoli. In the next three years the course was offered four more times and by 1989, 350 persons participate in the course.

1986

The Water Resources Development Act of 1986 was amended to require "opportunity for public review and comment" regarding any changes in the operation of reservoirs requiring a reallocation of storage space (P. L. 100-676, 33USC2312, Section 5).

1988

The Corps with sponsorship of the Chief Counsel's Office launched a three year project of training, technical assistance, and evaluative research to promote the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) within the Corps. The strategy of the project was similar to that employed by the Corps in promoting public involvement during the 1970s (Delli Priscoli, 1989 and Edelman, 1990).

1988

The *Report of the Corps of Engineers Panel on Project Development in Partnerships* was published 1 March 1988. At the direction of the Chief of Engineers, the panel addressed the implications of "partnership provisions" of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 and offers recommendations concerning the Corps effort to guide the field and to propose needed changes in project development practices. The report made clear that one of the implications of the "cost-sharing" provisions was that: "Involving the interested and affected public should be an important joint responsibility of the Corps and sponsors." (p. 7)

1989

The IWR published the first in a series of Case Studies on Alternative Dispute Resolution. The first case study was about the use of a mini-trial in 1985 between the Corps and a contractor on the Tennessee Tombigbee Waterway project. During 1989, IWR also published its first pamphlet in the ADR Series entitled *The Mini-Trial* which described the purpose and nature of this ADR procedure (Edelman, et. al., 1989).

1990 to Present

Context

Since 1990 the Corps has experienced significant public controversy, public appreciation, and a reorganization initiative. The controversy involved the Corps' role in helping to develop a Joint Wetlands Delineation Manual with four other agencies at the close of the Reagan administration. A proposed expanded definition of wetlands led to considerable public misunderstanding and opposition to the proposed manual from 1990 through 1992. The outstanding performance of the Corps in Desert Storm and in relief efforts in Hurricane Andrew and Hurricane Iniki provided the Corps with much public praise. The announcement of a proposed reorganization plan on 19 November 1992 created a sense of uncertainty and frustration among a number of Corps personnel.

The issue of public involvement received little corporate attention from headquarters during this period and was eclipsed by other concerns. However, efforts to involve the public had become widespread at the district level. The ADR program continued, but the number of persons attending the Public Involvement courses sponsored through the Training Department at the Huntsville Division declined.

Despite the lack of emphasis on public involvement as an issue and concept, the "Relations Workshop" convened at the Senior Leadership Workshop 1-12 November 1992, identified issues relevant and related to public involvement as a value and process.

Milestones 1990-1993

1990

On 7 July 1990 the Corps published regulations on *Shoreline Management on Civil Works Projects* (327.30) as an addition to 36 CFR Part 327 - *Rules and Regulations Governing Public Use of Water Resource Developments Administered by the Chief of Engineers.* The regulation called for the development of shoreline management plans to "achieve a balance between permitted private uses and resource protection for general public use" in all civil works water resource development projects under Corps jurisdiction. Section (d) (6) required: "District Commander will ensure public participation to the maximum practicable extent . . . public participation will begin during the initial phases and must be broad-based to cover all segments of the public interest."

1990

The Water Resources Development Act of 1990 expanded the mission of the Corps to include Environmental Protection, "The Secretary should include environmental protection as one of the primary missions of the Corps of Engineers (P. L. 101-640, November 28, 1990).

1990

In Working Paper #2 of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Series, Jerome Delli Priscoli discussed the connection and developmental continuity between, "Public Involvement, Conflict Management, and Dispute Resolution in Water Resources and Environmental Decision Making." (Delli Priscoli, 1990). The working paper reflected a point the author had made in an earlier article that conflict management and public involvement "were different sides of the same coin. Indeed, it was becoming more difficult to differentiate between CM mediation and PI facilitation." (Delli Priscoli, 1989, p. 32).

1990

The U. S. Army Toxic and Hazardous Materials Agency published a *Commander's Guide to Public Involvement in the Army's Installation Restoration Program.* The guide explained the requirements and elements of the program and how to develop public involvement in relationship to it.

1992

James Creighton completed a study and reported on a project to develop a public involvement strategy for the Corps in the Columbia River system (Creighton, 1992). The report identified many troubling findings. Among those were: the Corps was perceived as rigid, defensive, and closed minded; it did not relate effectively to major influential leaders in the region; its Public Involvement activities were perceived as pro forma; many Corps officials lacked people skills and made poor public presentations; Public Affairs Offices were seen as inadequate and were being reduced in size, and few Corps staff received any public involvement training during the 1980s.

1992

The "Relations Workshop" at the Corps Senior Leadership Conference on 9-12 November while not focused on the issue of public involvement, identified many issues related and relevant to it. Many of the issues and suggestions raised about relating to customers and partners were similar to those developed in the Corps' public involvement literature since the 1970s.

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This study examines the experience and opinions of Corps personnel regarding public involvement. The aim of the study was to determine how influential Corps personnel viewed the Corps experience, present capacity, and future challenges concerning public involvement. To obtain a cross section of opinion, 11 district offices in different parts of the country were visited.

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