

January-March 2016

# Collaboration Corner



## Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution: Innovative Cases

# In This Issue:

*Learn about some of the best collaboration and conflict resolution practices occurring across the Corps.*

*Every year USACE reports to the White House Council on Environmental Quality our use of Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution (ECCR) in USACE activities. For this issue, the most innovative cases have been selected to highlight the great work being done across the Corps. Corps staff involved in these cases have contributed the enclosed articles.*

**Cover Image:** USACE team members during the first ever “Effective Communication in Regulatory” Course held in Alaska District (POA).

Submit your questions on Collaboration and Public Participation to be answered in the next issue of Collaboration Corner [Here](#)



This newsletter is produced by the USACE Collaboration and Public Participation Center of Expertise (CPCX), located at the Institute for Water Resources. For questions, comments, or to submit articles, contact Andrea Carson at [Andrea.I.Carson@usace.army.mil](mailto:Andrea.I.Carson@usace.army.mil)

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JUN

**This could  
be your event!**

## Connect...

**We would like to hear about your stories, events, or announcements that would be of interest to our collaboration community.**

**Copy the [CoP Calendar](#) to your Outlook to stay connected!**

# Announcements

**MAY**

**4-5**

## **USIECR Training Course**

Collaboration in NEPA

Arlington, VA

Register [HERE](#)

**JUL**

**20-21**

## **IAP2 Training**

Emotion, Outrage, and Public

Participation: Moving from Rage to Reason, Austin, TX

Register [HERE](#)

## **IAP2 Training**

Emotion, Outrage, and Public

Participation: Moving from Rage to Reason, Phoenix, AZ

Register [HERE](#)

**SEPT**

**7-8**

## **USIECR Training Course**

410: Advanced Multi-Party Negotiation of Environmental Disputes, Arlington, VA

Register [HERE](#)

**MAY**

**19-20**

## **IAP2 Training**

Techniques for Effective Public

Participation, Great Falls, MT

Register [HERE](#)

**OCT**

**5-6**

## **USIECR Training Course**

501: Collaboration Leadership for Environmental Professionals, Arlington, VA

Register [HERE](#)

**JUN**

**7-8**

## **Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR) Environmental and Public Policy Section (EPP) Conference**

Austin, TX

Register [HERE](#)

**NOV/  
DEC**

**Nov 28 -  
Dec 2**

## **NCTC: Collaboration and Conflict Transformation in Multi-Party Processes**

For more information contact Seth Cohen at

[Seth.B.Cohen@usace.army.mil](mailto:Seth.B.Cohen@usace.army.mil)

## **NOAA Training**

Planning and Facilitating Collaborative Meetings, Dover, DE

Register [HERE](#)

**JUN**

**15-16**

## **IAP2 Training**

Emotion, Outrage, and Public

Participation: Moving from Rage to Reason, Chicago, IL

Register [HERE](#)

## **Upcoming PROSPECT Courses:**

### **#102: Effective Communication for the FUDS Program** Course Description [here](#)

April 26-28, 2016 in Baltimore, MD

### **#409: FUDS Public Participation Requirements** Course Description [here](#)

May 4, 2016

### **#407: Public Involvement and Teaming (PCC7)** Course Description [here](#)

May 9-13 2016 in Chicago, IL

# USACE Doubles Its Use of Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution Measures

By Cynthia Wood, USACE, Institute for Water Resources



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) increased its use of third-party Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution (ECCR) in 2015, reporting 29 specific uses as well as a significant number of non-third-party collaborative efforts across all USACE divisions and mission areas.

This was a significant increase from the 15 uses reported in 2013 and 2014. The volume and breadth of non-third-party collaborative efforts were also significant with many efforts noted in both the Navigation and Regulatory business lines. Interesting to note were the six priority, or emerging, areas of conflict and cross-cutting challenges in USACE: Water Security, Statutory Requirements and Federal Law, Native American Cultural Sites, Climate Change, National Historic Preservation Act, and In-stream Flows.

In the 2015 ECCR, many divisions reported direct consultation and partnering efforts with tribes. These experiences will be highlighted in the next edition of Collaboration Corner.

The USACE Collaboration & Public Participation Center of Expertise (CPCX), with the direct support from our MSC Liaisons, collected and summarized the uses of ECCR across the agency, including both third-party and non-third-party collaboration and conflict resolution efforts. The USACE 10th Annual ECCR Report (Report) was then coordinated across HQ-USACE, the Division Liaisons, and the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works).

Notable advances by all Divisions in the use of ECCR were captured in the Report. The annual assessment also helps CPCX gauge interest in training courses and direct assistance. Divisions and Districts identified eligible staff to participate in the Environmental Conflict Resolution Certification Program with US Institute for Environmental



*Members of the CPCX meeting with USACE personnel to discuss collaboration and conflict resolution challenges.*

Conflict Resolution, suggested developmental assignments to or from CPCX, suggested additions to the USACE facilitator database, and gave suggested topics for webinars.

Documenting the costs and benefits of ECCR continues to be a challenge for the agency, as confirmed by the responses from the field. Thus, future work is needed to capture and quantify the benefits of ECCR to demonstrate the power and effectiveness of its use in those government programs that affect the public.

The annual ECCR report is required by the 2012 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) joint memorandum on Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution. This 2012 memorandum supersedes and broadens the original OMB/CEQ 2005 joint memorandum on Environmental Conflict Resolution by explicitly encouraging appropriate and effective upfront environmental collaboration to minimize or prevent conflict.

**Do you want to see what other agencies are reporting?**

**Visit**  
<http://udall.gov/OurPrograms/Institute/ECRReport.aspx>



# Spice Up Your Workshop: Stakeholder Engagement through a “Multi-Hazard Tournament” in the San Antonio River Basin

By Andrea Carson, Harvey Hill, Rolf Olsen, USACE, Institute for Water Resources

Nature can giveth and nature can taketh away. This is a fact that people within the San Antonio River Watershed know all too well. With a long history of flooding and drought, area residents have wrestled with Mother Nature’s unpredictability many times. Floods in 1998 and 2002 resulted in two deaths and \$500 million in damages, and 11 deaths and \$1 billion in damages, respectively. Despite the tremendous destruction caused by flooding, water serves as the lifeblood to crops and livestock which provide billions of dollars in revenue to the state of Texas.

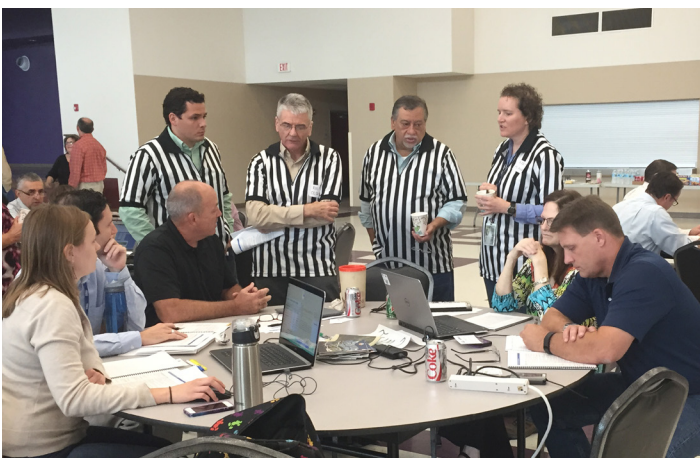
Deciding how to best thrive with the unpredictable nature of water, and reduce the risks associated with floods, drought, and poor water quality, is a complex challenge due to the physical and social vulnerabilities associated with these hazards. To successfully address these risks requires solutions based on the integration of relevant policies, engineering feasibility, economic factors, ecosystem services, and watershed stakeholder preferences. An innovative stakeholder engagement tool that can support integration for risk identification and mitigation is the Multi-Hazard Tournament (MHT).



*Participants and hosts of the San Antonio Multi-Hazard Tournament*

The first of a number of planned MHTs was conducted in September 2015 near San Antonio, Texas. Pioneered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Institute for Water Resources (IWR), Fort Worth District (SWF), and the San Antonio River Authority (SARA), the MHT was a competitive table-top simulation exercise designed to aid decision-making. Additional technical support for the MHT was provided by U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), South Central Climate Science Center, and National Drought Mitigation Center. Participants evaluated different scenarios and potential strategies to reduce drought and flood risk with the goal of increasing participants’ understanding of ways to reduce the risk of flood and other natural hazard risks within the watershed.

Forty-one participants, consisting of local, state, and federal water managers, agricultural extension agents, risk managers, and scientists, were divided into five teams. Each team worked together, using tools and data provided by USACE and other partners, to select adaptation options to address three hydrologic hazard scenarios: drought, flood, and water quality impairments which are characterized by high variability. Adaptation options are policies or projects that reduce vulnerability to such hazards. Pre-defined adaptation options in the MHT ranged from zoning changes to water reuse, and wetland conservation. A spreadsheet decision support tool enabled teams to visualize the tradeoffs of their



*Tournament referees discuss the merits of the HardCorps Watershed Planners’ proposal for reducing flood risk in the San Antonio River Basin.*

# Spice Up Your Workshop: Stakeholder Engagement through a “Multi-Hazard Tournament” in the San Antonio River Basin (Continued...)

decisions on metrics such as property protection, water nitrogen levels, aquifer recharge rates, and recreation. To promote innovation, “referees” challenged teams to propose new, creative adaptation options that were economically, legally, and technically feasible.

After each round, teams submitted mock press releases and explained their scenario and recommendations to the group. Teams received a score in each round based on how well their decisions reduced ecologic, sociologic, and economic risks, and the extent to which they addressed watershed and stakeholder interests within the allocated financial budget.

Learning and exchanging ideas with participants was a major goal for this exercise. As one participant said, *“I learned of many different possible adaptation measures after today’s exercise. I do not have the authority to make changes to policy. However, in documenting best practices and in other documentation that I prepare in the execution of my duties, I would make every effort to incorporate what I learned today; for example, by expanding the descriptions of available options and the consideration of impacts.”*

Feedback from the event reinforced earlier findings that this “serious game” is an innovative way to spur new ideas by creating a fun, team-centered learning

environment, and fictionalizing potential polarizing aspects of the watershed. However, the MHT should not be interpreted as a trivialization of the complex challenges facing stakeholders within a watershed. Over the last five years the sophistication and complexity of the framework has increased. Tournaments have been used in a variety of regions, including but not limited to Nepal, Czech Republic, Canada, United States, and the Caribbean; the San Antonio MHT was the first exercise of its kind in the United States. Upcoming USACE tournaments are scheduled for FY16 and FY17 in San Antonio, Texas (SWF) and Cedar Rapids, Iowa (MVR) to address flood, water quality, and drought, and in Norfolk Virginia (NAO) to address coastal and inland flooding, storm surge, and sea level rise.

The FY17 tournaments scheduled for San Antonio, Texas and Norfolk, Virginia will be funded as pilot projects through the Silver Jackets Program. Pending the outcome of the pilots, this new approach to Shared Visioning could be utilized throughout the USACE Districts to engage stakeholders, and share tools and data. The MHT framework has been consistently praised for its usefulness in helping a wide range of stakeholders understand natural hazard risk and adaptation risk mitigation options.

## Interested in earning the Udall Certificate in Environmental Collaboration? CPCX has resources to help!

### What is the Udall Certificate in Environmental Collaboration?

Offered by the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (USIECR), the courses required for the Certificate specialize in providing practical, hands-on training that helps participants improve their communications skills, conflict management style, knowledge of environmental collaboration and conflict resolution, and add to their negotiation and facilitation toolbox. To earn the Udall Certificate, candidates must complete five courses within a five-year period.

### How can CPCX help you attend?

CPCX may be able to fund your tuition\* to any of the courses listed here: <http://www.udall.gov/OurPrograms/Institute/Training.aspx>. If you are interested in attending a USIECR course, email Stacy Langsdale at [Stacy.M.Langsdale@usace.army.mil](mailto:Stacy.M.Langsdale@usace.army.mil) with the following: 1) the course number and name of the course you would be interested in attending and 2) a description of what you hope to get out of the course.

\*While CPCX may be able to cover your tuition for the USIECR course, you will need to elicit your own office’s support to fund your travel and per diem.

# Regional Sediment Management on the Illinois River

By Angela Freyermuth, USACE, Outreach Specialist, Rock Island District

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Rock Island District (MVR) received funding through the Regional Sediment Management (RSM) Program to study sedimentation issues at the confluence of the Illinois and Sangamon Rivers upstream of Beardstown, IL. Sediment management has been an issue in this region for over a decade and has caused strain on relationships between key partners, the public, and the USACE.

When MVR received funds to investigate sediment issues, the project team decided it would be a great opportunity to re-build relationships. Therefore, the team organized the Sangamon River Conceptual Modeling Workshop to help form a collaboration of interested stakeholders to assist the USACE with investigating the sediment source, brainstorm ideas for sedimentation reduction, and identify uses of sediment that could substantially benefit the navigation mission, while also consider the flood risk management and ecosystem missions. Thirty participants attended the eight-hour workshop including representatives from various mission sectors, county, state and federal partners, and members of the general public.

The team took the time to gain insight from project partners and the general public. This technique allowed MVR to complete the project and re-build critical partnerships. Additionally, MVR and the State of Illinois



Group discussion during the Sangamon River Conceptual Modeling Workshop. Photo Credits: Rock Island District

discovered new and improved ways to share data and information with each other; the two agencies used data gathered to develop an unsteady HEC-RAS model with sediment transport capabilities.

Lessons learned from this project included identifying means to leverage limited funds to achieve project goals. More importantly, the team learned to build and maintain key relationships through strategic communication, and collaboration techniques and tools.

*RSM is a systems approach working collaboratively with the USACE, stakeholders, and partners to deliberately manage sediments in a manner that maximizes natural and economic efficiencies to support sustainable, resilient water resource projects, environments, and communities. Linda Lillycrop (ERDC-CHL) is the Program Manager.*

## Flood Risk Communication Toolbox

<http://www.corpsriskanalysisgateway.us/riskcom-toolbox.cfm>

The new Flood Risk Communication Toolbox provides resources that can help District personnel effectively communicate flood risk to the public. It features information about the theories and best practices of risk communication, as well as informational documents that can be distributed directly to the public. The Toolbox is divided into three sections:

- 1) How to Communicate Risk, where you can find documents covering guidance, policy, and peer reviewed literature and research;
- 2) Flood Risk Outreach, where you can find fact sheets and multi-media; and
- 3) Case Studies and Testimonials, where you can find examples of best practices in flood risk communication.

Future versions of the toolbox will include a step-by-step guidance on how to plan for and conduct risk communication.



# Open Lines of Communication

*By Tom Walker, USACE, Regulatory Branch Chief, Norfolk District*

## **How do you find the balance between protecting and preserving national resources and providing critical infrastructure when stakeholders passionately embrace opposing viewpoints?**

Norfolk District is responsible for the permit actions requested by Dominion Virginia Power, a company that proposed to place an aerial electric transmission line across the James River east of Jamestown Island. The proposed transmission line would be visible from several important cultural resources including Jamestown Island, Colonial Parkway, and a National Historic Landmark named Carters Grove. Norfolk District initiated the public notice process and in response, received many comments in opposition to the plan specifically, that historic resources would be substantially and adversely affected by the proposed work.

To advance the required analysis and seek collaboration, over 20 organizations were invited to become consulting parties in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 process, as a required part of USACE responsibilities pursuant to NHPA. As part of this process, the parties involved identified resources to be evaluated, assessed effects of the undertaking, and explored measures to resolve anticipated adverse effects. Norfolk District initially held three in-person meetings, and one field trip in FY15 with groups concerned with the Dominion permit process. However, soon after starting these engagements, Norfolk District recognized an emerging tension among the group that appeared to stem from vastly different viewpoints and a lack of understanding. This ultimately complicated progress made at consultation meetings. As a result, Norfolk District enlisted a third party facilitator in an effort to move forward in a productive and cooperative way.

With the aid of the third-party facilitator Norfolk District hosted two additional in-person meetings to clarify the proposed project requirements, identify



The picture is taken from Colonial Parkway looking east on the James River east of Jamestown. Photo Credit: Mr. Randy Steffey.

potentially impacted resources, and discuss possible methods to mitigate or resolve adverse effects. The third-party facilitated meetings enabled participants to: 1) arrive at a mutual understanding of the Regulatory review process as it pertained to Section 106 of the NHPA, 2) provide clarity to questions that remained regarding the effects on cultural resources resulting from the alternative, and 3) initiate discussions regarding potential mitigation. This approach has allowed Norfolk District to educate the interested stakeholders about the regulatory process while simultaneously review the proposal, and better understand the interests of the various stakeholders.

Norfolk District has now conducted two facilitated sessions and, while there is still work to be done, the group has begun to communicate much more effectively. The district will consider continued use of the third party facilitator as it progresses with the NHPA Section 106 consultation process. Overall, the effort has fostered better relationships with stakeholders and has allowed the district to move forward with the evaluation of the proposed project.



# Blazing the Trail from Opposition to Support

*By Hayley Lovan, USACE, Chief, Ecosystem Planning Section, Environmental Resources Branch, Los Angeles District*

The Santa Ana River Mainstem Mitigation Project has engaged with the community of Norco “Horse Town USA” in Prado Basin, California on two occasions. On both occasions, the equestrian community was concerned about the loss of trails due to a proposed mitigation project. In the first instance, a few community members directly interfered with the mitigation project by standing in front of dozers, and vandalizing fencing and signs. Many others voiced their concern in public forums and news articles, and initially urged the City to retract their support. On the second occasion, four years later, community concern for the loss of trails was reignited. However, many of those community members who had originally opposed the project, instead spoke in support of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

## **What had changed?**

In 2010, as part of a mitigation requirement for the Santa Ana River Mainstem flood control project, USACE, Los Angeles District (SPL) had to remove 200 acres of invasive species, primarily arundo donax, at a site adjacent to the community of Norco “Horse Town USA” in Prado Basin, California. Contractors had been hired, permits received, and reconnaissance surveys started, before SPL realized the site was home to an active network of horse trails.

Upon realizing the importance of the trails to the equestrian community, and the potential project delays that could be caused by protests, SPL quickly began to reach out to leaders of the equestrian community and modified the scope of the contract to include extensive community outreach. USACE led focus groups to map trail locations and discuss mitigation site requirements, educate the community about the harmful effects of arundo on native habitat and the ecosystem, and listen to the equestrians explain the benefits of the invasive plant (from their perspective) including the creation of shaded trails and tunnels of vegetation to ride through. The agency and community members were able to develop a plan that significantly reduced the amount of



Meeting attendees work with USACE personnel and facilitators to map horse trails. Photo credit: Ultrasystems and Cardno, 2014

impact the project would have on the equestrian’s trails, giving deference to the most popular and memorialized trails, while still meeting SPL’s mitigation requirements.

Following the focus groups, Los Angeles District representatives continued to reach out to those who expressed greatest opposition. Representatives would talk with community members after meetings, join them on horseback rides, and visit the important trails.

As a result of the facilitated discussions and subsequent interactions with the community members, the equestrian community’s opposition to the project subsided. But ongoing arundo removal efforts, such as the need in 2014 for the removal of an additional 200 acres of arundo donax, reignited the wariness and concern of USACE intentions. **This time, Los Angeles District was prepared.**

Building from lessons learned and relationships established four years prior, community outreach was included in the contracted scope from the onset of the new project. A public meeting, led by a hired third party facilitator, was held in August 2014 to discuss the project objectives in coordination with equestrian usage. Similar to 2010, USACE asked the community to help map the opportunities and constraints of the trails which contributed to the project design. However, this

# Blazing the Trail from Opposition to Support *(Continued...)*

time the meetings were part of the planning process and occurred BEFORE the removal was scheduled to begin. Follow-up meetings were held to let the public know how their input was used in developing final plans for treatment areas and methods, access routes, and phasing of work. By facilitating these engagements, participants were able to contribute their opinions in a constructive manner.

Some of the greatest opposition became the strongest supporters. Los Angeles District personnel and representatives were ready to answer questions about proposed herbicide application and speak to other educational components that had been important to the community in the past. But, when concerns from attendees were raised, a few members of the equestrian community, who in 2010 were among the strongest opponents to the agency's plans, now helped answer questions, discussed their positive experiences with USACE, and shared how their opinions had changed over time. Pictures showing 'then' and 'now' photos of the 2010 project site, helped the community members visualize what the native flood plain and vegetation could look like when invasive plants are removed, and



*District representatives walk a horse trail and map invasive species to be removed. Photo credit: Ultrasystems and Cardno, 2014*

they began to understand the native environment.

This responsive and proactive approach to community collaboration enabled critical mitigation efforts for a \$2 billion flood risk management project to move forward. Since completion of the project, many of the impacted equestrian trails have regrown with native riparian habitat for the community to enjoy.

## Putting USACE in a Collaborative Position

"Put your money where your mouth is," a phrase that often incites a challenge or action is exactly what the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Districts and Headquarters (HQ) have done. Nationwide the agency has funded and harnessed a collaborative skill set and it is paying off!

USACE has begun to support environmental collaboration and conflict resolution (ECCR) through the creation of nationwide and district specific positions with mandates to promote ECCR principles.

By maintaining staff in Public Affairs Offices as well as creating positions such as the Silver Jacket Coordinator, Outreach Specialist, Public Involvement Specialist, and other related positions to assist with stakeholder engagement, Districts are able to dedicate time and resources to a wide range of interagency projects and establish a focal point for engagement activities.

[This story features three brief articles on collaborative- capacity- building positions within USACE.](#)

# Putting USACE in a Collaborative Position (Continued...)

## Rock Island District's Senior Oversight Outreach Team

*By Angela Freyermuth, USACE, Outreach Specialist, Rock Island District*

Whether you are drawing plans for a new project or doing hydrologic testing on one of nation's many rivers, all employees play an important role in district outreach and customer relation strategies.

For the past twenty years the Rock Island District (MVR) has had some form of an outreach team to increase collaboration and coordination between offices. However, in recent years the district has formalized a team and appointed senior level personnel to ensure a more unified and strategic approach to outreach and customer relations.

The MVR Senior Oversight Outreach Team is comprised of assistant chiefs from each of the major project offices to include program management, planning, emergency management, operations, and engineering, and support staff members such as the district's corporate communications specialist, congressional liaison, and outreach specialist. The team is primarily responsible for providing outreach direction and input into the district's outreach plan to ensure future trends and capabilities correlate to district and USACE missions. The team provides recommendations to fund outreach activities, coordinate outreach initiatives with district team members, and reports status of outreach efforts at quarterly meetings. In addition, the team completes an annual review of a key strategic partner list which includes projects and goals of various stakeholders. District leadership can then determine what partners they should meet with more regularly based on partner goals that are consistent with, and similar to, the USACE mission and capabilities. Similarly, leadership can identify stakeholder engagements to further develop relationships in areas where there may be less consistency.

Since establishing this Senior Oversight Outreach Team the district has been able to focus on key outreach initiatives with more synchronized communication and coordination across various offices within the district. This synchronized approach has allowed MVR to better collaborate with partners and customers at all levels.

## Albuquerque District's Climate Science Specialist

*Information provided by Ariane Pinson, USACE, Climate Science Specialist, Albuquerque District*

Albuquerque District's Climate Science Specialist serves as a project delivery team (PDT) member on all Albuquerque District's Civil Works project teams and engages federal, tribal, and state partners on issues related to future flood risk management, wildfire, and regional drought.

In FY15, the Climate Science Specialist provided both qualitative and quantitative information relevant to project planning and management measure evaluation, and actively engaged with other agencies and the public on the issue of Southwestern U.S. climate change impacts to regional hydrology. A series of new initiatives are the result of this position including a workshop on wildfire and climate change with The Nature Conservancy, the University of New Mexico and others, a workshop on climate change vulnerability for the USACE Los Angeles District, and biannual meetings with federal planners to address regional climate change adaptation planning and concerns.

Creation of this position has assisted the region in developing climate change resilience in the watersheds through improved awareness of climate change impacts among regional governments and potential project sponsors through ongoing engagement, information sharing, and resource sharing. In addition, there has been increased communication among PDT members on the issue of climate change. There is an increased



# Putting USACE in a Collaborative Position (Continued...)

confidence among sponsors that climate change is being accounted for in USACE decision making which has ultimately reduced friction with the local community, and enhanced customer relationships.

## Public Involvement Specialists

A cadre of 23 specialists across the country serve as public involvement subject matter experts to support projects across USACE. The Public Involvement Specialists serve as a resource to their respective Districts but also provide regional and national support to all 8 Divisions. In FY15 the collaborative skill set of the specialists accomplished the following:

- Provided PI technical assistance to 35 projects
- Conducted general outreach and developed materials for 15 additional activities
- Supported Silver Jackets program and USACE's Government-to-Government relationship with federally recognized tribes,
- Raised awareness of public involvement value/ shared info with others
- Supported Levee Safety Communication Planning

Just to name a few!

Public Involvement Specialists have been able to help assess the need, value, range, and even requirements for public engagement for any stage of a USACE project. The specialists can find the tools and resources to support public involvement for your project, whether to provide information exchange between USACE and a community, or to hire a neutral facilitator for a more complex, decision making process. Keep in mind, many of the Public Involvement Specialists serve as facilitators and moderators too!

Each Division's Public Involvement Specialists are able to provide the expertise directly or connect you to other Public Involvement Specialists that have the talent to get the job done. They will coordinate with district Public Affairs to define the levels of support and division of responsibilities appropriate for a specific project. Project



*Public Involvement Specialists at their 2016 face-to-face workshop in Portland, OR.*

Managers and teams are encouraged to consult with one of these specialists early in your project about the value of public involvement to help keep your project on schedule and within budget.

The time and financial resources allocated toward these positions and tasks show that USACE has begun to understand the value of collaboration in the decision-making process. USACE has recognized that public involvement early and often is an integral component of successful project execution. Creation of these nationwide positions has changed the communication landscape for the agency; rather than be in a compromising and reactive situation, the insights and expertise shared by these specialists has provided an opportunity for USACE to collaborate and communicate proactively.

## Conflict and Resolution Styles Assessment

This January webinar, jointly presented by the Facilitators' Exchange and the CPCX, focused on the origins of conflict, stages of conflict escalation, and personal style in responding to conflict.

If you missed the webinar, you can find the recording [HERE](#)

Keep an eye out for more webinars in this series on Conflict and Collaborative Problem Solving!

Dear Hal,

As a PM, I am expected to create a communication plan for my project or study, but I could use some guidance on the best way to build my plan. What should be included in a project or study communication plan?

# Ask Hal



I recently participated in the 2016 USACE Worldwide Public Affairs Workshop. At the workshop the Public Affairs Communities of Practice (PA CoP) rolled out the latest version of the Quality Management System (QMS) Enterprise Standard (ES) 28000 Communication Planning Process.

Those familiar with the original ES 28000 will recall a two-step process where information was input into a program called InfoPath and output into Microsoft Word for inclusion into a Program or Project Management Plan. Based on user feedback, the system was converted in 2016 to 100 percent Microsoft Word, and streamlined to meet the needs of Project Managers and study teams while simultaneously providing national guidance and direction. The ES 28000 Communication Planning Process includes 10 sections that have been divided into four steps: 10-4. The term 10-4 means 'message received' and 'understood'. Project managers can expect, that after completing the 10-4 template, that the team, management, and other customers will have understood, and received the communication messages that will guide the team through the study

phases. The 10-4 template is summarized below.

## **STEP 1 – Research and define the problem.**

1. Defining the problem.
2. Develop a situation analysis.
3. Determine affected stakeholders and target audiences.

## **STEP 2 – Plan by developing a goal and measureable objectives based on research conclusions, and a budget.**

4. Determine the program goals and objectives.
5. Determine the best strategies, tactics key messages and talking points to accomplish these communication objectives.
6. Budget.

## **STEP 3 – Implement strategies and tactics to accomplish objectives.**

7. Use communication summary template and action matrix to take action steps.
8. Track implementation and use checklists to ensure implementation.

## **STEP 4 – Evaluate the communication.**

9. Determine most appropriate way to measure whether the communication objectives were achieved.
10. Conduct evaluative research and compare results to initial research. Use this feedback to adjust this and future communication plans.

It is important to note that the summary and matrix referenced in Step 3, section 7 are included on the SharePoint site\*. The summary and matrix are each a single PowerPoint slide that is easy to use and are both efficient mechanisms for Project Managers and study teams to capture project specific communication tactics.

The QMS ES 28000 IS the USACE standard and is required to be used for developing ALL communication plans. By following the Communication Planning Process, your team will produce written communication plans that are policy compliant, and address the issues and concerns relevant to the project. The QMS 28000 requires Project Managers to work with their respective communications team to ensure the communication plan will include the necessary information to assist the project delivery team with frequent and planned communication techniques to foster positive working relationships with internal and external customers, stakeholders, and partners.

\*Step by step instructions on how to get started using the 28000 Communication Plan Process, the updated QMS guidance, and the communication summary and action matrix PowerPoint slides are included on the SharePoint site located at <https://cops.usace.army.mil/sites/PA/CommPlan/default.aspx>.

