



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 80
VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI 39181-0080

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CEMVD-PD-N

21 JUL 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR Commander, New Orleans District

SUBJECT: Peer Review Plan (PRP), St. John Parish Urban Flood Control Feasibility Study

1. References:

- a. EC 1105-2-408, Peer Review of Decision documents, 31 May 2005.
- b. Memorandum, CECW-CP, 30 March 2007, subject: Peer Review Process.
- c. Memorandum, March 2007, subject: Supplemental information for the "Peer Review Process."
- d. Email, CESPDPDS-P, 18 April 2008, subject: St. John Parish Peer Review Plan (encl).

2. I hereby approve subject PRP and concur in the recommendation that External Peer Review (EPR) of this project is not required since the implementation cost will not exceed the \$45 million threshold for EPR requirement as per WRDA 2007, Section 2034. Based upon EC 1105-2-408, 31 May 2005, decision documents will not undergo EPR if the subject matter is not controversial and is not precedent setting. The proposed PRP has been coordinated with the National Planning Center of Expertise for Flood Risk Management (PCX-CFRM). The PRP complies with all applicable policies and provides an adequate independent technical review of the plan formulation, engineering and environmental analyses, and other aspects of the plan development. Non-substantive changes to this PRP do not require further approval.

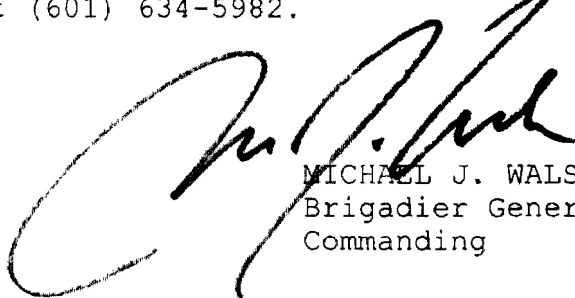
3. The District should take steps to post the PRP to its web site and to provide a link to the PCX-CFRM for their use. Before posting to the web site, the names of Corps/Army employees should be removed in accordance with reference 1.b. above.

CEMVD-PD-N

SUBJECT: Peer Review Plan (PRP), St. John Parish Urban Flood Control Feasibility Study

4. The MVD point of contact is Ms. [REDACTED], CEMVD-PD-N, at (601) 634-5982.

Encl



MICHAEL J. WALSH
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

CF:
CESPD-PDS-P (PCX-CFRM, Frentzen)
CEMVN-PM-W (Sims)
CECW-CP



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
New Orleans District

Peer Review Plan

St. John Parish Urban Flood Control Feasibility Study

St. John Parish, Louisiana

Revised May 2008

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1) Peer Review

This peer review plan (PRP) was developed to insure that high quality products are produced within the New Orleans District. This plan establishes the policies, procedures, and organizational responsibilities for providing quality control of planning products for this project.

The PRP for the St. John Parish feasibility study provides a technical review mechanism insuring that quality products are developed during the course of the study by the New Orleans District (MVN). The technical review of the feasibility study will consist of an Independent Technical Review. An additional level of policy review for the St John Parish study will be performed at the Headquarters of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (HQUSACE) and will insure that all applicable statutes have been applied with respect to cost sharing, project purpose, and budget criteria. All processes, quality control, quality assurance, and policy review, will complement each other producing a seamless review process that identifies and resolves technical and policy issues during the course of the study.

The review process will insure that a cost-effective solution, is developed. Technical review will assure accountability for the technical quality of the product. Each technical review objective in the PRP will be satisfied through a seamless review process performed outside MVN (Independent Technical Review), MVD (quality assurance of technical products), and HQUSACE (policy review). PRP is based upon applicable guidance from higher authority including the Engineering Circular 1105-2-408 titled: Peer Review of Decision Documents dated May 31, 2005, Report of the Task Force on Technical Review, dated December 1994, and CELMV-ET memorandum of 23 September 1995, subject: Lower Mississippi Valley Division, Directorate of Engineering and Technical Services, Quality Control and Quality Assurance Guidance.

2) Project Description

- a) **Decision Document.** The St. John Parish Urban Flood Control (UFC) feasibility study addresses flooding and interior drainage issues associated with St. John Parish in Louisiana. This study will develop a document stating alternative plans for addressing flood risk management in St. John Parish, the evaluation and screening of those plans, and for the development of a final plan to be recommended for implementation as a Federal project.
- b) **General Site Description.** St. John the Baptist Parish East Bank is located in the state of Louisiana about 30 miles west of the city of New Orleans. Improvements are being studied between the Mississippi River and Lakes Maurepas and Ponchartrain.

- c) **Project Scope:** The feasibility phase of this project is cost shared 50/50 with the project sponsors. Flood risk management opportunities are being looked at in the area in order to relieve problems caused by excessive flooding. The purpose of the feasibility study is to determine a comprehensive solution to urban flooding problems on the east bank of the Mississippi River area of the parish. The array of alternatives to be studied includes improvements to the interior canals and pumping stations in St. John the Baptist Parish east of the Mississippi River.

- d) **Problems and Opportunities.** St. John the Baptist Parish East Bank is a community of residential, commercial, light industrial, and heavy industrial interests. Due to inadequate drainage in the area, repeated flooding during periods of heavy rainfall is experienced. The opportunity exists to construct pumping stations along the Mississippi River in order to reduce the flood burden for the area.

- e) **Project Delivery Team.** The project delivery team (PDT) is comprised of those individuals directly involved in the development of the decision document. Contact information and disciplines are listed below.

DISCIPLINE
Economics – team member will have extensive experience in related flood damage reduction projects, and have a thorough understanding of HEC-FDA
Environmental – team members will have extensive experience in NEPA policies, cultural resources, recreational resources and HTRW
Project Management – team member will be familiar with watershed level projects, current flood damage reduction planning and policy guidance and have experience in plan formulation.
Hydraulic Engineering – the team member will be an expert in the field of urban hydrology & hydraulics, have a through understanding of the dynamics of open channel flow systems and enclosed systems, and have an understanding of computer modeling techniques that will be used for this project.
Civil Engineering / cost – team member will be familiar with cost estimating for similar projects using MCACES. Coordination will be made through the Walla District.
Geotechnical Engineering – team member will have extensive experience in levee & floodwall design, post-construction evaluation, and rehabilitation.
Civil Engineering – team member will have experience in utility relocations, positive closure requirements and internal drainage for levee construction, projects engineering, operations, and application of non-structural flood damage reduction, specifically flood proofing.
Mechanical Engineering – team member shall be familiar with levee pump station and closure structure design.
Real Estate – team member wall have extensive experience in acquisition and leasing, including right of way issues, and appraisals.

3) **Peer Review.** Based upon cost, technical expertise, and current and projected workload, the on-going technical review process for St John Parish feasibility study will be conducted by the New Orleans District in coordination with the FRM-PCX and MSC with flood risk management experience. The local sponsor will also be involved in the review process by participating in Project Delivery Team (PDT) meetings. In terms of technical expertise, the New Orleans District has a vast amount of experience and capability in order to produce a quality product for the study given the similarity to numerous other related projects constructed throughout the New Orleans District. A Peer Review can consist of Independent Technical Review, and External Peer Review. Peer Review Teams (PRT) will be responsible for verifying; 1) assumptions, 2) methods, procedures, and material used in analyses based on the level of analyses, 3) alternative evaluated is reasonable, 4) appropriateness of data used, and level of data obtained, 5) reasonableness of results, and 6) products meet sponsor needs and are consistent with law and existing policy.

a) **Independent Technical Review (ITR).** ITR will consist of a single level study review performed by the New Orleans District in coordination with the FRM-PCX and MSC.

i) *Planning Center of Expertise (PCX).* The St. John UFC study primarily falls under the PCX business program “Flood Risk Management.” ITR for studies grouped in this program are performed under the supervision of the South Pacific Division (415) 503 6572. The ITR will be performed by another Corps district in coordination with the PCX and MVD. These potential reviewers may include nominations from scientific or professional societies, if the Center so chooses.

ii) *Independent Technical Review Team (ITRT).* ITRT will be comprised of the same disciplines on the PDT, and will have experience in the type of analyses in which they are responsible for reviewing. Each ITRT member will be senior or equal in experience to the analyst or production person. At this time MVN has no specific candidate to nominate for the ITR lead. The FRM-PCX, in coordination with MVN and MVD, will be responsible for identifying the ITR lead for this study. Consistent with recent Corps guidance, the ITR team member for cost engineering will be obtained through the Walla Walla District. The number of reviewers participating in the ITR should include members with expertise in the following disciplines:

DISCIPLINE
Economics – team member will have extensive experience in related flood damage reduction projects, and have a thorough understanding of HEC-FDA
Environmental – team members will have extensive experience in NEPA policies, cultural resources, recreational resources and HTRW
Project Management – team member will be familiar with watershed level projects, current flood damage reduction planning and policy guidance and have experience in plan formulation.
Hydraulic Engineering – the team member will be an expert in the field of urban hydrology & hydraulics, have a through understanding of the dynamics of open channel flow systems and enclosed systems, and have an understanding of computer modeling techniques that will be used for this project.
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Civil Engineering – team member will have experience in utility relocations, positive closure requirements and internal drainage for levee construction, projects engineering, operations, and application of non-structural flood damage reduction, specifically flood proofing.
Mechanical Engineering – team member shall be familiar with levee pump station and closure structure design.
Real Estate – team member wall have extensive experience in acquisition and leasing, including right of way issues, and appraisals.

iii) *DrChecks*. ITR of this decision document will be conducted using the online DrChecks system (www.projnet.org). Use of DrChecks will document all ITR comments, responses, and associated resolution accomplished throughout the study delivery process.

iv) *Planning Models*: The Study will be using HEC-HMS and HEC-RAS models to determine with and without conditions. These, along with planning models being used in economic and environmental evaluation models will be reviewed by the PCX for certification.

v) *Milestones and Schedule*:

Milestone	Date
ITR Initiation	1st Qtr FY09

AFB	1st Qtr FY10
Draft Report	1st Qtr FY10
Draft Submittal	2nd Qtr FY10
NEPA Public Review	2nd Qtr FY10
ITR Certification	2nd Qtr FY10
Final Submittal	3rd Qtr FY10
CWRB	3rd Qtr FY10
MSC Commanders Public Notice	3rd Qtr FY10

- a. **External Peer Review (EPR).** This feasibility study does not meet the EPR criteria of EC 1105-2-408. The cost of this project is not expected to exceed \$40 million and therefore its magnitude is determined as low. The study will not contain precedent-setting methods or models, or contain a potential for failure or controversy. Because of this, the scientific information disseminating from the feasibility report will not be influential and will not present conclusions that are likely to change prevailing practices. Pending vertical team approval, EPR will not be required.
- b. **Public Involvement.** The public will have several opportunities to comment on the feasibility study through a public involvement plan implemented through a notice of study initiation, public meetings, and workshops. This will give the Corps the opportunity to exchange information with the public and insure that individuals with an inherent interest in the study are identified and contacted allowing them to voice their views and concerns relative to the study process. Significant and relevant public comments will be provided to the ITR team prior to ITR submittal along with any changes in the study resulting from these comments

Public meetings and workshops will be conducted to gather and provide feedback from the public, formulate a consensus, and generally keep interested parties informed. One such public meeting will be scheduled subsequent to the public release of the draft feasibility report and environmental assessment to present the study conclusions. This NEPA public scoping process will allow the public to comment on any environmental issues that may arise as a result of the study's recommended plan. Throughout the study other public meetings and workshops will be held as necessary.

Upon approval, the plan will be posted to the New Orleans District's website at: <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/PD/ProjsAsp/main.asp> where the public will be able to view and provide any comments relating to the review process they might have.