



Reply to
Attention of:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1100 COMMERCE STREET
DALLAS, TEXAS 75242-0216

CESWD-PDS-P

12 SEP 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR Commander, Galveston District

SUBJECT: Review Plan Approval for the Sabine-Neches Waterway Feasibility Report

1. References:

- a. EC 1105-2-408, 31 May 2005, subject: Peer Review of Decision Documents.
- b. Memorandum, CECW-CP, 30 March 2007, subject: Peer Review Process.

2. The enclosed Review Plan for the Sabine-Neches Waterway Feasibility Report has been prepared in accordance with referenced guidance.

3. This plan has been made available for public comment, and the comments received have been incorporated. It has been coordinated with the Deep Draft Navigation Planning Center of Expertise of the South Atlantic Division which is the lead office to execute the plan. The Review Plan includes External Peer Review.

4. I hereby approve this Review Plan, which is subject to change as study circumstances require, consistent with study development under the Project Management Business Process. Subsequent revisions to this plan or its execution will require new written approval from this office. For further information on this issue please contact Lanora Wright, CESWD-PDS at (469) 487-7032.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Kendall P. Cox".

KENDALL P. Cox
Colonel, EN
Commanding

Encl

SABINE-NECHES WATERWAY PROJECT
Channel Improvement Project
Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana

Project Review Plan
Independent Technical Review and External Peer Review

1. PURPOSE

Pursuant to Engineering Circular (EC) 1105-2-408, "Peer Review of Decision Documents," Office of Management and Budget's "Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review," and the May 30, 2007 memorandum from Major General Don Riley, USACE Director of Civil Works, a Project Review Plan (PRP) is being developed.

This Project Review Plan presents the process for independent technical review (ITR) and external peer review (EPR) that has been or will be implemented as part of the Sabine-Neches Waterway (SNWW) Channel Improvement Project feasibility study. These processes are essential to improving the quality of the products that we produce.

2. APPLICABILITY

The document provides the PRP for the SNWW Channel Improvement Feasibility Study. It identifies the ITR and EPR process for all work conducted as part of the study, including in-house, non-Federal sponsor, and contract work efforts.

3. REFERENCES

EC 1105-2-408 "Peer Review of Decision Documents" dated May 31, 2005
ER 1105-2-100 "Planning Guidance Notebook," dated April 2000
Major General Riley Memorandum on Peer Review Process, dated May 30, 2007

4. GENERAL

The SNWW is an approximately 64-mile federally authorized and maintained waterway located in Jefferson and Orange Counties in southeast Texas and Cameron Parish, Louisiana. The Sabine Pass, Sabine Lake, and Sabine River together form part of the boundary between the states of Texas and Louisiana. The SNWW serves the ports of Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Orange, Texas.

The Port of Beaumont is the Nation's 3rd largest port by total tonnage, with the Port of Port Arthur being the Nation's 29th largest by total tonnage. The SNWW is the Nation's number one crude oil arrival port, importing 13% of US crude oil in 1998-2002. The waterway produces 10% of Nation's petrochemical needs and 6% of US total refinery capacity, serves

two DOE Strategic Petroleum Reserves, and is a Tier One Port by Department of Homeland Security. The Port of Beaumont is the Nation's busiest Strategic Port of Embarkation for military cargo.

In response to Congressional study authority, the reconnaissance phase of the study was initiated in September 1998. The reconnaissance investigations resulted in a finding that there was an interest in continuing the study into the feasibility phase. The feasibility study was initiated on March 6, 2000 and investigated the need to deepen and widen the SNWW to improve navigational efficiencies and improve safety along the waterway. The Sabine-Neches Navigation District is the non-Federal Sponsor (Sponsor). The study costs are shared equally between the Corps of Engineers and the Sponsor.

5. REVIEW REQUIREMENTS (Independent Technical Review)

As part of the Quality Control Plan for the SNWW Project, an ITR team was formed to perform periodic reviews of the feasibility study efforts, including the project assumptions, analyses, and calculations, as needed throughout the planning study process. The ITR is best conducted by experienced peers within the same discipline who are not directly involved with the development of the study or project being reviewed.

Pursuant to EC 1105-2-408, the District coordinated with the Deep Draft Navigation Planning Center of Expertise (Mobile District) and organized ITR efforts on the engineering appendix, draft reports and the various modeling efforts conducted throughout the study.

6. ITR REVIEW PROCESS

The ITR process was conducted throughout the study process. ITR involvement was performed prior to the Feasibility Scoping Meeting by OA Systems (Dave Bastian). Mr. Bastian periodically participated in PDT meetings and Interagency Coordination Team (ICT) meetings. Copies of Project Delivery Team (PDT) notes were provided to Mr. Bastian on a regular basis.

ITR of the draft Engineering Appendix was performed by the PCX for Deep Draft Navigation (Mobile District). Mr. Ken Claseman (ITR Point of Contact for the PCX) coordinated all ITR efforts. The ITR review was initiated in July 2006 using the Dr. Checks (Proj.Net) comment and response system. A conference call between the PCX ITR team and the PDT was conducted on September 6, 2006. ITR issues were resolved and the ITR completed in October 2006. ITR documentation will be posted on the Galveston District website, at <http://www.swg.usace.army.mil/pe-p/SNWW>.

The ITR of the draft documents (Draft Feasibility Report, Draft Environmental Impact Assessment, Engineering Appendix, and Economic Appendix) and was initiated in March 2007 with the Deep Draft Navigation PCX (Mr. Claseman was the ITR POC).

On March 21, 2007, the PDT presented an overview of the study and conducted breakout sessions with the ITR team to discuss technical details of the study. The ITR focused on the following:

- Review of the planning study process,
- Review of the methods of analysis and design of the alternatives and recommended plan,
- Compliance with program and NEPA requirements, and
- Completeness of study and support documentation

All ITR comments and responses were formalized in Dr. Checks. The draft feasibility report was modified based on the ITR comments and responses and the revised report was reviewed again by the ITR for completeness. The PCX is in the process of providing a formal ITR certification for this ITR effort. Upon completion of the ITR process, ITR documentation will be posted on the Galveston District website, at <http://www.swg.usace.army.mil/pep/SNWW>.

Due to comments raised by USACE-HQ on the use of the Wetland Value Assessment (WVA) Model which was used to determine the environmental impacts of the proposed project, a separate review (model assessment) will be conducted. A separate ITR certification will be provided by the PCX for this effort.

7. REVIEW COST

ITR on the draft Engineering Appendix and associated models	\$ 56,103
ITR by the PCX on the draft reports	\$ 71,825
EPR (\$248K for EPR, \$25K for PCX, and \$48K Battelle)	\$321,000

8. REVIEW SCHEDULE

TASK	Date Conducted / Proposed
Initial ICT Review	
PCX identifies ITR team	June 2006
Review of Preliminary Engineering Appendix	July – August 2006
ITR Teleconference	September 6, 2006
ITR completed	October 2006
ITR review of draft documents (before AFB)	
ITR Briefing of study/breakout sessions	March 21, 2007
ITR review of draft documents	March – May 2007
ITR certification	August 2007 (awaiting)
Participation in AFB meeting	May 30, 2007
Model Assessment of WVA Model	

Development of SOW for Contractor
Model ITR by Contractor (Louis-Berger)
ITR certification

Ongoing
2-6 months (TBD)
TBD

9. PROJECT RISK

The SNWW Project is a typical deepening and widening (channel improvement) project involving traditional methods of dredging, traditional placement of dredged material, and beneficial use of dredged material to restore, maintain, and nourish the Gulf shoreline. No novel methods were utilized, and no methods, models or conclusions are precedence setting or likely to change policy decisions. However, the project is a large-scale project (77 miles long) and many of the analyses performed were complex (even though the interpretation and implementation of the project is straightforward and uncomplicated). Based on the estimated project cost of over \$1 billion and the enormity of the project, EPR is being conducted. Project risks in a typical dredging project are generally minimal; however, due to the large scale of this project, implications of project risks are increased.

10. PROJECT REVIEW PLAN

The components of the PRP were developed pursuant to the requirements of EC 1105-2-408.

A. General Information

The decision documents that will undergo peer review are the Feasibility Report (including Economic Appendix), Environmental Impact Statement, and Engineering Appendix. The District PDT is listed below:

1. District Project Delivery Team

<u>NAME/ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
Byron Williams Project Manager CESWG-PM	409-766-3140	byron.d.williams@usace.army.mil
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Janelle Stokes Environmental Lead CESWG-PE-PR	409-766-3039	janelle.s.stokes@usace.army.mil

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Gloria Appell Economist CESWG-PE-PL	409-766-3134	gloria.r.appell@usace.army.mil
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Marilyn Uhrich Public Affair Officer CESWG-PAO	409-766-3994	marilyn.uhrich@usace.army.mil
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2. ITR Team – TBD

<u>NAME/ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
Kenneth Claseman PCX ITR Point-of-Contact CESAM-PD-FE	251-694-3840	kenneth.g.claseman@usace.army.mil
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B. Scientific Information

The majority of the final feasibility report (and supporting documentation) is anticipated to contain standard engineering, economic analyses, and information. Based on comments from USACE-HQ, the environmental modeling (WVA model) will undergo a separate model assessment to ensure the validity of the model and the accuracy of the estimated project impacts and mitigation requirements.

C. Timing

The ITR process began at the initiation of the feasibility study process and is projected to end once the Draft Report is acceptable for public and agency review. The EPR process was initiated after Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB) comments were incorporated into the Draft reports. The EPR process is expected to be completed prior to public and agency review of the Draft Report.

D. External Peer Review Process

Due to the estimated project cost (greater than \$50 million), the SNWW Channel Improvement Project will require EPR. The estimated timeline for the EPR is as follows:

<u>TASK</u>	<u>Date Conducted / Proposed</u>
Approval of Workplan	June 22, 2007
Initiation of EPR	June 29, 2007
EPR comments received	August 21, 2007
District response to EPR Comments	August 22, 2007

Battelle submits final EPR Report to USACE

September 21, 2007

E. Public Comment

The USACE and Sponsor developed a public involvement plan to be used during the feasibility phase. The goal of the public involvement plan was to ensure that USACE and the Sponsor were responsive to the needs and concerns of all stakeholders and to ensure public involvement through an open, interactive process.

Coordination with resource agencies was conducted primarily through ICT and technical working group meetings. Resource agencies and the study team met regularly throughout the study process. Over 30 workgroup meetings and 10 ICT meetings were held.

A pro-active outreach program was initiated to ensure that the public, resource agencies, industry, local government, and other interested parties were informed about the project and that any concerns were identified and addressed. The following public involvement activities are important to the study process:

<u>TASK</u>	<u>DATE CONDUCTED /PROPOSED</u>	
Public Scoping Meeting	May 2001	
Workgroup Meetings	December 5, 2006 January 8, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, and 28, 2002 Feb 5, 6, and 7, 2002	
Public Meetings	Louisiana	May 28, 2002
	Texas	May 29, 2002
ICT Meetings	throughout study process	
Public Meetings (Draft Report)	Texas	TBD
	Louisiana	TBD

F. Dissemination of Public Comments

Proceedings from all public meetings, minutes from ICT meetings or any other public involvement meetings will be posted on the SNWW Project website (<http://www.swg.usace.army.mil/pe-p/SNWW>).

G. Reviewers

Since the feasibility study is a navigation study to deepen and/or widen the existing channel, the recommended disciplines of ITR reviewers are:

1. Engineering (civil, hydrology and hydraulics)
2. Economics
3. Environmental
4. Real Estate
5. Planning

H. Review Disciplines

A brief description of the disciplines required for the ITR team are identified below:

1. Civil Engineering – the reviewer(s) should have extensive knowledge of engineering principles and guidance related to deep-draft navigation.
2. Hydrology and hydraulics – the reviewer(s) should have extensive knowledge of hydrodynamic-salinity, ship simulation, sediment, erosion and coastal shoreline models/studies.
3. Economics – the reviewer(s) should have a strong understanding of economic models or studies relative to deep draft navigation (e.g. multi-port, container and bulk cargo analyses).
4. Environmental – the reviewer(s) should have strong background in coastal ecosystems (e.g. hypersaline, lagoonal, wind-tidal flat system) and Texas environmental laws and regulations.
5. Real Estate – the reviewer(s) should have knowledge in reviewing RE Plans for feasibility studies (e.g. navigation servitude).
6. Planning – the reviewer(s) should have a strong knowledge in current planning policies and guidance related to feasibility studies.

I. EPR Selection

Army Research Office (ARO) awarded a task order to Battelle to identify reviewers. The task order to Battelle was awarded on May 15, 2007. Initiation of EPR was approved by HQ and documents were loaded on the ftp site on June 29, 2007. The EPR workplan and other documentation will be made available on the Galveston District website, at <http://www.swg.usace.army.mil/pe-p/SNWW>.