

FEATURED ARTICLES

Bringing the Other Social Effects Account Back into the Planning Process

By Susan Durden, Institute for Water Resources and Mark Dunning, Marstel Day Consulting

How are social connectedness, community social capital and community resiliency likely to change in the absence of a solution to a water resources issue? How are vulnerable populations likely to be affected?

How can such factors be included and considered in plan formulation and evaluation? How are project contributions to social well-being identified, described, evaluated and chosen? What tools are available to help?

These questions, and others, are being asked as the Corps explores bringing the Other Social Effects (OSE) account back into the Corps planning process. As most planners know, recent Federal water resources development efforts have primarily focused on enhancing the Nation's economic well-being as portrayed in the National Economic Development (NED) account. However, many other factors also influence the degree to which water resources solutions are judged as effective, acceptable, and fair. The Corps' emerging four accounts planning framework as presented in EC 1105-2-409 places emphasis on including a broad range of considerations in planning. In this framework factors from all four accounts (NED, EQ, RED, and OSE) are to be considered in project analysis and decision making.

However, as anyone experienced in Corps planning knows, there has not been a great deal of attention paid to the OSE account in many years. If OSE factors are to play a greater role in the planning process there are a host of analytical and implementation issues that need to be addressed. USACE,

Headquarters has tasked the Institute for Water Resources (IWR) with exploring these needs and providing tools to Corps planners to help integrate OSE into project planning. Two products have been produced and are available in the Planner's Library on the Planner's web. The first product <http://www.usace.army.mil/cw/cecw-cp/library/OSE_RED_WhitePaperAug06.pdf> is a white paper addressing OSE and Regional Economic Development. This paper includes lists of factors and tools used by other agencies for OSE evaluations. The second paper, Theoretical Underpinnings of the Other Social Effects Account, <<http://www.usace.army.mil/cw/cecw-cp/psa/psa.html>> provides grounding in the theoretical basis and a conceptual framework for considering social factors in planning.

Work is underway on an OSE Handbook presenting methods and procedures for using social factors in water resources planning. The handbook will address social considerations by business line and will present procedures for applying OSE factors in each phase of the Corps six-step planning process. Several case studies will be included to illustrate key points.

Get Involved!

The handbook is being prepared under the direction of Ms. Susan Durden of IWR. Dr. Mark Dunning, a sociologist who retired in 2004 after a long career with the Corps, is the principal investigator. Susan and Mark welcome contact from Corps planners who have specific projects or situations related to OSE that might provide useful illustrations for the handbook—and thank those who are already involved in this work. Suggestions for internal and external reviewers would also be helpful. Please contact us at: <md@marstel-day.com> or susan.e.durden@usace.army.mil

USACE Partnering in the Western States Watershed Study

By Gene Lilly, Steve Ashby, Hal Cardwell, and Margaret Johanning

In the Western States Watershed Study (one of five federally funded studies), the Western States Water Council, in collaboration with the Corps project delivery team, is assessing new innovations to augment water management tools used by agencies and stakeholder groups in the western region.

Two pilot demonstrations were identified to share product

development and technology transfer methods from the Engineer Research and Development Center, System Wide Water Resources Program (SWWRP), and the Institute for Water Resources (IWR) Shared Vision Planning research program.



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