



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
441 G STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

AUG 07 2012

CECW-CP

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Reissuance of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Environmental Operating Principles

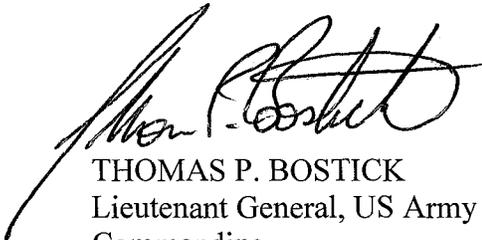
1. The seven Environmental Operating Principles (EOP) were introduced on 26 March 2002. These principles were designed to provide direction on how to better achieve stewardship of air, water, and land resources, and to demonstrate a positive relationship between management of these resources and the protection and improvement of a sustainable environment.
2. The Corps stepped up to the mark established in 2002 by establishing the Principles, but the mark has moved. In the last decade science has shown global changes, including climate and sea levels are changing faster than previously believed. Consequently, the Corps environmental vision must better (1) incorporate measures to reduce actions and inactions that may contribute individually or cumulatively to the factors causing global change, and (2) prepare Corps-managed Military and Civil Works infrastructure for adapting to global changes.
3. The Corps level of environmental commitment must expand and intensify. It is essential that each individual understand his or her responsibility to proactively implement the EOP as a key to the Corps mission. The understanding of these principles and implementation will require appropriate training of all staff. This does not require new training courses, but that all existing courses will include information on consideration and implementation of the EOP. Further, as regulations, circulars, and manuals are revised, consideration of EOP will be incorporated. Also the need for increased transparency in how government agencies incorporate the input of all stakeholders in its decision making processes has been stressed through the years and by the Administration. I fully support greater transparency and enhanced consideration of minority populations and low-income populations in Corps decision making.
4. The Army emphasizes sustainability, and the Corps has a major role as stewards of this Nation's environmental resources. Sustainability is the environmental legacy we pass on for future generations to improve upon and enhance.
5. I am revising and reissuing the EOP in a substantially more concise form and with more emphasis on proactively implementing these principles. The reissued EOP and explanations of each are presented in the enclosure.
6. These reissued EOP will soon replace Appendix A of ER 200-1-5. The revised EOP and the associated explanations will, to the extent legally and financially practical, guide all Corps management initiatives and business processes, and encompass the full spectrum of Corps

CECW-CP

SUBJECT: Reissuance of the Environmental Operating Principles

activities. This directive is intended only to improve the organization's internal management and the culture, it is not intended to, nor does it create any new substantive or procedural authority or legal responsibility, nor does it supplant any law, statute, codified regulation, or Executive Order. However, I am holding my senior leaders accountable to support the intent of these principles. I expect all MSC Commanders and staff to be accountable for delivering the improvements outlined in the revised EOP.

Encl
Environmental Operating Principles II



THOMAS P. BOSTICK
Lieutenant General, US Army
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

DCG-CEO
DCG-MIO
DCG-RA
CDR, LRD
CDR, MVD
CDR, NAD
CDR, NWD
CDR, POD
CDR, SAD
CDR, SPD
CDR, SWD
CDR, 249TH EN BN
CRU
HQ Staff Principals
DIR, LABS and Centers

ENVIRONMENTAL OPERATING PRINCIPLES II

PREAMBLE

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Environmental Operating Principles (EOP) were developed to ensure that Corps missions include totally integrated sustainable environmental practices. The Principles provided corporate direction to ensure the workforce recognized the Corps role in, and responsibility for, sustainable use, stewardship, and restoration of natural resources across the Nation and, through the international reach of our support missions. Since the Environmental Operating Principles were introduced in 2002 they have instilled environmental stewardship across business practices – from recycling and reduced energy use at Corps and customer facilities to a fuller consideration of the environmental impacts of Corps actions and meaningful collaboration within the larger environmental community.

The concepts embedded in the original Principles remain vital to the success of Corps and its missions. However, as the Nation's resource challenges and priorities have evolved, the Corps has responded by close examination and refinement of work processes and operating practices. This self-examination includes how the Corps considers environmental issues in all aspects of the corporate enterprise. In particular, the strong emphasis on sustainability must be translated into everyday actions that have an effect on the environmental conditions of today, as well as the uncertainties and risks of the future. These challenges are complex, ranging from global trends such as increasing and competing demands for water and energy, climate and sea level change, and declining biodiversity; to localized manifestations of these issues in extreme weather events, the spread of invasive species, and demographic shifts. Accordingly, the Corps is re-invigorating commitment to the Environmental Operating Principles in light of this changing context.

The Environmental Operating Principles relate to the human environment and apply to all aspects of business and operations. They apply across Military Programs, Civil Works, Research and Development, and across the Corps. The EOP require a recognition and acceptance of individual responsibility – from senior leaders to the newest team members. Re-committing to these principles and our environmental stewardship will lead to more efficient and effective solutions, and will enable the Corps to further leverage resources through collaboration. This is essential for successful integrated resources management, restoration of the environment and sustainable and energy efficient approaches to all Corps mission areas. It is also an essential component of the Corps' risk management in decision making, allowing the organization to offset uncertainty by building flexibility into the management and construction of our infrastructure. The re-energized Environmental Operating Principles are:

1. Foster sustainability as a way of life throughout the organization.
2. Proactively consider environmental consequences of all Corps activities and act accordingly.
3. Create mutually supporting economic and environmentally sustainable solutions.

4. Continue to meet our corporate responsibility and accountability under the law for activities undertaken by the Corps which may impact human and natural environments.

5. Consider the environment in employing a risk management and systems approach throughout life cycles of projects and programs.

6. Leverage scientific, economic, and social knowledge to understand the environmental context and effects of Corps actions in a collaborative manner.

7. Employ an open, transparent process that respects views of individuals and groups interested in Corps activities.

The following explanations of each PRINCIPLE are provided to synchronize Corps communications on the EOP and to suggest ways to evaluate the effectiveness of these Principles in guiding Corps practices. The latter may be tailored to better mesh with specific work programs across the Corps' diverse mission areas.

ENVIRONMENTAL OPERATING PRINCIPLES II – EXPLANATIONS

* Throughout these PRINCIPLES the word “Environment” shall mean the holistic environment, including both natural and human needs as these Principles guide Corps of Engineers efforts to foster and promote the general welfare, to create and maintain ecological and physical conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans.

1. Foster sustainability as a way of life throughout the organization.

The Corps must continue to achieve sustainability by making it a way of life which entails the concept of stewardship, wise management, and responsible use of natural resources. It requires that biological systems remain diverse and productive, that we reduce energy consumption and water usage, and that we promote reuse and recycling in construction and operations. Sustainability must be incorporated in all Corps activities to the extent feasible. It has ecological, economic, and social dimensions. Protecting and restoring natural systems and the environment while encouraging productive sustainable economic development that improves the quality of life is our goal, and it applies to all missions, and administrative functions.

Promoting sustainability needs to be both a corporate and individual goal. Its concepts need to be integrated at all organizational levels, from senior leaders to the newest team members. We need to identify more sustainable solutions in our planning processes and decision documents. When needed, training in sustainable practices may be required, whether it be for commanders and senior leaders or team members, and should be incorporated in existing courses. This is not a requirement for development of new training courses, but a requirement that all existing courses include appropriate information on consideration and implementation of the EOP.

2. Proactively consider environmental consequences of all Corps activities and act accordingly.

All Corps entities will exert leadership on environmental issues relevant to projects and programs and engage others early and often. All actions undertaken by the Corps will be considered in their full context incorporating lessons learned from similar actions, in order to ensure that Corps activities avoid adverse environmental consequences, and implement appropriate mitigation where avoidance is not practicable. Operational decision making will continually account for changing environmental conditions or context.

Planning and programming without compromising the environment must be timely, concise, and cost effective. Decision documents will clearly show how effects of a candidate action have been considered. Recommendations that minimize negative environmental effects or enhance positive ones should be supported.

3. Create mutually supporting economic and environmentally sustainable solutions.

Corps employees will endeavor daily to develop options for action that not only achieve their stated mission goal, but also protect the environment and our quality of life. Humans benefit from the range of vital products and processes provided by healthy ecosystems and environments. These products ranging from food and habitat to purification and recreation nourishment are commonly termed “ecosystem services” which need to be evaluated as environmental benefits or costs in Corps decisions. Protecting and restoring natural systems while encouraging productive economic development that improves the quality of life is our goal.

The Corps has major roles as stewards of the Nation’s land and aquatic resources and in balancing all decisions to protect those resources. We also have a mission to restore developed areas that are no longer used and degraded ecosystems, making both available to the public for beneficial use. This Principle takes the goal of achieving environmental sustainability in all Corps missions a step further by pointing the way towards procedures that will enable us to achieve balance between human activities, and restore sustainable natural ecosystems.

Decisions that affect natural systems or processes either as benefits or costs should be accounted for in appropriate monetary and non-monetary metrics. We must employ green engineering design, minimizing waste and maximizing energy efficiency, appropriately sized for the application and considered for the entire life cycle of the project. Our success is highlighted when our actions avoid environmental conflicts and when we develop multipurpose projects with ancillary benefits.

With these enhanced expectations, we can improve the ways projects and activities can achieve traditional services, such as flood control, navigation, and military activities, in an environmentally sustainable manner.

4. Continue to meet our corporate responsibility and accountability under the law for activities undertaken by the Corps which may impact human and natural environments.

Successful projects require effective, comprehensive planning using the full breadth of the vertical/horizontal team. All Corps entities must identify potential environmental concerns when projects/programs are at the conceptual stage and throughout their operational life, engaging counsel and subject matter experts within the organization. In order to avoid delays, an assessment of compliance with environmental requirements must be conducted as early in our planning processes as practicable. Engagement with interagency teams will better anticipate problems and promote collaboration. Coordinate with partners and stakeholders as early as feasible.

Legal challenges on environmental issues must be monitored and lessons learned incorporated in future actions. Employ all available tools to avoid environmental conflict. Document the results of their application and share throughout the enterprise.

5. Consider the environment in employing a risk management and systems approach throughout life cycles of projects and programs.

The use of conceptual models is fundamental to identifying all sources of risk. Analysis should focus on the areas of risk most relevant to the problem at hand. Risk reduction should not be accomplished by designing for overcapacity or overdesign. Design of risk reduction measures should consider the areas of relevant risk and utilize adaptive management as appropriate through the life cycle process. Risk assessments need to address both human and environmental health. Unpredictability of natural and manmade events dictates that we avoid the unwise use of floodplains and vulnerable coastal areas when taken in a systems context. When considering projects, areas with high ecological value and high frequency flood loss should be a focus for restoration or management as natural areas.

Communicating risk to the public for all projects we undertake is a skill which we must master and at which we must excel. We must explicitly describe risks and candidly report the concerns.

6. Leverage scientific, economic, and social knowledge to understand the environmental context and effects of Corps actions in a collaborative manner.

The Corps' experienced workforce and laboratories capabilities position the Corps to be a learning organization, embracing new and innovative ideas from both within the organization and from other agencies to understand the environmental context and complexity of its actions. The best available science, practices, analyses, and tools will be utilized and this will require outreach by the centers of expertise to elsewhere in government and the private sector. The Corps will reach inward to prioritize within the Research and Development Program and other areas to identify and fill gaps in the knowledge base and develop methods to sustain a healthy environment.

The Corps will implement and refine the timely, concise, and cost-effective planning initiative of the Civil Works program, and comparable initiatives in other mission areas. This will require scaling the level of analysis to be conducted to better match the significance of the decision. These efforts will require effective training, including collaborative training with other agencies, cross-training teams to facilitate use of datasets developed by other agencies, increased accessibility to cross-training programs within the vertical and horizontal teams. Utilizing uniform data standards will both serve to assist and measure the leveraging of scientific, economic, and social knowledge bases.

7. Employ an open, transparent process that respects views of individuals, groups, and businesses interested in and affected by Corps activities.

Today, the Corps is called by the nation to deal with complex problems characterized by competing economic and environmental factors and stakeholders with diverse opinions as to how to resolve those competing demands. The Corps will consider ethnic, cultural, and economic values as factors of the human environment as we design our projects and consider how each alternative affects the human environment as well as natural habitat.

The Corps will to the extent practicable make maximum effective use of transparency in scoping and planning actions, which will help to elicit new insights from individuals and diverse stakeholder groups. This will ensure that all Corps decisions on resource management gives appropriate consideration of all interested individuals, groups including minority populations and low income populations, and business. This principle recognizes and emphasizes that all individuals, groups, and businesses, as members of the public, are partners with the Corps. Encouraging dialogue will yield the diversity of opinions that can provide fertile grounds for innovation.

The Corps will make proactive use of innovative public involvement techniques to enhance stakeholder participation and gather the required public comments in response to public notices. The Corps will use current and developing technology including web and social-based media. The Corps will actively learn from Customer Surveys, Restoration Advisory Boards, industry examples, and engaging stakeholders in public sessions.