DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
CIVIL WORKS
108 ARMY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20310-0108

MAR 12 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations

SUBJECT: Support to Planning Centers of Expertise

In 2003, the Corps of Engineers designated six national Planning Centers of Expertise and identified their roles in support of plan formulation and complex technical evaluations associated with plan formulation. These Planning Centers of Expertise provide specialized planning talent to enhance and supplement the capabilities of the districts. In accordance with Section 2033(e) of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army re-affirms the establishment of the Planning Centers of Expertise to provide specialized planning assistance to Corps' districts in the development of water resources projects which support the Civil Works mission.

Each of the six Planning Centers of Expertise is critical to the Corps' planning capability and to the success of the independent peer review described in Section 2034 of WRDA 2007. I see the Centers in an expanded review role to support both agency technical review and the independent external review process for decision documents. The Centers should also participate in the research and development program to identify and develop new scientific, engineering and economic methods or models, as well as metrics that will support Corps' decision making and certification of models with national application. The Centers should also coordinate with the Engineering, Real Estate, and Operations Communities of Practice to ensure establishment of fully integrated teams in fulfilling their roles to support the districts. Additionally, each Center would need to maintain a close working relationship with the Walla Walla District Cost Estimating Directory of Expertise.

Since their inception six years ago, the Centers have struggled with insufficient resources, which severely limit their ability to reach their full potential as first envisioned. To accelerate progress in the maturation of the Planning Centers and to provide sustainability, I encourage the Corps of Engineers to establish full time positions at the Centers to optimally support the expected work load. Based on my review of the March 2008, 5-year sustainability plans of the Centers, on average, one to four full time positions would provide a basic level of service. You should develop a plan for funding in the FY 2011 Budget and beyond, which will implement this vision of the expected role and robustness of the Planning Centers of Expertise. Your plan should identify both the amount of funding recommended and the account and line item under which the Centers would be funded. My initial assessment is that a funding level of $3.5 million

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would be appropriate for FY 2011. Your funding plan and recommendations should be provided to this office before or during formulation of the Army's FY 2011 budget recommendations for Civil Works.

Leadership support to the Planning Centers of Expertise is a high priority of mine to ensure success in producing the highest quality, transparent and defensible decision documents that lead to wise Federal investments in the Nation's water resources infrastructure. Be assured that my office will continue to work with you to ensure their success and their role in further strengthening the Corps' planning capability.

I would appreciate an update briefing on how each of the Centers is currently operating and an assessment of their capabilities, needed improvements, and further funding requirements. With respect to capability, I am particularly interested in understanding the experience level of each Center, its structure, and the training needs of its staff. Please contact Mr. Doug Lamont to schedule this briefing.

John Paul Woodley, Jr.

John Paul Woodley, Jr.
Assistant Secretary of the Army
(Civil Works)

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