

## **FY 2000 TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CONFERENCES**

### **AFTER ACTION REVIEW**

#### **Conference on Effectively Restoring Ecosystems**

**St. Louis, Missouri**

**22-24 August 2000**

**PROPONENT(S):** CECW-P

**POINT(S) OF CONTACT:** Cheryl A. Smith, Harry E. Kitch

**TOTAL TDY USACE ATTENDEE MANDAYS (AUTHORIZED/ACTUAL):** 420 mandays (140 people for 3 days) were authorized. A total of 181 people attended all or a portion of the conference. This number includes guest speakers, a number of individuals from St. Louis District who were in and out, and other Corps employees in St. Louis on business for other purposes who took advantage of the opportunity to stop in for portions of the conference. Actual mandays is estimated at 406.

**CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES:** This conference combined Environmental Planners with Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Managers. "Effectively Restoring Ecosystems" was the theme identified as representing a topic of common interest. The focus, therefore, was on the Civil Works Ecosystem Restoration Mission, the goal of which is to restore degraded ecosystem functions to a less degraded condition. CAP authorities, Section 1135 of WRDA '86 and Section 206 of WRDA '96, contribute to this goal. Objectives of the conference were to enhance mission and technical capabilities and promote outreach activities.

Prior to establishing an agenda, a topic survey was conducted. MSCs and Districts identified issues that they view as pressing. Topics related to plan formulation had evaluation, partnerships with other Federal agencies, needs of the local sponsors, capabilities (including program developments and initiatives) and the sharing of innovations were incorporated into the agenda, a copy of which is attached.

#### **CONFERENCE REPORT:**

Attendees were requested to provide feedback concerning what went well for them and what did not go so well as well as to make recommendations for future conferences. Comments are summarized into the following categories:

Facilities/Logistics: The location and facilities, in general, were good. The hotel is located in an area that offers a diversity of evening activities and attendees appreciated the extra-curricular activities organized by the District and the Hotel. The main conference room was good, although no pens or paper were provided. The breakout rooms were problematic. The ones provided were distant from the main room and they changed from one day to the next. The exhibit hall was at the opposite end of the conference center from the main room and was extremely difficult to find. Logistics

were complicated by the presence of a Defense conference that included high security. Some corridors were blocked and security agents were not all informed concerning our conference. A number of our attendees were prohibited from going to and from the Exhibit Hall. The lack of coffee and snacks was noted as a “not so well”.

Agenda/Organization: The organization and execution was generally viewed as something that went well. The 30-minute breaks and 90-minute lunch hours were appreciated as this provided sufficient time for people to coordinate with their home offices and to follow up on session topics with informal, one on one discussions. The agenda may have been too full. The number of breakout sessions made it difficult for attendees to attend everything that was of interest to them. Some of the topics needed more time than that allotted. Insufficient time was allotted to the keynote speakers.

Technical Program/Speakers: The content was generally viewed as good and informative; providing a good balance of speakers and topics. The diversity of speakers topped the list as the best aspect. It was noted that speakers included Corps team members from all levels, District, Division, Headquarters and Laboratories, and representatives from other agencies and organizations. In particular, the audience appreciated hearing from MG Van Winkle and Michael Davis and expressed an interest in having more time allocated for these sessions. Some expressed the sentiment that not enough time was spent on CAP issues and that having technical environmental and CAP management issues was not a good mix. Sessions could have been improved with fewer “lectures” and more real exchange or questions.

## **LESSONS LEARNED :**

Each session was to have a summary prepared for posting on the Internet. They include background information (session number, topic, name of moderator and recorder, list of panelists, objective and description) and highlights, which include lessons learned. Individual presentations were also collected for posting. All available summaries and presentations are posted on the Planning and Policy website. To access, go to <http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/> and click on “Planning” in the left column.

Several sessions were organized to provide conference participants with an opportunity to raise issues and make suggestions. Issues of top priority were related to:

- Environmental Planner capability
- Section 206 and 1135 projects
- Monitoring after construction
- Non-standard estates
- Hydrologics and hydraulics input
- Cumulative effects
- CAP funding for new starts
- Consultation with Tribes

Additional issues and recommendations were related to the following topics:

- Authorities
- Interdisciplinary Teams

- Study Scope
- Formulation/Evaluation
- Environmental Compliance
- Coordination and Review
- Project Cooperation Agreements (PCAs)
- Partnerships
- Contracting
- Project Implementation
- Real Estate
- Innovations
- Outreach

Comments and recommendations for future conferences included:

- Good to have conferences (at a minimum) at least once every 2 years to share ideas.
- Would be good (next time) to have more open discussions.
- Next time have a session on contracting methods, and a (related) session on construction methods and innovations.
- More information on upcoming WRDA's and what are the good things and what are the bad things.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Information: How they do business.
- Need more planners making presentations on their projects, successes/failures.
- Poster sessions would also be good.
- Examples of restoration techniques (this could be one session by itself).

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**US Army Corps of Engineers  
Conference on Effectively Restoring Ecosystems  
St. Louis, Missouri  
22-24 August 2000  
FINAL Agenda**

**Tuesday, 22 August 2000:**

- 0730 – Registration (on-going each day)
- 0800 – 0830 Opening
- 0830 – 0930 Innovations in the Continuing Authorities Program – Part I
- 0930 – 1000 Break
- 1000 – 1130 Planning and Policy Updates
- 1130 – 1300 Lunch
- 1300 – 1430 Breakout sessions: 1
  - A: Case Studies – Watersheds
  - B: Environmental Benefits

- C: Real Estate Issues
- D: ERDC Tools Overview
- 1430 – 1500 Break
- 1500 – 1630 Breakout sessions: 2
  - A: Case Studies – Salt Marshes
  - B: Cumulative Effects
  - C: Project Cooperation Agreements
  - D: IWR Tools Overview
- 1630 Adjourn
- 1800 Welcome Reception

**Wednesday, 23 August 2000:**

- 0800 – 0830 Civil Works Environmental Mission
  - MG Hans Van Winkle, Deputy Commanding General for Civil Works
- 0830 – 0945 Keynote Panel: Effectively Restoring Ecosystems
  - James F. Johnson, Chief, Planning and Policy Division
  - Benjamin N. Tuggle, Chief, Division of Habitat Conservation, USFWS
  - Stephen E. Adair, Director of Conservation Programs, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
- 0945 – 1015 Break
- 1015 – 1130 Watershed Efforts with the Environmental Protection Agency
  - Phil Oshida/USEPA, Headquarters
  - Jack Generaux/USEPA, Region VII
  - Susan Branning/USEPA, Region VI
- 1130 – 1300 Lunch
- 1300 – 1400 Breakout Sessions: 3
  - A: Monitoring and Adaptive Management
  - B: Endangered Species
  - C: Case Studies – Miscellaneous
- 1400 – 1415 Break
- 1415 – 1515 Breakout Sessions: 4
  - A: Technical and Policy Review
  - B: Case Studies – Associated with Initiatives
  - C: Case Studies – Stream Restoration
- 1515 – 1530 Break
- 1530 – 1700 Breakout Sessions: 5
  - A: Environmental Planning Needs
  - B: CAP Managers Issues
- 1700 Adjourn
- 1900 Cardinals Baseball

**Thursday, 24 August 2000**

- 0800 – 0810 Administrative Announcements
- 0810 – 0900 Army National Perspective on Effectively Restoring Ecosystems
  - Michael Davis, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (Policy and Legislation)

- 0900 – 1000 Building What We Plan  
1000 – 1030 Break  
1030 – 1145 Stakeholder Panel
- Patrick A. Malone, Manager, Interagency Wetland Program, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
  - F. Allen Carter, Senior Fisheries Biologist, Office of the Director, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
  - K. Doug Blodgett, Great Rivers Area Director, The Nature Conservancy
  - Cheree Peterson, Assistant Director for Water, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- 1145 – 1315 Lunch  
1315 – 1430 Partnering
- Panel includes guest speaker: Colonel George Schlossenagle, Military Liaison, Coastal America
- 1430 – 1500 Break  
1500 – 1600 Initiatives  
1600 – 1630 Innovations in the Continuing Authorities Program – Part II  
1630 – 1700 Wrap-up  
1700 Adjourn