

Peer Review Plan

Upper Ohio River, Emsworth, Dashields, and Montgomery (EDM) Feasibility Study

March 2007

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1.0 Introduction

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Great Lakes and Ohio River Division conducted a navigation system study of the 19 existing locks on the Ohio River from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Cairo, Illinois. The study was initiated in 1992 and is referred to as the Ohio River Mainstem System Study (ORMSS). ORMSS was conducted by a team of specialists comprised of members from Louisville, Huntington, Nashville and Pittsburgh districts with significant contributions from academic institutions, other federal and state agencies, and consulting firms.

One product of this system study was a System Investment Plan (SIP), which identified navigation investment priorities ranging from aggressive maintenance to major rehabilitations to new lock construction. Though this study made no specific recommendations for authorizations, it did indicate where feasibility studies should be pursued. The Upper Ohio River locks were identified as a priority for feasibility study.

The Upper Ohio River, defined as Emsworth, Dashields, and Montgomery (EDM) locks and dams, are the first three navigation projects on the upper Ohio River and comprise three of the four remaining locks and dams built prior to World War II. *The Upper Ohio River, EDM, Navigation Improvement Project – Feasibility Study* is a fiscal year 2003 congressional directive.

The Peer Review Plan (PRP) presented below is a collaborative product of the project delivery team (PDT) and the USACE Planning Center of Expertise for Inland Navigation (PCXIN). The PCXIN shall manage the PRP, which for this study includes both an Independent Technical Review (ITR) and an External Peer Review (EPR).

2.0 The Peer Review Plan

Each of the following paragraphs (a. through j.) correspond to the guidance provided in paragraphs 6.a. through j. of Engineering Circular 1105-2-408:

a. *The Upper Ohio River, EDM, Navigation Improvement Project – Feasibility Study* shall be the decision document. The primary purpose of the feasibility study is to investigate navigation improvement opportunities for the upper three locks and dams. They are the oldest on the Ohio River. The study shall address structural and operational condition, adequacy of capacity, environmental issues, and the corresponding economic benefits and costs of various alternative improvement plans. The work involves plan formulation, conceptual engineering analysis, environmental and cultural considerations, economic analysis, and preparation of a real estate plan.

More information on the Upper Ohio study and points of contact are available at the study website: http://www.lrp.usace.army.mil/pm/upper_ohio.htm. Additional information on Peer Review is available at the US Army Corps of Engineers, Planning Center of Expertise for Inland Navigation (PCXIN) website: <http://inlandwaterways.lrh.usace.army.mil/>.

b. The feasibility study will use tools and data only recently developed as part of the Navigation Economic Technologies (NETS) program and tools still under development by the University of Tennessee. This NETS and University of Tennessee work represents significant new scientific information and tools. These tools and data are being used to evaluate and screen plans that could recommend hundreds of millions of dollars of navigation efficiency improvements. For these reasons, the feasibility study shall be subjected to both an EPR and an ITR.

c. Individual members of the ITR team shall review technical products as they are completed, submitting comments to the PDT, receiving responses from the PDT, and resolving and certifying individual products, including the draft feasibility report. The EPR Panel shall review all technical documents, providing comments and receiving PDT responses; however, individual technical products shall not be certified. The EPR Panel will commence their review concurrently with ITR of the Feasibility Scoping Meeting documentation currently scheduled for May 2007. The final EPR will be conducted concurrently with the public review of the draft feasibility study report. Following review of the draft feasibility study report, the EPR panel members shall prepare an individual letter report with certification and then oversee and approve the preparation of an executive summary EPR report.

d. As indicated in the paragraph above, an EPR shall be conducted with a panel.

e. There are several mechanisms in place for Public input and review. During the development of the report, the study team will schedule meetings with other Federal agencies, state agencies and interested stakeholders. As currently planned, a series of public meetings would be held after the draft feasibility report is available for public review and comment.

f. The EPR Panel will be provided with comments received during the public review period for the draft feasibility report. It is also anticipated that a minimum of two sessions will be held for the PDT to brief the EPR panel, relevant members of the ITR team, and interested stakeholders. These briefings will include but not be limited to information on traffic forecasts and project condition, and on shipper response and microscopic landside impact modeling. Both the Peer Review team and stakeholders may ask questions and offer comments during these sessions.

g. The current plan is to have five technical experts on the EPR Panel. The ITR team currently is comprised of technical experts within and outside the Corps. The size of ITR team has not been finalized and will be adjusted as necessary.

h. The EPR panel will require the following disciplines: a rail transportation specialist, a transportation economist, an energy sector expert, a structural engineer, a risk

and reliability engineer and an environmental specialist. The ITR team shall be comprised of individuals with experience in waterway transportation modeling, transportation rate analysis, waterway traffic demand forecasting, NED financial analysis, cost estimating, design and reliability engineering, environmental resource evaluation, NEPA compliance, cumulative effects assessments, and waterway resource plan formulation. The following are members of the External Peer Review Panel:

Christopher Hendrickson, Ph.D., Carnegie Mellon University
Ron Preston, self employed
Gregory Baecher, Ph.D., University of Maryland
Max Stull, self employed
Jerry Fruin, Ph.D., University of Minnesota

i. EPR panel members will be nominated by state agencies, other federal agencies, interested stakeholders, and the PCXIN. The PCXIN and the PDT shall screen nominees for independence and availability before making selections.

j. Member nominations for the EPR are described in the paragraph above. The ITR team members shall be selected by the PCXIN. In all cases, the PCXIN is responsible for the conduct of the Peer Review.