

PEER REVIEW PLAN
STL RIVERFRONT
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

1. Purpose and Requirements.

a. This document outlines the peer review plan for the Saint Louis North Riverfront Feasibility Report. EC 1105-2-408 dated 31 May 2005 “Peer Review of Decision Documents” 1) establishes procedures to ensure the quality and credibility of Corps decision documents by adjusting and supplementing the review process and 2) requires that documents have a peer review plan. The Circular applies to all feasibility studies and reports and any other reports that lead to decision documents that require authorization by Congress. This Feasibility Report will lead to Congressional Authorization and is therefore covered by the Circular.

b. The Circular outlines the requirement of the two review approaches (independent technical review (ITR) and external peer review (EPR)) and provides guidance on Corps Planning Centers of Expertise (PCX) involvement in the approaches. This document addresses review of the decision document as it pertains to both approaches and planning coordination with the appropriate Center.

(1) ITR. Districts are responsible for reviewing the technical aspects of the decision documents through the ITR approach. ITR is a critical examination by a qualified team that was not involved in the day-to-day technical work that supports the decision document. ITR is intended to confirm that such work was done in accordance with clearly established professional principles, practices, codes, and criteria. In addition to technical review, documents should also be reviewed for their compliance with laws and policy. The Circular also requires that DrChecks (<https://www.projnet.org/projnet/>) be used to document all ITR comments, responses, and associated resolution accomplished.

(2) EPR. The Circular added external peer review to the existing Corps review process. This approach does not replace the standard ITR process. The external peer review approach applies in special cases where the magnitude and risk of the project are such that a critical examination by a qualified person outside the Corps is necessary. EPR can also be used where the information is based on novel methods, presents complex interpretation challenges, contains precedent-setting methods or models, or is likely to affect policy decisions that have a significant impact. The degree of independence required for technical review increases as the project magnitude and project risk increase.

(a) Projects with low magnitude and low risk may use a routine ITR.

(b) Projects with either high magnitude/low risk or low magnitude/high risk would require both Corps and outside reviewers on the ITR team to address the portions of the project that cause the project to rate high on the magnitude or risk scale.

(c) Projects with high magnitude and high risk require a routine ITR as well as an EPR.

(3) PCX Coordination. The Circular outlines PCX coordination in conjunction with preparation of the review plan. Districts should prepare the plans in coordination with the appropriate PCX. The Corps PCX are responsible for the accomplishment and quality of ITR and EPR for decision documents covered by the Circular. Centers may conduct the review or manage the review to be conducted by others. Reviews will be assigned to the appropriate Center based on business programs. The Circular outlines alternative procedures to apply to decision documents. Each Center is required to post review plans to its website every three months as well as links to any reports that have been made public. The Office of Water Policy Review (OWPR) will consolidate the lists of all review plans and establish a mechanism for soliciting public feedback on the review plans.

2. **Project Description.**

a. Decision Document. The purpose of the decision document entitled Saint Louis North Riverfront Feasibility Report is to present the results of a feasibility study undertaken to restore native trees and prairie grasses along the St. Louis Riverfront. The study of the St. Louis Riverfront was authorized by the Resolution of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in the U.S. House of Representatives on 21 June 2000. The feasibility phase of this project is cost shared 50/50 with the project sponsor, the Great Rivers Greenway. This report provides planning, engineering, and implementation details of the recommended restoration plan to allow final design and construction to proceed subsequent to the approval of the plan.

b. General Site Description. The project area extends from the Arch in downtown St. Louis, north to interstate 270 along the Mississippi River Trail. The focus of the study is on lands that are in public ownership riverside of the flood protection system.

c. Project Scope. The proposed project area is approximately 10.5 miles long. The total project cost is estimated to be between \$5 million and \$10 million.

d. Product Delivery Team. The product delivery team (PDT) is comprised of those individuals directly involved in the development of the decision document. Contact information and disciplines are listed below.

| | | | |
|---------|---|--------|---------|
| REMOVED | Planning and Project Development Branch | PM-F | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | Cost Engineering | ED-DCE | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | Civil Engineering | ED-DCC | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | Geotechnical Engineering | ED-GF | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | Hydraulic Engineering | ED-HE | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | Environmental Quality | ED-HQ | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | NEPA documentation | PM-E | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | Economics | PM-FE | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | Cultural | ED-Z | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | Programs Management | PM-P | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | Real Estate Acquisition | RE-A | REMOVED |
| REMOVED | Real Estate Appraisal | RE-E | REMOVED |

f. Planning Models. The project will use the Aquatic Habitat Appraisal Guide (AHAG) and the Wildlife Habitat Appraisal Guide (WHAG) to evaluate benefits. The certification of these models is still pending. These models are commonly used for assessing potential project benefits on most of the ecosystem restoration projects. Most teams using these models are comprised of a variety of individuals including the Corps, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and state agencies.

f. Vertical Team. The Vertical Team includes MVS management, the MVD District Support Team (DST) and HQ MVD Review Integration Team (RIT) staff as well as members of the Planning of Community of Practice (PCoP). The District Planning Chief is **REMOVED FOR WEB POSTING**. DST manager for this project is **REMOVED FOR WEB POSTING**. The RIT manager is **REMOVED FOR WEB POSTING**. The MVD PCoP contact is **REMOVED FOR WEB POSTING**.

3. ITR Plan. As outlined above in paragraph 1.b. (1), the District is responsible for ensuring adequate technical review of decision documents. The responsible PDT District of this decision document is St. Louis District. The ITR District will be identified by the PDT in conjunction with PCX.

a. General. An ITR Manager shall be designated for the ITR process. The ITR Manager is responsible for providing information necessary for setting up the review, communicating with the Study Manager, providing a summary of critical review comments, collecting grammatical and editorial comments from the ITR team (ITRT), ensuring that the ITRT has adequate funding to perform the review, facilitating the

resolution of the comments, and certifying that the ITR has been conducted and resolved in accordance with policy. The ITR Manager shall be employed outside of MVD and its districts.

b. Team. The ITRT (not yet selected) will be comprised of individuals that have not been involved in the development of the decision document and will be chosen based on expertise, experience, and/or skills. The members will roughly mirror the composition of the PDT. The ITR team member for cost engineering will be obtained through the Walla Walla District. The other ITRT members and their areas of expertise are:

| First | Last | Discipline | Phone | Email |
|-------|------|--------------------------------|-------|--|
| | | ITR Manager/plan formulation | | @usace.army.mil |
| | | Civil design | | @usace.army.mil |
| | | Biology/NEPA | | @usace.army.mil |
| | | Hydraulics/hydrology | | @usace.army.mil |
| | | Socio-economics | | @usace.army.mil |
| | | Cost engineering (Walla Walla) | | @nww.usace.army.mil |
| | | Real estate/Lands | | @usace.army.mil |
| | | Cultural resources | | @usace.army.mil |
| | | Geotechnical engineering | | @usace.army.mil |

c. Communication. The communication plan for the ITR is as follows:

(1) The team will use DrChecks to document the ITR process. The Study Manager will facilitate the creation of a project portfolio in the system to allow access by all PDT and ITRT members. An electronic version of the draft report and appendices in Word format shall be posted at: <ftp://ftp.usace.army.mil/pub/> at least one business day prior to the start of the comment period.

(2) The PDT shall send each ITRT member one hard copy (with color pages as applicable) of the draft report and appendices such that the copies are received at least one business day prior to the start of the comment period.

(3) The PDT shall host an ITR kick-off meeting virtually to orient the ITRT during the first week of the comment period. If funds are not available for an on-site meeting, the PDT shall provide a presentation about the project, including photos of the site, for the team.

(4) The Study Manager shall inform the ITR manager when all responses have been entered into DrChecks and conduct an in progress review to summarize comment responses.

(5). A revised electronic version of the report and appendices with comments incorporated shall be posted at <ftp://ftp.usace.army.mil/pub/> for use during back checking of the comments.

(6) Team members shall contact ITRT members or leader as appropriate to seek clarification of a comment's intent or provide clarification of information in the report. Discussions shall occur outside of DrChecks but a summary of discussions may be provided in the system.

(7) Reviewers will be encouraged to contact PDT members directly via email or phone to clarify any confusion. DrChecks shall not be used to post questions needed for clarification.

(8) The ITRT, PDT, and vertical team shall conduct an after action review (AAR) no later than two weeks after the policy guidance memo is received.

d. Funding.

(1) The PDT district shall provide labor funding by cross charge labor codes. Funding for travel, if needed, will be provided through government order. The Study Manager will work with the ITR manager to ensure that adequate funding is available and is commensurate with the level of review needed. The current cost estimate for this review is between \$15,000 and \$20,000. Any funding shortages will be negotiated on a case by case basis and in advance of a negative charge occurring.

(2) The ITR manager shall provide organization codes for each team members and a responsible financial point of contact (CEFMS responsible employee) for creation of labor codes.

(3) Reviewers shall monitor individual labor code balances and alert the ITRT Study Manager to any possible funding shortages.

e. Timing and Schedule.

(1) The pre-AFB ITR is tentatively scheduled for July 2008 and will utilize the ITR team identified in Section 3b. above. The AFB is tentatively scheduled for December 2008.

(2) The ITR of the draft report (post AFB) will begin once a recommended plan has been selected, the preliminary design is complete, and the environmental assessment has been performed.

(3) The PDT will hold a "page-turn" session to review the draft report to ensure consistency across the disciplines and resolve any issues prior to the start of ITR. Writer/editor services will be performed on the draft prior to ITR as well.

(4) The ITR process for this document will follow the timeline below. Actual dates will be scheduled once the period draws closer. It is estimated that review of this document will begin in the 4th Quarter of FY 2008.

| Task | Date |
|--|-------------|
| Comment period begin | Week 1 |
| Kickoff meeting | Week 1 |
| ITR Comments due | Week 4 |
| PDT Responses due | Week 6 |
| Responses Backcheck | Week 8 |
| Certification | Week 10 |
| Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB) | Week 14 |
| AFB Policy Memo Issued | Week 18 |
| After Action Review | NLT Week 20 |

f. Review.

(1) ITR Team responsibilities are as follows:

(a) Reviewers shall review the draft report to confirm that work was done in accordance with established professional principles, practices, codes, and criteria and for compliance with laws and policy. Comments on the report shall be submitted into DrChecks.

(b) Reviewers shall pay particular attention to one's discipline but may also comment on other aspects as appropriate. Reviewers that do not have any significant comments pertaining to their assigned discipline shall provide a comment stating this.

(c) Grammatical and editorial comments shall not be submitted into DrChecks. Comments should be submitted to ITR manager via electronic mail using tracked changes feature in the Word document or as a hard copy mark-up. The ITR manager shall provide these comments to the Study Manager.

(d) Review comments shall contain these principal elements:

- A clear statement of the concern
- The basis for the concern, such as law, policy, or guidance
- Significance for the concern
- Specific actions needed to resolve the comment

(e) The "Critical" comment flag in DrChecks shall not be used unless the comment is discussed with the ITR manager and/or the Study Manager first

(2) PDT Team responsibilities are as follows:

(a) The team shall review comments provided by the ITRT in DrChecks and provide responses to each comment using “*Concur*”, “*Non-Concur*”, or “*For Information Only*”. *Concur* responses shall state what action was taken and provide revised text from the report if applicable. *Non-Concur* responses shall state the basis for the disagreement or clarification of the concern and suggest actions to negotiate the closure of the comment.

(b) Team members shall contact the PDT and ITRT managers to discuss any “non-concur” responses prior to submission.

g. Resolution.

(1) Reviewers shall back check PDT responses to the review comments and either close the comment or attempt to resolve any disagreements. Conference calls shall be used to resolve any conflicting comments and responses.

(2) Reviewers may “agree to disagree” with any comment response and close the comment with a detailed explanation. ITRT members shall keep the ITR manager informed of problematic comments. The vertical team will be informed of any policy variations or other issues that may cause concern during Headquarter review.

h. Certification. To fully document the ITR process, a statement of technical review will be prepared. Certification by the ITR manager and the Study Manager will occur once issues raised by the reviewers have been addressed to the review team’s satisfaction. Indication of this concurrence will be documented by the signing of a certification statement (Appendix A). A summary report of all comments and responses will follow the statement and accompany the report throughout the report approval process.

i. Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB). The AFB for this project will occur after ITR certification. It is possible that the briefing will result in additional technical or policy comments for resolution. After resolution of significant comments, the ITR will be re-certified, if needed.

4. EPR Plan.

a. This decision document will present the details of a feasibility study undertaken to restore the native trees and grasses to the Riverfront as described in paragraph 2 above. In accordance with the paragraphs below, this project does not meet the EPR standards outlined in the Circular.

(1) Project Magnitude. The magnitude of this project is determined as low, most likely in the \$5 million to \$10 million range. The scale of the project is limited because the project footprint will be limited to approximately 10.5 miles of property on the river side of the existing flood control system where there is relatively little land available for restoration. The project is not considered complex and involves wetland restoration, wetland enhancement, riparian corridor restoration, potential creek channel stabilization,

and improved fish habitat (pallid sturgeon) in the Mississippi River through the implementation of standard concepts. The project will have positive long term and cumulative effects.

(2) Project Risk. This project is considered low risk overall. The potential for failure is low because restoration of native grasses and trees is a straight forward concept with successful regional applications. The potential for controversy regarding project implementation is low because the recommended plan will take into account the public concerns. A socio-economic analysis will be prepared and at least one public meeting will be held. The uncertainty of success of the project is low because the methods used for evaluating the project are standard and the concept of native and grass restoration is not innovative. The ecosystem has not reached an irreversible state so it is likely that a restoration effort of the magnitude proposed will be successful.

(3) Vertical team consensus. The vertical team concurs that the subject matter covered in the decision document is NOT novel, controversial, or precedent-setting, and the project will not have significant interagency interest or significant economic, environmental or social effects.

(4) Therefore, a separate EPR will not be conducted on the decision document and external members will not be part of the ITR team. The ITR, Public and Agency Review will serve as the main review approaches.

5. Public and Agency Review.

a. Public review of the document will occur after issuance of the AFB policy guidance memo and concurrence by HQUSACE that the document is ready for public release. As such, public comments other than those provided at any public meetings held during the planning process will not be available to the review team for the AFB review.

b. Public review of this document will begin approximately one month after the completion of the ITR process and policy guidance memo. The period will last 30 days as required by law.

c. The public review of necessary State or Federal permits will also take place during this period.

d. A formal State and Agency review will occur concurrently with the public review. However, it is anticipated that intensive coordination with these agencies will have occurred concurrent with the planning process.

e. Upon completion of the review period, comments will be consolidated in a matrix and addressed, if needed. A comment resolution meeting will take place if needed to decide upon the best resolution of comments. A summary of the comments and resolutions will be included in the document.

6. PCX coordination. The appropriate PCX for this document is the National Ecosystem Planning Center of Expertise located at MVD. This review plan will be submitted through the PDT District (MVS) Planning Chief, to the PCX Director, Rayford Wilbanks, and PCX Deputies, Dr. David Vigh and Susan Smith, for approval. Since it was determined that this project is low magnitude and low risk, an EPR will not be required. As such, the PCX will not be asked to manage the review, but is requested to review and comment on the sufficiency of the ITR team proposed in paragraph 3.b. above. The approved review plan will be posted to the PCX website. Any public comments on the review plan will be collected by the Office of Water Policy Review (OWPR) and provided to the PDT District for resolution and incorporation if needed.

7. Approvals. The PDT will carry out the review plan as described. The Study Manager will submit the plan to the PDT District Planning Chief for review and coordination with PCX. The Commander of MVD retains final approval authority for the Peer Review Plan.

*1 APRIL 2007
PEER REVIEW PLAN
STL RIVERFRONT
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT*

**APPENDIX A
STATEMENT OF TECHNICAL REVIEW**

**COMPLETION OF INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW
ST LOUIS RIVERFRONT
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**

St. Louis District has completed the project implementation report (feasibility report) of the St Louis Riverfront project. Notice is hereby given that an independent technical review, that is appropriate to the level of risk and complexity inherent in the project, has been conducted as defined in the Review Plan. During the independent technical review, compliance with established policy principles and procedures, utilizing justified and valid assumptions, was verified. This included review of: assumptions, methods, procedures, and material used in analyses; alternatives evaluated; the appropriateness of data used and level obtained; and reasonableness of the result, including whether the product meets the customer's needs consistent with law and existing Corps policy. The independent technical review was accomplished by an independent team composed of XXX District staff. All comments resulting from ITR have been resolved.

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| Team Leader, St Louis Riverfront Independent Technical Review Team | Date |
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| Study Manager, St. Louis Riverfront Project | Date |
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CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW

A summary of all comments and responses are attached. Significant concerns and the explanation of the resolution are as follows:

(Describe the major technical concerns, possible impact and resolution)

As noted above, all concerns resulting from the independent technical review of the project have been fully resolved.

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|---|------|
| Chief, Planning and Policy Branch St. Louis District | Date |
|---|------|