



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SOUTH ATLANTIC DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ROOM 9M15, 60 FORSYTH ST., S.W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8801

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

CESAD-PDS-P

17 March 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDER, Jacksonville District, ATTN: CESAJ-PD

SUBJECT: Approval of Revised Peer Review Plan (PRP) for the St Johns, FL Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Feasibility Study

1. References:

- a. Memorandum, CESAJ-PD, 22 Feb 2008, subject: Approval of the Peer Review Plan (PRP) for the St Johns County, FL Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Feasibility Study
- b. EC 1105-2-408 Peer Review of Decision Documents, 31 May 2005.
- c. CECW-CP Memorandum, 30 March 2007, subject: Peer Review Process.
- d. Supplemental information for the "Peer Review Process" Memo, dated March 2007.

2. In accordance with EC 1105-2-408, "Peer Review of Decision Documents," the PRP for the St Johns County, FL Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction Feasibility Study has been coordinated and developed with the CSDR-PCX. The plan as prepared has been reviewed by this office and is approved.

3. We concur with the conclusion that external peer review (EPR) of this project is required due to the project cost exceeding \$45 million. The purpose of this study is to assess the needs for hurricane and storm damage protection and opportunities for environmental restoration and protection along the coast of St. Johns County, Florida. The most immediate and critical needs of the local communities are to address beach and dune erosion and include environmental protection opportunities. For this study, a total of approximately 7.8 miles of beach is being studied: 4 miles in the vicinity of South Ponte Vedra, 1.4 miles in the vicinity of Vilano Beach and 2.4 at Summer Haven. This study will define Federal interest and determine if a National Economic Development Plan can be formulated. This will be accomplished by participating in locally supported, cost-shared feasibility studies addressing issues along the coast of St. Johns County. The PRP complies with all applicable policy and provides for adequate independent technical review of the plan formulation, engineering, and environmental analyses, and other aspects of the plan development. Non-substantive changes to this PRP do not require further approval.

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4. The district should take steps to post the PRP to its web site and provide a link to the CSDR-PCX for their use. Before posting to the web site the names of Corps/Army employees should be removed in accordance with reference 1.d. above.

5. The SAD point of contact is Mr. Terry Stratton, CESAD-PDS-P, 404-562-5228.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



WILBERT V. PAYNES
Chief, Planning and Policy
Community of Practice

DRAFT
PEER REVIEW PLAN
FOR
ST JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
HURRICANE AND STORM DAMAGE
REDUCTION STUDY
FEBRUARY 2008

For questions or comments regarding this Peer Review Plan, please forward your comments to:

Title	Telephone	Email
Project Manager	904-232- 1597	Click here to email the project manager

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS PEER REVIEW PLAN IS
DISTRIBUTED SOLELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PREDISSEMINATION PEER
REVIEW UNDER APPLICABLE INFORMATION QUALITY GUIDELINES. IT HAS
NOT BEEN FORMALLY DISSEMINATED BY THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF
ENGINEERS, JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT. IT DOES NOT REPRESENT AND
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DETERMINATION OR POLICY.

DRAFT
PEER REVIEW PLAN
FOR
ST JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
HURRICANE AND STORM DAMAGE
REDUCTION STUDY FEBRUARY 2008

1. PURPOSE

This Peer Review Plan (PRP) provides a technical peer review mechanism ensuring that quality products are developed during the course of the study by the Jacksonville District (SAJ). All processes, quality control, quality assurance, and policy review will be done to complement each other producing a review process that identifies and resolves technical and policy issues during the course of the study and not during the final study stages.

The PRP is intended to describe the processes that will be implemented to independently (of the Project Team) evaluate the technical sufficiency of the planning study. The PRP is a collaborative product of the Project Delivery Team (PDT) and the National Planning Center of Expertise for Coastal Storm Damage Reduction (PCX-CSDR). The PCX-CSDR shall manage the peer review processes, which for this study includes Independent Technical Review (ITR) and an External Peer Review (EPR).

ITR is a critical examination by a qualified person or team, predominantly within the Corps of Engineers (Corps), which was not involved in the day-to-day technical work that supports a decision document. ITR is intended to confirm that such work was done in accordance with clearly established professional principles, practices, codes and criteria informed by Engineering Regulation (ER) 1105-2-100.

EPR is in addition to ITR, and is added to the Corps existing review process in special cases where the risk and magnitude of the proposed project are such that a critical examination by a qualified person or team outside of the Corps and not involved in the day-to-day production of a technical product is necessary. EPR will similarly be added in cases where information is based on novel methods, presents complex challenges for interpretation, contains precedent-setting methods or modes, presents conclusions that are likely to change prevailing practices, or is likely to affect policy decisions that have a significant impact. In the absence of a technical requirement high project cost, by itself, may necessitate EPR.

2. REFERENCES

ER 1105-2-100, "Planning Guidance Notebook"
EC 1105-2-408, "Peer Review of Decision Documents", dated May 31, 2005
CECW-CP Memorandum, "Peer Review Process", dated March 30, 2007

Water Resources Council's Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies, Chapter II - (National Economic Development NED) Benefit Evaluation Procedures (March 10, 1983).

3. PROJECT/STUDY BACKGROUND

The purpose of this study is to assess the needs for Coastal Storm Damage Reduction and opportunities for environmental restoration and protection along the coast of St. Johns County, Florida (Figure 1). The most immediate and critical needs of the local communities are to address beach and dune erosion and include environmental protection opportunities. For this study, a total of approximately 7.8 miles of beach is being studied: 4 miles in the vicinity of South Ponte Vedra, 1.4 miles in the vicinity of Vilano Beach and 2.4 at Summer Haven. This study will define Federal interest and determine if a National Economic Development Plan can be formulated. This will be accomplished by participating in locally supported, cost-shared feasibility studies addressing issues along the coast of St. Johns County.

The most immediate and critical needs of the local communities are to address beach and dune erosion and include environmental protection opportunities. This study will define Federal interest and determine if a National Economic Development Plan can be formulated. This will be accomplished by participating in locally supported, cost-shared feasibility studies addressing issues along the coast of St. Johns County.

The authority for conducting this study is contained in House Resolution 2646 adopted June 21, 2000, which reads as follows:

“Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the United States House of Representatives, That in accordance with Section 110 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1962, the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, is requested to survey the shores of St. Johns County, Florida, with particular reference to the advisability of providing beach erosion control works in the area north of St. Augustine Inlet, the shoreline in the vicinity of Matanzas Inlet, and adjacent shorelines, as may be necessary in the interest of hurricane protection, storm damage reduction, beach erosion control, and other related purposes.”

Total initial project cost, from the 2004 reconnaissance study, was estimated at approximately \$10M. Factoring in the projected cost of periodic renourishment would significantly increase the project total cost to the \$100M range.

The Project Delivery Team

Project Manager	Civil Engineer	Jacksonville District
Planning Technical Lead	Civil Engineer	Jacksonville District
Engineering Technical Lead	Civil Engineer	Jacksonville District
Geotechnical Analysis	Geologist	Jacksonville District
Cost Engineering	Cost Engineer	Jacksonville District
Hydrodynamic Modeling	Hydraulic Engineer	Jacksonville District

Environmental Analysis	Biologist	Jacksonville District
	Real Estate	Jacksonville District
Real Estate Evaluation	Specialist	
Economic Analysis	Economist	Jacksonville District
Construction/Operations	Civil Engineer	Jacksonville District
Legal Evaluation	Attorney	Jacksonville District

Planning Models

The economics model that will be employed is Beach-fx, a Corps-developed national model that does not require certification specific to this individual project.

Engineering models used in the study, SBEACH and GENESIS, are exempted from model certification under the guidance in the Engineering and Construction Bulletin 2007-6 dated 10 April 2007.

4. INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW PLAN

ITR may be performed at four key points in the study process to ensure the proper application of appropriate regulations and professional procedures. ITRs are typically performed at two Corps vertical team review points interim to the Draft Report: the Feasibility Scoping Meeting (FSM) and Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB). Subsequently the draft and final reports reviewed.

Skilled and experienced personnel who have not been associated with the development of the study products perform the ITR. ITR team members may be employees of U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Districts, other Federal agencies, state or local government agencies, universities, private contractors or other institutions. The key factor is extensive, expert knowledge in their field of expertise. DrChecks document review and comment software will be used to document the ITRs.

The relevant National Planning Center of Expertise, in this case for Coastal Storm Damage Reduction (PCX-CSDR), has ultimate responsibility for accomplishing ITR. The PCX-CSDR is requested to form an ITR Team, and to conduct ITR of the FSM Briefing Materials, AFB Materials, and Draft and Final Reports. The ITR team leader should be outside of the MSC.

Also, a Cost Estimating Directory of Expertise (Cost Dx) has been established, at the Corps Walla Walla District (NWW). The completed draft report cost estimate may require review by the Cost Dx. The PCX-CSDR is requested, herein, to coordinate cost estimation review with the Cost Dx. The working assumption is that the PCX-CSDR would secure Cost Dx approval of the proposed cost estimating reviewer, and that the Draft Report review would apply the proper Cost Dx-provided checklist. The completed checklist would be returned to the Cost Dx for approval.

Seven (7) technical disciplines determined to be appropriate for review of the Draft and Final Reports include: plan formulation, economics, environmental/NEPA compliance,

coastal engineering, geotechnical, cost, and real estate. All should be well-versed in conduct of coastal storm damage reduction studies.

Preliminary cost estimates for the 4 ITRs are itemized as follows:

- FSM Briefing Materials - \$20K
- AFB Materials - \$30K
- Draft Report - \$40K-ITR plus \$10K for EPR
- Final Report - \$30K- ITR
- PCX management - \$20 (\$5K per review)
- PCX CWRB preparation and participation - \$5K

5. EXTERNAL PEER REVIEW PLAN

In order to determine if external peer review is warranted for this particular project, an evaluation was conducted of the risk and magnitude of the proposed project, including consideration of whether or not study conclusions were based on novel methods, present complex challenges for interpretation, contain precedent-setting methods or modes, present conclusions that are likely to change prevailing practices, or are likely to affect policy decisions that have a significant impact, as called for in EC 1105-2-408, Section 4.b.

External Peer Review Requirement Determination

The Jacksonville District opinion is that this project would be considered large, likely exceeding \$45M in total cost. Magnitude of the project triggers the requirement for external peer review. EPR will be conducted on the draft report. Detailed scope of the EPR will be determined in advance of the review. Preliminarily, the cost of EPR is anticipated to be approximately \$100K.

Evaluations of individual decision criteria are provided below, in support of the above-stated opinion.

Unusually high risk or magnitude indicated?

The proposed project does not appear to include risks that are greater than normally would be expected for a coastal storm damage reduction project. However, the total cost, projected to exceed \$45M, would be considered high magnitude.

Study conclusions based upon novel methods?

Study methods to be employed are typical of other coastal storm damage reduction projects, and would not appear to warrant external peer review on this basis.

Study conclusions present complex challenges for interpretation?

Interpretation challenges, for this project, generally are typical of that for a coastal storm damage reduction project and are not expected to present complex challenges for interpretation.

Study conclusions contain precedent-setting methods or modes?

Well established analytical methods and modes will be employed and are not considered precedent-setting.

Study conclusions likely to change prevailing practices?

Study conclusions are expected to be typical of a coastal storm damage reduction project and are not expected to change prevailing practices.

The PCX-CSDR opinion is that due to the potential for the total project cost including periodic nourishment to exceed \$45 million, that a full EPR should be expected to be performed.

6. ADDITIONAL REVIEW CONSIDERATIONS

Public and Agency Comment and Dissemination

Public involvement is anticipated throughout the preparation of the Decision Document. Public information meetings are conducted to inform the general public, other federal and state agencies and interested stakeholders of the status of the project and alternatives being considered. Comments will be accepted by email or regular mail.

At a minimum, public meetings will be conducted as part of the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) compliance process. Results of public reviews are included in all products that are subjected to ITR.

7. CONSOLIDATED SCHEDULE

- ITR of FSM Package (Feb-09)
- ITR of AFB Package (March-10)
- ITR and EPR of Draft Report (Dec-10)
- ITR of Final Report (Dec-11)

8. POINTS OF CONTACT

Due to confidentiality law requirements with posting documents on websites for public review, only the Project Manager is listed as the point of contact for any questions concerning this Peer Review Plan and qualifications of members of the PDT team:

Title	Telephone	Email
Project Manager	904-232-1597	Click here to email the project manager

Figure 1 – St. Johns County Study Area Map



Figure 1 - St. Johns County Study Area Map