

10 Dec 2004

SUBJECT: H&H Chief Meeting Minutes  
Notes by Bob Buchholz

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- a. Purpose: Conduct an NWD H&H/Water Management Chief's Meeting
- b. Meeting Date: November 2-3, 2004
- c. Persons Participating:

i. Bill Branch	CENWD-PDW
ii. Gary House	CECE-CE-R/NWD
iii. Al Swoboda	CENWD-MT-E
iv. Larry Cieslik	CENWD-PDM
v. Larry Murphy	CENWD-PDM
vi. Alan Tool	CENWK-EC-HH
vii. Bob Buchholz	CENWP-EC-HD
viii. Michael Deering	CENWS-EC-TB-HH
ix. Mark Lindgren	CENWW-ED-H
x. Larry Buss	CENWO-ED-H
xi. Rudd Turner	CENWD-PDW-R
xii. John Remus	CENWO-PM-C
xiii. Jody Farhat	CENWD-PDM

**2. SUMMARY** This semi-annual meeting of the Northwestern division Chiefs of H&H and Water Management was held at the Missouri River Basin Water Management Office in Omaha, Nebraska. One of the outcomes of this meeting is the regional and national perspective gained by the participants and the furthering of the NWD H&H Community of Practice. The Agenda for the meeting is at this link:

[http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/PB/HHCOP/HH\\_Chiefs\\_mtgAgenda\\_Nov04.pdf](http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/PB/HHCOP/HH_Chiefs_mtgAgenda_Nov04.pdf) .

2. **NARRATIVE** The following topics were discussed:

1. **Missouri River Shallow Water Habitat** – John Remus gave an overview presentation of the history and development of the Missouri River shallow water habitat project. This project is a growing program and is in response to the changes to the Missouri river for the navigation and flood control project (75 million AF of storage on Missouri behind 5 dams and channelizing 732 miles of the lower Missouri River for navigation. The shallow water habitat project for Omaha and Kansas City Districts is similar in magnitude to the Columbia River Fish Mitigation program and involves a lot of channel restoration, levee setbacks, chute construction, dike modifications, etc. The Shallow Water Habitat project was also the topic of the first NWD Regional Technical Forum held in mid-November using “Netmeeting”.

## 2. CWMS Implementation

- KCD reported that the latest version of Solaris doesn't work with the new version of CWMS. HEC is working issue.
- Larry Murphy is pushing HEC to get out of DSS and commit fully to Oracle. NWD was due to convert on 1 October but problems with software. New goal is end of Nov. Working on naming conventions.
- Consensus that there is a need for in-house Oracle training and experience so we can fix our own problems. Relying on contractors isn't efficient.

3. **P2 Implementation:** NWK is having difficulty putting money from outside sources into the right place. General consensus from all present is that there are differing PM implementation, resourcing to section level is appropriate at this time and system problems still need to be worked out.

4. **NWD Website for Technical Questions:** There is a forum in NWD to ask questions on technical issues. Links were sent out last summer but it hasn't got much use. Need to do a better job of publicizing. Here is the link to the NWD H&H Community of Practice Site. At the bottom you'll see the Discussion Forum – you can send questions to the chiefs or open to everyone. Al will be sending out an announcement soon on it. Encourage everyone to begin using – like an H&H chat room. They are also going to be developing a new list of technical experts that will be “vetted” for accuracy. The previous list developed a couple years ago had some problems because some people, who said they were experts on topics, really weren't.

[http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/PB/HHCOP/HHCop\\_main.html](http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/PB/HHCOP/HHCop_main.html)

5. **Deviation Guidelines:** Missouri River RCC put together draft guidance on Deviation Requests and it was distributed for comment at the meeting. The guidance primarily covers recurring deviation requests were not covered. It was suggested that the guidance cover both recurring and temporary. I provided Al Swoboda a copy of a draft that Richard Oldham had put together to handle Willamette Projects. It was agreed that the draft would be modified to include temporary deviation requests. Action was Swoboda's I believe. (Attachments 2 & 3 of hard copy).

6. **Independent Technical Review** – Discussed any comments on the new proposed guidance from HQ that had been circulated in late September – early October. Division is working on ITR guidance. The Division Team was meeting in KCD the same week. Discussion of Dr Checks ensued. Gary House of HQ is a big proponent and implementation of the lessons learned module is going to be stressed. There will be requirement that the lessons learned module of Dr Checks be reviewed at the beginning of every project.

## 7. 2010 / E&C / H&H CoP:

- a. Technical Excellence Network (TEN) – Gary House talked about the TEN web site which is the the USACE Communities of Practice Portal. This is an interesting site which in addition to the CoP information it is the door to request criteria changes. The link is available at the bottom of the NWD CoP site or directly at - <https://ten.usace.army.mil/techexnet.aspx> .  
Standardization – Mr. House indicated there is a focus on standardization across the Corps such as CADD, GIS etc. Regulations and directives have

been in place but nobody pays attention. HQ will be trying to put more teeth into the regulations.

Development of Risk Management Tools - apply to dam safety and major rehab and infrastructure decisions. Tight budgets will require more risk management techniques to prioritize expenditures.

Key issues from HQ perspective: Effectiveness of ITR, Adequacy of CW R&D funding, Deteriorating Infrastructure, Limited funding for CoP's, Matrix Staffing, Resistance to CADD/GIS standards, PARC relationships, and Maintaining Technical Excellence at all organizational levels.

- b. H&H Initiatives Update by Bill Branch. H&H will participate in the Infrastructure Conference, which is to be held this year – probably in August in San Antonio, TX. It is NWD's intent to hold an NWD H&H conference in the off years from the Infrastructure Conference.

There was a discussion on the Standing Committees; Hydrology, Coastal, Channel Stabilization, Water Quality, and Flood Proofing committee.

Bill indicated that Darryl Davis will take over as Chairman of the H&H Executive Committee when Bill retires at the end of the year.

- 8. **SET – Science Engineering and Technology Initiative.** The USACE Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET) program is a corporate initiative, identified as an enabler in USACE 2012, designed to help us make the right decisions on what technology we deploy now and in the future. SET will establish common science and engineering policies, practices, and tools across the Regional Business Centers. SET will ultimately identify a uniform set of tools for USACE wide use, ensure future tools share common data sets and outputs, and ensure our people are effectively trained and supported in the use of these future tools. There was discussion among the H&H Chiefs about how this might impact the H&H community as we have many specialized software packages. The H&H community must stay vigilant on this program and its potential impacts on how we do business.

- 9. **Tuttle Creek Dam Safety Exercise:** Laila Berre gave an overview of lessons learned from recent Dam Safety Exercise at Tuttle Creek. Main concern was that Operations didn't involve H&H during the simulated emergency – Operations tried to handle on own and didn't have knowledge on releases or downstream impacts. Need to stress building relationships/trust with operators so they call Water Management or H&H staff for help.

Bill discussed communication problem on a potentially serious dam safety issue at Arrowrock Dam in B.C. Notification of the potential problem was not timely. There will probably be a dam safety exercise on the Columbia River next year as result. This incident pointed out deficiencies in communication between

BC Hydro, COE, and Bureau Reclamation. Subsequently a meeting was held with all parties to reaffirm the lines of communication.

10. **Stream Gaging Program** - The funding stream for the Cooperative Stream gaging program was discussed. Funding levels have generally fallen to the critical point and we can't afford to reduce the program any more and safely operate the projects. Omaha District is struggling to maintain funding for critical gages. Portland District indicated that a draft MOU for the operation and maintenance of gages on Willamette River by Project staff will be agreed upon soon.
11. **Support from IWR and ERDC to H&H:** There was a lot of discussion on this topic, with pretty much unanimous heartburn that the Research Proposal process is broken – the field review groups are not functioning and the researchers are doing their own thing without input from or feedback to the field. Joan Pope is the HQ program manager and there is a lot of concern that the field is being excluded from the research proposal review.

Mike Deering of NWS talked about serious difficulties at WES – getting documentation, meeting schedules, and the quality of work. Mark Lindgren and Bob Buchholz discussed some of the initiatives taken to try to improve the process. Mark, Mike and Bob will get together to share lessons learned and try to develop a consistent Division wide procedures when dealing with WES. The NWD needs to be consistent in the scoping, scheduling, documenting, and reviewing the work.
12. **Workload Sharing:** Everyone is in about the same boat – declining CAP/GI programs, a lot of work to do, but funding is an issue. CRA is causing problems.
13. **Sharing Training Opportunities in NWD:** There were several NWD training opportunities last year. The Omaha District is pursuing an ESRI / GIS class to be held in Omaha later this year – no other Division in-house training scheduled yet. Bob Buchholz mentioned the need for hydraulic design training – the last “Design of Spillways and Outlet Works” prospect course was in 1998. With a lot of new people, it might be time to be thinking about developing some in-house training – short work sessions to share lessons learned. Mark and Bob will get together to discuss.
14. **Regional Technical Forum** – The regional technical forum is Nov 15, subject “Missouri River Shallow Water Habitat” by Dan Pridal of Omaha. The meeting will use “Netmeeting” – allow viewing of PowerPoint on computer and listen in by conference call. These Forums will be held every 2-3 months. Next one in January possibly. Goal is to encourage sharing of technical information throughout the Division.
15. **Perspective from HQ on H&H funding for FY2005:** Gary House talked about HQ funding for the standing committees – they only get about \$25k/year. They will be stressing the use of Technical Excellence Network (TEN) – see link above for information sharing.
  - The Field Review work groups have basically been disbanded.
  - CoP funding is non-existent. WRDA passage is still being worked.
  - Funding in the future will be by business line.

- FY06 funding Corps Wide looks bleak.

16. **Status of established standing committees that serve H&H issues:** The chairs of the five standing committees are as follows: **Channel Stabilization** – Larry Banks; **Tidal and Coastal** – Bob McAdory; **Hydrologic and River Engineering** – S.K. Nanda and Gary Brunner; **Water Quality and Environmental** – Dave Shepp. Larry Buss indicated that he was chair of the **Floodplain Committee**.
17. **NWD H&H Conference – Spring 2005.** Discussed having next NWD H&H Conference in Kansas City in the spring 2005. Since H&H will be a part of the Corps Infrastructure Conference in August 2005, it was decided to defer the NWD H&H Conference to the spring on 2006 in Kansas City.
18. **Next H&H / Water Management Conference.** It has been suggested that the next meeting be scheduled for the spring of 2005. Location suggested was at ERDC to facilitate a briefing and tour of ongoing NWD modeling efforts at WES.