

Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution
Quarterly Forum Agenda
CEQ Conference Room
722 Jackson Place, Washington, DC
Call-in number: 1-866-434-5269 access code: 5064683

Tuesday, October 27, 2015
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Opening: Horst Greczmiel (CEQ) welcomed participants, thanked them for coming, and reviewed the agenda. Participants are listed in Attachment 1.

General Updates:

Horst Greczmiel informed participants that there is a lot of collaboration activity currently going on in the federal government, including efforts by the Infrastructure Permitting Team, FEMA on recovery projects, and HUD on reviews of activities on tribal lands. **ACTION ITEM:** Horst will send a synopsis of the activities to participants, including links to more information, so that participants can be aware of what is going on in other agencies.

ECCR Updates from Agencies:

EPA

- Recently held an agency-wide conflict prevention day. Approximately 150 people participated in various trainings nationwide.
- Recently used a mediator to work with EPA around a settlement involving wetlands. The neutrals helped facilitate discussion between the agency and respondents.

USFS

- Working on a program called “Leaders as Conveners” and providing on-site training to staff in advance of forest plan revisions. Participants are learning techniques for convening different interest groups around forest planning. World Café has been used as a method.

US Air Force

- Recently reorganized the internal ADR group. It is now part of the General Counsel’s Contractor Responsibility & Conflict Resolution Division and no longer exists as a separate division.

USACE

- Working to engage states and tribes around the 2014 Water Resources Reform Act, which is a national levee safety program.
- Working with FEMA to engage stakeholders regarding shared responsibilities associated with levees.

DOT

- Recently concluded a successful project regarding collaboration around the NEPA process between Nebraska Department of Roads and FHWA, facilitated by USIECR.

DOE

- Steve Miller recently completed a facilitation training by USIECR, which he found helpful for building skills and for helping to continue advocating for the use of ECCR.
- Working with tribes and states on work related to damages on tribal lands. Might engage USIECR for services if necessary.
- Would like to coordinate with other agencies around federal facility agreements.

CADR

- DOI University piloted a government-to-government consultation training in August. The training was delivered in response to an Executive Order issued in 2009, which gives DOI the responsibility to do conflict management and consultation.
- There is an upcoming opportunity for an ECCR detail in the BLM/CADR office in Washington, D.C.
- Will be offering a 9-month webinar training entitled "Managing my Network," which covers building partnerships, working with communities, and principles and practices in land management agencies.

NOAA

- NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service is a member of the Endangered Species Joint Task Force. Hired a facilitator who convened the three parties involved and they reach agreement in less than one month.

FERC

- Session taking place in Minneapolis regarding energy projects on tribal lands. There was a good showing of tribal representatives and lawyers involved in that work. Deborah Osborne shared information about ECCR. She will be holding a discussion at the Energy Bar Association on April 12 with panelists from different courts discussing court programs around energy.

CEQ

- **ACTION ITEM:** Horst will send document with information about ECCR and it would be helpful for discussions that end up being elevated.
- CEQ has a formal role with USIECR in which it must approve USIECR working with an agency. There is a document that needs to be signed, however CEQ does not get involved actively in the issues being addressed unless the issue is elevated.
- This administration's Clean Power Plan will face litigation. Important to keep in mind mediation and facilitation services and let agency leadership know that there is value in ECCR.

USIECR

- Recently hired several new staff people. Stephanie Kavanaugh joined the Washington, D.C. office from NOAA. Hired Joy Keller-Weidman as a remote employee on the west coast. Henrietta DeGroot and Carrie Thompson joined the Tucson office.
- Mike Lopez continues to build the Native American-Alaska Native (NAAN) program. He is working on redesigning the government-to-government consultation training and the Native Network.

Discussion Topic 1: ECCR Report Synthesis

Consideration of the FY14 Draft Synthesis Report

CEQ and USIECR sent a draft synthesis report several weeks ago, and since then there were some minor edits. Peter asked participants to review the latest version and send any input.

Distribution of the FY14 Synthesis Report to agency leaders

Horst reminded participants that last year, CEQ sent the final synthesis report to senior leadership at the agencies. The report was sent to chiefs of staff as well as the Forum participants. He asked if that would be the best course of action again, or if there should be changes to the method of distribution.

Participants agreed that it worked well but that the contact names may need to be updated. Peter let participants know that the report would be distributed in the next few weeks. Peter and Debra will circulate the existing list of leadership contacts, and participants should provide any updates.

Review of FY15 template and reporting

There were no substantive changes to the report template. Some reformatting is required for black and white printers. **ACTION ITEM:** Horst will send the template to participants.

Discussion Topic II: Agency Experiences in Using On-line Tools for ECCR

US Forest Service tools; Joe Carbone, Assistant Director for NEPA, WO Ecosystem Management Coordination Staff

- USFS field units input information about projects that may affect the environment into a database that distributes information to the public.
- In the past, each field unit put the information online themselves. Now, the online tool sends information from a database to the internet in real time, and each field unit's website is connected as well. The public has access to information about new projects as they happen. This has standardized the process across the country.
- The public can see what is being planned and which environmental issues are being discussed on each field unit's website, and information is automatically updated. This is helpful because USFS staff can post environmental documents, specialist reports, and other information by project. The public can sort by project or project type.
 - Some proposed actions could include special use permits for transmission lines; oil and gas development; forest restoration; reduction of fuels for fires.
- USFS has a comment analysis and response tool, which analyzes public comments and responds to them. Comments that come through email are automatically loaded into the system and anyone can read them. The public can also comment directly on the website.
 - Comments come through the projects and project leaders receive them. They do not come to one centralized place. The program sorts the comments and sends them to the appropriate team leader. The program also recognizes "form letters," which can be useful later on if disputes arise and people want to show that they were engaged in the process.
- USFS uses a collaborative mapping tool called "Talking Points" that allows it to post maps and allows the public to comment on the maps. Currently considering bringing that together with the comment analysis tool. This tool has been helpful in responding to comments.
- USFS uses a mailing list manager to which the public can self-subscribe based on the projects for which they want information. This makes external communication an easier process.

- Expanding collaboration through these tools allows us to shift from collecting comments to having dialogue in real time. It has also been helpful in increasing transparency.
- This tool is used for objections as well since it stores data from comments early in the process. Tools allows for sorting through what was said before and what is being said currently, and analyze what changed. Also shows who is saying what and how often, as well as how similar comments are across a number of interests.
- Interested in bringing social media into this effort. Could be useful in getting a sense for the general sentiment about an issue even though it is not a formal comment.
- The only task required by the field offices is that they need to put the projects into the database. The comment analysis, mailing list upkeep, and web publishing is not handled by the field offices.
- This work was done by an IT contractor. EPA uses a similar system for Environmental Impact Statements.
 - IT security and funding for upgrading technology is an issue for agencies.
- Peter and Horst suggested linking this conversation to evaluation. **ACTION ITEM**: Could explore how to capture and share lessons learned in a future meeting.

USACE tools; Courtney Greenley, Institute for Water Resources

- USACE has worked with local sponsors to meet technological and security needs. Currently developing a working paper about sixteen collaborative technology tools. This paper is currently undergoing an internal review. Courtney is looking for external reviewers as well.
- Interested in talking to agencies about how they are using social media platforms.
- One tool option is MindMixer, which allows for polling the public and collecting public comments. The traditional public commenting process is still available for members of the public that do not have access to the online tools.
 - USFS used MindMixer for forest planning efforts. Helpful for engaging stakeholders.
- Courtney created an instrument that the districts can use to decide which tool would be most useful based on their needs. USACE created an internal Wiki-page to compile testimony from the field.
- Participants voiced some interest in the use of social media platforms such as Twitter. Could be a more informal channel through which agencies can understand general sentiment on the ground.
 - USACE has used it to publicize events but not for two-way communication. There are security concerns associated with its use.
- USACE hired a contractor for social media and other web-based platforms to assist in communications.
- Another online tool that has been helpful for project management is Basecamp. Basecamp allows for sharing documents and collaborative editing. If interested, email Courtney for contact information at Courtney.L.Greenley@usace.army.mil.

Plan for Next Meeting

- The next ECCR Policy Forum meeting will be held during the week of February 22-26, 2016. **ACTION ITEM**: Peter and Debra will email participants to confirm in the coming weeks.
- Potential topics for discussion:
 - Update on how the individual agency ECCR Reports came together

- IT Tools
- Evaluation
- Native American/Alaskan Native work
- Broader efforts toward developing a community of practice; reporting on learning and ECCR techniques
- Trends in ECCR employment and projects
- Update on USIECR efforts generally.

Attachment 1: Attendees

Attendees

In person:

Courtney Greenley- USACE
Hal Cardwell- USACE
Horst Greczmiel- CEQ
Jeanne Briskin- EPA
Joe Carbone- USFS
Jonathan Krumeich- DOT
Julie Schaefers- USFS
Laura Drummond- OMB
Lauren Nutter- USIECR
Pat Collins- US Air Force
Peter Williams- USIECR
Siobhan Siaca- DOE
Steven Miller- DOE
Valerie Puleo- USIECR
Will Hall- EPA

On Phone:

Amy Coyle- DOT
Deborah Osborne- FERC
Debra Drecksel- USIECR
Dierdre Remley- FHWA
Sarah Palmer- CADR
Steve Kokkinakis- NOAA