

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1100 COMMERCE STREET
DALLAS, TEXAS 75242-0216



Reply to
Attention of:

CESWD-PDS-P

26 OCT 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR Commander, Fort Worth District

SUBJECT: Review Plan Approval for the Chacon Creek IFS, Rio Grande River Basin,
Feasibility Study

1. References:

- a. EC 1105-2-408, 31 May 2005, subject: Peer Review of Decision Documents.
- b. Memorandum, CECW-CP, 30 March 2007, subject: Peer Review Process.

2. The enclosed Review Plan for the Chacon Creek IFS, Rio Grande River Basin Feasibility Study has been prepared in accordance with referenced guidance.

3. This plan has been made available for public comment, and the comments received have been incorporated. It has been coordinated with the Flood Damage Reduction Planning Center of Expertise of the South Pacific Division which is the lead office to execute the plan. The Review Plan does not include External Peer Review.

4. I hereby approve this Review Plan, which is subject to change as study circumstances require, consistent with study development under the Project Management Business Process. Subsequent revisions to this plan or its execution will require new written approval from this office. For further information on this issue please contact Brent Hyden, CESWD-PDF at (469) 487-7033.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kendall P. Cox".

KENDALL P. COX
Colonel, EN
Commanding

Encl

CHACON CREEK – LAREDO, TEXAS

Project Review Plan

Independent Technical Review

1. PURPOSE

Pursuant to Engineering Circular (EC) 1105-2-408, “Peer Review of Decision Documents,” Office of Management and Budget’s “Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review,” and the May 30, 2007 memorandum from Major General Don Riley, USACE Director of Civil Works, a Project Review Plan (PRP) is being developed. This Project Review Plan presents analysis of the process for independent technical review (ITR) that will be implemented as part of the Chacon Creek feasibility study. These processes are essential to improving the quality of the products that we produce.

2. APPLICABILITY

The document provides the PRP for the Chacon Creek Feasibility Study. It identifies the ITR process for all work conducted as part of the study, including in-house, non-Federal sponsor, and contract work efforts.

3. REFERENCES

EC 1105-2-408 “Peer Review of Decision Documents” dated May 31, 2005
ER 1105-2-100 “Planning Guidance Notebook,” dated April 2000 Major General Riley
Memorandum on Peer Review Process, dated May 30, 2007

4. GENERAL

The study area is located in Laredo, Webb County, Texas, lying on the northern border of the Rio Grande River. Located in the eastern half of the city, Chacon Creek originates north of Lake Casa Blanca and flows about 5 miles to the south and west emptying into the Rio Grande. The stream provides some flood control, but it is also a local natural resource with recreational, educational, and economic potential. The objective of the feasibility study is to develop a project that will address ecosystem restoration, flood damage reduction, and recreation relating to Chacon Creek.

5. REVIEW REQUIREMENTS (Independent Technical Review)

As part of the Quality Control Plan for the Chacon Creek Project, an ITR team will be formed to perform periodic reviews of the feasibility study efforts, including the project assumptions, analyses, and calculations, as needed throughout the planning study process. The ITR is best conducted by experienced peers within the same discipline who are not directly involved with the development of the study or project being reviewed. Pursuant to EC 1105-2-408, the District will coordinate with the Ecosystem Planning Center of Expertise (Mississippi Valley Division) to organize a team to perform the ITR at various stages throughout the study. The technical point-of-contact is the Mississippi

Valley Division. Since the project is anticipated to have a significant flood damage reduction component, additional coordination with the Flood Damage Reduction Planning Center of Expertise (South Pacific Division) will be required to ensure that the appropriate expertise is assembled on the review team. The technical point-of-contact for the FDR PCX is the South Pacific Division. The ITR will focus on the following:

- Review of the planning study process,
- Review of the methods of analysis and design of the alternatives and recommended plan,
- Compliance with program and NEPA requirements, and
- Completeness of study and support documentation

More detailed ITR information is found in the Plan Formulation and Evaluation Section of the Project Management Plan (PMP).

It is anticipated that an external peer review (EPR) will not be required since this project involves neither of the special cases where risk and magnitude of the proposed project necessitate the critical examination by a qualified person or team outside the Corps. With an estimated cost of \$2.05 million, the project will not exceed the threshold necessary for an EPR; currently set at \$50 million. Additionally, the anticipated risk associated with this project is considered minimal. The SWD vertical team will determine the appropriate level of review prior to request for approval by the appropriate PCX.

6. REVIEW PROCESS

The ITR process will be conducted throughout the study process. ITR involvement is anticipated between major project milestones (i.e. FSM and AFB). Once the ITR team has been identified, models and appropriate documentation will be provided. Coordination with the ITR team and the PDT will be arranged appropriately. All decision documents relating to the ITR will be conducted utilizing DrChecks.

7. REVIEW SCHEDULE

<u>Task</u>	<u>Proposed Date</u>
Develop Project Review Plan	August 14, 2007
ITR review of FSM documents	August 6-10, 2007
ITR review of draft documents (before AFB)	TBD
Participation in AFB meeting	TBD

8. PROJECT RISK

Anticipate minimal risk involved with the project.

9. PROJECT REVIEW PLAN

The components of the PRP were developed pursuant to the requirements of EC 1105-2-408.

A. General Information

The decision documents that will undergo peer review are the Feasibility Report (including Economic Appendix), Environmental Impact Statement, and Engineering Appendix. The District PDT is listed below:

1. District Project Delivery Team Disciplines

- Hydrology and hydraulics
- Civil Design
- Structural Design
- Geotechnical
- Cost Estimating
- Economics
- Cultural Resources
- Environmental
- Real Estate
- HTRW
- Recreation

2. **ITR Team – TBD.** It is recommended that the ITR team lead be from outside the major subordinate command (MSC).

B. Scientific Information

The final feasibility report (and supporting documentation) is anticipated to contain standard engineering, environmental and economic analyses and information; therefore no influential scientific information is likely to be contained in any of the documentation.

C. Timing

The peer review process is projected to begin by the end of FY08 with the initiation of the ITR team and assessment of key models (e.g. HEC-RAS, HEC-FDA, and HSI) during this initial plan formulation phase of the study.

D. Public Comment

A Public Involvement Plan will be formulated to ensure the participation of all interested parties throughout the feasibility study process. Public Scoping Meetings will also be scheduled and conducted as appropriate. Additionally, an Interagency Coordination Team (ICT) consisting of District, non-Federal sponsor, State and

Federal resource agency, and other stakeholder representatives will be formed to address common issues associated with Chacon Creek.

<u>TASK</u>	<u>START DATE</u>	<u>FINISH DATE</u>
Public Involvement Plan	TBD	TBD
Public Scoping Meeting	TBD	TBD
ICT Meetings	TBD	TBD

E. Dissemination of Public Comments

Proceedings from all public meetings, minutes from ICT meetings or any other public involvement meetings will be posted on the Chacon Creek Project website.

F. Reviewers

Since the feasibility study is a flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration study, anticipated disciplines of ITR reviewers are:

1. Engineering (hydrology and hydraulics)
2. Economics
3. Environmental
4. Real Estate
5. Planning

G. Review Disciplines

A brief description of the disciplines required for the ITR team are identified below:

1. Hydrology and hydraulics – the reviewer(s) should have extensive knowledge of hydrology and hydraulics models or studies relating to flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration.
2. Economics – the reviewer should have a strong understanding of economic models or studies relating to flood damage reduction.
3. Environmental – the reviewer(s) should have strong background in inland ecosystems (e.g. riverine) and Texas environmental laws and regulations.
4. Real Estate – The reviewer should have knowledge in reviewing RE Plans for feasibility studies relating to flood damage reduction and ecosystem restoration.
5. Planning – The reviewer(s) should have a strong knowledge in current planning policies and guidance related to feasibility studies.