

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Meeting Summary

Reclamation Public Meeting on

Managing for Excellence

Salt Lake City, Utah
September 19 and 20, 2006



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation

MISSION STATEMENTS

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to Indian tribes and our commitments to island communities.



The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

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Introduction

On September 19-20, 2006, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) held the second public meeting on the *Managing for Excellence* initiative. The purpose was to provide the public with information on the objectives, direction, and action items associated with the *Managing for Excellence* Action Plan and to obtain feedback and answer questions related to specific action item ideas and concepts. This meeting was announced in the Federal Register on August 15, 2006, and drew over 50 participants from water, power, and environmental consortiums, as well as individual water districts. Federal representatives in attendance included Reclamation managers and staff, including the Acting Commissioner, several Senior Executives, external and public affairs staff, and several action item team leaders.

The first part of this document captures the written comments provided in a meeting evaluation form at the end of the meeting. The second part of this document captures the comments made during the presentations. This document also captures feedback received and questions raised (both orally and in writing) during the general and breakout sessions. In addition, Reclamation responses to questions and comments posed throughout the meeting are provided, where applicable.

In this document, comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation's responses are italicized. The information in this document is not a transcript of the comments and responses made during the meeting, but are primarily derived from notes taken during the meeting. In some instances additional information has been provided or minor changes have been made to provide clarity. Where appropriate, the comments will serve as a driver for the preparation of future overview presentation and/or has been flagged for additional follow-up.

To submit additional comments on the *Managing for Excellence* initiative, *Managing for Excellence* Public Meetings, or the individual action items you can use the internet at address <http://www.usbr.gov/excellence/comment/index.html>, email: excellence@do.usbr.gov, or call (303) 445-2841.

List of Organizations with Attendees

Aberdeen-Springfield Canal Company
Agri-Business Council of Arizona
Arizona Power Authority
Black Canyon Irrigation District
Carlsbad Irrigation District
Central Utah Water Conservancy District

Colorado River Water Conservation District
Colorado River Energy Distributors Association (CREDA)
Central Valley Project Water Association
Dolores Water Conservancy District
Elephant Butte Irrigation District
ELAN Associates
Ellis & Baker, PC
Emery Water Conservancy District
Fremont-Madison Irrigation District
Friant Water Authority
Garrison Diversion
Grand Valley Water Users' Association
Idaho Water Users Association
Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District
K.R. Saline & Associates, PLC
Mancos Water Conservancy District
Midwest Electric, Consumers Association
National Water Resources Association
Navajo Nation Safety of Dams
Navajo Water Resources
Ogden River Water Users Association
Owyhee Irrigation District
Provo River Water Users Association
Quincy-Col Basin Irrigation District
Salt River Project
San Bernardino Valley Water Conservancy District
San Juan Water Commission
Santa Clara Valley Water District
Sierra Club
Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD)
South Board of Control
Salt River Project
St. Mary Rehabilitation Working Group
Trout Unlimited
Uintah Water Conservancy District
Water Consult
Water District 01
Weber Basin Water Conservancy District
Weber River Water Users
Western States Water Council
Yuma County Water Users' Association

Summary of Key Comments

- Many of the meeting attendees requested notification of when draft products are available.
Response – Reclamation has created an email list for future notifications of upcoming events and products related to Managing for Excellence. You can sign up by sending a blank email to join-m4e@listserver.usbr.gov. You should receive a response stating “You have been subscribed to m4e.” In order to successfully subscribe, the email you send must not have any text in the body of the email.
- Provide additional information about the structure of the Reclamation fund and where the funds are spent was requested.
Response – Reclamation is preparing a presentation for the Managing for Excellence public meeting scheduled for November in Sacramento. The presentation will be posted to the Managing for Excellence website when available.
- Generally most attendees were pleased with the content and the preparation of the meeting.
- Some participants raised concerns that the process was moving too fast and they would rather see some deadlines missed than not have an opportunity to adequately participate in the process.
Response – The short timeframes are necessary to meet the deadlines identified in the Managing for Excellence Action Plan. It is our hope that the email list will alleviate some of the issues with the review period for Managing for Excellence reports prepared for approval by the Commissioner. The email list is designed to provide notification of when documents are available for review; providing the maximum time for review by interested parties.

Evaluation Form – Written Comments on the Meeting’s Purpose and Expectations

All participants were given the opportunity to complete a meeting evaluation form to provide feedback on the usefulness of the meeting. Ten forms were received. On this form, each participant was asked to answer a series of questions on the usefulness of the meeting and give their suggestions for improvement. The following is a summary of the comments received on the evaluation forms following the meeting.

Did this meeting meet your expectations?

- All responses stated that the meeting met expectations.

What was useful about this forum?

- The appearance of better partnershiping.
- The clear preparation of all presenters.
- The opportunity to see all presentations.
- The open and transparent effort.
- Availability of concept papers let me relate better to the presentations.
- Access to the Reclamation leadership team.
- Ability to participate and provide comments.
- Ability to ask questions and get answers.
- The two days were a great educational experience.
- The possibility of early cooperation between Reclamation and the stakeholders on Operation and Maintenance (O&M) projects and major capital improvement projects.
- It was a great opportunity to express our concerns, and support views on various aspects of Reclamation's organization, projects, and activities.
- It was a great chance to communicate and share ideas.

In Future Meetings on *Managing for Excellence*, what other topics would you like discussed?

- Provide a clearer understanding of both engineering and financial obligations as projects are recommended to stakeholders.
Response – Action Item 1, Strengthen interaction with customers and stakeholders to address Reclamation-wide issues, is examining ways to improve interaction with customers and stakeholders. This comment will be forwarded to them for consideration.
- Discuss specific revenue and loan sources at future meetings. Also, include stakeholder engineering participation early on in the O&M process.
Response – Action items within the Major Repair functional area and the Asset Sustainment functional area, which deal with loan sources and the O&M process, will be on the agenda for the public meeting in Sacramento, CA. This comment will also be forwarded to teams working on action items in the Asset Sustainment functional area and the Major Repairs functional area.
- Expand the O&M discussion.
Response – Over the next year while the Managing for Excellence effort is ongoing, Reclamation plans to continue the discussion about O&M issues.

- A discussion of the “vision” for the Bureau of Reclamation 30 years from now.
Response – Reclamation’s vision statement is “Through leadership, use of technical expertise, efficient operations, responsive customer service and the creativity of people, Reclamation will seek to protect local economies and preserve natural resources and ecosystems through the effective use of water.” The Managing for Excellence effort is not intended to re-evaluate Reclamation’s vision or mission but to examine our core capabilities to ensure that we can successfully fulfill our mission in the 21st century.
- The process could benefit from a better discussion of how the pieces fit together.
Response – Reclamation will provide information at the 2007 public meetings regarding how the final products will tie together and how this process will affect Reclamation’s daily business. During future meetings the sessions on Action Item 12, Complete a right-sizing process, will provide additional information about how many of the action items will affect the structure of the organization.
- A discussion of what and how the Bureau of Reclamation will go forward once this current *Managing for Excellence* process has been completed. How will Reclamation keep re-inventing itself to adjust to changing times and a retiring workforce?
Comment noted.
- Further discussion about project management, major repairs, and workloads. Discussion of alternative scenarios is vital.
Response – The discussions of project management, major repairs, workloads and alternative scenarios will continue at future public meetings.
- An emphasis on land, property, and rights of way issues.
Response – These topics are outside the scope of the Managing for Excellence effort.
- It would be helpful to have email notices and more input beyond the internet.
Response - Reclamation has created an email list for future notifications of upcoming events and products related to Managing for Excellence. You can sign up by sending a blank email to join-m4e@listserver.usbr.gov. You should receive a response stating “You have been subscribed to m4e.” In order to successfully subscribe, the email you send must not have any text in the body of the email. Additionally, Reclamation is planning meetings in 2007.
- A meeting so customers can comment on draft final papers before acceptance by the Commissioner.
Response – It is our hope that the email list will alleviate some of the issues with the review of final documents prepared for each action item. The email list is designed to provide notification of when documents are available for review; providing the maximum time for review by interested parties.

Other Comments and Suggestions

- We would like to see how Reclamation dealt with our comments within the “decision documentation” for the various action items.
Response – Reclamation will publish the final decision documents on the internet.

- Could we receive a list of teams and comment deadlines leading up to the public meeting in Sacramento?
Response –By signing up for the Managing for Excellence email list you will receive up-to-date notification of when items are available for comment.
- I feel there needs to be a better understanding early in the review process for recommended projects about engineering and financial costs.
Response – This comment will be forwarded to the teams working on Action Item 1, Strengthen interaction with customers and stakeholders to address Reclamation-wide issues and Action Item 18, Develop a process or tools to determine the need for major repairs.
- Internal communications between various areas of Reclamation could be clearer. For example, if a project is undergoing construction and there is a reciprocal request to release water from a reservoir which cannot be accomplished because of the construction.
Comment noted.
- I am concerned about the short time between release of final products and the closing date for comments. I would recommend a final meeting, with those impacted, before those action items are signed off.
Response – The short timeframes are necessary to meet the deadlines identified in the Managing for Excellence Action Plan. It is our hope that the email list will alleviate some of the issues with the review period for Managing for Excellence documents prepared for the Commissioner’s signature. The email list is designed to provide notification of when documents are available for review; providing the maximum time for review by interested parties.
- I would appreciate if the presenters related back to the National Research Council Report - *Managing Construction and Infrastructure in the 21st Century Bureau of Reclamation* (NRC Report). The presenters should address whether the National Research Council addressed this issue or not, if they did, what did they say?
Response – The Managing for Excellence effort is larger than the NRC Report and as such action items may not directly relate to the NRC report. In instances where a direct relation exists, the presenters will be asked to discuss how the action item relates to the NRC Report.
- The NRC Report was interesting, but it was too narrow. It really did not address how we might address the issue of aging infrastructure and a changing climate. What will Reclamation’s role be in a future world where the climate may be different than it is today?
Response – Reclamation has identified the Major Repairs functional area to look at ways we might address the issue of aging infrastructure. The comment on climate change has been forwarded to the teams working in Research and Laboratories functional area.

- In my view, Reclamation's partners are not doing their part. This includes Congress. In the later 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s there was a clear vision for Reclamation. This clear vision became less clear in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Today it is very unclear! I share the comment that Reclamation is a government entity, not a business! Is there a role for a government with a national perspective in maintaining our water infrastructure in the 21st century? I think so, but I hope Reclamation can get more input on that basic question as a part of this process.
Comment noted. This comment has been forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner, External and Intergovernmental Affairs.
- In one year after completing the *Managing for Excellence* effort, hold a public meeting in Denver to update customers on how well the goals established through *Managing for Excellence* are being accomplished, reached, or completed.
Response – This will be considered.
- We are pleased with the job Reclamation is doing, particularly in the Pacific Northwest Region and especially in the Snake River Area Office. We have always enjoyed open communication with Reclamation personnel from John Keyes to Bill McDonald. One problem I note (that is inherent in large bureaucracies) is the use of acronyms and jargon. It often makes people outside the organization feel confused. Parenthetical definitions in concept papers and presentation would greatly alleviate this difficulty.
Response – A concerted effort will be made to reduce the use of jargon and acronyms. In instances where jargon and acronyms are used, definitions will be provided.
- Suggest you get more rooms at the seminar rate.
Response – More rooms have been reserved at the seminar rate for the November Public Meeting in Sacramento, California. If you have issues making reservations at the seminar rate please contact Staci Link at (303) 445-2808.
- There do not seem to be people with financial backgrounds on the teams. A financial background is important to the teams dealing with asset sustainment, major repairs challenges, and perhaps others. These teams will likely be discussing issues that impact annual financial statements. Financial statement presentations must meet certain standards and these standards should be addressed in this process.
Response – Your concerns will be forwarded to the Executive Sponsors and teams working on action items in the Asset Sustainment functional area and the Major Repair Challenges functional area. The team working on Action Item 25, Develop financial status reporting for all infrastructure has two Financial Managers and one Business Manager. Additionally, the team lead has a significant background in financial matters.
- Need a meeting so that customers can comment on draft final papers before acceptance by the Commissioner.
Response – Reclamation will consider ways to improve the ability of customers and stakeholders to provide comments on final drafts for the various action items.

General Session

Overview

Bill Rinne, Acting Commissioner Bureau of Reclamation; and Larry Todd, Deputy Commissioner for Policy, Administration, and Budget gave opening remarks on the purpose, approach, and importance of *Managing for Excellence*.

The Bureau of Reclamation showed strong support for the overall effort as demonstrated by the attendance of all the Regional Directors and almost all Senior Executives.

The meeting was structured with overviews of the eight functional areas, Relationships with Customers and Stakeholders, Policies and Organization, Engineering and Design Services, Major Repair Challenges, Asset Sustainment, Project Management, Research and Laboratories, and Human Resources/Workforce. Each was followed by breakout sessions for action items under the functional areas.

At this meeting, concept papers describing the overall *Managing for Excellence* effort were provided to meeting attendees. The concept papers described the eight functional areas and how they relate to the individual action items. Additional information about the action items was also included. The concept papers are available on the *Managing for Excellence* website (<http://www.usbr.gov/excellence>).

Meeting participants were encouraged to discuss issues concerning individual action items with the Executive Sponsors or the Team Leads.

Overview of Relationships with Customers and Other Stakeholders Functional Area

Presenter: Brenda Burman, Deputy Commissioner, External and Intergovernmental Affairs.

The overall goal of the Relationships with Customers and Other Stakeholders functional area is to maintain and/or improve good customer relations, transparency, and communications. There are three action items under this functional area: Action Item 1, Strengthen interaction with customers and other stakeholders to address Reclamation-wide issues; Action Item 2, Ensure the Reclamation Manual is readily available; and Action Item 3, Revise policy development to consider transparency and value added. Action items 2 and 3 are complete. Below are comments received at the meeting, identified by bullets and Reclamation's responses which are italicized.

- Who do we talk to if we have input on what competencies should be required for a given job?

Response – You should talk with both Lorri Gray and Brenda Burman. We recognize there is overlap between and among teams. This issue will also be discussed further in the Human Resources breakout sessions.

- Teams need to look at transparency and ensure customers, stakeholders, and partners get a chance to give feedback. Transparency isn't about only communicating numbers and/or outcomes.

Response – We are continuously working to improve transparency in this process. For example, an email list has been established to provide notification of when items are available for review by the public. This comment has been forwarded to the team working on Action Item 1, Strengthen interaction with customers and other stakeholders to address Reclamation-wide issues.

Overview of Asset Sustainment Functional Area

Presenter: Kirk Rodgers, Director, Mid-Pacific Region

Reclamation has over 250 billion dollars in assets and we need to ensure that the financial status of projects is understood to make good business decisions related to these facilities. There are seven action items under this Functional Area: Action Item 25, Develop financial status reporting for all infrastructure; Action Item 26, Find opportunities to transfer Operation and Maintenance (O&M) to water users; Action Item 27, Find opportunities for outsourcing O&M of reserved works; Action Item 28, Find opportunities for title transfer; Action Item 29, Analyze the effectiveness of O&M planning; Action Item 30, Integrate O&M planning into the budget process; and Action Item 31, Benchmark the O&M of water storage and distribution facilities.

Kirk Rodgers made the following observations: Reclamation is taking the *Managing for Excellence* effort seriously, this is the most sustained and interactive effort he's ever seen in his 33 years of Government service; Reclamation Senior Leaders are involved and are paying attention to customers in multiple ways; and discussions among the *Managing for Excellence* Executive Team are delightfully robust. Comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation's responses are italicized.

- Asset sustainment dovetails with operation and maintenance. You need to make purposeful decisions on what is rehabilitation or modernization versus what is O&M. Those activities that cannot be paid off in a year should be considered rehabilitation or modernization and a process to pay these costs off in a reasonable period of time (multiple years) should be explored or developed. Currently, there are no mechanisms, except the loan guaranty program, for large projects and that program doesn't cover all scenarios.
Response – This comment will be forwarded to the teams working within the Asset Sustainment Functional Area and the Major Repairs Functional Area.

- Was our only shot at providing feedback on this topic at the Las Vegas Meeting and via the internet?

Response - There is a product on Action Items 29, Analyze the effectiveness of O&M planning and Action Item 30, Integrate O&M planning into the budget process posted on the internet. Comments will be accepted until September 25th. The internet is the best approach to offer feedback.

- How can stakeholders receive notification when something is available for comment if they are not searching the internet regularly?

Response - We have developed an e-mail list to provide specific information on what's available for comment on the website. You can sign up by sending a blank email to join-m4e@listserver.usbr.gov. You should receive a response stating "You have been subscribed to m4e." In order to successfully subscribe, the email you send must not have any text in the body of the email.

Overview of Research and Laboratory Services Functional Area

Presenter: Dave Achterberg, Director, Safety, Security, and Law Enforcement

Reclamation is analyzing the location, size, and purpose of Reclamation labs based on recommendations from the NRC Report. A National Academies of Science study of the Desalination program is ongoing. The final product is expected in December of 2006. Information from this study will be incorporated into the work the teams are doing. There are five action items in this functional area: Action Item 32, Identify opportunities for use of Federal and non-Federal lab services; Action Item 33, Identify opportunities for retaining, consolidating, and/or eliminating lab services within the Technical Service Center and the regions; Action Item 34, Continue Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) goal implementation for research and development; Action Item 35, Re-evaluate the steering committee to increase core mission research and development; and Action Item 36, Assess the National Academy of Sciences' review of desalination research and development.

Overview of Policies and Organization Functional Area

Presenter: Roseann Gonzales, Director, Program and Policy Services

The overall goal of the Policies and Organization functional area is to refine the balance between centralized policy and effective decentralized operations. There are five action items in this functional area: Action Item 4, Identify decision-making process gaps; Action Item 5, Revise delegations of authority; Action Item 6, Identify policy gaps; Action Item 7, Expedite development of items identified in Action Item 6; and Action Item 8, Consider the alternative scenarios from the National Research Council. Action Item 5, Revise delegations of authority, is complete. Comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation's responses are italicized.

- Are you talking about centralized policy development and localized implementation?
Response - Yes
- How does Reclamation's budgeting process work? How are sources of revenue used?
Response - An educational presentation on Reclamation's budgeting process and Reclamation revenues will be considered as a topic for future Managing for Excellence meetings.
- Reclamation staffing levels never seem to reduce, only grow. We need to understand why.
Response – The Action Item 9, Workload evaluation, demonstrates that there have been significant declines in staffing levels. From 1992 to 2002, Reclamation's overall staff decreased from approximately 8,000 to 5,900 and was approximately 5,800 in March of 2006. We want input on whether you think we are looking at the right data.
- We do want to provide input on ways to change the policy development process if possible.
Response - We want to get as much feedback from as many individuals as possible.
- You have been talking a lot about becoming more efficient and operating as a business. We don't want you to be a business. We want you to be a public organization that operates for the good of all to manage resources for the future. We do want you to be efficient and cost effective, but are not looking for you to become like a private business.
Comment noted. This comment has been forwarded to the team working on Action Item 1, Strengthen interaction with customers and other stakeholders to address Reclamation-wide issues and to the Managing for Excellence Executive Team.

Overview of Reclamation Cash Flow

Presenters: Gary Campbell, Deputy Director, Great Plains Region
Bruce Muller, Chief, Dam Safety Office
Tim Ulrich, Manager, Lower Colorado Dams Office

This overview was to provide information to attendees about Reclamation indirect costs at all office levels: Technical Service Center, Regional Office, and Area Office. Information was also provided about how the Technical Service Center charges are determined and the source of funds. Additional detail was provided for an actual project at Parker Dam. The comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation's responses are italicized.

- Why are work hours 1600 versus 2060 per year?
Response – Leave varies by employee and more seasoned employees have more leave. Additional information obtained after the meeting shows that Reclamation-wide, including the Technical Services Center, Reclamation employees charge an average of 1,700 hours per year as regular work hours. The average does not include overtime or comp time. The remaining 380 hours in a normal 2080 hour work year, are split among annual leave, sick leave, holidays, and administrative leave.
- When you are developing the overhead rate, do you take into account when an engineer doesn't have enough work to be full time? Is this typical?
Response – At Parker Dam, all costs are charged directly to customers. This is not typical because the lower Colorado Dams Office (the specific example given in this presentation) does not have an overhead account or multiple projects to charge.
- With a leave additive of 29% or 1600 hours per year, are benefits included in the leave additive or is it a part of the salary?
Response – The sum of salary and leave is used to calculate the benefits.
- Employees are not working hard enough.
Response – The 1600 hours does not reflect how many hours an employee actually works, but was intended as a place holder in this presentation.
- What will the work force look like in 10 years?
Response – Action Item 12, Complete a right-sizing process, will establish a process to continually right-size Reclamation. Action Item 12, Complete a right-sizing process, is scheduled to start in November and will be the subject of breakout sessions in 2007 Managing for Excellence public meetings.
- Who determines what costs are reimbursable? Security, for example, has some costs that are reimbursed and some that aren't. Can we get a clear description of how these decisions are made?
Response – Reimbursable costs may be determined by statute, policy or case law. For security costs, Reclamation published a booklet, which describes which security costs are reimbursable and which are non-reimbursable. The booklet is available on the Managing for Excellence website at <http://www.usbr.gov/excellence/events/slcpm.html>. Prior to September 11th, most security costs were reimbursable. After September 11th, the policy changed so that capital costs would be non-reimbursable and maintenance would be reimbursable. Guards were non-reimbursable through 2005. Starting in 2006 guards are reimbursable.
- It would help to have warning and to amortize extraordinary maintenance costs.
Comment noted.
- How were allocations of reimbursable security costs made? Has Reclamation considered that recreation provides far greater risk to security (due to bringing people to dams) more so than power or irrigation?
Response – Existing allocations for O&M of a project facility were used. Where recreation is an established benefit, security costs were proportionally allocated and paid for with appropriated funds.
- Are all personnel costs within Reclamation reimbursable?

- Response - Reclamation will try to address this question at future public meetings.*
- Out of Reclamation's total salary cost, is it possible to say what percentage is reimbursable? Where does the appropriated money go?
Response – Reclamation will address this question at future public meetings.

Overview of Major Repair Challenges

Presenter: Mike Ryan, Director, Great Plains Region

Much of Reclamation's infrastructures are 50-55 years old, an age which places many structures in need of major repairs or replacements, which are very expensive. While O&M costs are up 35%, farming income is down 25%. Infrastructure failure is significant in terms of economic impact. An additional factor is the realities of the national budget. The goals of this functional area are a sustainable infrastructure, financial viability of projects, and customer involvement. There are three action items under this functional area: Action Item 17, Loan guarantee; Action Item 18, Develop process or tools to determine the need for major repairs; and Action Item 19, Work with stakeholders to add value to major repairs. This presentation included a discussion of the results of Action Item 17, Loan guarantee. Comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation's responses are italicized.

- We prefer the Rehabilitation and Betterment (R&B) program.
Response – Under current public policy, the R&B program is not available. This comment was forwarded to the Managing for Excellence Executive Team.
- Can we begin completing paperwork to be proactive if loan guarantee legislation should come through?
Response – We will notify all Reclamation districts when to begin the process of applying for a loan, after legislation is passed and enacted.
- Will taking a loan guarantee trigger the Reclamation Reform Act (RRA)?
Response – This will depend greatly on how the final law is written. This comment was forwarded to the team working on Action Item 17, Loan guarantee.
- If you are out from under RRA I'm not sure why a loan would bring an entity back under RRA requirements.
Comment noted. This comment was forwarded to the team working on Action Item 17, Loan guarantee.

Overview of Engineering and Design Services Functional Area

Presenter: Maryanne Bach, Director, Technical Resources

The objectives of this functional area are to develop a twenty-first century service model by examining the maintenance of a Center of Excellence, determining costs, determining who pays, and ensuring that Reclamation has the appropriate core capabilities and is

right-sized and efficient. There are eight action items under this functional area: Action Item 9, Workload evaluation; Action Item 10, Evaluate workload in terms of commercial, commercial core, and/or inherently governmental nature; Action Item 11, Analyze the unit to unit cost of in-house performance of commercial workload vs. outsourcing; Action Item 12, Complete a right-sizing process; Action Item 13, Analyze alternative funding for the Technical Service Center; Action Item 14, Implement design engineering estimate oversight functions by identifying and conducting pilot reviews; Action Item 15, Establish policy and procedures for the oversight of design and construction estimates; and Action Item 16, Analyze Reclamation's engineering standards.

Overview of Project Management Functional Area

Presenter: Rick Gold, Director, Upper Colorado Region

The objectives of the project management functional area are to use internal and external stakeholder input to examine agency and industry practices, to consider additional improvement in construction-type project management throughout Reclamation from inception to operation and maintenance, and, if necessary, develop policies and guidance to ensure effective implementation of project management practices. There are five action items under this functional area: Action Item 20 through 23, Project management; and Action Item 24, Establish and maintain a contracting repository.

Overview of Human Resources/Workforce Functional Area

Presenter: Lorri Gray, Program Manager, Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

The focus of the human resources/workforce functional area is to ensure employees have the skills to successfully carry out Reclamation's mission, to establish performance accountability, and to develop processes to ensure that these skills are not lost through employee turnover. There are five action items under this functional area: Action Item 37, Identify positions that require collaboration; Action Item 38, Create a collaborative competency curriculum; Action Item 39, Ensure training to develop collaborative competencies is available for employees; Action Item 40, Evaluate Reclamation's training to plan for succession; and Action Item 41, Develop a workforce and succession planning process.

Breakout Session Comments and Feedback

Action Item 6: Policy Gaps

Team Lead: Shannon Kerstiens, Program Analyst

Executive Sponsor: Roseann Gonzales, Director, Program and Policy Services

The objective of Action Item 6: Policy Gaps is to identify policy gaps created by past sunseting efforts or based on new needs and to prioritize policy gaps using internal and public feedback. Comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation's responses are italicized.

- What are you looking for from the stakeholders, customers, partners and the public?
Response – We are looking for comments on what issues need policy or directive and standards developed. We are also looking for comments on what is highest priority (which policies or directives and standards are needed in the next year) and for areas where there are inconsistencies or where there appears to be too much “grey” in what Reclamation can do.
- When are comments needed?
Response - By September 29th.
- Land and property issues need to be made a high priority.
Response – This will be placed on the list for Reclamation leadership to consider.
- I second the importance of land issues and I will provide documentation regarding Reclamation houses in disrepair.
Comment noted.
- Do you have a policy for rehabilitation of existing projects?
Response – No, this will be placed on the list for Reclamation Leadership to consider.
- What happens to excess revenue that goes into Reclamation fund. We need some accounting of where the money goes and how that money is credited to the project.
Response – Reclamation is preparing a presentation for the November public meeting to explain the Reclamation fund.
- How can an O&M bill be more than 10 years old? How can Reclamation let this happen? Reclamation needs to take better care of its financial business.
Comment Noted. This comment was forwarded to the responsible Regional Director.

- Water transfers between project and non-project entities needs to go on your list.
Response – Send us your details and we will place this on the list for consideration by Reclamation Leadership.
- Is the team taking into account issues such as the need for additional authority?
Response - We have not taken the need for additional authority into account under action item 6, however, this issue will be forwarded to the Reclamation Leadership as an item that is not covered by the existing action items.
- Project planning doesn't need to be high priority. Reclamation is not building new projects.
Response – The Great Plains Region has a majority of its budget in new construction, rural water, so it is important in some areas.
- Is this being done in response to the National Research Council report?
Response - Yes, the National Research Council Report - Managing Construction and Infrastructure in the 21st Century Bureau of Reclamation (NRC Report) noted that field staff was still using the Reclamation Instructions. Also, the report emphasized centralized policy and localized decision making and updated policies will be necessary to achieve this.
- Will the policy relate to disasters? For example, flooding?
Response - Flood plain and Emergency management policies might. However, we may not have policy for emergency planning in the event of flooding. This is why we are looking for comments on how much policy is needed. There is a trade-off between rigidity and flexibility.
- Policy should be more like guidelines, allowing for flexibility and creativity.
Response – We define policy as those items that must be done a certain way.
- You can establish policy that still allows flexibility at the field level.
Response – We agree. This is the challenge with developing policy that is mandatory.
- I have experience with specific inflexible policy. You should not go that far. Policy should be established to keep people out of trouble.
Response - We need you to tell us what you think about how we should respond to the NRC Report that says, “Develop policy.” What do you think that should mean?

Action Items 8: Alternative Scenarios

Team Lead: Lisa Vehmas, Program Analyst

Executive Sponsor: Roseann Gonzales, Director, Program and Policy Services

The purpose of Action Item 8, Alternative Scenarios is to consider the scenarios discussed in Chapter Five of the National Research Council Report - *Managing Construction and Infrastructure in the 21st Century Bureau of Reclamation* (NRC Report) and what refinements, if any, to Reclamation's organizational structure may be useful in meeting future challenges under each of these scenarios. Comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation's responses are italicized.

- I can see the practicality of contracting out Operation and Maintenance (O&M) but what parts of operations would it make sense to outsource?
Response - Think beyond operations on irrigation diversion dams, what about a power plant or turning a gate versus how much water to release? Many facilities are already operated by private entities. We are trying to evaluate the scenarios that National Research Council (NRC) identified.
- Is the team evaluating any scenarios not identified by the NRC?
Response - Yes, the team will be looking for suggestions, but the team hasn't identified any yet.
- The NRC report page 89 last bullet states water users will be responsible for increased O&M responsibilities, who gets the break, who has decreased responsibilities?
Response - Under Scenario 3 this issue will receive a lot of focus. This goes to how scenario 3 is interpreted and the analysis of the funding options.
- In one case, the O&M is split up among four or five local entities. If the proportion of the O&M increases, who gets to pay less? This is a particular concern given that as the infrastructure ages it will need more and more O&M.
Response – Chapter 5 of the NRC report states that water users will be required to provide an increasing proportion of O&M financing. The team will be looking at financing, both the increasing O&M costs and the proportion water users pay, primarily in the context of scenario 3.
- We have an excellent working relationship with Reclamation and the Water and Power Administration. It is critical that Reclamation maintain critically skilled labor and professionals so that they are available when needed, particularly in an emergency. We favor customer involvement. We don't want an over-reliance on brokers and contractors. Reclamation has a good record in this area. We want to hold onto this and build it up. It is working in the Mid-Pacific Region and we would like to keep it.
Response - Distinguishing between centralized construction management in the regions versus the Technical Service Center is one thing the team needs to address. We have to understand and define terms such as "centrally located" and "project" and combinations of both terms.
- The Salt River Project had centrally-located construction management. If you don't get the individual out in the field, that is a problem; the leader has to be as close to the project as possible. Projects can be managed out of Denver, but it is frustrating to have to get on a plane and go to Denver. They should be out at the site. The raising of Roosevelt Dam was a good experience.
Comment noted. Any additional information would be appreciated as the team moves forward.
- We believe centrally-located project management is with the area office. We find it frustrating working with Denver because they have never been to the project. It is more efficient for the district to deal with the local area office.
Response – We recognize that different area offices have varying levels of skills and can provide different levels of service. This will be considered as the team moves forward.

- With the increased O&M costs it would be nice to receive funds for operating the dams. For example, recreation doesn't provide revenue for operations.
Comment noted. This comment was forwarded to the team working on Action Item 29, Analyze the effectiveness of Operation and Maintenance planning.
- Are there any case studies reflecting different geographical regions? Will there be more clear delineation between O&M and capital improvement? This is important because of different cost sharing between the two. Is there a way to better clarify O&M and capital improvement?
Response – Scenarios are currently being developed and case studies are being identified. This comment will be considered as the team moves forward.
- The Central Arizona Project is different than scenarios 1 through 3. It was constructed out of the area office and is managed by local offices and districts. Reclamation just oversees the project at a broad level.
Comment noted.
- Consider as a case study “How does Reclamation transfer projects to more than one entity?”
Comment noted. The team will consider this comment as case studies are developed.
- The Rio Grande Project may be a good case study for Scenario 2. Mexico and two states are involved. The operating agreement has less and less involvement by Reclamation but still some oversight. There are probably too many Reclamation people involved and we have a concern with the budget for Reclamation personnel.
Comment noted.
- We are concerned with Reclamation getting rid of Reclamation people who know how to turn wrenches. Reclamation needs expertise in operations. Reclamation should continue to grow expertise from within the agency.
Comment noted. This comment will be forwarded to the teams working on Action Item 12, Complete a right-sizing process, and the action items in the Human Resources functional area.
- How does Reclamation propose to deal with conflicting interests when transferring multi-use facilities?
Response - The team needs to analyze this issue including analyzing the pros and cons of transferring multi-use facilities to water users and identifying barriers and opportunities. The details will come out in the products.
- The scenarios assume that the system is broken, but one scenario should be the “no action alternative”. Is the team looking at new scenarios too?
Response - Reclamation is not looking at a “one size fits all” approach. The team will consider an array of options; not all options fit all projects.
- I have an O&M contract to replace a pump. We are working with Reclamation on replacement but keep running into walls. The design is done and we have money to do the project. The installation results in capital assets and we are being told that we can't donate assets because there is no way to get the assets back on Reclamation's books.
Comment noted.

- I know of one real-life example of three entities that have taken over conveyance facilities. After taking over of the facility, our experience is that there is no reduction of costs even though this was supposed to be an outcome of the transfer. *Comment noted. This comment was forwarded to the teams working on Action Item 28, Find opportunities for title transfer and Action Item 26, Find opportunities to transfer O&M to water users.*
- Reclamation has had a number of title transfers. For single-purpose projects it is easy to quantify savings to each district, but what has been the Reclamation reduction in the annual budget? For more complicated projects, allocation of costs and benefits is difficult. We suggest you consider a single-purpose project and a multipurpose project example. *Comment noted. The team will consider this comment as case studies are developed.*
- Develop a strategy for multi-user O&M for example, two states, 3 tribes (each sovereign), and numerous water districts. It would be useful to see some examples of operation of a project as a committee and what is Reclamation's role. *Comment noted. The team will consider this comment as case studies are developed.*
- I disagree with calling an operating district a customer. They should be called a partner if they are paying part of the cost. *Comment noted.*
- You need something on rehabilitation of aging infrastructure. Add a scenario that addresses this. *Comment noted. The team will consider this comment as case studies are developed.*
- Analyze under each scenario what we mean by "retain level of stewardship." *Response - Yes, the team will be looking at what Reclamation retains in stewardship. Scenarios need to be site specific.*

Action Item 9: Workload in Engineering and Design Services

Team Leads: Perry Hensley, Chief, Geotechnical Services Division
Jamie Macartney, Business Resource Manager

Executive Sponsor: Maryanne Bach, Director, Technical Resources

The objective of Action Item 9 was to prepare a comprehensive evaluation of historical and near-term workload. The purpose of this breakout is to provide results for Action Item 9. To complete Action Item 9, existing data sources were used. The Action Item initially encompassed design, estimating and construction management but it was determined that all technical services should be considered, with the exception of operations of facilities or work done in support of the Department or other Cabinet agencies. The data used was a combination of data sets from Activity Based Costing

(ABC/M) and Federal Financial System (FFS). Data from the budget process was not used because the technical services could not be separated from other services.

There were three primary results

Result No. 1: there has been a significant transition from water resources development to water resources management. Cost data reflects this transition, as does current staffing. For social scientists and physical scientists, the engineering work stayed fairly stable, while the engineering staff has been reduced by almost one-half.

Result No. 2: the workload in Reclamation is performed where it is most efficient to meet objectives.

Result No. 3: there is substantial outsourcing of technical services performed by Reclamation; fiscal year 2005 Reclamation outsourced approximately 40% of the workload.

Comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation's responses are italicized.

- Of the outsourced work, how much is environmental in comparison to true engineering work?
Response – Action Item 9, Workload evaluation, activities focused on the total technical workload, the contracted work was not segregated into work performed specifically by environmental and engineering disciplines. This information is not readily available from the existing Reclamation data structures and would require extensive efforts to obtain. However, the distribution of environmental versus engineering work that is outsourced could be roughly approximated by assuming this workload is similar in distribution to the proportion of in-house scientific and engineering technical staffing. Based on this assumption it is likely that the outsourced environmental work load represents at least a third of the total technical workload that is outsourced. Further evaluation and characterization of the outsourced work on an environmental and engineering basis may be performed during the completion of Action Item 12, Complete a right-sizing process.
- The mission of Reclamation is changing, but as a farmer that looked at 130 percent of snow pack before the season started, we need to realize that if we are having a change in climate, there are structural, engineering, and other technical areas that need to be able to respond to these situations.
Comment noted.
- When the district is responsible for the O&M of transferred works via an O&M contract with Reclamation, and the district outsources the O&M, that data will not be reflected in the outsourcing data Reclamation used in this study. Only work outsourced directly by Reclamation will be reflected in the data studied.
Response – That is correct and a very good point. The data presented does not account for technical work on transferred facilities whether the work is performed by the district staff or performed by other entities through contracts.

- Do you see trends continuing over the next 2 years? Looking at more biologists, etc.?
Response – There are no anticipated radical departures, maybe a slight decrease in engineering and slight increase in environmental sciences. In addition to the often-highlighted retirement bubble, we are seeing young folks leave the agency—the newer Federal retirement system has features more like the private sector, for example 401Ks, and that allows more mobility in the Federal sector than in the past. Also, it takes a special type of engineer who wants to stay with Reclamation given the salary that they could earn in the private sector. The cost information presented in the Cash Flow Overview demonstrated our senior engineers make less than their counterparts in the private sector.
- Allow for more input from the project beneficiaries early in the process because some districts have engineering capability that can be utilized. The question is, at what point can the beneficiary be included to have valuable input on design?
Response – We agree that project beneficiaries should be included in the process and this comment will be forwarded to the team working on Action Item 18, Develop a process or tools to determine the need for major repairs.
- If you provide a challenge for engineers and a reasonable wage and benefits you'll keep good employees.
Response – We believe that Reclamation is a challenging and exciting place to work and that is reflected by Reclamation's many excellent employees.
- Have you performed any analysis in the “what if” arena e.g., what if we outsourced \$150 Million of the \$200 Million, what difference does it make to staffing? This could show customers what they are getting for their money.
Response – This has not been done but will be considered during the analysis for Action Item 12, Complete a right-sizing process.
- Whenever you look at dollars as an indicator of work, it is not a good indicator of work as people get raises etc.
Response - Actual hours were used for the in-house evaluation; however, we do not have the same data for outsourcing. The previous graph looking at the number of jobs is much more useful way to look at workload.
- It is curious that program managers doubled. I think it would also be helpful to look at data after the 1990's downsizing and separate that data to see what the trend is; to see if there is no longer a downsizing effort reflected.
Response- Some of the increase in program managers could be attributed to a change in philosophy that supervisors and managers should no longer retain the job classification they held as non-supervisors. As employees retire, they aren't being replaced due to budget cuts; however, the workload continues to increase to the point where we are going to get into a serious situation given the aging infrastructure. There are some Reclamation recruitment programs: rotational engineers, interns, SCEP(student career educational program), STEP(student temporary educational program), and retention bonus that are working well.
- We are trying to match company employment base to the community. Not only is Reclamation's organizational knowledge at stake, water users are having the same issues.
Comment noted.

- Rightsizing has to be looked at carefully because the “right size” will depend on who you are asking. We want to make sure that you are looking at the “right size” to meet everyone’s needs. Some customer’s are not as in need of engineering services as others. You may want to get more customer input on what services customers anticipate needing from Reclamation in the near future.
Response - What started this analysis was the perception of some customers that they pay for the Technical Service Center through overhead costs.
- It might be helpful to show what customers are reimbursing vs. what they are not. People tend to look and say, “Look at all the people in Denver and we are paying for all of those.”
Response – Around a third of the work performed by the Technical Service Center is reimbursable. Additional information collected after the meeting shows that the bulk of the work performed by the Technical Service Center is for the Dam Safety Office, Regional Dam Safety Programs, and Other Government Agencies, which are mostly non-reimbursable from water users. In addition, a significant portion of the planning related work performed by the Technical Service Center is not reimbursed by water users.

Action Item 18: Determining the Need for Major Repairs

Team Lead: Tim Ulrich, Manager, Lower Colorado Dams Office

Executive Sponsor: Mike Ryan, Director, Great Plains Region

The objectives of Action Item 18 are to incorporate transparency and customer involvement in the process of determining whether a major project is warranted and to determine if the existing tools are adequate. The data gathered for Action Item 18 are based on information from Reclamation employees and two districts or customers in the five regions. To interpret the comments made during this breakout session, a copy of the PowerPoint presentation is necessary. The presentation is available at <http://www.usbr.gov/excellence/events/slcpm.html>. Comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation’s responses are italicized.

- A major repair should be defined as a repair that can’t be paid for within a year. This should be set by the districts own practices. This wouldn’t be an exclusive definition.
Response – The definition was expanded to include this comment.
- Are the boxes on the right side of the flow chart, the boxes with a yellow border, triggered by inspections?
Response – The boxes could be triggered by inspections, they aren’t defined that way.
- Where is the risk defined?
Response – Risk is defined in the asset assessment; the wording on the bottom diamond box under “Willing to accept degraded performance”. I am talking about a standard agreed to by the customer and Reclamation. The team has not

- defined the standard of minimum degraded performance; this will be up to the area office and the customer.*
- Who is a customer?
Response – A customer is anybody holding a contract with Reclamation, any contract: power or water. A stakeholder is nebulous. They have an interest but not a contract.
 - Can you provide an example of value added?
Response – Hoover Dam had an overhaul due to leakage. The gates were being replaced anyway but by using stainless steel the gates could provide more flow capacity at lower heads. This proposal was presented to the customer and the customer agreed that this was worthwhile.
 - We suggest you consider social and political impacts. When you have a transferred work, Reclamation should listen to the project operators and back them and support them. In our case, employees were directly asked questions by Senators and didn't respond. Furthermore, the Senate committee on water and power got no response to written questions.
Comment noted. This comment was forwarded to the teams working on Action Item 1, Relationships, Action Item 26 Transferred O&M, Action Item 28, Title transfer, and Action Item 8, Alternative scenarios.
 - What if federal funds are available but no local funds are available? The chart needs another path.
Response – This chart is only an example. The specific process should be identified by the area office.
 - After passing through box 5, “loan guarantee”, why not drop directly to “Do the work”?
Response - Some projects are funded by federal and non-federal funds. In this case, Reclamation has to come up with funds available.
 - Do you have an example of legislative action for funds or for other projects?
Response – On the Lower Yellowstone, the Corps of Engineers went back to congress to have their authority expanded allowing them to use their money as a solution.
 - Our biggest failure is getting past block 7 “legislative remedy.”
Response - Is there something we can put in the process? The district can develop a scenario on its own but there will not always be outcomes on which everybody agrees.
 - Good Dilbert flow chart. The lower section falls into funding the project. Lots of funding tools are not included.
Response – The funding mechanisms are wrapped into one bundle. Either we are going to do the job or go to box number 7 “Legislative Remedy.”
 - You could simplify the chart because Reclamation needs to be involved as well as the local customer.
Response – The items in red (stakeholder and customer) includes yellow (customer), stakeholder review also implies that yellow (the customer) is included. In response to funding sources districts can form non-profit corporations. We recognize that many funding sources are not listed here.

- During a comprehensive facility review we identified that there was a potential Safety of Dams issue. We were involved in the value added process and we jointly determined a repair was needed and was to be federally funded. We were also involved with the Technical Proposal Evaluation Committee (TPEC) preparation of specifications. The Provo Area Office gave us complete support. The scope and complete repair has to be red (stakeholders and customers). We felt like a customer. It takes time to get good relationships.
Response – The team will consider this recommendation as the final product is developed.
- Why not color block 5 “funding” yellow? Why include stakeholders at this state? They were included earlier in the process.
Response – I have examples where there was financial benefit from including other groups. The team will think about marking the box yellow, customers only.
- We have a good relationship with area office, don’t screw it up.
Response – This process is not going to solve all the problems, it is not designed to solve all problems but leaves enough flexibility to maintain the good relationships.
- No two partners/customers are the same. Some districts have problems spending money, some have no problem. There is a big difference with the financial capabilities of customers.
Response – This flow chart is an example that requires customization at the local office level to meet each entities’ needs.
- Remove the blocks on the bottom and replace with “is this financially feasible?”
Response - This will be considered as the team moves forward.
- You need to examine additional alternatives for addressing major repairs, including: 1) establishment of a revolving loan fund using the Reclamation fund, to allow water users to pay their share of major repairs; and 2) evaluating title transfer when a major repair is needed to help secure private financing.
Response - A presentation of the Reclamation fund is scheduled for the November Public Meeting in Sacramento, California. Additionally, this comment will be forwarded to the team working on Action Item 28, Find opportunities for title transfer.

Action Items 20-23: Project Management

Team Leads: Lauren Carly, Deputy Construction Manager
Rick Ehat, Construction Manager

Executive Sponsor: Rick Gold, Director, Upper Colorado Region

The objectives of Action Item 20-23 are to examine Reclamation’s and industry-wide project management practices, to consider improvements to Reclamation’s project management, and, if necessary, develop policies and guidance to ensure effective implementation of project management practices. Comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation’s responses are italicized.

- Are we only focusing on construction-type activities?
Response – No. There is a need to educate people in Reclamation that Project Management (PM) is a generic process that could also apply to Environmental Impact Statements, contract negotiations, etc. The Upper Colorado Region has already implemented project management for a non-construction type project and it is also being similarly used in the Pacific Northwest Region. The best way to implement this is to try it on those applications that appear to fit best. This has a huge potential in other areas. The Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) provides the strategies for management of such projects.
- What is the date of the first version of PMBOK?
Response – PMBOK is in its third edition dated 2004 which is published by the Project Management Institute which began in 1969.
- What is the source for PMBOK?
Response – The Project Management Institute website (<http://www.pmi.org>)
- Are we using the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for peer review?
Response – Team co-lead, Lauren Carly, worked for the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) during its transition into using a rigid PM process. USACE developed their own document, but it mirrors PMBOK. We are hesitant to inject USACE rigidity; we want to maintain flexibility to get things done quickly within Reclamation.
- This would be nice to use for smaller tasks also.
Comment noted.
- Be sure to have someone available to follow through on workload while others are in training.
Comment noted.
- Reclamation needs to make a commitment to maintaining the human resources to do things such as PM and technical services.
Response – We keep hearing from the customers that the issue seems to be the cost of Reclamation. We need to hear what’s important to all customers.
- Much of what Reclamation does is beyond project management, mediators or facilitators, a different skill set. I hope there is a place for both talents in the future of Reclamation.
Comment noted.
- What is the connection to asset sustainment or asset management? How is it being coordinated?
Response - We have identified a total of 9 action items with overlap with our action items 20-23. We recognize that further work is required to align all of the action items.
- Is there an equivalent guideline to PMBOK for asset management? Looking for consistency within and across regions.
Response – There could be one, but we are not aware of it being available. Is this an area where we should invest more time?

- Don't downsize to the point that districts can't rely on the advice of Reclamation personnel to carry out their business.
Comment noted.
- Our dealings with area offices have been great due to knowledge of problems throughout many different areas of Reclamation and how they were addressed on other projects.
Comment noted.
- We sometimes have a lack of promptness in getting simple things done. New hands seem to require a minimum time to review projects regardless of the simplicity of the issue. We will leave example letter with you.
Comment noted.
- Reclamation staff saves customers money by holding contractors accountable. Customers are relying on Reclamation's expertise.
Comment noted.
- Customers that have dams don't want Reclamation to lose expertise. It would be beneficial to have a pilot program for young engineers to spend time out on the projects. Reclamation needs to build understanding of irrigation facilities for new young staff. We want to keep closeness between Reclamation and customers.
Comment noted. This comment will also be forwarded to the teams working on Action Items 40, Evaluate Reclamation's training to plan for succession and 41, Develop a workforce and succession planning process.
- What did the National Academies of Science say about PM?
Response - They said Reclamation needs to look at the need for a comprehensive and consistent PM process. If there is merit, implement such a process and provide the necessary training in PM principles.
- Does the report cover all action items 20-23?
Response - The report covers phase 1, "The Status of Project Management in Reclamation" examines current practices for all areas. It answers "What are we doing today? What could we do better?" Phase 2 will contain the Team's recommendations for moving ahead for the future.
- Process - How does PM interact with Transferred works?
Response - This does have some application to inspections. The Pacific Northwest Region currently uses PM on Section 7 ESA consultations.
- Do we plan to train other entities in PM if O&M transfer is on the horizon? I suggest offering it.
Comment noted. This will be considered in phase II.
- The key element of success for these action items is a commitment by Reclamation to retaining personnel with the technical expertise to perform these project management tasks - not limited to construction management. There are technical projects for which the private sector is not a viable alternative. Retaining these personnel and the requisite support facilities may involve supporting these capabilities even when there is not a "client" or steady stream of outside project requests. This comment also relates to right sizing and other action items.
Comment noted.

Action Items 37, 40, and 41: Human Resources/Workforce

Team Leads: Action Item 37: Lorri Gray, Program Manager

Action Item 40: CJ McKeral, Deputy Area Manager, Montana Area Office
(Not Present)

Action Item 41: Ann Gold, Special Assistant to the Deputy Commissioner
of Policy Administration and Budget

Executive Sponsor: Larry Todd, Deputy Commissioner, Policy Administration and
Budget

The breakout session was intended to provide information and to receive input and feedback on the following action items: 37, Collaborative competencies; 40, Leadership and technical training development; and 41, Workforce/succession planning. Comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation's responses are italicized.

- A problem lies in “we can't help you because we do not have a policy to help you.” We need to get past this.
Comment noted.
- Younger employees don't seem to understand the mission of the Reclamation. They tend towards environmental issues and forget about the mission and other goals.
Comment noted.
- Why do you have a current technical skill factor when it does not appear to be used?
Response – Including the technical skill factor in the evaluation process provides supervisors with the tools to look at all of the potential skills that he/she may want to look for in a particular position.
- How much lateral movement is there for engineers? Can engineers move into other positions or occupations?
Response – Yes engineers can move into other positions in the organization.
- Are Engineers important enough to Reclamation to move them into other occupations?
Response - Yes, we do look to move them into other occupations depending on their interests and the organization's staffing needs. We have had mission-critical positions that include engineers.
- Snake River employees are really helpful and understand irrigators. They have a long list of things they are doing right and a smaller list of things they are doing wrong.
Comment noted.
- One thing you are currently doing wrong is using acronyms and jargon.
Comment noted.

- Reclamation employees seem to listen and respond, but customers do not always understand the answers.
Response – Reclamation is working to address this through Action Item 1, Strengthen interaction with customers and other stakeholders to address Reclamation-wide issues.
- Reclamation does not communicate between departments or organizations. This is the case for all areas and is especially true at the local office.
Comment noted.
- Provo provides good information on capital projects. They share expertise.
Comment noted.
- Some positions might need to be incorporated into the organization because of aging infrastructure and a changing world. Long-term asset management seems to be left out of Reclamation plans. Some things may not have been needed in the past, but now are needed.
Response – Asset management has a central effort going on at the corporate level, and we are working with area managers to get this done. We have a draft asset management plan. We need to develop better communications on this program. The Department of the Interior has made it clear that transferred works will need to have asset management plans as well as reserved works. The timeline is for this effort to be complete in 2008. We are paying attention to this.
- It is helpful to have one point of contact for a problem where that person is able to get the answer and bring back the information. That way, we don't have to go through multiple levels.
Comment noted. This comment will be forwarded to the team working on Action Item 1, Strengthen relationships, to consider as they develop their recommendations.
- Reclamation has a set of rules and cannot seem to surmount them until we get to the Area Manager level. Thinking outside the box and doing things that make sense is important. Find ways to accomplish things instead of listing why it cannot be done.
Comment noted.
- It is difficult for managers to assess “collaborative competency” without input from collaborators. Hopefully, the assessment procedures will involve the folks on the other side of the table.
Comment noted.

- Why categorize the technical skill level of an employee and not use it to calculate the “succession factor”?

Response - One of the factors we are evaluating as part of the workforce planning exercise is the 'Position Risk Factor,' which takes into account those critical and unique skills in a given position and how difficult it will be to fill the position. This factor is part of the “Total Succession” factor so the risk of losing those unique, critical skills is evaluated. The intent of the “Technical Skills” factor, on the other hand, is to evaluate whether there are individuals who can provide training, serve as mentors, provide specific expertise in a technical area, etc., which helps us determine where we have gaps and where we have expertise that can be shared. We believe the "Position Risk" factor takes into account the concern raised in this question.

Closing Session Comments

The following are comments made at the closing of the session. Comments received at the meeting are bulleted and Reclamation's responses are italicized.

- We appreciate the meeting. The presenters were well prepared.
- Provide a meeting in January or February of 2007 to review "near final" products, prior to them being approved and implemented.
Response – A meeting schedule for 2007 is being developed and will be discussed at the next public meeting.
- We would like the opportunity to comment on products but we don't want to slow the process. We will request to see how our comments were incorporated prior to the decision documents going forward to the Commissioner for signature and implementation.
Response – Reclamation will look for ways to improve the ability of customers and stakeholders to provide comments on final drafts for some action items.
- Where will the report reside? Will there be a pocket version for all employees or will policy and directives be on the Reclamation Manual website? You need to assure that we think about how to educate all employees on the importance and outcomes of *Managing for Excellence*.
Response – Reclamation will provide information of how the final products will tie together and how this will affect Reclamation's daily business during the 2007 public meetings.
- Could we do more items in the meeting to minimize travel time, i.e. cover more items in a full 2-day meeting?
Response - This will be considered as future agendas are developed.
- It is good to have formal answers to questions that were asked at the last meeting. Don't just post answers on the website, print them and have them available at the next meeting.
Response – The response to comments will be available at future public meetings.
- The internet is sometimes tough to fully use; for example, downloading large documents on standard speed connections. Perhaps send out responses in print to attendees.
Response – If you are having problems obtaining documents from the Managing for Excellence website please email excellence@do.usbr.gov or call (303) 445-2841. We are available to make copies and mail hard copies to those that request them.

To submit additional comments on the *Managing for Excellence* initiative, *Managing for Excellence* Public Meeting, or the individual action items, you can use the internet at address <http://www.usbr.gov/excellence/comment/index.html>, email: excellence@do.usbr.gov, or call (303) 445-2841.