

**Partnership Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
APPL Conference – Sacramento, CA
March 19-23, 2007**

Attending

Debra Stokes, HQ
Jeff Boutwell, SWF
Greg Miller, NWK
Richard Otto, MVP

Cori Brown, NAB
Mark Wilmes, LRL
Chris Gallagher, SPN
Mike Hosey, SAW

1. The entire team attended the Association of Partners for Public Lands conference in Sacramento, California and met as sub-committees as well as a meeting of the whole committee during the week.

2. One of the sub-committees is assigned to investigate existing Corps partnership authorities, recommend change in existing policy concerning these authorities as well as investigate the need for new authorities that would enhance the Corps partnership ability. This group met with Misty Latcu, attorney from NWP who is advising the team on legal matters. The group then summarized the meeting results with the entire PAC. In general, there are 4 products that require Counsel input, and 2 products that will require written policy guidelines after new legislation is passed.

A. Provide draft language for a Corps “Partnership Enhancement Package.” This proposed legislative package would address several shortcomings of the existing partnership authorities and would authorize the Corps to:

- Enter into cooperative agreements for partnership purposes. This would provide an avenue for the Corps to transfer appropriated funds to a partner organization.
- Address shortcomings in the Challenge Partnership authority allowing partnering groups to issue contracts (rather than just the Corps) and would allow the Corps to issue contracts and obligate appropriated funds based on notification that a partner agency has received a grant and will reimburse the Corps once grant monies are received (up-front funding issue).
- Authorize the Corps to partner with our lessees to develop projects whose end result is in the public good.
- Clarify authority for cooperating associations to state that associations can be reimbursed from the Corps for the associations’ labor in staffing visitor centers, and to state that cooperating associations may sell items beyond the typical book store items, similar to a concessionaire arrangement, provided the funds are used by the association for purposes outlined in its by laws.
- Would authorize the Corps to participate in jointly operated facilities on non-Corps lands, such as a visitor center where it may benefit the Corps to have interpretive displays.

B. Review and provide legal counsel on the draft MOU with the new Corps of Engineers Education Foundation (COEF).

C. Develop guidelines concerning donations, fund raising and recognition. This document would be similar to the National Park Service Directors Order 21 and would address such things as in-park donations, funds accountability, corporate or business donations, fundraising campaigns, who can accept donations, prohibited sources and donor recognition.

D. Provide a legal primer, similar to the Department of Interior's Partnership Legal Primer, that would address basic partnership concepts, partnership tools (grants, MOUs, CAs, contributions, etc), statutory authority for partnerships and how these authorities translate into agency policy, appropriate use of government equipment and property (including the Corps Communication Mark and Signature) and the ethics associated with all of the above. (Note: The donations and fund raising guidelines summarized above in item C may be one chapter of the legal primer).

E. Revision of Corps regulations

F. Simplifications of forms and agreements

Note: In reference to items E and F minor changes may be made in the existing Engineering Regulations and Pamphlets prior to the authorization of new authorities. Obviously any new legislation will require major changes in Corps implementing guidance based on the specific language of legislation.

3. The PAC realizes that a defined process is necessary to accomplish the legislative and legal tasks and will use the Corps PMP process to accomplish this. This project management plan will define the products, outline the process needed to accomplish Office of Counsel review, outline the process needed for RLAT (Recreation Leadership Advisory Team) coordination, and set a time table to accomplish the tasks listed above. A meeting of HQ principles including Operations and Office of Counsel will solidify this process.

4. A second sub-committee of the PAC is examining the OMBIL reporting requirements for partnership information and what performance measures should be used to determine partnership success. It is generally felt that the current data being entered in to OMBIL is insufficient to provide a total picture of Corps partnership activities. After reviewing current OMBIL entries, the sub-committee has determined that the definitions of each reporting item need to be clarified and partnership agreements should be broken away from Real Estate agreements. Data fields that do not apply to specific types of partnership agreements should be grayed out. The "volunteer agreements" field currently being reported will be dropped as it provides no real usable data. The new OMBIL recreation wizard worked well this past year but only included volunteer data. The remaining partnership data was not included and as a result OMBIL partnership reports show incomplete partnership data. The sub-committee is exploring the possibility of including all partnership data in the wizard or drawing from both the wizard and the other partnership agreements data for one report. Further review is also needed concerning the environmental stewardship side of OMBIL vs. the recreation side to determine where

partnership data should be entered. The sub-committee will also explore whether direct costs and benefits data should be included in OMBIL similar to what we now do with handshake applications. The sub-committee will discuss this with Scott Jackson and others at ERDC and ask for a recommendation.

5. The PAC is recommending that budget packages entered into RecBest and ESBEST be tagged as partnership projects. This would elevate packages in priority similar to what is done with endangered species. This will require coordination within Headquarters and ERDC to determine how much significance would be placed on budget packages tagged as partnerships.

6. At the APPL convention, APPL and the Corps conducted its sixth training class for Corps employees on how to build partnership capacities and operate within the Corps current authorities. During this training, a presentation was given by Mr. Rich Deline and Ms. Debbie Chenoweth concerning the newly established Corps of Engineers Education Foundation (COEF). The Foundation has incorporated, approved by-laws and received non-profit status from the IRS. The next step is to complete the review and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Corps. We hope the MOU will be signed by the end of May 2007. Parallel efforts to define the process for identifying projects, coordination between the Corps and the Foundation, and how funds will be handled are being developed. Mr. Deline explained the Foundation intends to be an umbrella type organization that will work with local friends groups and associations to seek funding for worthwhile projects. The Foundation is dedicated to the stewardship of the environmental, cultural, educational and outdoor recreational resources associated with the Natural Resources Management mission of the Corps. An official kick-off ceremony is planned for the Corps national Env/Rec conference this fall in San Antonio, Texas.

7. The team also heard from Tim MacAllister, of the Trinity River Project office (SWF) about the development of a general template citizens could use when considering creating a non-profit organization in support of the Corps NRM mission.

8. The team discussed the Challenge Partnership Handshake Program and ways to refine the process and get more quality applications. The training at APPL was specifically tailored to instruct students in submitting professional Handshake applications. Recipients of the FY07 funding have not been announced pending funding allocations.

9. PAC roles and responsibilities were reviewed and assigned. The new PAC Chair will be Chris Gallagher. Greg Miller is assigned to legislative needs and will be designated as the Corps liaison to the new Foundation. Dick Otto will be Secretary and will assist Greg with legislative needs, and Cori Brown is assigned to OMBIL and is the Gateway SME. Mark Wilmes will work with Cori on OMBIL, Jeff Boutwell will handle PAC funds, and Mike Hosey is assigned to lead the Handshake Program.

10. Debra Stokes will provide an appointment letter for Chris and a thank you letter to Jeff Boutwell for his past 4 years as the PAC Project Manager/Chair.