

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WATER INFORMATION  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEDIMENTATION**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Approved September 10, 2003

**I. OFFICIAL DESIGNATION:** The Subcommittee on Sedimentation (Subcommittee) of the Advisory Committee on Water Information (ACWI).

**II. PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND FUNCTIONS:**

- A. **PURPOSE:** The Subcommittee promotes and supports development and standardization of equipment, methodologies, and calibration and performance criteria for the collection, analysis, interpretation, and interchange of fluvial-sediment data and related technical information. Information and data about sediment transport or deposition rates and the physical and chemical qualities of sediment are important to understanding current resource conditions and trends. The Subcommittee evaluates this information and other relevant issues and facts, and drafts proposed position papers or recommendations for improving the availability, reliability, and interpretation of information and data about sediment conditions. The Subcommittee forwards the draft papers and recommendations to the ACWI for deliberation and approval as advice to the Federal Government. With such information, decisions can be made by local, State, Tribal, and Federal entities on the direction of current and future programs for solutions to identified problems related to sediment.
- B. **SCOPE:** The Subcommittee considers all quality and quantity aspects of sediment transport and deposition, and effects of sediment in the environment, including stream flow, lake and reservoir storage, wetlands, estuaries, riparian areas, and overall processes that produce sediment. The Subcommittee considers policies, programs, and activities for the collection, analysis, assessment, archiving, distribution, reporting, and use of sediment and related information.
- C. **APPLICABILITY:** As resources are available and consistent with applicable legal requirements, organizations that participate in Subcommittee activities will implement recommendations and voluntarily use the guidelines and procedures developed by the Subcommittee and approved by the ACWI.
- D. **FUNCTIONS:** The Subcommittee fosters the collection, availability, and appropriate use of sediment data and information. All appropriate methods are considered, and data quality assurance is of paramount importance for natural resources managers and other decision-makers.

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1. **Background:** Sediment discharge measurements began in the late 1800's in the United States and continue today. Measurement and analysis technologies and methodologies have been refined over the years. Direct water and sediment sampling techniques continue to be used, along with those developed to collect in situ and remotely sensed sediment data in discrete and continuous time modes using electronic measurement and monitoring technologies.
  2. **Institutional partnerships:** Fosters collaborative partnerships of relevant organizations at the national, State, Tribal, river basin and watershed levels for the support of a national program of sediment and related data monitoring activities. Collaborates with the National Water-Quality Monitoring Council on surface-water monitoring issues.
  3. **Data acquisition, reduction, and analysis:** Develops guidelines for planning, designing, and operating sediment data programs of institutional partners. Develops procedures to improve the analysis, interpretation, and integration of data needed to describe sediment conditions.
  4. **Information management and sharing:** Recommends or provides guidelines for creating or modifying modern information systems to support easy access for interpretation of sediment and related data by any user.
  5. **Methods and data comparability:** Provides the coordination necessary to develop, distribute, and implement recommended methods, guidelines and consensus standards for collecting and analyzing sediment and related data. Develops or promotes common terminology, definitions, and data quality assurance criteria for documenting sediment data.
  6. **Reporting and public education:** Fosters a better understanding of sediment-related conditions, trends, and issues among sedimentation professionals, decision-makers and the general public. Sponsors conferences and other forums to encourage the transfer of information among professionals in sediment-related disciplines.
  7. **Training:** Identifies training requirements and recommends collaborative training activities to make the most effective use of monitoring resources and to facilitate and enhance data quality, comparability, and sharing among institutional partners.

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### **III. MEMBERSHIP:**

- A. Subcommittee membership is open to Federal, interstate, State, Tribal, and local government agencies and private organizations. The membership will include organizations that collect, analyze, disseminate, or use sediment and related data as well as those that develop monitoring technologies, guidelines, and (or) standards.
- B. Organizations that pledge to actively support the functions of the Subcommittee may become voting members by: (1) informing the Chair in writing of their desire and commitment to participate and (2) providing information that is needed to communicate with them. Active support includes attending meetings, drafting documents, reviewing and commenting on documents, making presentations, and other contributions of staff time, funding, or other resources. During meetings, the Chair will announce membership applications received up to two weeks before the meeting. Applicants will become members at the next meeting.
- C. Each member organization designates a representative and alternate to the Subcommittee.
- D. The Chair and Vice Chair are selected from among the representatives of the member organizations. At the first Subcommittee meeting, the members will select a Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair and the Vice Chair will serve until September 30 of the full year after the Subcommittee is formed. Biannually thereafter, the Vice Chair will become Chair and the members will elect a new Vice Chair to replace the Chair after two years. Also, the Vice Chair will serve in the absence of the Chair. A special election will be held if either the Chair or Vice Chair terminates their association with the Subcommittee before their term expires.
- E. Representatives or alternates of member organizations are expected to participate in all meetings of the Subcommittee. If a member organization is not represented at 50 percent of the meetings in any fiscal year (October 1 to September 30), the Chair will remove the organization from the membership rolls. An organization can be reinstated one year later by informing the Chair of their desire to renew their participation as a member of the Subcommittee.

### **IV. MEETINGS AND PROCEDURES:**

- A. The Subcommittee meets every six months and at other times as designated by the Chair. At least one meeting each year is held in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The Chair determines the dates, times, and locations of the meetings, in consultation with the members. The Chair is also responsible for announcing meetings and distributing agendas and information about meetings to all members at least two weeks in advance of the meetings.
- B. The representatives and alternates of the Subcommittee receive no pay, allowances, or benefits from the Subcommittee or the ACWI. All travel expenses are borne by the individual member organizations.

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- C. The Subcommittee conducts business in an open fashion by discussing and attempting to resolve all issues through consensus and by recognizing the legitimate interests and diverse views of Subcommittee participants. If complete agreement cannot be reached on a specific issue, then the following procedures will apply:
1. A consensus exists unless a representative (or alternate) of one or more member organizations requests a vote.
  2. Once a vote is requested, then Robert's Rules of Order apply, and the Chair polls the voting member organizations of the Subcommittee. An affirmative vote of a majority of the member organizations present constitutes approval of a motion. Each member organization, except for the Chair, may cast one vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair casts the deciding vote. Two thirds of the representatives (or alternates) of the members organizations constitutes the quorum necessary to vote.
  3. The Chair signs and forwards to the Chair of the ACWI, through the Executive Secretary, decisions of the Subcommittee that are proposed for implementation nationwide or by the Federal Government. These decisions may be in the form of advice, guidance, or recommendations. Members may prepare minority reports and provide them to the Subcommittee Chair within 3 weeks of a decision. Such minority reports are included in the final majority reports.
- D. Meetings of the Subcommittee are open. Each meeting includes time for individuals who are not representatives or alternates to make statements at the discretion of the Chair.
- E. Before proposing consensus guidelines, methods, or standards for voluntary implementation nationwide, it is appropriate for the Subcommittee to announce proposed guidelines, methods or standards in the Federal Register for the purpose of obtaining public review and comment on the technical aspects of the guidelines. As it deems appropriate, the Subcommittee revises its proposals and products based on the public review comments. The Subcommittee documents the results of the public review, comments and revisions in the final draft information submitted to the ACWI for deliberation and approval.
- F. Decisions by the Subcommittee are reached in formal session or in writing on an individual basis after the Chair advises every representative of the member organizations about the issue at least 10 working days in advance.
- G. The Chair prepares and distributes minutes with action items of Subcommittee meetings to members and to the Executive Secretary of the ACWI.
- V. TERMINATION:** The Chair of the ACWI has the authority to terminate the Subcommittee in consultation with the member organizations of the ACWI and the Subcommittee. At least 60 days notice must be provided in advance of termination.

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**VI. SUBORDINATE GROUPS:**

A. For assistance in conducting its business, the Subcommittee may establish subordinate groups. Such groups will gather information, conduct research, analyze relevant issues and facts, and draft proposed position papers and recommendations for deliberation by the Subcommittee. These groups will be established by the Chair and will have the balanced perspectives and knowledge necessary to perform their assigned functions. Representatives that serve on subordinate groups may include organizations or experts that are not members of the Subcommittee or the ACWI, but that provide knowledgeable and interested individuals needed to carry out the assigned tasks. All subordinate groups will serve for the time necessary to complete the actions for which they were formed. The Subcommittee will review the status of subordinate groups each year and terminate those that have completed their assignments.

**VII. AUTHORITY:** The Subcommittee is part of the Water Information Coordination Program mandated by OMB Memorandum No. 92-01, dated December 10, 1991. The Subcommittee reports to the ACWI that operates under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The Subcommittee is not separately chartered under FACA.

Approval Date and Signatures:

ACWI: September 10, 2003

Subcommittee: September 22, 2003

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Toni M. Johnson  
Executive Secretary, ACWI

John R. Gray  
Chair, Subcommittee