



**DRAFT Summary Minutes
Chief of Engineers Environmental Advisory Board
Park Place Hotel
300 E State Street
Traverse City Michigan
July 12, 2017**

1. Call to Order

Ms. Mindy Simmons, the Designated Federal Officer (DFO), called the Chief of Engineers Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) meeting to order at 9:00 AM on 12 July 2017 at the Park Place Hotel, 300 E. State Street, Traverse City, Michigan, Dr. Rollin Hotchkiss, Chairman, presiding. Ms. Simmons read for the record that the EAB was created by the Chief of Engineers, Lieutenant General Frederick Clarke, in April of 1970 as a means to gain outside expert and independent advice on environmental issues facing the Corps of Engineers. The board is subject to the rules and regulations of the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972. This is a Sunshine in the Government Act meeting and, as such, is open to the public. The Army Corps of Engineers is the sponsor of the board and provides support for the activities of the board.

EAB Members Present:

DR. ROLLIN H. HOTCHKISS, Chair
DR. MARY C. BARBER, Vice Chair
DR. SAMUEL ATKINSON, Member
DR. TAMMY NEWCOMB, Member
DR. LYDIA OLANDER, Member
PROF. CHARLES A. SIMENSTAD, Member
DR. FRED H. SKLAR, Member
DR. CHARLES SOMERVILLE, Member

Also Present:

LTG TODD SEMONITE, Chief, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
MINDY SIMMONS, Designated Federal Officer
KAREN BAKER, Chief, Environmental Division, USACE Headquarters
THEODORE A. BROWN, Chief, Policy and Planning Division, USACE Headquarters
DR. BETH FLEMING, Director, Environmental Laboratory, U.S. Army Engineer
Research and Development Center
Linda Nelson, USACE
Anne Cann, USACE
BG Mark Toy, LRD Commander, USACE
LTC Sugrue, Detroit District Commander, USACE
Scott Thieme, USACE
MAJ Sturgeon
MAJ Covington

Carl Platz, USACE
Mark Miller, Director, Michigan DNR
Michael J. Donahue, AECOM
Scott Levy, www.bluefish.org
Marie Sturm, USACE
Kelly Schroter, USACE
Jeanette Gallihugh, USACE
Jeffrey Zuercher, USACE
Jeremy Crossland, USACE
Jim Carruthers, Mayor of Traverse City
Troy Naperala, AECOM
Caroline Moellering, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Frank V Dituri, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa, Natural Resource Dept
Scott Fairbank, Great Lakes Maritime Academy
Steve Fischer, USACE
Erica Mitchell, USACE

2. Introduction of EAB Members and USACE Senior Leaders

Each of the eight EAB members present introduced themselves, as well as USACE Senior Leaders Karen Baker, Tab Brown, and Dr. Beth Fleming.

3. Opening Remarks

Dr. Rollin Hotchkiss thanked Detroit District staff for all of their support, especially Ms. Kelly Schroter. He especially appreciated the field trips to see actual projects. On behalf of all EAB members, he said that they are enthused to learn more today together and to exchange ideas about future directions.

LTG Todd Semonite, Chief of Engineers, welcomed everyone to the meeting. He is looking forward to hearing from EAB members as well as the public. He thanked Detroit District staff for making all the arrangements for the meeting and field visits. He also introduced Mark Miller, Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

LTG Semonite then described where he wants the Corps to go during his tenure as the Chief. He said that the credibility of the Corps is measured by the organization's ability to deliver results that are on time, on budget, and of exceptional quality. To do this and to maintain the Corps' status as a world class engineering organization, now and into the future, the Corps needs to focus on three fundamentals: 1) strengthen the foundation; 2) deliver the program; and 3) achieve the vision.

He also outlined the four goals of the campaign plan which are: 1) work across the globe to support the combatant commands with civil works, military missions, and water resource development and research and development expertise; 2) make the Corps more efficient and effective while delivering integrated water resource solutions for

national missions and to address infrastructure challenges; 3) be proactive in reducing disaster risk and responding to disasters; and 4) prepare for tomorrow.

4. Welcome and ‘Living the Environmental Operating Principles and E-Flows’ in the Lakes and Rivers Division and Detroit District

BG Mark Toy, Commander of the Lakes and Rivers Division, gave a powerpoint presentation introducing his division and how they are dealing with several environmental issues. ([link to ppt on website](#))

LTC Sugrue, Commander of Detroit District, gave a powerpoint presentation on how his district is living the Environmental Operating Principles. They are working on sustainability through energy conservation in their offices as well as in the management of dredged material and dam removal to restore free flowing rivers, such as the Boardman. ([link to ppt on website](#))

5. Observations from the Soo Locks/GLRI Trip

Dr. Barber said that she saw a lot of adaptive management already going on in the Detroit district area, especially with dredged materials. Dr. Atkinson was impressed by the strategic importance of the Soo locks and the complicated balancing of the water among several users. Dr. Simenstad commented on the scope and scale of the partnerships at work in both the Soo locks and the Boardman River projects.

6. USACE News

Dr. Beth Fleming discussed the latest research going on at the Environmental Lab of the Engineer Research and Development Center, which she leads in Vicksburg, MS. Ms. Karen Baker provided updates on the Environmental Division and Environmental Community of Practice, which she leads at HQ. Mr. Tab Brown, Chief of the Planning and Policy Division at HQ, discussed progress on implementation of the 2016 Water Resources Development Act. He also reported that in FY 17 USACE Civil Works received a little over \$6 billion. And the President’s budget for FY 18 is a little over \$5 billion, but the House has marked it up above \$6 billion.

7. USACE Invasive Species Program – Challenges and Opportunities Presentation

Mr. Jeremy Crossland gave a powerpoint presentation on the USACE Invasive Species program. ([link to ppt on website](#))

8. Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) and Brandon Road Project

Mr. Jeffrey Zuercher gave a presentation on the GLMRIS and the Brandon Road Lock and Dam invasive species protection measures. ([link to ppt on website](#))

9. EAB Work Topics

A discussion took place on a list of potential work topics which the EAB may address.

Invasive Species – EAB will move forward with this task, looking at how the Corps could better incorporate prevention into their programming across multiple business lines, opportunities for the Corps to be responsive to high risk invasions, opportunities for the Corps to leverage the interagency, interjurisdictional resources with state and NGO partners, and finally looking at the information and scientific gap that may exist related to management on Corps properties and for Corps managed installations. A report from the EAB is expected within a year.

Refining Environmental Metrics – Better ways to measure the benefits of ecosystem restoration projects, and ecosystem benefits of Corps projects in other business lines as well are needed in order to prioritize projects and to gain financial support for them. EAB will scope this task and identify some interim products.

Environmental Considerations for Infrastructure Investments, Divestments, and Repurposing – Plan for this task is for the EAB to develop a short communication on encouraging the Corps to continually consider the environmental operating principles while thinking about decommissioning infrastructure. EAB will also review and provide comments on the Value Model being developed for infrastructure.

Inland Regional Sediment Management and Beneficial Use – This topic received strong support from the Chief, and a team of EAB members are interested in tackling it. Next step is a scoping session with Corps experts.

Assessing the Corps' Technical Capacity to Assess the Nation's Environmental Challenges - Plan is for the EAB to review programs on sustainability in universities, Corps training in the Purple book, other Corps certification programs, and develop a white paper with recommendations on a Corps sustainability certification program.

Future Directions – Dr. Olander reported on work already done by the EAB on how the Corps can meet the needs of the nation in the future. This includes both internal actions which the Corps can take, and external actions which are beyond Corps control. Guidance from the Chief on this is for the EAB to embed their work on this into the USACE Campaign Plan, and to begin by reviewing Division strategic plans.

Action: LTG Semonite directed USACE staff to send Division commander letters and other information describing their needs (what OMB needs to do; what Congress needs to do) to better deliver the Corps program as well as Division campaign and strategic plan documents to EAB members.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management – Dr. Sklar explained that ecosystem restoration and mitigation has a lot of uncertainties with in it, and this task is looking at the monitoring and adaptive management program across about 18 Corps restoration efforts and will develop recommendations on improving efficiency and effectiveness.

Action: LTG Semonite advised to continue scoping on the remainder of the topics, since there was not sufficient time to review them at the meeting.

Action: LTG Semonite requested interim reports every 3 months on EAB progress, and said that they can be done via teleconference.

10. Public Comments

Ms. Simmons summarized three written comments which had been submitted.
(attached for the record)

Mr. Jimmy Hague of the Nature Conservancy expressed support for the EAB work on valuing ecosystem services, on multi-objective projects, and on environmental flows and the Sustainable Rivers project, and on beneficial reuse of dredged material.

Mr. Jim Waddell expressed support for removal of the Lower Snake River dams.

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Three persons were present at the meeting and made oral comments.

Mr. Jim Carruthers, Mayor of Traverse City, Michigan, welcomed the EAB to Traverse City. He discussed the Boardman River restoration project which involves the removal of three dams and a study on invasive species passage and management. He also mentioned that he is a representative of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Cities Initiative and is an active supporter of the commerce as well as the environmental aspects of the Great Lakes. He encouraged USACE to release the Brandon Road Lock and Dam study. He also expressed concern about Enbridge Line 5, a pipeline running under the Straits of Mackinac.

Mr. Mike Donahue of AECOM, also a former EAB member from 2005 to 2009, discussed the Environmental Operating Principles and a natural infrastructure initiative being undertaken by AECOM. It is trying to resolve the disconnect between the producers and potential consumers of dredged material. Three priorities are: 1) advocating for laws, policies, programs, and funding mechanisms favorable to expediting delivery of natural infrastructure programs and projects; 2) advancing the development of new technologies and business models to expedite cost efficient service delivery; and 3) informing, educating, and enlisting the support of stakeholders and decision makers in advocating for change.

Mr. Scott Levy of Bluefish spoke in favor of removing the Lower Snake River dams. He said removal of these dams would be a huge benefit for the region, both economically and ecologically for the salmon. He suggested that the EAB take on the Lower Snake River Dams as one of their tasks. He distributed a written document ([Attach for the record](#))

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 PM.