14 August 2002

Memorandum for Record

Subject: Project Coordination Team (PCT) Meeting for J.H. Kerr Section 216, Neuse River Basin, Princeville, and Currituck Sound Feasibility Studies

1. Subject meeting was held in the Wilmington District beginning at about 1030 on 12 August 2002. Enclosure 1 is a copy of the agenda for the meeting to which was generally adhered. Page 2 of the agenda includes a list of attendees.

2. In the opening remarks:

    a. Mr. Morris welcomed the opportunity to participate with Col. Alexander as member of the Executive Committee for the four projects. He indicated that it was unfortunate that Mr. Dave Paylor, Deputy Secretary, Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Natural Resources could not attend. Mr. Paylor is also on the Executive Committee for the J.H. Kerr Section 216 study. Mr. Morris stressed the need to use best available existing data and material from all sources during pursuit of the on all subject investigations. He also stated his desire for regular, maybe monthly, meetings of the PCT, with an email report of the meetings to all concerned.
    b. Col. Alexander said that using the Wilmington Harbor PCT model was a good idea. He was pleased that Mr. Pearsall of the Nature Conservancy could be in attendance.
    c. Mr. Tickner indicated that this approach was good and that an Advisory Committee to help guide the Executive Committee on each of the studies was okay. But, he cautioned that the Advisory Committee would be sanctioned by, and give advice to, the States' representatives. The Corps has restrictions regarding the use of Advisory Committees. Therefore, we will refer to this committee as the Sponsor's (s') Advisory Committee throughout these notes.
    d. Mr. Long briefly discussed procedural matters such as clarifying the need/or requirement for regular (but maybe not monthly) PCT meetings, and the need for the formation of Stakeholders/Sponsors Advisory Committee(s) for the Neuse River and Princeville Studies (noting that the J.H. Kerr Section 216 and Currituck Sound studies already have these committees developed). There was general discussion of who should be in these groups. He responded to the notion that the PCT meeting(s) could be combined with monthly Project Review Board (PRB) meetings by indicating that combining them would not be a good idea because the PRB meetings were already lengthy and combining the meetings would result in an all day meeting. Mr. Long also said that he would like to have Lead Planners for the studies attend future meetings (most were in attendance for this meeting). The group concurred.

e. Mr. Blair Boyd, Chief, Wilmington District Finance and Accounting Office, briefly discussed tracking of expenditures on projects and used the Wilmington Harbor Deepening Project as an example. The Executive Committee agreed that regular financial information on the studies should be presented at PCT meetings, but that the level of detail need not be that used for Wilmington Harbor, which is a very complex project.

3. Mr. Sam Pearsall, PhD, Director of Science and Stewardship, The Nature Conservancy, gave an excellent PowerPoint presentation on his organization, its relationship to the Roanoke River and to the Corps of Engineers. He said the TNC is the largest organization of its kind. It has holdings of 11 million acres in the U.S. and Canada, which are designed to protect ecosystems within "ecoregions". The mission of TNC is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. Within the Roanoke River Basin, from the "fall line" to the coast, about $20 million has been invested to conserve 60,000 acres. TNC has entered into agreements with the Corps, the most recent being the Sustainable Rivers Project (formerly known as the Dam Re-operations Initiative) in March 2002. Under this partnership the Corps and TNC will work together to improve dam operations, helping to restore and protect the health of rivers and surrounding natural areas while continuing to meet human needs for services such as flood control and hydroelectric power generation. A "CD" of his presentation was given to the Wilmington District (Ms. Lisa Hetherman has retained the CD in her files).

4. The J.H. Kerr Section 216 study was the first to be individually discussed.

   a. Mr. Morris was pleased with the progress of the study, the Sponsors' Advisory Committee that has been formed and the three-phased approach being used for the study. The first study phase includes determination of data needs and data gaps, assigning tasks to appropriate elements and determining the necessary studies and the costs for those studies, which will occur in phase 2. The second phase will involve performing studies identified in phase 1, describing problems needs and opportunities, establishing goals and objectives for the study and delineating the scope of the next phase. Phase 3 will include development of alternatives, outputs and impacts of those alternatives, tradeoff analysis and selection of a recommended plan. The final feasibility report, and environmental assessment or environmental impact statement, will be completed in phase 3.
   b. Because of the uncertainty of the costs and time for the feasibility completion, and because both the States of North Carolina and Virginia will be partners in the study and cosigners of any study related agreements; the feasibility cost sharing agreement (FCSA) may be a challenge to coordinate and to be approved by Headquarters U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (HQUSACE). Mr. Morris recommended a proactive,

innovative and steadfast approach with USACE in getting the FCSA signed.

c. With regard to the study plan as described in a. above, Mr. Morris recommended consideration of moving some of the items now being considered in phase 2 to phase 1. Ms. Hetherman will complete the Project Management Plan (PMP), incorporating latest comments of both states and the Nature Conservancy. This PMP will serve as basis for the FCSA.

5. After a lunch of Subway sandwiches in the conference room, the Neuse River Basin Study was discussed.
    a. The undersigned began by briefing the status of the investigation. The FCSA for the study was signed in May and the investigation has just begun. The feasibility study of the Neuse River Basin is Congressionally authorized to identify and recommend solutions for environmental restoration and flood damage reduction in the basin. The study will take about three years to complete, and the resulting feasibility report could be used as a decision document to get a Congressionally authorized federal project(s) implemented.
    b. However, it was agreed that the agencies of the State of North Carolina should be the lead in any overall basin study effort. The Corps role, and the feasibility study effort, will be more clearly defined as the study progresses. The first year of the feasibility study will be used to identify, collaboratively with state and federal agency representatives and the public, the detailed scope for the study.
    c. Also during the first year, the Corps will work with local governments to identify and implement smaller environmental restoration projects under the Section 206 continuing authority. Wake County has been the first area selected for consideration for these projects because the County has a well-defined and nearly completed watershed management plan. Other areas within the Neuse River Basin will be considered as the feasibility study progresses. A multi-agency Sponsor's Advisory Committee is envisioned to aid in selection of specific environmental restoration sites and to help in the definition of the overall basin study effort. That committee has yet to be named.
    d. Mr. Morris asked that a clear, concise and definitive (not a bureaucratic) project study plan and budget be developed for fiscal year 2003. This then can be used as a basis for a State decision on funding their share for fiscal year 2003. The Corps agreed to provide that plan.

6. The Princeville study was next to be discussed and was also briefed by the undersigned.
    a. The FCSA for the Princeville study was signed in July and funding is now available for initiation. Alternatives to be evaluated include:
        - No Action Option.
        - Levee Modifications. The Town of Princeville is currently protected to the 300–year storm event (1/3 percent risk of

being overtopped in any given year) by a levee built by the Corps. One option for increasing the level of flood protection would be to upgrade the existing levee or construct a new levee to protect the entire town from a flood event similar to Hurricane Floyd. The effect of this plan on Tarboro needs to be carefully considered.

- High-Flow Bypass Channel/Floodway. High-flow bypass channels are constructed secondary or cutoff channels designed to reduce downstream water surface elevations, by carrying a portion of high flood flows through an alternate channel.
- Reservoirs. In addition to flood control, reservoirs could also provide water supply and water quality benefits as well as recreation benefits for the area. The sponsor is interested in evaluation of reservoir alternatives upstream of Princeville that could provide multipurpose benefits such as water supply and water quality improvements as well as flood damage reduction at Princeville, Tarboro and other downstream communities. A single reservoir alternative will be identified and studied in further detail based on the results of a previously conducted Tar River Basin study.
- Acquisition/Relocation and Acquisition/Demolition. The Town of Princeville has already opted not to relocate. However, USACE Planning Guidance and NEPA regulations require that all potentially viable alternatives be considered, therefore, this option will remain under consideration.
- Channel Improvements and Bridge and Roadway Structure Modifications. Channel improvements such as widening and/or deepening of the Tar River downstream of Princeville will be considered. Other possible modifications to be considered would entail enlarging the openings of bridges/roadways to allow increased flow.

b. Similar to the Neuse River study, Mr. Morris asked that a project study plan and budget be developed for fiscal year 2003 that can be used as a basis for a State decision on funding their share for fiscal year 2003. He also emphasized that existing data and previous studies be used to the extent possible. There was also discussion on development of a Stakeholders/Sponsor's Advisory Committee. The Corps agreed to development of the plan, use of existing information and to pursue committee development.

7. Ms. Lisa Hetherman briefed the Currituck Sound study. Main points of the discussion follow:
   a. A Sponsor's Advisory Committee (to the state) on this study has been developed and Lisa is working with them to develop the items for

inclusion in the PMP. The PMP will serve as basis for the FCSA, which has yet to be signed.

b. There was some discussion regarding the goal of the study that here-to-for has been reduction of the salinity in the Currituck Sound. Sea level rise and its effect on salinity of Currituck Sound, and all North Carolina sounds, could make "freshening" Currituck Sound very difficult. Mr. Pearsall suggested that perhaps re-establishment of waterfowl populations, or of aquatic vegetation in the sound, might be considered as a more practical goal.

c. Mr. Morris indicated that they would work with Lisa on development of the PMP.

8. In conclusion, all present indicated that the meeting was worthwhile and timely. Col. Alexander stated his discomfort with the uncertain direction of the Neuse River Basin and Currituck studies and the unclear scope of the Princeville study. There was again discussion of when the PCT should meet again. Although no firm date was decided upon, mid October was generally agreed as the first likely date for the next meeting. A special meeting regarding the J.H. Kerr Section 216 will be held before then. It was agreed that a Sponsors' Advisory Committee Meeting for the John H. Kerr 216 Study should be scheduled after the FCSA is signed. This meeting will serve as a "kick off" meeting for Phase 1 of the Feasibility Phase. Jim Mead, from NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Water Resources, stated that he had comments on the draft PMP that he would electronically send to Lisa. After the USACE team members define costs for all three stages and address Jim's comments, Lisa will send the draft PMP electronically to all the members of the Sponsors' Advisory Committee for comments. It was decided that the e-mail should include the diagram of the 3 Phases that was discussed at this meeting. Also, all agreed that the e-mail should include a request for comments within a very short period in order to proceed quickly. The meeting concluded at 1530.

Al Bjorkquist
Project Manager

Lisa Hetherman
Project Manager

Encl. Agenda and Attendees

Project Coordination Team (PCT) Meeting
12 August 2002
Main Conference Room
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District Office
10 am – 2 pm

1. General Discussion
    a. Recommend PCT Members
    b. Determine Frequency of PCT Meetings
    c. Review Projects' Matrix (schedule)
    d. Status of Funding/Method for Reporting at PCT Meetings

2. John H. Kerr 216 Study
    a. PMP Format: Three Phases
    b. Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement:
        i. Cover All Phases - $3 M
        ii. NC and VA Agree on Funding Percentage
    c. Sustainable Rivers Project

3. Neuse River Study
    a. Identify Members of the Sponsor's Advisory Committee
    b. Appoint a NC Representative for Product Delivery Team (PDT) Meetings
    c. Current Activities

4. Princeville Study
    a. Scope of Study
    b. Stakeholders Group
    c. Project Justification

5. Currituck Sound Study
    a. Outline for Project Management Plan (PMP)
    b. Technical Sub-Groups

<u>Note</u>: Please sign up for the type of Subway sandwich you would like at the beginning of the meeting. Sandwiches will be delivered at 12 am.