

Fort Peck DEIS / IEPR Kick-off Call

Friday, April 22, 2021, 10:00am – 12:00pm CT

--SUMMARY--

Opening Remarks

Mr. Aaron Quinn (USACE) welcomed participants to the Kick-off call for the Independent External Peer Review (IEPR) of the Fort Peck Dam Test Release Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). USACE seeks to conduct this test release as part of complying with the 2018 Final Biological Opinion concerning the Operation of the Missouri River Mainstem Reservoir System, the Operation and Maintenance of the Bank Stabilization and Navigation Project, the Operation of the Kansas River Reservoir System, and Implementation of the Missouri River Recovery Management Plan. The DEIS assesses the capacity of test flows released from Fort Peck Dam to foster the growth and survival of the endangered pallid sturgeon from the embryo stage to the free-swimming juvenile stage. The IEPR is being conducted by the Independent Science Advisory Panel (ISAP) associated with the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC). The purpose of this kick-off call was to orient ISAP members to their charge and desired work product, and to answer any questions they might have.

The call facilitator, Dr. Marci DuPrav of the National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution, took roll and reviewed the call objectives and agenda. (Please see Appendix A for the call attendee list.) MRRIC's Third Party Science Neutral, Dr. Steve Bartell (who coordinates the work of the ISAP overall) introduced the three co-chairs for this particular ISAP engagement -- Dr. Melinda Daniels, Dr. John Loomis, and Dr. Steve Chipps. Dr. Bartell also introduced Dr. Darren Ranco, who will be participating in the IEPR as an ad hoc member of the ISAP; he will serve as the panel's expert on Tribal Cultural Knowledge for this review.

Kick-off Presentation for this Review



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Mr. Quinn provided a brief orientation to the Ft. Peck DEIS and supporting documents (slides attached above). He noted that the DEIS is also currently out for public review through May 25, 2021. Mr. Quinn presented on the Ft. Peck DEIS's general structure and content to equip those on the call to independently navigate the document and supporting materials.

After discussing the document structure, Mr. Quinn noted that the "purpose and need" discussion in Sections 1.1 and 1.3 were made clearer in this draft as opposed to the former draft. Section 3.2 is particularly important, as it sets the stage for basic geomorphic and hydrologic processes that could change based on a test flow. This section also discusses climate change and physical monitoring (e.g., regarding dam safety and irrigation intake) that would occur during a test flow. Chapters and sub-sections are complemented by supporting materials provided in the DEIS Appendices.

Mr. Quinn also explained the four-part format that USACE suggests for the ISAP's comments. He walked participants through a sample DEIS comment formatted in this way.

Finally, Mr. Quinn reviewed the IEPR timeline, as follows:

2021 IEPR Timeline	
Begin IEPR	April 15
Kick-off Call	April 22
Mid-Review Call	May 19
Comments Submitted to USACE	June 30
USACE Responses to ISAP	July 19
ISAP presents overview of comments to MRRIC	July 27
ISAP Back-Check Responses	August 6
ISAP Submits Final IEPR Report to USACE	August 23

Questions & Wrap-Up

Dr. Bartell reminded participants that ISAP members have been assigned to specific areas of review depending on their expertise, but that they are invited to weigh in on all topics included in the DEIS. Dr. DuPraw invited ISAP questions on each DEIS section. However, there were no follow-up questions or comments from participants or presenters. Dr. Bartell, Mr. Quinn, and Dr. DuPraw thanked panelists for diving into the review and sharing their expertise with MRRIC.

Appendix A

Attendees

Christina Austin-Smith	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Brian Barels	MRRIC Member
Steve Bartell	TPSN
Joe Bonneau	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Gail Bingham	MRRIC Chair
Alyssa Bonini	John S. McCain III National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution
Steve Chipps	ISAP
Mitch Chrismer	John S. McCain III National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution
Melinda Daniels	ISAP
Steve Dinsmore	ISAP
Marci DuPraw	John S. McCain III National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution
Doug Hardy	MRRIC Vice-Chair
Kendra Laffe	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Ryan Larsen	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Graham Long	Compass
John Loomis	ISAP
Lisa McDonald	Pinyon Environmental
Dennis Murphy	ISAP
Jamie Myers	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
John Norder	ISAP
Darren Ranco	ISAP (<i>Ad Hoc</i>)
Margaret Ryan	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Aaron Quinn	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Bill Warren-Hicks	ISAP