

FINAL TRIBAL OUTREACH CHARGE TO ISAP PANELIST DR. DARREN RANCO

Based on findings of an earlier “Discuss and Feedback” (D&F) engagement conducted by ISAP panelist Dr. John Norder that culminated in a May 10, 2021 report to MRRIC entitled “Outreach to MRRIC Tribes regarding how ISAP (and MRRIC) can help USACE and USFWS incorporate Tribal knowledge and concerns in implementing the Missouri River Recovery Program,” the National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution (NCECR) concluded that it would be useful to allocate time from the pool of funded D&F hours to ISAP member Dr. Darren Ranco to get input from the Tribes to help inform his opinion for ISAP’s independent external peer review (IEPR) of the Fort Peck DEIS.

Dr. Norder’s D&F engagement explored with interested MRRIC Tribes how best the Tribal Cultural Knowledge expert on the ISAP should carry out his or her role, given that there are approximately 30 MRRIC Tribes,¹ each with its own knowledge base. One of the recommendations in Dr. Norder’s report was that the person holding this position on the ISAP could be most effective if he or she were enabled to conduct outreach to the MRRIC Tribes during any given ISAP engagement to orient MRRIC Tribal representatives to the documents being reviewed by the ISAP, and to elicit their input regarding relevant knowledge held by their respective Tribes.

On April 15, 2021, the ISAP began reviewing the Fort Peck DEIS. The ISAP’s initial comments on this review are due June 30, 2021, and the panel’s final report is due August 23, 2021. For this particular review, Dr. Darren Ranco is serving as the ISAP’s Tribal Cultural Knowledge expert. Consistent with Dr. Norder’s recommendations, NCECR would like Dr. Ranco to participate in a virtual meeting with interested MRRIC Tribes (e.g., via conference call or webinar) in which a USACE expert will team with Dr. Ranco on a presentation to orient Tribal representatives to key topics in the Fort Peck DEIS IEPR and invite them to convey to Dr. Ranco relevant Tribal knowledge from their respective Tribes, so that Dr. Ranco can bring this knowledge into the ISAP’s deliberations. (This team approach recognizes USACE as the author of the Fort Peck DEIS and thus the appropriate party to explain its contents, while Dr. Ranco can play a key role in fostering the Tribal representatives’ understanding of this material.)

Tribal representatives may wish to provide knowledge from their respective Tribes immediately following the presentation or in follow-up telephone conversations between representatives of a particular Tribe and Dr. Ranco. Information provided by the Tribes to Dr. Ranco will be used to inform the opinions on the Fort Peck DEIS that Dr. Ranco provides to the rest of the ISAP. For this engagement, Dr. Ranco should provide his views on the Fort Peck DEIS to other ISAP members in the form of a memo (in addition to normal verbal participation in ISAP deliberations), in which he might support his opinion as appropriate with information provided by MRRIC Tribes; however, if a Tribal representative asks Dr. Ranco to keep something confidential, Dr. Ranco should do so.

¹ “MRRIC tribes” refers to any tribe that has been formally invited to be a member of MRRIC.

The ISAP then will consider Dr. Ranco's opinions as they formulate and present comments to the Lead Agencies and MRRIC regarding the Fort Peck DEIS. Ultimately, MRRIC (including MRRIC Tribal representatives) will determine by consensus how to use the ISAP comments on the Fort Peck DEIS in formulating potential MRRIC recommendations to the Lead Agencies. Please note that ISAP members do not represent the Government, and nothing in this charge constitutes Government-to-Government consultation.

The virtual meeting described above is expected to take place in the context of a MRRIC Tribal Interests Work Group (TIWG) call, to be scheduled in early June, and to which all MRRIC Tribes will be invited. The TIWG facilitator (Laura Bartock, RESOLVE) will organize, facilitate, and document the conference call or webinar with MRRIC Tribes, following the above confidentiality guidelines. (Work Group call summaries are routinely shared with all MRRIC members; thus, RESOLVE will provide all participants a review and comment opportunity to ensure confidentiality has been protected consistent with participant requests before sharing this summary beyond call participants.)

Anticipated tasks are as follows:

1. Dr. Ranco will participate in a conference call or webinar (approximately 1-2 hours in length) with interested MRRIC Tribes, teaming with a USACE expert to orient them to focal topics in the Ft. Peck DEIS IEPR and invite relevant Tribal knowledge that Tribal representatives would like Dr. Ranco to consider in formulating his opinions on the Fort Peck DEIS to share in ISAP deliberations. This event will be organized, facilitated, and documented by RESOLVE.
2. Dr. Ranco will partner with a USACE expert on developing a 20-30 minute slide presentation for the purposes referenced in Step #1 above. In preparing this presentation, Dr. Ranco and the USACE expert will coordinate with the event facilitator (e.g., regarding number of slides, slide content, and slide format). The presentation should not take more than 1/2 of the allocated time in order to protect time for Tribal represents to ask questions and provide input.
3. Dr. Ranco will accept (and may initiate) phone calls and emails from Tribal representatives following the above-referenced event to enable Tribal representatives to convey relevant cultural knowledge from their respective Tribes to Dr. Ranco.
4. Approximately one week after the conference call / webinar referenced in Item 1 above, Dr. Ranco will provide to TPSN Steve Bartell, ISAP colleagues, and NCECR a memo containing key points Tribal representatives have asked Dr. Ranco to bring into ISAP deliberations about the Fort Peck DEIS. Because this is an ISAP work product arising from this Discuss and Feedback engagement, NCECR will share the memo with MRRIC in an "fyi" mode; if Tribal representatives ask Dr. Ranco to keep anything they have shared confidential, such items should be omitted from the memo.