

Warrior and Coosa Projects Combined

E8 IAG Work Plan

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Issue Statement

WE8 & CE8 Lake Levels Fluctuations - Effect of project related lake level fluctuations on the aquatic resources of the project study area.

IAG Tasks and Responsibilities

The E8 IAG will undertake the following responsibilities.

- review current project operations (see Initial Information Packages) and operational constraints (e.g., Corp of Engineers operating guidelines) of the Coosa (Weiss, Henry, Logan Martin, Lay, Mitchell, Jordan, and Bouldin) and Warrior (Smith and Bankhead) Projects.
- identify areas within the project study area that will be benefit environmentally(e.g. improved fish spawning and aquatic habitat) from changes to current lake level fluctuations
- identify goals and objectives for improving areas affected by project operations
- work with the APC Project Operations Group to identify “reasonable” (based on hydrologic, structural, and other limitations identified) changes and alternatives for modifying project operations
- identify studies (literature reviews, expert opinion, modeling input, etc.) necessary for evaluating changes to project operations and,
- assess and/or predict the operational and biological effects of potential changes in lake level fluctuations, and
- make recommendations to the EcoRAT & WCRT regarding a range of reasonable alternatives to current project lake level fluctuations.

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Work Scope and Product

- Task 1 Review existing operations and existing operation constraints of the Coosa and Warrior Projects as identified by APC and the ACOE.
- Task 2 Identify, list and discuss management goals for environmental resources affected by (adverse or beneficial) lake level fluctuations
- Task 3 Identify areas/resources within the project study area where changes to current project lake level fluctuations would have a significant effect on aquatic habitats (based on input recorded on the E8 Issue Sheet and additional input from IAG members). The IAG will use the E12 wetland database, topographic maps, and expert opinion as screening tools for identifying areas of impact.
- Task 4 Develop a range of reasonable alternatives (taking into account operational restraints) for lake level fluctuations and submit these alternatives to the APC Project Operations Group for modeling.
- Task 5 Use the information provided by the APC Project Operations Group, Task 1 through Task 4, and existing information (focusing on fish spawning period and habitats) to develop answers to the Issue Sheet requests and identify any field studies needed.
- Task 6 Update the EcoRAT and WCRT on results of the modeling studies and present recommendations for proposed field studies.
- Task 7 Gather additional information deemed necessary – literature reviews, model analysis, professional expertise, and/or field surveys.
- Task 8 Use information from the APC Project Operations Group, topographic maps, the E12 wetland database, expert opinion, and any field study information to determine the extent of aquatic habitats potentially gained or lost by modifications to lake level fluctuations for each Project.
- Task 9 Provide final recommendations or range of reasonable alternatives to the APC Project Operations Group for economic analysis.
- Task 10 Compile the information to develop a range of reasonable alternatives or recommendations to the EcoRAT and WCRT.

Schedule

The E8 – IAG is anticipated to begin work with a kick-off meeting at the September 28, 2001 Coosa RATs and WCRT Meeting and will continue meeting periodically over the coming months. The following is a “projected” schedule of work that may change with the group’s approval. These meetings can be either “face to face” or “conference call” meetings based on the group’s approval. Also, note that the RecRAT R3-IAG (effect of lake level fluctuations on Recreation) is working concurrently and that the two IAGs may need to work together at times in order to reduce duplicate efforts, take advantage of data collections (field and library) and help further refine the issues/requests.

- Meeting 1 Kick-off meeting – Discuss Work plan
- Meeting 2 Discuss Tasks 1 – APC to provide operations information – Discuss Task 2 - IAG members identify key project areas of concern.

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- Meeting 3 Discuss results of Task 1&2 and begin work on Task 3
- Meeting 4 Discuss Task 3 recommendations and submit these to the APC Project Operations Group
- Meeting 5 Discuss results from Task 3 and begin work on Task 4; Homework Assignment – pull together necessary information to develop Task 4
- Meeting 6 Discuss and complete Task 4
- Meeting 7 Task 5 - Present information from Tasks 1 through 4 and any proposed field studies to the WCRT and EcoRAT; Homework assignment - prepare for Task 6
- Meeting 8 Discuss Task 6 and develop any literature reviews, model analysis, or field surveys needed.
- Meeting 9-11 Perform and then discuss data collections – Task 6 and Task 7.
- Meeting 12 Discuss consolidation of information to be submitted for Task 8
- Meeting 13 Discuss results of Task 8 and submit recommendations to the APC Project Operations Group for analysis; Homework Assignment – Compile information developed to date.
- Meeting 14-15 Develop recommendations for the EcoRAT and WCRT (Task 9)
- Meeting 16 Present recommendations to the EcoRAT and WCRT

Tracking Tool

The IAG will use a tracking document that identifies decisions and recommendations for each of the study areas proposed in Task 3. Information tracked will include:

- general description of area and habitat,
- description of environmental management goal,
- decision for study area (study plan),
- spreadsheet that tracks various lake level fluctuation operating scenarios and their effects on both habitat and project operations, and
- range of recommendations on lake level fluctuations or a range of reasonable alternatives to the EcoRAT and WCRT including those alternatives that were not analyzed for further investigation.