



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SOUTH ATLANTIC DIVISION
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ATLANTA, GA 30303-8801

CESAD- RBT(1165)

23 February 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION.

SUBJECT: South Atlantic Division (SAD), Engineering with Nature (EWN) Proving Ground

1. Reference Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020, H.R.7575, Sections 113, 114, 115, 123, 124, 116th Cong. (2020).
2. Purpose: Articulate Command Support of SAD as an EWN Proving Ground.
3. Applicability. This Command Support statement applies to all SAD Civil Works projects and project delivery teams.
4. Discussion. Delivering infrastructure to sustain our communities, economy, and environment calls upon us to innovate, modernize, and even revolutionize our approach to infrastructure planning and development. Partnering with nature is a vital part of delivering bold solutions to combat uncertainty and achieve long-term and sustainable solutions. Recent advances in policy and quantitative methodologies can capture the comprehensive range of economic, environmental, and social benefits that nature-based solutions can provide.

a. EWN is the intentional alignment of natural and engineering processes to deliver economic, environmental, and social benefits efficiently and sustainably through collaboration. The USACE EWN Program works to better integrate traditional and nature-based infrastructure approaches by aligning engineering and natural processes for greater benefit. Incorporating natural and nature-based features into project scoping, planning, design, construction, and operations, from a foundation of inclusive and collaborative engagement, creates a broad array of opportunities to meaningfully strengthen community resilience into the future.

b. The benefits of employing natural and nature-based features are broadly recognized and specifically required by reference 1, which further directs USACE to consider their inclusion in project development. In addition to the requirements in WRDA, LTG Scott A. Spellmon, 55th Chief of Engineers, and Commanding General U.S. Army Corps of Engineers voiced his commitment in June 2021 to the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, Water Resources & Environment Subcommittee that:

"We absolutely want to do more engineering with nature everywhere we work across the Corps, you have my commitment."

In addition, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, the Honorable Michael Connor, stated in his Intent for Civil Works in May 2022 that:

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"...We need to take advantage of nature-based infrastructure and figure out how we can bring multiple benefits to our projects, so that we're not just doing flood risk and coastal storm management, but we are also helping to further environmental restoration and even augment water supply where we can."

c. SAD is committed to integrating EWN into our guidance and processes to facilitate the meaningful evaluation and inclusion of natural and nature-based features into our projects and procedures. This commitment not only includes new studies, but also incorporates EWN concepts into existing civil works projects, USACE managed recreational areas, and emphasizes the public interest benefits of EWN for the Regulatory Program.

d. SAD is partnering with ERDC to become an EWN Proving Ground. For more than three decades, SAD has applied EWN techniques across business lines including Coastal Storm Risk Management, Navigation, and Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration in collaboration with Tribal, Federal, State, and local partners. SAD is excited to partner with ERDC, share proven EWN techniques across the enterprise, and identify new, innovative ways to apply EWN in our Civil Works programs as we plan and build sustainable water resources infrastructure. SAD will leverage our experience and that of our partners and sister SAD Districts, including application of Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge. The desired outcome is to include EWN in in planning and design efforts to increase resiliency in communities (assuming urban and natural ecosystems) and allow for future adaptation.

5. I ask that you join me in advancing SAD as an EWN Proving Ground. I cannot underscore enough the importance of seeking every opportunity to apply EWN across our Civil Works Program. My point of contact for this memorandum is Dr. Katherine Brutsche, SAD Science and Technology Program Manager, Katherine.E.Brutsche@usace.army.mil, or (404) 562-5142.



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