

# USSD History Committee

## COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

The USSD History Committee shall establish priorities and then perform research and develop documentation of significant historical events, engineers, projects and failure case histories of importance to the USSD membership and broader community of practice for dams, levees, and related hydraulic and hydroelectric facilities within the US and Internationally.

All activities of the Committee shall be conducted in such a manner as to support and reinforce the priorities of the USSD Board of Directors and membership consistent with the 2014 Strategic Plan and the four identified Strategic Imperatives: Advocate, Educate, Collaborate, and Cultivate.

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

This committee charter was prepared and submitted to the USSD Board of Directors for approval at the November 5, 2015, Directors meeting in San Francisco, CA. There is no corresponding ICOLD (the International Commission on Large Dams) committee on history.

Add information related to approval and direction from the Board.

## BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The idea for the History Committee grew out of the USSD (formerly USCOLD, U.S. Committee on Large Dams) Strategic Planning process completed in 2014. Based on goals identified under the Advocate and Educate imperatives, then President Keith Ferguson, initiated a “Legacy Engineers” keynote address at the 2014 Annual Conference in San Francisco by inviting Dr. Richard Goodman to present on the important contributions of Dr. Karl Terzaghi to the practice of dam engineering in the US and Internationally.

In addition, because of the importance of the USSD organization to the practice of dam engineering in the US and internationally, and the organization’s relationship to ICOLD, Mr. Ferguson requested Richard Wiltshire, Life Member, to begin the process of researching and documenting the history of USSD and related ICOLD involvement beginning in about 1928. Of key importance to this initiative are: 1) strengthening the membership’s understanding of the importance of the USSD/ICOLD connection, and 2) improving the community of dam and levee engineering practice’s understanding of the involvement of USCOLD (now USSD) in the initiative that lead to the publication of the first “Model Law for State Supervision of Safety of Dams and Reservoirs”, first prepared and published by USCOLD in 1970 (Golze, 1977), and support of the national initiative that lead to the formation of what is now the

Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO). USSD’s relationship with ASDSO is a primary objective under the 2014 Collaboration Strategic Imperative.

The Model Law was the outgrowth of an initiative started in 1965 by USCOLD in response to a series of dam failures. As part of this initiative, USCOLD undertook a questionnaire survey of the 50 states, “inquiring as to the exercise of their police powers in supervision of dams extending from the planning stage, through design and construction, into operation and maintenance.” These responses were summarized by USCOLD in a document published in 1966 (USCOLD, 1966).

Add appropriate reference information from the 1988 Book to lay the ground work for this committee.

## COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

Chair: Richard Wiltshire  
Bureau of Reclamation - Retired  
rlwiltshire.pe@comcast.net

Vice Chair: Keith Ferguson  
HDR Engineering, Inc.  
1670 Broadway, Suite 3400  
Denver, CO 80202  
Telephone: 303-764-1546  
[Keith.ferguson@hdrinc.com](mailto:Keith.ferguson@hdrinc.com)

Vice Chair: To be named by Manoshree from Education Imperative Team

Vice Chair (YP): To be determined

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Continue development of documents related to the history of ICOLD/USCOLD/USSD, including events, officers, awards, etc.
2. Champion the “Legacy Engineers” program.
  - Develop “family trees” in each key discipline area in the practice of dam and levee engineering, including geotechnical, engineering geology, structural, hydrology/hydraulics and others as identified by the committee.
  - Identify list of “Legacy Engineers” for research, documentation, and presentation on the USSD website and as keynote addresses USSD conferences and workshops

- Develop and present research and documentation.
3. Evaluation and documentation of significant projects and case histories:
    - Failures and Incidents.
    - Milestone projects (technical and achieving important purposes).
  4. Provide input and support to the Advocacy and Education Imperatives.
  5. Benchmark and develop collaborative linkages to the history committees and activities of the following organizations:
    - ASCE
    - ASDSO
    - AASHTO
    - ASME
    - IEEE
  6. Develop information and maintain the portion of the USSD Website dedicated to dissemination of historical information.

## POTENTIAL MEMBERSHIP

The following individuals are being approached about their participation on the committee:

Larry Stephens	Former Executive Director	
Richard Kramer	Consultant	Bureau of Reclamation - Retired
Jim Talbot	Consultant	SCS/NRCS
Steve Poulos	Consultant	Ties to Harvard University
Francisco Silva-Tula	Consultant	Liaison to MIT
Ross Boulanger	Professor	University of California, Davis
Dave Rogers	Professor	Univ of Missouri, Rolla
Jim Mitchell	Consultant	Liaison to Berkley/Virginia Tech
Joe Ehasz		
John France		URS Corp./AECOM?
Don Babbitt	California	CA DWR
Mark E. Baker	National Park Service	Liaison to the ASDSO Incident Committee
Eric Kollgaard		
Ken Hansen		
Larry Nuss		Bureau of Reclamation - Retired
Glen Tarbox		MWH Global
Marty McCann	Consultant	Stanford University
Bill Bingham		
Art Miller	Consultant	Former Professor, Penn State University

Jeff Bradley  
Jerry Webb  
Jack Cassidy

Others as recommended by the Board, committee, or who volunteer from the USSD Membership

## References

1. Golze, A. R., Handbook of Dam Engineering, Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1977.
2. USCOLD, "Supervision of Dams by State Authorities", New York, N.Y., July 1966.
3. USCOLD, "Model Law for State Supervision of Safety of Dams and Reservoirs, 1970.