

USSD Environment and Sustainability Committee Charter

Approved by the BOD on February 6, 2020

Committee Description

The Committee on the Environment & Sustainability fosters discussion and advocates for continuous improvement in the planning, design and construction of dams and levees to enhance their performance as environmentally, socially, and financially sustainable water resource and hydropower systems.

Terms of Reference

The Environment and Sustainability Committee charter was renewed by the Board of Directors of USSD in 2015. The Environment and Sustainability Committee is charged with enhancing recognition that power generation at dams and reservoirs is renewable energy that contributes to a reduction in carbon emissions and climate change issues, and to provide a forum for exchange of information within USSD membership and to persons interested in dams as sustainable water resource systems. The Committee assists in furthering the mission of USSD to champion the role of dam and levee systems in society, be the premier source for technical information about dam and levee systems, build networks and relationships to strengthen the community of practice, and nurture the growth of the community of practice. Further, the committee supports interaction with ICOLD on environmental issues of dam engineering. These are to enhance awareness of the great importance of the environmental and social aspects of dams and reservoirs; to cooperate conscientiously with nature's inherent fragility as well as its dynamism without ever overtaxing its powers of regeneration; and, to be guided by the concept of sustainable development. The Committee keeps the general membership informed of significant environmental and sustainability issues through timely publication of reports and white papers, announcements in the Newsletter, input to the committees section of the USSD website, and in the organization and execution of periodic workshops. The Committee also collaborates with and assists other committees in developing and promoting education and training activities.

Background and History

In 2010 the committee organized a Workshop on Impoundments and Tailings Dams with the assistance of the Tailings Dam Committee. The workshop served to highlight the importance of applying dam safety concepts to these structures, the need to better understand the properties of the materials contained in these structures, and identify specific end of service issues. In 2017, the committee organized a workshop entitled "Defining Environmentally Sustainable Projects" at the 2017 Annual Conference and Exhibition. Participants in this workshop enjoyed an interactive and engaging workshop designed help understand and define environmental sustainability as it relates to dam and

reservoir projects. The committee is also assisting USSD with preparing a position statement on “Principles of Sustainability for Dam, Reservoir, and Levee Systems” which is expected to be approved by the Board in 2020.

Responsibilities

As of this writing, the BOD has not established any specific responsibilities of the committee. The committee chair is working with the USSD President to identify specific responsibilities.

Chair, and Vice Chairs

Outgoing Chair: **John P. Osterle**
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Vice Chair: Brandon Vavrek
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Vice Chair (Young Professional): Open

Goals and Objectives

Advocate

Champion the role of dam and levee systems in society to manage water sustainability.

Communicate with other committees on relevant outreach information/activities.

Educate

Cultivate technical presentations and speakers for the annual meetings.

Publish a relevant article in the newsletter annually.

Develop and implement a workshop a minimum of quinquennial or more often depending on pressing issues related to the environment and sustainability.

Provide links to on-line resources

Collaborate

Build networks and relationships to strengthen the community of practice and open dialogue with other organizations seeking to manage water resource systems sustainably.

Cultivate

Nurture interest in issues related to the environment and sustainability and expand committee membership.

Membership

Denise Bunte Bisnett

Kelly Schaeffer

Preston Wilson

Manshoree Sundaram

Glen Dewillie

Dan Wade

Blaine Dwyer

Ken Steele

Keith Hala

John Wolthope

RJ McIntosh