USSD COMMITTEE ON LEVEES CHARTER
2022 Final

COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION

Levee Committee mission is to promote good engineering practices in all aspects of levee safety and advocate for the role of levees as part of a broader flood risk management strategy. Levee Committee goals are aligned with the USSD 2021-2025 Strategic Plan as follows:

Advocacy and Awareness:

1. Build awareness of the importance of levee safety by participating in relevant national and international conferences, workshops, seminars and other industry activities that lead to a better understanding of levees and their role in the broader context of flood risk management.

2. Support implementation of a strong National Levee Safety Program, as being developed by Federal government agencies.

3. Collaborate with stakeholders and policy makers to provide accurate and timely information about levees to support their efforts.

Education and Professional Development:

1. Facilitate technical discussion, training and exchange of knowledge for levee evaluation and characterization, design, construction, operation and maintenance, inspection, and risk assessment.

2. Encourage the use of best engineering practices so that levees are designed, built and operated safely, efficiently, and economically.

Community and Connections:

1. Partner with USSD and International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) technical committees and other national and international professional organizations to identify collaboration opportunities and eliminate duplicative efforts.

2. Provide a forum for industry review of technical publications, manuals, guidelines, regulations and other technical publications related to levees.

3. Promote the benefits of levees as part of a broader flood risk reduction and management framework.

Recruitment and Growth:

1. Identify and promote research and development needs to advance state-of-the-art technologies and best practices for levee safety.
2. Continue to support collaboration through the ICOLD Levee Technical Committee and other organizations in other countries to bolster the international Community of Practice working on issues associated with levees specifically and flood risk management in general.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Levee Committee was established by the Board of Directors (BOD) of USSD in 2010. In 2018, an equivalent ICOLD technical committee was established stemming from a levee-focused workgroup under the European Club of ICOLD. Current membership of the USSD Levee Committee includes individuals from a variety of different organizations, both public and private, representing levee owners and regulators, academia, and consulting engineers. The annual meetings of the committee are open to all who have an interest, or a possible interest, in the field of levee safety.

The Levee Committee is charged with promoting best practices for levee safety, collaborating with other national and international professional organizations interested in levees and supporting the development of a strong National Levee Safety Program. The Committee keeps the general membership informed 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 collaborates and/or assists with other committees in developing and promoting education and training activities under the four imperatives of the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan – Advocacy and Awareness; Education and Professional Development; Community and Connections; and Recruitment and Growth.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary responsibility of the committee, as defined in the USSD Operations Manual, is to distribute information to the membership through the publication of “state-of-the-art reports, manuals, and bulletin items.” The committee is responsible for preparation and internal technical review of such reports, white papers, etc., prior to final review and publication by USSD.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Specific initiatives for a four-year period beginning in 2022 are listed below:

Advocacy and Awareness:

1. Support the U.S. National Committee on Levee Safety (NCLS); USACE; FEMA; and other Federal, State and local agencies in carrying forward levee safety initiatives. This includes provisions of Title IX of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007 and development and implementation of a National Levee Safety Program (NLSP). Specific activities will be determined in
coordination with agencies leading those programs, and may include 1) participation in standing committees to advise the NCLS regarding specific technical levee safety issues, 2) assistance with the development of national levee safety guidelines; 3) review of the draft guidelines; 4) assisting in the development of technical materials and training to promote levee safety; 5) organization of seminars, workshops and online meetings targeted to expanding understanding of specific technical issues related to levee safety.

**Education and Professional Development:**

1. Solicit and encourage international presentations at the annual USSD meetings and other conferences to share experiences and best practices from other countries.

2. Establish a working group with partner organizations (USACE, ASCE, ASDSO, NCLS, ASDSO, USSD, etc.) to inventory research and development (R&D) efforts related to levee safety from a practicing “industry perspective”. Establish links with Universities and R&D centers conducting research in the field of levee safety to promote prioritization and development of beneficial targeted R&D efforts related to key levee safety issues.

3. Collaborate with the Education and Training Technical Committee to provide training materials and opportunities related to levees. Also, identify aligned USSD committees with similar technical objectives and regularly (e.g. bi-annual calls) facilitate a review and discussion of current and future development of publications, workshops and other trainings, etc., actively seeking ways to collaborate and share information across committees.

**Community and Connections:**

1. Participate as a member of the U.S. Levee Coalition and collaborate with ICOLD Levees Technical Committee and Technical Committees in other organizations (e.g., DFI, ASDSO, etc).

2. Provide a forum to review technical publications related to levees (e.g. USACE guidelines).

**Recruitment and Growth**

1. Actively promote collaboration and involvement with young members in authoring white papers; presenting at the annual USSD meetings; becoming involved with other specific committee activities.
Attachment #1:
Committee on Levees Leadership
Succession Plan
COMMITTEE ON LEVEES LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION PLAN

Governance of the USSD Levee Committee is described in Article IV of the By Laws. The committee leadership team includes a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Young Professional (YP) Vice Chair, who must be current members of USSD and should be active with the Levee Committee. Candidates for the Chair, Vice Chair, and YP Vice Chair are nominated by the Levee Committee membership for appointment by the President of USSD for periods of four years.

Although the Bylaws describe the general requirements for governance of the Levee Committee, they do not provide a prescriptive process for leadership transition. Therefore, the purpose of this document is to describe the suggested leadership transition process adopted by the Levee Committee. Though the Bylaws specify four-year term for each position, to maintain some continuity between outgoing and incoming leadership teams and prevent wholesale leadership change every four years, it is intended the Vice Chair transition into the role of Chair for the subsequent four-year term.

During the third year of the cycle, the current Chair will solicit volunteers and/or nominees for the Vice Chair and YP Vice Chair for the next term during the Spring Annual Conference in April or May. The position selection shall proceed as follows in order of preference:

CHAIR

The current Vice Chair will automatically be nominated as the incoming Chair of the Levee Committee for the next four-year term, subject to the candidate’s willingness to continue in the Levee Committee and assume the role of incoming Chair. Nominations will also be accepted for additional candidates as the upcoming Chair from the general membership. If alternative candidates are nominated by the membership, all nominated candidates will be included on an election ballot.

In case the existing Vice Chair is unwilling to transition into the incoming Chair, the following steps shall be considered, in the order of preference:

1. The YP Vice Chair will be offered the nomination as the incoming Chair in the Vice Chair’s stead. Nominations will also be accepted for additional candidates as the upcoming Chair from the general membership. If alternative candidates are nominated by the membership, all nominated candidates will be included on an election ballot. If the YP Chair declines, open nominations and election will be held for the Chair position.

2. If the Vice Chair or YP Vice Chair decide not to assume the Chair position and continue in their current position, solicitation for new Chair position shall be opened by the Chair and filled by election.
VICE CHAIR

When the current outgoing Vice Chair transitions to the role as next Chair, open nominations will be accepted for the Vice Chair from all active committee members. The successful candidate will be determined through an election.

If the existing Vice Chair decides not to assume the Chair position, they will be offered the opportunity to continue in the Vice Chair position for the next term to help provide for continuity and consistency between the outgoing and incoming Levee Committee leadership teams. If they also decline this role, the open nomination process will be held, as described above.

YP VICE CHAIR

A primary function of the YP Vice Chair is engagement with the YP Committee. Open nominations from the committee for the YP Vice Chair position will be solicited concurrently with the Vice Chair position. The YP Vice Chair should be a Young Professional member of USSD (under 35 years of age at the time of the appointment) and an active member of the Levee Committee. The successful candidate will be determined through the election.

If YP member active in the Levee Committee cannot be identified to serve in the YP Vice Chair role, the current Chair will reach out the YP Committee for assistance in identifying an appropriate candidate.

NOMINATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Potential candidates for levee committee leadership will declare their intentions to the Chair, as well as provide a resume/bio detailing their qualifications along with a brief statement of interest. Current (outgoing) Chair will request a volunteer(s), who is a member of the Levee Committee but not on the current leadership team, to assist with managing the election and form a short-term election committee. The election committee will review the information submitted by and confirm the potential candidates are qualified.

The election committee volunteer shall develop a simple ballot providing the name, affiliation, and brief biography for each qualified candidate. The ballot should also include the voters name, email address, and an attestation that they are a member of USSD in good standing. The ballot can be provided in Word or PDF (via electronic mail), or via an online voting service (e.g., Survey Monkey) and distributed to the active Levee Committee member list. At least 30 days should be allowed for collection of the votes. The election committee should tally the votes and will be responsible for announcing the results to the committee members at large.

If there is only one candidate for each position the Chair can propose the candidates be elected by consensus of the membership attending the Annual Committee Meeting and forego the election. Such a consensus election shall be unanimous.
Once the new leadership team has been confirmed, the outgoing Chair should provide the results of the election to the USSD Board President for ratification prior to the January Board meeting. Ratified candidates shall be installed at the next Spring Annual Conference.

**SCHEDULE**

The process described above shall adopt the following basic milestone schedule. The leadership team can adjust the milestone dates as necessary, provided the commitments to the USSD Board are met.

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<th>Task</th>
<th>Milestone Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Call for Volunteers/Nominations</td>
<td>Spring Annual Conference, Year 3 (April/May)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribute Ballot</td>
<td>July 1</td>
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<td>Voting Closes</td>
<td>July 31</td>
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<td>Vote Counted and Confirmed</td>
<td>August 15</td>
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<td>Recommendation to USSD President</td>
<td>September 1</td>
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<td>(Must be before January Board Meeting)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ratification of Nominees by USSD Board</td>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Install New Committee Officers</td>
<td>Spring Annual Conference, Year 4 (April/May)</td>
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Attachment #2:
Committee on Levees Background and History
BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The Committee on Levees was established in 2010 under the leadership of Peter Hradilek (Chair) and Eric Halpin (Vice Chair). Committee activities to date focused on growing levee-related technical tracks at annual USSD conferences, developing workshops focused on levee safety, developing strategic relationships with target professional organizations and advocating for a National Levee Safety program. The Committee organized four levee safety workshops:

- Workshop on levees, October 2009, Sacramento, CA
- Workshop on levees, November 2010, Memphis, TN
- 81st Annual ICOLD Meeting, August 2013, Seattle, WA
- Risk Informed Formulation and Design for Levees, 2022 USSD Conference, San Diego, CA

Additional notable accomplishments of the Committee include:

- Founding member of Levee Safety Coalition – a partnership of ASDSO, USSD, NAFSMA, ASCE and DFI in cooperation with USACE and FEMA to promote levee safety
- Integrating levees in USSD mission and strategic plan, including renaming the USSD bulletin “Dams and Levees”
- Contribution of levee-related articles for the bulletin
- Coordination of review and input to the International Levee Handbook (ILH)
- Promotion of ILH through a rollout campaign in the US through a series of 20 webinars held over a 9-month period, with over 1,700 participants from 225 companies in 11 countries.
- Collaboration with Deep Foundation Institute on Workshop on Levee and Coastal Rehabilitation, February 2014, Miami, FL, and
- Coordination of USSD participation in the Midwest Levees and Rivers Technical Exchange, October 2014.
- Organization of the 2016 USSD/DFI International Symposium on Seepage Control and Remediation.
- Collaboration with the USSD monitoring committee on a levee instrumentation white paper.
- Establishment of an ICOLD technical committee on levees (TC LE). These efforts have included establishing a working group on Levees and Flood Defences under the European Club of ICOLD in 2015 and selecting Question 103: “Levees and Small Dams” for the 26th ICOLD Congress in Vienna, Austria. In 2018, the EUCOLD Working group has been expanded to create ICOLD technical committee on leves (TC LE), with the goal to address technical, governance and policy issues related to levees and flood defences. The committee currently includes more than 20 member countries. US holds a vice
chair position on the committee.

- Development of a US-chapter for the ICOLD Bulletin “Levees around the world, Characteristics, Risks and Governance” and “Comparison of dams and levees; similarities, differences and recommendations”, to be approved at the 2022 ICOLD Congress in Marseille, France (27th ICOLD Congress, the 90th ICOLD annual meeting)

- Contribution to the ICOLD Bulletin “Comparison of dams and levees; similarities, differences and recommendations”, tentatively scheduled for release in 2023.
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Note: The table contains information about members of the 2022 USSD Levee Committee Meeting, including their names, last names, organizations, and emails.