

CECW-ON

MEMORANDUM FOR DCW

FROM: MICHAEL B. WHITE, CHIEF, OPERATIONS DIVISION

SUBJECT: Implementation of Visitor Center Initiative (VCI) Recommendations - FOR DECISION

06/30/03

*MSW
important initiative
must be worked
with the Communications
Committee*

1. PROBLEM. To obtain your decision regarding the implementation of VCI priority items identified during the 21 May 03 informational briefing. (Background Tab, 19 May 2003, Information Paper, Encl 1; 21 May 2003, Memorandum for Record, Encl 2).

2. BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION.

a. MG Van Winkle, while Director of Civil Works, approved the CECW-ON Visitor Center Initiative (VCI) strategy paper on 27 September 2000. The chartered VCI committee commenced on 16 May 2001 and completed in October 2002.

b. The VCI report concluded that the Corps is neither keeping pace with public expectations, nor the realities of managing and funding visitor centers. Twenty-three issues were identified that are impacting the visitor center program along with corrective recommendations.

c. The VCI committee was also tasked with development of an interactive, state-of-the-art "Corps Story" audiovisual program to communicate the Corps role in improving the lives of American citizens. The "Corps Story" design is in the early stage of development.

d. As a result of the 21 May 2003 information briefing for you, you asked that we develop a decision memo that documents the decisions made that day. Here are the decisions that were made.

(1) Develop the Corps Story audiovisual exhibit.

(2) Define the Corps visitor center of the future and appropriate level of customer service through updating visitor center standards. Establish benchmarks for future decision-making.

(3) Conduct customer surveys to evaluate visitor satisfaction and appropriate levels of customer service. Use the standards and survey information to identify centers that provide the greatest value added as far as new investment is concerned. Also identify visitor centers that provide the smallest value added as far as new investment is concerned. Develop a plan for closing these centers.

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(4) A PDT will be established to implement the above priority recommendations and other VCI recommendations as funding permits.

(5) Costs:

- Establish PDT (\$60k)
- Contract for video production and software development (\$120k)
- Contract for hardware and installation at 3 locations (\$90k)
- Develop 12-minute theater version (\$30k)
- Evaluate and revise based on visitor testing (\$20k)

3. IMPACT. \$320k from the O&M, General account in FY04 or a subsequent year. The PDT will revise the visitor center standards, and facilitate the implementation of customer surveys and other VCI recommendations. Project personnel will perform visitor center surveys using existing project funds.

4. COORDINATION:

CEPA	CONCUR/ NONCONCUR	<u>204</u>	(David Hewitt)	Date	<u>6/19/03</u>
CEHO	CONCUR/ NONCONCUR	<u>W410</u>	(Paul Walker)	Date	<u>6/23/03</u>
CECW-BC	CONCUR/ NONCONCUR	<u>SKA 2</u>	(Joseph Bittner)	Date	<u>6/24/03</u>

5. RECOMMENDATION. That you approve the priority items listed in paragraphs 2. d (1) through (5).

Approved ATC Disapproved _____ Other _____

Stephen Austin/761-1940