



Collaborating Toward Sustainability

Memorandum of Understanding Between ERDC-CASI and University of Illinois Office of Sustainability Signing Ceremony September 17, 2009

The challenge of developing sustainable institutions, expertise and practices has attracted broad interest at both at the University of Illinois (UI) and the Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC). In 2006, ERDC established the Center for the Advancement of Sustainability Innovations (CASI at: <https://casi.erdcd.usace.army.mil/>), with the Director assigned to the ERDC laboratory in Champaign, IL (Construction Engineering Research Laboratory or CERL). This center specifically supports the Army strategy for sustainability – which seeks to pursue sustainable practices in all Army operations. The Army sustainability strategy, entitled Sustain the Mission, Secure the Future, can be viewed at: <http://www.sustainability.army.mil/overview/overview.cfm>

In 2008, UI established an Office of Sustainability to broadly support the development and implementation of a sustainability vision and plan for the campus programs, curricula and activities (<http://sustainability.illinois.edu>). The UI Office of Sustainability and ERDC-CASI are pursuing several areas of collaboration, including the development of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) being signed today by the two institutions. This MOU will encourage and enable a better flow of information and coordination of projects between ERDC-CASI and UI. Several collaborations are already underway, to include:

- A series of meetings in 2008 and 2009 with UI Office of Sustainability, Ameren, UI professors, and ERDC-CERL on local collaborations with smart grid planning and development of a concept for local micro-grid experimentation and testing facility.
- Collaboration on a workshop, hosted by the UI Center of Advanced Materials for the Purification of Water with Systems (*WaterCAMPWS*), which is a National Science Foundation Science and Technology Center (<http://www.watercampws.uiuc.edu>); the workshop was entitled “Military Applications for Emerging Water Use Technologies” (held in November 2008).
- Sponsorship (CASI, UI Office of Sustainability and Illini Post Society of American Military Engineers) of a visit, in April 2009, from Mr. Amory Lovins, director of the Rocky Mountain Institute, to give a talk at the UI campus and also to meet with the zero footprint energy team at ERDC-CERL. Talks were well attended and helped shape our new energy research effort.

- Response to a June 2009, request from the Installation Management Command (IMCOM) Futures Center to help anticipate how military communities will be changing. Working through the UI Office of Sustainability, two UI professors (Dr. Brian Deal and Dr. Charles Linville) established a multi-campus team (Universities of Houston, Missouri, Penn State and Carnegie-Mellon) to explore the anticipated changes in communities hosting military installations over the next several decades, and to analyze the potential impacts of these changes on military bases.
- Engagement of CASI with the Cline Center for Democracy in 2008 and 2009. Cline Center staff briefed ERDC-CERL in spring 2008 and has met with ERDC-CERL staff several times since. Currently, CASI and the Cline Center have submitted a joint proposal to the Army Environmental Policy Institute to conduct a study on peacemaking outcomes from national and regional conflicts over natural resources that occurred during the past 50 years. In August 2009, the Cline Center hosted a visit from Annica Waleij of the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), which is a proposed partner in this effort.
- Support to UI Office of Sustainability, which is leading a campus-wide effort to develop a Sustainability Vision and Strategy for the university. William Goran, CASI Director, has participated in several forums to help shape and advance this vision and strategy, and others from ERDC-CERL have also participated in these UI planning sessions.
- Sponsorship with the University of Illinois Land Use Evaluation Model (LEAM) laboratory and a “spin-off” firm (LEAMgroup) to develop U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) criteria and a module extension to the LEAM model.

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