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Title: Models Distribution and Support Center

Topic Area: E4.3: Technology Transition Services

Objective: To transition models, tools and databases produced for multidimensional modeling in the RSM program to USACE practitioners.

Problem: Knowledge, models, tools and databases developed in other RSM work units, particularly those in the Modeling and Assessment Tools and the Informatics units, will not be useful if there is no means of providing these technologies to the users within the USACE.

Benefits: The Sedimentation Models Distribution and Support Center (MDSC) will provide a single source for USACE users to obtain software (e.g. models, tools, databases, etc.), technical support and training developed within the RSM research program and used for sedimentation modeling within the USACE community. With a single web-based source approach to providing these technologies to the USACE, problems such as model updates being incompatible with databases or tools can be effectively eliminated. Enhancement requests, bug reports and other suggestions are efficiently delivered from users to developers and tracked to ensure responsiveness to user needs. Expertise and familiarity with the models, tools and databases supported together with feedback and reports from users will be combined to uniquely qualify the Sedimentation Modeling Technical Support Center to design, coordinate and conduct training courses for USACE users on a regular basis.

This work produces new tools and methods for the USACE and nation. It is an integral part of the Regional Sediment Management Research Program, and thus contributes primarily to support of the USACE's navigation, flood/storm damage reduction, and environmental protection and quality missions. It supports all 8 Civil Works strategic goals and 7 of 9 Listening Session objectives identified by HQUSACE as R&D priorities. With companion work units, it employs active technology transfer and insertion.

Work Description: In 1995 the US Army Groundwater Modeling Technical Support Center (GMTSC) was formed at WES to distribute and provide technical support and training for a new product, the Department of Defense Groundwater Modeling System (GMS). Initial efforts of the GMTSC were to distribute and publicize the availability of the software to the DoD, DoE and US EPA. As GMS became more widely known and used, the activities of the GMTSC shifted more to providing training and technical support in the use and application of tools found in GMS to specific groundwater modeling issues. A GMS web site was

established from where literally thousands have downloaded software tools, found technical support contact information and received answers to support questions. Presently the GMTSC provides support to over 1200 GMS users, fielding nearly 1000 calls a year for software installation, operation and other technical support issues. Over 20 different GMS training classes and courses have been held at various locations since the GMTSC was formed.

The GMTSC will be used as a model for the establishment and operation of the Models Distribution and Support Center (MDSC). Qualified individuals will be identified to staff the MDSC to provide technical assistance with downloading, installing and operating software tools distributed by the MDSC. An MDSC web site will be set up from which USACE users can download updated software tools at any time. Frequently asked questions, version update information and upcoming training course information will be available from this web site at any time for all users. The web site will also provide means to receive technical support via email, voice, and fax. An ftp site will be made available for users to send files for MDSC review in cases where technical support issues cannot be resolved via other means. A moderated email discussion forum will be created which will allow USACE users to ask questions, make suggestions and share tips and ideas in a group setting. Email discussion forums such as this are often excellent ways to exchange expertise and improve software capabilities because the feedback from the users is direct and those who voluntarily participate have a demonstrated interest in using and improving the tools. Training courses in the use and application of the models, tools and databases developed in other RSM work units and supported by the MDSC will be designed and offered on a regular basis. These courses will include introductory level courses as well as more advanced application-type courses and will be scheduled at times and locations as dictated by the needs of the MDSC user community.

MDSC products are listed below. Most can be fielded within the first year of funding of the work unit. However, because its mission will be to provide RSM modeling technologies to the USACE as a whole, its mission does not end with the fielding of a web site or establishment of a moderated email forum. Technical support, web site maintenance, discussion group moderation and training course development and teaching all require continuous funding throughout the RSM research program if the MDSC is to achieve its purpose. As other RSM units develop new technologies, tools, knowledge and databases, the products fielded by the MDSC will of necessity require updating and modification. Therefore the completion dates listed here indicate when the first versions of each product will be available but funding requirements for each product will continue through to the end of the RSM research program.

The results of this work unit will provide the basis for a following work unit, "Models Distribution and Support Center - Intermediate Products". It is suggested to start in FY05.

Products:

The primary product of this work is the successful transfer of modeling tools to USACE practitioners.

<u>Product</u>	<u>Scheduled</u>
1. MDSC establishment	Q4/FY02
2. MDSC web site added to RSM site	Q4/FY02
3. Email, voice, fax and ftp site online	Q4/FY02
4. Moderated email discussion forum online	Q1/FY03
5. TN: How to access the RSM MDSC	Q1/FY03
6. Training courses designed and scheduled	Q3/FY03
7. Training course(s) Phase 1	Q4/FY04
8. TN: Summary of models and tools, Phase 1	Q4/FY04