Southwestern Division

Pacesetter

Summer 2013

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Water:
Our history, our mission our future

SOUTHWESTERN

DIVISION

PACESETTER

Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Kula
Commander
Southwestern Division

Martie Cenkci
Chief, Public Affairs
Southwestern Division

Editor
LaDonna Davis
Deputy Public Affairs Chief
Southwestern Division

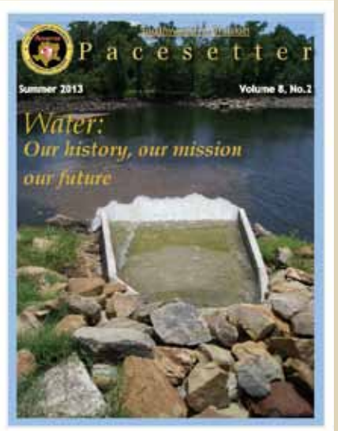
Associate Editors
Edward Rivera
Fort Worth District

Sara Goodeyon
Tulsa District

Jay Woods
Little Rock District

Isidro Reyna
Galveston District

on the cover



Water gushes from the low flow pipe system into the stream below the Tenkiller Dam. The low flow pipe system transports water from the surge tank at the hydropower plant to the stream. (Photo by Nate Herring)

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CONTENTS

Summer 2013 Volume 8 - No. 2

Water: Yesterday, today and tomorrow

Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula
Southwestern Division Commander

The history of the Southwestern Division is all about water. The Division was created in 1937 as a result of large and catastrophic flood events that led up to Congress passing the Flood Control Act of 1936. That Act recognized that flood control was a federal responsibility and authorized 211 flood control projects in 31 states. It authorized five reservoirs and a variety of levee construction and improvement projects on the Arkansas River Drainage Basin. To oversee these projects, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers established two offices on July 1, 1937: the Little Rock District and the Southwestern Division. SWD also took over areas in the watershed of the Canadian River and its tributaries west of the Texas-New Mexico border.

In 1939, SWD's workload increased with the addition of two new Districts: The Denison District (sponsored by House Majority Leader Sam Rayburn to build Texoma Reservoir on the Red River in Texas for both flood control and hydropower) and the Tulsa District (for flood control, hydropower, and navigation).

Nearly doubling SWD's territorial area was the addition of the Galveston District on Jan. 15, 1941. With the addition of the Galveston District, the geography and the topography of SWD ranged from wetlands on the eastern portion to desert on the west. The Fort Worth District was created in March 1950. This development was a result of the increased construction of reservoirs in north Texas on the Brazos and Trinity Rivers. Local officials, including the Trinity Improvement Association, fought for a District Office in Fort Worth. A major flood event on the Clear Fork of the Trinity River added urgency to the cause, thus the Fort Worth District was created.

The Corps' missions are vast and they are all important. Though water is the focus of this Pacesetter issue, it does not negate all the great things that our Military Programs and Interagency and International Support are doing. It is all of our programs and missions that make the Corps such a unique and instrumental governmental agency.

But, for now we will focus on the importance of water to the Corps mission.

"The history of the Corps is linked to water, and we are organized around watersheds for our civil works boundaries."

Just think of the many components of our work: navigation, flood protection, recreation, water supply, recreation, regulatory, all of it is involved in some way in water. Our dams and levees protect us from too much water. Our lakes provide us recreation, water supply and sometimes hydropower. The waters that define our coastal ports and inland navigation—the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System—move our commerce and en-

hance our economy.

The history of the Corps is linked to wate and we are organized around watersheds for our civil works boundaries. Early Corps works on canals and waterways captured the path of commerce along the rivers that helped build this Nation. We became involved in flood control as early as after the Civil War, and subsequent Flood Control Acts broadened our involvement. Hydropower development began in the 1880s. The Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 gave the Corps the authority to regulate most kinds of obstructions to navigation. And these were just the beginning.

Today, we still deal with impacts from or relating to water. Hurricane Season started on June 1, and we have a Hurricane Table Top Exercise upcoming to help us deal with such an event should it occur. We are experiencing drought conditions in our region again, potentially as bad as 2011. Water safety on our area Corps lakes is as big an issue as ever. We are great stewards of these recreation areas for our communities, but must continue to educate those who use these areas in the necessity of life jackets and the importance of learning to swim.

And there is excitement and change in the air with our water missions. The Water Resources Development Act of 2013 is making its way through our legislative process, with a Senate-passed version currently in the House of Representatives. Tulsa and Little Rock Districts, working with interested stakeholders, are developing a strategic vision for the MKARNS to ensure that we have a resilient model system for today and tomorrow. That great arc of the Texas coast, always a potential target for hurricanes, is getting a fresh ecosystem look. And across the region, we continue to partner with state water development boards to collectively work issues like water supply.

We are also looking at a refresh of our SWD Azimuth and Regional Priorities, and more will be coming about them prior to the new Fiscal Year. As a region, we will continue to focus on partnerships and our stakeholders, as well as strategies for sustainable infrastructures, particularly with the Texas Coast and the MKARNS.

"As a region, we will continue to focus on partnerships and our stakeholders, as well as strategies for sustainable infrastructures, particularly with the Texas Coast and the MKARNS."

Some of the leadership that powered these initiatives will be changing out. Our Districts go through a rotation in the summer months, and we will be saying goodbye to the commanders of the Galveston, Little Rock, and Tulsa Districts. A great deal of appreciation for their many efforts goes to Col. Chris Sallese, Col. Mike Teague, and Col. Glen Masset, all of whom are retiring this summer. Their perspective, can-do attitude, and great commitment to their Districts and the Army Corps of Engineers have defined their three years in their respective roles. We will all miss them as friends, colleagues, and leaders.

The transition also gives us the opportunity to welcome new leaders into our region. Taking command in July will be Col. Rich Pannell, new Galveston District commander, who comes from serving as the Corps Engineer for the III Armored Corps at Fort Hood, Texas; Col. Courtney Paul, new Little Rock District commander, departing his position as director of Capabilities and Integration, Maneuver Support Center of Excellence, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and Col. Richard Pratt, new Tulsa District commander, arriving from Headquarters U.S. Army. What a broad spectrum of the Army they come from, and what a great perspective and background they will bring to the Southwestern Division.

All of our best leadership needs the people who propel the mission execution forward. And that is you. I truly empathize with the stress that all the fiscal uncertainty has brought into many of your lives. I want to thank you for being steady, for continuing to believe in our mission, and for being there for the Corps of Engineers and the American people we serve.

Water is essential to survival

Col. Glen Masset
Commander, Little Rock District

We all need water to survive. Not only is water in 60 percent of the human body, it's also essential for producing our food, energy, clothing, computers, moving our waste stream and keeping us and the environment healthy.

We are so fortunate in Arkansas and southern Missouri to have more than 600,000 acres of lakes and over 9,700 miles of streams. This is incredible when you think freshwater makes up a very small fraction of the water on our planet. While nearly 70 percent of the world is covered by water, only 2 percent of it is fresh. The rest is saline and ocean based. Even then, just 1 percent of our freshwater is easily accessible, with much of it trapped in glaciers and snow fields. In essence, only 0.007 percent of the planets water is available to fuel and feed its 6.8 billion people.

With water being one of our most precious resources, I couldn't be prouder of the work our district does every day to ensure there is a reliable water supply on a regional scale. Water supply storage is included in 11 of our projects and includes 30 agreements with cities, water districts and the like. These provide for up to 313 million gallons of water per day.

Due to geography, climate, engineering, regulation, and competition for resources, some regions seem relatively full of freshwater, while others face drought and debilitating pollution. In much of the developing world, clean water is either hard to come by or a commodity that requires strenuous work or a considerable amount of currency to obtain.

While the amount of freshwater on the planet has remained fairly constant over time, continually recycled through the atmosphere and back into our cups, the population has exploded. This means that every year competition for a clean, copious supply of water for drinking, cooking, bathing, and sustaining life intensifies.

Serving as responsible stewards of public health, utility resources, and the environment the Corps' water supply challenge is to enhance the quality of life around our reservoirs and projects. We accomplish this by maintaining the water quality and delivering dependable service that exceeds customer's expectations and protecting and ensuring a long-term water supply for future generations.

The key to our success is going to be how well we listen to our stakeholders and work with the utilities and communities around us. Our water supply has so many competing and conflicting uses that it has to be allocated correctly and regulated to the best of our ability. This includes regulating private development that could affect our water. The regulatory challenge is that it can't be about the environment versus development. It's about looking after both. Economic success in our society provides resources that can be used to help protect the environment. Environmental protection preserves natural resources for our children.

The reservoirs the Corps built 50 and 60 years ago have truly helped balance the regions need for a stable water supply and flood damage reduction, but the truth is that the infrastructure is aging and the cost to keep it running is rising. The challenge of maintaining our region's water supply will never go away and it's one that must be met head on with strong partnerships and agreements between agencies who have the public's best interest in mind.

Our future depends on it and the bottom line is that it's about survival. Water can sustain life, but if not respected, can destroy it. Respect water by keeping it clean and taking care of the environment; respect it by wearing a life jacket; respect it by not taking unnecessary risks like taking a boat out when a small craft advisory has been issued.

I trust that as I depart the district you will press on with the mission and ensure that the folks in our region receive the levels of service they deserve from a world class organization like the Little Rock District. Essayons!

The power of water and the will of the people

Col. Michael Teague
Commander, Tulsa District

Maybe the title should be the power of water and wind looking at the weather we have had over the last couple of months. In January, Tulsa District had 22 lakes below 75 percent conservation pool on our drought map. As of June 10th we only have two. I wish that meant we were done with the drought but unfortunately the Drought Monitor predicts the drought continuing. What it does mean is that the wild and often tragic weather over the last couple of months replenished almost all of our reservoirs as we head into the heat of the summer.

The media thoroughly covered the major storms that tore into Oklahoma and cut swaths through Shawnee, Moore, and El Reno. We also had tornadoes here in the Tulsa area that damaged homes in Broken Arrow. The focus was certainly on the tornadoes and the power of wind but the storm that came through El Reno and into Oklahoma City also brought a ton of rain. There was flash flooding in Oklahoma City and all along the path of the storm to the northeast up to the Oklahoma/Kansas border. For the first time in a couple of years we had flash flooding as many of the streams and rivers that feed our lakes exceeded their banks before eventually giving our lakes the recharge they needed.

What has been amazing to watch is the will of the people throughout all of this.

When the first storms hit Shawnee, Oklahoma on May 19th the District Emergency Management shop kicked into gear. Kerri Stark went to the State Emergency Operations Center as the District became the first Federal agency to respond; a testament to the great relationships built up over time. Our Power Planning and Response Team (PRT), along with the Debris Team from the Fort Worth District and subject matter experts from across the Corps stood on alert. Over the next couple of weeks the District Emergency Management staff orchestrated the response to make sure that we gave FEMA and the State the proper support.

Our Hydraulics & Hydrology folks worked with the National Weather Service for river forecasts and with the U.S. Geological Survey for accurate stream gaging for the flooding. When a woman from Miami, Oklahoma called about flooding in her home, our team took the time to answer her call and all of her questions, explaining that the flooding was above our lakes and in areas that we could not control. We could not ease the pain of the flooding but she called back later that day to thank us for taking her call and for explaining what was happening.

It has been really amazing to watch the resiliency of the people of Oklahoma and the support from across the Nation. Volunteer groups filled the turnpike from Tulsa to Oklahoma City. They came from churches and scout troops and schools and American Legion posts. While none of our District people were impacted in the biggest of the storms in Moore and El Reno, we certainly had extended families that lost everything. It has been impressive to watch our families gather together to help each other, all while some are preparing for the impacts of the upcoming furloughs.

So, when Mother Nature wants to impose her will she has shown, once again, that she can be harsh. But the people of our areas have shown that their will is pretty strong and resilient as well.

Finally, this is the last Pacesetter column that I will write. I cannot believe how fast these three years have gone. I certainly did not understand the power and all of the uses of water managed through the civil works program before I got here! The resiliency of the District personnel shined bright not only throughout the storms but also in completing the BRAC mission, all of the ARRA projects, continuously improving our civil works projects, and always striving to meet the commitments to our stakeholders. Thank you to everyone in the Tulsa District and across the region for an amazing opportunity to simply be part of your team.

Water continues to be a huge mission for Fort Worth

Col. Charles Klinge
Commander, Fort Worth District

Team Fort Worth – As we approach another balmy summer in Texas and a very busy one as a District, I want to take an opportunity to first congratulate many of you who have sons, daughters and other family members who recently graduated - from pre-school grads to post-graduate degree grads. We share your pride in their accomplishments.

The official start of summer is here and all signs indicate the drought situation in our area and other parts of Texas could be worse. This will place great importance our water mission and partnerships.

The most astonishing statistic I can give you is the Fort Worth District partners with our area communities to maintain the infrastructure that supplies water to more than 30 percent of Texas residents. Our district's operations and maintenance program includes 25 lakes across Texas and many of those lakes were designed to provide flood risk management, hydropower, water supply and recreation to our numerous customers. We pride ourselves with how well we manage, operate and maintain our lakes, but we are also constantly looking for innovative ways to operate the lakes more efficiently to enhance water supplies. If you have ideas and suggestions as you work directly or indirectly with our Operations Division, please let them know.

As many of you have probably already seen on the news and or may already be experiencing in your own neighborhoods, water restrictions will be a reality for most of the Dallas-Fort Worth area this summer as we anticipate drought conditions may parallel or exceed those of 2012.

Just as we did last year, we will work with our partners to maintain a balance and take into account the many competing water needs of all entities, to include hydropower beneficiaries, the navigational community, local water supply for farmers and citizens and oil and gas companies while simultaneously considering environmental impacts.

Thanks to the great work our Reservoir Control Branch under our Engineering and Construction Division does, we make the levels at all of our 25 lakes available to the public by posting them daily on the lake pages of our SWF internet site: http://www.swf-wc.usace.army.mil/reports/droughtreport.html

While water 'supply' for the state of Texas is a critical mission set, additionally we have a critical recreation mission that is primarily built around water.

We actively and continuously promote water and boating safety throughout the span of our district's reach but still continue to experience accidents and fatalities in and around our lakes at an unacceptable rate. When I say unacceptable, I mean 'any' incident because one accident and or fatality on any of our 25 lakes is one too many.

At the time I am writing this column, we have already experienced eight water related fatalities, most of which involved swimming or wading. They have occurred on Waco Lake, Belton Lake, Stillhouse Hollow Lake, Joe Pool Lake, Lewisville Lake and Lake O' The Pines. Statistics show that through the month of June over the last five years, we suffered an average of 17 fatalities. Even though this is definitely a positive indicator of how well our outreach and education at the lakes, surrounding communities, schools and through numerous external and internal media campaigns are making a difference, it isn't enough until we can get that number to zero.

I realize I say it so much that many of you may think of it as a cliché, but I truly mean it when I say each of you are the face and voice of the Corps. Please review some key safety rules I've outlined at the end of this column and a great video produced jointly with area schools and several of our partners. Share them with your family, friends and neighbors as often as you can. Reducing water-related accidents and fatalities isn't just an Operations Division mission – it's a full Team Fort Worth mission and it begins and ends with each of you.

We have a busy and chal-

lenging work schedule ahead this summer, but I want you to still take time out to enjoy some time away from the office. Whether at one of our 25 lakes or elsewhere, please have a safe time in an around the water. I also ask you to help the district and our partners who share our water mission by observing and relaying water safety rules and helping us share 'accurate' information on the impacts of any drought situation on the water supply for Texas.

Have a great summer and thanks for all you do every day.

Water safety quick tips that could save your life!

- **Learn how to swim within your limitations and abilities**
- **Wear a properly fitted life jacket when in or near the water**
- **Swim only in designated areas and always swim with a buddy**
- **Children should always be supervised when in or near the water**
- **Do not dive from elevated areas such as bluffs, large rocks, trees, bridges, etc.**
- **Do not swim after floats that have drifted away nor rely on floats as a life jacket substitute**
- **Pay attention and comply with posted warnings and be mindful of exposed hazards**
- **Avoid alcohol and other drug use that impair physical ability and judgment**
- **Avoid risky behavior and challenges that could lead to injury or death**
- **Know the risks associated with boats, personal watercraft and other water related activities**
- **Avoid polluting our lakes by cleaning, draining and drying your boat to prevent invasive species from populating**
- **Always keep safety a priority over fun and remember life jackets float you don't!!!!**
- **Don't be a statistic!!!**
- **View 'Forever 15 2013' for a heart-wrenching reminder of what happens when you don't follow safety rules in and around the water:** http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6lSrbqcBzw

The summer of changes and new challenges

Col. Christopher Sallese
Commander, Galveston District

It is incredible how quickly time goes by. Not only has 2013 brought change and new challenges for all of you, it will also bring new leadership as many significant district leaders have recently retired or will soon be retiring and I will be transferring to another command following the completion of my three-year tenure in July.

We are well into fiscal year 2013 and continuing to work diligently to execute our projects and programs on time and on budget to meet our goals. The next couple of months will bring about significant changes with incoming and outgoing leadership as well as changes in the federal government in general and in the Armed Forces.

Recent headlines have focused on sequestration and its effects on readiness, sexual harassment in the uniformed services and the president's fiscal year 2014 budget submission. Given these challenges, and many more, we must continue to focus on identifying those strategic engagements of significance and communicating consistently with employees and our external stakeholders. I challenge us all to do our part in building and strengthening relationships with our customers and demonstrating how we can add value and support.

In March, I headed to Washington, D.C., to participate in annual congressional visits.

The main concerns for the members in south Texas related to the drought and the effects it is having on the valley. Each member asked how the district could help them with lining water supply and irrigation channels in order to conserve water that is lost through evaporation and infiltration. We have an authority to assist with water supply infrastructure, it has never been funded and agreed to help them work with the Texas Water Development Board to see if they could garner relief from the state. I agreed to continue to partner with our non-federal sponsors to seek technical and financial solutions for this problem.

I spent quite a bit of time talking about the importance of Congress passing a new WRDA bill. This bill is important to the Sabine-Neches Waterway, Freeport and Corpus Christi ship channels, which all need of authorization for construction to be ready for the Panama Canal expansion.

The congressional delegation in Houston was highly complimentary of the district's efforts to keep the city safe from flooding and maintaining the ship channel. They were very interested in the on-going Bayport and Barbour's terminals and Luce Bayou permit actions.

We are blessed with a caring group of congressional members who are all pulling hard for the projects all along the Texas coast.

Closer to home, the district was tasked once again with support for others to assist in the recovery efforts of the Oklahoma and Texas tornado disasters. These tragic natural disasters serve as a reminder of the importance of our mission and also remind us to personally prepare ourselves and families for the impending hurricane season by updating our emergency contact lists, beginning our pre-hurricane inspections to ensure personal evacuation plans are up to date and that emergency kits have adequate water, food, a first aid kit, batteries, radio and cash. Now is the time to have an evacuation plan in place and ensure that you have the district's and your supervisors' contact information so we can maintain accountability throughout the event.

Additionally, the arrival of the summer months brings an increased level of outdoor activities throughout the State of Texas, especially with outdoor recreation involving water activities on public beaches, swimming pools, boating and other aquatic-related activities. It is imperative that we continue to promote wearing life jackets, boating sober and learning to swim well as they are all essential components to staying safe this summer while recreating on the water.

Lastly, school is coming to a close and children will be playing more in our neighborhoods. Be attentive when driving and use caution. Additionally, I want to ensure our employees create a balance. Balance for me is balancing my work commitments versus my commitments to my family. Family has always come first and you are a part of my family. Take the summer months to schedule your vacation, spend time with the ones you love and recharge your batteries.

I thank you for your continued dedication while we work through challenges in the Galveston District. Remember to take some time for yourself and remain flexible. We have a lot to accomplish in a very short period and in order to do so, I ask that you continue to execute on time, within budget to deliver sustained superior products to our valued customers.

Thank you for continuing to build strong.

SWD welcomes three new commanders

Col. Courtney W. Paul, Little Rock District

Col. Courtney W. Paul is coming to Little Rock District from the Manuever Support Center of Excellence in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., where he served as the Director of Capabilities Development and Integration. Paul was commissioned in the Corps of Engineers on May 16, 1987 as an ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate and graduated from Texas Tech University with a Bachelor's degree in Geography. He also holds a Master's degree in European Studies from Indiana University. Paul is fluent in German and French. "I'm no newcomer to the Ozarks, and I have gained a healthy respect for the role the District projects play in the livelihood of the region," said Paul. "I'm eager to get there and continue the traditions of professionalism and teamwork that SWL is known for."

Col. Richard P. Pannell, Galveston District

Col. Rich Pannell is coming to Galveston District from the Corps Engineer for the III Armored Corps at Fort Hood, Texas where he has been serving since July 2012. Originally from Athens, Ga., Pannell graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire in 1985 and attended the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. where he received his commission in the Corps of Engineers in 1989. "What an incredible honor and privilege to be a member of the Southwestern Division Team, said Pannell. "I am excited to serve the Galveston District and the great civilian work force that does so much for our country."

Col. Richard A. Pratt, Tulsa District

Col. Richard A. Pratt comes to the Tulsa District from the Navy War College in Newport, Rhode Island. A native of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, Colonel Pratt earned his commission from Norwich University, The Military College of Vermont, in 1990. Most recently, Colonel Pratt served as the Engineer Organizational Integrator in the Force Management Directorate of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7. "My wife, Mary and I are really looking forward to joining the Southwestern Division and Tulsa District teams," said Pratt. "We placed Tulsa at the top of our preference sheet based on Tulsa 's reputation as a great place to raise a family coupled with the diverse military and civil works and program."

Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Kula, commander, Southwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, presents Tom Burrell, chief executive officer, Our Lands and Waters Foundation with a commander's coin for OLWF's support of a water safety day at Lewisville Lake.

Our Lands and Waters Foundation selected for national award

by Forth Worth District Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has selected Our Lands and Waters Foundation as the 2012 Excellence in Partnerships Award winner. The national award recognizes outstanding contributions by a partner to the Corps Recreation and/or Environmental Stewardship programs.

The OLWF works with the Southwestern Division and Fort Worth District in cooperative management of campgrounds, innovative recreational and educational programs, support for water safety programs and has provided more than $2 million in support of the Corps.

"It's an incredible honor. Partnerships have been gaining steam within the Corps for a few years now and as a result great accomplishments are being made at Corps parks throughout the country," said Tom Burrell, chief executive officer, OLWF. "We are very happy to have won the award and are proud to be part of a partnership community that is helping make our parks a better place for present and future generations."

The Foundation operates 18 parks on four lakes in the Trinity and Piney Woods Regions of the Fort Worth District and reinvests collected revenue back into these parks. OLWF also promotes water safety and safe boating practices, educates the public about native woodland and wetland environments, restores ecosystems on Corps land, provides historical education interpretive programs and actively engages the public through a variety of media outlets.

According to Burrell, the relationship built with the Corps since OWLF's inception has made their success possible. "The idea that we can work together to operate the parks through the Cooperative Joint Management process has proven to be a sound model."

Providing customer service to parks through 72 gate attendant contracts at an annual cost savings for the Corps of $390,000 (total FY 11 and 12 - $420,000). OLWF has expanded the Corps' reduced hours of operation from 8 hours to 16 hours a day within cooperatively managed parks.

Providing $255,660 in cost savings to the Corps in repairs, renovation, and/or replacement of recreation facilities over the last two years including the installation of two new courtesy docks, the repair of 13 existing courtesy docks damaged in storms, the renovation and reopening of three restrooms, and the planning and construction of boardwalks and storage facilities. Some of these repairs enabled the OLWF to re-open Oakland Park at Lewisville Lake which had been closed since the 2007 flood event.

"It has been a learning process and we have had to overcome some hurdles to get where we are but as a result we have arrived at a place where it is possible to accomplish some significant results," said Burrell.

More than 60 million direct and indirect water safety contacts (calculated by the professional advertising agencies) utilizing multiple media outlets for a total cost benefit of $158,900.

They reinvested $218,939 in 2012 into Corps park areas with improvements such as campsite and restroom renovations, shoreline mowing, courtesy dock repairs, cleaning, and trash removal.

The OLWF will be recognized and receive their award at the Association of Partners for Public Lands conference in March 2013 in Portland, OR. This year's award is co-sponsored by the Corps of Engineers Natural Resources Foundation.

"Congratulations to the Fort Worth District and Our Lands and Waters Foundation for achieving this award," said Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Kula, SWD commander. "It recognizes a great partner and the efforts of many people in our community and within the Corps. This is a remarkable testament to the power of partnerships."

Educating others about what we are doing here is often the biggest challenge whether that is the public or internally. The idea of Cooperative Joint Management is a new one that is sometimes met with skepticism. I imagine people may wonder "Is this for real?" and I can assure you it is for real. Once people understand that we are a non-profit whose goal is to work in tandem with the Corps and improve our parks, everything falls into place.

Safety fair a hot attraction for kids, parents on a cool day

Story and photo by Edward Rivera,
Fort Worth District Public Affairs Office

On a chilly, overcast and rainy weekend the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Heart of Texas Regional Advisory Council teamed up for a "Get Outdoors" Sport Show and Safety Fair.

The event was held March 23 and 24 at Twin Bridges Park on Waco Lake. Approximately 850 visitors braved the weather to check out sporting and outdoors recreational activities and gear, while spending time with local public safety agencies on hand providing information and promoting safety practices.

"I thought the event was a big hit," said Christine Reeves, HOTRAC executive director. "While the weather wasn't perfect, it was workable on Saturday. We saw approximately 750 people on Saturday and another 100 on Sunday."

The family-oriented fair was held to promote safe family involvement in outdoor activities. The Waco Fire department had equipment on display along with the Waco Police Department K-9s. Visitors young and old were taught the proper wear of a personal flotation device.

"The event touched people from all backgrounds, we saw a wide range of ages from infant to elderly," said Reeves.

Waco resident Jeff Brister and son, Vernon, 6 enjoyed many of the day's scheduled activities. "This is great for kids, I hope it grows and becomes an annual event," said the older Brister.

Parents attending were able to get their children fingerprinted and have child safety seats inspected. Youngsters were able to get some time on the lake checking out various types of kayaks and paddleboards or for the not so adventurous there were opportunities to see if the fish were biting from the shore.

A few winged friends were on hand from the Texas Hawking Association, although they did not take flight, visitors were treated to a close look at red-tailed and Harris's hawks a Screech owl and a Peregrine falcon.

The Corps and HOTRAC have been partnering for more than a year, working together often through the Drowning Prevention Coalition partnership.

"Overall for a first time event I think it was a success," said Elizabeth Anderson, Waco Lake park ranger. "Although the marginal weather affected the attendance, it was a worthwhile event."

Tennille Hammonds, Community Resource Coordinator, Three Rivers Region, Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers helps Serinity Juarez, 4, try on a Personal Floatation Device while explaining to her parents how to check if the life jacket is a proper fit.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwestern Division Commander Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula met with members of the TEX-21 group to discuss the Corps infrastructure mission, successes and challenges. (Photo by LaDonna Davis)

Meeting the Nation's infrastructure challenges through collaboration, partnerships

by LaDonna Davis, SWD Public Affairs

As our nation's infrastructure continues to age and deteriorate, and funding levels remain unchanged, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is faced with the challenge of maintaining the Nation's waterways and reservoirs all while reducing spending. The urgency to find new ways to maintain the Nation's infrastructure has only been heightened by the latest infrastructure report card given by the American Society of Civil Engineers. The ASCE gave our Nation's infrastructure a D.

This challenge has forced the Corps to look at new ways of funding the Nation's water infrastructure projects in order to meet the needs of the millions of people and businesses that rely on these systems on a daily basis to import and export goods and services, travel and recreate.

The Southwestern Division Commander, Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula recently spoke to members of the TEX-21 group to educate and inform them on the Corps missions and challenges with meeting the Nation's infrastructure needs. TEX-21 is a grass-roots, national coalition made up of public and private entities that are committed to determining comprehensive solutions to the transportation challenges plaguing our areas.

The meeting is part of a collaborative effort by the Corps to find new ways to meet the challenges that face Texas' infrastructure demands. "The Corps sees the need to work closely with groups like TEX-21 to expand our communication and collaboration efforts so that we can develop comprehensive solutions to the transportation challenges across the region," Kula said.

"With the Corps projected funding levels being flat-lined and even possibly reduced over the coming years, there is concern that our lack of funding infrastructure projects at the federal level could impact our nation's economy," said Kula. "The Corps has initiated its infrastructure strategy based on collaboration with business and customers so that we can create a business case based on understanding the customer-stakeholder priorities."

The SWD infrastructure strategy encompasses three major priorities: water supply, the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System and Texas channels and ports.

Speaking to the group about water supply, Kula emphasized the challenges that the southwest region faces when it comes to water supply- drought, the Tarrant Regional Water District losing a

Supreme Court case recently over their ability to access water from Oklahoma, and the Texas Water Development Board losing a State Court case in which the Region C water plan was invalidated due to the plan for the Dallas-Fort Worth region to transfer water from northeast Texas. These water supply issues affect the SWD because the Corps is the largest single water supplier in the region, holding 74 multi-purposed water reservoirs in Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, said Kula.

To overcome these challenges, SWD has partnered with the TWDB, Oklahoma Water Resources Board and the Kansas Water Office to identify ways in which these agencies can leverage resources with the Corps to identify funding opportunities, integrate planning processes, and identify opportunities to ensure long term sustainability of the regions reservoirs.

Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula, commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwestern Division, talks with members of TEX-21 about the Corps infrastructure mission (Photo by LaDonna Davis)

The next priority Kula discussed was the MKARNS which spans two SWD districts, Little Rock and Tulsa. The Corps is responsible for the maintenance and operations of the MKARNS which is made up of 417 miles of channels from the Mississippi River to the Port of Catoosa and has 18 locks and dams.

With budget cuts and funding reductions, the Corps has had to find innovative ways to keep the MKARNS reliable and operational, all the while maintaining a level of service that allows industry to continue their transportation of goods along the waterways without interruption.

By collaborating with industry and users of the system, SWD has been able to develop a long-term maintenance plan that allows for predictable, scheduled outages along the waterway so the Corps can perform the highest priority maintenance with minimal disruption to industry.

The third major priority for the regions is tied to the shallow draft navigation system along the Texas Coast.

The Texas coast includes 12 shallow draft ports and 15 deep draft ports all interconnected by 443 miles of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterways. More than 73 million tons of commerce travel along the Texas coast making it a vital system to tie Texas to the world's economy. The shallow draft ports are especially essential to the economy and the oil and gas industry of Texas because of their strategic placement near shale oil discoveries.

Currently, funding constraints are preventing the Corps from maintaining these ports to standard. To overcome some of these challenges, SWD has been working with the Texas Department of Transportation to find ways of funding the maintenance of the shallow draft ports in order to meet the transportation needs of the oil and gas industry for the next 25 years.

"Working with TXDOT, we see a future where we will be linking available federal funding to state and local funding to meet the transportation needs of industry that rely on our waterways," said Kula.

"Meeting the Nation's infrastructure challenges is a top priority for the Corps and we are always looking for new, innovative ways to make sure we meet the needs of the millions of people and businesses that rely on our systems every day," said Kula. "In a time of constrained budgets, it is imperative that the Corps continues to meet with, educate and collaborate with diverse groups, agencies and organizations that have a vested interest in keeping our infrastructure up-to-date and reliable and are focused on ensuring the future viability of this region."

Veteran Robert Jackson, who lost both his legs while serving in Afghanistan in 2003, cuts the ribbon at the Folds of Honor Cottage at CrossTimbers Marina at Skiatook Lake. The May 26 ceremony marks the completion of construction on the retreat dedicated to the exclusive and cost free use of veterans served by the Folds of Honor Foundation. (Photo by Sara Goodeyon)

Ribbon cutting held for warrior retreat by waters of Skiatook Lake

by Sara Goodeyon, Tulsa District Public Affairs

A healing retreat for Wounded Warriors and their families is now complete at Skiatook Lake, a project managed by the Tulsa District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in northern Oklahoma. The official ribbon cutting for the cottage was Sunday, May 26.

The Honor Cottage is a 1,100 square foot getaway tucked into a secluded hillside at CrossTimbers Marina overlooking the lake, to take advantage of the healing and restorative power of water. It is dedicated for the exclusive and cost free use of veterans served by Folds of Honor Foundation. Its construction was possible through a partnership between the Tulsa District USACE, the Skiatook Economic Development Authority, CrossTimbers Marina owner Ron Howell, and the Folds of Honor Foundation.

"The partnership the Corps has with Ron Howell and the town of Skiatook began when the Corps began to look for ways to expand recreation at our lakes," said Col. Michael Teague, Tulsa District commander during remarks at the ceremony. "CrossTimbers came out of a public/private partnership and it has led to the ability for us to work together to get this first-of-its-kind cottage built at Skiatook for Wounded Warriors. The military believes that a fallen comrade is never left behind, and there are things we can do to help them such as this cottage. There is no way the Corps would have been able to get this cottage built for our soldiers without the partnership with CrossTimbers and Folds of Honor and their ability to do this."

Veteran Robert Jackson, who lost both his legs while serving in Afghanistan in 2003, cut the ribbon as his wife and six children watched. Jackson voiced his concerns about the wellbeing of wounded vets and noted that 22 veterans committed suicide in May alone.

Retired Army Major Ed Pulido, senior vice president of Folds of Honor, said the cottage is a message to the families that their country loves them, supports them, and welcomes them home.

"At the end of the day, when you're recovering from a traumatic brain injury or post traumatic stress, this is a great place for recovery," said Pulido, who lost part of his leg while serving in Iraq in 2004.

A $250,000 investment of donated funds from the Folds of Honor Foundation, an organization that provides spouses and children of the wounded and fallen educational scholarships, funded the cottage. Now retired Oklahoma Air National Guard pilot Maj. Dan Rooney founded the Oklahoma-based organization.

USACE responds to killer Okla. tornados

by Tulsa District Public Affairs

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employees were among the first on the scene following the May 2013 tornado outbreak in Oklahoma.

Members of the USACE Emergency Support Function III (ESF3) deployed to the scene hours after destructive tornadoes ripped through several areas in the state, with the most extensive damage in the cities of Shawnee, Moore and El Reno.

The USACE ESF3 cadre is coordinated out of USACE headquarters at the request of FEMA in disaster situations where the damage and debris are such that debris management assistance in support of the National Response Framework is necessary.

The ESF3 provides assistance to local governments in developing debris removal contracts and assisting with environmental issues as part of the FEMA Region VI disaster response.

At the onset of the disaster, Tulsa District Commander Col. Michael Teague declared an Emergency Situation for the district and the Emergency Operations Center activated to round-the-clock operations. The ESF3 cadre stood ready to provide assistance in any way necessary.

Tulsa District Emergency Management Specialist Kerri Stark deployed to Oklahoma City as soon as the roads opened, arriving in the area by 7:00 p.m., May 20. Stark acted as USACE liaison to the State and local governments at first, and then transitioned to ESF3 Assistant Team Leader when the cadre activated. Greg Deleon-Guerrero acted as Team Leader during the first week of the response. The ESF3 team is located at the Joint Field Office in Oklahoma City and is comprised of Stark and nine Debris Subject Matter Experts.

In the EOC at the District Headquarters, the Incident Management Team met several times per day to follow the status of the search and rescue mission and subsequent recovery mission. Col. Teague traveled to the disaster scene and met with local, state, and federal officials in the State EOC, while Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Don Nestor and District Emergency Manager William Smiley monitored the emergency at the District Office. Ten days after the tornado outbreak the Tulsa District Commander declared an end to the Emergency Situation and the EOC returned to normal operating hours.

The USACE ESF3 mission for the 2013 Oklahoma Tornado outbreak is one of debris management assistance and technical advice. The cadre provides assistance on contract issues and the development of debris management strategy, with the local, state and federal governments handling the debris removal. The team will also provide feedback to FEMA on the Sandy Recovery Act Alternative Procedures for Public Assistance Pilot Program in use as part of this mission.

Director of Contingency Operations and Office of Homeland Security, Headquarters, USACE, Karen Durham-Aguilera, P.E., Southwestern Division Commander Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula, Col. Teague, Disaster Program Manager William Irwin, and SWD Chief of Operations and Readiness Division Anthony Semento visited the JFO May 31 to meet with FEMA and State Emergency Management officials and to see damaged areas. Kula, Teague, and Semento left the city before severe weather and tornadoes struck that evening, but Durham-Aguilera, Irwin and the ESF3 team sheltered in place at the JFO as the storm passed over. None of them was injured.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ESF#3 Team Oklahoma Tornado 2013: Left to right back row: Whit Barton (Debris SME), Bob Chitwood (Debris SME), Cecil Jernigan (Debris SME), Olen Burditt (Debris SME), Greg Williams (Debris SME), Terry Sharpless (Debris SME), Wes Trammell (Debris SME), Greg Deleon-Guerrero (TL) Kerri Stark (ATL), Peter Navesky (Permanent Cadre)

The ESF3 team will remain at the JFO to provide oversight of the debris mission and the debris SMEs will continue to offer technical advice until the mission is complete.

The USACE has ESF teams across the nation that stand ready to deploy within hours of a disaster at the request of FEMA as part of the National Response Framework. Members of the teams undergo extensive initial training for certification to serve as first responders.

Planning modernization aims to improve processes

by Jay Townsend, Little Rock District

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works project planning process informs Congress as it makes decisions for authorizing and funding water resources investments for the Nation. Challenges with planning capability, funding, and study duration affect USACE's ability to provide timely and reliable information to support congressional decision making. USACE's planning modernization effort is focused on improving the processes and products that support timely and sound decisions regarding our Nation's water resources needs.

"It is absolutely essential that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers transform its study processes if it is to remain at the forefront of federal agencies the Nation turns to when seeking answers for water resources challenges. The current study processes too often leave our stakeholders and the Nation waiting for critical answers," said Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

The Little Rock District just completed the first of two national pilot studies in two and a half years. Six months under the three year allotted time table.

"This is a huge accomplishment as few studies go before the CWRB and this was the first USACE pilot study that was reviewed and approved, said Southwestern Division Commanding General Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula. "There is still work to do to get to the Chief's Report in August but I'm confident this team can do it!

"The goal of the new process is to complete the feasibility study in three years for under $3 million with three levels of vertical integration," said Trish Anslow, Chief of the Little Rock District's Planning and Environmental Division.

Some measures under the modernization efforts include the 3x3x3 rule:

- All feasibility studies will be scoped with a target goal of completion within three years.
- The target cost for a feasibility study will be no greater than $3 million.
- The study team will use all three levels of the vertical team.
- The target length for the main report of the feasibility study will be 100 pages or less.
- Any schedule or budget exceeding these guidelines will require Headquarters USACE approval.

The vertical integration process has division and headquarters looking at issues and providing guidance simultaneously and earlier in the process.

USACE recently issued guidance to implement several actions that should help modernize the planning process. The new planning paradigm is focused on risk-based scoping to define the levels of risk associated with water resources alternatives. This will involve defining the appropriate levels of detail for investigations so that recommendations for authorization can be captured, succinctly documented and completed in timely manner. This scoping will rely on the current USACE planning fundamentals – ensuring the right level of quality engineering, environmental and economic analysis – and will incorporate appropriate levels of review, with the aim to be more flexible and scalable.

"We are focusing our planning efforts on risk-based decision making," Anslow said. "We look at what information is critical to make our decisions as we move through the process. This allows us to focus our time and efforts on the most critical risk while accepting risk in the areas that are less critical for feasibility-level decisions."

The new process allows the planning team to screen earlier in the process so it gathers greater detail and builds certainty as it moves through the study.

On Feb. 18, 2011, the Jordan Creek Flood Risk Management Study in Springfield, Mo., was chosen as a pilot study to help the Corps transform the Pre-Authorization Study (Planning) Process. The Corps suggested that the study be a part of the pilot program to expedite the planning process and approval.

The core principles of planning would stay the same; however, the Corps was evaluating ways to streamline the feasibility level analysis and decision making to deliver decisions in a more efficient manner. The idea for the Corps is to gain lessons learned from this study to apply Corps wide to other studies.

The city of Springfield is prone to flash flooding and excessive damage because of the poor flow capacity of Jordan Creek. The area along Jordan Creek is heavily urbanized and includes extensive infrastructure associated with both commercial and industrial areas.

In July 2000, one of the most damaging floods on record in the White River Watershed occurred. Six inches of rainfall fell during the storm and most of it fell in the first two hours. That amount of water in such a short amount of time resulted in floodwaters four to six feet deep in some places, damage to at least 124 homes, and displacement of more than 100 people with an estimated $2 million in damages to public property alone.

In response to the flood, the city requested a reconnaissance study which was initiated on March 18, 2002. This phase of the study confirmed a federal interest in continuing the study into the feasibility phase. The city, as the non-Federal sponsor, and the Little Rock District Corps of Engineers initiated the feasibility phase by signing a Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement on May 12, 2004.

A wide variety of management measures to address the flood risk were developed, evaluated and screened. Fifteen plans were formulated for consideration, and in the final array two plans were closely compared for recommendation. The tentatively recommended plan includes detention basins in the upper reaches of the watershed and channel modification below the confluence with Wilsons Creek and Jordan Creek. The fully funded total project cost is estimated to be $21,900,000 with a sponsor contribution of $7,700,000 and a federal contribution of $14,200,000. The recommended plan has a benefit-to-cost ratio of 2.7 (at an interest rate of 3.75 percent).

After evaluation of comments received from public and stakeholder input, the final report was reviewed by the USACE Civil Works Review Board and unanimously approved.

The Chief's Report which makes the final project recommendation to Congress will be presented Aug. 29, 2013.

Topping out:
Darnall Army Medical Center ceremony held

By Randy Cephus, Fort Worth District Public Affairs

The Fort Worth District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its partners conducted a topping out ceremony at Fort Hood, Texas, May 14 with more than 600 representatives of the construction team, hospital workers and dignitaries.

Col. Charles Klinge, commander, Fort Worth District praised the efforts of all the partners consisting of the Corps, the Fort Hood Garrison; Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center; the joint venture of Balfour Beatty Construction of Dallas and McCarthy of St. Louis; and the various trades currently at work on the project during remarks at the ceremony.

Col. Charles Klinge, commander, Fort Worth Dsitrict, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Col. Roger Gallup, commander, Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center sign the last beam which was later placed at the top of the building during the "Topping Out" ceremony for the new medical facility. (photo by Fort Worth District)

"The project is roughly 40 percent complete and is on track for completion in late summer of 2014," said Klinge. "But more importantly, we hope to open the doors to care for our service members, their families and our veterans by the summer of 2015."

By the end of the project, according to Klinge, there will be enough concrete to build a 4-foot wide side walk from El Paso to Houston; enough rebar equal to the weight of 122 M1 Abrams tanks; and enough metal pipe to extend from Austin to San Antonio.

The tradition of the topping out ceremony has its roots tying back to the ancient Scandinavian religious practice of placing a tree on the top of a new building to appease the tree-dwelling spirits. The practice migrated to England and then to the U.S.

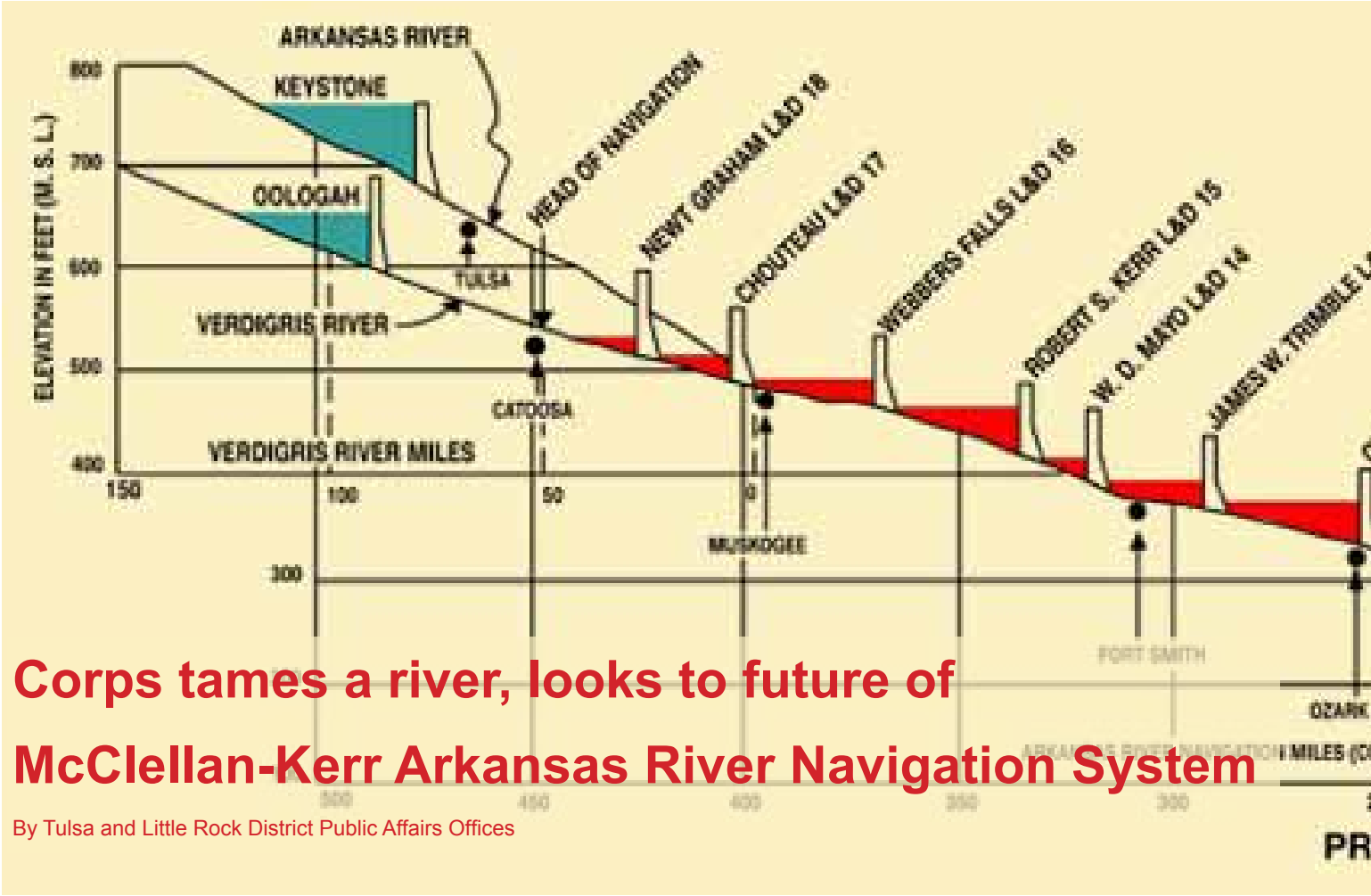
"We commemorate this significant milestone by marking a day of celebration, which includes the placing of an evergreen tree upon the structure to symbolize growth and to bring good luck," commented Klinge during remarks at the ceremony. "We also raise the state and national flags atop the structure and invite the worker crews, and local dignitaries to sign the topping out beam."

The new hospital will be approximately 60 percent larger than the existing 45-year old Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center and will specifically address Fort Hood's most pressing needs.

"The new facility will address needs in the areas of behavioral health, medical and surgical specialty clinics, and pediatric primary care," said Col. Roger Gallup, Commander, Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center.

Safety is paramount in any construction effort and the hospital project to date, can boast a lofty safety record. According to Capt. Cassidy Eaves, the Corps' hospital project operations officer, the team has consistently executed contract requirements for the project and has done it with nearly 1.2 million hours without any "lost time" accidents.

"So, to all the craftsmen who have spent numerous hours supporting the project, we salute you," said Klinge. "For without these craftsmen – the steel workers, crane and fork lift operators, electricians, welders, carpenters, plumbers, stone masons, brick masons and others, we would still be looking at a drawing on a piece of paper."



Corps tames a river, looks to future of McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System

By Tulsa and Little Rock District Public Affairs Offices

Prior to a navigation system, the Arkansas River was an erratic waterway which could swiftly change from just a trickle of water to a havoc-wreaking torrent. In the 1800's, the very existence of a navigable channel depended upon the whims of nature.

The taming of the Arkansas River for navigation, additional flood control, hydroelectric power generation, and other purposes was the largest civil works project ever undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the time of its completion in 1970. It was authorized by Congress in the River and Harbor Act of July 24, 1946, and construction began in 1957.

In 1971, Congress designated it the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. The cost of the project was approximately $1.2 billion split between projects in Arkansas and Oklahoma.

The 445-mile navigation channel, with its 18 locks, begins at the confluence of the White River and the Mississippi, winds 385 miles through Arkansas and ends at Catoosa, near Tulsa, Okla on the Verdigris River.

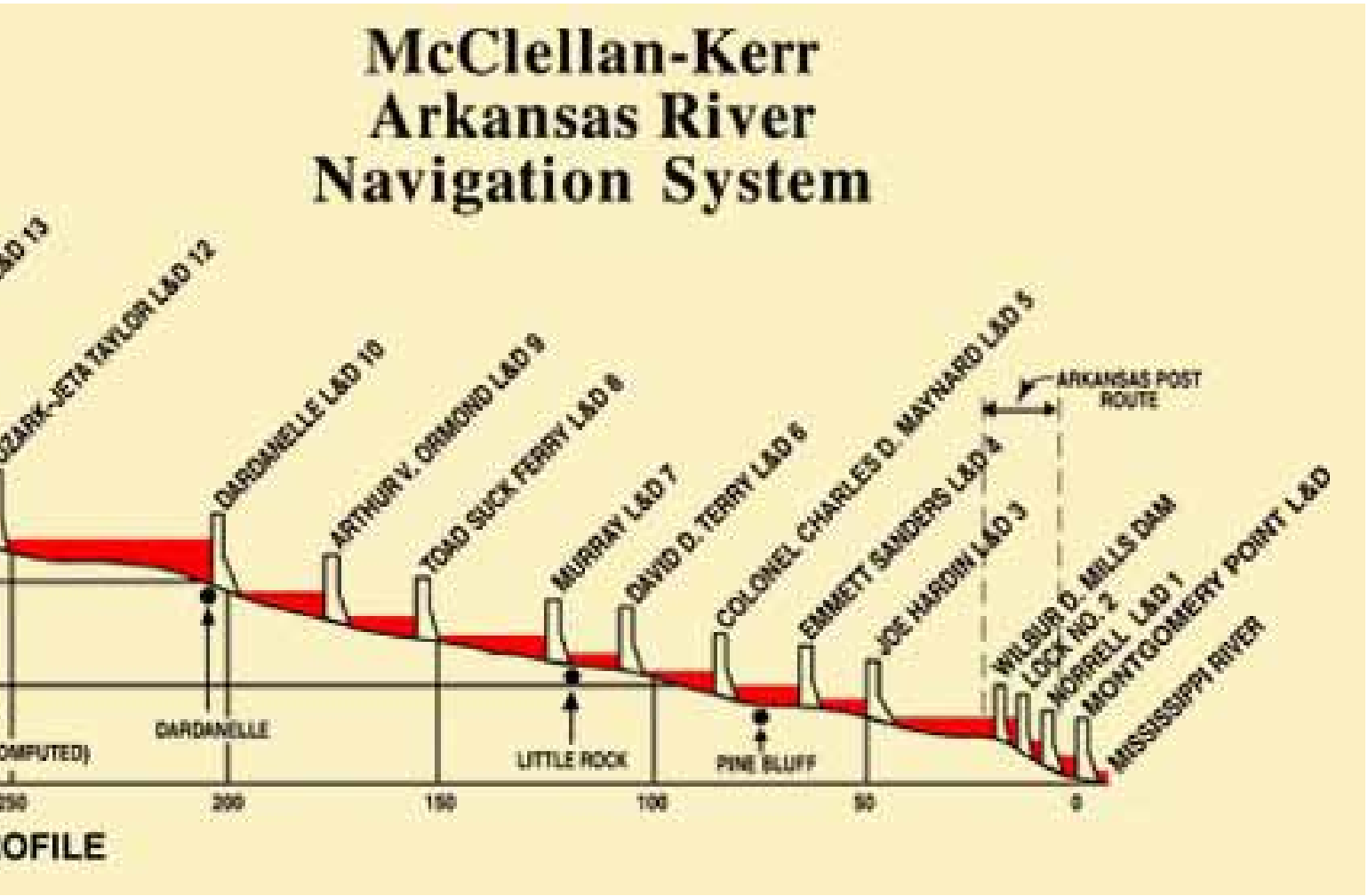
Each of the system's locks has a single chamber measuring 110 feet wide and 600 feet long. This is large enough to accommodate several vessels or a single tow as large as 108 feet wide by 585 feet long. A typical tow of eight barges carrying 12,000 tons total is equivalent to 400 semi-trucks or 120 railroad freight cars.

In building the system, the Army Corps of Engineers sought to protect and enhance the Arkansas River's scenic and recreational values. Provisions were also made for conservation, enhancement, and management of lands, waters, forests, wildlife, and other resources in the public interest.

The inland waterway is an enormous economic generator for middle America because of the combined efforts of a number of partners, including commercial shipping interests, local businesses, recreational users, and the Corps of Engineers.

During 1971, the first year the entire waterway was in operation, 4.3 million tons of cargo was moved on the system. Today, because of the closely synched operation of the MKARNS by the Tulsa and Little Rock Districts of the Corps of Engineers the average annual cargo moved on the system amounts to nearly 12 million tons with a value far exceeding $3 billion.

It works because, as Tulsa District Commander Col. Michael Teague said, "We talk with each



other. We share a lot of resources to make sure it continues to operate in spite of what mother nature throws at us."

If the waterway were to unexpectedly shut down for any reason, it would cost shippers using the waterway more than a million dollars a day in lost revenue. For that reason, both districts are making every effort to prevent unannounced closures of the system. Whether it be caused by man or nature.

During the multi-year drought in the western end of the system, Teague said "it was only because so many people pulled together they were able to keep a nine-foot deep channel open and operating."

Today, the districts face many challenges in maintaining the navigation system to meet the needs of all users, whether those users are the inland navigation industry, a bass angler, or a recreational boater.

Constrained funding and the Nation's fiscal deficit have led to reduced operations and maintenance funding, when coupled with aging infrastructure and increasing cost of operation, the Tulsa and Little Rock Districts have sought innovative means to create a "model" navigation system. A system that industry and businesses (including the tourism industry) will move to for its reliability and resiliency.

Some of the recent efforts include: implementation of a four-hour daily maintenance period at five locks (three in Oklahoma and two in Arkansas); in conjunction with industry, conducting a "dispatching" system by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation for scheduling daily maintenance (to enhance the maintenance periods and lessen the impact to industry) at Chouteau and Newt Graham Locks, Okla.; used Oklahoma DOT modeling and industry engagement, evaluated expansion of scheduled maintenance periods to the remaining locks on the system; and development of a robust recreational vessel lockage policy after extensive public involvement and feedback.

"The two districts work as a team and understand how critical this waterway is to the region and the nation," said Little Rock District Commander Col. Glen Masset. "The districts will continue working together in the future to ensure a resilient, reliable, and sustainable waterborne transportation system that optimizes the value of the system to all of the users and beneficiaries while making the best use of available resources."

New Aquatic Training Center located on desert base

Story and Photos by Edward Rivera

Fort Worth District Public Affairs

A new $15.5 million Aquatic Training Center on East Fort Bliss officially opened May 13. Located on the East Bliss Town Circle the 50,000 square-foot center boasts three pools each designed to support mission requirements as well as the recreational needs of the Fort Bliss community.

The facility has a 13-foot-deep diving pool to be used for drown-proofing, combat water survival training and other training exercises, a multipurpose pool with a rock wall for climbing and a 50-meter Olympic-size pool with a moveable bulkhead which can divide the pool in half for lap swimming and other activities.

If required, the diving pool can be retrofit later to accommodate helicopter water egress training. The multipurpose pool has a zero-depth entry for easy access for disabled and wounded soldiers. It can also be heated to 92 degrees within four hours for physical therapy.

According to Tammy Jones, project manager for the Army Corps of Engineers the new center's main emphasis will be on soldier training, but the three pools can easily be converted and used for recreation.

Divers test out the new $15.5 million, 50, 000 square-foot aquatic training center recently opened at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas. The new facility has a 13-foot-deep diving pool for drown-proofing, combat water survival training and other training exercises. If required, the diving pool can be retrofit to accommodate helicopter water egress training.

After the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Act, the desert base would almost triple in soldiers and family members along with more than $4 billion in construction to support the increase. At the time there were only two pools to support soldiers and family members and they both were approximately 60 years old.

The final product was delivered after seven years of planning. The Center of Standardization of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began addressing Fort Bliss pools around 2007, said Jay Clark, an architect with the center.

"We wanted to provide bodies of water to accommodate training, therapy and recreation," said Clark.

Jones said, all the requirements were put in the request for proposal, and that took quite a while to get it finalized and within the available funding to award the project. But like many projects the funding was cut leaving them no choice but to cut down the scope of the project.

"We originally started with four pools and we cut that down to three," said Jones. "It was a challenging project but we were able to deliver a state of the art aquatic facility with a lot of flexibility that's great for training, healing and recreation."

Corps of Engineers, Arkansas, Oklahoma port operators, navigation stakeholders agree to resume 24-Hour operations and adopt new lock maintenance plan

Article courtesy of Office of U.S. Senator James M. Inhofe

CATOOSA, OKLA. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the Arkansas Oklahoma Port Operators Association, announced the resumption of 24-hour operations and the adoption of a more efficient maintenance procedure plan for the locks and dams along the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS), one that saves not only time but also money while helping to maintain the integrity of the system for those who ship cargo on the waterway.

As a result of the National Strategy for the Inland Marine Transportation System study, completed by the Corps in 2008, a plan to close five locks along the MKARNS for maintenance four hours each day was implemented in October 2012. The new plan to begin July 1st, 2013 calls for locks to be closed only as required to enable required maintenance projects to be initiated and completed on a timely basis. Ample notice of these closures will be given to all stakeholders along the system, helping them plan for the closure and minimize the overall impact of closures on the towing industry and their customers while increasing the amount of maintenance performed on the system.

“I applaud the decision by the Corps of Engineers to resume 24-hour operations on the MKARNS,” said Inhofe. “This waterway is incredibly important to the State of Oklahoma and the nation, and even minor disruptions in service can have extremely negative consequences. This decision recognizes the value of the waterway to interstate commerce and international trade, and I commend the Corps and all the stakeholders for their work toward making continuous service on the MKARNS once again a reality.”

"This is an example of the benefits to be derived by the partnership that has developed between the Corps and the Stakeholders throughout the MKARNS, and it will ensure that we increase the maintenance of the entire system and therefore its reliability" said Colonel Michael J. Teague, Commander, Tulsa District, USACE.

David Yarbrough, President of the Arkansas Oklahoma Port Operators Association, agreed.

"This is by far a better system, one that we can all agree to," said Yarbrough. "Maintenance dollars will go farther by allowing better concentration of resources to a given repair, and delays to the shipping industry will be reduced through elimination of the daily closures."

The Corps of Engineers, in its memo regarding the new plan, stated: "This strategy will develop over time and will take significant stakeholder involvement to be successful. Our mutual goal is to have a model system – one that is reliable and resilient – for future generations."

Gary Ridley, Oklahoma Secretary of Transportation, applauded the joint agreement between the Corps and AOPOA.

"This agreement bodes well for the continued success of the MKARNS and the water-borne cargo transportation industry, a crucial element for not only the Oklahoma economy but for our entire region," said Ridley. "We also must recognize the key efforts and support of Senator Inhofe who understands that without this navigation system, our economy would lose up to $2 million per day. With Senator Inhofe's help, we have taken another step in the right direction for preserving this great economic resource for the present and the future."

Galveston District's maintenance and operations efforts along the Texas coast

by Galveston District Public Affairs

Heavy equipment operators construct dewatering ditches at the San Jacinto Placement Area as part of $1,382,700 contract to provide outflow of excess water to increase the placement area's capacity to hold more dredge material. This process is part of the district's Disposal Area Management Program which ensures placement areas are prepared for future dredging activities.

Attracting millions of tourists to the coastline annually, the Texas Gulf Coast is more than a vacation destination. It is a complex and vulnerable system that is home to three of the top 10 ports in the nation that generates 22 percent of the nation's waterborne commerce, creates millions of jobs and pumps billions of dollars each year into the nation's economy.

With the historic economic transformation associated with shale oil and gas exploration and the expansion of the Panama Canal, the success of these enterprises hinges heavily on the successful maintenance of these vital waterways.

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District's Operations Division is responsible for managing a robust operations and maintenance program to ensure the continued safe navigation along our waterways as well implementing measures to mitigate flood risks," said Joe Hrametz, chief of the USACE Galveston District's Navigation Branch. "As we work to maintain these waterways, we're constantly seeking to improve our processes to ensure the continued success of our nation's vital industries."

Tasked with the mission of providing vital engineering services to strengthen the nation's security, energize the economy and reduce risks from disaster, the USACE Galveston District staff works with its federal, state and local partners to maintain 1,000 miles of deep and shallow draft channels and have developed three new policies and processes to help streamline these efforts.

The Labor Workbook was developed to effectively manage labor funds down to the activity level for planning studies and milestone for dredging and construction contracts. The workbook is prepared prior to the beginning of each fiscal year and is fully automated to extract financial information from the Corps of Engineers Financial Management System (CEFMS) and populate the labor workbook each pay period thereby eliminating the need to manually extract the information, while providing the operations manager total oversight regarding who is charging to his or her project and if milestones are being accomplish on schedule and within budget.

The Gulf Intracoastal Waterway Set-back Policy was updated this year to ensure safe navigation for 423 miles of waterway and will regulate the distance that marine structures can be constructed in the vicinity of the GIWW. Working with federal and state partner agencies as well as the commercial towing industry, the district identified five areas of navigation concern to include bends, bridges, mooring facilities, waterfront structural congestion/ encroachment areas and land encroachments. Being able to visually depict the channel in readily available formats for the public provides the Corps the ability to depict the setback of the channel in relation to the proposed private structures and provides a greater layer of transparency to the district's regulatory permitting policy along the GIWW.

Additionally, the district's GIS technology will be used to add

The spill barge "Shamrock" places material to construct an underwater levee that is part of a Beneficial Use Site to provide a shallow water sea grass habitat along the south side of the new channel, during the construction of the La Quinta Channel Extension Project in Nueces County, Texas. The USACE Galveston District awarded the contract in September 2011 in the amount of $33,537,027.20 to Texas-based King Fisher Marine Service LP (now known as Orion Marine Group) to complete the project by July 2013. (Photo by USACE Galveston District Civil Engineer Kenneth (Chip) Worley.)

A satellite image depicts the proposed setback lines along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The single red line in the middle of the waterway represents the centerline of the GIWW while the white lines on either side of the red centerline show the channel toes of the channel. The blue lines represent the proposed setback off of the channel that will allow for full maintenance activities and other operations necessary to maintain the integrity of the channel. The waterfront structures shown in the picture (recreational docks) show an example of permitted structures that were built in compliance with their approved permit and the proposed setback policy.

visibility of the setback by creating a downloadable overlay on the district's website that will show where the setbacks are located with respect to the authorized channel along the GIWW and is expected to be available by summer 2013. The policy will also give the Corps the ability to analyze known navigational hazardous locations along the GIWW in order to maintain navigation safety.

Lastly, the district updated its outgrants and non-federal use of dredge material disposal facilities policies. An outgrant is a written, legal document that authorizes the right to use real property managed by the USACE and establishes the timeframe, consideration, conditions and restrictions of its use. In 2013, staff identified areas in the Outgrant Program that if streamlined, could potentially save thousands of federal dollars each year, and began developing a new funding model that addresses the prioritization of outgrants, establishes fair-market value of property managed by the district and categorizes/standardizes permit application fees. The updated policy regarding the non-federal use of dredge material disposal facilities enables the district to charge for the usage of these sites and keep the fees instead of returning the funds back to the U.S. Treasury, which benefits the entire Corps.

“The Texas economy relies heavily on the Gulf Coast,” said Hrametz. “We’re developing new initiatives and policies to improve the district’s Operations and Maintenance Program that will allow us to continue our mission of providing safe, reliable, efficient and environmentally sustainable waterborne transportation systems for movement of commerce, national security needs and recreation, and in the process we’re setting a new standard for the way we do business.”

Continuing drought impacts Corps lakes in Southwestern Division region

by Dr. Michael Sterling, Chief, Water Management and Infrastructure Safety, Southwestern Division

An aerial view of O.C. Fisher Lake in Fort Worth District, which has been severely affected by drought. (Photo by Fort Worth District)

Since 2011, the central and western portions of the United States have experienced prolonged, severe drought conditions. Reservoirs within the Corps of Engineer's Southwestern Region have been suffering from severe drought conditions during this period. The lack of precipitation has dropped water levels in all lakes of the region causing concern for adequate water supplies to meet the needs of water supply users, navigation, hydropower, recreation and fish and wildlife habitat. Recent rains in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas have given some relief, but the overall region is still in need of more rain in anticipation of continuing drought in the region.

What are benefits of Corps lakes during drought?

Corps of Engineers lakes serve many purposes to multiple stakeholders. While primarily viewed as flood control infrastructure, Corps lakes also provide critical water storage when too little rain has fallen. The conservation pool of a reservoir is the specified amount of water dedi-

cated to water storage. This water can be used to generate electricity, provide drinking water supply, offer recreational opportunities, provide fish and wildlife habitat, and other benefits.

When will the drought end?

Increased rainfall is the ultimate solution to alleviating drought conditions impacting Corps of Engineers lake projects. Some parts of the region have recently received rain. As result of rainfall this spring, many of the lakes in Arkansas, and eastern portions of Oklahoma and Texas have refilled to pre-drought elevations.

However, most Corps of Engineers lakes in western portions of Texas and Oklahoma have continued to experience declining elevations. The rainfall that has occurred in these areas has not resulted in substantial runoff. One factor is that the soil is so dry that it acts as a sponge allowing little to no surface run-off. It will take more rain for runoff to reach the lakes and the rivers which flow into the lakes.

How has the drought impacted lake operations?

Most of the Corps lakes in Southwestern Division have multiple purposes. The negative impacts of dwindling water supplies in Corps lakes are clear for municipal water supply customers. At the same time, additional impacts have included reduced hydropower generation, park restrictions and closings, and impaired environments for fish and wildlife. The resulting economic consequences can be significant to consumers, who may have to purchase more expensive electricity. Local communities, which depend on visitors to Corps lakes and associated parks, have also been hurt economically.

How is the Corps mitigating drought impacts to stakeholders?

The Corps of Engineers has continued its efforts within existing authorities to mitigate the drought's effects in its management of water resources to ensure its projects continue to fulfill their multiple authorized purposes, to include navigation, water supply, recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, and environmental purposes.

In alignment with Drought Contingency Plans developed for each lake, the Corps has worked closely with stakeholders and local interests to encourage communication and planning in managing dwindling water resources. As a first step, water conservation opportunities are examined and implemented to extend water supply sources. In addition, the Corps has partnered with stakeholders and resource agencies to identify and implement prudent conservation alternatives at selected projects. For example, at John Redmond Lake in Kansas, the Corps had developed a water reallocation study, increasing storage available for water supply by 17,200 acre-feet. While the study is obtaining final approvals, the Corps has conditionally increased the storage to the new limit, providing enough additional water for up to 150,000 people for a year.

The Corps is leading a similar collaboration with stakeholders and resource agencies regarding El Dorado Lake in Kansas. El Dorado Lake is the municipal water supply for the City of El Dorado, Kansas (pop. 13,000). Due to the city leaders' drought concerns, the Corps reduced outflow from the lake by 432,000 cubic feet per day. This modification has provided enough additional water for over 30,000 people.

The Corps has modified its own maintenance activities at lakes with drought water levels. For example, at Lavon Lake in Texas, the Corps suspended gate operations for maintenance activities to reduce water losses at the project. It is estimated that the water released during these gate operations would be enough to supply an average family of four for six years.

Other water users have conserved their own water consumption to allow for increased municipal water supply. As an example, Southwestern Power Administration (SWPA) utilizes water releases from Corps lakes to generate electricity for its customers. However, with consideration of falling lake levels and dwindling municipal water supplies, SWPA has elected to reduce its own water consumption. During the past 2 years, SWPA has purchased over $60 million of electricity from other sources for its customers.

Sedimentation cakes shoreline above John Redmond Reservoir. Sedimentation is flowing into the reservoir at a rate faster than anticipated causing issues with water supply storage for the Kansas Water Office. As a result, the Water Office is planning a first-of-its-kind dredging initiative at the reservoir. (Photo by Tulsa District)

A poster child for sedimentation: Dredging John Redmond Reservoir

by Nate Herring, SWT Public Affairs

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District lakes are designed to accumulate sediment as a natural part of their lifespan, but studies by the Corps and the state of Kansas determined that sediment is accumulating in the conservation pool of John Redmond Reservoir, Kan. at a rate faster than originally projected.

As a result, in a first of its kind effort at a federal project, the Kansas Water Office plans to dredge the reservoir in a multi-year effort that will help to regain some of the water storage capacity lost. John Redmond Reservoir, which was completed in Sept. 1964, currently provides water supply for 13 cities, one wholesale water supplier, five industries and Wolf Creek Nuclear Generating Station.

"From 1964 to 2010, John Redmond has lost an estimated 42 percent of its conservation pool storage capacity and it continues to lose on average 739 acre feet of storage to sedimentation each year," said Susan Metzger, chief of planning and policy at the Kansas Water Office. "The state is proposing to dredge the sediment in John Redmond in a phased approach, removing about 600,000 cubic yards of sediment each year."

In addition to dredging, another major component of the state's plan to best utilize the reservoir for water supply storage is a reallocation. A reallocation would change the amount of water designated for certain uses such as flood control and redesignate it for other uses such as water supply.

"The reallocation is a federal action to reallocate storage from the flood control pool to the conservation pool for water supply use," said Steve Nolen, Tulsa District planning division chief. "It would involve a two foot pool increase, so normal lake level would increase from 1039 to 1041 permanently."

This reallocation was recently approved by the Assistant Secretary of the Army

for Civil Works Jo-Ellen Darcy and will be implemented soon. Currently, a temporary increase of two feet has been authorized until the permanent change is implemented.

"The two foot pool rise at John Redmond will increase the state's storage capacity by a little more than 17,000 acre feet," Metzger said. "The reallocation is a necessary and vital piece to ensuring the lake remains a viable water source." However, even with the reallocation, sediment will continue to accumulate unless dredging is done.

Though this is the first time a non-federal agency has attempted a major initiative such as this on a federal project, this is not the first time the Kansas Water Office has performed dredging on a lake. In 2010, about one million cubic yards of sediment were dredged from Mission Lake in Brown County, Kan. Dredging of this lake, which is a small public water supply lake, has served as a pilot project for not only future small public water supply lakes, but many of the lessons learned can be applied to dredging at John Redmond Reservoir, Metzger said.

During their planning process representatives from the water office, the Corps of Engineers, and other Kansas state agencies studied some dredging projects on canals and lakes by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. According to Metzger, many of the elements of the Ohio program such as the methodology, landowner coordination and funding sources may be used at Redmond.

Currently, the state is identifying a design dredge team, through a procurement process, that will include experts in dredging, engineering and construction. Another step currently ongoing is the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement by the Kansas Water Office, with assistance from the Corps of Engineers. An EIS, a requirement of the National Environmental Protection Act, must be completed when work such as this is done on federal land. The EIS will identify environmental impacts to the reservoir and presents alternative actions and consequences ranging from completely dredging the lake to taking no action at all. During the preparation, public meetings were held to solicit input from the general public and gather data. After analysis, a Preferred Alternative is presented and finally, a Record of Decision, expected by the end of 2013, is signed. In addition to the EIS, the Kansas Water Office must apply for a Section 408 permit from the Corps of Engineers which allows them, as a non-federal entity, to modify a federal project. As part of that process, a technical review is completed and if there are no issues, the permit is granted. The current plan is to use two areas on federal property below the reservoir as dredge material disposal sites. To do this, the Water Office will apply for a real estate outgrant from the Corps of Engineers. This will allow the state to begin the project and use those sites while they work to identify and secure other dredge material disposal sites on nearby private lands. Once all of these steps are taken, dredging could begin as early as March 2014.

While dredging won't restore the reservoir to its original depth, the Kansas Water Office is also addressing ways to reduce the amount of sedimentation coming into the lake. They believe that dredging combined with other sediment reducing activities in the watershed such as stream bank stabilization will help regain some of the lost capacity by reducing the amount of sediment coming into the lake allowing the dredging to be more effective. In addition, sites with significant eroding stream banks were identified on federal land along the Neosho River above John Redmond.

"These sites may be areas where the Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can implement sediment-reducing stream bank stabilization practices on federal land," she said.

As the Kansas Water Office plan and implement dredging at John Redmond, Metzger says they will only be as successful as their partnership with the Corps of Engineers.

"We view John Redmond Reservoir, and other Corps of Engineers' reservoirs in Kansas, as joint projects," she said. "Corps' staff participation in the planning, permitting, and oversight of this project will be critical to making sure the project moves forward both correctly and expeditiously."

As with any first, there may be challenges that need to be overcome, but Metzger is hopeful that this project will help other states faced with similar issues in the future.

"This will be the first example of a non-Federal entity planning, implementing and funding a dredging initiative at a federal project," she said. "For this reason, dredging of John Redmond Reservoir will serve as a pilot project for the rest of the nation."

MAKE IT RAIN

by Randy Cephus, SWF Public Affairs

Several boat ramps like this one at Grapevine Lake have recently been closed due to low lake levels.

Although there have been a few severe storms this spring, the rain has not produced much inflow to the lakes managed by the Fort Worth District. Currently, the reservoir storage across the State of Texas is at or near record lows. The amount of water flowing into area lakes are comparable to 2011 levels; the lowest ever recorded by the district.

The 25 multi-purpose lakes managed by the Fort Worth District store approximately 30 percent of the surface water in the state. The lakes also provide hydro-power production and recreational opportunities for millions of visitors each year.

"Most major lakes in the Colorado River Basin are in worst condition today than they were at this same time in 2011," said Water Resource Chief, Jerry Cotter. "The Brazos River Basin has also been severely affected by the low inflows."

Whitney Lake, the largest lake in the Brazos River Basin, is approximately 10 feet below its conservation pool. This equates to the lake being 25 percent full and according to Corps officials, if this trend continues hydropower generation at Whitney will be limited this summer.

Although not as severe as other areas in the state, there still remains concern for the Trinity River Basin which includes the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex with its dense population, and high demand for water resources. Lavon and Cooper Lakes, which supply the North Texas Municipal Water District's service area, are at critically low levels.

"Without significant rain in the near future, the implementation of water restrictions will be common in many communities this summer," Cotter said.

Throughout the district, Corps lake managers had to close several boat ramps and designated swim areas as a result of the decreased water levels. These low water levels also expose some hidden dangers at area lakes.

"As drought conditions persist, I caution swimmers and boaters to watch for hazards, such as trees or rocks, which may be exposed or closer to the water surface due to lower lake levels," said Grapevine Lake Manager, Brandon Mobley.

Mobley further cautioned that with waters lower than the traditional pools at most area lakes, it is even more imperative that visitors do not jump or dive into the water and that everyone wear a life jacket when recreating in or near the water.

"The key to success as we manage the effects of the drought is to keep all key stakeholders at the table to work out solutions as we share this limited resource," said Cotter. "We must maintain a balance and take into account the competing needs of all parties affected by a drought."

The bottom line is that even with the recent rains, much of the state remains in a drought and everyone has a role in protecting and conserving this precious resource.

Aging hydraulic pipes removed from Robert S. Kerr Lock and Dam

by Ross Adkins, Tulsa District Public Affairs

On any lock and dam, the last thing you want to fail is the ability to open and close one of those huge gates. When that happens, the entire lock is shut down. That was about to happen at Robert S. Kerr Lock and Dam 15.

The miter gates are big, heavy, and require hydraulic power assists to open and close allowing vessels to enter the lock chamber.

On the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation system, there are five locks and dams within the Tulsa District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-managed portion of the inland channel. The system was built and became operational 42 years ago. Much of the equipment that operates the locks is the original equipment installed in the late 1960s. It is beginning to show its age.

Installing the new stainless steel hydraulic pipelines are left to right,Tulsa District employees David Ford and Christopher Anderson. Crews from the Tulsa District have installed new stainless pipes in three of the districts lock and dams with two more scheduled for replacement as money becomes available. (Photo courtesy USACE employee Victor Heister)

In order to move the huge miter gates, galvanized steel pipes were installed as part of the lock's hydraulic system. Greg Barnes, Navigation and Fleet Operations Manager said, "The original pipes had gotten so bad, we were expecting a complete failure at anytime. That would have resulted in an unscheduled shut down of the navigation system. And that would be real costly."

Each day the navigation system is shut down, it costs shippers over a million dollars in lost revenue.

The district is replacing the galvanized steel pipes with new stainless steel pipes that are expected to last much longer than the original 1960s pipes in the same environment.

Robert S. Kerr Lock and Dam is the third of five locks on the Oklahoma navigation system at which Tulsa District has had to replace these pipes. The pipes at Webbers Falls were replaced in 2004, and W. D. Mayo pipes replaced in 2012. Pipes at the remaining two locks are scheduled to be replaced when funding becomes available.

In the past, pipes have burst at locks 14, 15, and 16, creating an unscheduled shut down of the navigation system for more than 24 hours. Even a shutdown of a few hours can cause a huge back-up of shipping. When this occurs the district must go on a 24-hour emergency repair schedule to restore operations on the navigation channel. To prevent that from happening again, the district, in partnership with shipping interests, have scheduled periodic closures to replace aging pipes and perform other needed repairs. Navigation interests agree that scheduled maintenance closures saves them considerable money by allowing time to pre-plan schedules around the planned closures versus surprise unscheduled shipping stoppages.

Tulsa District employees, through pre-planning with shipping interest stakeholders, were able to close down for the repairs that took less than the scheduled 7 days thus saving shippers more than the $1 million dollar per day cost of an unscheduled outage.

Visitors fish in the steam below Tenkiller Dam. During the summer of 2011 drought, low dissolved oxygen levels and high water temperatures resulted in a fish kill below the dam.

New mechanical systems to help trout fishery below Tenkiller Dam

By Nate Herring, Tulsa District Public Affairs

The stream below Tenkiller Dam in Okla. is home to a popular trout fishery; however, during the 2011 drought, low dissolved oxygen levels, and high water temperatures resulted in a fish kill of both trout and other types of fish.

As a result of a multi-agency effort, a two-part mechanical solution was developed to prevent further fish kills below the dam.

"What happens is that below the dam, the water level gets so low and the temperature gets so hot that there's no oxygen to support the fishery so the fish basically suffocate," said Richard Thatcher, Oklahoma Wildlife Department director.

The new mechanical solution ensures that in times of stress there will be enough oxygenated water coming into the area, he said.

Although one of the congressionally-authorized purposes of Tenkiller Lake is for fish and wildlife, there is no water allocated in the lake for that purpose and all water storage is contracted to other users. The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife and Conservation relies on limited donated storage to release water for the fishery. The mechanical system will help ODWC better utilize that donated storage.

The first part of the new system is a low flow pipe that transports water from the surge tank at the hydropower plant to the steam. Prior to the low flow pipe, there was only one mechanism to release water for the trout fishery, and it had a minimum release of 150 cubic feet per second. At certain times, this was more water than ODWC wanted released.

"This will allow for smaller and better releases of donated water so that we have higher dissolved oxygen levels, lower water temperatures and more water available downstream," said Kent

Kent Dunlap, Tulsa District chief of natural resources, explains the low flow pipe system and how it will benefit the fishery below Tenkiller Dam.

Dunlap, Tulsa District chief of natural resources.

With the low flow pipe, as little as 50 cubic feet can be released, unlike the earlier mechanism which would waste thousands of gallons of water.

"You couldn't control it," said Col. Michael Teague, Tulsa District commander. "It's like opening the garage door when you want to let your dog out."

Another benefit of the low flow pipe is that it will be controlled from the Fort Gibson powerhouse so releases can be changed around the clock. In the past, when the gates were used for releases late in the day, the releases needed to continue until personnel arrived in the morning to close the gates.

The second part of the mechanical system is a Supersaturated Dissolved Oxygen System, or SDOX, that will target an isolated pool below the powerhouse where the 2011 fish kill occurred. ODWC can operate the system when the dissolved oxygen levels reach critical lows in that area.

"It's able to oxygenate the water in the sluice pool area when we have really critical low dissolved oxygen times," Dunlap said.

He compared the SDOX to an elephant gun in that you don't use it often, but when you do it is definitely needed.

The low flow pipe system and SDOX were the result of a partnership between the Corps of Engineers, ODWC, and Southwestern Power Administration, a partnership which Teague called critical to the project.

"All of the agencies had different concerns and also different resources they could contribute to the project," he said. "No agency could have done it alone."

In addition the mechanical system, ODWC has placed dissolved oxygen monitors along the stream.

"This will allow us to collect very important data in the future to see what the situation is, how the fishery is being affected and when we need to implement these measures that we have in place to keep the fish alive," he said.

The oxygen monitoring, combined with the low flow pipe and SDOX, will help to ensure that the fishery continues to thrive.

"Thousands of people come to the area each year to fish," Thatcher said. "Not only is it important to the local economy, but it's also great for people to come and just enjoy the beautiful surroundings out here."

Kansas Water Office works with Corps to update water plan

Article courtesy of Kansas Water Office

The Kansas Water Office (KWO), in coordination with local, state, federal and interstate partners, is developing the 5-year update of the Kansas Water Plan.

The Kansas Water Plan is one of the primary tools used by the state of Kansas to address current water resource issues and to plan for future needs.

Statutory authority and basic guidance for formulating the Kansas Water Plan is contained in the State Water Resources Planning Act. Two of the key issues identified in the Kansas Water Plan are reservoir sustainability and extending the economic life of the Ogallala – High Plains Aquifer. The two activities described below are direct implementations of activities to address those issues.

Federal reservoirs are an important source of water supply in Kansas, providing water to two-thirds of Kansas' citizens. The ability of the reservoirs to store water over time is diminished as the capacity is reduced through sedimentation. John Redmond Reservoir, a poster child for the sedimentation issue in Kansas, is an important source of municipal and industrial water supply in the Cottonwood-Neosho River Basin. The growing sedimentation problem at John Redmond has been recognized for some time now, but it became clearly evident in 2012 due to the drought conditions. Since 1964, John Redmond has lost an estimated 42 percent of its conservation pool storage capacity to sediment.

Many short and mid-term alternatives to reduce sedimentation at the lake or increase storage have been or are currently being implemented. These alternatives include streambank restoration projects on the Neosho and Cottonwood Rivers and a two-foot pool raise and reallocation of storage is anticipated at the reservoir in 2013. While these actions have been important steps to extending the life of the reservoir, removal of the already deposited sediment is necessary to ensure a reliable water supply is available to meet the current and future area demands.

KWO in partnership with the Corps is working through the necessary steps and requirements to ensure this project is completed efficiently and in accordance with all federal requirements.

The Ogallala Aquifer supports the entire economy of the western third of Kansas and in most locations is in decline with annual withdrawals far exceeding the average, annual recharge. Locally proposed groundwater conservation plans is one tool making headway in Kansas to address this decline. Local Enhanced Management Areas (LEMAs) were enacted into law in 2012 (K.S.A. 82a-1041) to support pro-active, groundwater conservation plans. Each LEMA can be developed with specific controls to meet the decline or other groundwater concerns in a way that is acceptable to the locals involved. Once approved through an order by the states' Chief Engineer it has the force and function of law.

The first LEMA approved is a region in northwest Kansas, known as Sheridan Co. High Priority Area 6 (SD-6). Landowners in SD-6, primarily farmers, developed the LEMA to extend the useful life of the Ogallala High Plains aquifer in their region. The long term economics, land stewardship and inter-generational equity have been mentioned as influences on locals' decisions for the LEMA. The SD-6 LEMA will reduce irrigation water to an allocation based on 11 acre-inches/acre/year, or 55 acre-inches/acre over five years. Other non-domestic water uses are also reduced. This LEMA provides producers the flexibility to manage crop water over five years as well as allows movement of water anywhere within the LEMA boundaries (subject to not impairing an existing water right).

Galveston District finalizes Freeport's periodic inspection findings

by Galveston District Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District completed its review of the 2012 periodic inspection of the Freeport and Vicinity Hurricane Flood Protection Project, which concluded in an overall rating of unacceptable.

According to Levee Safety Program Manager Scott Leimer, USACE Galveston District, the levee received an unacceptable rating due to a combination of factors which included the evaluation of new data on levee system's expected performance, a re-evaluation of existing data using current guidelines and the presence of abandoned infrastructure within the system.

"The periodic inspection was conducted by a multidisciplinary team that included the levee sponsor and was led by a professional engineer," said Leimer. "The district typically conducts these inspections every five years on federally authorized levees in the district's Levee Safety Program."

Once the levee system was inspected, a final inspection rating for operation and maintenance was granted based on the levee inspection checklist, which included 125 specific items dealing with operation and maintenance of levee embankments, floodwalls, interior drainage, pump stations and channels.

"There was one of three ratings that could have been granted - acceptable, minimally acceptable or unacceptable," said Leimer. "Levees rated unacceptable are not expected to perform to their full design capability and potentially pose a higher risk to the public during extreme flood events."

Leimer stated that in order for the Velasco Drainage District to remain eligible for federal rehabilitation assistance through the USACE Rehabilitation and Inspection Program (Flood Control and Coastal Emergency Act Public Law 84-99), it must maintain the levee at the minimally acceptable standard.

"Public safety is our top priority," said Chairman George Kidwell, Velasco Drainage District. "We are taking necessary corrective measures in order to fix deficiencies in our levee system to ensure we reduce flood risks to the public, comply with the district's levee safety standards and remain in the USACE Rehabilitation and Inspection Program."

The USACE uses inspection findings to rate the levee system to determine compliance with operation and maintenance requirements (including some measures of performance), understand the overall levee condition and determine eligibility for federal rehabilitation assistance under PL 84-99. Currently, approximately 10 percent of USACE levee systems are acceptable, while about 80 percent are minimally acceptable and 10 percent are unacceptable.

"Levees reduce the risk of flooding but no levee system can eliminate all flood risks."

"Levees reduce the risk of flooding but no levee system can eliminate all flood risk," said Leimer. "There is always a chance that a flood will exceed the capacity of a levee, no matter how well built. Levees can work to provide critical time for local emergency management officials to safely evacuate residents during flooding events however, the possibility exists that levees can be overtopped or breached by large floods and in some instances fail even when a flood is small."

The Galveston District encourages residents to know the risks associated with living and/or working behind levees and their roles in reducing those risks. Levee inspection ratings are available in the National Levee Database at http://nld.usace.army.mil/egis/f?p=471:1:

Galveston District's ecosystem restoration initiative

by Galveston District Public Affairs

The Texas Gulf Coast is a national treasure from both an economic and environmental standpoint. Attracting millions of tourists to the coastline annually, the Texas Gulf Coast also serves as an important hub for fishing, provides habitat for millions of migratory birds and is home to three of the top 10 ports in the nation, which generates 21 percent (2010) of the nation's waterborne commerce, creates millions of jobs and pumps billions of dollars each year into the nation's economy.

"Maintaining the environmental health of our coastal wetlands is crucial to ensuring the continued success of many of our nation's vital industries," said Commander Col. Christopher Sallese, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District.

Tasked with the mission of providing vital engineering services to strengthen the nation's security, energize the economy and reduce risks from disaster, the district plays a role in managing ecosystem restoration projects along the Texas coastline and is responsible for making regulatory permit decisions involving proposed wetland impacts to ensure projects are carefully evaluated to protect these valuable resources.

A 72-feet-wide tow enters and exits through the east lock of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Colorado River Locks in Matagorda, Texas. The tow had a foot and a half clearance on either side of the barge, as the locks are 75-feet-wide. The tug, named the "Emile T," was carrying offshore oil rig equipment on the barges down the Texas coast. (Photo by Colorado River Locks Lockmaster Simon DeSoto, USACE Galveston District.)

Coastal habitat protection and restoration: Coastal wetlands are critical to the health of the Texas Gulf Coast, providing habitat for migratory birds; acting as nurseries for fish and shellfish; filtering water; reducing coastal erosion and often serving as a buffer against storm surge. The district employs the following programs as part of its ecosystem restoration initiative:

Barrier island shoreline stabilization: To combat erosion, the USACE Galveston District is creating wetland and barrier islands along the Texas coast to replace shorelines that have been eroded over the decades. The stabilization of the shoreline and barrier islands will also continue to serve as vital habitat for nesting shorebirds as well as for the critically endangered Kemp's Ridley sea turtle and other sea turtles. The district continues to nourish beaches along the Texas coast as well as renourish eroding islands in Galveston's West Bay. Additionally, the district will construct more beneficial use sites in Aransas National Wildlife Refuge during fiscal year 2013.

Beneficial use: Annually, the USACE Galveston District dredges (removes sediment from underwater locations and transports it elsewhere via a barge or pipeline) approximately 30 to 40 million cubic yards of mate¬rial from Texas ports to ensure waterways remain open for commerce. While undertaking its mission of keeping America's waterways navigable, the Corps uses the material to benefit local communities and improve eroded coastlines through beach nourishment and beneficial use pro¬grams to create marsh, restore sea grass and provide bird rookeries in Galveston Bay, Matagorda Bay, Corpus Christi Bay, the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge and Laguna Madre.

Oyster reef restoration: According to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, more than 8,000 acres of oyster reefs were lost in Galveston Bay during Hurricane Ike. With more than 50 percent of the oyster reefs in

Galveston Bay impacted, the USACE Galveston District remains committed to working with its partners to construct more than 170 acres of oyster reefs in Galveston Bay and is planning to partner with the Nature Conservancy to create 12 acres of habitat at Half Moon Oyster Reef in Matagorda Bay in 2013.

Sea grass protection: Sea grasses provide an invaluable habitat for numerous fish species and contribute to the stabilization of recreational fishing grounds. The district contributes to the protection of sea grass by only dredging the Laguna Madre and other sensitive areas in the winter when the sea grasses are dormant and continuing to nourish the beds with a thin layer of beneficial use material derived from nearby dredging projects. Regulatory permits involving dredging and other work in sea grass beds adhere to stringent guidelines and require mitigation or restoration to maintain the values of these special aquatic sites.

Securing freshwater inflows: The district's Wallisville Lake Project protects freshwater intakes on the Trinity River from saltwater intrusion during periods of low flow for the City of Houston and widespread agricultural interests. Regional water resource management within Texas also interfaces with Regulatory permits when water transfer projects are proposed in waters of the United States.

Threatened and endangered species: The Corps employs a variety of methods to minimize impacts to threatened and endangered species including the use of turtle trawling monitors and excluding devices on dredges to reduce turtle takes (kills) and scheduling dredging and construction projects around various seasonal time frames to minimize impacts to nesting birds and turtles. Additionally, the district applies these same requirements when issuing Regulatory permits to ensure minimal impact is made to our nation's threatened and endangered species.

Wetlands: Wetlands serve as valuable nurseries for fish and wildlife and are also vital barriers during storms. Through permitting, the USACE Galveston District ensures that economic development in coastal areas can move forward while minimizing the impact on our environment. These wetlands have propelled the Texas Gulf Coast as one of the most important wintering and migration habitats in North America. The district's Regulatory Branch provides strong protection of the nation's aquatic environment, to achieve a goal of no net loss of wetlands while balancing economic prosperity with environmental sustainability.

With all of these measures in place, the Texas coastline continues to erode and with it, impacts to wildlife areas, wetlands, barrier islands and residential and commercial properties has caused significant environmental and economic consequences.

The district has received approval to initiate a three-year Coastal Texas Ecosystem Protection and Restoration Study that will provide a complete body of data that will enable staff to recommend a comprehensive strategy for storm damage reduction and ecosystem restoration along the entire coastal area of Texas. While continuing to partner with governmental/non-governmental agencies and academic institutions, the district will also coordinate with the established Gulf Coast Inter-divisional Team in 2012 to find solutions to the Texas Gulf Coast restoration challenges.

"The Texas economy relies heavily on the Gulf Coast," said Sallese. "As the 15th largest economy in the world, it's imperative that we strike a balance between industry growth and the health of our ecosystem and work to ensure it can withstand and recover from future disasters."

The USACE Galveston District places a final reef ball in an area that has been named the Robert Benjamin Boren Memorial Reef, located in Chocolate Bayou, Placement Area 4A. Boren, who passed away July 4, 2008, was a USACE Galveston District visionary who advocated the use of the concrete reef balls for erosion control purposes (as an effective alternative to articulated concrete block revetment systems) and to help enhance marine ecosystems. (Photo by Mike Bledsoe, USACE Galveston District.)

Lavon Lake, located in Wylie, Texas, supplies water to the member cities of the North Texas Municipal Water District, as well as provides flood control to the Collin, Dallas and Rockwall County areas. (USACE photo)

Building a resilient and reliable water resources portfolio

by Martie Cenkci
Southwestern Division Public Affairs

The cycles of drought and flooding that have defined Texas and much of the southwest over the years have presented many challenges in water management, all intensified by the large gains in population and industry that the area has seen. With 28 reservoirs in Texas with storage set aside for water supply, and 74 multipurpose water reservoirs within the region, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' Southwestern Division has been in the forefront, working with state and local governments and other stakeholders to ensure they are able to meet the water needs of the area. SWD participated in the Texas Water Conservation Organization's Mid-Year Conference in Galveston, Texas, June 19-21 to discuss its role in water management and efforts to build a resilient and reliable portfolio that meets the current and future water resources needs for the region.

Robert Slockbower, director of Programs for SWD, briefed the General Session on SWD's initiatives within the state of Texas, with an emphasis on the Infrastructure Strategy for the future.

"With our current budget constraints, as well as the possibility of reduced budgets in the coming years, we have a concern about the potential impact on our region, its water needs, and our economy if the existing Corps reservoirs are not reliable for the long term," Slockbower said. "So we have initiated an Infrastructure Strategy that is based on collaboration with our customers to ensure we understand their priorities."

Slockbower said that SWD is addressing levels of service and efficiencies in operations to identify potential funding gaps in order for the state water providers to have a complete understanding of the future infrastructure needs of the region. "We are looking at this as a priority

at the regional level, and we need to know what the customers' priorities and needs are. This will provide us the information we need to try and align our authorities and funding to assist in those areas where we can."

Water supply is one of three priorities in the SWD Infrastructure Strategy, and it faces many challenges, including the results of two recent court cases. One case would have forced Oklahoma to sell water to Texas, and another case invalidated provisions in the State Water Plan associated with the Dallas-Fort Worth region efforts to transfer water from northeast Texas. These water supply issues affect SWD because of its role in the region with 74 multi-purposed water reservoirs in Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, said Slockbower.

To overcome these challenges, SWD has partnered with the Texas Water Development Board, Oklahoma Water Resources Board and the Kansas Water Office to identify ways in which these agencies can leverage resources with the Corps to identify funding opportunities, integrate planning processes, and identify opportunities to ensure long-term sustainability of the regions reservoirs.

The Texas Water Conservation Association is the leading organization in Texas devoted to conserving, developing, protecting, and using the water resources of the state for all beneficial purposes, and the Corps has a long relationship with the organization.

"The purpose for our participation in the Mid-Year Conference is that TWCA is the state organization set up for the education of water providers across Texas." Slockbower said. "It provides the opportunity for us to learn about the issues and concerns that are driving their plans to stay ahead of the water supply needs of the state. We participate with similar organizations in the other states in our region, all focused on developing the best solutions for water supply in the region."

The 74 multipurpose water reservoirs in the region hold more than 8.4 million acre feet of storage, which equates to 20 percent of the surface water supplies in Kansas, 36 percent in Texas, and 35 percent in Oklahoma. This is enough water to support the needs of more than six million individuals, which are almost two million households in the region. An "acre foot" is a water measurement that measures the volume of one acre of surface area to a depth of one foot.

As a regional initiative, SWD established partnerships with the Texas Water Development Board, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, and the Kansas Water Office to identify ways to leverage resources. This included the establishment of a charter based on these principles:

- Working together to improve communication and collaboration
- Looking for opportunities to integrate planning processes
- Identifying opportunities to ensure the long term sustainability, and the best use of the existing federal reservoirs
- Identifying funding opportunities and authorities for water planning and the implementation of State water plans

With the State Legislature establishing the $2 billion Infrastructure Fund in the State of Texas, there is a need to ensure an understanding of the challenges water providers may find in meeting the requirements found in the Corps' Regulatory Program, according to Slockbower.

"Water providers face challenges in three areas," he said. "The major challenge is ensuring water providers have a full and consistent understanding of the scope and breadth of studies that are required to move a strategy to implementation in the State Water Plan. The second challenge is the need to avoid the transfer of potentially damaging invasive species, such as the Zebra Mussel. The third challenge is the process for mitigating environmental impacts associated with large water resources project, which may require large quantities of mitigation. Water providers must understand that developing these plans can be time consuming and costly."

The Corps is working with TWCA's Federal Affairs Committee to host the Reservoir Infrastructure Future Visions Sessions in August. This will be one of the key topics for the Committee at the TWCA Conference.

"We must work together to solve the challenges we face in water supply in this region," Slockbower said. "By working with organizations such as TWCA, we can ensure that we obtain a true perspective of the priorities and challenges of our water supply customers."

An aerial view of the Port of Houston (courtesy photo)

SWD, Texas Ports partner to address current issues, future needs

by Martie Cenkci,
Southwestern Division Public Affairs

Officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers met with representatives from Texas Port Authorities in Galveston, Texas, June 20, to identify current areas of need and discuss opportunities to improve the infrastructure that supports the Texas Coast and its immense economic impact on both Texas and the Nation. The meeting, held in conjunction with the Texas Water Conservation Association's mid-year conference in Galveston, provided an opportunity for Corps and Port officials to discuss and evaluate current ways of doing business as well as opportunities to improve customer relationships and support. It included officials from the Ports of Houston, Galveston, Corpus Christi, Port Author, Freeport, Beaumont, Texas City, Victoria and Mansfield.

"The Army Corps of Engineers and the Texas Port Authorities form a vital partnership to support the national economic powerhouse that is the Texas Coast," said Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Kula, commander of the regional Southwestern Division in Dallas. "With its 28 ports tying it to the national and world economy, the condition of our Texas

coast is a here and now concern. We are continually seeking ways to improve that partnership as we work together to address current issues and future needs, as well as the impact of budget constraints and an aging infrastructure."

The Texas Coast is one of the three major priority areas make up SWD's Infrastructure Strategy. The great arc of the Texas coast, which includes 13 shallow draft ports and 15 deep draft ports, all interconnected by 443 miles of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterways, sees the movement of more than 73 million tons of commerce. The strategic placement of the shallow draft ports, near shale oil discoveries, including the Eagle Ford Shale under much of South Texas, makes them especially vital to the oil and gas industry as well as the transportation to move the products of that industry.

Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (courtesy photo)

Texas is the number two state in the Nation for maritime commerce, with 760 miles of shallow draft ports and 240 miles of deep draft ports. These ports account for more than $300 billion in economic impact, and provide more than a million jobs. There is more than $60 billion in private investment currently in the works, primarily due to the Panama Canal, oil reserves and the Eagle Ford Shale. The number of Post-Panamax vessels is expected to more than double, typically with a minimum hull draft of 39-60 feet (tankers 49-70 feet). No Texas port has a draft greater than 50 feet

The Corps' responsibility to maintain all these ports to standards has become more difficult because of funding constraints. As part of its Infrastructure Strategy, SWD has been working with state and local partners to find solutions. For example, it has been in close collaboration with the Texas Department of Transportation to find ways of funding the maintenance of the shallow draft ports to meet the transportation needs of the oil and gas industry in the future.

"Communications with our partners is the key," said Kula. "Whether we are working with the Texas Port Authorities, state agencies such as TXDOT and the Texas General Land Office, or local officials, we must have strong partnerships, as well as communications that are coordinated and synchronized at the national, state, and local levels. In these days of constrained budgets, we must continue to meet with, educate, and collaborate with all that have an interest in keeping our great Texas ports reliable and resilient, and focused on the future viability of this region."

Victor Roberts joins SWD as Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

What is SHARP?

SHARP stands for Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention. The SHARP Program is a comprehensive integration and transformation of the Army's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program and Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) efforts. The mission of the SHARP Program is to eliminate sexual harassment and sexual assault from the Army by creating a climate that respects the dignity of every member of the Army Family.

The policy of the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is that sexual harassment/assault is unacceptable conduct and will not be condoned or tolerated. Sexual harassment/assault is a serious crime that has no place in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It degrades our mission readiness by devastating the Corps ability to work effectively as a team. It is not compatible with the Army values and is punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and other Federal and local laws.

What constitutes Sexual Harassment?

Sexual Harassment is a form of gender discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature between the same or opposite genders when submission to, or rejection of, such conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, work performance, or creates a hostile or intimidating work environment.

What is Sexual Assault?

Sexual Assault is any unwanted, forced, or coerced sexual act. It includes inappropriate sexual contact or fondling, acquaintance rate, date rape, stranger rape, any form of sexual abuse. Sexual assault is not about sex- it is a crime of violence where sex is used as a weapon, motivated by the desire to have power and control over the victim. Sexual assault violates not only a person's body, but also their sense of safety and control over their life. Females are not the only victims of sexual assault males may also be victims of sexual assault. The Southwestern Division has employees that work and live in various areas throughout the Division therefore; the Division's SHARP Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), along with each District's SARC POC has provided the Employee Assistance Program as a first line of assistance available 24 hours a day.

What if you are assaulted?

If you are a victim of sexual assault, consider doing the following:

1. Go to a safe place.
2. Seek medical care immediately, if needed.
3. Get tested for sexually transmitted diseases.
4. Speak to a Sexual Assault advocate.
5. Call the SWD SARC and/or your District's SARC POC
6. Call a supportive person, a friend or relative.

SARC Contacts

SWD SARC: Mr. Victor Roberts 469-487-7119
Victor.L.Roberts@usace.army.mil

SWF SARC POC: Ms. Tonia Buxton 817-886-1321
Tonia.P.Buxton@usace.army.mil

SWG SARC POC: Dr. Rose Caballero 409-766-3920
Rose.M.Caballero@usace.army.mil

SWT SARC POC: Ms. Maggie Fletcher 918-669-4943
Maggie.Fletcher@usace.army.mil

SWL SARC POC: Ms. Virginia Ivnanoff 501-324-5534
Virginia.G.Ivanoff@usace.army.mil

Getting to know you...

Meet the newest members of the SWD Level 3 Leadership Development Program

by Melanie Ellis, SWD Regional Outreach Coordinator

Each year a group of team members from the Southwestern Division accepts the challenge to develop their leadership skills by participating in Level 3 of the Leadership Development Program. This year seven SWD team mates joined the program to learn more about their management and leadership styles, issues facing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as an organization, and what the SWD leadership is doing to prepare for success in the future.

"Every single member of this organization plays a role in our success," said Tom Hudspeth, chief, Business Management Division and Leadership Development Program Champion. "That means as an organization we need to work with those folks who have shown an interest in developing their leadership skills and provide them the tools to be successful. One of the tools that we have to offer is the Leadership Development Program."

The newest members of LDP Level 3 joined the SWD leadership at the annual SWD Senior Leadership Conference, April 8-10, 2013, Lewisville, Texas. During the conference they heard about many issues facing SWD and the Corps and sat in on discussions about the future of the Corps. Following the conference they shared a little about themselves and the key points they hope to take back to their offices.

Laura Cameron, lead planner, study and project manager, Planning and Environmental Division, Little Rock District

1. What do you hope to get from the program? I hope to gain a broader understanding of the work that occurs in our division. I work in planning, and I touch most of the communities of practice in some way. I look forward to learning not only about the issues in those communities but also about the people involved in solving those issues.

2. What are the top three things you took away from the SLC? First, the way we are doing business is going to change across all of our programs and business lines. The changes in operations and in the military programs are much larger than I expected. Second, along with change coming, there is change that is already here. It was interesting to hear how organizations have changed to accommodate the decrease in workload and about the regionalization efforts going on. I also enjoyed getting to know Noel Clay and Paula Johnson-Muic. I have spoken to them many times on the phone, so it was great to put a face with their name.

3. How did you first learn about the Corps? I grew up with the Corps in my backyard. I am from northern Arkansas and spent many days in the summer at the lakes on the White River system (Bull Shoals, Norfork, and Table Rock lakes specifically). Our favorite swimming hole in the late summer was just off of the White River near the old Cotter Bridge. It was crisp and cold thanks to the high head dams upstream.

4. Tell us about your favorite hobby and how you became involved with it. My favorite hobby is cycling. I ride both road and mountain bikes. I became involved in biking out of necessity when my car caught fire in college. I rode my father's old 10-speed as my main source of transportation. When I got my first job, I was able to buy a vehicle AND a new bike. Since then, I have done both races and charity rides. Little Rock really has a culture of bike riding. There are many designated bike trails along the riverfront. There are also lots of great trails to ride single track.

Lauren Fagerholm, Project Manager, Programs and Project Management Division, Fort Worth District

1. What do you hope to get from the program? I want to be a better leader for USACE, my Flood Risk Management team, and myself.

2. What are the top three things you took away from the SLC? First, there is a unique value for each of our customers, find their needs and fill it. Secondly, continue to invest in trust based relationships. Lastly, change in USACE will come from the bottom up. We need to pick the best ideas at a regional level and push them up the chain to HQ's.

3. How did you first learn about the Corps? My Geotechnical Engineering class at Virginia Tech was given a week off so that our Professor could teach a class to USACE employees. Besides being elated to have the week off, I thought that Corps must be serious about the professional development of their employees to hire one of our best professors to teach their classes.

4. Tell us about your favorite hobby and how you became involved with it. On the weekends we love to go for long walks in USACE parks with our dog Lucy. Before working for USACE, Lucy and I traveled for my job as a construction manager. The weekends were always spent exploring parks in the various locations I was working in.

Michael Hurley, Chief Park Ranger, Beaver Lake, Little Rock District

1. What do you hope to get from the program? My time with the Corps has been focused solely on the recreation mission as a park ranger, which I am proud of. After becoming employed with USACE, I soon realized that the organization is so diverse with many missions. I hope to gain some insight from Division leaders, as well as other LDP participants, about other business lines such as military construction projects, FRM, Planning, and Hydropower. I am very interested to see how the Division balances resources amongst the competing business lines, especially when budgets are constrained. I also look forward to "bringing home" leadership advice from proven leaders in our organization. Having an excellent mentor from the Division office will be very beneficial.

2. What are the top three things you took away from the SLC? First, I was most impressed with how focused our Division leadership was on making USACE successful, from large-scale projects to employee morale. It is often perceived that higher level leaders don't really care about what happens down in the weeds - but they do! Secondly, we shape the new normal. Even with budgets shrinking and resources becoming harder to get, we have the chance to adapt to the new normal with innovative methods that could make us better in the end. Lastly, our Nation's civil works needs are transforming and becoming more prevalent as the population increases and our infrastructure ages. We must continue to develop the best and brightest talent and be ready to direct the development of future civil works projects.

3. How did you first learn about the Corps? I grew up "a stone's throw" from Truman Lake in central Missouri. My family was a bit non-compliant when it came to following rules on government property around the lake, so I became familiar with park rangers early in life. Plus, when you live in a town of 2,000 people, the dam and lake are "the" claim to fame. Everyone in my town knew about the Corps.

4. Tell us about your favorite hobby and how you became involved with it. My favorite hobby is hiking and biking. During the past few years, I've hiked two 14'ers in Colorado and plan to hike a few more. Mountain biking is becoming my favorite just because my two girls love riding bikes with me and my wife says that I spent way too much money on a bike, so I better use it. It makes for a good family outing.

Michelle Lay, Chief, Civil Design Section, Tulsa District

1. What do you hope to get from the program? I hope to make new connections outside of the District with people that I can reach out throughout the rest of my career. I also hope to gain some regional and national perspective that I can bring back to the team in my District.

2. What are the top three things you took from the SLC? The SLC was an excellent opportunity to learn where the focus of our senior leaders is as we move toward a "new normal". The three things I took away that I can focus on at the working level include: (1) Believe in transformation rather than just accept it; (2) Focus on leading indicators instead of lagging indicators; and (3) Find the need and fill it.

3. How did you first learn about the Corps? My parents both work for the Corps of Engineers. I fell in love with the Corps at the dinner table and have never wanted to work anywhere else.

4. Tell us about your favorite hobby and how you became involved with it. Right now my favorite hobby isn't really a hobby. I have a 19 month old son at home who occupies all of my free time and turns it in to fun time!

Adrian Rios, Project Manager, Programs and Project Management Division, Fort Worth District

1. What do you hope to get from the program? I hope to learn more about the organization and all of the components (sections) that make the organization run. I also hope to make good contacts that I can use in my career to help me along the way. I would like to hone some of my leadership skills, and presentation skills so that I can command a presence that is strong and confident that will encourage others to follow. I also hope to have fun working with the group of people who have ambitions as great as mine.

2. What are the top three things you took away from the SLC? First, I learned that there are real issues out there in other Districts dealing with Life Safety and Health. I never knew the types of tough calls that our leaders make every day. Secondly, I took away that customer relationships must be constantly worked at in order for them to be successful. Lastly, I learned that USACE has a diverse group of leaders that utilization collaboration to solve these complex challenges that lie ahead of the organization.

3 How did you first learn about the Corps? I first learned about the Corps when I was hired as a summer intern in May 2007. My friend Simon Ng helped get me the opportunity. He used to tell me stories about working there, and for some reason I pictured him working out of a trailer in the desert since he worked on the Fence Program. It wasn't until I started working downtown Fort Worth at the District that I realized the Corps was a professional robust organization.

4. Tell us about your favorite hobby and how you became involved with it. My favorite hobby is boring old running. I started running when I was in middle school by joining the track team, because I used to see pretty girls running every day after school. Ever since then I have made it a point to run a few 5K races every year. I find the races both challenging and rewarding.

Christopher Strunk, Senior Structural Engineer in the Civil Design Section, Tulsa District

1. What do you hope to get from the program? A more in-depth look at the USACE structure, particularly how SWD works together with other agencies within the region.

2. What are the top three things you took away from the SLC? As an organization, we need to do a better job of showing our value. That our Division leadership is very interested in the opinions of those who work below them, and we should take opportunities like this to share meaningful comments and questions (to better prepare us, as the future leaders within the organization). Senior leadership is concerned about the economic forecast for the Division and is working diligently to position us to weather the storm.

3. How did you first learn about the Corps? I learned about the Corps while serving as a non-commissioned officer in the Oklahoma National Guard. When my command learned that I was earning my degree in engineering they told me that it was an organization I should check out.

4. Tell us your favorite hobby and how you became involved with it. My favorite hobby is Wood-turning. I mentioned to my wife that I wanted to try wood-turning again, having spent a couple of summers growing up playing around in the school shop at an earlier age, this was 8-10 years ago. She, Rachel, decided that a small hobby lathe would be cheaper than an I-pod. Long story short, I have now been to two national conventions, and have a production size lathe, and can turn 500-lbs chunks of wood into table tops (she should have bought the Ipod, I still listen to the same 20 CD's I had in college).

Brett Ulekowski, Budget Analyst, Resource Management Division, Southwestern Division Office

1. What do you hope to get from the program? I hope to share leadership techniques with my peers and learn from the leadership of the division. I also hope to learn more about my strengths and weaknesses as a leader and learn how to enhance my weakness and fully utilize my strengths.

2. What are the top three things you took away from the SLC? There were a number of good points mentioned that we as the Corps of Engineers can and need to concentrate on to maintain our usefulness to the Nation. First, I think that the information that was provided by our customers was very interesting and surprising in how they see us. Knowing that we have many areas where we can improve upon to better serve the United States. Secondly, it was also educational to see how the discussions about important issues regarding the Corps are discussed by our senior leaders and how the decisions are made. The major issues that we see each day are addressed at a higher level to direct us to success. Lastly, I saw that there were numerous areas where we could become more proactive in our services. Our customers have very good ideas that we can begin implementing to become as useful as possible. We need to become more proactive rather than reactive.

3. How did you first learn about the Corps? My father was a Colonel in the Army Corps of Engineers. I saw him perform his duties regularly and was able to visit him and see the projects he worked on. This gave me exposure not only to the Corps but to the Army as well. This exposure is what drew me toward the Army.

4. Tell us about your favorite hobby and how you became involved with it. I have two young daughters, 1 and 5. Right now my hobbies are the two of them. Spending as much time as possible with them is my favorite hobby. When time and money allow I also enjoy flying small single engine planes.

If you would like more information about the SWD LDP please visit https://team.usace.army.mil/sites/SWD/RB/RLDP/default.aspx

SWD welcomes new Division Counsel

Nancye Bethurem

The Southwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, welcomes Nancye Bethurem as the Division's new Division Counsel.

Bethurem recently arrived at SWD after serving as Senior Counsel, Compliance Law Department, with Savannah River Remediation LLC in Aiken, S.C. As the Division Counsel, Bethurem is responsible for providing all legal services required to execute a military construction and civil works program.

"I feel extremely honored to have been selected to be the Division Counsel for the Southwestern Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in a position where I am responsible for the provision of all legal services required to execute a significant military construction program for the Army and Air Force and many large civil works programs in seven states through four district offices that includes supervision of 40 attorneys and 10 support staff," said Bethurem. "I am also excited about the opportunity to return to the practice of law in Dallas where I spent a significant amount of time in my legal career in both private practice and previous government legal representation."

Bethurem began her legal career in private practice in Missouri and Texas. She then joined the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation as a Supervisory Senior Litigator. She transferred to the U.S. Army, where she represented the 25th Infantry Division (L) and the U.S. Army Hawaii's Environmental Management

Directorate in environmental and real estate matters.

Bethurem's legal career has taken her to Nevada, where she worked with the U.S. Air Force for three years as the environmental, administrative and real estate attorney for the Air Warfare Center, at Nellis Air Force Base, she then went to Bentonville, Ark., where she worked as an Assistant General Counsel at Wal-Mart and acted as the primary legal advisor in the areas of real estate and environmental litigation and later to South Carolina, where she worked in the Compliance Law Department with URS affiliate, Savannah River Remediation.

Bethurem's education includes a B.A., summa cum laude, in History from the University of Missouri-Rolla, a B.S. in Education from the University of Missouri-Columbia, a Masters of Education-Guidance and Counseling degree from Central Missouri State University, and a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, where she served as an Associate Casenote Editor of the Law Review. She is also a graduate of UNLV, earning a Ph.D. in Environmental Science with a focus on Environmental Policy and Management.

"I am so pleased to welcome Ms. Bethurem to the SWD family," said SWD Commander, Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula. "Her legal expertise will be a great asset to the Division and ensure that we are in legal compliance as we execute critical military and civil works missions. I know she will do an excellent job."

Bethurem is licensed to practice law in Texas, Hawaii, Missouri (inactive) and Massachusetts (inactive).

SWD welcomes new EEO manager

Dr. Ann Bargains

Dr. Ann Bargains is an Equal Employment Office manager for the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity for Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington, D.C. and the Chief of EEO for the Southwestern Division, USACE headquartered in Dallas. In her capacity as EEO specialist for HQ, Ms. Bargains is the Management Directive 715 and Training Manager for all EEO careerists in USACE. As Chief, EEO in SWD, she develops EEO policies, conducts program assessments of the four district programs, provides technical and staff assistance to the subordinate district commanders and EEO staff, and advises a U.S. Army general and his senior staff on EEO-related matters.

Ms. Bargains began her federal career as a Presidential Management intern in Washington D.C. with the Department of Health and Human Services. She completed her internship at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention where she was an employee development specialist with management responsibility for supervisory and managerial training and all management intern programs. She also served as complaints manager at the CDC for several years before joining the USACE as EEO manager at the Mississippi Valley Division in Vicksburg, Miss. Ms. Bargains left MVD for a brief period to serve as assistant regional director with responsibility for EEO, Diversity and Alternative Dispute Resolution Programs with the Department of Interior's National Park Service in Atlanta, Ga.

Ms. Bargains is a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, life member of Jackson State University National Alumni Association member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; life member of the National Council of Negro Women; and a member of the National Association of Professional Women. She was awarded the distinguished Diversity and Leadership Award in 2011 by Career Communications science, technology, engineering and math group.

Ms. Bargain's educational background includes a bachelor's degree in sociology, a master's degree in public policy and administration and a doctorate's degree in public administration from Jackson State University. She holds a certificate of completion as an EEO investigator and as a DOD certified mediator.


Employee
Spotlight

Galveston District:
Kenny Pablo

By Galveston District Public Affairs

Q: Discuss your role at the Corps.

I was hired as an intern into the Real Estate Program and have learned a lot regarding the significant role Real Estate plays in every action within the Galveston District.

Q: What do you enjoy most about working on your particular project(s)/tasks?

Working real estate projects is great because every day brings something different. I recently prepared the Cedar Bayou DMMP Real Estate Plan. This is the first real estate plan our office has written analyzing third party use of our placement areas. To allow this third party use the Non-federal Sponsor will need to acquire the land for the new placement area in fee title and provide the Government with a perpetual easement containing specific language that allows the Government to do all things necessary to address a wide variety of third party uses. It's good to know that the work I do will contribute to the long-term success of the project

Q: What do you like about your current job?

I enjoy the people I work with and the direction our Real Estate Division is headed in the near future.

Q: What's your most memorable moment working with the Corps?

My most memorable moment was closing my first acquisition for the MARAD Project. It was a small acquisition but it was nice to get the first one under my belt.

Kenny Pablo

Bio Stats

Current Title/Position: Realty Specialist
How long have you held this position: 3 yrs
Degree(s) earned: Bachelor of Science in Supply Chain and Logistics Technology from the University of Houston.
Hobbies/Interests: I enjoy watching and playing sports, and coaching my daughters soccer team. I have been playing organized sports all my life and hope to instill the importance of being physically active and healthy to my kids.

It also showed me that all the hard work I put into researching, building my relationship with the land owners and MARAD personnel, and sticking to the acquisition plan my supervisors and I agreed on really paid off.

Q: Why did you choose this field?

My brother-in-law introduced me to buying and selling residential and commercial real estate in the private sector. Having the opportunity to work in this field in the public sector I found a challenge I wanted to tackle.

Q: How do you feel your work is making a difference in the district?

I feel I'm making a difference because I'm part of changes the Real Estate Division is making to better support the District mission.

Tulsa District:
Bill Minnock

By Nate Herring, Tulsa District Public Affairs

Q: What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

A: The best aspect of my job is making sure that all my customers are taken care of and that any problems are solved with satisfaction. I also want to ensure that any employee getting behind the wheel of a GSA or Corps-owned vehicle will be safe, and they shouldn't have to worry about the safety of the vehicle.

Q: How does what you do help others in the district?

A: In many ways and aspects, there really isn't a job out there that can be accomplished by just "one". It always takes a team! So my work is just part of the team's overall effort to make sure we have satisfied customers.

Q: How do you like working at the district so far?

A: I really enjoy my position. It came with a big learning curve, but I do enjoy challenges. It has been satisfying.

Q: What did you do prior to coming here?

A: I served 10 years active duty Army, and then I served another 19 years with the Michigan National Guard. The last 11 years of my Guard time, I was also a Federal Technician. I Started out as a wheel mechanic and then moved up to become a state automotive inspector for the National Guard. I retired from the National Guard in June, 2012.

Q: What do are some of your interests outside of work?

A: I have a lot of interest, but I'm more on the curious side. I'm always curious of what is out there, which leads me to explore. Being that I'm new to Oklahoma – there is a lot to explore!

Q: What is one thing you've learned about the Corps that you didn't know before working here?

A: CEFMS!!!

Q: What else would you like to add?

A: I'm just looking forward to meeting everyone and learning what the Corps does.

Bio Stats

Current title: Transportation Assistant (Fleet Manager)
How long in current position: Since February 2013
Hometown: Holly, Michigan
Hobbies: Biking, fishing, hunting, playing cards.

Little Rock District:
Russell Malahy

By Jay Woods, Little Rock District

Q: How were you chosen as the Water Safety Champion?

Three ladies, who will remain anonymous (they know who they are) approached me and coerced, hmmm, I mean, encouraged me to apply for the co-chair position because they could see potential in me. So I was voted in as co-chair and two years later rotated to the chair.

Q: What additional duties come with this responsibility?

Nearly 90 percent of the drownings at Corps-managed lakes could have been prevented if the victim was wearing a life jacket. So the main responsibility is to find ways to reduce the number of unnecessary deaths from drowning. Other than assisting the program manager with oversight, management, and directional guidance for the team, a major responsibility that I feel is important is to shine the light and brag on our excellent team members and other district employees in the water safety arena. These folks are the real champions. You cannot measure our success very accurately. It's hard to put a number on how many drowning didn't happen, so I feel it's important to constantly recognize their efforts.

Q: Do you take this role personally?

Absolutely! I take each water safety accident personally. I try to zero in on each case, target what went wrong and what could have been done to reach the victim before the tragedy to ultimately prevent it from occurring in the future.

Russell Malahy

Bio Stats

Official Position: Natural Resources Specialist/ SWL Water Safety Team Chair
Years with SWL: 3.5
Hometown: Fruitland, Mo.
Education: Bachelor's Degree Biology & Wildlife Management and Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement; Minor in General Agriculture

Q: What are your short and long term goals as water safety champion?

I want to bring new, innovative ideas and concepts to the district and nation. We've got to figure out how to reach our target demographic (18 to 35-year-old males) better. My goal is to figure out how to make water safety one of their priorities. One of the big challenges is figuring out where to reach them. Is it Facebook or Twitter or do they care about it there? Do we only have a few short minutes when they are filling out their Day-Use-Pass? One big goal is to find the "sweet spot," or the prime real-estate for a water safety message that will reach the bullet-proof male. We've also got to come up with messages that are gripping and unfortunately, tragic so we can reach folks. The challenge is getting these types of images approved.

Southwestern Division:
Constance Williams

By SWD Public Affairs

Constance Williams

Q: You were recently named the Acting Civil Works and Integration Chief for SWD, how has this position challenged you in ways different from you previous position as Lead Program Manager for Civil Works?

The most difficult challenge is living up to my predecessor, whom built relationships with stakeholders, congressional members, and senior leaders. His knowledge is unlimited and he literally wrote the book on some of the policies and implementation guidance that we use today. Being new to the division, I find this to be pretty big shoes to fill. Yet, I face each and every new challenge the same way, as growth opportunities in disguise, and should be embraced. I view each day as a new opportunity to be my very best.

Q: What have been some of the more interesting projects you've been involved in?

I believe the most interesting project was to witness the process for USACE first pilot study, Jordan Creek, to go before the Civil Works Review Board (CWRB) and earn a unanimous approval. The CWRB serves as the top corporate checkpoint that the final report, NEPA document and Chief's Report are ready for State and Agency review prior to submittal to the ASA(CW) for Administration clearance before transmittal to Congress for new or additional authorization. This win for the team proved to be a successes story for SWD's initiatives to incorporate Civil Works Transformation.

Q: Civil Works is a big chunk of what the Corps does, what have been some of the challenges that Civil Works has faced with reduced funding in recent years?

In this changing climate with declining budgets, our civil works program is faced with the inevitable challenge of sustaining and maintaining the infrastructure to acceptable levels of performance. Despite funding deficiencies, the Corps is committed to Civil Works transformation delivering the best services and products to the nation.

Q: Which do you like better? Running an entire office of people that have to answer to you, or answering to someone else?

Championships are not won by one player alone. No matter how much knowledge or skills one possess, one person is not responsible for a team victory. I believe in collaboration, improvising to be innovative and empowering team members to realize their full potential. With that said, I would have to answer…both. We all have to answer to someone.

Bio Stats

Years at SWD – 9 months
Years with the Corps – 28 years
Hobbies- Bowling, fishing, watching movies
Hometown – Fort Worth, TX
Education/certifications – B.A. in Information Technology

Fort Worth District:
Ginger Gruber

By Denisha Braxton, Fort Worth District

Q: What is your role at the Fort Worth District?

I am the Acting Chief of Contracting for the Fort Worth District

Q: What are some key initiatives going on in Contracting Division? Why is it so important to the Corps' mission?

Currently we are re-organizing Contracting in order to stand up a Pre-Award Section. This Section will be responsible for all of the large, District-wide acquisitions. This change will ensure personnel are focused on these important actions, maintaining schedules, and become experts at pre-award acquisition processes.

Q: You received the prestigious Secretary of the Army Award, the highest award given to an Army Civilian, what did you receive it for? How did you feel as a recipient representing for the Fort Worth District?

I received this award for the work I did while I was deployed at the Chief of Contracting at the Afghanistan Engineer District-North (TAN). This is a very prestigious award and it was a true honor to be nominated. I was supported by a great team in Afghanistan and I couldn't have won this award without them.

Q: Tell us about your most rewarding experience, your proudest moment, since joining the Fort Worth District.

My most rewarding career experience was my deployment to Afghanistan.

Ginger Gruber

Bio Stats

Position: Acting Chief of CT, Fort Worth District
Years with the SWF: 6
Hometown: Shenandoah, Iowa
Education: Master's in Business Administration, University of Nebraska at Omaha
Certifications: Unlimited Warrant, DAWIA Level III Contracting Certified, Project Management Professional (PMP)
Hobbies: working out, riding motorcycles, traveling,

I had the privilege of working with many talented people from Forth Worth as well as across USACE and DOD. I learned more than I could have ever imagined and made several lifelong friends.

Q5: What do you enjoy doing when you're not at work?

In my free time, I enjoy going to the gym, riding my motorcycle, traveling, and going to concerts.

Q: Before working for the Corps of Engineers Fort Worth District, what was the most unusual or interesting job you've ever had?

My most unusual job was in college. I worked at a cemetery. I did grounds keeping work, assisted digging graves and other funeral preparation, as well as other manual labor.

Pacesetter Points

Congratulations

Katie Parks from Galveston District became a Certified Defense Financial Manager, American Society of Military Comptrollers, in March. The CDFM is the premier certification program within the financial community of DoD.

Galveston District's, **Capt. Derek Thornton** was selected for promotion to major. He has also been selected to attend resident ILE (Command and General Staff College) in FY14 at Ft. Leavenworth, Kan.

Galveston District's, **Isidro Reyna**, earned first place in the Individual Achievement Award Category for the U.S. Army's 2012 Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Public Affairs Competition. The district's Corps Cares: Connecting the Community with the Corps earned second place.

Galveston District's, 2013 Administrative Professional of the Year Nominees: **Katherine Adams; Tammi Barreras; Mary Baugh; (selected); Kari Gauntt; Lisa Johnson; Susan Martin; Karen Milburn and Mathilda Montgomery.**

Simon DeSoto, Colorado River lockmaster, earned second and third place awards for his radio water safety public service announcements during the 17th International Boating & Water Safety Summit in San Antonio.

The USACE Galveston District's **Sandra Arnold**, chief of the Public Affairs Office, and Deputy Public Affairs Chief **Isidro Reyna**, were recognized with a first place USACE 2012 Locke L. Mouton Award for excellence in the category of Command Information.

Congratulations to **Lt. Col. Marty Maldonado**, Galveston District's deputy commander, for his recent promotion to lieutenant colonel.

Congratulations to the following Southwestern Division employees for being recognized as exemplifying the seven Army Values: **Loyalty: Loree Baldi; Duty: Loc Nguyen; Respect: Bryon Haney; Selfless Service: Debra Moore; Honor: Elaine Newbaker-London; Integrity: Roxanne Welch; Personal Courage: Julie Bentley**

Congratulations to Tulsa District's Deputy Commander, **Maj. Don Nestor**, who has been selected by the Department of the Army for Lt. Col. Command.
Congratulations to Tulsa District's, **Mike Kerr**, who has been named the new District Safety Manager and **Shawn Painter** selected to join Design Branch as the Chief, Military Design Section

Congratulations to Tulsa District's, **Sara Goodeyon** on her promotion to Deputy Public Affairs Officer.

Congratulations to Marcus Mitchell who has been selected as a Contract Specialist at Little Rock District.

Congratulations to **Jeremy Thomason**, Little Rock District, for his new position as a Real Estate Specialist in the District

Congratulations to Little Rock's, J**ustin Crowe** who has been selected as a Lock and Dam Operator Trainee at Murray Lock and Dam and **Randy Crapps** who has been selected as the Russellville Lock and Dam Equipment Mechanic Supervisor.

Congratulations to **Dorothy Howard and Jesse Coleman**, Fort Worth District on your retirements

Congratulations to the 2012 Fort Worth District Annual Award recipients: **Esmat Salahat**- Engineer of the Year; **Daniel de Robles**- Employee of the Year; **Peggy Grubbs-** EEO Supervisor of the Year; **Denisha Braxton**- EEO Employee of the Year; **Brent Jasper**- Outstanding Regulator of the Year; **Jeffery Allen**- Project Manager of the Year; **Lance Speer**- Hard Hat of the Year; **Carrol Harris**- Innovator of the Year; **Allyson Walters**- Designer of the Year; **Norman Lewis**- Planner of the Year; **Terry Corbett**- SWF and SWD Environmental Stewardship Employee of the Year, **Kevin Madsen**- Recreation Employee of the Year; **Elizabeth Anderson**- SWD and SWF Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence.

Arrivals

Tulsa District would like to welcome the following employees: **Terry Rupe and Kent Bray**

Galveston District would like to welcome **Jon Plymal (redeployed), Carlos Tate (redeployed), Rikki Stanley, Prater Wesley and Brooks Anacker**

The Southwestern Division office would like to welcome the following employees**: Victor Roberts, Ann Bargains, Tony Semento, Jose Lujan, Paul Cook, David Curry, Nova Robbins, Sam Arrowod and David White**

Departures

Tulsa District would like to say farewell and good luck to **Mark Moore and Bob Vandegriff**

Galveston District would like to bid adieu to **Carolyn Milton, Christopher Shelby, David Voelkel, Elston Eckhardt, Helene Kieslich, James Oden, Jason Foltyn, Karyn Trevino Mark Garza, Mark Garza, Ruth Anderson Ryan Hatch and Samantha Wells (deployed)**

Southwestern Division wishes the following people goodbye and good luck**: David Reel, Pete Perez, Lynn Ray and Bonnie Shepard (deployed).**

Russo receives de Fleury Medal

by SWD Public Affairs

Ray Russo, acting Director of Regional Business for the Southwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, was recently honored with the presentation of Bronze de Fleury Medal for his superior service to the Army Engineer Regiment and numerous contributions to both the Civil Works and Military Programs missions of the Southwestern Division.

The de Fleury Medal is an Engineer Regimental Award presented by the Army Engineer Association to recognize those who make outstanding contributions to Army Engineering.

Russo's award was originally presented in Washington D.C. in May by Senator John Cornyn (R-Texas) and Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Kula, Southwestern Division commander, while Russo and Kula were conducting annual Congressional visits. It was re-presented to Russo during SWD's Engineer Day awards ceremony in Dallas this month.

Ray Russo, (center) the Southwestern Division's acting regional business director, received the Engineer De Fleury medal in Washington, D.C. from Texas Senator John Cornyn (left) and Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula, commander SWD, for his excellence in public service. (SWD photo)

"The Halls of Congress were a very fitting location for the presentation of this award," said Kula, "considering the many efforts that Mr. Russo has made through the years in seeing through significant civil works projects that have brought enduring and tangible benefits to the people and communities of the Southwester Division region. He set conditions for success in awarding hundreds of construction projects, and oversaw initiatives in Civil Works Transformation that advanced critical Corps Civil works projects," Kula added.

"His influence transcended the Division through his co-authorship of the national framework for the budgeting by watershed concept, which will ultimately result in a new budget process Corps-wide."

During the most recent period of his Army Corps of Engineers career, while serving as the Chief of Civil Works Integration Division, Russo managed the preparation of over 400 civil works projects, including Flood Risk Reduction, Navigation, hydropower, water supply contracts and numerous Congressional engagements. His efforts enabled the SWD region to award 36 military construction projects worth $694 million in Fiscal Year 12. He also led the successful award of the majority of the Fort Polk Land Acquisition project that supports the military training mission at Fort Polk, and the Consolidated Tower, San Antonio Military Medical Center, a world-class hospital facility that supports of the Department of Defense Medical program.

Russo also led the charge on civil works transformation, overseeing and managing the development of infrastructure strategies, planning, methods of delivery, and transforming the budget. His deep reservoir of experience and talent in the civil works arena allowed him to provide insight and guidance in these critical areas that will pave the way to the Corps' future.

"Mr. Russo's efforts to devise new and better ways to do business in this changed environment ensures that the Southwestern Division will continue to provide great value to the region and the Nation and remain relevant for future generations," Kula said.

Russo is a graduate of Texas Tech University, and is a registered Professional Engineer in the State of Texas. He is an active member of the Society of American Military Engineers.