



Southwestern Division

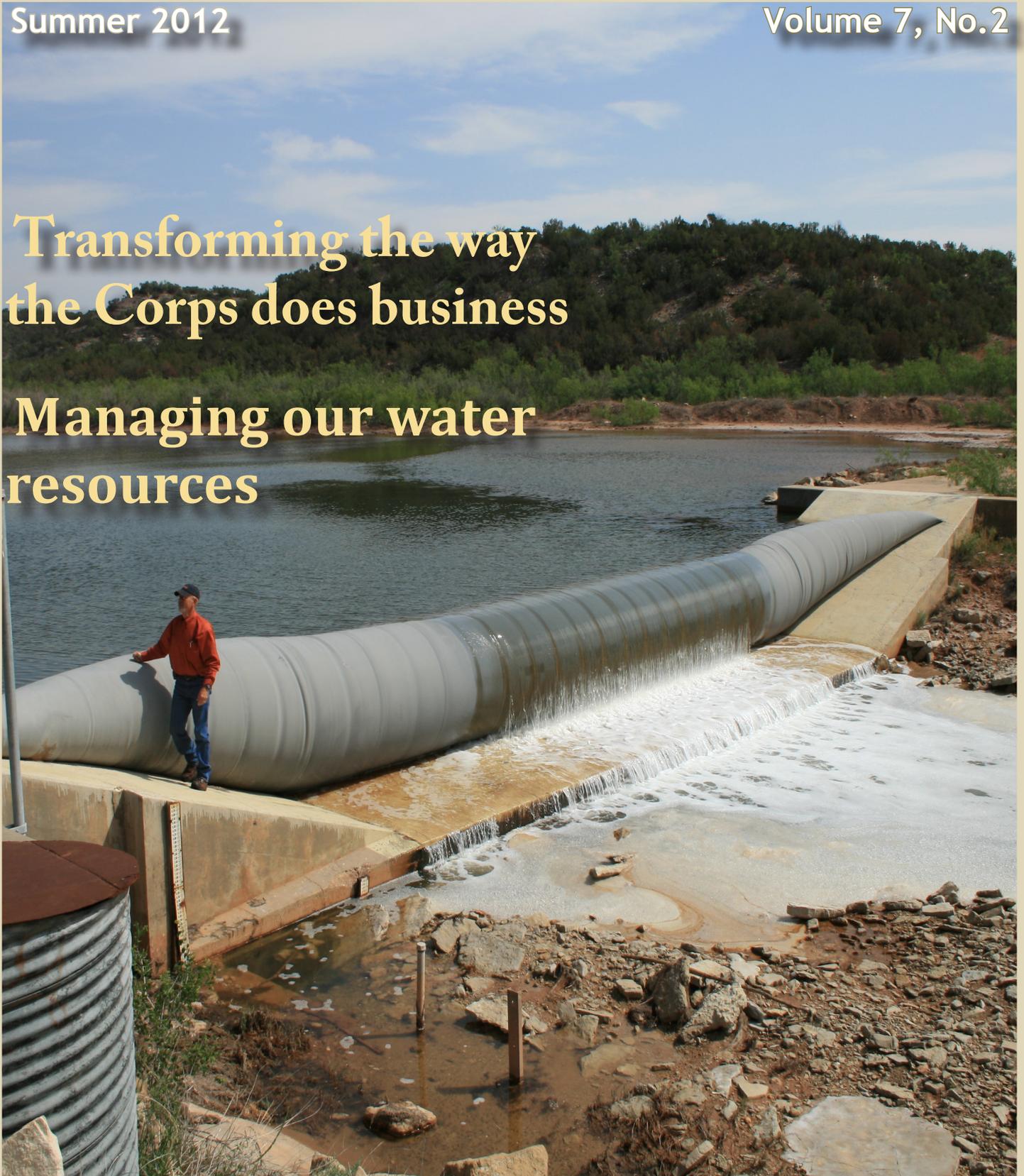
# P a c e s e t t e r

Summer 2012

Volume 7, No.2

Transforming the way  
the Corps does business

Managing our water  
resources



# SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION PACESETTER

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**On the cover**  
A member of the The Truscott Lake Red River Chloride project team stands on the weir of the inflatable dam at the Area VIII dam site and pump station. The Truscott lake project reduces the salinity of the Red River by diverting the salt through a 21-mile pipeline, making the Truscott Lake suitable for agricultural and municipal needs. (photo by Cpt. Ian Minshew)

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# Entering the summer months, highlighting District successes

## Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula Southwestern Division Commander

**T**he summer months in Southwestern Division might seem like a case study in “water, water everywhere”—in the form of water safety campaigns and Hurricane Season—or not, in the form of a drought. Professional opinions are divided on the likelihood of another drought (especially in Texas), but rainfall and water supply affect our Division in so many ways, even contributing to the number of recreation visitors we have at our facilities. During last year’s drought, we had an upswing in the number of public fatalities at our lakes, while the number of visits went down. Add in Hurricane Season, and it could be a very remarkable summer.

Before the recent Memorial Day Weekend, I sent out a message that talked about water safety for this recreational season. Maj. Gen. Michael Walsh, our USACE Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations, has established a goal of decreasing the number of public fatalities across the Corps by 50 percent by the end of Fiscal Year 14. It’s a challenging goal that will require a concerted effort from all of us as well as our partners. Our Districts need to keep up their efforts and remember—you are making a difference.

Hurricane Season is also an important water event in our Division, and our Readiness and Operations Division hosted a Hurricane Tabletop Exercise in late May to take us through a hurricane scenario. A real standout from this exercise was the great participation by our State and Federal partners, making this tabletop arguably the biggest and best yet! Another testament to teamwork is the Gulf Inland Waterways Joint Hurricane Team Protocol, which formalizes

the partnership with the Corps, the U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA, State of Texas agencies, and the waterways industry to restore the waterways in the event of a hurricane impacting the ports and Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The new protocol was signed on June 1, coinciding with the start of Hurricane Season.

The role of water in our Division is also highlighted in an article on Page 15 that highlights our FY 12 Goal 2: “Develop and implement regional watershed and reservoir sustainability strategy that includes water reallocation.” The drought that I mentioned at the beginning of this article highlights the risks that we face regionally in providing dependable water supplies to a burgeoning population. It’s an important article that everyone should read.

Equally important is our spotlight on Goal 3, Civil Works Transformation: “Maximize the FY 14 Civil Works program investment strategy by using risk informed asset management principles and tools.” In a fiscally constrained era, we must find new and innovative ways to continue to bring value to our Nation. That article begins on Page 11

As you know, we are really pushing transformation, and we need your help in leading this change, primarily focusing on four areas:

- Planning
- Budgeting
- Infrastructure Strategy
- Methods of Delivery

In the stages of affecting change, it is important to celebrate early successes. Though we have some work still to do in these projects, I would like to highlight some areas in which the Districts are on the path to some key achievements:

• SWF: Dallas Floodway, and SAMCC total completion

• SWL: Jordan Creek, projected to be the first 18-month pilot study completed

• SWG: Moving forward on Texas Coastal Studies, our fifth regional priority for fiscal year 2012, and exploring innovative ways to support shallow draft ports

• SWT: The successes of Chloride Control Projects, and exploring partnerships with the private sector.

These projects have all enjoyed some successes, with more to come. They herald the change the Civil Works Transformation will bring.

This is the season of good-byes and welcomes, and a new leadership team at our Headquarters. We all welcome Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, who became the 53rd Corps of Engineers Commanding General on May 22, and we look forward to his visit to our region! Maj. Gen. Merdith “Bo” Temple, who has been the acting CG since the retirement of Lt. Gen. Van Antwerp, will be retiring this month after a long and distinguished career in service to the U.S. Army and the Nation. We wish him the very best in everything to come! He will be replaced by Maj. Gen. Todd Semonite from the South Atlantic Division. The Corps also has a new Command Sergeant Major, Karl J. Groninger, replacing CSM Michael Buxbaum, who retired in May. Within SWD, our Deputy Commander, Col. Charles Klinge, assumed command of the Fort Worth District on June 27 from Col. Richard J. Muraski, who became the SWD Deputy Commander.

Finally, as you may have heard, I have the great fortune to remain your commander for another year. I look forward to continuing to work with you to achieve even more in our Corps’ great contributions to our Nation. Essayons!



# Gearing up for Summer

## Col. Christopher Sallese Commander, Galveston District

**M**y Coastal Custodians, We are well into fiscal year 2012 and I am confident the Galveston District will continue to position itself to execute our projects and programs on time and on budget. With the diminishing FY 13 program ahead of us, we will reassess our current obligations to ensure we continue to provide vital public engineering services in peace and war to strengthen our nation's security, energize the economy and reduce risks from disasters.

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.

I would like to recognize someone who has demonstrated outstanding initiatives in partnering with our community. Our very own Water Safety Program Manager Kris Brown of the Houston Project Office was selected as the 2012 Ronald J. Ruffennach Communicator of the Year - an award to recognize a member of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers outside of the Public Affairs career field for his/her outstanding contributions in communicating the USACE missions and programs.

Kris' continued efforts have not gone unnoticed and we are truly proud of her tremendous work to inform the public of water safety initiatives.

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.

Recently, we had the first water-related public fatality (since prior to 1997) occur in the Galveston District. While we may not have a large recreation mission in our footprint, we must remember we are not immune to accidents and must continue to stress water safety.

Wearing lifejackets, boating

*“Wearing life jackets, boating sober and learning to swim well are all essential to staying safe this summer.”*

sober and learning to swim well are all essential to staying safe this summer.

As the leading provider of outdoor recreation on all federally-managed public lands in the U.S., the Corps has a dedicated focus on water safety by putting “safety first” and becoming “water aware” when participating in water-related recreational activities.

With the arrival of summer also comes hurricane season! June 1 marks the beginning and I can tell you the district and Southwestern Division's leadership are ready to respond. In May, Corps leadership, FEMA, Army Northern Command and HQ USACE came together in Dallas to complete an annual table top hurricane exercise.

This exercise enabled us all to review our roles and responsibilities and ensure our efforts are synchronized to prepare and respond to an actual event.

I ask you to ensure you're prepared as well! Start your pre-hurricane

inspections to ensure your personal evacuation plans are up to date, your emergency kit has adequate water, food, a first aid kit, batteries, radio and cash. Be confident that if you have to evacuate that you will have a place to go and your vehicle will get you there. More importantly, do you have the district's and your supervisor's contact information so we can maintain accountability throughout the event?

School is out 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.

While we work through challenges in the Galveston District, please remain flexible and technically proficient to fully support our mission, continue to execute on time, within budget, and deliver sustained superior products to our valued customers.

Finally, I want to congratulate Jesse Boyer, Pablo Hernandez, Rashid Sheikh-Ali and Andrew Smith on passing the Professional Engineer exam. This is certainly a milestone you can always be proud of achieving and I thank you for your extra effort – this is quite the accomplishment!

Thank you for continuing to build strong!



# Water Safety Initiatives Key to a Safe Summer

## Col. Glen Masset Commander, Little Rock District

**T**he recreation season has just begun, and lake related fatalities are already up from last year. Maj. Gen. Walsh has challenged us to cut fatalities in half by the end of fiscal 2014. I am challenging each of you to help us meet this goal.

Even though we are using a wide variety of media to distribute our water safety messages, we are still seeing a rash of incidents. Through the first week of June we had five water related fatalities, whereas last year we had six for the whole year. This quarter alone we have had three fatalities at our lakes. All three fatalities were teenage boys. Two of the fatalities happened in designated swimming areas while one happened in a non-designated area. None of these young men was wearing a life jacket.

Some of you are working very hard pushing established initiatives that ensure our water safety messages are reaching the recreating public.

For instance, Public Affairs has been working closely all year with the district Water Safety Team and the project offices to keep water safety messages in the news media and on our web

and social media sites.

Our project offices are supplying life jacket loaner boards that make life jackets available for visitors who do not have life jackets or who forgot to bring them.

A new initiative this year is the Water Safety Team working with Visual Information, Public

media and web initiatives, don't forget that face-to-face contact is still one of the most effective ways to get messages to our visitors. On top of all their other duties, our park rangers regularly travel to local schools and teach students how to be safe when on or near the water. Students always seem eager to learn about

water safety, and they remember the lessons learned from year to year.

You are not the only ones who are responsible for water safety in the district. I am going to do my part stressing water safety by implementing a mandatory life jacket policy on the Arkansas River when small craft advisories are in effect. There have been many times when boaters do not heed the advisory, and this policy will stress the importance of water safety.

I challenge each and every one of you to not only talk the water safety talk, but also to walk the walk. Set the example by ensuring we and our families wear life jackets, learn to swim, and refrain from drinking alcohol when on or near the water. I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer!



Little Rock District Commander Col. Glen Masset signs the Arkansas River Trail System Memorandum of Understanding June 1, solidifying the Corps' commitment to help maintain portions of the trail.

Affairs, Clearwater Project Office, and Ouachita Project Office to develop public service announcements that feature Miss Arkansas and Miss Missouri. These video and radio spots are being posted on our social media sites, and are being distributed to broadcast media throughout Arkansas and Missouri.

Even with all our social



# *It has to be about getting better— always better*

## Col. Michael J. Teague Commander, Tulsa District

Who doesn't want to get better? The Tulsa District Leadership Development Program Level 2 Class recently met to discuss the idea of learning from our mistakes. We talked about an article titled "Fail Better" that had several examples of how people learn from their mistakes. The article has nothing to do with the U.S. Army or the Corps. It had everything to do with making yourself, and your team, better. There has been a lot of discussion and writing about the Corps' Civil Works Transformation. Much of the discussion revolves around doom and gloom of future budget projections. It has to be much more than that. It has to be about getting better.

Please don't think that we aren't worried about future budgets. It would be naïve to think that our Nation's economy can continue on its current course. But as public servants, our focus should always be about getting better and not just cheaper. It is our fundamental duty. For those of us lucky enough to be part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers our portion focuses on our projects. Those Civil Works projects are getting older. We have to find ways to extend the life of our infrastructure and there are many examples of things that we have already done and several of things that we are doing.

The Jonesboro Agreement

allows for customer funded upgrades and repairs on our hydroelectric power plants. It is an agreement between the Corps, the Southwestern Power Administration, and City Water and Light of Jonesboro, Ark. Through this cooperative agreement the \$65 million renovations at the Webbers Falls power plant are customer funded while the renovations at the Ozark power plant are federally funded. What started as a small agreement to make minor repairs has grown

*"... as public servants, our focus should always be about getting better and not just cheaper."*

through great teamwork into a major renovation program. The Corps could not do this alone. This agreement is a different way of operating. It makes us better.

In the last Pacesetter, the cover photo was from the groundbreaking at the new marina on Keystone Lake and one of the articles focused on the teamwork between the Corps, the City of Mannford, and the developer. That public-private partnership is a good example of the way we can be better in the future. When Oklahoma had to close the Wah-Sha-Shee State Park on Hulah Lake because of funding cuts, the Osage Nation picked up the reins. With equipment from the state and help from both state and Corps park rangers, they opened the park in time for Memorial Day. The District could not have done this alone. It was a different way of doing things. It was a better way.

And there are things that we can and should do in the future. The Red River Chloride Control project is very unique. The purpose is to collect and dispose of the naturally occurring chlorides from the Wichita River in northern Texas to keep them out of the downstream water systems. Right now we collect the brine, pump it into Truscott Brine Lake, and let it evaporate. What if someone could use that brine water to make electricity? There are pool restrictions

because of dam safety concerns. What if, instead of spending

a lot of money on dam safety repairs, we kept the pool restriction and used the brine water to make renewable energy? Wouldn't that be a better way to operate our project? We are currently looking at similar changes on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System to increase the amount of maintenance, and in particular, preventive maintenance on the system. We are working with other partners to increase recreation opportunities. The Tri-State Water Summit last winter gave several suggestions on how to work together and better.

All of these changes take a vision of the future. They all will force us to look hard at ourselves and how we do business to see what we should do differently.

It's about getting better — always better.



# Farewell, but not goodbye

## Col. Richard Muraski Commander, Fort Worth District

**A**s my time as the 24th commander of the Fort Worth District comes to an end, I first and foremost want to thank you all and say it has been an honor and privilege to serve you and our nation as the commander of this great organization.

I knew it would be a great place but I didn't have a full understanding of the magnitude and how challenging commanding this District would be nor the value the District brings to the nation.

When I assumed command I didn't realize how lucky I was to be able to come and be responsible to serve the people and the mission for the Fort Worth District.

Spending most of my 22 years as a muddy boots combat engineer, I knew coming here would be a challenge. Its geographical location combined with the District's stellar reputation made it my number one choice.

During my first few days in the District I was immediately set up for success by Col. Christopher W. Martin, the executive staff and division chiefs. Everyone involved with bringing me up to speed provided briefings and

site visits which laid the foundation for a successful tour. I was impressed with everyone I met, not just by their professionalism but their in-depth understanding of their jobs, what they were doing on the ground and its impact. They understood what they were doing it wasn't just a job to them, you could see their passion.

From the beginning through now you all gave me a clear vision of what was going

*"I was able to be comfortable being uncomfortable in certain situations because I could rely on all of you to give me the information and sage advice needed."*

well, what wasn't going well and what areas I needed to engage. As a team you were always quick to have good, sound recommendations for issues. There was never an issue or problem brought up that didn't come with a sound logical recommendation.

I could not have learned about the district, visited projects and met with stakeholders without the help of the Deputy District Engineers, the Division and Branch Chiefs, Area Engineers and so many dedicated professionals of the District. I also learned early on that in order to accomplish our missions we needed authority and appropriations and throughout my time here I owe a special thanks

to unsung heroes Robert Geiger and Rex Crosswhite who provided counsel which I relied heavily on. We could not have accomplished so much without the help of my battle buddies, Troy Collins, Bob Morris and Peggy Grubbs.

It was easy to see why the general thought around the Corps was "If it's difficult, give it to Fort Worth." As a team you were already executing at a high operation tempo, and as a reward you got more and more programs to execute. Four military hospitals and stimulus package projects that put the district under the gun to deliver shovel ready projects to jumpstart the nation's economy. All this atop a the Fort Bliss Expansion, San Antonio

Military Medical Center, Dallas Trinity River Corridor Project and the San Antonio River Improvement Mission Reach project, the largest eco-restoration project in an urban environment.

One clear reality is that our success could not be attained without relationships that we have with, local, state and federal representatives, our stakeholders and the citizens in each community we serve along with sister Districts. I felt in large part it was my role to help translate "Corps speak" into understandable information that the public and stakeholders could understand. And you all made that easy to do. I was able to be comfortable being uncomfort-

able in certain situation because I could rely on all of you to give me the information and sage advice needed. Sometimes it wasn't what they wanted to hear but we are the honest brokers and the public trusts our judgment, we have a responsibility to exercise our authority and people respect that.

During my tenure here the biggest change I have seen is that we are now more responsive and aware of our customer's perspective. Understanding and acknowledging their view, even if you give them bad news, will lead to cooperation and collaboration, building stronger relationships. This has always been present but I see the divisions work harder now from the chiefs to the mid level managers. I believe we have also thought and executed more regionally, working together to accomplish the mission for the good of our partners, the nation and the Corps. Let's keep this attitude going as we have some challenging time ahead. Challenges that I know this district will help lead and find solution on how to best accomplishing our missions.

It has been an honor to serve the district and it has been an honor to deliver projects and services to our country, our military and our communities. We are such an innovative district, changing and evolving along with the military and political environment. We are expected to be leaders and I'm sure this district will continue to be a leader within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It's the people and the passion, not the projects that make Fort Worth a leader in the Corps.

This has been one of the most challenging yet rewarding positions I have had in my military career. The impact that the Fort Worth District has had to our nation is phenomenal. We should not be so humble that we do not

tell our story. We are myth busters and should continue educating everyone on the value the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers brings to the nation.

Thanks for all you do each and every day, serving our nation. I salute you all.



Col. Richard J. Muraski, Jr. is interviewed by San Antonio news media after the grand opening of the San Antonio River Improvement Mission Reach project. The project serves as an example of ecosystem restoration efforts and a commitment by the federal government in protecting the health of America's waters.



Col. Richard Muraski meets with former City of Dallas Mayor Tom Leppert at the Trinity Center in Dallas.

# USACE Galveston District welcomes new deputy commander



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District welcomed its new deputy commander Maj. Marty Maldonado May 21, 2012. Outgoing deputy Lt. Col. James Schultze was selected to command the 15th Engineer Battalion based in Schweinfurt, Germany.

“The district is fortunate to have Maj. Maldonado onboard and I am confident that he will quickly become an invaluable member of the district,” said Col. Christopher Salese, USACE Galveston District commander. “His extensive background in engineering coupled with increasingly progressive roles as a leader makes him a perfect addition to our team.”

A native of Vega Baja, Puerto Rico, Maldonado graduated from the University of Central Florida with a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering Technology, received his commission through Army ROTC and later graduated from the Engineer Officers Basic Course in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

Following graduation from EOBC, Maldonado was assigned to the 9th Engineer Battalion, 1st Infantry Division, Schweinfurt, Germany, where he served as the battalion signal officer, assault and obstacle platoon leader, and company executive officer. During this tour, Maj. Maldonado participated in multiple rotations at the Combat Maneu-

ver Training Center, served as a task force engineer while conducting multi-national exercises in support of the United Nations Preventive Deployment force in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and deployed to Kosovo as part of KFOR in support of Operation Joint Guardian II.

Maldonado has served in a variety of positions at multiple levels within the Department of Army, including two deployments to Afghanistan.

A graduate of the Engineer Officer Advanced Course, Maldonado earned a Master of Science in Geology and Geophysics from the Missouri University of Science and Technology as well as graduated from the Army Command and General Staff College at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation.

His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal (2), Meritorious Service Medal (5), Army Commendation Medal (2), Army Achievement Medal (2), National Defense Service Medal (2), Iraq Campaign Medal (2), Afghanistan Campaign Medal (3), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Ribbon (3), Parachutist Badge, and Air Assault Badge and the Bronze Order of the De Fleury Medal.

# Retirement opens new opportunities for former deputy district engineer

By Stephen Sheedy  
Galveston District Public Affairs

Most Corps employees reach a point in their lives when they must choose between continuing their careers or retirement. It can be a very difficult decision to make and some view it with a mixture of confusion and apprehension.

After working for decades, retirement can seem like stepping into an unknown world; however, with the proper planning, this milestone can lead to a new and rewarding way of life.

For Arthur J. Janecka, former USACE Galveston deputy district engineer for programs and project management, retiring after 47 years of federal service was a question of timing.

“I loved working in the Galveston District,” said Janecka. “While it was a difficult decision to leave the Corps, I knew the time was right to move on.”

Although retirement does represent the end of a phase in life, it’s also the beginning of another. Many retirees take the opportunity to travel, go back to school, spend more time with family and friends or even start a new career.

Janecka retired on July 1, 2011, and had no problem filling the time.

“My wife and I remodeled our home,” said Janecka. “I also did a lot of new planting in the yard and enhanced the garden. I even found the time to further my education by taking a few engineering courses online.”

In addition to catching up on home and lawn projects, Janecka now has the opportunity to renew old friendships.

“I’ve reconnected with some old friends from high

school and college,” said Janecka. “I also get together with Corps retirees from years ago to enjoy a cup of coffee and swap war stories.”

Since retiring Janecka has also been busy catching up with members of his own family.

“I’ve re-established contact with several of my cousins, some of whom I hadn’t spoken with in years,” said Janecka. “I also have more time to revel in my role as grandpa.”

The extra time with his family is what Janecka values most about retiring from the Corps.

“Retirement affords us the opportunity to spend more time together and evaluate what is important to us as a family,” said Janecka. “We’ve begun to explore our family history, continue to work within our church, and sometimes, we will just relax and enjoy an old Western movie together.”

Janecka believes anyone can successfully transition into retirement with proper planning and preparation.

“I encourage anyone thinking of retirement to carefully examine their financial situation and have a plan to execute the transi-

tion from employment to retirement,” said Janecka. Additionally, follow all the rules and deadlines when filing your paperwork and keep meticulous records of your retirement documentation.”

Even with the additional time on his hands, Janecka still has a couple plans that remain unfulfilled.

“My wife and I plan to travel to Alaska. Also, I haven’t gotten in any fishing yet,” said Janecka.



Arthur J. Janecka, deputy district engineer for programs and project management, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District, was presented the Silver Order of de Fleury Medal by Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Kula, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southwestern Division and Col. Christopher W. Sallese, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District, on behalf of the Army Engineer Regiment. Janecka, a Columbus, Texas, native and a 1964 Lamar University graduate, retired from the Corps July 1, 2011, after 47 years of dedicated service to the nation.

# LDP leading the way! Where are they now...

The Southwestern Division Regional Leadership Development Program builds our bank of future leaders by providing a way to develop leadership skills to meet the needs of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the region. Participants learn how to improve their performance through training and on-the-job experience.

This four-level program has more than its share of success stories, some of which are highlighted in this article. Level 1 focuses on institutional awareness and the strategic direction of our organization and is self-paced; while Level 2 focuses on teamwork, self-awareness and exposure to leadership styles and is a two-year program.

The former Emerging Leaders Program (ELP), now Level 3 of the RLDP, is a regional program. The purpose of Level 3 is to provide individuals who have exhibited leadership potential the opportunity to further develop and refine their leadership skills. Additionally, Level 3 participants will have the opportunity to observe the leadership styles of their peers and the USACE Senior Leadership while participating in various conferences, workshops and meetings. Each year two, or more, people from each District and SWDO are selected for the Level 3 program and these individuals, along with the current Level 3 participants, participate in Southwestern Division's Annual Senior Leader/Leadership Development Conference.

The new Level 3 participants also have a chance to be selected to represent SWD at the USACE Annual Emerging/Senior Leaders Conference. Level 4, which is still under development, will ultimately be administered by Headquarters USACE.

The successes of the program are evident, both for the individual and for the organization. As a measure of that success, following are where some of the participants are now.

## Anjna O'Connor- Fort Worth District

**Job Title:** Operations Project Manager, Capital Region Office

**Graduation from LDP:** 2005

**How did the LDP help you get where you are or accomplish you current duties?** The LDP helped me progress in my career by allowing me to learn more about organizations other than my "home room." The developmental assignments were critical in providing me an opportunity to broaden my experience base and explore career paths other than the traditional ones.

**Anything else you want to add:** The LDP provided greater exposure to senior leadership and opportunities to observe strategic and operational level decision making. This exposure helped me gain a better understanding of the operating environment within the district, division and USACE.



## DeJuan Carter- Little Rock District

**Job Title:** Chief of Construction Branch, Area Engineer

**Graduation from LDP Level III:** 2005

**How the program benefited you most:** I got exposure to other leaders in the district and division. Developmental assignments and opportunities followed.

**What are your future career goals:** It's obviously a challenging thing to accomplish, but the next rung on the ladder for me would be chief of E&C.



## Felicity Dodson- Galveston District

**Job Title:** Project Manager

**Years with the Corps:** 10

**Graduation from LDP Level III:** April 2, 2012

**Benefits you have identified with completing this course:** I have a better understanding of what goes into regional governance and the strategic direction planned for SWD and SWG. I also better understand the business lines that make up the Corps and how my branch and division contribute to the Corps' overall mission.

## Franchelle Craft- Galveston District

**Job Title:** Civil Engineer

**Years with the Corps:** 10

**Graduation from LDP Level II:** Fall 2011

**What you liked most about the program:** I enjoyed the ability to network outside of the district on a regional and headquarters level.

**How has this program assisted you with career progression?** I have developed relationships with mentors outside the USACE Galveston District and received training that's not associated with technical performance.



## Adam Crisp- Tulsa District

**Job Title:** Chief, Military/Environmental Branch- Tulsa District

**Years with Corps:** 11

**LDP Graduation Date:** Local level LDP 2005, Regional LDP 2008

**How the program benefited you most:** The LDP program helped me recognize my own strengths and weaknesses and how best to overcome or adapt in various circumstances. I was able to meet several of the Corps of Engineers Senior level management and was even selected to work at HQ USACE for seven months, a job that eventually led to my current position. The LDP program helped open my eyes to the many opportunities that exist within

our great organization and make relationships with colleagues outside my everyday sphere of influence.

## Casandra Ramsey- Tulsa District

**Job Title:** Realty Specialist

**Years with Corps:** 5

**LDP Graduation Date:** 2012

**What you learned most from the program:** I learned I can lead from anywhere. I can still have influence, no matter what position I am in. It is better to know how to do the research than to memorize.

Communication is key. Lead by example. Know yourself. Think about where you want to go in the organization. Go after promotions because you think it is the best way you can help the organization.



# DOING LESS

+with-

# LESS

## HOW THE CORPS IS TRANSFORMING ITS BUSINESS MODEL TO MEET TODAY'S FISCAL CHALLENGES

*by LaDonna Davis*

There is an old saying that, for years, has resonated across companies, government organizations and households when money is tight: “do more with less.” But, in fiscally challenging times where the U.S. government is looking for ways to decrease spending and reduce funding across many government agencies, that old saying is getting a new twist, “do less with less.”

Doing less with less is the challenge that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is facing; and part of the solution is to come up with ways to transform its entire civil works program to suit lower budgets, less projects, less resources and a new way of doing business.

“The Corps’ culture in the past has been to do more with less, but the reality is that we can’t continue to do all the things we’ve always done,” said Andrea Murdock-McDaniel, USACE Southwestern Division chief of operations. “We have to change the way we do business, we have to find ways to do less with less.”

Currently the Corps is responsible for planning, maintaining,

designing and constructing more than \$250 billion of the Nation’s civil works infrastructure. But, the budget for civil works projects in 2013 is projected to be equal to the budget in 2009.

In a memorandum from Maj. Gen. Michael Walsh, USACE Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations dated March 16, 2012, he says “we anticipate that our budget will remain flat for the next five years, thus, it encourages us to seek alternative and innovative funding strategies that can complement the Federal budget allocations and meet the high value needs of the Nation over the next 20 to 50 years.”

Finding new ways to cut costs isn’t an easy feat. That’s why in August 2011, USACE put together a Senior Oversight Group comprised of civil works deputies from various USACE Districts, Divisions and major subordinate commands to develop strategies into a collaborative plan which suits the new economic climate and can be implemented at the MSC and District level.

The oversight group has come up with four key target areas to focus on in order to address the change in bud-

get and reduce costs: modernize the project planning process, enhance the budget development process through a systems approach, improve methods of delivery to produce and deliver critical products and services through water infrastructure, and develop a smart infrastructure asset management strategy to deliver solutions to water resources problems. The changes are expected to be implemented in 2014.

The first area of transformation- modernizing planning- focuses on how the Corps plans for future projects. In some instances this may mean changing the way the Corps delivers products to its customers. “Right now we have a lot of planners out there that don’t have a consistent workload,” said Murdock-McDaniel. “We need to look at ways of regionalizing the work we do have in order to maintain our planning expertise. This may mean that not every District will maintain their full scope of planning competencies within their geographic

boundaries, but will utilize planners across the region to provide that expertise virtually instead.”

The oversight group has also come up with a new approach to planning projects called “3x3x3.” “Three- by- three- by- three means that our projects should take less than three years to complete, cost less than \$3 million and undergo only three levels of review,” said Murdock-McDaniel. The idea behind 3x3x3 is that it will ultimately reduce the time it takes the Corps to deliver the product to our stakeholders and will cut costs by limiting the review to just what is needed to make our decision and reduce the amount of reviews required for each step of the process.”

Completing projects, that in years past might have taken five years or longer, in three years or less can be challenging; which is why the Corps is also looking at changing the way projects are executed, operated and maintained.

Using a systems approach to operating and maintaining projects versus breaking projects into sections could help save money in the long run. “We need to start looking at our projects as one big operating system versus individual projects that need to have separate contracts and be maintained in an a-la-carte fashion,” said Murdock-McDaniel. “We also need to look at levels of service- does every project need to be built and maintained to such a high degree? The questions that the Corps is going to start asking is, ‘what can we do for the public to still meet their needs and still keep the integrity of our project, but do it at a lesser level that focuses our limited resources on the highest priority work and on the most efficient method of delivery in terms of cost and time?’”

One example of this approach is the McClellan-Kerr Arkan-

sas River Navigation System in Little Rock and Tulsa Districts. Currently, the MKARNS locks are run 24 hours a day 7 days a week. One thing that the Southwestern Division is studying is if it would be beneficial to reduce the number of operating hours that the MKARNS stays open. “Do they need to have all that staff all the time,” questions Murdock-McDaniel. “This is an example of the Corps looking at ways to operate with the money we have and still produce a service that



A barge boat makes its way through the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System lock and dam. Reducing the MKARNS hours of operations is just one of the ways the Southwestern Division is looking to reduce costs as part of the civil works transformation. Currently, the MKARNS runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week. (Photo by USACE Little Rock District PAO)

the public wants.”

The third cost cutting measure the Corps will be implementing pertains to the management of Corps assets.

Currently, the Corps maintains millions of dollars worth of infrastructure, but with limited monies, it is getting more and more difficult to maintain each structure. To counter this problem, the Corps is surveying the condition of its infrastructures to determine which structures are considered most at risk and most critical in terms of the projects ability to provide its intended benefits.

“We’re developing a risk informed prioritization process that utilizes Corps-wide criteria, metrics and decision support tools to focus

our resources to those projects with the highest value or return on investment for the nation,” said Murdock-McDaniel. Some of the determining factors could include the value of the asset, the economic value of the services provided, the number of people at risk, maintenance costs and the current operating conditions of the facility.

The Corps will have to make some tough decisions in the coming months to acclimate to the changing

economical climate. But, while a tighter budget might result in less projects getting complete, the one thing the Corps is hoping it won’t have to do is cut its employees. “USACE is trying to do this in the least harmful way to employees,” said Murdock-McDaniel. A few of those ways include reducing the workforce through attrition and limiting the number of rehired annuitants. USACE will also look at ways to virtually restructure

the organization where it places work where the people are or vice versa.

The full civil works transformation plan is expected to go into implementation in 2014, but Murdock-McDaniel says that the changes won’t stop there. “Any good organization has to be able to transform to the current conditions,” she said. “Just because we start the transformation process in 2014, doesn’t mean that it will end there. We’re changing the culture of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a whole and also here at SWD. There will be some internal growing pains that we’ll all be sharing as we work our way through this transformation, but we’ll get through it and hopefully the Corps of Engineers will be better for it.”

# Springfield Flood Risk Management Project picked for pilot study

By Laurie Driver, Little Rock Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is modernizing its civil works planning process, and Little Rock District's Springfield Flood Risk Management Project was one of the first two planning projects selected to be part of the national pilot study.

"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," Trish Anslow, chief of the Little Rock District's Planning and Environmental Division, said.

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

"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.

"Now we don't have to spend significant time on an alternative that we know wouldn't make it through the initial screening process," Anslow said. "This allows us to focus on the best possible alternatives available and move the project forward quicker."

Currently, the project team is refining its suggested fix for Springfield's flood problem.

"The project team has performed several iterations of developing and evaluating alternatives. It screened out numerous ones narrowing the current field to five plans," Anslow said.

The next step is to tentatively select the recommended plan.

"The team is also preparing



For the last 200 years, the town of Springfield, Mo. has been suffering from severe flooding along Jordan Creek. A new pilot study being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Little Rock District looks to help solve the flooding issues in an expedited manner. (Photo by USACE Little Rock District)

the draft report, with all alternatives considered, in preparation for public review," Anslow said. "Once there is public and agency concurrence on a tentatively selected solution, the team will further refine the design in preparation for authorization and appropriation."

This process requires the team to work more closely with the sponsor throughout the entire study process.

"The sponsor is very involved in their study and piloting this new feasibility study process," Anslow said. "That feedback is important to our team and the development of national guidance."

The new process benefits the sponsor but also offers benefits to the district's planners.

"As the organization becomes more comfortable with the new process we will realize more and more benefits," Anslow said. "I believe this process will be much more efficient and will empower our civil works planning teams to be more creative, to think more critically, and use professional judgment more often during the study process."

The multimillion dollar, 50-50 cost-shared feasibility study with the city of Springfield should be completed in 2013.

The flood control measures being considered include structure relocations, detention ponds, open channels, and in congested areas, underground culverts.

The City of Springfield plans to create an environmentally-sustainable beltway downtown along Jordan Creek that will provide flood damage reduction, and redevelopment. Portions of the creek flow through covered conduits in the city center.

During the flood of July 2000, \$1.85 million in flood damage occurred and interrupted traffic on main city thoroughfares and rail lines. More recent flooding occurred in the spring of 2008.

"The new process is a win-win for everyone," Anslow said. "We produce a more cost effective study, in a timelier manner, with greater sponsor involvement while challenging our planners to meet those goals."



The Fort Worth District's Westside Creeks Project Delivery Team and members of the San Antonio River Authority conduct a site visit to the project area which is part of a pilot program to streamline the amount of time it takes to complete studies.

## Making the transformation stride along the Westside Creeks

By Randy Cephus, SWF Deputy PAO

The Fort Worth District is making great strides with civil works transformation during the conduct of the Westside Creeks Pilot Study. Through this transformation, the Corps of Engineers established a new and modernized planning paradigm to streamline the project planning process.

Corps leaders envision this transformation, featuring a risk based decision process, will help produce a more concise Chief's Report that is completed faster and at a lower cost than in the past.

Westside Creeks is one of only five studies across the Nation currently in the Pilot Study program. But what makes this study unique is the fact that it is the only one to enter the program from the project's inception.

"A basic premise is to define a new paradigm that allows us to produce a more timely decision document without sacrificing quality, and to do so by developing planning processes that are efficient and effective," said Westside Creeks lead planner, Stacy Gray.

The study area includes four tributaries of the San Antonio River that run through San Antonio's west-side communities. These tributaries are the Alazan, Apache, Martinez, and San Pedro Creeks. All four creeks were straightened and channelized during the 1960s as part of the San Antonio Channel Improvement Program.

The study will examine how to restore the native riverine function to the Westside Creeks study area while at least, maintaining the current level of flood risk management. Recreation is also an authorized project

purpose and will be considered as a study component.

The process requires that the team identify risks and uncertainties and establish a level of risk that is acceptable with consideration to life safety and health, and then design and implement a study to that appropriate level of effort.

"One of the most challenging; yet exciting things about this project is thinking outside the box and getting out of our comfort zone of doing things the traditional way," said Gray.

The new paradigm stresses making key decisions in a timely fashion. The first decision centered on whether or not there is a Federal interest. A key subset of this was to also see if there is also a Corps interest that is separate from the overall Federal interest.

"Under this paradigm, the goal is to make that decision in the first three to six months of the study, and if the determination is no Federal interest then we would move into a technical support role to assist the local community with implementing their vision within an existing Federal project," said Gray.

The next major milestone is DP2, which is the Tentatively Selected Plan," said Westside Creeks project manager, Nova Robbins. "We anticipate reaching this decision point around December of this year."

Often referred to as an 18-month study, the Westside Creeks' actual range is a 16-24 month study. The overall goal is to shorten the planning process, but to do so without sacrificing quality information needed for a decision.

A key component to the initial success of the project is due to the constant communication and collaboration with the project sponsor, the San Antonio River Authority. SARA is one of the Fort Worth District's oldest partners. They are full project delivery team members and are active participants throughout the planning process.

"SARA is providing much of the technical data, such as geomorphology and natural channel planning, to our H&H folks, and we could not execute this aggressive timeline without their technical support," added Robbins.

"Many of our sponsors seek special legislation to ensure the community's desires are not lost in the Corps planning process," says Robbins. "The WSC project comes to this process with a conceptual plan developed by the community and provides us an opportunity to plan a study that includes this vision using the concepts of the paradigm."

SARA's technical expertise makes the entire PDT stronger. This teamwork will become even more critical as the project makes further strides in reaching its final goal, the Chief's Report.

# HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE WATER?

## How the Corps is managing Earth's precious, limited resource

by Brad Hudgens,  
SWD Technical Director of Water Management and  
Reallocation Studies Planning Center of Expertise



Texas State Park police officer Thomas Bigham walks across the cracked lake bed of O.C. Fisher Lake, in San Angelo, Texas. (Courtesy Associated Press)

The record drought that occurred in 2011 across much of Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas highlighted the risks that our region faces in providing dependable water supplies for a growing population and economy. While the drought of 2011 was particularly intense, the drought of record for most of the region remains the extended drought that occurred through the 1950s.

The recently released 2012 Texas State Water Plan reports that, if we were to experience those same drought conditions today, water sup-

plies could not be sustained at the rate of current demands across the state.

Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas have all prepared detailed state plans for meeting future water needs in the region.

Texas estimates that \$53 billion will have to be invested in new infrastructure to develop additional sources of water supply to reliably meet the future water demands that are expected to occur with population growth over the next 50 years. This does not include the additional capital

expenses that will be needed to clean and distribute new water supplies, and then collect and treat the additional wastewater to meet discharge standards, all of which are estimated at over \$170 billion.

Oklahoma reports that \$82 billion will be required to provide adequate drinking water and wastewater infrastructure over the next 50 years.

Kansas estimates that many existing water supply reservoirs in the state will soon be unable to supply their communities through a once-

in-fifty-years drought, primarily due to high rates of sedimentation that are reducing the dependable storage much sooner than planned.

Groundwater supplies a considerable amount in all three states, but sustainable rates of production from the major aquifers in the region are forecasted to decline, and, in many cases, pumping rates are already decreasing and being restricted.

Water supply, although a small program within the Corps from the national level, is an important mission across the region. The Southwestern Division has placed an emphasis on working with state, tribal and local partners on issues related to water supply as part of Goal 2 of the USACE Campaign Plan to “deliver enduring and essential water resources solutions through collaboration with partners and stakeholders.” This goal is also reflected in the division’s implementation plan, the IPLAN, and Brigadier Gen. Kula established this as one of his priorities for FY12: “Develop and implement regional watershed and reservoir sustainability strategy that includes water reallocation.”

The Little Rock, Tulsa and Fort Worth Districts operate 60 major reservoir projects in these states that include over 6.7 million acre-feet of storage that is dedicated to municipal and industrial water supplies – more than any other region in the Corps.

This storage is capable of reliably supplying over three billion gallons per day to households and industries in the region throughout the drought of record.

In fact, the Corps is the single largest supplier of water in the region. The states and local municipalities depend on these projects, including eight reservoirs in Kansas operated by the Kansas City district, for about one-half of the existing surface water supplies in Kansas, and one-third of the supplies in Oklahoma and Texas.

The average age of these



Members of the Corps, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas team for Regional State/Federal Collaboration in Water Resource Planning and Management charter meet at the National WWI Museum in Kansas City, February 2012. (Division photo)

reservoir projects is now about 50 years old. While operations and maintenance (O&M) of these projects remains a top priority for the Corps, reliability will become an increasing concern given their age and current trends of flat or declining budgets.

As with any major capital item, the Corps manages these projects throughout a life-cycle of construction, operation and maintenance, and recapitalization.

As the Corps reservoir projects in the region approach the end of their initial service life, decisions about recapitalization will be made within an infrastructure asset management approach.

Recapitalization may entail major expenditures to extend the service life of a project, ensuring its safety and reliability. Recapitalization may also include reformulation of project purposes and changes in operations to best meet the present needs of the region. And, in some cases, the Corps may recommend de-authorization and closure or divestment of the project, if it is determined to be in the best interests of the public.

Recognizing that project costs allocated to water supply are carried entirely by the non-federal sponsors, these decisions will need to be made in close coordination with those sponsors.

In 2011, the Texas Water Development Board, Oklahoma Water Resources Board, and Kansas Water

Office began a partnership with the Corps to improve coordination on water resources issues such as these.

The group signed a charter that pledges to work together towards better communication and collaboration, integration of planning processes, and identification of funding opportunities.

The overall goal of the team is to enable implementation of sustainable solutions to water resources problems and ensure the best use of the major federal reservoir projects in the region for future generations.

Execution of Kula’s priority for a regional watershed and reservoir sustainability strategy, and the related SWD IPLAN and USACE Campaign Plan goals during this period of constrained budgets will require that the Corps actively pursue available funds under programs such as Planning Assistance to States and ensure that the region’s needs are communicated in the development of the administration budget for each fiscal year.

In FY11, the Division sought and obtained reprogramming for unobligated PAS funds from other regions, doubling the amount of funding brought into this region. In planning for the FY14 budget, SWD worked with the national water supply business line and Headquarters Programs Integration Division to develop new performance-based metrics that will better align the O&M work category in the business line with the numbers

of existing projects and water supply storage agreements in each region.

These metrics will be applied in the FY14 budget for the first time, and are expected to bring a larger percentage of the program funds to this region, enabling the start or continuation of one or two reallocation studies each year.

Maintaining aging infrastructure projects to best serve changing needs and purposes may send the Corps and its state and local partners into uncharted territory, and the path forward may not always be clear. Nevertheless, SWD Pacesetters are embracing these challenges and moving forward with some notable successes.

In 2009, Little Rock District completed a reallocation of conservation storage at the Bull Shoals reservoir to provide a source of safe and reliable water supply for 20,000 people in four rural counties in Arkansas

who had been drinking water from contaminated groundwater aquifers.

By completing the planning study to authorize the reallocation within a one-year schedule, the District enabled the sponsor to secure nearly \$60 million in funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to build a new water system to serve the area.

Fort Worth district also utilized ARRA to address major repair needs at several reservoir projects in Texas.

Recognizing that these projects would need to be cost-shared with local sponsors, some of whose water storage agreements required

payment in full at the time of construction, the District sought and obtained permission from the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works to allow the sponsors to amortize these costs, relieving them of the unexpected financial burden at a time when they could least afford to pay, while still accomplishing these much needed repairs.

From 2006 to 2011, Tulsa

develop such relationships through efforts like the Western States Federal Agency Support Team.

In 2011, Lilly saw an opportunity to get funding from the Institute for Water Resources for pilot studies related to the challenges of climate change. He won approval for his proposal to work with the Department of the Interior's newly formed South Central Regional Climate Science

Center at the University of Oklahoma to investigate how study teams can obtain and apply the best available climate science in evaluating issues such as water demand and availability.

There is no doubt that the Corps Civil Works program is undergoing transformation, and no shortage of initiatives looking at ways to meet current and future challenges: planning modernization,

asset management and infrastructure strategies, watershed and systems approaches and integrated water resources management, just to name a few!

Good ideas from all of these areas may have a role to play in working with state and local sponsors to solve the water resources problems in the region. By looking for opportunities, encouraging innovation, and using all of the tools in the federal toolbox, Pacesetters will continue to blaze new trails in developing enduring solutions to these challenges.



An aerial view of the Grapevine Lake in Grapevine, Texas

District worked with the Oklahoma Water Resources Board using PAS funding to help the state complete the 2011 update to the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan.

The District is now working with the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations in southeast Oklahoma on a water plan for the tribes.

In some cases, the Corps can be a facilitator to leverage the expertise or authorities of other federal agencies towards specific issues faced by the states and sponsors.

Gene Lilly, a lead planner in Tulsa district, has worked for years to



Oologah Lake is being used for a pilot study that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Tulsa District is conducting along with NOAA to determine what affects climate change has on the water supply. (Photo courtesy lasr.net)

## Learning about climate change on Oologah Lake

by LaDonna Davis, SWD Public Affairs

Have you ever wondered what will happen to our water supply in 25 years? What about 50 or 100? How will the ever changing climate affect our water resources in the years to come? Those are the questions that The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Tulsa District is trying to answer in a pilot study of the Oologah Lake and watershed in Northeast Oklahoma and Southeast Kansas.

Currently, 117 of the 600 Corps' managed multi-purpose reservoir projects include enough water supply storage to meet the water needs of approximately 85 million American households for a year. In order to effectively manage these reservoirs, USACE is studying the impacts that a change in climate will have on the water supply over time.

The pilot study is just one of the ways the Corps is looking toward the future to come up with a sustainable water supply strategy. The goal of the study is to demonstrate a sustainable local, tribal, state and federal government risk management process associated with climate change impacts to reservoir yield, water quality and soil and water conditions in the watershed. Information gathered from the study can also serve as a template for future reservoir and watershed studies.

"Our intent is to be able to repeat this process as the climate science advances," said Doug

Lilly, lead civil engineer for Tulsa District. We want to find some practical ways of leveraging resources for multiple organizations and applying that info in a practical way in a planning study and then providing that information to decision makers."

The Oologah Lake and watershed was chosen because of existing reservoir models and baseline information developed from the Oologah Lake Watershed Assessment Study that was completed in 2012, making the pilot study cost and time effective. "We get more bang for our buck by using Oologah because we don't have to spend pilot money on models," said Lilly. The total cost for the study is

\$225,000.

The study is being conducted in partnership with the National Oceanic Atmosphere Administration Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program and the Department of Interior's South Central Climate Science Center at the University of Oklahoma along with other local, tribal, state, federal and non-government organization stakeholders.

The study will take an interactive and collaborative approach by encouraging stakeholder input and information exchange. Climate data will be collected from various global and regional historic climate models and statistical downscaling to produce a future project dataset. The data collected will be entered into a dataset model to be incorporated into existing Lake Oologah and watershed models.

"We're in the process of learning about climate change and its effects on our waters," said Lilly. "What we do know is that there is potential for warmer weather- more extreme events and that may change how sediment is transported in to reservoirs. So, in the future we may learn if we have more extreme drought events we may have less reservoir yield than we previously thought. Our lakes may in the future fill up quicker with sediment if there are more extreme events that transport more sediment. So those are things that are potential issues and that are what we are trying to learn more about- how we would plan for those potential issues in the future?"

The pilot study began at the beginning of 2012 and is expected to be complete by the fall of 2013.

Tucked away along the outskirts of the bustling City of Houston lies a 23,000-acre natural retreat also known as the Wallisville Lake Project. Not only does the project provide recreational opportunities for visitors to connect with the outdoors that includes kayaking, bird watching, recreational fishing and picnicking, the project serves a very important watershed function.

# Wallisville Lake Project

By Galveston District Public Affairs

## Q: What is the Wallisville Lake Project?

**A:** Located 40 miles east of downtown Houston at the Trinity River and Interstate 10, the Wallisville Lake Project is designed to primarily prevent the intrusion of saltwater up the Trinity River in order to conserve fresh water and to protect fresh water intakes for local municipalities, including the City of Houston. This feat is accomplished through the use of a saltwater barrier, a navigational lock and a control structure used to regulate water during times of low river flows and drought on the Trinity River and prevent the saltwater wedge from moving upstream. In addition to protecting the fresh water supply, the U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers and the Wallisville Lake Project supports navigation of commercial and recreational boats, serves as a water supply, is a favorite recreational destination among Houstonians and supports an array of fish and wildlife habitats.

## Q: What is unique about the Wallisville Lake Project's environment?

**A:** Home to the largest remaining intact cypress swamp along the Texas Gulf Coast, the Wallisville Lake Project contains brackish marshes, freshwater marshes, bottomland hardwood swamps and cypress swamps. These protected wetland habitats contain a tremendous variety of wildlife species ranging from deer, bobcat and alligators to dozens of migratory, waterfowl and songbirds. The project also protects and serves





A fishing enthusiast enjoys a day of recreational fishing at Wallisville. The Wallisville Lake Project is a large area of protected wetlands, swamp forest, and bottomland hardwood forest created by the USACE Galveston District for salinity control, navigation, water supply, recreation and fish and wildlife enhancement. For more information about recreating at one of the parks within the project visit. (photo by USACE Galveston PAO)

as the nursery for the estuary of the Trinity River system.

**Q:** Which agencies primarily partner with the Corps at the Wallisville Lake Project?

**A:** The primary partners for the development and operations of the Wallisville Lake Project are the Trinity River Authority, the City of Houston and the Chambers-Liberty Counties Navigation District who benefit from the water management aspects of the project.

In addition to water management partners, the Corps also partners with groups whose primary concerns are the protection of natural resources associated with the project and the education of the public about them. These include, but are not limited to, The Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, Houston Wilderness and the Waterborne Education Center. While the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory's primary interest focuses on educating visitors about the birds that inhabit the project, the Houston Wilderness centers on promoting the outdoor opportunities available to Houstonians, and the Waterborne Education Center works to increase awareness about the value of the wetlands, marshes and aquatic habitats in relationship to the coast and the bays in the area. Together, these agencies continue to cultivate stewardship and an appreciation of the natural and historic resources available to Houstonians and visitors alike.

**Q:** Which recreational opportunities exist at the Wallisville Lake Project?

**A:** Many recreational opportunities that cater to nature lovers are available to visitors. The J.J. Mayes Wildlife Trace is a driving nature trail located along the west side of the Trinity River begins at I-10 and runs south through the marsh for approximately three miles. Along the trace visitors will find numerous spots to stop and observe the wildlife. With an abundance of hiking trails, including a .8-mile long hiking boardwalk that is wheelchair accessible, the

trail has quickly become a favorite destination for birding enthusiasts.

The Trinity River Mouth Waterbird Rookery hosts a boardwalk that enables visitors to walk to the edge of the marsh where numerous waterbirds nest during the spring (wheelchair accessible). Additionally, the Trinity River Island Recreation Area along with the visitor center offers information to visitors about places to fish, its boat launches, observation towers and picnic facilities.

Additionally, fishing opportunities are available year round and waterfowl hunting opportunities are available during the fall and winter months throughout the project.

**Q:** How can the Wallisville Lake Project further the goals of America's Great Outdoors initiative?

**A:** The ultimate goal of America's Great Outdoor initiative (created in 2010) is to conserve and restore America's great outdoors and encourage Americans to connect with nature. From paddling, hiking, biking and fishing, the Wallisville Lake Project provides visitors unlimited recreational opportunities, offer awareness-raising educational opportunities and supports environmental partnership initiatives.

**Q:** Which new sites are opening at the Wallisville Lake Project?

**A:** The Corps is working with its partners to develop a paddle trail on the eastern side of the project off of FM 563. The paddle trail will pass through part of the largest remaining cypress swamp remaining on the Texas gulf coast. The Corps has surveyed the area and determined the layout of the trail and will begin installing the trail markers in the coming months with the trail expected to be completed by fall. Though the trail is not yet marked, visitors are welcomed to paddle the area.

Remember, when on the water, always wear your life jacket, take plenty of drinking water and always provide a float plan to a friend or family member.

# A FISH OUT OF WATER

## Saving the Illinois trout fishery

by Nate Herring, Tulsa District

The town of Gore, Okla. proudly calls itself the “Trout Capital of Oklahoma” because of the large trout fishery on the Lower Illinois River below the Tenkiller Lake dam, however, during the summer 2011 drought, the future of the fishery was uncertain. Low dissolved oxygen levels and high water temperatures resulted in a small fish kill of both non-native trout and native species of fish and the threat of an even larger fish kill that could devastate the fishery was looming.

Though Tenkiller Lake is authorized for fish and wildlife, there isn't any water allocated for

that purpose and all of the water supply storage is accounted for leaving no water for the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to use for the fishery. For many years, however, a leak in the sluice gate at Tenkiller Dam provided a fresh water flow that aided the dissolved oxygen level and temperature. In 2010, that leak was repaired.

“The repair was needed just as a matter of maintaining our equipment,” said Jody Stringer, Water Management Section, Hydrology and Hydraulics branch. “The project was built in the 1950s and nothing lasts forever, so we

must maintain our equipment to ensure that we are able to operate the project effectively and efficiently.”

In addition to the sluice gate leak, donated water of a little more than 12,000 cubic acres from Sequoyah County Fuels' water supply allocation allowed ODWC to release water for the fishery.

However, during the drought, that donated water was exhausted. The depleted donated water combined with the repaired sluice gate left no water available for the fishery. As a result, oxygen levels dropped and water temperatures rose leading to a small fish

kill in the stilling basin below the Tenkiller Dam.

“After the initial fish kill, there was nothing that the Tulsa District could do since ODWC was out of water,” Stringer said. “As an interim measure, ODWC decided to stop stocking trout and Southwestern Power Administration, who manages hydropower generation at Tenkiller, began to do a little more generation than they had previously.”

These quick actions prevented further fish kills during the drought, but still left the need for longer term solutions. To further complicate the situation, the donated water storage from Sequoyah County Fuels may not be available in the future because the company is relinquishing their rights to the water. Multi-agency discussions began to discuss possible solutions to the issue.

Partnership efforts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District, ODWC, SWPA, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, are underway to ensure the trout fishery remains a vital part of the local economy.

In the short term, two projects are in development that will benefit the fishery. The first is the installation of a Supersaturated Dissolved Oxygen System that will target the stilling basin where the fish kill occurred. It will be operated by ODWC during times when the dissolved oxygen level reaches critical lows in that area.

The other project is a low flow pipe system which will release water directly from the surge tank

to the stilling basin.

“Right now we only have one mechanism to release water for the trout fishery, and it has a minimum release of 150 cubic feet of water per second. At certain times, this is more water than ODWC would like to have released,” Stringer said. “This low flow pipe will allow Tulsa District to help ODWC conserve their water as much as possible by releasing as little as 50 cubic feet per second through it.”

In the past, when the gates were used for releases late in the day, the releases would need to continue until personnel arrived in the morning to close the gates. The low flow pipe will be controlled from the Fort Gibson powerhouse so releases can be changed around the clock, Stringer said.

“The small amount of water that is available makes every decision important,” she said. These projects are funded by SWPA and are executed by the Tulsa District.

“The goal is to have them in place by August, just in time for the hottest part of the summer,” said Kent Dunlap, chief of natural resources.

In addition, the four agencies are setting up a monitoring plan to monitor conditions throughout the fishery downstream of the dam.

“One of the problems that we had in the past is a lack of consistently measured data to help make better decisions in managing

the water that is available,” Stringer said. “This plan will help in making future decisions to manage resources and support good habitat conditions in the trout fishery.”

These projects will provide help to the fishery in the event of a drought like last summer while a mid-term solution is still under consideration. The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has requested a seasonal pool increase of two feet. This would raise the pool level from 632 to 634 from the beginning of June through the end of November for a one year trial period. This increase would allow ODWC to have additional water for release.

There are several challenges that must be addressed prior to approval such as the cultural impact and negative impacts to other water supply users. In addition, raising the pool two feet leaves less room for flood control storage. This seasonal pool will not be approved in time for this summer, said Dunlap.

A long-term solution would need to come from a permanent reallocation. This is something that would need to be congressionally authorized and funded, and it would take multiple studies prior to execution.

“There is no magic bullet solution to all of this,” said Dunlap. “None of these things by themselves fix it, but if you have several things working together, it helps, and that is what these agencies are trying to do, find solutions that together can help sustain the fishery well into the future.”



# IF YOU FLOOD IT, THEY WILL COME

by Jay Townsend, Little Rock District

## *Nestled between the Ouachita and Ozark Mountains,*

Nimrod Lake is the oldest Corps of Engineers lake in Arkansas. And project lands associated with this lake host the Lloyd Millwood Waterfowl Area, a 2,400-acre green-tree reservoir and public duck hunting area.

Green-tree reservoirs use water control structures and levees to intentionally flood forest lowlands that provide migrating waterfowl with shelter, food and mating opportunities from late fall through early spring. At the same time, these shallow woodland lakes provide excellent hunting opportunities.

Green-tree reservoirs were first established in the 1930's near Stuttgart, Ark. They were designated "green-tree" (seasonally flooded stands of living trees) to distinguish them from dead tree (permanently flooded) reservoirs. The concept originated as a means to compensate for the unreliability of fall rains and to ensure sufficient

waterfowl habitat.

The earliest models for green-tree reservoirs from the 1930's say that oak trees, water and ducks are all that are needed for success. Initially it was thought flooding would enhance the trees' growth and development as well as the ducks'.

"This is an over simplified formula," Nimrod Lake Park Ranger Eric Edwardson said. "The theory appears simple, but thorough planning is critical to prevent damage to the timber."

The Nimrod Project office and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission have implemented an adaptive life-cycle management plan to maintain aquatic ecosystems and prevent environmental losses to timber in the waterfowl area. The life-cycle plan includes yearly construction, maintenance and management.

"Protection and management of the natural environment are our main goals," the park ranger said. Regular inspection of green-tree reservoirs is an essential management requirement. Fall and winter inspections check the operation of water control structures and regulate water inflow to the reservoir.



The Lloyd Millwood Water Fowl Area is a 2,400-acre green-tree reservoir and public duck hunting area. (Photo by Jay Townsend)

Debris must be removed from water control structures, and levees should be inspected for critter tunnels and signs of erosion. Periodic inspection is also needed during summer, and after heavy rains.

Properly managed green-tree reservoirs are flooded after trees become dormant during the fall and are drained before the growing season begins in the spring. Only a few inches of water or saturated ground during the growing season can cause permanent timber damage. In addition, annual flooding of timber for too many seasons in a row can cause increased soil moisture and alter the ecosystems.

That is why AGFC and the Nimrod office will draw down the green-tree reservoir completely this year and will not re-fill it this fall. This will promote continued regeneration of typical bottomland hardwood species and allow the soil to dry out.

For hunters, this means they'll have to find a different place to duck hunt this year, and for ducks it means one of their favorite pit stops on the migratory highway will be closed for repairs.

"The drawdown is a normal part of maintenance around here. If we don't take care of the trees and land,

they won't be here in the future," Edwardson said.

Personnel will use the dry time to perform some much-needed repairs and upgrades.

"The drawdown will give us a chance to update our water control structures and clean up our levees," he said. Workers will install new stop log structures that will not only help get the water off the trees faster, but will also better regulate the depth of the green-tree reservoir.

"The average depth over the reservoir should be 12 to 18 inches, with a maximum depth less than 3 feet," he said. "These depths allow ducks to feed off the bottom and allow hunters to wade safely through the reservoir.

"We have a lot to get done this year. Thorough planning and hard work will reduce the potential for future management problems," Edwardson said.

Hunters in the Nimrod Lake area won't have their favorite duck hole this year, but with a little planning and vision from the AGFC and the Corps, they'll have it for many years to come. Because these two agencies are willing to partner up and work together, hunters can rely on an adequate supply of ducks, good access, and sufficient personnel to maintain this unique wildlife management area.



# Employee Spotlight

# Fort Worth District:

## *Tim MacAllister*

**Water safety is one of many key initiatives going on in Operations Division, what other initiatives are you leading your team on? Why is it so important to the Corps' mission?**

One of the biggest areas being emphasized at this time is training. Over the last few years, many people have retired and many more will retire soon. It is imperative that we adequately train newly hired employees as well as capture the knowledge of existing employees before they retire. This is a huge piece of the puzzle to the Civil Works Transformation processes currently underway.

**What is your role at the Fort Worth District?**

My role is to provide oversight and staff supervision in execution of all Operations mission areas of the Fort Worth District, including Operations & Maintenance and major repairs of all completed civil works projects and multi-purpose water resources projects, within the business lines of flood risk management, hydropower, recreation, environmental stewardship compliance, and water supply. I also serve as resource provider for field sites and leverage funds, manpower, etc. to ensure offices function as effectively as possible. There are also times where I have to answer inquiries from stakeholders, partners and the public...i.e. media, Congressional interests, municipalities, counties, state and federal agencies.

**Tell us about your most rewarding experience, your**

**proudest moment, since joining the Fort Worth District.**

The most rewarding experience I have is seeing employees excel. We strive to provide the resources necessary for employees to become



### Bio Stats



**Position:** Assistant Chief, Operations Division

**Years at SWF-** 17

**Hometown:** Grew up all over Texas... from Nacogdoches to El Paso and many, many places in between. The family home place is in Gonzales County.

**Education:** Bachelor of Science, Range and Ranch Management, Tarleton State University

**Hobbies:** Hunting, Fishing, Traveling, immersing myself in my children's activities, church activities

successful and I take great pride and satisfaction seeing people thrive in their positions.

**Before working for the Fort Worth District, what was the most unusual or interesting job you've ever had?**

I've worked on farms and ranches, in metal shops and the construction industry, for roofers and plumbers...all of which had some unusual and interesting aspects to them. However, nothing in any of those jobs compare to some of the unusual or interesting things that I encountered as a Park Ranger/Natural Resources Specialist at Lake Georgetown and Lewisville Lake.

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

I love to spend time with my wife and kids. We love to fish, hunt, travel, and attend sporting events...Go Cowboys (I am a huge Emmitt Smith fan), Rangers and Mavericks! I'm also involved in church activities.

# Southwestern Division:

## Jenny Moore

### How do you see your role as the Commander's Executive Secretary?

This varies with each commander...all very different in their expectations and I try to determine how best to serve each one. This usually evolves over time as I gain their trust. I have been very fortunate in that in all the years I have been in this position I have never had a Commander that I didn't like. Very often, I see a different side of these folks from what has to be shown to others for one reason or another. We work so closely that I and others in the Executive Office, am more like a Commander's extended family.

### What are some of the requirements of the job:

Flexibility, discretion, tact/diplomacy, initiative; be self-sufficient and proactive.

### What are some of the interesting events you have seen happen here at SWDO?

In 1997, during Brig. Gen. Henry S. Miller's tenure, there was considerable discussion about and planning for collocating the SWD Office with the Fort Worth District Office. Planning proceeded to the point where folk had their official orders, and some had already received assistance with selling/buying homes in order to move to within the commuting area. At the last minute, Headquarters called the re-location off.

In 1998, Brig. Gen. Ed Arnold arrived from Fort Leonard Wood, where he had been the deputy Commanding General. He had suffered two heart attacks the year before coming to SWD and as a result had a Medtronic defibrillator implanted. He was one of the first recipients of the particular model. I had a list of doctors to call in case of emergency/malfunction, and we did have a couple of incidents at the airport.

Brig. Gen. David Melcher was the next commander. He was Commander during



White House Fellow during President Reagan's term, and had some interesting stories to tell.

### Do you speak any other languages

I did a ten month "total immersion" in Italian language & culture as an "au pair" in Northern Italy and 18 months "total immersion" in German language/culture while working in German business in Dusseldorf, Germany

### Tell us about your farm!

After several years of gardening in the clay soil of Dallas, Jim and I searched for some land which had large trees (my requirement) and anything except clay in which to raise a vegetable garden (Jim's requirement). Twenty years ago this December we bought some land just east of Canton. Part of it had been used to grow roses and fruit trees and these had not been cared for for a considerable length of time. It took us several years of busy weekends and much assistance from friends to bring it up to par. We now run approximately 40 head of Brangas cattle and grow and cut enough hay to feed them, though the drought last year played havoc with our hay supplies, and, unfortunately, our native trees.

**Bio Stats**

**Position:** Executive Secretary  
**Years with Corps:** 27 years  
**Hometown:** Born in Glen Innes, New South Wales; grew up on a sheep property on the New South Wales/Queensland border in Australia  
**Education:** shorthand, typing & book-keeping course at the Presbyterian Girls College in Warwick, Australia.  
**Hobbies:** travelling, gardening; reading; helping my husband on our small farm in East Texas

the September 11th terror attack and its aftermath, and during his time, the Division was joined by many reservists called in to provide assistance with the war effort and security of our facilities. We were very unaccustomed to having so many uniformed members in the Division. General Melcher was an avid golfer, and joined John Brigance and other SWDO golf Team members as often as he could. General Melcher had spent time as a

# Tulsa District:

## Dwight 'Ed' Blankenship

By Shawna Blake, public affairs student intern

### You are new to being a Corps parks volunteer. What led you to decide to volunteer at Short Mountain Cove?

This is my first season volunteering. My family and I were camping here, and the camp host mentioned to us there would be an opening for this volunteer position. I didn't even know there was such a position. We thought about it and prayed about it and decided it would be an excellent opportunity to be able to camp and work for our stay. We love it! It is a great opportunity to be together as a family. It is so easy to get so wrapped up, so busy with day-to-day life and not spend enough time together.

### What does that everyday life involve for you?

I graduated from Northeastern State University with a Masters in Education Administration and was an elementary school teacher for 10 years before surrendering to the call to preach. As a minister, it is very easy to answer every call and neglect my own family. I do some jail ministry and other programs, and it's hard to say 'no.' This gives me a great opportunity to get some family time, to step back and re-group. I have four children, ranging in age from our oldest, our son, 26, to our youngest, Lily, 8. With one of my daughters just graduating; it really reminds me how quickly it all goes.

### So how has living in the park volunteering changed things?

This has been a great chance to get a little peace. I enjoy the work I do here. Cleaning up the campsites is never drudgery. Spraying off the picnic tables, cleaning the fire pits, and picking up the trash is almost therapeutic for me. Also, we usually do work as a family. We will take a walk around all together, checking the docks and swimming areas and making sure they look good. It has been a real blessing to me and my family. This is a chance to do something different, while



### Bio Stats

**Position:** Corps Parks Volunteer  
**Park:** Short Mountain Cove, Robert S. Kerr Lock, Dam and Reservoir on the Arkansas River  
**Years of Service:** First season volunteering  
**Other Jobs:** Pastor and Substitute Teacher

allowing me to be free for the job that I do as a minister.

### Does being a minister influence your work here?

I don't tell people I am a pastor unless they ask. I just want them to think of me as a good neighbor. There is a simple bible verse, about loving thy neighbor as yourself, and it seems that when I treat others well, they treat us well back.

I guess that is why I get so many fish given to me.

### People just give you fish? That must be a nice perk.

Yeah, people bring me fish all the time. We freeze them when we get so many. We had a big fish fry over Memorial Day weekend, so now it is time to stock up again. Working out here has shown me there are just so many nice people.

### Do you do any fishing of your own?

I had an old boat given to me by some friends. It had belonged to their parents. It's a 1979 ski boat, Susie, a beauty in her time. The last time it was started was 1985, before I started it this summer. That will be a project of mine for the summer, cleaning it up and getting out on the lake fishing in it.

### It sounds like you've turned it into one. Have there been any challenges your family has faced while living in the park this season?

Being involved in Evangelism, we are used to wandering around and being out of the house. Lily is a real animal lover, certainly a friend of the squirrels. One evening she was playing with a net over by the water and accidentally scooped up a huge gar. She had the most shocked look on her face because it was the first time she'd ever seen one of those.

### What is the best part of your volunteering experience?

I'm a people person, and I just love the interactions with the campers. That is probably my favorite part of this experience. My family and I love this volunteer work; a great opportunity to be able to do something that is kind of our dream. I like to serve people and be a good neighbor. My main passion is fishing for people, but pulling a 15-pound catfish out of the lake is mighty fun!

# Galveston District: *Tricia Campbell*

## What do you do in your current position:

Currently, I am the Operations Manager for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) projects on the Houston Ship Channel, Galveston Harbor Channel, Bayport Ship Channel, Barbours Terminal Channel, and Greens Bayou Channel.

## What project(s)/tasks are you currently working on?

Some of the tasks that I am currently working on include managing the award a maintenance dredging contract for the Houston Ship Channel Greens to Sims reach, developing upcoming contract scopes and schedules for FY13 Houston Ship Channel, Galveston Harbor, and Bayport projects, managing ongoing Houston and Galveston maintenance dredging contracts and executing necessary modifications within available project funds.

## Discuss your role as the Operations Manager.

As the Operations Manager for my projects, I am responsible for coordinating and executing maintenance dredging and construction contracts necessary to maintain waterway dimensions in order to ensure safe navigation. I am responsible for developing project budgets and schedules and for leading a project delivery team in the development of upcoming contracts as well as the resolution of construction issues for ongoing contracts. I also coordinate with the Local Sponsors in order to develop projects which best benefit the waterway users and local industry.

## What do you like about your current job?

I like solving problems and seeing the projects which we have designed come to fruition. Even when things don't happen exactly as we have planned and problems arise, we always find a way to come together, resolve the problem, and get the job done.

## Who's the most interesting person you've worked with during your tenure at the Corps?

## ure at the Corps?

I have learned a lot from many different people in our district, but I would have to say that I consider Al Meyer of the Houston Resident Office to be my mentor. He is extremely knowledgeable about his projects, is dedicated, hard-



**Bio Stats**

**Position:** Operations Manager in Operations Division -Navigation Branch

**Years in current position:** One

**Years with SWG:** Five

**Education:** Bachelors Degree in Civil Engineering from Purdue University. Masters Degree in Civil Engineering from University of Missouri-Rolla

working, and always takes time out of his day to help people. He helped teach me the ropes of how to be a project engineer when I worked in the Houston Resident Office and that knowledge has benefited me greatly as I continue my work in Operations Division.

## What's your most memorable project working with the Corps?

I will never forget the Freeport Hurricane Flood Protection Project for floodwall construction at Port Freeport. I was assigned as the lead project engineer halfway through the project. The project had complex problems arise every day, and the solutions to the problems re-

quired a lot of thought and analysis in a very restricted period of time in order to keep the project moving. Tensions were high between all parties, but we were able to tackle the problems in order to ensure project accomplishment.

## Why did you choose Engineering as your field of choice?

While growing up, I was either building things or taking things apart to see how they worked. When I headed to college, I really didn't even know what "engineering" was, so I started out in a different major. Eventually I realized that I wanted to be an engineer, not only because of my desire to build things and the lure of being involved in some really exciting projects, but also because my efforts could directly benefit peoples lives. It was a lot of hard work, but now I am incredibly thankful that I was blessed with the opportunity to be an engineer—both for the Army and now for USACE—and that everything has worked out the way that it has.

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

Managing the O&M projects on the Federal waterways helps to maintain safe and reliable navigation for waterway users, which is critical in keeping the economy running. Our project delivery teams work together in order to design, construct, and maintain projects that benefit the Nation, and everyone in our district plays a hand in these projects whether directly or indirectly.

# Little Rock District: *James Fisher*



to the Armed Services Board of Contracts Appeals. The Medical Support Branch is the primary contracting agent for the Air Force Medical Servicing Agency, which has an annual budget of about \$6.9 billion and runs 75 military treatment facilities, including 13 hospitals and medical centers and 171 smaller medical units worldwide. We also have construction projects that we are the contracting agent for and manage for the Department of Veterans' Affairs as well as the U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine. All Corps contracting actions valued at \$500,000 or more must be reviewed by an attorney. Therefore, the Medical Support Branch has many solicitations and contracts that I need to scrub before they can be sent out. I see my role as being Smokey Bear rather than a fire fighter; I

tal counsel and freedom of information act officer from 2004 through 2009. I reviewed all environmental assessments, environmental impact statements and all requests for information under FOIA. I also advised the district on the impact of the Privacy Act of 1974 and supervised the paralegal's administration of FOIA program.

**The pictures in your office reveal your love for astronomy, but the most important question is, are you a Star Trek or Star Wars fan?**

I honestly love them both. I grew up watching the original Star Trek series with Captain Kirk, and when I was 18-years-old the first Star Wars movie premiered. I'm a huge fan of both. My interest in the final frontier began in 1971 when I was trying to earn my Astronomy Merit Badge for the Boy Scouts. Later that year my parents gave me my first telescope as a birthday present. I loved looking at the stars as a child, but I didn't have time to explore space much in college and law school, however, I never lost interest. I really got back into astronomy in a big way in 1997 when comet Hale Bopp became visible.

**For an astronomer, how cool was it to see Venus transit in front of the sun?**

Oh man it was cool. It's in my top five most impressive things I've done as an amateur astronomer. My friend Bill Sanders (a civil engineer in Hydraulics and Technical Services Branch) and I, along with other members of the Central Arkansas Astronomical Society, set our telescopes up at Pinnacle Mountain State Park for a public watch party during the transit of Venus. Bill and I are both active members in CAAS, which is a nonprofit organization that regularly promotes astronomy in the community, usually at star parties on Pinnacle Mountain and at Woolly Hollow State Park. Bill and I have a deep passion for astronomy, and we are happy to share it with the public.

**Attorneys typically work in Office of Counsel. Why don't you?**

I report to District Counsel R.E. Rogers but I sit alongside my clients in the Program and Project Management Division's Medical Support Branch and the Contracting Office personnel who assist medical support. The Medical Support Branch has such a heavy contracting footprint that when the branch was formed in 2009, district leadership determined that a full time attorney was needed to review the various contracting actions to help keep the program on a fast track and also to keep the program out of the courtroom.

**Do you go to court and yell "I object, your Honor!"?**

No, I have never objected in court. In fact I rarely go to court. I see the goal of my job as keeping district leadership and the contracting officer out of court. I assist Contracting Officer A.J. Brown in responding to contractor claims, preparing responses to bid protest, and appeals

**Bio Stats**

**Official Position:** Assistant District Counsel

**Unofficial Position:** Counsel to Medical Support Branch

**Years with SWL:** Eight

**Hometown:** Crossett, AR

**Education:** Law degree from the University of Arkansas

**Hobbies:** Amateur astronomy and retired racing greyhound adoption

look for small fires and put them out before they become raging forest fires.

**What did you do before you worked for the Medical Support Branch?**

I served as the district's environmen-

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# USACE Galveston District's beneficial use site provides shelter for weary fliers

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Left: Birding enthusiasts gather at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District's Corps Woods during FeatherFest, an annual Galveston birding event in April that attracts thousands of birders from around the nation. Center: A sign recognizing Corps Woods as "the great Texas coastal birding trail" by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department solidifies the park as an important birding site in the state. Right: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District's Commanding Officer Col. Christopher Sallesse welcome participants to the Corps Woods, part of a beneficial use site, during the 10th Annual FeatherFest event (Photos by USACE Galveston District PAO)

By Galveston District Public Affairs

Every April, the sky above the Gulf Coast becomes alive as millions of birds wintering in Latin America take a temporary respite before resuming their long journeys home. Depending on the weather, the 18-hour flight can be arduous and many of the birds need time to recuperate before continuing to their breeding grounds further north, which makes the Corps Woods on Galveston Island, situated along a major migratory route, an ideal rest stop after crossing the Gulf of Mexico.

The heavily wooded strip of land located on the island's East End is part of the USACE Galveston's beneficial use site that was developed using dredged material extracted from the Houston Ship Channel and quickly became a pristine habitat for wildlife and a favorite destination for migratory birds.

Each year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District dredges approximately 30 to 40 million cubic yards of material from Texas channels to fulfill its mission of keeping waterways open for navigation and commerce. The material collected is often used for ecosystem restoration projects.

According to Mort Voller, bird enthusiast and an organizer of FeatherFest, an annual Galveston birding event in April that attracts thousands of birders from around the nation, wildlife gathers in the Corps Woods because it provides relatively safe cover to rest, feed and drink.

"From the air, after a very long and tiring Gulf flight, the Corps Woods is an inviting place to land," said Voller. "There is plenty of dense vegetation, fruiting trees,

grasses and seeds and fresh water. The Corps Woods is special because it is a little oasis before the birds continue their long journeys."

Once the Corps Woods was identified as a prime habitat for wildlife to flourish, USACE Galveston District's Chief of Regulatory Fred Anthamatten partnered with the City of Galveston, Galveston Parks Board, Galveston Chapter of the Houston Audubon Society, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and TxDOT to protect and preserve the property.

According to Ted Eubanks, co-creator of the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, the Corps Woods preservation efforts have paid off and continue to provide birders with exceptional opportunities to sight many species in one visit.

"There are a number of red mulberry trees along the trail, and when fruiting there is no better place to see migrants in all of their glory, said Eubanks. "There are times when hundreds of tanagers, orioles and buntings can be seen crowded into these trees."

Recognized by TPWD as an important birding site in the state and listed on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail's list of places to bird watch, this beneficial use site serves as a model for employing environmental and economical responsible ways to use dredged materials to benefit local communities and improve eroded coastlines through marsh restoration.

For more information on Corps Woods, visit <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wildlife/wildlife-trails/coastal/upper/galveston-loop-1>. For additional information concerning beneficial use sites, contact USACE Galveston District Operations Manager Alicia Rea at (409) 766-3995.

# A bird helping birds: Corps uses helicopter to prepare habitat for endangered birds



A helicopter sprays an EPA-approved herbicide over an Interior Least Tern island along the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System in Oklahoma. This was the first time a helicopter was used. In the past, the Tulsa District sprayed by boat, which was more time consuming, costly and less effective. (Photo by Nathan Herring, Tulsa District Public Affairs)

By Nate Herring, Tulsa District

It is quite common to hear the chirp of birds along the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. Recently, however, another type of bird, a helicopter, could be heard whirring over the MKARNNS.

For the first time, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District used a helicopter to spray herbicide on four Interior Least Tern islands along the navigation system.

The Interior Least tern is an endangered migratory bird that comes from Central and northern South America to use barren or sparsely vegetated sandbars along the Arkansas River, among other river systems, as nesting grounds during the summer months.

Since most of the sandbars along the MKARNNS are lush with vegetation, they must be sprayed with herbicide to make them suitable habitat. In the past, the Corps has sprayed by boat and this process could be very time consuming and expensive. Using a helicopter was a significant savings of both time and money.

"Spraying by helicopter gave us a 45 percent cost savings in labor and material," said Stacy Dunkin, biologist with the Tulsa District. "We also were able to do in one day what normally takes us at least three weeks."

Compared to spraying by boat applying the herbicide by air

was also much more effective and required less herbicide to be used.

"The efficiency at which the helicopter applies the herbicide allows us to cover more area and use two thirds less than we would by boat," he said.

The Corps used a special type of herbicide called Imazapyr Salt that is approved by the EPA to be used in and around water, Dunkin said.

Though the actual application of the herbicide by helicopter only took a few hours, the planning and logistics took several weeks.

The contractor, AirPro, Inc. of Sallisaw, Okla., made arrangements for landing zones near each island, which included getting permission to access private property. The Corps of Engineers traffic control and security during times the helicopter needed to refuel and reload the herbicide.

One of the greatest logistical challenges was coordinating safety. In addition to having a Tulsa District boat and personnel onsite in the event of an emergency, the contractor arranged to have the Sequoyah County Sheriff's Office and a swift water rescue team on standby.

"Safety was a huge aspect of this project," Dunkin said. "A lot of careful thought and preparation went into making sure that contingencies were in place in case of an accident. We wanted to make sure that we were prepared."

the herbicide to take full effect, but Dunkin is hopeful that it will provide excellent results and he plans to continue using herbicide and helicopters in the future.

"My goal is to keep the islands clear of vegetation, but I know from previous experience the vegetation will be back next year," he said. "We have considered other options, but using herbicide by helicopter is the most effective method for long term control of vegetation and it's also the most efficient and cost effective method."

Three of the four islands sprayed were built by the Corps of Engineers using dredge material and the fourth was an existing sandbar that was enhanced by the Corps to make it a more suitable habitat for the birds. The Corps is involved in creating the habitat because dams, reservoirs and other changes to river systems in Oklahoma have eliminated most historic habitat in for this endangered bird.

"Maintenance and creation of nesting habitat for the Interior Least Terns is mitigation for the operations of our flood risk management projects," Dunkin said. "Through consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, we are required to maintain the nesting habitats for the birds."

The Corps works diligently to maintain these islands, so the use of a helicopter by the Corps seems only fitting—a bird helping birds.

# PACESETTER POINTS

## *Congratulations*

**Little Rock's Public Affairs Office** took the top spot in the USACE Locke L. Mouton Award for Excellence in the Community Relations category. The award is for communications planning the team did on the Recreation Adjustment Plan that addressed tight budget changes in the districts' park operations.

**The Greers Ferry Lake Park Ranger Team** won the 2012 Central Arkansas Federal Executive Association Federal Team of the Year Award. Rangers Joe Harper and David Moore attended a luncheon May 23 to accept the award on behalf of the team. The rest of the team was recognized at Greers Ferry's June 6 Engineer Day.

Congratulations to Little Rock District's **Bobby Van Cleave** on his promotion to geotechnical lead engineer in the Dam Safety Production Center.

Congratulations to Little Rock's **Ben Bradshaw** on his selection as Medical Support Branch's new Air Force initial outfitting project manager.

Congratulations to Little Rock's **Cynthia "Cindy" Herren** on her selection as budget analyst at the Greers Ferry Project Office.

Congratulations to Little Rock District's Civilian of the Year, **Donna Wilkerson** and Engineer of the Year, **Bobby Van Cleave**.

Congratulations to the following Fort Worth District team members who received their Professional Engineer credentials: **Lee Epperson, Daniel W. Berndt, James Harton, Robert Bruce McMillian, Don Wilson, and Edwin Zook**.

Congratulations to Tulsa District employees honored at the annual Corps Day Awards Ceremony in June: **Robert Goranson**, Commander's Award; **Nate Herring**, third place in the Outstanding Initiatives in New Media category of the Herbert A. Kassner Public Affairs Competition; **Lloyd Lewis** and **Eugene Goff**, Safety Accomplishment Awards; **the Canton Dam Safety Assurance Team**, Project Delivery Team of the Year; **Dr. Tony Clyde**, Customer Care Employee of the Year; **Christopher Strunk**, Outstanding Community Service; **Joe Repschlaeger**, Trades and Crafts Employee of the Year; **Courtney Perry**, Technical and Administrative Employee of the Year GS-8 and Below; and **Lee Perry**, Technical and Administrative Employee of the Year GS-9 and Above. **Louis Vogele** was presented Tulsa District's own Lt. Col. Mark Fritz Leadership Award; **Cynthia Buchanan** was named Ranger of the Year; **Michael Nance** the Employee of the Year; and **Daniel Morales**, Engineer of the Year.

Congratulations to Tulsa District retirees honored for their meritorious careers with induction into Tulsa District's Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees. **Ruth Norris**, former executive assistant to the Tulsa District commander, and **Robert Ramsey**, former Geotechnical Branch chief and a pioneer in the district's dam building years.

Congratulations to Galveston District's **Mathilda Montgomery** for earning her Bachelor of Science in Social Work from Excelsior College.

Congratulations to Galveston District's **Dr. Rose Caballero** for earning the 2012 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Roy Wilkins Renown Service Award.

Congratulations to Galveston District's **Isidro Reyna**, APR, and **Sandra Arnold**, APR+M, for being recognized as the Public Relations Society of America Houston Chapter's 2012 Government Communications Team of the Year

Congratulations to the following Galveston District employees for passing the Professional Engineering Exam: **Jesse Boyer, Pablo Hernandez, Rashid Sheikh-Ali and Andrew Smith**.

Congratulations to the following Galveston District Employees honored for Supervisor of the Year, Employee of the Year and Engineer of the Year respectively: **Sandra Arnold, William "Bill" Krampe, Mark "Steve" Peterson**.

**Galveston District** launched its new website ([www.swg.usace.army.mil](http://www.swg.usace.army.mil)) offering visitors quick and easy access to essential information about the district's missions.

## *Arrivals*

Galveston District welcomed its new deputy commander **Maj. Marty Maldonado** May 21. Outgoing deputy Lt. Col. James Schultze was selected to command the 15th Engineer Battalion based in Schweinfurt, Germany

SWDO welcomes the following employees: **Christopher Rooney** joined ACE-IT, **Kimberly Sandifer** joined the SWD office as an Internal Review Specialist, **Gerald Regalia** joined the SWD PDR staff as an Appraiser in Real Estate, **Pat Riley-Ramsey** joined the SWD PDR staff as a Realty Specialist, **Noel Clay** joined the SWD PDP staff as Chief, Planning Division, **Miles Waldron** joined the SWD PDO staff as an Electrical Engineer, Hydropower PM. **Lynn Ray** joined the SWD PDM staff as a MILCON PM, **Ronald (Gene) Embry** joined the SWD RMR staff as a Budget Officer. **Col. Richard J. Muraski Jr.** joined the SWD staff as the Deputy Commander

## *Departures*

Galveston District would like to bid farewell to **Lt. Col. James Schultze, Lee Coe, John Eugino, Linda Fredendall, Jon Plymale, and Carlos Tate**.

SWDO would like to bid farewell to the following individuals: **Maureen Weller** retired with 37 years of USACE service, 28 of those years she has been affiliated with SWD. **Elizabeth Beat** retired with 43 years of federal service, 33 of those years with SWDO; **Katie Embry** says farewell to SWD for US Army Material Command in Huntsville, AL; **Nicholas Bordemay** says farewell to SWD for the Corps of Engineers, Europe District.

# Photo



# Review



Mr. Michael Fallon, previously the Director of Programs for the Southwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, receives an encased Senior Executive Service flag from SWD Commander Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Kula during an awards ceremony June 28. Fallon, who retired after 37 years of service to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, also received the Exceptional Civilian Service Award, the highest award presented to a civilian employee by the U.S. Army. (Photo by SWD)



Colonel Charles Klinge, left receives the colors from Brig. Gen. Thomas Kula officially assuming command of the Fort Worth District from Colonel Richard J. Muraski, Jr., at the Downtown Fort Worth Hilton. Approximately 400 Corps employees, key stakeholders, congressional staffers, city officials and family friends attended the ceremony. (Photo by Edward Rivera, Fort Worth District Public Affairs)



The Army Corps of Engineers' Little Rock District held a ribbon cutting ceremony April 27 for the new Dewey Short Visitor Center at Table Rock Lake near Branson. The \$10.8 million, 15,000 square foot center, which is situated near the dam and the Corps' project office, is one of a handful of regional Class A facilities in the Corps nationwide. (Photo by Little Rock District Public Affairs)



Woodway Department of Public Safety rescue divers Captain Barney Witt and Sgt. William Hitch simulate finding a 15-year old drowning victim, Graham Gonzalez. Volunteers from Waco Fire and Rescue and Police departments. The real-time recovery operation was conducted in full view of about 120 students from the Bosqueville Independent School District. The program was embraced by the schools, City of Waco, Bosqueville county and civic and private organizations. (Photo by Edward Rivera, Fort Worth Public Affairs)