

# ENGINEER UPDATE

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## Ordnance disposal mission ends



Photo courtesy of Huntsville Center

**Huntsville Center personnel stack old munitions for the final burn before demobilization.**

**By Debra Valine**  
*Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville*

At one time, it would have been easy to call Iraq the most dangerous place on Earth. Years of war and slipshod munitions accountability during the Saddam Hussein regime had turned the country into a thicket of unexploded ordnance.

But that danger has ended, thanks to an ordnance disposal program that has now itself ended. Nearly nine years after the U.S. Army requested ordnance support, the Ordnance and Explosives Directorate in the Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville ended its munitions disposal mission in Iraq.

The coalition munitions disposal (CMD) mission was completed Nov. 12, at the direction of the Army. CMD stood up Nov. 21, 2008, replacing the coalition munitions clearance (CMC) mission that had mobile teams conducting ordnance clearance and disposal missions all over Iraq.

"The CMD mission was a static operation, in that all munitions were delivered to a centralized disposal point at forward operating base (FOB) Hammer where the actual disposal occurred," said Bill Sargent, chief of the International Operations Division. "Complete demobilization from the site was completed Nov. 12, however, the last demolition shot was executed Oct. 24."

A "shot" is a controlled demolition where explosives are rigged to destroy a

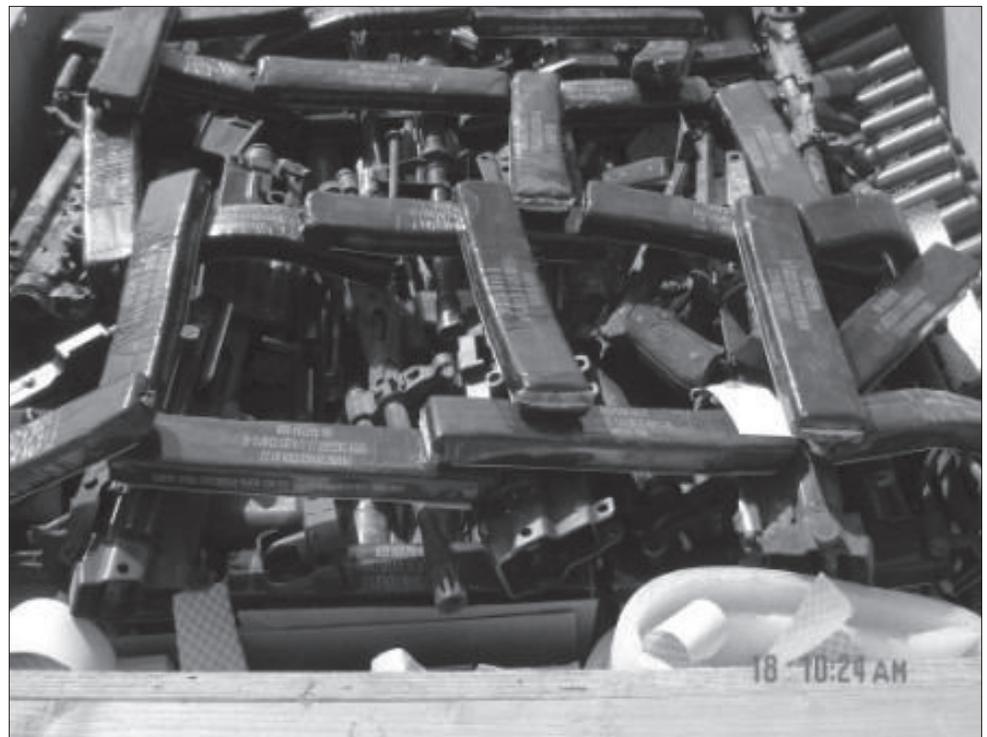


Photo courtesy of Huntsville Center

**These old Iraq handguns are rigged for destruction.**

parcel of unexploded ordnance.

Preliminary numbers show that 3,731 tons of unserviceable ammunition, 479 tons of enemy remnants of war and 214 tons of munitions belonging to the United Kingdom were destroyed, totaling more than 4,400 tons combined.

Also destroyed in the demolition shots were weapons, other sensitive items, expired drugs, etc. Munitions disposed of included artillery projectiles, land mines, grenades, rockets, small arms ammunition, some aerial bombs, detonation cord, etc.

"The majority of the munitions and other items disposed of were sent to us by the U.S. Army," Sargent said. "We also destroyed some explosive items for the U.S. Air Force. When the British Army pulled out of Iraq, their excess ammunition also was sent to FOB Hammer where it was destroyed."

The munitions disposal mission started in July 2003 as the captured enemy ammunition (CEA) disposal program. The focus of the CEA mission was securing six major captured Iraqi ammunition depots

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*Insights*

# How to keep New Year's resolutions

By Col. Brent Causey  
Chaplain, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

I can hear some of you saying, "Oh, no! Not *another* article about resolutions and how quickly they get broken from year to year."

It is true that most resolutions don't last through January. During the past 10 years, the average success rate in keeping New Year's resolutions is about 12 percent. Of the 78 percent who failed, many had focused on a negative goal. They had suppressed their cravings, fantasized about being successful, and adopted a role model or relied on willpower alone.

Richard Wiseman, a psychologist at the University of Hertfordshire says part of the New Year ritual is an annual attempt to start afresh and turn over a new leaf. But making resolutions is a near pointless exercise. "We break them, become dispirited in the process and finally more despondent than we were before."

But before we just give up, I want to encourage your endeavors to self improvement. There are religious parallels to this secular tradition. During Judaism's New Year, Rosh Hashanah, through the High Holy Days and culminating in Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), one is to reflect upon their wrongdoings during the year and both seek and offer forgiveness.

People may act similarly during the Christian fasting period of Lent, though the motive behind this holiday is more of sacrifice than responsibility. The concept, regardless of creed, is to reflect upon self-improvement annually.

So how do we go about making progress? There are many formulas and suggestions out there. Most focus on having a plan and sticking to it. However, I have found that if I am trying to break a bad habit or change a personal characteristic, just having a plan usually leads to eventual failure. Even if it is a spiritual fitness resolution that I am planning on "doing for God," my failure rate emulates that of most people with their New Year's resolutions. The problem I run into is "doing" for God, instead of tapping into His plan for me and joining in with Him.

So what *are* some of the guidelines for success?

**Accountability partners** -- If you want to start something, change something or continue to progress in something you are already doing, having someone there to encourage you, support you and sometimes even challenge you goes a long way to succeeding. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 says, "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!"

**Positive action** -- Stop focusing on the negative of the self improvement. You can't change anything by quitting one action without replacing it with something else, something useful. Ephesians 4:28 says, "Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need."

**Prayer** -- Include God in your actions with prayer, petition and thanksgiving. It is a scientific fact that faith enables positive outcomes and change in people's lives,

health, actions and successes. Philippians 4: 6-7 says, "Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in every situation, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, tell your requests to God. And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

**Positive attitude** -- In all of our self improvements, you have to know that you will have failures. The difference of total failure is dwelling on that failure. You must simply accept that you failed, and then let your mind dwell on your successes. Philippians 4:8 says, "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of respect, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if something is excellent or praiseworthy, think about these things."

Now you are probably saying, "Isn't that a plan?" In some ways, yes, but it is also not trying to do it on your own. This is allowing God to move you to success in changing your life, your actions and making these actions successful.

So this year, as you make that resolution to exercise more, eat less, become more disciplined, be more patient, be less argumentative, or whatever it is, embrace the power that will allow you to become successful. Prayer, attitude, actions and accountability are the keys to personal improvements in your life by tapping into the main source to assist you in making it happen.

*(The opinions in this article are those of the writer and do not reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.)*

## Ordnance disposal

Continued from page 1

and disposing of ammunition not retained for the future Iraqi Army. The CEA mission evolved into both CMC and the depot operations program in February 2006.

CMC was tasked with the subsurface clearance of previously destroyed ammunition sites in Iraq, with a focus on denying improvised explosive device (IED) capable materiel to a rising insurgency.

The depot operations program was tasked with initially standing up and operating two ammunition depots for the newly-formed Iraqi Army. One depot was later closed by the Iraqi Army, and the other became Baiji National Depot.

Under the coalition munitions clearance mission, mobile contractor teams moved from site to site, clearing collapsed bunkers and uncovering buried munitions. When the ammunition sites that were a concern under CMC had been cleared and the depot turned over to the Iraqi Army for their own control and operation, the mission

changed from a mobile operation to the CMD effort with a centralized collection point for unserviceable U.S. munitions disposal.

During the five years of the CMC program, more than 346,000 tons of explosive remnants of war were destroyed at 51 clearance sites, denying the enemy these hazardous materials for IED that would have caused untold loss of life and property, said Col. Rock Donahue, former director, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Engineers (C7), at the change of mission ceremony.

At the height of the program, 18 mobile teams were operating in Iraq to support the CMC mission, and local national labor and subcontractors were hired at each of the 51 clearance sites.

"The toll on these honorable men and women performing this inherently dangerous mission was high," Donahue said. "Forty-three contractor personnel and an untold number of local nationals lost their lives denying the enemy ammunition, ordnance and cache sites."



Photo courtesy of Huntsville Center

Old land mines were among the munitions collected for destruction.

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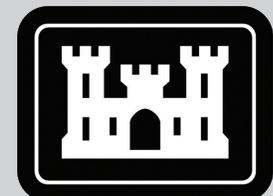
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# Even droughts have silver linings

By Sara Goodeyon  
Tulsa District

Water levels at Tulsa District lakes were the lowest in years as the result of an extreme drought. The drought had many negative impacts on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and local communities, but USACE took advantage of the low water to perform routine necessary maintenance on facilities that are usually underwater.

The drought throughout the district reduced water levels at most lakes by several feet, exposing silt, debris, trash, even an ancient skull, and lake managers used the opportunity to get maintenance done more easily and less expensively.

"This window is being taken advantage of to enhance work that we do routinely, and it has given us a better angle to do a better job with those routine maintenance jobs," said Eugene Goff, operations project manager, Kansas Area.

"We did a ton of cleanup at lakes in our area," said Mark Ellison, operations project manager, Red River Area. "We spent many weeks cleaning the shoreline of our lakes with volunteers picking up old tires and other trash and debris."

One of the more unusual items discovered was a bison skull found about a quarter mile below Denison Dam on the Red River. The age of the relic is unknown, but Ellison said it has been a long time since bison roamed that area. It is now on display in the Texoma Lake Office.

"We are responsible as stewards of public lands," Goff said of the cleanup. "It makes it cleaner and safer from a personal safety standpoint, but also from an environmental perspective."

Water is well below the end of boat ramps at Red River Area lakes, allowing dredging out to the ends of the ramps to remove silt and debris, which improves accessibility.

A persistent issue at USACE lakes is erosion encroaching on public use areas, which are situated as closely as possible to the water. Over time the banks erode and close in on the recreational vehicle campsites.

"Low water levels let crews get the proper equipment into the area to do erosion control and stabilize the banks

## Letter to the Editor Arctic task force

In your July 2011 edition, there was an article about the Cold Regions Research Engineering Laboratory that captured my interest.

In early 1956, I was assigned as a unit commander in the First Engineer Arctic Task Force under the overall command of a Col. Clark. My unit was assigned to build an electronic highway more than 100 miles on the Greenland ice cap from the base camp, Camp Tuto, to Camp Century. My camp on the Greenland ice cap was Camp Whitehorse. I have enclosed photos of wire-laying operations for the electronic highway.

In the summer of 1956, the Air Force crash-landed a C-47 Skytrain on the ice cap, and my unit was assigned to retrieve it and return it to Thule Air Force Base. I have also enclosed photos of that retrieval operation.

Thanks for the memories.

**Sonny Caputo**  
Springfield, Va.



Photo courtesy of Tulsa District

**A 100-year-old bison skull, discovered near Lake Texoma, was among the things revealed when the 2011 drought dramatically lowered water levels throughout Tulsa District. The skull is on display at the Texoma Lake Office.**

in the public use areas," Ellison said. "During high water you get a lot of erosion. We had a chance to get in at Waurika Lake and stabilize those banks, and that means there will be less maintenance on those RV sites at Kiowa Park and Chisholm Trail Park because we provided that safe zone. We've got riprap and Gabion baskets (cages filled with riprap, sand or soil) in there. It's one technique we use on those eroded banks."

Courtesy docks usually floating in the water are sitting high and dry with grass growing around them, making it easy to replace flotation bumpers and decking.

"You can do it in the water, but it's a lot more labor intensive," Ellison said. "It saves us money and time when we can do it at the lower levels."

While most of the work was regular maintenance, some work could not have been done unless the water was low.

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS) did a lot of work that they wouldn't have been able to do," Goff said. "They've done a lot of work on the marshes. It was done without high cost because they didn't have to work in wet conditions. It will carry years and years down the road. There will be monumental benefits as we receive moisture."

The USF&WS rehabilitated some dikes at John Red-



Photo courtesy of Tulsa District

**Tulsa District personnel placed a long strip of riprap near the South Loop of Kiowa Park 1 at Waurika Lake, Okla., as part of erosion control work done while the water was low because of drought. The riprap will prevent the loss of the road and several campsites, and will prevent utility lines from being exposed.**

mond Reservoir and replaced outfall structures, which holds water in the marsh. Eroded areas in the marsh that allowed leaking were repaired to help the marsh function as intended and work at full capacity.

"Fish and Wildlife couldn't control the water; now they've got better management of the marsh," Goff said. "Sometimes they draw the water down to let vegetation grow, and other times they store water to get it into the vegetation for the wildlife."

Other work at USACE lakes with low water levels included extending boat ramps, planting winter wheat for soil stabilization, placing fish structures and habitat, removing beaver dams and lodges, and re-working the sand on some swim beaches.

Recent rains have raised water levels at some lakes, even helping some move from drought stage to flood pool, and the window of opportunity for low-water work is closing. As bad as the drought has been, for USACE lakes it wasn't all bad.

"We would not pray for it again," Ellison said. "But we did take advantage of what the weather dealt us and we made the best of it."



Photo by Pfc. Gerald Carroll, 2d Signal Platoon (Photographic)

**The sign on the aircraft reads "Delivered Through the Courtesy of the First Engineer Arctic Task Force." The task force retrieved the C-47 Skytrain after it crash-landed on the Greenland Ice Cap. The Soldiers are (l-r) Pvt. Charles Castelli, Pfc. William Jones, and PV2 John Meana.**



Photo by Pfc. Gerald Carroll, 2d Signal Platoon (Photographic)

**The First Engineer Arctic Task Force used M-29 Weasels to lay wire for the electronic highway.**

# Disaster housing mission ends quietly

By Stacy Ouellette  
Baltimore District

Disasters make headlines when they happen, but the end of a disaster is much quieter.

Tropical Storm Lee made headlines when it hit the Gulf Coast Sept. 4. During the next week, the storm's large size and slow movement dumped heavy rain across much of the nation causing an estimated \$1 billion in damage.

By Sept. 8 the tropical storm brought heavy flooding in the Susquehanna River Valley, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assigned a temporary housing mission to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The housing planning and response team (PRT) from Huntsville Center took the mission to support residents rendered homeless by the Susquehanna River flood.

The mission began during the hectic days of early September and ended quietly Nov. 30.

"Our mission was to provide temporary housing units at two sites, Stony Brook and Country Terrace both in the Bloomsburg, Pa., area," said Rex McLaury, project resident engineer. "Both sites required our expertise in creating the infrastructure to support the mobile housing units provided by FEMA. Basically, we ensured the water, electrical and sewage lines were installed, while FEMA was responsible for the units and resident placement."

McLaury had six members on hand to support the mission, all project managers from Huntsville Center. There were two quality assurance specialists at each site and each team member brought an individual expertise.

This particular mission had special meaning to PRT member Sheron Belcher. Her in-laws' house was a total



Contractors prepare sites (left) at the Country Terrace site. (Right) Randy Hilton, quality assurance specialist (left), and a contractor discuss the placement of a temporary housing unit on a USACE-contracted pad at Country Terrace.



Photos by Stacy Ouellette, Baltimore District

loss due to the flooding. Although they did not inhabit one of the mobile housing units, Belcher said she was proud to help their neighbors and other residents needing a place to call home.

Raul Alonso, electrical engineer and quality assurance inspector, is also no stranger to the personal effect of disasters. In 1992, USACE removed debris from Alonso's property in Miami after Hurricane Andrew. He was part of the recovery missions for Hurricane Katrina and supported Alabama after deadly tornados hit last year.

"Deploying is part of being a civil servant," Alonso said. "In the office we help the warfighter, and out here we help people. I get to pay back what the Corps did for me and my family years ago. It is fulfilling and a humbling experi-

ence to help others."

Current residents were supportive and understanding of minor disruptions due to construction. McLaury said the collaboration between the PRT, contractors, community and local townships helped the project move smoothly.

When FEMA finishes installing the mobile homes, 40 families will reside at the 20 units at Country Terrace and 21 units at Stony Brook. In addition, the contractor was a local hire with employees also affected by the flooding.

"All involved truly had a stake in making the projects a success for the families in need of this housing," McLaury said. "I know personally that our team was here to make a positive difference and gain new experience, which has been great for all."

## USACE signs agreement with Brazilian agency

By Jorge Alcalá  
Headquarters

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a global agency with a global mission, so it is not unusual for USACE to form partnerships with other countries. The latest is with Brazil.

On Dec. 14, Maj. Gen. Todd Semonite, commander of South Atlantic Division, and the Hon. Fernando Bezerra Coelho, Brazil's Minister of National Integration, signed an agreement between USACE and the Brazilian Development Agency for the São Francisco and Parnaíba Valleys (CODEVASF).

The signing ceremony was held in Brasilia, the capital of Brazil. Although the dialogue between USACE and CODEVASF started in late 2008, the groundwork for the signing ceremony was laid in mid-2011.

The agreement was necessary for USACE to provide waterways navigation experts (initially hydraulic and geotechnical engineers) for three years to serve as consultants in reviewing design documents developed by Brazilian firms and/or the Brazilian army. These subject matter experts (SMEs) will provide CODEVASF with technical

expertise on bank stabilization and sediment mitigation projects for the São Francisco River in northeast Brazil.

CODEVASF, an agency under the Ministry of National Integration, is funding USACE technical assistance at about \$1.3 million per year.

This agreement represents Brazil's vote of confidence toward USACE. More important, it represents a leap forward in addressing issues that Brazil may face with its national waterways. USACE SMEs will work shoulder to shoulder with CODEVASF team members, and they in turn will benefit from experience gained by studying waterway issues that are of national significance to Brazil.

In addition, it will send a signal that investing in natural water resources such as the São Francisco could translate into further economic prosperity in Brazil and neighboring Latin American countries. The U.S. Department of State views Brazil as a strategic partner in maintaining stability in the region.

Now that the agreement is signed, the next step is for USACE to staff the office that will be established within CODEVASF in Brasilia.

(Marcelo Salles of U.S. Southern Command also contributed to this article.)



Photo by Jorge Alcalá, Headquarters

Maj. Gen. Todd Semonite, commander of South Atlantic Division, signs the agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Brazil Development Agency for the Sao Francisco and Parnaiba Valleys. Liney Soares, chief of Ceremonies for the Ministry of Integration, stands beside him. USACE will provide waterway navigation experts for three years to consult with Brazilian firms.

# Irene power response a success

By Chris Gardner  
New York District

In late August, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers emergency response personnel deployed to various states in the eastern U.S. to help with response and recovery efforts after Hurricane Irene left a path of destruction from North Carolina to Vermont.

Because one of the biggest response challenges in the aftermath of Irene was widespread power loss, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assigned USACE the mission to deploy experienced teams and resources to provide temporary emergency power to critical facilities like water treatment plants, hospitals, police stations, fire stations and shelters.

This was the first time that USACE has deployed multiple power teams and their resources to multiple states simultaneously, and the response was rated a success.

“With the temporary power mission, what is most important for success is deploying rapidly to make a difference for the local community affected most by the disaster,” said Karen Durham-Aguilera, director of Contingency Operations and Homeland Security. “If we can quickly install a generator to get a water treatment plant up and running again, we’re going to make huge impact on that community. Or if we can replace a faulty generator at a hospital with one that works, we’ll not only prevent relocating patients, we may also save lives.”

State emergency management officials often call upon FEMA and USACE to provide teams, equipment and other resources to augment emergency temporary power when local resources are exceeded following a disaster.

The mission is generally managed by specially trained



Photo by Sarah Rivette, Philadelphia District

**Kathleen “Micky” Mulvenna, chief of Emergency Management in Philadelphia District, briefs the district power team before they depart for Hurricane Irene.**

temporary power planning and response teams (PRT) that oversee the overall mission and contracts and relations with local partners, which is crucial in any emergency response situation.

The PRT works closely with the Soldiers of the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power). The prime power Soldiers primarily make initial facility assessments to determine the generator and supply requirements. The generators are usually supplied by FEMA. The actual installation of a generator is often handled by contractors managed by the PRT. However, the 249th Soldiers can also install generators if the situation requires.

After Hurricane Irene passed through, USACE deployed emergency power teams and Soldiers to various states from North Carolina to Vermont where they worked closely with local emergency management officials. Prime power Soldiers deployed to five different states at once, and three of the Corps’ seven temporary power PRTs activated and

deployed to the East Coast, ready to act quickly to needs following Irene’s landfall. The teams were from Philadelphia District, Memphis District and Walla Walla District.

Although the emergency did not require installing as many temporary generators as a larger event, it did prove that training exercises and real-world experience prepared the temporary emergency power personnel to quickly respond in several states simultaneously.

“Fortunately, Hurricane Irene did not make landfall as a major hurricane, and local power crews were able to rapidly restore power to many of the impacted customers,” said Spencer Schargorodski, emergency management specialist. “Relatively few generators were required for critical facilities during this disaster, but this response demonstrated that USACE and FEMA can rapidly deploy multiple temporary power teams, generators and other resources to provide life-saving and life-sustaining support to multiple states that could potentially be impacted by a major disaster in the future.”

FEMA and USACE officials say they were pleased with the smooth, multi-state deployment of temporary assets to the eastern U.S. from across the country during Irene response operations, and what it will mean when the mission is activated on a large scale in the future.

“Hurricane Irene demonstrated the FEMA/USACE commitment to anticipate requirements and rapidly deploy generators and temporary power teams even before landfall,” said Eric Smith, assistant administrator of FEMA’s Logistics Management Directorate. “This was possible because of the coordinated efforts of professionals from both the Corps and FEMA that not only know their jobs, but who are also energized by the opportunity to make a big difference for people who need disaster relief.”

## Kandahar U. gets engineering textbooks

By Mark Ray  
Afghanistan Engineer District-South

The Soviet occupation damaged Afghanistan’s universities, and the reign of the Taliban nearly destroyed them. On Sept. 22, the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team helped Afghanistan Engineer District-South (AED-South) repair some of that damage by delivering \$120,000 worth of engineering textbooks to Kandahar University.

The Commander’s Emergency Response Program (CERP), which allows military commanders to meet urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements in their areas of responsibility, funded the purchase of the books, said Elliot Porter, a program manager with the district’s Water and Infrastructure Branch. Porter, who deployed to Afghanistan from Pittsburgh District, is responsible for coordinating CERP and renewable energy initiatives in AED-South.

The books were the first of a series of efforts that will increase the capability of Kandahar University to provide quality engineering instruction to Afghans. In the next year, the university will also receive:

- Equipment to help demonstrate key engineering concepts, such erosion and fluid dynamics;
- A concrete testing laboratory;
- Office and classroom equipment.



Photo courtesy of Afghanistan Engineer District-South

**Kandahar University students and U.S. Soldiers unload engineering textbooks.**

The program to increase the capacity of the engineering department started with a visit to the university by former district commander, Col. Anthony Funkhouser, in March 2010. Funkhouser wanted to discuss the pos-

sibility of establishing a program to hire locally-educated Afghan engineers. The district’s Herat Area Office had already had significant success with a similar program with Herat University. In the course of the discussions, it became clear that the university had serious shortfalls in textbooks and equipment needed to educate its engineering students.

“Col. Funkhouser asked the university authorities for a list of requirements,” Porter said. “Once we had the list, we reviewed it to see what we could do within the district’s CERP authority, and began to develop a program to meet the most pressing needs.”

“The faculty and students of the engineering department are excited by the prospect of having up-to-date textbooks and demonstration equipment,” said a representative from the Kandahar University Authority. “These materials will help increase the capacity of our professors to teach, and our students to learn.”

“By helping the Afghan universities reestablish their ability to train engineers, we help create the conditions for Afghans to effectively build and maintain their national infrastructure, including the infrastructure that supports the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police,” Porter said. “Building the Afghan national capability to train engineers directly supports Afghanistan government’s and coalition goals, and furthers the establishment of security and stability in this country.”

# Cyberspace comes to the great outdoors

By Roy Stone  
Louisville District

Cyberspace became part of the great outdoors when Buckhorn Lake in Perry County, Ky., became the first U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project in the nation to provide park visitors with Wi-Fi (wireless) connectivity.

On the Cumberland Plateau where Buckhorn Campground is located, cell phone service and Internet access are at a premium. With limited communications resulting from the rugged terrain of the Appalachian Mountains of Eastern Kentucky, it was not surprising that Wi-Fi access in Buckhorn's Tailwater Campground gained immediate popularity when it was installed in June.

The Wi-Fi is a point-of-sale item, meaning it can be purchased at the campground like ice, firewood or renting

horseshoe equipment. It costs only five dollars per week, a friendly price to customers considering the region's rural isolation. The Wi-Fi access is secure and is protected by a pass-code that is changed every week.

Wi-Fi enables devices such as smart phones, personal computers, video games and digital audio players to connect to the Internet when in range of the wireless network. Wi-Fi has a greater range outdoors and multiple overlapping access points can cover large areas.

By accessing existing DSL services in the area, the addition of Wi-Fi at Buckhorn Campground was relatively painless and cost-effective. With the total price of hardware less than \$200, plus minor monthly service fees, Buckhorn Lake provides park patrons and guests with valuable resources, peace of mind and an open link to the outside world, while simultaneously enjoying nature.

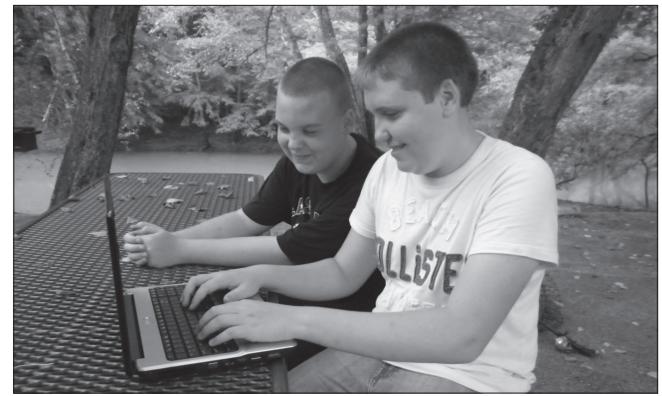


Photo by Priscilla Southwood, Buckhorn Lake

**Derek Spicer (right) and Nicholas Sampsell enjoy surfing the Internet at Buckhorn Campground. Buckhorn Lake in Kentucky is the first USACE project to provide Wi-Fi connectivity.**

## Reserve Affairs

# IMA program sees a lot of changes

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is adapting to changing operational requirements and practices to achieve sustainability in our individual mobilization augmentee (IMA) Program.

The USACE IMA Program has undergone significant change in the past year, including the overall organization and administration. The Reserve Affairs Office was charged to update and improve the USACE IMA Program and develop an updated policy. The primary focus is supporting the divisions and districts responding to all USACE related mission requirements. In meeting this tremendous challenge and all associated demands, the Army Reserve has a major role in serving our nation.

The overall objective for the USACE IMA Program is to provide fully qualified, highly trained and readily available reservists to augment the active Army wartime structure immediately upon presidential call-up or partial mobilization. This program also provides for rapid expansion of those USACE organizations that depend on augmentation by reservists to accomplish mobilization missions.

USACE mobilization manpower requirements exceed peacetime staffing levels and need to be augmented immediately during a national emergency or crisis. These Soldiers are part of the Selected Reserve and are eligible for call to active duty under the presidential call-up. When they are called up, they are assigned to an authorized military position on the USACE mobilization table of distribution and allowance.

Wherever the Army commits forces in the world (Afghanistan, Bosnia, the Philippines, Iraq, Afghanistan) Soldiers in the Army Reserve are an integral part, providing critical support, force protection and augmentation. No longer a "force in reserve," the Army Reserve is a full partner across a broad spectrum of operations from major combat operations to homeland defense, from peacekeeping to humanitarian missions.

The terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001 and the overseas contingency operations that followed intensified the pace of operations for the Army Reserve, reinforcing the need for constant readiness and fast, flexible mobilization.

Never has the Army Reserve been asked to do so much. Numbers tell the story. Reservists have deployed 10 times in the past 12 years for operations from Bosnia to Iraq.

During the previous 75 years, the Army Reserve mobilized just nine times. Since December 1995, we have been in a continuous state of mobilization with an average of nearly 9,300 reservists mobilized each year. The years after 9-11 saw more than 80,000 Army Reserve Soldiers mobilized for overseas contingency operations.

Today's Army Reserve missions around the world are engaged in intelligence gathering, investigation, training, legal support, communications, postal and personnel support, engineering, mortuary services, logistics and transportation operations, medical support and civil affairs. Army reservists are no longer an add-on to military operations. They are increasingly part of a joint team with the active Army in fighting and winning the nation's wars.

With that in mind, the Army Reserve is implementing a transformation plan to create a better balance between answering the call to duty and taking care of reservists and their families. It is also a plan that will provide greater security for the nation. The Army Reserve is currently streamlining the mobilization process, refocusing our regional commands to better support Soldiers and their families, restructuring units for increased relevance, improving human resources operations, and improving the pool of skilled reservists for combat commanders.

There is also something new to the USACE IMA program. We have launched an IMA policy. This policy applies to all elements subordinate to Headquarters including major subordinate commands, districts, laboratories and field operating agencies, separate reporting agencies with mobilization requirements, and all assigned IMA Soldiers.

With this policy we are taking care of Soldiers with respect to distance and career paths. For example, mileage restrictions have been put in place help the Soldier and the organization save time traveling, and associated transportation costs. IMA Soldiers should not reside outside a 50-mile radius of their assigned duty location since they are not authorized to be reimbursed for travel expenses or per diem while performing scheduled battle assemblies. If the IMA Soldier lives outside the 50-mile radius, he/she must sign a unit expense waiver.

We also changed the way Soldiers serve or remain assigned to a USACE IMA position. This will help our

reservists grow and to share their expertise throughout the Reserve community. The USACE standard IMA program tour length is three years, not to exceed five years. This will provide opportunity for other qualified IMA Soldiers to gain experience and return to a troop program unit or the Individual Ready Reserve.

*(The Reserve Component Mobilization Team in Headquarters produced this article.)*

## HR Corner

# Management course popular

During fiscal 2011, the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division (LRD) Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) developed a performance management course for LRD supervisors that focused on developing performance expectations, providing effective feedback, determining employee development requirements, dealing with poor performance and properly recognizing high performers.

This training initiative was in response to the results from the 2010 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. The course, "Cultivating a High Performance Culture", was heavily influenced by Engineer Research and Development Center training material. It is led by Benjamin Bracken and members of the LRD CPAC. The course material was complete last May. Last June a pilot train-the-trainer program took place in Louisville, Ky., and again in October in Nashville, Tenn.

The course received extremely positive feedback and is in significant demand throughout LRD. The course, using role-playing and situation-based exercises, reinforces the basic and technical competencies needed to be a successful manager of a great organization.

In 2012, classes are tentatively scheduled for Jan. 24-26, Feb. 7-9, Feb. 28-March 1 and May 1-3. All classes will take place in Nashville. After finalizing feedback from the coming courses, the material will be finalized and presented to Headquarters for possible implementation USACE-wide. For more information, contact pablo.feliciano@usace.army.mil.

# AROUND THE CORPS

## Small business awards

Maj. Gen Merdith Temple, USACE commander, recognized the achievements of several USACE leaders during the Annual Small Business Awards luncheon at the Gaylord National Harbor in Baltimore. They were:

**Col. Richard Gridley Award for Excellence:** Brig. Gen. John McMahon, commander of Northwestern Division.

**Small Business Champion Awards:** Brig. Theodore Harrison, deputy director of the National Contracting Organization; Robert Fuchs, Portland District; Daphne Jackson, Nashville District; Robert Byrne, New England District; Henry Wigfall, Charleston District.

**Division Small Business Specialist of the Year:** Melea Crouse, USACE division level small business leader.

**District Small Business Specialist of the Year:** Daniel Curado, Albuquerque District.

**Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Institutions Star Award:** Col. Robert Ruch, commander of Omaha District; Col. Bruce Estok, commander of Seattle District; Col. Kevin Wilson, commander of the Engineering Research & Development Center.



NSU students analyze a feeding plot at Eufaula Lake in Tulsa District.

## NSU, Tulsa agreement

An agreement between Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Okla., and Tulsa District will allow more efficient wildlife management practices to be studied and implemented at USACE projects. NSU students are analyzing food plots at Eufaula Lake, although the partnership may expand to other USACE lakes.

Dr. Amy Smith, an NSU professor, brought 10 students from her Principles of Fish and Wildlife Management class to Eufaula Lake to collect data on food plots that USACE plants to attract deer.

The students are analyzing the soil and plants in each food plot to make recommendations on which plants are eaten and what type of plants are most suitable for the soil at each plot. Once the research and sampling is complete, the students will write a wildlife management plan that will be used by the Eufaula project staff.

"Other agencies allow classes to collect data on their areas, but USACE is the only one that has expressed a willingness to incorporate student research into their management practices," Smith said. "An opportunity like this to solve problems under real-world conditions is invaluable for the students. It allows them to actually do what we have studied in class."

## Ansbach lodge

On Dec. 14, U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach opened the doors to a new Army lodge.

"Army lodges are a key element of a Soldier's transition into Europe, especially for those who have never been stationed overseas, said Col. Peter Helmlinger, Europe District commander. "This is a Soldier's first and last impression of Germany. All across Germany we've transformed the reception for Soldiers and their families as they come to Europe and as they depart."

The new lodge replaces the Franconian Inn, which opened in 1972 in a former barracks.

"It was turned into a hotel after major renovations, and we did the last project there in 1998," Lawler said. "We've kept that facility running through self-help projects, duct tape, whatever it took. Since its last major renovation was 12 years ago, we knew we needed something better for our Soldiers, families and civilians."

The \$10 million lodge provides 26 rooms to in-coming and out-going members -- six standard rooms, one extended-stay room with a kitchenette, and 19 extended-stay suites with separate bedrooms, living areas and kitchenettes.

Although there are fewer rooms than the Franconian Inn, the new rooms are larger and the quality is better. Safety features include fire-retardant doors, alarms, security cameras and a fire and emergency alert system. The new lodge also meets the Americans with Disabilities Act guidance.

The groundbreaking was April 2010, and the project was completed last December.

## Levee safety conference

To prepare communities and local project sponsors for a flood, Louisville District hosted its Fourth Annual Levee Safety Conference in Jeffersonville, Ind. The theme was "Flood Preparedness."

The conference provided information to more than 140 attendees that included levee system local sponsors, vendors, architect/engineers and officials in the USACE levee program. The local sponsors who attended the conference operate and maintain more than 276 miles of levees in a four-state area in the Ohio River Basin.

The two-day conference featured more than 20 presentations and workshops that covered various levee safety topics including "Saving Smithland, Ky., from 2011 Ohio River Flooding", Emergency Action Plans, Underseepage Fixes, the new National Levee Database, levee system evaluation and the National Flood Insurance Program.

The conference also helps sponsors by allowing them to become familiar with the latest levee criteria.

A highlight of this year's conference was a hands-on sandbag demonstration that allowed attendees and local sponsors to see how to properly stack sandbags during a flood, and how to contain a sand boil.

"It's critical because the local sponsors need to experience the actual feel of a properly filled sandbag," said John Allison, chief of Civil Engineering Branch. "It's important to perform live demonstrations with sandbags rather than simply present pictures of sandbagging operations."

Hands-on experience beats PowerPoint slides anytime."

The conference also served as a forum for local sponsors to share their experiences and problems. Conference attendee and Paducah levee system local sponsor Rick Murphy said, "The biggest benefit of the conference is putting faces to names. Meeting other sponsors with similar projects is a great help. It allows networking and knowledge sharing."

"We benefit when we're more familiar with our USACE representatives that can help with different aspects of our projects," Murphy said. "Sometimes the information can be hard to digest, but that's why the points of contacts at USACE are so important."



USACE is managing a \$380,000 project to repair two dams at U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr in Germany. The ponds are an important part of the ecology in the training area.

## Grafenwoehr dams

Europe District is working with Bavarian environmental authorities, U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr and German government construction agencies to repair two dams at Grafenwoehr. This is the first dam repair project that USACE has managed in Germany.

The dams were built by German troops before World War I. A routine safety inspection in 2009 found deficiencies in the compacted earth dams. They were built before German or American flood safety standards, and compaction devices 100 years ago were not as efficient. Over time, the earthen material had worn down and the emergency overflow structures have been damaged.

The garrison came to USACE with year-end money to repair the dams, and Europe District and the Directorate of Public Works are taking measures to stabilize the dams and mitigate potential flooding downstream.

USACE is managing the \$380,000 project, which includes repairing, cleaning and grubbing the dams, and installing gutters. The scope is limited to critical repairs, but USACE will provide plans for recurring maintenance in compliance with German environmental standards.

This project is unique for Europe District. In Grafenwoehr and throughout Europe, Africa and the Near East, USACE primarily focuses on military construction.

"Our mandate is to assist the garrisons to build military facilities," said Terry Bautista, district chief of engineering and construction. "But under the right conditions, we can do civil works. We try not to limit ourselves to a specific function. We can mold or blend our expertise into whatever we're tasked to work on."

# Blind engineer earns top DoD honor

By JoAnne Castagna  
New York District

Nathanael Wales, a civil engineer/planner with New York District, received the 2011 Outstanding Department of Defense Employee or Service Member with a Disability Award. The award is given annually to 19 recipients by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and Wales is the first person in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to receive the award in decades.

"I was surprised that I was selected," said Wales, who has been blind all his life. "There are a number of employees throughout USACE with all kinds of disabilities, some visible, some not. To be selected from among the entire DoD is amazing."

Wales attended a ceremony in Bethesda, Md., to receive the award. He was accompanied by Col. John Boule, district commander, and other New York District leadership.

"It was an honor to be among a group of distinguished recipients, such as service members who have sacrificed tremendously," Wales said. "It also gave me an opportunity to contribute who I am to the USACE and DoD process, and raise awareness of the capabilities of persons with disabilities. One of the recipients manages contracts totaling 10 billion dollars. Most of all, the ceremony provided an opportunity for my supervisors, the district and USACE to be honored for the work they've done to hire persons with disabilities."

USACE hires disabled individuals to fill various positions. In the past two years, New York District hired 14.

"Our district is also fortunate to have managers who are willing and interested in hiring under the Disability Pro-



Photo courtesy of New York District

**Nathanael Wales receives his award from Thomas Lamont, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Manpower and Reserve Affairs. On the left is John Campbell, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy, and on the right is Col. John Boule, commander of New York District.**

gram, said Estelle Capowski, chief of the district's Equal Employment Opportunity Office. "In Nathanael's case, his staff has always assisted him in every way."

Wales has been an employee of the district's Plan Formulation Branch for five years. He has worked on several important coastal erosion protection projects.

He says that his coworkers have always been supportive and approachable and that he has never had a problem asking questions. Wales added that people without disabilities may not be aware of a few things about disabled

people, in particular those with a sensory disability.

"Those with a disability must learn how to accomplish the same tasks using an alternative technique," Wales said. "For example, instead of reading print notes, I'll read them in Braille, or instead of reading my computer monitor I'll use a text-to-speech program."

"I feel the process of finding these alternative techniques adds to my job," Wales said. "In USACE we're supposed to think of innovative solutions. Thinking creatively and outside the box is a skill many disabled people have, and it's an asset to an organization."

Wales said that it should not be assumed a person with a disability has a particular limitation until they are asked because more than likely the assumption is wrong.

"Some people may think that doing field investigations is something I'm not able to do," Wales said. "I can do that, I just have to perform it a little differently. For example, if I'm visiting a beach erosion project, I may have to interact more with the people showing me around, and ask more questions. Just like any engineer, it's valuable for me to go to a site. It adds to my understanding of a project, and helps me be a better planner."

During his free time, Wales mentors blind high school and college students who have a strong interest in science, engineering, technology and mathematics. He wants them to know that a career in the sciences is reachable, even if one is blind.

"One student I mentored at a summer camp changed his college plans to study chemistry, something he thought was unattainable," Wales said. "He is now studying to get his Ph.D. in chemistry, and runs chemistry camps for blind high school students."

## Old tool prevents RIFs, keeps talent in USACE

By Bernard Tate  
Headquarters

Sometimes an old tool is still the best tool.

The Command Special Assistance Initiative (CSAI) is an old tool that gives managers in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers another option to prevent reductions in force (RIF) and keep valuable talent in USACE.

CSAI dates back to 1999. The Headquarter's Directorate of Human Resources updated CSAI and released it to the field Dec. 8 in Operation Order (OPORD) 2011-84. HR specialists unearthed it while helping North Atlantic Division (NAD) deal with a personnel drawdown after Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC).

"We ramped up NAD to handle the heavy BRAC workload," said Dawn Clappsy, chief of Human Resources in NAD. "Now that workload is finished, we're drawing down, and we want to draw down with the least impact."

Clappsy started the initiative last February when she approached Phil DeMarais, chief of Employment & Compensation Division in Headquarters, for permission to send out resumes of NAD employees who were interested in working for other USACE divisions.

"I had the NAD commander sign letters to other division commanders that included a package of resumes from people interested in working in those divisions," Clappsy said. "If I knew somebody in NAD was interested in working in SAD, I sent the letter to Maj. Gen. Todd Semonite, SAD commander, to see if he would consider

that employee. This is a win-win. SAD fills their slot, I place somebody who needs a position, and we maintain that talent in USACE."

As Clappsy and DeMarais worked to place NAD personnel within USACE, the 11-year-old Command Special Assistance Initiative was reviewed. It was created in 1999 as a tool for USACE managers to place employees if they are subject to downsizing, and had not been used or updated since.

There are already a number of tools that allow leadership to manage the workforce by attrition and avoid a RIF. These include the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority, Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay, and the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program. CSAI provides another important tool.

"One thing that Sue Engelhardt, USACE director of Human Resources, stresses is that we want to prevent a formal RIF whenever possible, because a RIF is very disruptive," DeMarais said. "It's costly; it creates a huge administrative burden. That's why it's important to have tools to prevent a RIF. CSAI is another of those tools."

CSAI would be initiated only at a commander's request. "If a major subordinate command (MSC) or separate organization has people that they need to place, their commander would write a memo to the USACE Human Resources director to invoke CSAI," DeMarais said. "Then we would use OPORD 2011-84 to help place those people in other USACE organizations."

Once CSAI is implemented, the employee would go to

a website on the USACE intranet and enter their name, job, and the locations where they are interested in working. "It's a very easy system to use," DeMarais said.

CSAI is voluntary; employees are not required to register.

"That's in contrast to the DoD Priority Placement Program," DeMarais said. "Once an employee has been given an official RIF notice, he or she is required to register in PPP. When DoD matches the employee against a job, he/she must accept it or decline it. If he/she declines it, he/she loses all further rights for placement."

"CSAI is a little softer than that," DeMarais said. "If they decline a job through CSAI, they are ineligible for one year, and then they may register again."

When the human resources team realized what an effective tool that CSAI could be, they updated the 1999 standard operating procedure, formalized it and released it to the field Dec. 8 in OPORD 2011-84 to make CSAI available to management throughout USACE.

"There were some second-order effects to issuing the OPORD," DeMarais said. "People saw it and wondered if there were plans for RIF in the near future. But our purpose in issuing CSAI was to give management another right-sizing tool. It would not be used unless it is needed, and then only if the commander of the MSC or separate organization requests it. CSAI would only be used to help employees who face downsizing find jobs elsewhere within USACE. It's another way to take care of our people, avoid a RIF, and keep talented people in this command."