



Corps responds to Calif. fire missions

By Mike Tharp
Los Angeles District

Some of the worst wildfires in California history ignited some of the best in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

A dozen blazes in October and November in five counties killed at least 22 people, burned more than 3,600 homes and 1,200 other structures, and charred nearly 740,000 acres. Damage is estimated in the billions, and the cost of fighting the fires nudged \$200 million.

Even as the stench of aluminum melted into puddles still hung in the ash-laden air, South Pacific Division and other Corps workers streamed into the ravaged areas. As with other natural disasters, the Corps deployed Emergency Support Function (ESF) teams within hours of getting the call from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Long-time Corps mission

Ever since Congress passed the Stafford Act in 1988, the Corps has mobilized to provide public works and engineering support for lifesaving, life-protection, and recovery after a major disaster. ESF teams have already dealt with hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, tornados, mudslides, and other forest fires, so they segued into a well-ordered drill in California.

Kelley Aasen, team leader from South Pacific Division in San Francisco, arrived at the makeshift emergency headquarters in Pasadena, Calif., on Oct. 29. For the next several weeks, the Corps veteran (who started responding to emergency sirens with the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989) rested for only a handful of hours. For the rest of the time, he was rooted at one of three long tables facing three wall-sized maps, coordinating Corps efforts with those of other federal and state agencies.

Coordination meant manning phones and laptops, attending limitless meetings, assessing what was being done and still needed to be done on the ground, sharing information among agencies, and accompanying visiting VIPs on their rounds.

Reporting that all was within normal limits, Aasen said the Corps efforts "help a lot of people. If we're called out, all resources are pulled toward the response."

Unlike more all-encompassing natural disasters such as hurricanes, these wildfires did not require the full-court press of a major Corps mission that can last for months. The division's strategy was focused on five main jobs — debris management, temporary housing, geographic information systems (GIS), a deployable tactical operations center, and technical assistance.

Debris

Although by mid-November most of the wildfires were extinguished or under control, team members had to contend with the inevitable ripple effects from fire-scoured hills and mountains — mudslides after heavy rains, and debris runoff clogging flood control basins.

Luckily, thunderstorms during the first week of November did not cause either, but Ed Andrews, Los Angeles District Emergency Operations Branch Chief, was ready. "The district's history of responding to disasters is good," he said. "We've done it before, and our Crisis Management Team is meeting every day in anticipation of us being asked for assistance."

Andrews noted that his counterpart from San Francisco, Duke Roberts, came down to help, and Andrews linked the multi-district approach to USACE 2012. "You pull



Mark Wingate, a South Pacific Division debris expert, photographs the remains of a home in Palmer County, Calif. (Photo by Mike Tharp, Los Angeles District)

folks in where needed and strengthen what you've got, especially in emergency situations," Andrews said. "The Corps is very good at that."

A look at what emergency team members did on the scorched earth of the Golden State illustrates their wide-ranging contributions to relief and recovery efforts.

After the recent wildfires, Mark Wingate, SPD's Disaster Program Manager, and his fellow experts Beau Hanna and Eddie Sosebee from Mobile District, estimated the volume of debris at 350,000 cubic yards. They categorized debris into recyclable metal, metal appliances, household hazardous waste, and construction and demolition debris. The list includes ash, partially standing masonry/stucco walls, concrete, appliances, loose masonry/tile, metal framing, metal furniture, power poles, and partially burned trees and automobiles.

Wingate, Rick Castro of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services and Michael Raphael of FEMA/Homeland Security stopped to speak with Rick McElwain. He had been manning a bulldozer to clean up the remains of his parents' house, demolished by a 200-foot-wide tornado of fire.

"One thing that's holding me up is there's no place to take this debris," McElwain said, waving toward a pile he had bulldozed together. Later, as they drove to another site, Wingate said, "I just can't say enough good about that guy because he's doing it right. That's a perfect example of getting your debris to the right-of-way to implement a roadside pickup."

A few miles northwest, all that was left of most of the 70-year-old homes in Palmer Canyon were stone chimneys, a barbecue grill itself grilled, and a small statue blackened like two shadows.

At what used to be the two-bedroom home of Fred Turnbull and Girija Karamcheti, Wingate said, "We're sorry about your house," then listened as the couple described what happened and outlined their plans. "Clearly this canyon would be a lot safer if this road could be widened and some of those trees thinned," said Turnbull. Wingate peered up at some of the singed and teetering eucalyptus. "The criterion for eligible debris is imminent threat to the public, and that's an imminent threat," he said.

Temporary housing

Some 40 miles east of there, at Big Bear and Lake Arrowhead, another ESF member was on a quixotic quest for flat land. T. Pete Thompson formed part of the temporary housing team, along with Jack Rose, Alan Ruff, and Kim Mulhern. All four are from Omaha District.

His mission, which took him through several cauterized mountain communities — find level lots to put travel trailers for fire victims unable to get their own interim living quarters while their homes are rebuilt or before they relocate.

Consulting maps and website printouts of mobile home companies in the area, Thompson flourished his "get-out-of-jail" FEMA sign to pass through police barricades still keeping out the public.

On State Highway 189 near Lake Arrowhead, Thompson visited Blue Jay Village Co. and spoke with general manager Michele Nadler about possible sites. Nadler asked maintenance manager Jesus Rios to show Thompson unoccupied land above one of the firm's trailer parks, and Rios bounced Thompson in his four-wheel-drive up the ridge. Walking through undamaged cedars, Thompson said, "I think this is too steep" for mobile homes, but thanked Nadler on his way to the next location, a gravel-topped landfill.

Thompson got out and photographed the area, wondering aloud whether contamination would preclude its use.

Then on to Lakeside Trailer Park where manager Nick Fogg told him he had "only one other space left. The rest are torn up putting in water lines." But he referred Thompson, unfailingly polite to everyone he met, to another trailer park called the Valley of Enchantment.

There Thompson conferred with managers Bob and Rose Melis. "I'm on the primary response team for temporary housing," he said. "I'm here to assess the need for temporary housing for people displaced by this disaster." The Melis' said they had six spaces available with more vacancies opening up in a few weeks. They also said they required credit checks for residents. Thompson suppressed a smile. "I think if FEMA is paying the bill, their credit is

Chief of Engineers' Holiday message

Remember those serving overseas

The holidays are a time for remembering others, and for giving to others.

This year, I want us to remember that there are many in our Corps of Engineers family who are serving in harm's way in Afghanistan and Iraq. They are giving an expensive gift...willingly sacrificing their holiday with their families so that others who lived for decades under tyrannical rule might have a future of safety and freedom.

I'm enormously proud of them. They volunteered for an important cause, and they are doing excellent work under difficult circumstances.

Of course, Afghanistan and Iraq are not the only places where our Corps team members will spend the holidays. Our people are at work in 91 countries worldwide, and many of them will also be separated from their loved ones during the holidays.

Please take a few moments during these holidays to remember those in the Corps family who are serving overseas. If you are acquainted with some of them, please mail them a card or send them an e-mail letting them know that you're thinking about them, and that their service is appreciated.

I have also served overseas during the holidays under difficult conditions, and you can trust me on this...in the situations that our people face in Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere, simple gifts like those will be treasured.

For all of us, this has been a busy year. As in years past, the Corps of Engineers has taken part in events that made



Capt. Sam Hunter, a Reservist with the 416th Engineering Command, is serving in Iraq. In civilian life, he works for the Engineering Research and Development Center. (Photo courtesy of ERDC)

headlines, and made a difference.

When the space shuttle *Columbia* burned up during re-entry, Corps people took part in the search in Texas and other states to find debris that helped piece together what happened to the spacecraft.

During Supertyphoon Pongsona on Guam, Hurricane Isabel on the East Coast, and the wildfires in California,

Corps emergency teams were on the scene to fight the disaster, and to clean up afterwards.

Whether it is helping clear landmines in Afghanistan, or advising the Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources in re-routing water to preserve the Marsh Arabs' way of life, or providing new facilities for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, this year Corps people have continued making a difference in America, and in the world.

The holidays are also a time to look to the future, and the Corps of Engineers' future is bright. The plans for USACE 2012 have been released and are now being implemented. People throughout the Corps are learning the basics of the Project Management Business Process, cornerstone of the Corps' new way of doing business. And Corps people are learning the concepts of competitive sourcing, which will be our part in the President's Management Agenda.

These actions and others will give the Corps of Engineers the best possible gift...the ability to improve our service to the American people.

As always, I encourage all of you to take time off during this holiday season. Relax and have fun, and especially make time to enjoy your families.

And my family and I wish you all a safe and joyous holiday season, and a happy, prosperous New Year.

Essayons!

ROBERT B. FLOWERS
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

Corps woman recounts ambush in Iraq

Article and Photo
By Susan Tianen

(Editor's note - This is Susan Tianen's account of the day when she and Ghassen Khorsorownia survived an ambush in Iraq. It is written by permission from an e-mail account that she sent to her friends in the U.S.)

This morning, Sept. 17, I went to the Military Industrial Compound (MIC). My mission was to get the foundry back in operation, smelt war wrecks into reconstruction material, and employ 12,500 people.

An extraordinary man, Ghassen Khorsorownia, a structural engineer from Sacramento District, accompanied me. Ghassen is a native Iranian and does not speak Arabic, but he has a determination that could hold off a pack of tigers.

He wasn't happy with the assignments he had been given and asked if he could help me. Of course I said, "Yes!" Well, the assignment I gave him was to stand up the Engineering Division of the Baghdad Mayoralty and Governorant.

This morning he accompanied me out to the MIC. We met with the engineers and discussed how to put them back in operation, and how to update and market their resources. Ghassen was primed; he had "found his feet." He was happy, energetic, and scheduled two meetings with all of the engineers.

When we arrived at 0945 an explosion occurred to the north near Highway 1. It was close enough to shake everyone up and put them in the "READY" posture. We waited for about 10 minutes before Cpl. Carlton Brown of my Personal Security Detail (a military term for "bodyguard") said we could continue. Ghassen and I went into the building and started our meeting. Then Carlton came in and told us that the zone had become unsafe. (We were already in the Red Zone, requiring



A photo of Ghassen Khorsorownia in Iraq, taken minutes before the ambush.

four armed HMMWVs for safety.)

So, I asked Carlton how much time we had. He said make it quick. I asked for 30 minutes, and he said okay.

We left the admin building and went to the "structural steel" building. We finished our review of the operation and went back to the HMMWVs to depart the area. I took a picture of Ghassen as he got into HMMWV Two. Ghassen smiled at me and said, "I don't know what their problem is. I will go out with you anytime, anywhere." (This referred to the fact that no other in-theater engineer would go out on this request from the 1AD (First Armored Division) - a cold call in a Red Zone.)

We left the factory and proceeded down the road toward Baghdad, and there was a sudden burst of air pressure with a loud bang. Our HMMWV swerved and stopped. Then the radio calls came in...

... "One, OK!"
... "Two, **Hit!**"
... "Three, OK!"
... "Four, OK!"

They floored HMMWV One and Three to get me to safety. They went up the road about a mile and put me in a tank. Then they returned to the downed HMMWV. I knew it was Ghassen's. I listened to the call for medivac, and held my breath. I hadn't seen Ghassen or Dr. Fouad Jijji. (Jijji was my translator, a professor of linguistics at the University of Baghdad.)

When the area was secure (a lot of weapons, armed HMMWVs, two Bradley, and plenty of air cover) they took me back to join the rest. I looked for Ghassen and Jijji, and found Jijji sitting in the back of a truck with his head down. I spoke with him for a few moments to ascertain how he was.

Then I went looking for Ghassen. When the military are in there to provide protection and medical aid, you stay out of their way, and that's what I did.

I watched in silence as the day was laid out in front of me. It was like an accident investigation in *s-l-o-w* motion. There was a lot of blood and silence. I started the day with 20 men, 17 military and three civilians, including me. I ended the day five short. Ghassen and four soldiers from the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment (2ACR) of the 1AD, were medivaced (flown out by helicopter) to the 21st Combat Surgical Hospital (CSH) in Baghdad.

Here is the formal report...

"At 1132 hrs 5th EN (Engineering Division) reported an explosion near Gunner Gate at MC290073. Upon investigation, 5th EN reported that a convoy from 1 Troop, 3rd Squadron, 2ACR (1AD) had been hit by an

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Insights

Exploring faith is the great adventure

By Col. Mark Fentress
Headquarters

*The world will never starve for wonders,
but only for the lack of wonder.*

G. K. Chesterton

Many years ago, my two sons and daughter begged me to take them to Kentucky's Mammoth Cave while we were on vacation. My wife Becky thought it was a good idea, too, so we detoured south from Louisville and spent a day trekking through that huge cavern—the longest known cave system in the world.

I had been through several of its limestone passages before when I was a young boy, but had forgotten just how expansive its water-carved tunnels were. Our guide pointed out that while 150 miles of passages have been probed since the cave was discovered, the full extent of the cave is still unexplored.

Can you imagine the adventure it must have been for the discoverers of the cave who first explored their find?

The grand explorations of new depths of land or sea or outer space are such fascinating ventures made by those frontiersmen who are willing to take the risks to learn the deep secrets of the universe. Most of us must experience these adventures vicariously—through the firsthand accounts of others.

But there is one area of exploration open to all of us. That is spiritual exploration. Some people adamantly refuse to accept the challenge to take this—the greatest adventure of a life time. For whatever reason, they seem unwilling to make this leap of faith in God. And therefore, they miss His transforming and sustaining power as they journey through life.

If you are groping and searching for a faith in God that is meaningful, relevant, vital, solid, deep, and everlasting—then open your mind and heart to the power who shaped

the heavens, sets the tides in motion and carved the caves of the earth. He will gladly take you on a new path, a new adventure unlike anything you've never known before.

God bless you as you make this adventure and journey of faith!

Prayer -- Lord God, during this most Holy season, grant us a robust, vibrant and caring faith as we make this journey and venture through life. Help us to be a blessing to our neighbors who are in need. Bless all of our military and civilians who are serving in harm's way overseas. And be a near and ever-present strength to their families. This we pray in Your holy name. **Amen.**

In faith and friendship

Chaplain Mark

(The opinions expressed 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 Defense, or the U.S. government.)

California fires

Continued from page one

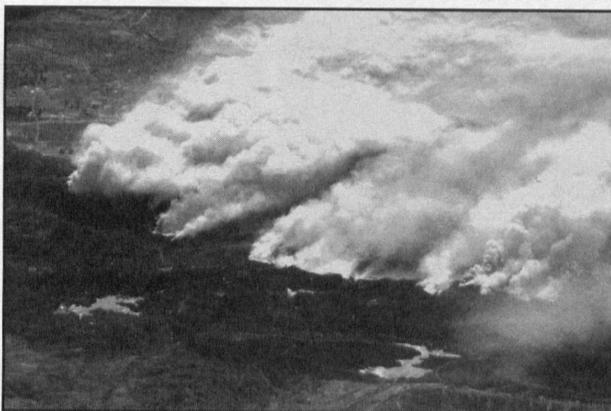
pretty good," he said. "I don't think they need a credit check."

Emotions

Later, visiting Old Waterman Canyon where numerous houses were destroyed, Thompson shook his head. The terrain was just too rugged to place a trailer next to a home while it was being repaired or rebuilt. He described his method of operating in disaster areas: "You feel for them, but you've got a mission and have to focus on your mission," he explained. "Emotion has to take a back seat. You're too busy reading the road and working 12-to-14 hour days."

GIS

"Without geography, you're nowhere," says Caribbean philosopher Jimmy Buffett, and Doug Swanson, a geographer from Portland District, would agree. Swanson and his colleagues, Kathleen Bergman from L.A. District, and Steve Long from Philadelphia District, flew into SoCal soon after the word went out that Corps emergency crews



A photo from the International Space Station captures the California fires. Lake Arrowhead (left) and Silverwood Lake are visible. (NASA Photo)

were needed.

Within two weeks the GIS specialists had fielded and met more than 600 requests for map products. Need to know where Red Cross shelters are each day? The GIS team provided maps to help residents find temporary refuge from evacuated areas. Want to identify potential flood



Pete Thompson from the Fort Carson Resident Office photographs a temporary housing site. (Photo by Mike Tharp, Los Angeles District)

areas affecting American Indian lands? They plotted them in less than a day. Where are the ethnicity and foreign language areas in the region so aid workers can identify their various requirements? GIS produced.

Crucially, the team also acquired and distributed flood plain, slope, and elevation data to emergency response workers so they would be better prepared for possible mud and debris flows following rainfall in burn areas.

Swanson recalled another request: "Show me all the roads leading to the fire areas, paved with asphalt, wide enough for a fire truck with no bridge overhang lower than 12 feet." We use satellite data, aerial photography, and now the Predator (drone aircraft). We even considered using the U-2 (the famous high-flying spy plane)."

Emergency response vehicle

If seeing is vital for Corps and other emergency crews, talking and listening are too. That's why SPD dispatched its version of the Batmobile, Emergency Command and Control Vehicle #3, from Sacramento District. Within two days of deployment, the vehicle, one of only six nationwide, was sending and receiving from Harbison Canyon in San Diego County. Wildfires had roared through the canyon, destroying homes and knocking out all phone communications.

The 36-foot-long vehicle was anchored at a community center and immediately began providing electric power and communications through telephone and data lines.

"We were using the satellite dish to capture the signal, hooked to a satellite, linked back to a satellite provider in Virginia," said Gary Fong, team leader of the Deployable Tactical Operations Center. He estimated that the ECCV hooked up 200 people in 10 days with phone, Internet, hand-held radio, and other communications. "We support FEMA every way we can," he said. "There were no glitches."

Ambush

Continued from previous page

IED (improvised explosive device). The second vehicle in the convoy was hit, with 4xUS soldiers and 1xUS civilian injured. The Gunner QRF (Quick Reaction Force) was dispatched along with a four-litter ambulance. The area was secured and the injured individuals were air medivaced to 21st CSH. EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) assessed the area and determined that the IED was a remote detonated 155mm projectile strapped to a guardrail in the center median. It was also assessed that the IED was the same type used earlier in the north that hit the 3rd BCT (Battalion Combat Team) convoy. It was also remote detonated. Local civilians reported that they had seen a red truck with two individuals in it engaged the HMMWW with small arms fire after the IED detonated. The truck was seen moving north at a high rate of speed. While securing the site, 5th EN received small arms fire from the vicinity of Al-Asiryiah. 5th EN and the Gunner QRF are currently clearing the village."

That tells what happened, but not how it felt.

After they did an equipment check, they handed me Ghassen's equipment and backpack, then they handed me his dogtag. I looked at them and asked "Why?" They said it was because I was the senior on site. One dogtag remained with Ghassen, and I had the other.

My breath left my body and my heart sank in my chest.

But I had to be strong, so I simply said, "Thank you."

We departed the compound with Ghassen's bloody flak vest, Kevlar helmet, and backpack resting on my lap. No words were spoken all the way back to Baghdad.

When I arrived in Baghdad, the rest of my team members from the Forward Engineer Support Team met me. I guess they all thought I would fall apart like I did the first time I was under fire, but I didn't. I just wanted to go see Ghassen.

We drove over to the emergency room, and there I saw my teammate, my friend. I held his hand, and wiped some blood from his face. I will always remember his blood on my hand and on his face.

Ghassen smiled and said, "If you extend, I will come back." I smiled and kissed him on the cheek.

He will be medivaced by military transport plane to Germany, and then to the States. He will leave in 24 hours. I have a mission tomorrow morning, so I probably won't see him again in-theater. All of the soldiers are expected to live, too, but they will all be going home.

Tonight my prayers are with those brave soldiers and with Ghassen.

(Ghassen Khorsorownia is currently at home in the Sacramento, Calif., area on sick leave, recuperating from surgery on his eye and shoulder. Susan Tianen has returned to her regular job as the Chief Safety Officer of Los Angeles District.)

Real estate in Iraq

'The legal issues that we deal with here are different'

By Grant Sattler
Iraq Provisional Command

As the Iraqi army collapsed, coalition ground forces that came to depose the regime of Saddam Hussein and Ba'ath elitists primarily took up residence on property owned by the former government. Coalition troops entered military bases, government compounds, and grandiose palaces where Hussein had squandered the nation's wealth.

But in some places, the mission to provide a secure environment for Iraq's democratic re-birth led coalition forces to set up operations where no government facility or military base was available.

"When we came in, there was direction to all the forces to use Iraqi government property, palaces, or military installations, and to stay out of private property, and for the most part that happened," said Mike Taylor, team leader of the Contingency Real Estate Support Team (CREST) with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Iraq Provisional Command. "There have been a few cases, though, where we've occupied private property."

Taylor said he couldn't blame the troops. "You can't easily tell what's public property and what's private property in the middle of a war," he said. "If it was a walled compound and fit the needs of the military unit, they occupied the property."

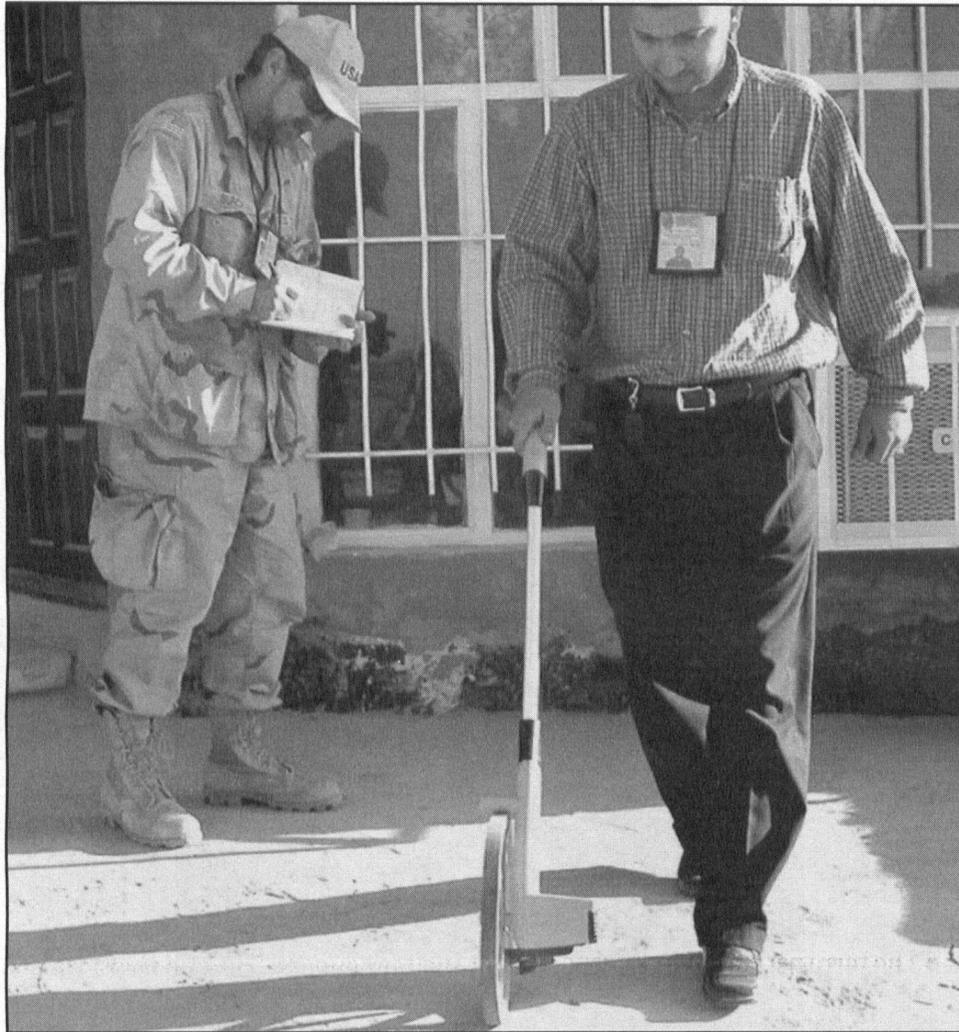
But unlike the former regime, the Coalition Provisional Authority is ensuring that private citizens are compensated for the use of their property. There is a basis in international law for doing so, but for the U.S. Army, knowing it is the right thing to do has an early precedent. In Colonial America, the aversion to British troops being billeted in private homes led to the third amendment of the U.S. Constitution which says that "[n]o Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law."

Taylor and the CREST members are in Iraq to make sure private property owners are compensated for coalition use of their property. Facilities formerly belonging to the Iraqi military, Ba'ath party, or Saddam's regime are gratis.

Even though the American military has used private property during past contingencies, the situation in Iraq is unique, said Taylor, who arrived in Iraq in mid-July.

Special situation

"This is the first time since World War II that we've actually been an occupying force," said Taylor. He has worked on contingency real estate issues in Saudi Arabia during Vigilant Warrior (Hussein's post-Desert Storm probing of U.S. resolve), in Bosnia-Herzegovina immediately after the Dayton Peace Accords, in Croatia, and in Macedonia with NATO supporting the mission in Kosovo. "The legal issues that we have to deal with here are different."



Mohammad Najeeb, interpreter for CREST, measures the dimensions of a patio on a partially finished home while real estate assessor Jim Burch takes notes. (U.S. Army Photo)

In the deployments mentioned above, real estate specialists were able to negotiate leases before U.S. troops moved in. But many of the properties in Iraq were first occupied in the course of the war. Any use of property before the date President George W. Bush declared the end of hostilities is not compensatable, Taylor said. "That's just the cost of war."

However, in cases where use of private property continued after May 1, or in locations where expanding security zones around occupied former Iraqi government property has impacted private property, there will be compensation payments made to the owners, Taylor said. "According to the rules of land warfare, we can't come in and seize private property."

CREST works with military units, U.S. Army Civil Affairs, Army Claims Agency, and others who are approached by Iraqis seeking compensation for coalition use of their property.

Determining what are valid claims, and what part of those claims are real estate costs and what must be requested as damage compensation through other means is a challenging task that has the CREST coordinating closely with Judge Advocate General officers.

Claim validity

CREST real estate appraiser Jim Burch said deeds have to be closely checked.

"We find there are a lot of fake deeds, a lot of fraud," Burch said. "So we go to the registry and confirm that it is indeed a valid deed."

Validating the actual location and dimensions of the property is not straightforward either. With the help of an interpreter/translator, CREST real estate specialist Armando Moneu pores over a large pile of Iraqi diagrams, maps, and satellite imagery to determine true property boundaries. Often, however, he finds the diagrams do not match with the reality presented by overhead satellite imagery.

The CREST members go out often with measuring wheels and GPS receivers to calculate the rough dimensions of property before meeting with claimants.

One particular area, a partially developed subdivision in Northern Baghdad, is proving to be a big job for Moneu, who is from Los Angeles District. An estimated 1,700 lots comprise the area that coalition forces dubbed "Red Falcon." While most lots are vacant, many have completed homes or homes in various stages of construction. Homeowners have either been moved out or prevented from completing construction and occupying their property due to the coalition forces' use of the area.

For three days of each seven-day workweek, Moneu assists CREST member Ken Chennault at the CPA Headquarters in conducting property assessments for pub-

lic property that will be used by coalition units or contractors under letters of authority.

Agricultural

Taylor said they want to do the right thing by rural property owners as well, but face many obstacles. The first is determining the actual property owner. "We've been looking at what the real estate laws are and what was established here," Taylor said. "A lot of property was nationalized in the early 1970s, which means there is a lot of government property. But a lot of the land that was nationalized was taken from individual farmers, then they turned around and leased it back to the same people who'd been on it for hundreds of years."

So farmers lost the title to their property.

Because the Army can only make lease payments to the owner, officials are seeking other means to provide assistance to farmers whose income has been affected by coalition forces, Taylor said.

To value agricultural property, Burch has used information from throughout the region. For example, to compensate farmers who will not be able to farm an artillery range that will be used by U.S. forces, Burch is using Turkish values per square meter for agricultural land. "Agricultural factors will track across countries more closely than other categories of real estate," Burch said. "They're between 15 and 30 cents per square meter annually."

He said the farmers were permitted to farm the land by the Iraqi army, but at great personal risk from unexploded ordnance. They can be compensated through a real estate contract for lost profit from the property if they can demonstrate an average income and prove ownership.

Residential property

Burch, who joined the CREST from Jacksonville District, also has the task of determining residential property and rental values.

"The market is extremely low, lower than any country I've been in," he said. "It's almost the same as under the communist government in Bosnia in that there wasn't a free flow of the market."

Burch said finding comparable activity to base values on is difficult. Unlike researching a market in the U.S. where multiple listings are available, there is little published information, although a few sales of lots in Baghdad's newer subdivisions have been recorded.

Getting information by canvassing is problematic due to the security situation and the requirement to travel with armed escorts and multiple vehicles, Burch said.

There also is no professional group dealing with real estate to contact, unlike in the U.S. where real estate brokers are licensed to ensure a higher measure of quality and honesty. "Here, you just de-

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'One day of training can save lives'

By Gary Kehoe
North Atlantic Division

The following e-mail came straight from the field in Afghanistan.

"The driving techniques saved the day," wrote Capt. Loi Nguyen, of Forward Engineer Support Team-Augmented Six. "The convoy commander was lost in Kabul. Our vehicle was following the convoy as part of a supply run. The 'Forward & Reverse 180,' and the 'High-Speed Get-Away' really worked when we had a few bad guys with AKs coming toward us. We got out without firing a bullet.

Highly recommend that this training continues for all deployable personnel," Nguyen added. "One day of training can save lives."

The training that Nguyen is talking about took place during the week of Oct. 20 when more than 20 members of North Atlantic Division (NAD) completed the USACE Advanced Antiterrorism and Force Protection (AT/FP) Training Course.

About half of the attendees were immediately destined for TDY (temporary duty) assignments in Iraq and Afghanistan, while several others had been placed on notice that they will soon be in TDY status.

Throughout the week the class members participated in a series of lectures and question-and-answer sessions (about 30 hours) presented by professors from George Washington University, Fordham University, University of Miami, and California State, as well as from other subject-matter experts.

Additionally, the attendees participated in two hands-on exercises (about 13 hours) that involved a Route Analysis/Surveillance Detection exercise in



Drivers practice evasive maneuvers at Bill Scott Raceways. The training is part of the USACE Advanced Antiterrorism and Force Protection Training. (Photo courtesy of Bill Scott Raceways)

the Winchester, Va., area, and an AT/FP Evasive Driving Class at Bill Scott Raceways at Summit Point Speedway in West Virginia.

Lecture topics in this class included:

- Individual protective measures.
- Psychology of terrorism.
- The terrorist threat in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.
- Domestic terrorism.
- Weapons of mass destruction.

Besides learning about the regional terrorist and insurgency threats, the attendees received an overview of the history, culture, and customs in the respective regions.

Presently, most of the lectures are con-

ducted at the Transatlantic Program Center in Winchester. The remaining segments of training are conducted at other nearby venues.

Upon conclusion of his class, Nguyen commented that he had previously read materials detailing AT/FP evasive driving maneuvers. He said there was no comparison between reading the materials and actually experiencing the various maneuvers.

At the request of USACE's former Provost Marshal, Lt. Col. Terrence Ryan, this training program was modeled after NAD's AT/FP training originally developed for personnel traveling TDY or permanent change of station (PCS) to coun-

tries such as Israel and Turkey. At Ryan's request, the curriculum was expanded to include other areas of the globe where the Corps maintains a presence, or could be called on to establish a presence. This was accomplished by locating additional subject matter experts on additional regions of the globe to present the segments that were added to the curriculum.

The training satisfies the requirements for individual training under Appendix F of AR 525-13.

This training is available to all members of USACE. Before each class, a message goes to Headquarters and to provost marshals throughout the Corps who recommend people for the training. Class size is usually limited to 24, but can be larger under some circumstances.

At this time the course is conducted quarterly. Due to the possible increase in overseas missions and the corresponding increase of personnel that will deploy to areas such as Afghanistan and Iraq, adding additional classes throughout the year is under consideration.

The class is recommended for:

- Military members, their dependents, and contractors preparing for a PCS or TDY assignment to medium- and high-threat areas.

- Members of the command assigned to the Field Force Engineering and Contingency Real Estate Support Teams.

- Personnel who volunteer for overseas contingency operations (military or civil).

- USACE members who routinely travel TDY overseas to medium- and high-threat areas.

The next class is scheduled for the week of Jan. 11. For more information about availability and associated expenses, please contact Gary Kehoe of NAD by e-mail or at (718) 765-7020.

Real estate

Continued from previous page

side you want to be a broker and you try to put a buyer and a seller together. Ethics really doesn't come into it."

Researching deeds has not provided much market data either. "Deeds here don't give the same information that you get in the U.S.," Burch said. "They show ownership, but don't say who you bought it from, they don't say what kind of a price you paid for it, and there are not a lot of deeds I've been able to find where properties have been built and re-sold."

Fair compensation

It can be particularly complicated to determine fair compensation for commercial property, Taylor said. Owners may want reimbursement for lost business, costs of relocating operations, costs of keeping an idle, trained workforce on payroll, damages to property, and costs to return the property to its original condition.

Generally, property owners ask for a large figure in total compensation, and it is through negotiations that the CREST works with them to determine the basis of each part of the claim, validate the amounts claimed, explain what is a basis for a lease payment, and suggest to them what other claims may be reimbursed by other means.

"We're going to come up with what we can pay them for rent, and working hand-in-hand with the claims of-

ficer, any additional claims," said Taylor, a real estate specialist with Louisville District. The aim is a package to compensate them for the use of their property.

But Burch said even determining a fair rental price for commercial property is difficult for Iraq. "That market is really tough to gauge," he said. "Iraqis don't go somewhere and just lease a building. These people build their own building on land the government allows them to use, putting their own investment into it, trusting that they would be able to continue in business."

Burch added that maintaining that favor meant giving gifts to Saddam's sons Uday and Qusay.

Not finding a free market for warehouse space, Burch has had to use cost information from regional sources outside Iraq to apply and extrapolate to the local area to arrive at a fair lease price.

Having served on a CREST for a short time in Kuwait at onset of war, Burch developed a network of Iraqi contacts who have been helpful in getting information on what the Iraqi real estate market had been.

Treating individuals fairly is important to building good will with the local Iraqi populace, Taylor said. "A lot of units out there need assistance, but have had a hard time finding that we're in country," he said. "We're here to help."

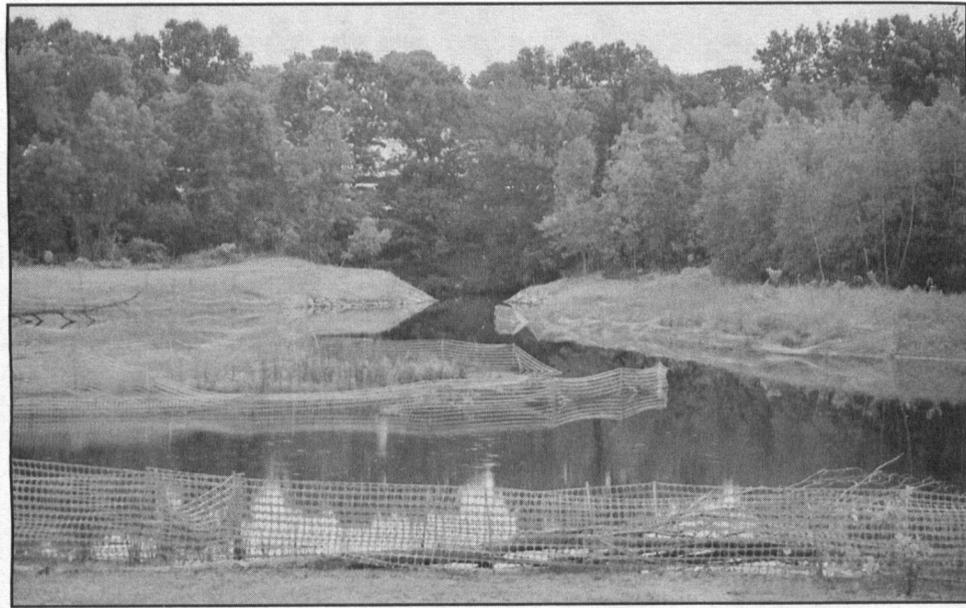
(Grant Sattler is the Public Affairs Officer of Europe District. He is currently in Iraq working with the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Corps' Iraq Provisional Command.)



Real estate assessor Jim Burch checks his Global Positioning Satellite receiver while measuring private property in a partially completed Baghdad suburb used by the Coalition Provisional Authority. (U.S. Army Photo)



After nearly 20 years of neglect, the Lonsdale Drive-In had deteriorated badly.



The 37-acre site is now productive marshland that attracts wildlife.

Old drive-in turned into marshlands

Article by Ann Marie Harvie
Photos by Mark McInerney
New England District

A Rhode Island drive-in theater that once brought fun and entertainment to local residents will now provide a rich environmental habitat where wildlife will thrive, thanks to an environmental restoration initiative by New England District (NED) and its Coastal America partners.

The Hon. John Paul Woodley, Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), represented the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the Lonsdale Wetlands Restoration Project dedication ceremony on Sept. 15. The ceremony marked Woodley's first official function in his new position.

NED took the lead in designing and building the project.

"I'm proud of the partnership that New England District formed with the state, local government, and private sector to turn the site from an eyesore into a piece of productive marshland habitat," said Woodley.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Lonsdale Drive-in in Lincoln, R.I., provided entertainment to many local residents. But when the drive-in closed in the 1980s, the 37-acre site was

left to decay. The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM), the project's non-federal sponsor, purchased the site in 1998 to restore it to wetlands and riparian habitat. RIDEM requested NED and their Coastal America partners to assist. The district and RIDEM signed a project cooperation agreement on May 16, 2002.

Work in restoring Lonsdale involved removing about 13 acres of asphalt; demolishing a movie screen, speaker posts, and other associated features; excavating about 60,000 cubic yards of material; placing organic rich topsoil; and planting wetlands and uplands.

At the RIDEM's request, NED also removed an abandoned excavator on a man-made island in the middle of Blackstone River.

"So many people enjoyed the Lonsdale Drive-in, but now there will be a new enjoyment for people to come here to see the wildlife and all the natural activity taking place in a very urban setting," said Sen. Lincoln Chafee.

Woodley told the audience why he thought the \$2.6 million dollar project was a success. "About seven acres of wetlands are now connected to the Blackstone River," he said. "About 13 acres of the riparian buffer/grassland

habitat were created and now the project provides shelter to waterfowl and habitat for grassland bird species."

Numerous deer, foxes, and coyotes have also been sighted on project land.

The Lonsdale Drive-In wetlands restoration project is unique in several ways. The project is the first aquatic ecosystem restoration effort within the Blackstone River watershed, an American Heritage River. It is also the first U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project with cost sharing from the new Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership in Rhode Island.

Charter Environmental, Inc., of Chelsea, Mass., performed the work under a construction contract. Work began early this year and was scheduled to be complete this fall, plus two growing periods. The work was completed ahead of schedule.

In the fall/winter time frame, the Rhode Island Department of Transportation will build a bicycle trail within and adjacent to the project site that will take up about three acres of paved space. The state project, separate from NED's restoration project, will benefit the aesthetics and public usability of the site. The project is expected to take about 18 months to complete.

HR Corner

Relationships essential to USACE

Relationships...

No, this is not an advice column for the lovelorn. The mere mention of *relationship* is enough to start some folks running very fast in the opposite direction.

But relationships are the foundation upon which all successful organizations are built. History has shown that when less friction exists between individuals, between individuals and groups, and ultimately between different groups, the more likely it is that all of these components of the organization will function as a cohesive unit and reach their individual and collective goals.

And relationships will become even *more* important to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the near future as we transition from a "stovepipe" organization to a "teamwork" organization under USACE 2012. Good relationships are essence of any winning team.

In 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed the Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute (5 USC 71) into law. Although best known for the protections it provides for the rights of unions, individual employees and management, in the Findings and Purpose section it states that "*The Congress finds that (1) experience in both private and public employment indicates that the statutory protection of the right of employees to organize, bargain collectively, and participate through labor organizations...contributes to the effective conduct of*

public business...facilitates and encourages the amicable settlements of disputes between employees and their employers - and (2) the public interest demands...the efficient accomplishment of the operations of the Government. Therefore, labor organizations...are in the public interest." (5 USC 7101).

Essentially, Congress stated that the mere existence of particular groups, i.e. labor organizations, within the greater organization makes the entire organization efficient.

Organized labor has had a long and distinguished history in the U.S. It is responsible for essentially all of the protections that employees in both the private and public sectors enjoy — the Fair Labor Standards Act, the creation of the Occupational Safety & Health Administration, and a host of protections that were not in the modern workplace until the labor movement took root in the early 20th century.

The gains that were made, though, came about through advocacy and confrontation, and had nothing to do with labor and management working collaboratively.

Efficiency in the federal sector is not attributable to any one group — not to organized labor, not to an individual employee (no matter how gifted or efficient that person may be), and not to management. A solid and positive relationship, particularly between labor and management, is an absolute necessity for us to be as effi-

cient as possible.

Trust is a foundation of any relationship, yet it is more often lacking in federal labor-management relationships than not. The ability to focus on the needs of the organization as a whole, and particularly the interests of all parties affected by decisions, does more good than parties digging in their heels and holding on to firmly entrenched positions.

Working together to compromise and resolve problems, rather than working at cross-purposes and engaging in endless litigation, is of longer and more lasting benefit to all involved, as well as leading toward a more efficient organization.

With the advent of our own USACE 2012 plan and the prospect of strategic sourcing initiatives, it is a categorical *imperative* that all employees, managers, and labor organizations work together to ensure that we meet these challenges.

Some labor-management relationships are models that we can all learn from, on both a personal and professional level. Others may well need work. Regardless of the state of affairs of any relationship, there is always room for improvement.

Note: This is the first in a series of articles pertaining to labor relations by Seth Shulman, Labor Management Employee Relations Team Leader.

Around the Corps

Black Engineer of the Year

Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Commander of Southwestern Division, has received the Black Engineer of the Year Award in the Professional Achievement in Government category. He will be presented this award by Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, Chief of Engineers, and the Career Communications Group at the Black Engineer of the Year Awards Conference Feb. 19-21 in Baltimore.

Gary Hawkins of New Orleans District, and Memphis Vaughan of Mobile District are Special Recognition Award winners, and will be honored during the Power Breakfast with the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Deans on Feb. 21.

Other Corps awardees are the Modern Day Technology Leaders. They will receive Certificates of Merit and be profiled in *U.S. Black Engineer and Information Technology Magazine*. They are Alexander Anyaegbunam, Alaska District; Marsha Dawson, Mobile District; Kamili Hitchmon, Jacksonville District; Stacy Humes, Savannah District; Valarie Smith, Alaska District; Clarence Thomas, Mississippi Valley Division; Michael Ware, Tulsa District; Olice Williams, Jacksonville District.

Workshop and luncheon

The 8th USACE Workshop & Luncheon will take place Feb. 19 at the Renaissance Harbor Place Hotel in Baltimore. This annual event is held in conjunction with the 18th Black Engineer of the Year Awards Conference.

At the workshop Corps employees will hear from senior leaders, get the latest information, and ask questions relating to career development and advancement. The theme is "Communications During Transformation," and includes presentations by Maj. Gen. Ronald Johnson, Director of Military Programs, Dwight Beranek, Deputy Director of Military Programs, and other Senior Executive Service members. There will also be a presentation on "The Cheese Experience, or How to Prepare Yourself and Others for Change during USACE 2012."

The luncheon's keynote speaker will be Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Commander of Southwestern Division, and currently in charge of Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil.

To register, contact Olivia Henry at (202) 761-0152, or e-mail olivia.c.henry@hq02.usace.army.mil



Congressman David Hobson, Chairman of the Defense Appropriations Committee, presents SAVE International's Golden Shears Award to Maj. Gen. Ronald Johnson, Director of Military Programs. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Photo)

Golden Shears Award

Two powerful congressmen honored the Corps and the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management (ACSIM) for saving tax dollars.

Congressman David Hobson of Ohio, Chairman of the Defense Appropriations Committee, presented the Golden Shears Award to the Corps and ACSIM at SAVE International's Congressional Education Reception on Sept. 10. He was joined by Congressman Ed Schrock of

Virginia, a member of the Armed Service, Budget, Government Reform, and Small Business committees.

SAVE gives the award to government and private agencies that successfully use Value Engineering and Value Management. Both the Corps and ACSIM were honored for cost-effective stewardship of tax dollars, while providing excellent customer satisfaction.

The Corps has saved and/or avoided more than \$3.8 billion since its VE program began, including more than \$192.3 million in FY02. Maj. Gen. Ronald Johnson, Director of Military Programs, accepted the award for the Corps, and John Nerger, Director of Facilities and Housing, accepted the award for ACSIM.

Hobson spoke after the presentation, saying, "I give the Corps of Engineers a lot of grief, but they really do a great job."

ASCE President's Medal

The American Society of Civil Engineers presented the President's Medal to Dwight Beranek, Deputy Director of Military Programs, during ASCE's annual meeting Nov. 15 in Nashville, Tenn. The President's Medal recognizes the accomplishments and contributions of eminent engineers to the profession, to ASCE, or to the public.

Architect of the Year

Doris Sullivan, an architect with St. Paul District, was inducted into American Society of Landscape Architects' Council of Fellows during the ASLA's annual meeting Oct. 30-Nov. 4 in New Orleans. The honor is given for outstanding accomplishments in landscape architecture, administrative leadership, knowledge, and service to the profession.

McMillan Island

Dredging material out of the navigation channel in the Mississippi River keeps open shipping arteries for commerce and recreation. But the dredged material has to go somewhere and be put to good use.

St. Paul District met that goal at McMillan Island about three miles north of Guttenberg, Iowa. For years, the island had been a temporary placement site for dredged material from maintenance of the nine-foot navigation channel. But the island had become a mountain of dredged material (182,000 cubic yards), so the district hired a contractor to move it upriver to Buck Creek for permanent storage.

In August 2002 the contractor began using a hydraulic dredge to pump material off the island through an 8,800-foot pipeline. The Buck Creek site work is nearly complete with tree planting and final seeding underway. The contractor graded Buck Creek, paved it for access, and installed entrances. The landowner will develop four acres for wildlife viewing. The southern six-acre end of the site will be open for beneficial use.

The contractor completed work at McMillan in June with construction of a new containment berm. The job restores McMillan Island as a placement site for dredged material.

National Public Lands Day

National Public Lands Day drew nearly 300 volunteers to New England District's Buffumville Lake and Hodges Village Dam. They worked on 15 projects around the facilities.

Their work included trailblazing, trash clean-up, weeding plants, habitat work, disc golf course upkeep, painting, installing posts, installing benches on top of the dam, and much more.

This was New England District's 12th year of participation in National Public Lands Day. Buffumville Lake and Hodges Village Dam were chosen for the seventh year as one of 500 locations to host the event. National Public Lands Day is a public-private partnership involving many federal, state, and local agencies

that work closely with businesses and numerous non-profit organizations.

Vehicle donation

Los Angeles District recently donated its former Soil Lab truck to the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority at Fort Defiance, Ariz. The truck will be used to haul potable water and equipment. The tribe also received a boat and trailer no longer used by the Survey Section. The Corps can donate civil assets that have been declared excess, and the Navajo Nation is one of the legal recipients.

Shifting sands

When sand choked the Mississippi River near Coulters Island July 29, St. Paul District's Channels and Harbors Unit had a plan ready. The unit, based in Fountain City, Wis., mobilized survey boats, coordinated marine advisories, and called a dredging contractor to clear the choke point at river mile 801.6 near Diamond Bluff, Wis.

"Just after 11 a.m. on July 29, a down-bound tow with 11 barges ran aground, blocking the channel," said Steve Tapp, project manager. "To free the barges, the tow shifted sands on the bottom of the river, creating bumps in Pool 3 that left the channel blocked for the next 54 hours. The grounding halted nine tows pushing 54 barges."

The Channels and Harbors unit project office sent a hydrographic survey launch to map the channel the next morning. "Once Launch 53 had checked the site, we decided the channel should be closed until a detailed survey could be conducted," said Tapp.

Groundings a week earlier had prompted a hydrographic survey of the area on July 23 and preparation of a dredging plan. Dredging at mile 801.6 was scheduled for July 29, the day of the grounding. A mechanical dredging contractor began to clear the first of nearly 40,000 cubic yards of sand and silt from channel July 30.

"They were on-site that morning and began dredging as soon as the new survey was complete and dredge cuts were laid out," said Tapp. By 5:30 p.m., July 31, a pilot channel about 180 feet wide had been cut between the nine-foot contours, and shipping resumed.

"All waiting vessels safely transited the area as of Aug. 1," said Dan Krumholz, project manager. "Complete maintenance dredging will take several weeks."

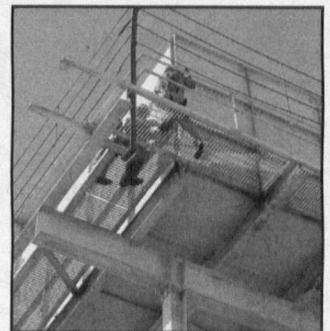
Safwan Pumping Station

The 40,000 residents of Safwan, Iraq, had no fresh drinking water, but not because their well went dry. Years of neglect and abuse transformed the pumping station into an antiquated collage of rusted and leaking pipes.

Today, safe drinking water flows to Safwan, thanks to the U.S. Agency for International Development. USAID assigned the Corps to monitor Bechtel National's contract to install new distribution pumps, piping, valves, filtration systems, and to restore water storage tanks.

Under USAID guidance, USACE, Bechtel, and subcontractor Al-Ryadh & Najid Company completed the job. The subcontractor logged more than 8,000 man-hours without injury and completed the work on schedule and within budget.

In a region where workers often perform dangerous jobs without adequate safety equipment, the contractor supplied full body harnesses, safety shoes, hard hats, and eye protection. A platform and rail system allowed the workers to safely dismantle an aboveground water tank while working almost 50 feet off the ground.



A platform, rail system, and other equipment keep Iraqi workers safe 50 feet above the ground. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo)

1950s soldier aids search for old ammo

By Candice Walters
Headquarters

A signature on a 50-year-old piece of paper and a bit of detective work are paying big dividends for the Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) program.

FUDS project managers in Fort Worth District found a 1950s range clearance document signed by a Maj. Dallas Lynch, and decided to see if Lynch could be found. Not only was Lynch still around, but Lt. Col. Lynch, now retired, proved to be a major find.

Lynch, 83 and still sharp, is providing FUDS project managers throughout the southern and western U.S. with valuable information he compiled while he led the 9800th Bomb and Shell Disposal Group in the early- to mid-1950s. The group was responsible for surface clearance of bombs and other munitions (mostly duds) on military installations from Wilmington, N.C., to Yakima Firing Range, Wash., that were being closed down and disposed of by the Department of Defense.

Lynch, who spent 20 years on active duty with the Army developing and clearing minefields, spent the next 24 years working for Little Rock District, earning a spot in the district's Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees.

At a workshop at the district Aug. 23-25, Lynch met with FUDS project managers from South Atlantic, Southwest, Northwest, and South Pacific divisions, explaining in great detail the work the 9800th group accomplished from 1952 through the middle of 1957 when he was reassigned to Korea.

For three days, Lynch sat at the head of the table in the Little Rock District office, reciting facts, figures, dates, and answering questions, often referring to his faded file folders, and a three-inch-thick picture album of black-and-white photographs held together with a rubber band.

"We did surface clearance only and, when we were finished, we provided certification that everything that reasonably



A photo from the 1950s shows 4.5-inch rockets unearthed at Southwest Proving Ground, Ark. (Photo by Dallas Lynch)

could be found was cleared," Lynch said. "It was written on the deeds then that this land was cleared for surface use only."

But too often deeds such as those recorded in the mid-1950s, titles, and other records have been misplaced at these now-closed military installations. And as time passes, the people who once worked on these installations also have disappeared.

That's why someone like Lynch, who actually cleaned up bombs and munitions from many military installations from the Carolinas to California, is a valuable information source.

Dwayne Ford, a FUDS project manager in Fort Worth District who made the original contact with Lynch, called the material and memories Lynch provided "truly invaluable. Records, if we find them, can be misleading, or there can be huge holes in the data. Many times we'll find that the sites may never have been used as ranges; it was just on paper. So getting information from someone who was actually there, you can't put a price on it. He identified a number of ranges that we had no record of and didn't know existed until we saw his photographs.

"The weekly range clearance reports Lynch submitted when he was perform-

ing the work, containing detailed maps, tables, and photographs, have disappeared in the ensuing decades, so the personal photos he took now provide some of the best information about these sites available to the FUDS team," Ford said.

"We'd love to locate other members of the 9800th or the other disposal groups," Ford continued. "We have big gaps, and there may be people out there who were on similar teams. We believe they have information that would be of value to us and help us save lives.

"Time is an issue; these people aren't going to be with us forever," Ford added. "Plus we're racing the clock at a number of these sites, as property is being developed on sites where we know there may be ordnance. It's dangerous and risky."

Just as risky as the work that Lynch and his crew did when clearing the ranges. Although most of the bombs cleared were duds, the team occasionally encountered live rounds. "We taught safety every day," Lynch said. "We had a scrap pile where we taught everyone to recognize a thousand different shells, fuses, etc., all in various stages of destruction."

And when you're dealing with areas where the group recovered 35 tons a week,

that's a lot of munitions. "At Midland, Texas, they were bombed worse than Berlin and didn't even know it," Lynch said.

On most ranges, which normally encompassed 1,200 acres, the group would encounter 5,000 to 10,000 bombs per range. On one range, through, the team found 20,000 bombs — that was the record, Lynch said. In most cases, the group relied on basic tools — axes, shovels, a pick-mattock, and a tool they invented themselves and nicknamed "Henry", a steel pick with a six-foot handle for extra leverage. They would pile up the practice bombs, or sometimes throw them in the back of one of their trucks.

"We never buried any (munitions), but we sure dug up a lot," Lynch said. "Most of the ranges had a two percent dud ratio, but lots of places it was five percent or higher. Southwest Proving Ground (Arkansas) had a higher percentage than other bombing ranges, and I don't know why."

Although it was dangerous work 50 years ago, it was a risk that Lynch was willing to take. "I'm satisfied in knowing that we cleared the land and made it safe enough for people to use."

And FUDS project managers were happy to find someone who could provide the historical information so critical to knowing what happened on these ranges, even if Lynch modestly said he was "drawing on the echoes of his memory."

"It was well worth my time," said John Baden, a FUDS project manager in Wilmington District, who attended the workshop. "It's very hard to find someone who has that amount of information who is still available to talk with. Col. Lynch explained what the terms meant on documents that we found — that 'no digging' meant that the land was to be used for forest or pasture."

Ford said that anyone who worked on these now-closed ranges or helped clear them should contact the nearest Corps of Engineers district Public Affairs Office. "They'll put you in contact with the FUDS program manager and we'll go from there," he said.

CERL fitness program earns kudos

By Angela Dickson
Construction Engineering Research Laboratory

The Construction Engineering Research Laboratory (CERL) has become a national model for the American Cancer Society's Active for Life program. The worksite fitness program, implemented last January, encourages employees to become more active, leading to improved health and fostering teamwork and morale.

"The idea is to get people who don't usually exercise doing moderate activity for 30 minutes a day, five days a week," said Wayne Schmidt, team captain of "Wayne's Walkers." Some participants, including Schmidt, already led active lifestyles but still joined the program for the fun and team-oriented competition.

The program's team approach stresses the benefits of moderate physical activity with individual, personalized goal setting to help adults stay fit. Team members earn one point for each minute of exercise, up to 150 points per week. Many participants exercise during lunch or walk after work, but all on their own time.

Many different activities earn points — running, walking, basketball, even salsa dancing! One team picked up



CERL employees exercise in the lab's fitness center. (Photo courtesy of CERL)

cans for recycling as they completed their mile walk twice daily. Several team members are training for triathlons.

"Treadmill Trotters" team member Elaine Kent began as a non-exerciser, but immediately discovered the benefits of the program. She began walking vigorously for 45 minutes a day on a treadmill in CERL's fitness

center. "I lost 20 pounds and 15 inches," she said. "I feel better, sleep better, and have more energy than before."

Sherry Scott, CERL's Safety and Environmental Health Coordinator, was ecstatic at the success of the first 10-week program, and decided to continue it through the end of the year.

Juli Richards, Regional Director of the Eastern Region of the American Cancer Society, said that CERL is the first worksite to implement the program year-round. "CERL has come a long way, and has exceeded its goals for employee motivation," Richards said.

In each 10-week program, about 80 CERL participants amassed nearly 150,000 points for their efforts.

CERL has always stressed healthy eating and physical activity and offers many programs to improve wellness, such as yoga, qigong (Chinese medical exercise), and tennis, but this program added an extra element of fun and rewarding competition. In surveys completed after the initial 10-week program, exercisers reported that individual goal setting, team support, and friendly competition kept them going. Susan Drozd of the "Just Do It" team explained, "The support of my peers and the challenge of competition kept me motivated the entire time."