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The Sign Program Newsletter US Army Corps of Engineers

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Welcome back to *The Sign Post*!

Welcome to an exciting new issue of *The Sign Post*, the informal periodic newsletter of "topics of interest" to Corps employees with an interest in signs and the National Sign Program.

This is the first issue of *The Sign Post* since Rick Magee's retirement in 2013. Many have asked for it, and I've certainly seen the need for it.

This issue features an interview with AJ (me), details about a site visit to UNICOR, general news about the Sign Program, additional information about sign retroreflectivity testing procedures, and a fun little article about the history of signs in Detroit and the rest of the United States.

Enjoy!

Report: UNICOR Sign Factory Visit

Heather England (of the Truman Sign Shop) and AJ visited the UNICOR sign factory in Lompoc, California on 19-21 May. Doug Pecyna, the facilities director, and Mike York, the foreman, hosted us and answered every question we asked them.

The purpose of our site visit was to inspect the facilities, observe the manufacturing process, and ensure that all of the signs produced for the Corps meet the high standards of excellence called for in our sign program.

UNICOR is another name for Federal Prison Industries, a branch of the US Department of Justice. UNICOR is the largest single provider of signs to the Corps of Engineers, followed by the Truman Sign Shop in the Kansas City district and the Lake Tulley Sign shop in the New England district.

We noticed the strong attention to detail exhibited by each inmate (known in the facility as employees). "Our employees take great personal pride in the signs they produce for the Corps," said Doug. "Sometimes it's hard to get them to stop working on signs at the end of the workday."



Mike York, AJ Jensen, Heather England, and Doug Pecyna at the UNICOR Sign Factory in Lompoc, California.

This work ethic showed, as we watched them exceed minimum standard tolerances for quality of materials and fabrication. The quality control mechanisms in place help to ensure a quality end-product.

If you order UNICOR signs for your project, and you wish to pay these inmates a huge compliment, take a photo of a newly installed sign and send it to the sign factory at unicor.sign.factory@usdoj.gov. Seeing their work installed gives them a huge feeling of accomplishment.

Notes from the Editor

These next two pages are my notes about various topics of interest to members of the Corps sign community. Hopefully you will find them to be of value.

If you have articles or photos that you would like to contribute to *The Sign Post*, please forward them on to me at aaron.j.jensen@usace.army.mil

Likewise, if you or your colleagues would simply like to help out by sending photos of a sign installation from start to end or something else useful like that others may be able to use to improve their programs, please send them on to me.

— AJ Jensen, Editor-in-Chief

Sign Standards Actually Make a Difference

Signs are so fun!

Pictured to the right is a lamp post in Beverly Hills, California, right next to Hollywood. We took this picture in May on a busy city street. In order to take the photo, we had to stop our vehicle and block traffic behind us.

I couldn't believe how much information there was to be read on a single lamp post. It was hard to read. I think that the mere act of our stopping to read the sign placed us into violation of one or more of them. ("How did you get that traffic ticket?" "Oh, I stopped to read a sign.")

Seems this municipality doesn't realize how to communicate effectively. Communicating a concise message in a brief moment is the best way to inform the public in instances like these.

It's easy to wonder if we're making a difference at our projects with signage, especially given the fact that we have so many competing duties. Sign program work is really thankless work. However, using our standards and other sign resources, we make a huge difference in the safety, direction, and aesthetics of our projects, and that's something to be proud of.



No Parking signs in Beverly Hills, California.
Photo: Heather England

Sign Manual News

The current version of the Corps Sign Standards Manual, Volume I (EP 310-1-6a), was last published in 2006. A lot has transpired since then, requiring a revision. It has been under review by the Sign Advisory Work Group (SAWG) since Rick Magee was the National Sign Program Manager. Right now, the SAWG and I are working on some of the advanced edits. We are aiming (and are very hopeful) to have it published sometime this year. We are trying to balance getting it out soon and getting it right, but getting it right is our first priority.

Volume II (EP 310-1-6b) is the part of the manual that deals with the technical side of sign materials and manufacturing. It was last updated in 1993. Yeah, that's a long time. Tim Grundhoffer, the engineering support element of the National Sign MCX, has compiled a lot of engineering data that will bring the publication up to industry standard on the manufacturing end. Most of us don't consult Volume II very often because SignPro and the sign manufacturers take care of that for us, but it's the baseline set of instructions that needs to be accessible, or our signs will not look as good or hold together as well.

New Approved Danger Signs

Two new land-based signs have been authorized by Headquarters and are available for use (see below).

You will notice that their wording is very similar to signs already in the Sign Manual; however, their distinct message was deemed necessary by project, district, and division sign program managers. They completed a safety sign waiver request, each of which was approved by the Sign Advisory Work Group, signed by the National Sign Program Manager, and approved at the Headquarters level.

Headquarters approval is required for the wording of all Danger, Warning, and Caution signs, per the Corps Sign Manual, EP 310-1-6a. If your project requires a sign of this type with wording that does not appear in the Sign Manual, complete a request for a non-standard safety sign using the procedures described on the Gateway at the following location: corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/sign/waivers.cfm

District sign program managers remain your point of contact to approve all sign orders.

Danger

**Hazardous Bottom
and Strong Currents**

**No Swimming,
Wading or Diving**

Danger

**Strong Currents
and Undertow**

**No Swimming,
Wading or Boating**

Training

I was a park ranger at Chief Joseph Dam in the Seattle district when I was first assigned sign duties. I spent a day or two in the field with my predecessor installing a couple of signs. The last sign we installed along a roadway, my predecessor was on the tractor and I was on the ground to watch the auger attachment, ensuring the hole was vertical. I noticed some roots were surfacing in the excavated soil, but when I looked around to see which plant they came from, there were none. Turns out they were communication wires. We had failed to make that little “call before you dig” phonecall three days before digging in that spot.

Over the next several months, as I strived to meet the project’s sign needs, I was forced to actually read the Sign Manual. I called other rangers at other projects for ideas and I got advice from my District Sign Manager. I looked on the Gateway. I researched the

MUTCD and I did a lot of online searching. From that, I learned a lot. But all along the way, I asked myself, “Isn’t there an easier way?” and “Why isn’t there a clear, concise, one-stop-shop approach to learning what I need to learn without having to search high and low for it?”

Signs are fun, so why shouldn’t training be, too? My take is that training should be straightforward, intuitive, and enjoyable. It should be simple and easy. Yes, there is a lot to learn, but you don’t have to learn it all at once.

I intend to send out surveys to find out what people’s training concerns are. When you respond to them, please be as detailed as you can. We read every response and appreciate the candid comments of everyone. Complaints are fine, but they carry more weight when you attach a solid recommendation for a solution.

Feature: Interview of AJ Jensen

Jeff Mangum, Chairman
National Sign Advisory Work Group

The following is an interview of the new National Sign Program Manager, AJ Jensen, conducted by Jeff Mangum, Chairman of the National Sign Advisory Work Group. Questions are italicized with answers in standard text.

You've been the National Sign Program Manager since last October. Where were you before that and what did you do?

I spent six years as a ranger at Chief Joseph Dam in the Seattle district. I started out as an interpretive ranger, but by the time I left, I was managing contracts,



AJ as a Corps park ranger at a boat show

performing budget work, and managing the project's sign program. I loved all three of those duties. In 2010,

I represented the Corps with a team of park rangers at the National Boy Scout Jamboree.

What are your hobbies?

My first hobby is my family. My wife Cindy and I have a house full of adventuresome daughters. With



The Jensen family in 2009

that comes cooking and grilling. I've always loved the outdoors. I'll go hiking and camping any time of year, whether it's blistering hot or icy cold. I love traveling. I've lived seven years of my life off US soil in the Orient, the Middle East, Canada, and South America. I love meeting new people and learning new languages. I speak Spanish and Arabic (and a bit of Korean). I also enjoy calligraphy. And I'm big into music. My dad was a professional musician, so my siblings and I all learned to sing and play instruments. I zoned-in on the string bass and bass guitar, but I also play some guitar, the recorders, and the viola. I enjoy most styles of music. I've been part of several symphony orchestras as well as rock, folk, and jazz bands.

Tell us more about your calligraphy hobby.

My sister and I went to the same college. She heard about a calligraphy class and invited me to take it with her. We had a great teacher (with whom I still maintain contact) and a great time. I use calligraphy to relax. You may notice the calligraphy artwork I did for *The Sign Post*. I did that with a pen on a sticky note during a recent PROSPECT course, scanned it, vectorized it, and cleaned it up to be usable for this publication.

You were big into Boy Scouting, weren't you?

Yes, I was a Cub Scout and a Boy Scout back in the '80s and '90s in Oregon and Washington. I even earned and received the Eagle Scout award and actively participated in the Order of the Arrow, which is essentially the advanced leadership training branch of Scouting. It was through Scouting and my father that I grew an enduring appreciation for the environment. I conducted and assisted with a lot of environmental service projects, from erosion control and wetlands restoration to wild animal rehabilitation projects. I've always enjoyed helping people achieve their goals, so as an adult, I have been a registered Scout leader for several years. Much of my Scouting experience contributed to my being hired as a park ranger for the Corps in 2008. As a ranger, I convinced a number of Eagle Scout candidates to execute their Eagle projects on Corps land.

What are some of the skills and experience that you bring to the table as the National Sign Program Manager?

In college I was a typesetter and editorial assistant for two published books. I also worked in three computer labs, one of which was part of a print shop, much like a FedEx or Staples lab. I took several advanced writing

ment. I've also worked in food and beverage processing facilities as a continuous improvement specialist and a quality assurance technician. My experience working at Chief Joseph Dam as a park ranger with sign duties gave me experience with SignPro, drafting sign plans, and performing sign installations. I wrote and managed several government contracts at Chief Joe. I also have experience as an analyst and mapmaker with the National Guard.

After Rick Magee left, his position was vacant for a year and a half. How are we to pick up the program after that?

Right off the bat, I have to say that Rick Magee was an incredible National Sign Program manager. I was sad to see him go. He, Jeff Mangum, and the other SAWG members have really done amazing things for this program. Unfortunately, a lot of talent has left our ranks over the last year or so. However, we still have many dedicated individuals who have stepped up. I met with the SAWG the first week of March. My realization: Our program has the right people to get the job done—passionate civil servants who care about the program at all levels. So it's easy for me to see that we're continuing to build on what our predecessors started for us. And we'll continue to improve.

Do you have any particular goals for the Sign Program?

I've begun to work on several things since I began working here. Some things that are long overdue: The Sign Manual needs to be updated regularly. SignPro needs improvements. Meaningful communication needs to increase. I want people who have sign duties "dumped" on them to feel like they have all of the resources they need to succeed. At one time or another, we've all felt overwhelmed with sign duties. I want to help eliminate that frustration through appropriate training and communication. I also see that there are many people across the country who don't have sign plans in place, or have sign plans that have not been updated for years. Each project needs an up-to-date sign plan. These are all achievable goals. We really can get there if we work as a team.

What are some ways that you plan to find out the needs of the program at the project levels?

I send out surveys from time to time. I always ask for honest, unfiltered feedback because that's the only



AJ (R) with his younger brother Jacob (L) at an awards ceremony in 2012, where AJ received the Silver Beaver award. AJ and two of his brothers (including Jacob) are Eagle Scouts.

courses. After graduation, I taught English and edited publications in Korea for four years. After completing my MBA studies, I worked in a county finance depart-

way for me to understand the full extent of people's feelings. When responding, always communicate what you feel needs to be changed or improved with specific details on how you feel it should be.

I really do emphasize the need for "unfiltered" feedback. I don't even care if you sound harsh. Just say it! Speak up! Besides, those unfiltered comments give me the ammunition I need to make recommendations on up the line. Please be patient if changes don't happen immediately. With a large organization like ours, we have to fully examine the potential effects of implementing each change and prioritize them. But if you don't speak up, we can't make the change, right?!

What's your take on training?

Training strikes many as mundane, dry, boring... you name it—something that most of us dread. I'm not a huge fan of "webinars" myself, nor most other online trainings. I've been to countless trainings where subject matter experts would teach you theory and a whole bunch of fluff, but nothing "down and dirty" or "hands-on" (which was what you really needed the whole time). I'm not saying we won't have any webinars or online training, but my vision for it makes learning about specifics of the program a bit more practical and enlightening. Of course, this won't happen right away; it's a work in progress. Be sure to participate in the surveys to voice what you need for training and how you think it would be most effectively implemented.

Are you willing or able to travel around to deliver in-person trainings?

If your district or division would like me to visit in-person to provide onsite training about the Sign Program, here's how it works: My labor is already

funded from my budget, so your district/division would simply fund my travel-related expenses and I'll get travel orders to visit you. I'll put together any sign-related training you ask for, from site inspections and SignPro training to getting started from nothing and creating sign plans. This is great for NRM conferences or any other occasion you come up with. Something to think about.



AJ with his string bass, as an active performer with the Okanogan Valley Symphony Orchestra, the pit orchestra for several musicals, and a jazz combo.

What do you see as the roles in the Sign Program structure?

I fully acknowledge that the real "boots on the ground" people managing the National Sign Program are the project sign program managers. I came from being one of them, so I know the role first-hand. These fine individuals meet each project's signage needs better than anyone else because they actually see their projects every day and accordingly rise to the occasion. They've got their hands on everything sign related. Without them, we have no program.

As the National Sign Program Manager, I'm now responsible for leading the sign community toward building a consistent program across the nation. The Sign Manual (EP 310-1-6a, b) is our source

of guidance to accomplish this. I rely heavily on the Sign Advisory Work Group (SAWG), a group of representatives from across the nation, to provide knowledge, experience, and perspective as we make program improvements together. Tim Grundhoffer (the Sign Program Technical and Engineering representative) and I together form the Sign Program Mandatory Center of Expertise (MCX), which answers directly to Headquarters. Tim is heading up the revision of Volume II of the Sign Manual.

Now for District and Division Sign Program Managers. District Sign Program Managers are and will

remain the key to running a good program throughout the agency, specifically at the project level. Keeping them informed and up-to-speed is going to be my ongoing focus. Even though the project sign program manager is where the action really happens, the district sign program manager is the critical liaison between the national program and the project. They are the Quality Assurance managers of the program. They approve all sign orders (ER 1130-2-500, 6-2b(2, 3)) and

provide advice on sign verbiage. They see that each project sign manager consistently maintains a current and useful sign plan. They train new project sign managers. Most of my communication will be directed to them. The Division managers assist the District managers when called on. I will keep them in the loop when I communicate with the District Sign Program Managers.

SignPro

I get a lot of questions about SignPro. You're the end-user of SignPro, so you deserve to know what's going on right now. There is actually good news!

We all know that SignPro is a fundamentally important piece of database software. SignPro is a pretty powerful little program that performs a number of important functions in our program. It was released a little under 10 years ago.

I have been working with the Kansas City district contracting team to get SignPro "migrated" from an older, non-compliant server to a newer approved server. Previous National Sign Program Manager Rick Magee began this drawn-out process, but some complications arose that couldn't be fully resolved before his 2013 retirement. During my interview for this position, I committed to getting SignPro migrated and updated. I am still committed to that. So, no, SignPro is not dying. Keeping it alive is critical to our program.

So here's the good news: As of June 2015, there is an awarded contract to migrate SignPro from the old to new servers! The contractor has already begun preparations to make this happen.

During my years as a park ranger, I was tasked with sign duties, and that means using SignPro. I found that in the beginning, SignPro seemed a bit clunky, but after spending some time with it, I stopped complaining and found it quite useful and handy in accomplishing my sign duties. If you are experienced with SignPro, you are aware that not all of its originally designed functions work properly. You've also likely noticed that the reports coming out of SignPro are not the eas-

iest to read. I'm working toward overcoming some of those hang-ups with this migration.

After the execution of the contract for SignPro's migration, update, and trouble-shooting, we will have some breathing room to determine where we will go next. We are considering writing a maintenance contract for SignPro, with the ability to update it. Whatever we do, the reality is that we are subject to budget limitations. But we try to maximize the value of the resources given us.

Here's what I need from every end-user of SignPro: We need to hear all of your complaints, bickerings, whines, howlings, hissings, gripes, groans, vexations, wailings, booings, and sob stories that SignPro has introduced to your life. This is important. Please detail all of the glitches that you have ever experienced, regardless of whether you have voiced them before.

We need "unfiltered" comments about SignPro. Don't worry about offending me. If you are frustrated, express your frustration, specify what about SignPro frustrated you, and recommend a course of action for improvement. I can't promise the world, but I can compile your comments to use as back-up materials when I make budget requests. If you don't speak up about your frustration, I can't do anything about it. I just ask that you have patience with me in working to get things done. If you feel you aren't getting satisfaction, send me an e-mail or call me.

Details matter. I am thanking you in advance for sharing with me anything and everything about how we can make that program work better!

Before Order Came Chaos

John Derby, Special to *The Sign Post*
Sign Advisory Work Group Representative, NWD

We see traffic signs every day. Some warn of us danger and others direct us to stop. We don't seem to give them a second thought, other than to occasionally notice that there are too many signs that ruin a scenic view of a landscape or snow capped mountain. Ever stop and wonder who invented traffic signs? Or perhaps you've been too busy texting and talking on your iPhone to even think about it? So who was it that invented the famous word *Stop* and the shape recognized worldwide?

Let's check out the history of early traffic signs and how they evolved. We can start with this man, Charles Brady King, who in 1896 became the first person to drive a gasoline powered automobile also known as the "horseless carriage" automobile in down town Detroit Michigan (it would be another three months before Henry Ford test-drove his first car).

King made history by steering his horseless carriage down St. Antoine Street to Jefferson Avenue and then swung north on Detroit's famous Woodward Avenue to Grand Boulevard. The age of the horseless carriage was born. After King followed other inventors, including Henry Ford, who flooded the market with cheap inexpensive cars called Tin Lizzys and Model T's. However, with new technology come new issues. Horseless carriages require fuel, without which they go nowhere. How do we inform drivers how far the next town is where they can refuel at 12¢ a gallon?

The answer appeared in the form of rocks—yes, piles of rocks shaped like a small pyramid—placed along rural roads to mark distance in miles. Today, the rocks have been replaced with metal signs called mile posts or mile markers. But once a driver enters a

big city, who has the right of way? How fast should a car go in town? Who should move out of the way—the horse pulling a cart, or the children playing stick ball? Americas were suddenly faced with solving the dilemma of how to control all those new cars on the road to prevent ever-increasing numbers of citizens from being killed.

Several tabloids from the early 1900s exposed auto accidents as a real menacing problem. Statistics kept by the Nascent Automobile Club of America recorded that in 1909, there were 200,000 motorized vehicles in the United States. In 1916, just seven years later, there were 2.25 million. In 1917, Detroit and its suburbs had 65,000 cars on the road, resulting in 7,171 accidents and 168 fatalities. Three-fourths of the victims were pedestrians, a third of which were children. The law enforcement of this era did not even have rules for citizens driving intoxicated. In fact (much

like today), the laws were being written in a reactionary fashion as the accidents were happening. Cars did not have turn signals or even break lights. Most used a single marker light on the rear bumper.

The Nascent tabloid reported one young woman was detained by a policeman after driving on a Detroit sidewalk and killing several people. It had been her 26th arrest for reckless driving. She said she suffered from blackouts. Meanwhile politicians, police and judges held debates in courtrooms and discussed in editorials that the automobile was inherently evil. The state of Georgia's Court of Appeals wrote:

"Automobiles are to be classed with ferocious animals and ... the law relating to the duty of owners of such animals is to be applied... However, they are



The streets of Detroit (1917) were much like other cities of the day, filled with pedestrians, streetcars, automobiles, and horse-drawn wagons. Without a system of interaction, traffic flow was much less efficient than today (Photo: *The Detroit News* archives).

not to be classed with bad dogs, vicious bulls, evil disposed mules, and the like."

The Law of the Automobile, published in 1906, discussed the legal ramifications of driving inside our cities and invented new words like "speeding," a new concept never before thought of since the horse was the main source of transportation. Lawmakers had to ask serious questions including what's the purpose or function of a street. What rights should be conveyed to the people who walk in town? Children of those days played in the streets because there were no playgrounds till after the 1930s. So what should be done about the children who are injured or killed from speeding cars?

The auto capitol of Detroit came up with the idea of controlling intersections by developing the first stop sign in 1915. Also developed were lane markings, one-way streets, and traffic signals.

The first stop signs of 1915 had black lettering on a white background and were 24 by 24 inches, somewhat smaller than the current sign. As stop signs became more widespread, a committee supported by the American Association of State Highway Officials or (AASHO) met in 1922 to standardize them, and selected the octagonal shape, which has been used in the United States ever since. It has even become the international standard. The unique eight-sided shape of the sign allows drivers facing the back of the sign to identify that oncoming drivers have a stop sign and prevent confusion with other traffic signs.

"Automobiles are to be classed with ferocious animals... However, they are not to be classed with bad dogs, vicious bulls, evil disposed mules, and the like."



The first stop signs were a new concept. To keep drivers from ignoring the first traffic control devices, many were manned by police officers of the Traffic Squad (Photo: *The Detroit News* archives, 1926).

Even the Corps of Engineers had to answer the call for proper signage as recreation boomed in the late 50s. Our day-use areas grew in popularity, and with growth came driving problems. The ranger program as we know it today is rather young—Nashville District hired its first ranger, Mr. Gerald Purvis, in only as recently as the early seventies. The first ER to discuss signs was issued in 1972 as Engineering Regulation (ER 1130-2-400), which it required each division to have its own sign manual.

Today, there are over 400 Corps projects, each with a designated project sign coordinator responsible for managing the sign program to ensure our guests have a safe and enjoyable time. So when you're driving around your parks—or along any public roadway, for that matter—and you see the famous R1-1 stop sign, stop and remember who it was who developed it and

how many people paid the ultimate sacrifice for us to have this one-word legacy.

John Derby, Natural Resources Specialist
Seattle Washington, Seattle District

Excerpts taken from the article 1900-1930: The Years of Driving Dangerously, by Bill Loomis, special to The Detroit News. For the full article and an array of historical traffic photos see www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan-history/2015/04/26/auto-traffic-history-detroit/26312107/

Sign Program Surveys

I sent out a sign program survey in February via the NRM Gateway. I received 50 responses, which is great! I asked for “unfiltered” responses and comments. I always do. It’s the best way for our group to communicate, too.

Want to know what I got from the survey? It’s actually pretty consistent with my own experience while I was project sign manager. Here goes: 1) SignPro is an important and useful sign management tool, but has issues that need to be addressed like mapping, 2) the Sign Manual is helpful but needs some updating, 3) many sign managers (project and district) wish for online and in-person training, 4) sign acquisition is a challenge – in ordering through contracting and in delayed wait-times with the Corps sign shops and UNI-

COR, and 5) there needs to be better communication with district sign managers.

We expect to make use of surveys as an ongoing feedback mechanism. When you participate in these surveys, don’t forget to be completely frank. Be detailed in the comments sections to clarify some of your responses, because we read all of them. They give us a picture of how things are really happening in the field. They are a great time to expose your successes and frustrations.

I hope to send out another one soon. Please be as detailed as possible, especially on questions about SignPro, as we need as much timely information on how to improve it as possible.

FHWA Reflectivity Requirements

Are your project’s signs in full compliance of the national retroreflectivity standards?

In 2009, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released the most current version of the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) which contained information about retroreflectivity standards for all traffic signs on lands accessible to the public. In 2011, the FHWA released a document It also implemented a requirement to test signs every two years and have a plan for bringing the out-of-compliance signs into compliance. The document gave agencies across the nation until June, 2014 to implement a plan of action to meet this new requirement.

Taken from the document:

“This Standard does NOT imply all signs need to be replaced. The intent is to identify and replace signs that no longer meet the needs of nighttime drivers.

“The MUTCD language recognizes that there may be some individual signs that do not meet the minimum retroreflectivity levels at a particular point in time. Reasons for this include vandalism, weather, or damage due to a crash. As long as the agency is using one of the methods (with appropriate procedures) to maintain their signs, they are considered to be in compliance with this Standard.”

The Corps of Engineers is committed to full compliance to this standard. Testing each such sign every two years is a requirement, even with brand-new signs. Documentation of testing (every two years) will be recorded in your sign plan. If signs are found to be out of compliance, a written plan of action to replace them is required to be placed into the project sign plan. The primary concern is safety. Close behind is the liability factor. By properly following these procedures, we reduce the civil liability to the Corps, which is part of our charge.

Regular testing for reflectivity on signs is nothing new for us. Volume II, Section 3, page C13 has an older step-by-step process on how to maintain reflectivity on signs (did you know that?). However, the new FHWA nighttime retroreflectivity guidance is a higher standard than the SOP we have been using for years. We have our new guidance, so we proceed forward. If you have problems or questions on how to make it happen, notify your District Sign Manager.

For further information, visit the FHWA webpage http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/night_visib/

To download a .pdf of the guidance (which includes methods for testing signs on roadways: http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/night_visib/sign_retro_4page.pdf

Meet the National Sign Committee!



The National Sign Committee (from left to right): Jeff Mangum (North Atlantic Division and SAWG Chairman), Paul Harris (South Pacific Division), Jack Nichol (Great Lakes & Ohio River Division), Kim Rea (Mississippi Valley Division), John Derby (Northwest Division), Steve Logan (South Atlantic Division), AJ Jensen (Manager, National Sign Program MCX), Tim Grunhoffer (Engineering & Technical Support, National Sign Program MCX), and Paula Rafferty (Southwest Division). Not pictured is Milt Boyd (Counsel, HQUSACE).

The National Sign Committee, consisting of the Sign Advisory Work Group (SAWG) and the National Sign Mandatory Center of Expertise (MCX) held this year's annual meeting in March at in Warsaw, Missouri at Truman Project of the Kansas City District.

A seasoned group saturated with great enthusiasm for signs, a love for the Corps, and good humor, the SAWG convened to discuss the ongoing needs of the National Sign Program.

Ideally, the National Sign Committee meets together annually to ensure that the program consistently meets the needs of the projects nationwide. This was the first meeting since 2013.

Each member of the committee has been selected to perform a specific function. You will notice that each of the largest seven divisions is represented on the group. The Mandatory Center of Expertise (MCX) also participates, as do certain Headquarters elements, which usually include Counsel, Navigation, Safety,

and a Natural Resources program liaison, although there are some vacancies waiting to be fulfilled.

The meeting's two biggest topics were 1) getting the Sign Manual's next revision finalized and published and 2) keeping SignPro functioning. Others included getting *The Sign Post* going again, retroreflectivity compliance, sign training needs across the Corps, the newest ANSI standards for safety signs, improving communication in the program, updating the group's charter and mission statement, and more.

The group was privileged to speak with Mary Coulombe, Chief of Natural Resources, by phone. She voiced her support for the program and encouraged the group to continue doing its best. See the Gateway for the meeting minutes.

If you have an issue that you feel should be brought to the attention of the National Sign Committee, feel free to notify your district sign program manager, who has contact with your division SAWG representative.