

Brian Osberghaus, NRM CAP February – July 2019

One of the highlights of my career was my selection for the Natural Resource Management Career Assignment Program at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Up to this point I had spent my career as a summer hire, co-op, and journeyman ranger; then as a natural resource specialist and later as supervisor and manager on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. I have worked at projects in the Kansas City, Tulsa, New Orleans, and the Little Rock Districts.

Everything about this assignment intrigued me. There's no denying that I had some anxiety leading up to my first day there but from my first moments in the building the staff was very welcoming and did everything to challenge me to do my best. I worked for the Chief of NRM Jeff Krause and assisted his staff including Steve Austin, Jeremy Crossland, Scott Strotman, John Coho, Heather Burke, Pam Doty, Mike Riegert and Mike Richards (both of the Mike's were also on assignments).

One of the greatest tasks I worked on was to support General Semonite's initiative to place the Army Star Logo on project entry signs. The support effort for this initiative was impressive due to the involvement of the different parties that made it happen in such short order. Within six months we were able to go from a concept and directive to implementation. In actuality, many of my tasks involved collaboration with Office of Counsel, Public Affairs Office, ACE-IT, Real Estate, and different RIT's and MSC's along with the appropriate NRM program manager. With very few exceptions, these different team members worked in unison to quickly complete each of these tasks.

The scope of some of the work assignments span more than one CAP assignment. Some of these I picked up where Eric Schreckengost left off before me and handed off to Heather Wood after me. While that is not ideal, it is just the way business has to be done sometimes.

The NRM CAP assignment may not be for everyone. The appointee must be able to break out of their comfort zone. While many of our projects are in remote and rural areas where employees drive to work, this assignment requires living in a very metropolitan city (expenses paid) and using mass transit. It can be a little intimidating at first but I found it to be an easy transition. The tasks will challenge you and force you to think outside the box. You grow immensely during these assignments.

I am grateful for my boss's support as well as my district's and division's support of my NRM CAP application and even more grateful to the NRM team in HQ for my selection and supporting me during my assignment.