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St. Paul District

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Corps improves habitat at Long Meadow Lake wildlife refuge



Joel Face (left), St. Paul District, and a contractor inspect work at Long Meadow Lake near Bloomington, Minn., November 2006. More, Page 12. (Photo by Don Powell)

District's budget preparations pay off

**Fiscal year 2007:
Where are we going?**

by Col. Mike Pfenning
St. Paul District Commander

On Feb. 15, 2007, President Bush signed into law the "Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007," which provides appropriations for continuing projects and activities for the federal government through fiscal year 2007. Many might ask – "What does this mean for the St. Paul District?"

During these last few months there has been much discussion and debate on how to finalize the appropriation bills for fiscal year 2007.

The Corps of Engineers has become accustomed to balancing the dynamic and changing civil works budget, and this year is no exception. Every summer, the Corps districts and divisions anticipate funding for the following year for which the next fiscal year budget is projected. Last summer, St. Paul District, in coordination with the Mississippi Valley Division, developed a projected workload for fiscal 2007.

While, we are still awaiting final approval of our plan for project funding under the recently passed "Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007," there are some additional projects included that we must be prepared to execute quickly.

- General investigations, or GI funds, are used to evaluate water resource projects that will be funded in future years. Many describe these evaluations as our "seed-corn" for the future. In the summer of 2006, we anticipated a fiscal 2007 allotment of \$1.1 million. Yet, based on our most recent information, the effort for 2007 could be as much as 40-percent more than originally anticipated.

- Construction general, or CG funds, are used to construct our authorized projects. The district might receive 50 percent more than the originally anticipated \$24.8 million. This will be particularly favorable to completing work on the Grand Forks, N.D., and East Grand Forks, Minn., project as well


as, continuing the environmental infrastructure program and the Mississippi River environmental management program.

- Operations and maintenance, or O&M funds, are used to operate and maintain navigation and recreation projects. In the summer of the 2006, we anticipated a fiscal 2007 allotment of \$67.3 million. Current estimates project 14 percent less than originally thought. I applaud the efforts of our operations and maintenance management team in developing a revised fiscal year 2007 program that best addresses the current needs of the district.

So to answer the question: "What does this mean to the St. Paul District?" For the next few months, we will be challenged to execute significantly larger GI and CG programs than we originally anticipated. While our operations and maintenance program has been scaled back, we will accomplish our other important activities. Each of us must be ready to proactively work with our project development teams, maintain excellent communication with all team members and be prepared to execute our revised programs. We have a significant amount of work ahead for the remainder of the 2007 fiscal year, but I am absolutely confident that we will complete it on schedule, within budget and to required specifications.

Finally, thank you for the work that each of you do on a daily basis to sustain our reputation of successful mission accomplishment with our customers and the American citizens.

Essayons!



US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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St. Paul District photo

Dave Rydeen, design branch, helps students at Washington Technology Middle School in St. Paul, Minn.



St. Paul District photo

Matt Bray, design branch, usually visits Washington Technology Middle School in St. Paul, Minn., to support students with math and science.

District builds bridges with 8th grade students

By Peter Verstegen

For almost three years, Dave Rydeen and others from the St. Paul District have supported math and science learning at Washington Technology Middle School in St. Paul, Minn. Rydeen is chief of geotech, geology and surveys in design branch.



This year, he's been tutoring eighth-grade students in solving algebra problems at the middle school. "We go to the school in St. Paul, typically one afternoon a week," said Matt Bray, cost engineer in design branch. "Dave [Rydeen], I and Denise Kapler, the teacher, break up into three groups. Each group has four to six

kids. We review homework assignments for the day and review example problems. Our Corps' tutors also bring in problems, exercises and demonstrations. This year, we have given presentations on flood fighting and how a lock on the Mississippi River works."

Said Rydeen, "We usually break into groups in the same room – we have a large room this year. In previous years, we would go to other rooms." The school is undergoing a major renovation this year, which has restricted access to rooms."

Jody Kormanik, water control, set up the lock demonstration. Adele Braun, design branch, brought in a bridge-building exercise for the students.

Also, students learned to build a bridge using candy bars and various office supplies. "Last year, Rydeen brought in the surveying level and we had an exercise out in the park," said Bray. "I gave them a cost-estimating problem related to excavating a foundation. The students tend to respond positively to projects we bring into the class."



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St. Paul District photo

Lori Taylor, design branch, visited project site in Jefferson Parish near New Orleans in January to become acquainted with the geography there.

Taylor designs levee overtop protection for New Orleans

by Mark Davidson

Lori Taylor, an engineering technician with the engineering and construction division, has been doing Computer-Assisted Design and Drafting, or CADD, support work in New Orleans since Dec. 11. And, she thinks the world of the New Orleans District people she works with there.

“I pretty much sit behind a computer and crank out drawings 12 hours a day, so the only residents I come in contact with are my New Orleans District co-workers,” said Taylor.

“All I can say about them is that they work their tails off. Most work the same number of hours I do, only they have been doing it for a year-and-a-half. Add to that

the fact that many of them and/or their families have been directly affected by the storm on a personal level. They are pretty amazing folks. It makes me feel good that I can lighten their load ... even if it’s just a little bit.”

The projects that Taylor has been working on involve laying out concrete slope pavement to protect existing levees should they be overtopped. This is just a temporary fix, said Taylor, to hold the levees through the next hurricane season.

“Other St. Paul folks are working on permanent solutions which involve building T-walls or higher levees,” said Taylor. “They are really short staffed down here, so I will be coming down here every other month.”

Army Corps, local sponsor sign cooperation pact for levee work

by Peter Verstegen

The Army Corps of Engineers and local sponsors in New Orleans signed a cooperative agreement on Feb. 13 for the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity phase one construction work. “The St. Paul District expects to advertise the LPV 103 Phase 1 contract in the first week of March, award the end of March and complete

construction the end of July,” said Bill Csajko, project manager.

Phase 1 construction is designed to bring levees in the LPV 103 zone up to their original design elevation.

“LPV 103 is on schedule to be the first Hurricane Protection Office project restored to its original design elevation,” said Marsha Mose, liaison for the upper five districts working on hurricane protection in New Orleans. Mose

is chief of design branch in St. Paul District and on temporary duty in New Orleans with the HPO.

“Due to subsidence in the area, the levees are lower than their original construct elevations,” he said.

The agreement also includes providing scour protection and seepage protection for existing floodwalls.

Civilian education system prepares leaders for change

by Pat Berczyk

The only thing constant in our Army is change. As the Army continues to transform to successfully accomplish its missions of tomorrow, civilian leaders must be adequately prepared to support the Army in any venue.

The Civilian Education System, or CES, is a new progressive and sequential leader development system that provides enhanced leader development and education opportunities for Army civilians. It is being fully deployed in January 2007 – one year ahead of the original schedule. The new courses are to more accurately reflect the skill sets needed by Army civilians to match what the uniformed Army receives.

G-3 and G-1, both part of the Army’s deputy chief of staff, supervise civilian training. TRADOC (Training and Doctrine Command) administers the curriculum development and training for them.

Today, the military’s reliance on civilians is becoming more pronounced as the transforming Army operates in a new “operational” environment. The Global War on Terrorism has

caused uniformed leaders to be increasingly assigned and focused on war-fighting missions. Consequently, more leader responsibilities are being shouldered by civilian employees, many of whom are also serving in operational environments. Civilians are a critical part of the unified Army team.

The CES leader development program includes the civilian foundation course and three levels of leader development training – the basic course, the intermediate course, and the advanced course.

The foundation course, FC for short, is designed for civilians entering the Army, but mandatory for all new supervisors, interns, team leaders and managers hired after Sept. 30, 2006. This course is entirely distributed learning (computer-based courses). Students learn to understand and appreciate Army values and customs, serve professionally as a member of the Department of the Army, acquire foundation competencies for leader development, develop effective communication skills, and be ready to assume a first leadership role.

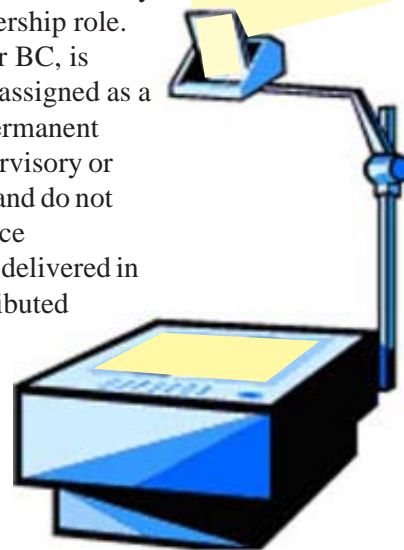
The basic course, or BC, is required for civilians assigned as a team leader or in a permanent appointment in a supervisory or managerial positions and do not have course/experience substitution. It will be delivered in a combination of distributed learning and resident attendance. Students will understand and apply basic leadership skills to

effectively lead and care for small teams, apply effective communication skills and develop and mentor subordinates. The BC replaces LEAD, or Leadership Education and Development. The prerequisite for this course is the foundation course, if required, and the ACTEDS, or Army Civilian Training Education and Development System, supervisor development course.

The intermediate course, or IC, is required for civilians in a supervisory or managerial position

Civilian education, continued Page 6

The Civilian Education System provides enhanced leader development and education opportunities for Army civilians.



Civilian education, from Page 5 and employees who are program managers and who do not have course/experience substitution. It will be a combination of distributed learning and resident attendance. Students learn skills to manage human and financial resources, direct program management and systems integration; and display flexibility, resilience and focus on the mission. The IC replaces OLE or organizational leadership for executives. Prerequisites for this course are the foundation course (if required) and the basic course.

The advanced course, or AC, is required for civilian leaders in a

permanent appointment as a supervisor or manager at GS-13 or comparable pay band and who do not have course or experience substitution. It is a combination of distributed learning and resident attendance. Students become skilled in leading a complex organization; managing human and financial resources; leading change; inspiring vision and creativity; directing program management and systems integration; and displaying flexibility, resilience and focus on mission. The advanced course replaces SBLM, or sustaining base leadership and management. The

prerequisite for this course is completion of the foundation, basic and intermediate courses.

All CES courses are now centrally funded by Headquarters Department of Army. All Corps employees, regardless of salary funding source, will be fully funded to attend CES courses. The restriction that civil-funded Corps employees had to pay their way for Army leadership courses is eliminated.

Employees who are interested in the CES courses should discuss them with their supervisors as part of their individual development plan.

Web sites offer tips to prepare for pandemic

by Mark Davidson

There are several federal and state government Avian Flu web sites on the Internet that you should review on a regular basis to see what is going on with this strain of flu. Sharing this information with family members and friends will help you be prepared for an outbreak in Minnesota, according to St. Paul District emergency readiness officials.

Here at work, employees should review the link on the district Intranet site called "District Pandemic Flu." This is updated weekly by the public affairs office with information about the avian and other types of flu.

A one-stop access to U.S. government avian and pandemic flu information can be found at <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>. This site provides guidance for federal, state, local and individual planning efforts and is managed by the Department of Health and Human Services. Pick your state from the U.S. map at this link, and a large amount of information on state and local planning appears.

Or, you can take a look at the current status of avian flu in the world by clicking on "Avian Flu Watch" and receive the number of confirmed cases by location in the world as reported to the World Health Organization.

The links for schools in Minnesota, from K-12 to the state colleges and universities, have lots of information on how those government agencies will manage the avian flu and other pandemic outbreaks.

Other excellent web sites to search for avian flu information include:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/> (Center for Disease Control and Prevention);

<http://www.who.int/en/> (World Health Organization);

<http://www.hhs.gov/pandemicflu/> (Dept. of Health and Human Services);

<http://www.opm.gov/pandemic> (Office of Personnel Management);

<http://www.osha.gov/dsg/guidance/avian-flu.html> (OSHA).

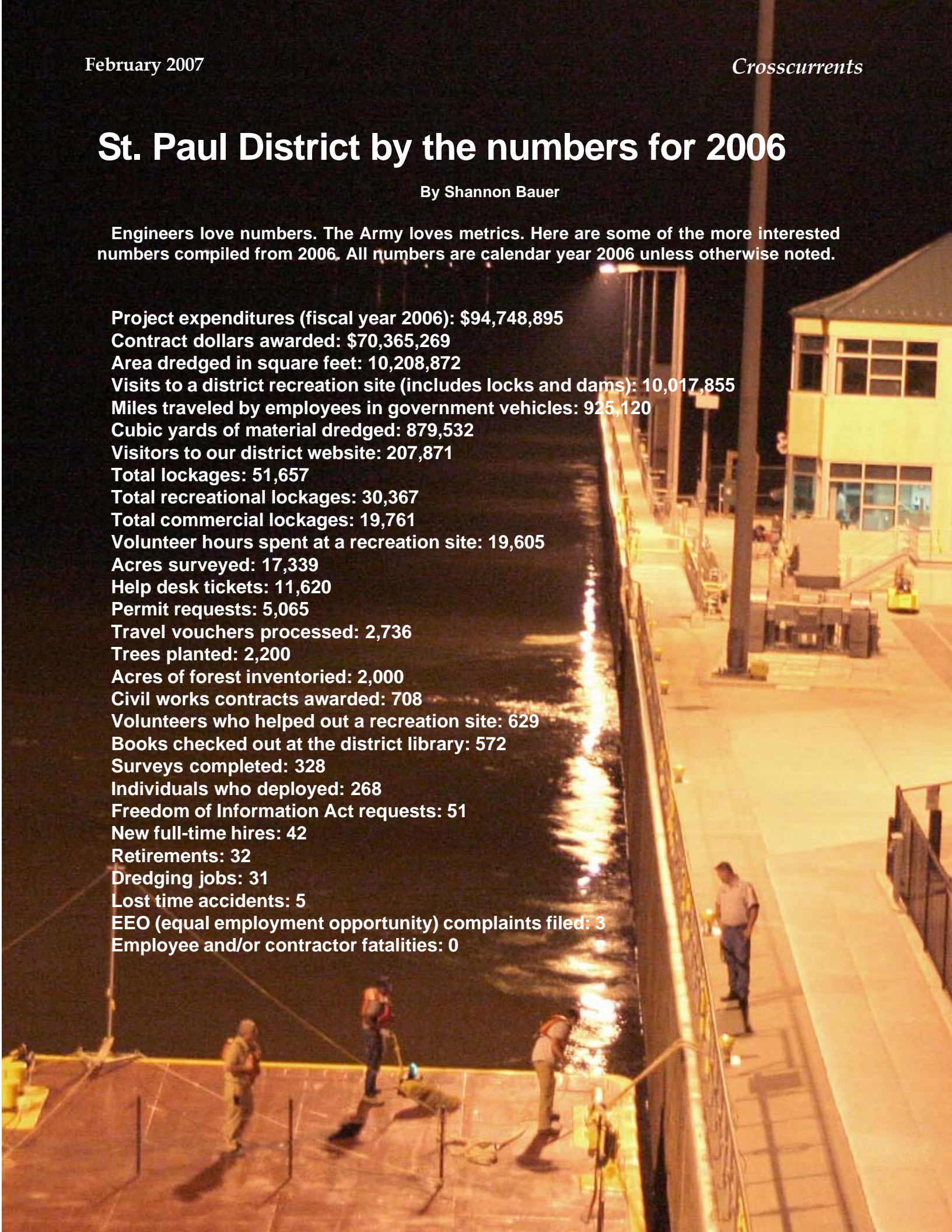


St. Paul District by the numbers for 2006

By Shannon Bauer

Engineers love numbers. The Army loves metrics. Here are some of the more interested numbers compiled from 2006. All numbers are calendar year 2006 unless otherwise noted.

- Project expenditures (fiscal year 2006): \$94,748,895
- Contract dollars awarded: \$70,365,269
- Area dredged in square feet: 10,208,872
- Visits to a district recreation site (includes locks and dams): 10,017,855
- Miles traveled by employees in government vehicles: 925,120
- Cubic yards of material dredged: 879,532
- Visitors to our district website: 207,871
- Total lockages: 51,657
- Total recreational lockages: 30,367
- Total commercial lockages: 19,761
- Volunteer hours spent at a recreation site: 19,605
- Acres surveyed: 17,339
- Help desk tickets: 11,620
- Permit requests: 5,065
- Travel vouchers processed: 2,736
- Trees planted: 2,200
- Acres of forest inventoried: 2,000
- Civil works contracts awarded: 708
- Volunteers who helped out a recreation site: 629
- Books checked out at the district library: 572
- Surveys completed: 328
- Individuals who deployed: 268
- Freedom of Information Act requests: 51
- New full-time hires: 42
- Retirements: 32
- Dredging jobs: 31
- Lost time accidents: 5
- EEO (equal employment opportunity) complaints filed: 3
- Employee and/or contractor fatalities: 0



District works to save, organize and establish platform for project and work data

By Shannon L. Bauer

The old government filing system just can't keep up with the digital age.

As our ability to create, obtain and use large amounts of data continues to grow, our ability to organize, archive and later retrieve it continues to decline.

Large amounts of data continue to be lost when people retire or change jobs. In many cases, important correspondence sent via e-mail never finds its way into an official file. Photos and reports are often duplicated numerous times on individual server space, never quite making it to a centralized database where all those who might need the same items can easily access them. In some cases, individuals continue to store data directly on the hard drives of their personal computers and lose everything when their machines break.

This problem is government-wide, Corps-wide, district-wide.

The St. Paul District, however, is trying to be one of the first in the pack to prevent this recurring brain drain.

Last year, the district created a data archiving project delivery team that includes representation from each functional area in the district. The team's goal is to create a system whereby the many different forms of data can be organized and accessible in a centralized, digital database.

The team reports to an advisory committee, made up of branch chiefs, who ultimately make all the

decisions and who will ultimately be responsible for ensuring all district employees use such a system when implemented.

The idea for such a team started at the same time in both GIS, or geographic information systems, and in hydraulics and hydrology. Byron Williams, enterprise geographic information systems, or EGIS, project manager in the environmental section, and Kenton

Spading, then a hydrologist in water control but now assistant to the chief of engineering and construction division, were both tasked with trying to manage community data in their individual sections. Now co-leaders of the data archiving project delivery team, both credit Terry Birkenstock, chief of environmental and economics

Data, continued on Page 9



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Byron Williams, enterprise geographic information systems, is co-chair of the data archiving project delivery team.

Data, continued from Page 8

branch, and John Bailen, then chief of engineering division, with linking them together and suggesting they create a team to deal with this problem district-wide.

According to both Spading and Williams, it is very important that something is done and that it gets done soon. "No matter how much talent an organization has or how many quality products and reports they produce, you cannot tap their full value if you cannot efficiently search and access the resultant flow of information," said Spading. "This applies to both access to current project data and access to prior work efforts and studies.

"Managing or working for an organization or team without easy and reliable access to data and products is inefficient and wasteful," he continued. "In addition, it is not in the best interest of our customers and employees; and, in many cases, loosing data has legal implications."

Currently the team is working on establishing a system to capture data, said Williams. The team hopes to have a prototype by July, with all employees using it by December. The proposed system will be an Oracle-based data management program. The database will have a map interface (GIS), plus a working directory interface that will look similar to Microsoft Windows Explorer.

With this system, users will be able to input maps, photos, spreadsheets, documents and more into folders that will be easily accessible to all. Once downloaded, the user will be instructed to add key words, so



St. Paul District photo

Dave Tropple, now lockmaster at Lock and Dam 5, spoke to students from Summit Elementary School, LaCrosse, Wis. Tropple's interpretative work at Great River Bluffs State Park in Minnesota in June 2005 illustrates one form of institutional knowledge the archiving project hopes to protect.

others will be able to find the data when searching for it.

"The goal is to try and make this as user-friendly as we can," said Spading. "We will actively solicit comments from the district's employees. We will have a beta version out there and so on, so people can use it, comment on it and eventually be confident with the final product."

Once the system is in place, Williams said the team will work on developing processes or standard operating procedures for what data is to be archived and how. Then, they will host training sessions for district employees, as well as recommend policies to be made by senior leadership on making archiving mandatory.

Eventually, once the system is up and running and everyone is using it, the team hopes to begin importing past data into the

system. "The district has a huge hard copy holding of historical data, but we don't know what we have," said Williams. "We can't start organizing all this information, though, until we have a system in place."

Another future goal of the team includes developing a way to capture tangible knowledge from retiring employees.

If you have ideas or input for the team, please contact either Williams at Ext. 5727 or Spading at Ext. 5623 or any of the team members listed on the team's intranet site [not available outside the Corps] at: https://mvpiis.mvp.usace.army.mil/mangmnt_info/document_storage/

Example of the map interface, Headquarters' CorpsMap, can be viewed at: <https://corpsmap.usace.army.mil/>.

News and Notes

Announcements:

Mary Kay Larson, park ranger, was selected as the resource manager for the Gull Lake Dam, located near Brainerd, Minn., early February.

Tom Koopmeiners, district deputy for small and disadvantaged businesses, attended Marketplace at the Fargodome in Fargo, N.D., on Jan. 16-17 to inform and educate small businesses how to do business with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Newcomers:

Arlan Baukol, laborer, Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings, Minn.

Thomas Mings, ecologist, regulatory at the St. Paul District Office.

Angela Wall, lock and dam operator, Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings, Minn.

Retirements:

Judy Kiges, lock and dam operator at Lock and Dam 3 in Red Wing, Minn., Jan. 23, with more than 28 years federal service.

John Lawson, lock and dam operator at Lower St. Anthony Falls in Minneapolis, Feb. 3, with more than 32 years federal service.

Darrell Morey, civil engineer at the district office, Feb. 2, with more than more than 33 years federal service.

Gregg Struss, park manager at Gull Lake, located near Brainerd, Minn., Feb. 2, with more than 34 years federal service.

Corps of Engineer's 'pool drawdown' wins state engineering award

by Shannon Bauer

The Minnesota Society of Professional Engineers presented the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, a Seven Wonders of Engineering award Feb. 23 for its "Water Level Management for Ecosystem Restoration" project on the Upper Mississippi River.

This MSPE competition is conducted annually to recognize outstanding achievements in the field of engineering. This is the thirteenth such award earned by the district since 1964.

The district completed drawdowns in Pool 8 in 2001 and 2002 and in Pool 5 in 2005 and 2006, which showed significant improvements in the growth of aquatic vegetation in the pool.

The goals planned and met during the project included improving conditions for the growth of aquatic vegetation with special emphasis on emergent aquatic species; continuing to operate and maintain the 9-foot channel project for commercial navigation; minimizing any adverse effects on river recreational usage, such as maintaining boating access to a level acceptable to the public; and educating the public on the benefits of drawdowns.

"The St. Paul District is honored to have the 'Water Level Management for Ecosystem Restoration' project recognized by the MSPE as one of the state's Seven Wonders of Engineering," said Jeff DeZellar, Corps' project manager. "We are proud of this project, and we are proud of the expertise, hard work, cooperation and support of all the many team members and agencies that made this project a success. In particular, the leadership of the Water Level Management Task Force has been essential in implementing the drawdowns."



Photo by Kurt Brownell

Project managers from Corps and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service inspect a site in Pool 5 for progress on outcomes in the drawdown.

Don Powell: November Employee of the Month

Shannon Bauer, public affairs; Tom Novak, logistics management; and Aaron Snyder, project management, teamed up to nominate Don Powell, project management, as Employee of the Month.

Tom Novak, formerly project management, said: “I have worked with Don Powell in the Environmental Management Program for the past six years. He has helped me in so many ways. He has mentored me on how to prepare planning documents, conduct public meetings, prepare other documents for public meetings at the River Resource Forum and the Environmental Coordination Committee. He’s given me an opportunity to substitute for him at these meetings to improve my understanding of the EMP program.

He has coached me about the technical work and the political issues of EMP, and what’s important to each of our partners and other stakeholders. He has done an excellent job of transferring his experience and knowledge about the work and the district in general to me in these six years.”

Said Aaron Snyder: “When I think of the Corps of Engineers and who is reliable, helpful and knowledgeable, I think of Don Powell. He arrives early every morning and gets the office going by making coffee. Once the day begins, he is bombarded from all sides with questions regarding various issues. Powell is willing to assist others and help with whatever is needed to get the job done.



Photo by Jon Lyman

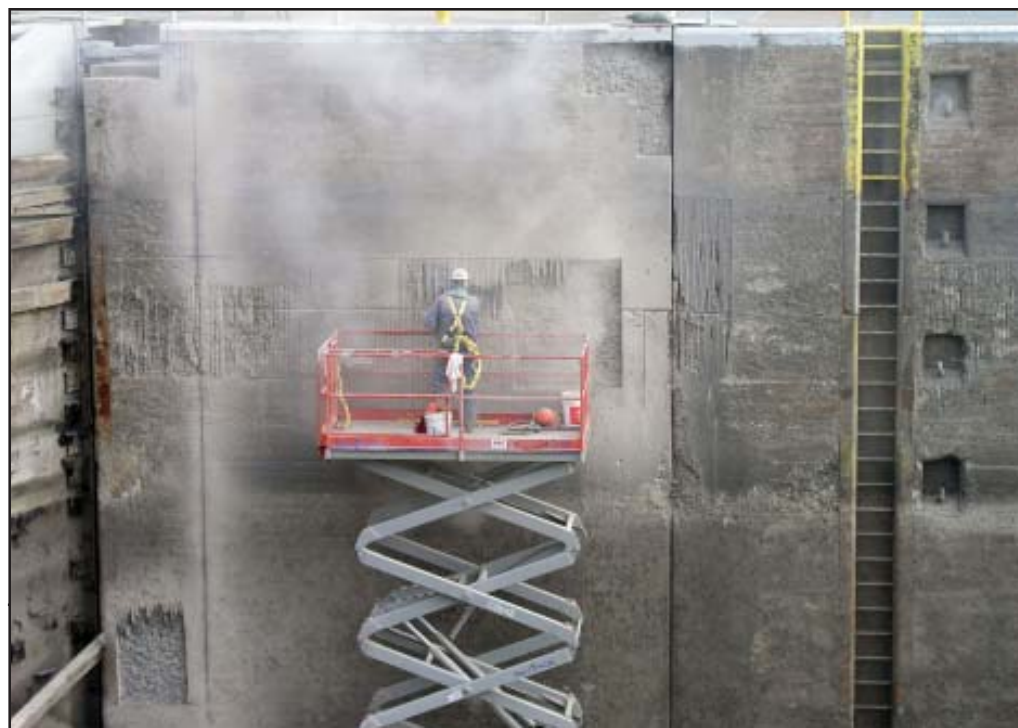
Don Powell, right, received the Employee of the Month recognition from Bruce Boldon, chief of operations division. Boldon was acting district commander at the time of the award.

Said Shannon Bauer: “Powell is a most outstanding project manager and event planner. I have worked at several events that he has planned, including the Trempealeau National Wildlife Area and Polander Lake dedication ceremonies, the Dredge Goetz christening ceremony, the Motor Vessel Mississippi and more, and every one has gone off without a hitch. All have reflected well on the Corps of Engineers in the community. Additionally, Powell is a living, breathing encyclopedia of Corps’ knowledge. Others, including members of the public and myself, frequently go to him with unique questions, and he almost always has the answer. If he doesn’t, he will go the extra mile to try and help us track down an answer.

Maintenance continues at Lock and Dam 2

Daniel Boone, who normally works as a lock operator at Lock and Dam 8, near Genoa, Wis., is ribbon cutting concrete that has deteriorated in Lock and Dam 2, Hastings, Minn. The old concrete will be removed for placement of new concrete as part of scheduled maintenance. The lock is 33 feet from the floor to top of the wall; 600 feet long and 110 feet wide.

Photo by Brian Peterson



Long Meadow Lake construction completed

by Peter Verstegen

The bird motel in Bloomington, Minn., is open. So is the food court and the pool. The Corps of Engineers, working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, has improved habitat for migrating waterfowl – not far from the Mall of America and the cluster of hotels and restaurants that surround it.

This November, a contractor for the St. Paul District completed a new water control structure at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

The new control structure improves management capabilities for Long Meadow Lake for use as a rest area and food source for migrating waterfowl. “It prevents the Minnesota River from backing into Long Meadow Lake during less than large flood events,” said Don Powell, project manager. “It also provides the capability to discharge excessive water from the lake. Restoration of farm fields to native floodplain forest habitat is planned for later this year.”

Long Meadow Lake was dying, as sediment from the Minnesota River filled in the marsh. Damage included loss of emergent aquatic vegetation, decline in habitat diversity and marsh quality and increased aging rate of the lake.

The refuge improvements, costing \$302,000, were funded under the authority of the Environmental Management Program. The contractor will finish planting trees this spring. A project dedication may be held this fall.



Photo courtesy U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Above, Lt. General Stroock, chief of engineers, and Patricia Martinkovic, manager of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Long Meadow Lake Unit, Bloomington, Minn., break ground Sept. 6. Below, from left are Pat Loutsch and Jon Halter, both with Holte Construction; Randy Devendorf and Joel Face, both with the Corps' St. Paul District. They are inspecting the project in November 2006. (Photo below by Don Powell.)

