



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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Lock and Dam 3
dewatered



Photo by Shannon Bauer

James Norenberg (left), a deckhand with Detroit District-Duluth, and Eric Lockington, a lock operator and diver at Lock and Dam 8, stand on the floor of the lock chamber at Lock and Dam 3 near Red Wing, Minn. Norenberg formerly worked in the St. Paul District.

Command Corner by Col. Jon Christensen

We have all become 'strategic corporals' for the Corps

St. Paul District Teammates,



Christensen

During my first eight months with the St. Paul District, I have had the opportunity to observe the multitude of ways we are called upon to interact with the public and the media, at both the district headquarters and our field sites, as part of our daily routine.

Interactions such as telephone calls and e-mails, public meetings, interviews with the media in-person or over the telephone and talking to the public at our work sites are part of our daily schedule and are critical to mission success.

In effect, this means that every one of us does some public affairs work in our jobs. It's a reality today that every Corps' employee should be aware of who is watching us and what kind of image we are projecting, especially with the constant scrutiny from the media and special interest groups. In this era of instant communications and pervasive media images we have all become "strategic corporals" for the Corps – what we do or say can have a profound impact on the success of our mission.

Based on this information I want to remind you of some ways you can help the district in getting the proper messages out this year:

1. Before answering any media questions, contact the Public Affairs Office immediately. The PAO numbers, office and cell phone, are on the district Internet site under "Press Room" in case you are contacted during your off-duty time. Discuss with PAO what the reporter wants, their contact information and the deadline for the interview or information. If you are the project manager or subject matter expert for the project, issue, or event, chances are great that you will answer the media's questions – just let PAO know first before you answer any questions.

2. When it comes to other projects, issues and events, notify PAO a couple of months in advance if a news release is involved or a communications plan is needed. PAO can also help you prepare for public meetings by coming up with key messages and a series of questions and answers you can use to get the Corps' messages out.

3. Command Information is very important these days with increased regionalization and the increased awareness of what USACE districts and divisions are doing in the United States and around the world. Remember to keep PAO in mind when it comes to stories and photos of projects and events that district employees are doing every day.

Keeping PAO informed ahead of time will help make everyone's job run smoother, and will contribute to mission success.

Thanks for your cooperation in getting the word out about the district!



US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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Photo by Shannon Bauer

Joe Piranio, physical support branch, signals the crane operator at Lock and Dam 3 near Red Wing, Minn.



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Empty Lock and Dam 3 undergoes major maintenance

Compiled from Public Affairs media releases

Personnel at Lock and Dam 3 drained 12 million gallons of water from the lock chamber at Lock and Dam 3 near Red Wing, Minn., in December. The Corps' St. Paul District closed the lock and dam, Dec. 1, to begin scheduled winter maintenance.

The site will be closed until March 15, while the navigation season is on hold for the winter.

Major maintenance recurs every 20 years at each Mississippi River lock and dam. Lock and Dam 3 has not been dewatered since 1988.

The scheduled maintenance for Lock and Dam 3 includes vertical concrete joint and surface repair on the walls, horizontal concrete repair on the floor and corner protection armor replacement and replacement of parts of the miter gates and bubbler systems, as well as sandblasting and painting the miter gates.

The lock sill will be modified near the upstream and downstream gates to accept the new bulkheads which work as a system with the

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Joe Kupietz, physical support branch, crawls out a filling conduit in the bottom of lock to the main chamber on the bottom of Lock and Dam 3.

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newly constructed slots. This work will involve an underwater concrete placement. All of this work will be accomplished by the Corps' maintenance and repair and diving section based at Fountain City, Wis.

The maintenance is more substantial than filling potholes on highways and roads from cars and trucks.

More than 12,000 vessels and 7 million tons of cargo passed through Lock and Dam 3 during the 2007 navigation season from March 30-Dec. 1.

Of these vessels, 1,087 were commercial, 10,847 were recreational and 173 were of the other category, such as government watercraft. This number marks a slight decrease in traffic from 2006, where 12,148 craft passed through Lock and Dam 3 – 1,110 of them commercial, 10,992 of them recreational and 46 other.

In 2006, the amount of commodities transported through Lock and Dam 3 was 7,338,218 tons.

The Motor Vessel Cooperative Venture was the last tow of the year at Lock and Dam 3, Nov. 27.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, constructed Lock and Dam 3 in 1938.

Mike Gunderson (right) and Nick Stanton remove quoin seal (covers structural angle) on the miter gate at Lock and Dam 3. Photo by Shannon Bauer.





Photo by Shannon Bauer

B.J. Nissalke (above), a lock operator at Lock and Dam 8, Genoa, Wis., melts ice to set a safe scaffolding base. Photo below: Bobbie Davis (left), equipment repair, Lock and Dam 3, and Joe Kupietz, physical support branch, escort John Weiss (middle) a reporter from the Rochester Post-Bulletin, on the floor of the lock chamber.



Photo by Tim Meers.

Dan Schmidt (left), lockmaster at Lock and Dam 3, Steve Lenhart, upper area lockmaster, and Leon Mucha, civil engineer, discuss the overall progress of the winter dewatering project at Lock and Dam 3 – what is working well and what needed to be documented for the next dewatering project.



Photo by Shannon Bauer



Corps targets
accessible deer hunting

St. Paul District works with natural resource agencies to open Orwell Lake and Goose Island to hunters with disabilities



Photo by Ray Marinan

Goose Island, just south of LaCrosse, Wis., has abundant population of deer for hunting. It is one of two locations this fall set up for wheelchair-accessible deer hunting.

Corps' Orwell Lake Project offers wheelchair accessible deer hunting

by Steve Odegaard
Orwell Lake

The Corps of Engineers partnered with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Outdoors Without Limits to hold a special deer hunt for disabled hunters at Orwell Lake, Nov. 6-8.

Outdoors Without Limits is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people with disabilities experience and enjoy a wide variety outdoor recreational activities.

Orwell Dam wildlife management area is known to contain many deer, particularly in the fall and winter seasons. The sanctuary portion of the wildlife management area had not been hunted in more than 50 years,

creating an excellent opportunity for disabled hunters to see and harvest a deer.

The close proximity of the Corps' Orwell office and shop facilities provided an ideal staging site to support the hunters and allowed them a place to rest, warm up, enjoy lunch and to visit with other hunters and event staff.

To be eligible, hunters with disabilities had to qualify for a Minnesota DNR special hunting permit that exempted them from some hunting regulations.

Safety practices were a primary concern for hunters and staff, and the topic was covered extensively during the orientation meeting held the day before the hunt.

Wood platforms built by Corps' employees were placed in strategic locations throughout the wildlife

sanctuary. Portable ground blinds topped the platforms to camouflage hunters and protect them from the weather. Hunters were required to have an assistant while hunting to help with access to and from the blind, tracking deer and hauling and cleaning of animals.

Outdoors Without Limits provided volunteers if the hunter didn't have a friend or relative available. Four of the five hunters bagged a deer, all bucks.

Media from Fargo, N.S. and Fergus Falls, Minn., reported on the event.

Bob Schimming, a maintenance worker at Orwell, worked extra hours, hosted the event and provided logistical support.

"The hunt was considered a big success by the hunters, staff and media and by local sportsmen's groups," said Schimming. "Plans are already in the works for another hunt next year."



St. Paul District photo

The St. Paul District's Orwell Lake Project, near Fergus Falls, Minn., was a staging site for a deer hunt for individuals with disabilities, Nov. 6-8. In the back row third from left is Steve Odegaard, Orwell supervisor; fifth from left and behind the banner is Bob Schimming, Orwell maintenance worker.

Hunters with disabilities take aim at deer on Goose Island

by Ray Marinan
Natural Resources Office

A group of disabled hunters participated in a managed deer hunt at Goose Island Park just south of LaCrosse, Wis., Dec. 8-9.

This was the second consecutive deer hunt held at the park. Hunters harvested 26 deer this year, compared to 37 last year.

Ray Marinan, a park ranger at the Mississippi River natural resources office, is one member of the multi-agency team established in 2006 to address a deer overpopulation issue at the park.

Issues with habitat degradation, loss of natural forest regeneration, a marked increase in the spread of exotic species and deer that looked to be in poor health were all reasons for the development of the management team.

Other agencies involved include the Town of Shelby, the LaCrosse County Parks, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The park has approximately one square mile of deer habitat, and the population estimate exceeded 150 deer. By comparison, neighboring deer management zones attempt to hold deer numbers fewer than 30 per square mile.

An interagency team drafted an interim deer management plan calling for reducing the deer herd

beginning that same year.

Reduction methods were evaluated using criteria such as cost, long-term effectiveness, labor needs and park operation impacts. The decision to go with a managed hunt for disabled individuals was guided by safety considerations, flat terrain with access roads and trails that place the hunters where the deer like to be.

Thirty sites were established throughout about 1,100 acres of the park. Five sites were on trails that would require an ATV for access, otherwise the rest were located along one of the many park roads. At each site, a shooting lane was established to limit what direction and how wide of an angle the hunter could shoot. This was an important safety measure for all participants and helped in the final site selection process. Each hunter would be allowed to harvest two deer.

The Corps owns the land and LaCrosse County leases the site for use as Goose Island Park and Campground. A portion of the land is also part of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. Both agencies have rules prohibiting hunting within the park, and both have separate procedures to follow in order to change those rules. An amendment to a local ordinance that would allow special deer hunts with the use of firearms had to pass the LaCrosse County Board of Supervisors. "That was just step one" said Marinan. "Once that hurdle was cleared, they had to present our interim management plan to the board for approval. Just amending the ordinance didn't mean we could hold a hunt. It just



Photo by Randy Ulrich

Jon Grothjhan, left, with his mentor, Charlie Luna, on Corps' owned Goose Island just south of LaCrosse, Wis. Grothjhan bagged his first deer ever Dec. 9.

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meant we had a method to use if they agreed we needed a hunt.”

Once the county approved the hunt, then the Fish and Wildlife Service began its internal approval process at the local and regional level.

The team selected a local Wisconsin based nonprofit group, North American Squirrel Association, to organize the event and select the participants. Not to be confused with the other NASA, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the North American Squirrel Association is a group specializing in providing individuals with physical disabilities the opportunities to enjoy the outdoors.

This group developed an application process and a random drawing to determine the participants. All applicants were required to have a class A, B or C disability permit and a Wisconsin hunting license. An able-bodied mentor had to accompany the participant. The mentor had to be at least 18 years old and have completed a hunters’ education course.

“The mentor is there to help with all the logistical stuff like getting the hunter to the assigned location, getting them set up and so on. They’re also an extra set of eyes and a backup shooter if needed,” said Marinan. “Not everyone gets a deer, but almost everyone gets to see deer.”

The managed hunt occurs as a one half-day event on Saturday and one-half day on Sunday. “It was easier to get the hunt approved, if we didn’t have to close the park



Photo by Jessica Larson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Dan Cottrell (left), a park ranger at Blackhawk Park south of LaCrosse, talks with successful hunter Randy Hansen. Hanson filled his tags on a cold Saturday morning during the 2007 hunt on Goose Island. Each hunter was issued two tags for the hunt. “If you get a deer, you must place a tag on it,” said Ray Marinan, park ranger.

for the whole weekend,” said Marinan. “Many participants just couldn’t be out there that long anyway.”

The animals underwent field-dressing at the nearby Badger State Sportsman Club, where they were screened for health issues and received preliminary

processing. The gender, weight and age were determined.

The management goal was to reduce the size of the deer herd, improve its general health and at the same time reduce the negative impacts a large herd has on the landscape. The plan calls for annual population monitoring.

News and Notes

District broomball team goes 3-1-1 for season

The St. Paul District's broomball team won three, lost one and tied one this season.

The team roster, with inactive players, includes: Teri Alberico, project management; John Bailen, retired, engineering and construction; Kevin Baumgard, operations, Col. Jon Christensen, district commander; Tom Crump, project management; Chris Erickson, project management; Scott Goodfellow, engineering and construction; Maj. Preston Hayward, contracting; Kurt Heckendorf, engineering and construction; Lisa Hedin, formerly project management; Corrine Hodapp, Eau Galle Recreation Area; Mike Knoff, engineering and construction; Lt. Col. John Kunkle, deputy district commander; Kari Layman, engineering and construction; Molly McKegney, office of counsel; Mary Morris, a friend of Azure Snyder; Joe Mose, project management; Tom Novak, project management; Jon Peterson,



St. Paul District photo

engineering and construction; Ashley Schnable, civilian personnel; Jim Sentz, engineering and construction; Tim Smith, operations; Aaron Snyder, project management; Azure Snyder, law student; John Sobiech, project management; and Gary Wolf, engineering and construction.

Corps camps at sportsmen's show



Photos by Peter Verstegen

Camping at a Corps of Engineers' recreation site attracts children, adults and families. Mary Kay Larson, a ranger at Gull Lake, represented the St. Paul District at the Minnesota Sportsmen's Show in St. Paul, Jan. 9-13. The show had more than 200 exhibitors. She informed and educated an estimated 2,000 visitors who asked about camping opportunities at the district's recreational sites this coming season.

District and Industrial Builders, Inc., receive partnering award for East Grand Forks, Minn., project

by Shannon Bauer

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi Valley Division and the Mississippi Valley Associated General Contractors, or MVAGC, selected the East Grand Forks, Minn., Existing Floodwall Modifications project as the recipient of its 2007 Dan W. Renfro Partnering Award.

The Dan W. Renfro Partnering Award is given out annually to a

Corps' partnership that best exemplifies the principles and successes of project partnering within the Mississippi Valley Division. The Corps' St. Paul District and the prime contractor, Industrial Builders, Inc., of Fargo, N.D., will accept the award at the Associated General Contractor's eightieth annual meeting in Destin, Fla., Feb. 8.

Criteria used to select the recipient of this award include

whether or not the overall project quality attained was beyond that of contract specifications, whether or not good relations were maintained with all the partners, whether or not team building activities occurred, whether or not innovative ideas were used to improve productivity, quality, safety and more.

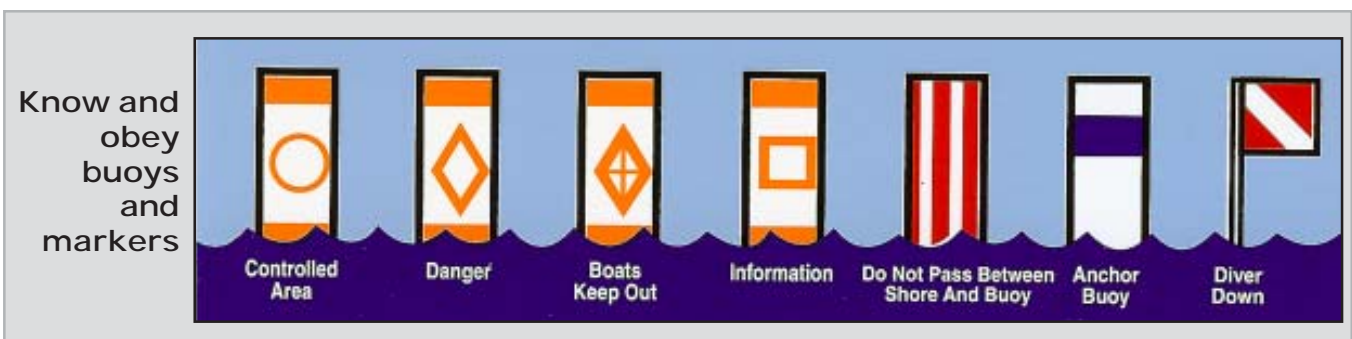
The East Grand Forks project team received this award specifically for their work on modifying an existing 900-foot floodwall. The project included installing a sheetpile seepage cutoff; building a concrete footing extension, foundation piers and entrance wall and plaza; modifying steel supports; weld testing and repairing existing steel supports; installing reinforcing grass pavers and raised brick plants; and more. The project not only occurred in a busy downtown area but was also under construction during the sixth highest flood of record in the Red River Valley.

Throughout the project, the partners adopted a team approach that resulted in outstanding performance. They completed a quality project and were successful at communicating and working together to solve problems.



St. Paul District photo

A subcontractor drives sheetpile in construction of the flood risk management project at East Grand Forks, Minn., in 2005.



St. Paul District looks ahead into 2008

by Mark Davidson

In general

- Global War on Terror: Ongoing support in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- New Orleans: Ongoing emergency response support and building hurricane protection
- I-35W bridge collapse: coordination for reconstruction.
- 2007 Water Resources Development Act: Authorized but no funding.
- Feb. 17: Conversion of about 300 non-supervisory, general schedule employees to the National Security Personnel System.
- May 20-22: Society of American Military Engineers national conference in Minneapolis.
- Sept. 1-4: Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minn.

Navigation

- Winter: Lock and Dam 3 dewatering and repairs
- 2008: Lock 5A slot being cut. Locks 6, 7, 10 remain



Photo by Tim Meers

Interstate-35W bridge collapsed over part of the guidewall at Lower St. Anthony Falls, Minneapolis, August 1. The above view looks downriver to the site where the bridge collapsed and shows how close reconstruction is to the lock and dam.

to be cut. Locks 2-4, 5, 8-9 have had slots cut.

- July 2008: \$15 million contract complete on Lock and Dam 10 Stage 2 major rehabilitation.
- 2008: Will receive the Quarters Barge Taggatz. Fleet completed.
- August 2008: Motor Vessel Mississippi arrives to conduct low-water inspection.

Flood Damage Reduction

- Grand Forks, N.D./East Grand Forks, Minn.: completing project construction to provide protection from the Red River of the North.
- Rushford, Minn.: Public Law 84-99 restoration of flood control works project at Rushford to pre-flood conditions.
- Wahpeton, N.D./Breckenridge, Minn.: Project construction continues.
- Dawson and Montevideo, Minn.: Construction to begin on flood risk management projects.
- Devils Lake, N.D.: Received \$5 million for Devils Lake.
- Ridgewood area of Fargo, N.D.: Construction of flood risk management project will be initiated in the spring, connecting to the Veterans Administration flood wall work that was substantially completed the fall 2007.

Infrastructure

- Devils Lake, N.D.: Water-supply line funded in the consolidated appropriation for fiscal year 2008.

Environmental Stewardship

- Environmental Management Program: Constructing Pool 8, phase 3, stage 2 islands downstream of La Crosse.
- The Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program: Authorized in the Water Resources Development Act 2007. NESP is funded for nearly \$9 million in fiscal year 2008 for pre-construction engineering and design work.
- Active ecosystem restoration projects: Water-level management in Pool 5; forest management in Reno Bottoms in Pool 9; and floodplain restoration for the Root River in Minnesota and Pierce Co. Island in Wisconsin.

Schwanz honored as top civilian Army engineer and selected for top 10 federal engineers of the year

by Shannon Bauer

The National Society of Professional Engineers selected St. Paul District employee Neil Schwanz, design branch, as one of its top ten finalists, representing the Department of the Army, in its federal engineer of the year program.

This annual award is sponsored by the NSPE Professional Engineers in Government. Candidates are nominated by their agency based on engineering achievements, education, continuing education, professional/technical society activities, NSPE membership, awards, honors and civic and humanitarian activities. A total of 34 agencies nominated candidates.

Schwanz will be recognized for his award at the National Press Club, Feb. 21, in Washington, D.C. There, NSPE will announce the 2008 Federal Engineer of the Year.

Schwanz is a regional technical specialist for the Mississippi Valley Division. He has been a



Photo by Jodi Schwanz

Neil Schwanz

federal engineer for more than 29 years, all of them working for the St. Paul District. He is also a member of the Minnesota Geotechnical Society, the Association of State Dam Safety Officials and the Order of the Engineer.

He received this award predominately for his work on rebuilding the hurricane protection system in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. His role

included completing numerical modeling of the New Orleans I-walls, leading the development of seepage and stability design criteria, participating in a field load test conducted on the London Avenue canal wall and more. He spent more than 1,100 hours above and beyond his normal schedule in this work.

Additionally, Schwanz recently authored two chapters for the Unified Facilities Criteria on *Engineering use of Geotextiles* and portions of the Engineer Circular on *Evaluation or Design of I-walls*, performed numerous independent technical reviews and value engineering studies for other Corps' districts and is chairman of the planning committee for the University of Minnesota's annual Geotechnical Engineering Conference.

"Neil [Schwanz] exemplifies the best the engineering profession can offer and sets an outstanding example for all engineers," said Marsha Mose, design branch chief.

Meers receives Army award for I-35W bridge response

by Shannon Bauer

Tim Meers, lockmaster of Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam in Minneapolis, received the Department of the Army Superior Civilian Service medal late November for his meritorious actions directly after the collapse of the I-35W Bridge Aug. 1.

The Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam facility served as the location for the incident operations center throughout the search and recovery efforts. The Hennepin County Sheriff's Department, a U.S. Navy

Dive Team, a Corps of Engineers' maintenance and repair unit and many other agencies used the site to stage its response activities after the catastrophe.

Throughout the three-week recovery effort, Meers worked long hours, every day to coordinate the numerous logistical needs of the different agencies working at the site, as well as played a key day-to-day role in closely managing water levels in synchronization with diving operations.

"Meers' skillful leadership, insightful resource

Meers, continued Page 14

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management and outstanding communications skills played a vital role in the rescue and recovery phases of this tragedy,” wrote Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, commander of the Corps’ Mississippi Valley Division, who nominated Meers for this award. “His contributions to this effort helped insure that conflicts between agencies were avoided and that operations were executed safely and securely.”

Meers has served as the lockmaster of Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam since 2001. For the 20 years prior to that, he served as work leader at Lock and Dam 2 and a head lock operator at Lower St. Anthony Falls.

This award is the third highest medal that a civilian employee of the Department of the Army is eligible to receive.



Col. Jon Christensen, commander of the St. Paul District, presents the Army Superior Civilian Service medal to Tim Meers, left.

Permitted and prohibited politics under the Hatch Act

by Ed Bankston

Note: Ed Bankston, chief counsel, wrote this column prior to his retirement

Year 2008 is an election year. As federal employees we are subject to the provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. chapter 73, subchapter III). Although the Hatch Act imposes some restrictions on the political activities of federal employees, federal employees are free to engage in a wide range of political activities. Specifically, federal employees may:

- Register and vote as they choose;
- Sign nominating petitions;
- Campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, and municipal ordinances;
- Assist in voter registration drives;
- Express opinions about candidates and issues;
- Distribute campaign literature

in partisan and nonpartisan elections;

- Make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan and nonpartisan elections;
 - Campaign for and against candidates in partisan and nonpartisan elections;
 - Contribute money to political organizations;
 - Attend and be an active member of a political party or club
 - Join and be an active member of a political party or club;
 - Hold office in political parties or clubs;
 - Attend political fund-raising functions
- Be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections (ones that do not involve political parties)
- However, federal employees may not:
- Be candidates for public office in partisan elections;
 - Use official authority or influence to interfere with an election;
 - Solicit or discourage political activity of anyone with business

before their agency;

- Solicit or receive political contributions (may be done in certain limited situations by federal labor or other employee organizations);
- Engage in political activity while (1) On duty, (2) In a government office, (3) Wearing an official uniform, (4) Using a government vehicle;
- Wear partisan political buttons on duty.

Before engaging in any political activity a federal employee should make sure that the contemplated activity is permitted under the Hatch Act. Violations of Hatch Act provisions are punishable at a minimum by a thirty day suspension without pay and may result in removal. Should you have any questions whether a specific activity is permitted please contact Steve Adamski, office of counsel, 651-290-5498, for advice. Other sources for information include the Office of Special Counsel web site at <http://www.osc.gov/hatch>.