



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Walla Walla District

Intercom

Serving the military and civilian members of the Walla Walla District

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**Guard troops
test field skills
at Mill Creek**

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IMO business methods promote cheaper, better service

As I prepare to depart the District, I have been reflecting on the accomplishments of the staff of the Information Management Office over the past several years and at the challenges that lay ahead.

Five years ago, the office was given the charter to provide better or equal service at a lower cost.



Brian Hood

By fiscal year 2001, costs of providing information technology services were reduced by more than one million dollars per year. The 2004 budget still reflects that reduction; the 2004 information technology budget for the District is \$1.1 million less than the 1999 baseline.

Has service been equal or better? In a 2001 poll, 53 percent of our customers said that service was equal to what it had been, while 42 percent indicated that service had improved.

Why is there such a focus on reducing costs?

Most IMO services are paid for out of the general and administrative expense or department overhead expense budgets. These accounts are used to pay for other office overhead costs such as training and awards.

The less we spend on IT services, the more is left over for other things. If we don't provide you with an adequate level of service and equipment, you will not be able to perform your job efficiently. If we provide you more than you need, we waste money. It's a delicate balance.

This success has not gone unnoticed in the Northwestern Division. USACE 2012 directed the "regionalization" of information management support functions. The model for customer service established in this District is being considered as a regional best

business practice.

What will this mean to you? Hopefully, service levels will be maintained or improve, and costs will continue to be contained. But, that service might be provided by a larger IM organization. Instead of the current 36 member District IMO providing services to this District's 700 employees, in the future you may be receiving services from a regional information management team with 250 employees providing services regionally to the division's 5,000 employees.

The model for the organization is still being developed. It is hoped that this metamorphosis will be transparent to you. It is anticipated that staff in the local area will provide most services. At times, people in another district may provide some services. There is a lot of talent in the five Northwestern Division districts. Leveraging this talent is expected to provide opportunities to expand regional services and reduce regional costs.

During our transition to a regional support services organization, you can help us. If you need new IT services, discuss your requirement with your office's IM coordinator. If you are currently using some IT equipment or software and it breaks, call the Help Desk.

It has been a pleasure serving you for the past five years. Carol and I will miss the District, its exceptional staff and the Walla Walla community.

Brian Hood
Chief, Information
Management Office

Editor's note: Hood was selected as the Northwestern Division information manager and regional chief information officer. He will transfer to Portland, Ore., in June.

ASA (CW) visits Lower Granite

Marty Mendiola, operations and maintenance manager at Lower Granite Lock and Dam, right, explains the fish passage improvements made there to the Army's highest civil works official during a recent visit.

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works John Paul Woodley Jr., left, visited on April 9 to learn more about the Removable Spillway Weir operating the dam and to hear more about another being considered for Ice Harbor Dam, near Burbank, Wash. Woodley was also briefed on project funding, short- and long-term goals and objectives, recreation visitation and other District missions, interests and issues. Before leaving Lower Granite, Woodley took time to seek out several people on site supporting his visit to present coins in appreciation for their contributions to the success of his visit to the dam.



Photo by Dutch Meier

Goose, HQ team fixes lock leak

NWW Public Affairs

Lockages for fishermen and other recreational vessels were suspended April 12 at Little Goose Lock and Dam, near Starbuck, Wash., when water began leaking through the side of the navigation lock.

“We had to minimize the use of the lock until we knew exactly what it would take to repair the leak found at a seal between concrete sections of the north lock wall over the weekend,” said Ann Glassley, an Operations Division specialist at the Walla Walla District headquarters.

Commercial lockages continued for tugs and barges during the five days it took engineers and dam maintenance workers to inspect and patch the leak temporarily.

The lock reopened to all river traffic early morning on April 17.

“Our maintenance crews made temporary repairs to the excess water passing through seal joints of the lock,” said Scott Ross, the operations manager at Little Goose. “We resumed recreational lockages just in time for people to take advantage of the salmon fishing season announced by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.”

“Our experts got in there and applied a quick fix so that we can keep a safe dam safe and keep traffic flowing on the river,” said Lt. Col. Ed Kertis, district commander. “This facility is a key part of an infrastructure system that aids the region’s economy.”

The passage of water through sections of dams is a normal thing, according to headquarters engineers. The amount passing at the lock was more than usually seen. The seal will be evaluated for a more permanent repair to be done later.



Photo by Kyle DeSomber, Little Goose Dam

Workers apply new sealant between concrete sections of the lock wall.



Photo by Gina Baltrusch



Photo by Kyle DeSomber, Little Goose Dam

Above, Marty Compau, power plant mechanic, washes the leaking seal, readying it for repairs. Left, Compau and Clancey Hummel, power plant mechanic, reseal the leak.

On the Cover...

U.S. Army National Guard Soldiers from the Pasco-Walla Walla new recruit training program find Mill Creek project lands the perfect place to practice map reading, land navigation, cover and concealment tactics and first aid during their tactical land navigation test.



photo by Gina Baltrusch

Intercom



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Local Guard troops hone tactical edge on Mill Creek lands

Story and photos by Gina Baltrusch

Outdoor recreation enthusiasts at Mill Creek April 18 may have been surprised by an unusual group of visitors – but only if they were sharp-eyed enough to see them.

About 30 initial-entry-training troops assigned to the Washington National Guard Pasco-Walla Walla new recruit training program roamed the terrain around Bennington Lake with maps and compasses to sharpen their land navigation skills. Other Mill Creek visitors may not have noticed the camouflage-clad Soldiers creeping through the woods and low-crawling across grassy areas.

Working in teams of four or five, the troops tried to find five points on the ground in the shortest possible time, all the while hiding from snipers eager to “shoot” them and set off the laser-activated alarms on their harnesses if they failed to tactically move between map points.

Many new Guard Soldiers enlist as juniors in high school, attend Basic Combat Training during the summer before their senior year, then attend job-specific Army training once they finish high school. Until graduation, they become part of the new recruit program, training with other Guardsmen on drill weekends.

“We’re really glad to have federal lands nearby to help us train,” said Sgt. 1st Class Mark Mebes, Guard recruiter in Walla Walla and a primary instructor for the new recruit program. “We’d be limited to training in a parking lot if it weren’t for Mill Creek. It’s just not cost or time effective to take everyone to the Yakima Training Center for just a weekend, and YTC doesn’t offer the terrain and vegetation features that Mill Creek has.”

Mebes touts Mill Creek as perfect for the unit’s tactical land navigation test – a challenging field environment to evaluate Soldiers on map reading, land navigation, first aid and casualty evacuation skills.

“It’s got a good mix of terrain – hills, valleys, open areas, woods and water obstacles,” he explained. “We’ve taught ‘land-nav’ here for years. It’s great that another element of the Army family – the Army Corps of Engineers – helps us make training more realistic for our Soldiers.”

The Guard coordinated with project officials for a special event permit, working out the land-use details to ensure troop training would not interfere with the project’s obligations to the general public.

“Most visitors don’t even know they’re out there. The Guard put up signs to let visitors know there were Soldiers out there training. The troops weren’t carrying weapons and the snipers kept their gun-shaped laser system activation devices concealed when they weren’t using them, so if a civilian did see them, they wouldn’t be too concerned,” said Dave Hays, Mill Creek project manager.

Letting the Guard train at Mill Creek serves as a chance for the District to help the Army’s war-fighter training mission, he added.

“Part of our mission is to support the military side of the house. If we can do that on our recreation lands and continue to serve the general public, that’s something we want to do,” said Hays. “They always take care to not damage the lands. We’d welcome them back to train here again.”



Pvt. Branden Gradin (left) and Pvt. Shawn Hernandez r Lake area, identifying nearby terrain features to deter



Pfc. Nicholas Busse-Paul uses the compass-to-ch magnetic azimuth for an objective on the ground.



refer to a map of the Bennington
determine their team's location.



seek method to determine the



Pfc. Patrick Taylor (right) and Pvt. Branden Gradin (left) radio to report a teammate's simulated injuries as they conceal themselves on a deer trail through the brush.



Above, Pvt. Francisco Gomez tests his military common tasks knowledge during a written test given at one of the point stations. Left, Pfc. Patrick Taylor sprints toward nearby trees that will lend some tactical cover from snipers – ROTC cadets from Washington State University and Eastern Washington University.



Pvt. Branden Gradin (left), Pvt. Shawn Hernandez and Pvt. Brittney Stanton (right) travel in three-to-five-second rushes between trees as they try to advance unobserved along a ridge above Bennington Lake.

Projects team up to flush sewage problem

Story and photos by Toni Fisher, Lucky Peak Dam

Twenty-five years of use left Lucky Peak Dam's remote lakeside bathrooms in dire straits.

The outhouse-style vault sewage containers, long overdue for an emptying, were nearing capacity.

Monte Crawford, project foreman, contemplated how to accomplish the job for two years with no acceptable options.

"I called many sanitation companies only to be told that the campsites were too remote to approach using commercial septic equipment and to get a system that could access the sites by boat would cost too much," said Crawford. "I was beginning to think the sites would go another 25 years before getting cleaned."

Then Crawford thought of the maintenance team at Dworshak Dam where he had worked prior to joining Lucky Peak's staff in 2001. He recalled how maintenance on the remote sites there was accomplished using a seagoing boat, a flexible hose and a portable septic tank. He knew this equipment had been replaced with a smaller landing craft that was faster, more efficient, and most importantly, transportable.

Working with Lucky Peak's Operations Manager Dave Brownell and Dworshak's Natural Resources Manager Paul Pence, Crawford arranged for a team to come down to Lucky Peak to assist with the project.

On April 12, Bob Kaufman and Don Weza drove the 250 miles from Dworshak with the landing craft and equipment in tow to help Lucky Peak clean its remote facilities.

Over the next three days, the Lucky Peak-Dworshak maintenance team used the landing craft to haul a septic tank, tools and power wheelbarrow to three remote sites on Lucky Peak Lake.

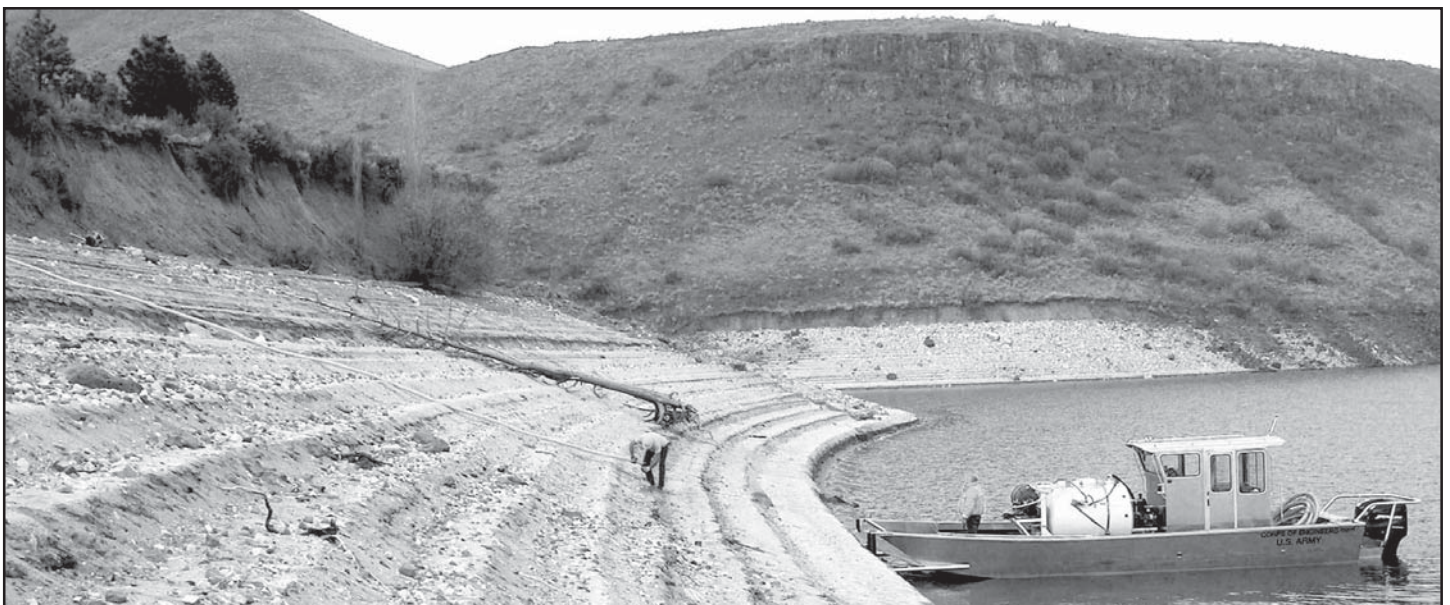


From left, Monte Crawford, Lucky Peak project foreman, Bob Kaufman, a maintenance worker and Don Weza, a utility systems operator, both from Dworshak Dam, unload equipment from the landing craft.

They cleaned four vault systems, pumping sewage from the bathroom facilities 250-400 feet through flexible hoses to the boat's septic tank.

From there, they navigated across the lake to a marina where they transferred the sewage from the septic tank aboard the boat to a contracted septic hauler waiting on shore.

"The work cost Lucky Peak about \$4,500. Without the Dworshak crew's willingness to help with this project, it could easily have been more than double that cost," Dave Brownell said. "Sharing project resources within the District got the job done cheaper and quicker."



Dworshak and Lucky Peak workers connect flexible hoses crossing about 400 feet between the campsite's bathroom and the boat.

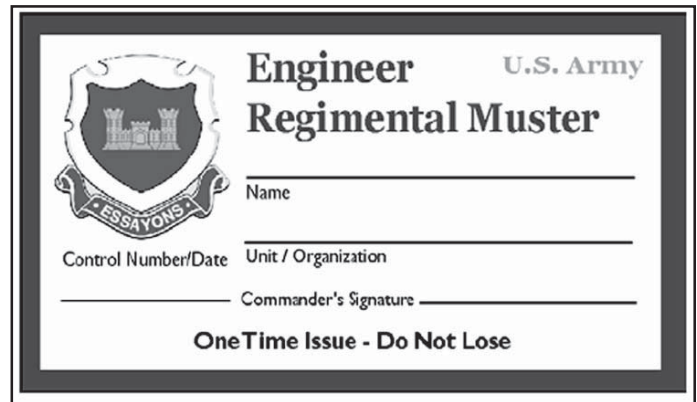
All District members invited to muster event

District members, current and retired, are invited to attend the Engineer Regiment muster ceremony set for June 18 at the headquarters in Walla Walla, Wash.

The muster is planned as part of Engineer Day activities. During the ceremony, a muster card will be issued to each person, officially adding him or her to the regiment's membership rolls.

The District commander will officiate ceremonies at field office and project locations.

District retirees should call (509) 527-7700 to advise event coordinators of their intent to attend the ceremonies so personalized muster cards can be printed for the event.



Unified regiment binds all engineers together

by **Bernard Tate, HQ USACE**

“If you wear a castle on your collar, if you have a castle in your office or if you work with people whose motto is Essayons, then you are part of this regiment.” – Lt. Gen. Joe Ballard, 48th Chief of Engineers (1996-2000).

That's a big regiment, arguably the biggest in the Army. AR 600-82, the regulation covering the U.S. Army Regimental System, backs up the claim. Among the corps listed in section 4-2 as regiments the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is numerically the largest.

And when you start counting, the numbers add up fast. The active Army is the center, but it's not the only piece of the regiment. It includes the Reserves, the National Guard, USACE divisions, districts and labs, Directors of Public Works and Department of the Army civilians. Retirees are also part of the regiment – once a member, always a member. And finally, the contractors and professional organizations who work with us are important partners and stakeholders.

“The Army regimental system started in 1986,” said Jack O’Neill, Executive Director of the Army Engineer Association (AEA). “It started as a way to boost morale and preserve history and tradition. As the Army downsized and so many units were deactivated, Army leaders felt something was needed for soldiers to identify with, to link soldiers with the proud heritage of the past.”

Regimental unity is vital, especially for one as large and diverse as the Engineer Regiment, which contains people who don't even realize they are part of a regiment.

Besides the work that they do, three factors help link together Engineer Regiment members.

One linking factor is the Regimental Vision, hammered out by the Corps' senior leaders and adopted by the General Officer Regimental Vision Conference in Arlington, Va., in 1998.

The vision statement, which can be found on the Corps' webpage, <http://www.usace.army.mil/essc/one/vision.htm>, states that the Engineer Regiment is:

- The world's premier engineer team.
- A full spectrum total force, vital to the Army and the nation.
- Values-based – respected, responsive, ready.
- Visualizing and enhancing terrain to ensure mission success.
- Meeting tomorrow's challenges today – deployed or at home, in peace or at war.

Another link is the annual ENFORCE conference at Fort Leonard Wood, home of the U.S. Army Engineer School.

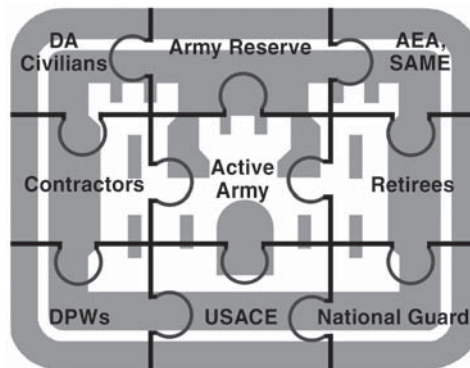
“ENFORCE is the one time each year that all of the senior commanders throughout the regiment assemble to professionally exchange information,” said O’Neill.

The third link is the AEA, a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation with offices in Alexandria, Va., and Fort Leonard Wood. The AEA supports the Engineer Regiment in a variety of ways. It helps commemorate and

memorialize the regiments distinctive past, and recognizes current achievements of units and individuals. The AEA also sponsors two scholarships for regiment members and their families, forms partnerships and networks with private industry and publishes *The Army Engineer*, the regiment's bimonthly magazine.

“The Engineer Regiment helps bond every member of the Corps into a fraternity,” said O’Neill.

“Early engineers spoke with one voice,” Ballard told ENFORCE attendees in 1998. “They were a tightly knit group of people who kept tabs on each other. They stayed in constant communication, and they did this without e-mail, faxes or Federal Express. We're proud of this past, and we all share in its heritage.”



Above it all



Photo by Gina Baltrusch

Perched atop a fire truck's ladder, Lt. Wayne Jorstad, a City of Walla Walla Fire Department paramedic, strings new rope on the top of the Walla Walla District headquarters flagpole April 2. Emergency services personnel attached the new lines while they were visiting the headquarters to perform a pre-fire plan to familiarize themselves with the building's floorplan.

It's here: P2 training hits NWW

Story and photo by Gina Baltrusch

Since early April, Alden Foote, the District's project business management process guru, walks into the Castle Room of the District headquarters about every three days and welcomes a new class to P2 training.

More than 200 District employees will get the initial training so they can use the software deployed across Northwestern Division April 12.

District workers most likely to use the new project management software were first to get initial hands-on instruction. Computers in the classroom helped them follow along, screen-by-screen, over the basics of using P2.

"This is a complex system – there's a steep learning curve for those who have no previous experience with project management software," said Foote. "Even after this training, users will need additional guidance as they input their projects until they become proficient."

For more information about P2, visit <https://pmbp.usace.army.mil>.



District employees absorb several days of hands-on P2 instruction at the headquarters in Walla Walla.

Salmon season opens

Story and photo by Gina Baltrusch

Spring chinook salmon fishing opened early at two Walla Walla District-managed areas on the Snake River. The April 16 opener lured anglers hoping for an early catch to Little Goose and Lower Granite dams.

Bill Street, a District retiree, caught a 15-inch keeper by noon on opening day at Little Goose.

Regular season opened April 24. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife website predicts "plenty of hatchery fish for the catching" based on a predicted above-average returns of spring chinook. The season is set to run through May 31, depending on catch rates and potential impacts to wild fish.



Anglers line the railing on the downstream side of Little Goose Lock and Dam on opening day of salmon season April 16.