



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Walla Walla District

Intercom

Serving the military and civilian members of the Walla Walla District

Vol. 32

No. 4

November-December 2005



FIRE

Dworshak burn
spurs new growth

FROM WHERE I SIT

Chief sends holiday greetings



Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock
Chief of Engineers

Corps family,

As I reflect on the events of 2005, I am inspired and gratified by the contributions made at all levels throughout the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The past year has been extremely busy as you performed our daily work, supported the Global War on Terror, and responded to natural disasters. I don't have to tell you how all of this work directly contributed to our national security, energized our economy and enhanced our environment.

From the Indian Ocean tsunami that hit on Dec. 26, 2004, to hurricanes Dennis, Katrina, Rita and Wilma, and the Pakistan earthquake, you rapidly and effectively

responded as our nation and the world were challenged.

We can count our blessings and be thankful that although many Corps employees lost their homes from Hurricane Katrina, none of our people were lost.

The Corps family was quick to respond to this national catastrophe. I am proud to know that every district, division, center, lab, and our headquarters sent people forward to help with the massive response. Many retired employees returned to help. And, employees who remained behind took on additional duties for deployed coworkers. Clearly, selfless service remains the hallmark of the Corps of Engineers. It is important to remember that many of our Federal partners also supported our efforts. Their response also speaks to their sense of service. It also speaks to the strength of our relationships.

Throughout 2005 there were many other accomplishments of note:

You have contributed significantly to the well-being of our nation and the U.S. Armed Forces through our military programs, civil works and research and development missions.

In Iraq, the Gulf Region Division has made outstanding contributions in support of the Global War on Terror. About 3,000 projects were started and 2,000 have been completed.

In Afghanistan, the great work being performed on facilities and infrastructure projects has contributed to that nation's stability and security.

And on the Corps of Engineers' birthday, we released an updated vision and campaign plan that will help keep us moving in the right direction.

With so much going on, it is impressive that we also closed out the year just as if it were business as usual. I truly appreciate those of you who worked late hours to ensure a successful closeout on Sept. 30. It is a significant accomplishment and something to celebrate.

Over the next year, and the next several years, we will continue to be very busy. With so much going on in the Corps and around the world, it is easy to feel strained. Remember to take care of each other and yourself.

As you enjoy time with your family and friends, I ask that you remember those who are still in harm's way in Afghanistan and Iraq. Let's keep them in our hearts and minds.

Be safe and have fun. I have great pride and confidence in our team and look forward to what we will accomplish in 2006. Happy Holidays!

Essayons!

Carl A. Strock
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

Intercom is an unofficial publication authorized by the provisions of Army Regulation 360-1. It is published bimonthly by the Public Affairs Office, Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It has a distribution of 1,500 copies and is digitally printed by the Document Automation and Production Service. Contents of the INTERCOM are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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On the Cover...



photo by Deb Norton, natural resource specialist
Dworshak Dam and Reservoir (stringer)

Russ Davis, wildlife biologist, and Sam Martin, natural resource specialist, monitor and support fire crews Oct. 24-25 as they burn about 600 acres of woodland in the Little Bay area of Walla Walla District's Dworshak Reservoir. The controlled burn set conditions for a healthier forest. See story and more photos on pages 6-7.

Dredging starts on lower Snake River

from a NWW news release

Channel maintenance on the lower Snake River began Dec. 15.

Lower Monumental Dam's navigation lock approach was the first stop for dredging crews from the Seattle-based Manson Construction Company.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project will restore the 14-foot congressionally authorized channel depth in three key areas of the navigation channel and two port berthing areas that are clogged with sediment – the confluence of the Snake and Clearwater rivers, the navigation lock approaches to Lower Granite and Lower Monumental dams and the berthing areas at the ports of Clarkston, Wash., and Lewiston, Idaho.

The dredging vessel uses a crane-like boom attached to a 15-cubic-yard hinged bucket that scoops up sediment from the channel and deposits it on a barge. Once filled, crews navigate the barge to a disposal site on the river between Lower Granite Dam and Clarkston where the sediment is placed to develop rearing and resting habitat for juvenile salmon.

The Corps plans to remove up to 450,000 cubic yards of dredged material. A portion of the cost is borne by the ports of Lewiston and Clarkston for dredging the berthing areas in front of their facilities.

Concerns prompted by the build up of

sediment drove the Corps' plans to begin clearing the Snake River channel.

"The Corps considers maintaining the authorized channel depth a priority for this region," said Jack Sands, project manager. "Shoaling in the channel is critical in some locations. Since early 2001, there have been reports of groundings in the channel."

In the past, the Corps dredged in the lower Snake River every three to five years to maintain the authorized channel depth and provide for safe, efficient navigation. The Corps has not performed maintenance dredging since the winter of 1998-99.

Over the years, economic costs to the region rose as the navigation industry tried

to adapt to channel conditions. Depths as shallow as eight to 10 feet were recorded in critical areas. Some shippers began "light loading" barges, Sands said.

"Without dredging, impacts to commercial navigation will continue to increase operations costs to get inland cargo to world markets," Sands added.

The lower Snake River is part of an inland channel system that provides navigation from the mouth of the Columbia River near Astoria, Ore., to port facilities on the rivers in Lewiston-Clarkston. Transporters shipped 17.4 million tons of products through the lower Snake River locks in 2004.



photo by Sue Walton, mechanical engineer, Lower Monumental Lock and Dam (stringer)

Manson Construction Company workers start removing sediment from the navigation lock approach at Lower Monumental Dam on Dec. 15.

NSPS implementation moves forward

Employee primer defines pay bands, terms, performance measures

by Gina Baltrusch

Human resources managers at the Department of Defense released an educational primer Dec. 7 for federal employees transitioning to the National Security Personnel System.

The 25-page document defines more than 80 terms and outlines the career groups, pay schedules and pay bands proposed for the new system. The primer explains how NSPS performance management will work and how success will be defined for employee evaluations.

Some proposed elements of the NSPS are subject to discussion with components and the continuing collaboration process with employee representatives. While lawyers work out the details under contest in the federal courts, the Office of Personnel Management is moving forward with the new pay system.

Human resource managers encourage all federal employees to review the NSPS primer and become familiar with the new system.

"While the primer doesn't spell out which career fields and current pay grades will be in a particular pay band, it does give employees a better idea of how the system will look," said Ray Quinn, Walla Walla District's human resources chief. "The details will be finalized as we move closer to implementation."

Walla Walla's human resource employees will convert to the NSPS in February as part of Spiral-1.1 implementation. The rest of the District's general schedule workforce is slated for Spiral-1.3 implementation in October.

The NSPS will revamp evaluation and pay standards, emphasizing performance rather than length of service when it comes to employee pay increases.

More information about the new pay-for-performance system is posted on OPM's NSPS Web site at www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps, and you can download the employee primer in portable document format at www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/pdf/WebHRPrimer1205.pdf.

District safety officials urge cold-weather caution

by Rick Haverinen

The Walla Walla safety team reminds District employees to work and play safe this winter.

"Eighty percent of our vehicle damage is due to snow and ice conditions," said Mike Remington, Safety and Occupational Health Office chief. "Fortunately, we haven't had any serious injuries from vehicle accidents."

One winter driving hazard vehicle operators recognize very quickly is when the car's direction isn't matching what the driver intends because of icy road conditions.

"You need to steer into a skid to regain control of your vehicle," said Safety Specialist Bob Bonstead. "And, jamming on the brakes will just cause you to spin around."

Skid recovery isn't something that's easily practiced in advance. Skids usually confront the driver in a real-life "let's see you get out of this" scenario.

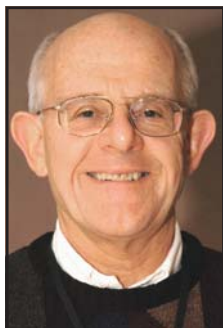
There are several local winter driving conditions that can limit visibility. Fog, freezing rain and snow can make it hard to see through the windshield.

Safety officials recommend stocking your car with emergency items in case you become stuck along the roadside.

"If you have a cell phone, take it with you," Bonstead said. "I carry a small shovel in my pickup truck. Also, kitty litter works pretty well as a traction device if you're in the snow. Carry nutritious snacks, water, blankets, a flashlight and extra batteries."



CPAC update: courts to determine NSPS details



Ray Quinn

The holidays and the National Security Personnel System are coming, it seems.

While the timing of the holidays is certain, NSPS' arrival is not nearly so predictable.

The NSPS, whose most prominent and publicized features are pay banding and pay-for-performance salary increases, is currently the subject of litigation in the D.C. circuit of the federal court system. The union-initiated lawsuit

contends that the Department of Defense has exceeded the authority received from Congress to develop a revised personnel system and violates existing laws.

Specifically, the lawsuit alleges that the DoD did not consider union and other employee organization views and concerns when drafting regulations for the various aspects of the new system, as intended by Congress.

Interestingly, it will apparently be the courts that decide what Congress intended, as opposed to the Congress itself, which adds a bit more uncertainty and drama to the situation.

A hearing was requested for late-January. A federal judge

will decide when and if much of the National Security Personnel System will be implemented.

Several features of the broader NSPS legislation are not in litigation, however, and have proved very beneficial in managing our human resources. We have seen reshaping of the workforce through continuing early retirement and separation incentive authorities.

Additionally, our ability to rehire annuitants without pension offset has helped us maintain an experienced workforce as we continue to deploy large numbers of District employees in support of Corps missions.

Regardless of the court decision on the more fundamental system changes, we will have these flexibilities through 2009, and they will be very helpful as we continue to support national priorities in the Global War on Terror and the transition to a USACE2012 organization.

Our Civilian Personnel Advisory Center staff will keep you informed on NSPS developments in the coming months.

Meanwhile, we wish all of you the very best holiday season.

Why NSPS?

- ✓ Advance DoD's critical national security mission
- ✓ Respond swiftly and decisively to national security threats and other missions
- ✓ Accelerate DoD's efforts to create a Total Force
- ✓ Retain and attract talented and motivated employees committed to excellence
- ✓ Compensate and reward employees based on performance and mission contribution
- ✓ Expand DoD's ability to hire more quickly and offer competitive salaries

www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps

Ray Quinn
CPAC Chief
Walla Walla District

Native son revisits Gulf Coast disaster

by Joe Saxon

Robert Joshlin was eight the night the lights went out in Dixie – the night Hurricane Betsy struck the Gulf Coast in 1965.

He remembers abandoning his Baton Rouge, La., home after the power blew out and the windows exploded inward. He remembers stepping into the howling wind, into the deep dark night, into the path of a raging storm.



Robert Joshlin

As the eldest of four children, he was at the end of a human chain, struggling to hold onto his four-year-old sister, who was his lifeline to a younger brother, who arm-linked to his mother as she cuddled his infant sister in her other arm.

“We were out for about 15 minutes as we made our way to a neighbor’s home, but it seemed a lifetime. I saw huge oak trees get blown over. When we got to our friend’s home, all the kids huddled in the bedroom to ride out the storm while the adults lit candles and listened to a transistor radio.”

Hurricane Betsy, a category four storm with 155 m.p.h. winds whipped Baton Rouge and destroyed nearly every building on Grand Isle, just south of New Orleans. When her 10-foot-high storm surge slammed into neighboring New Orleans, flood waters overtopped levees and inundated parts of the city. Before her destructive fury was satiated, 75 people were dead and parts of the Gulf Coast lay ravaged by the country’s first billion-dollar storm.

Although Hurricane Betsy eventually passed from public view, the heroism and humanity of neighbors responding to neighbors in need left an indelible mark on Joshlin, now a contracting specialist with the Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“I remembered seeing desperate people being plucked off their rooftops by heroic fisherman who came out in force to rescue people,” he said.

Hurricane Katrina strikes

Forty years later, disaster struck again in the form of Hurricane Katrina – one of the fiercest storms to hit America in the past 100 years.

“I saw an email asking for volunteers, and I remember telling someone I can’t do that because I had season tickets to Boise State University’s football games,” Joshlin said. “I hadn’t seen a game in four years, and I was determined to see them firsthand.”

But that evening, while watching television reports of Hurricane Katrina’s immediate aftermath, he was

struck by the tragedy. He flashed back to Hurricane Betsy and remembered what it meant to be young, vulnerable and helpless, facing the destructive power of Mother Nature.

“At that point I felt ashamed that I could be so selfish as to put my self-indulgence in a football game before the needs of those affected by this massive storm,” Joshlin said. “I did a priority assessment and realized I needed to go help. Because of the impact Hurricane Betsy had on me, I understood to some small degree, what those folks were going through.”

Native son returns

He volunteered for the relief effort, and soon arrived at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Miss. Upon reaching Gulfport, Miss., there was damage and debris everywhere. Every building had sustained some type of damage.

“Seeing overturned trees, houses with roofs missing and people who are totally without the basic necessities we take for granted brought me back to a point I had left 40 years earlier,” he said.

Upon entering Biloxi, about five miles from the coastline, he realized how far the Gulf of Mexico had invaded inland. He witnessed a region strewn with appliances including refrigerators, washers and dryers, toys, clothes “and anything else that would float.” He noted a highway bridge that “had huge 100-foot portions of concrete road deck and guardrails totally missing” where four lanes of traffic used to traverse.

At his duty station he immersed himself in his contracting duties, which kept him busy 12 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week.

After spending 51 days supporting hurricane relief efforts, Joshlin returned to Walla Walla, more reflective and appreciative of his blessings, remarking, “It’s strange to drive around neighborhoods and not see rubble piled 20 feet high.”

“We did a lot of work and a lot of good.” Joshlin said. “I wish we could have done more. But, my tenure there was worth it, and I would do it again.”



photo by Sue Walton, mechanical engineer, Lower Monumental Lock and Dam (stringer)

While deployed, Robert Joshlin, a Walla Walla District contract specialist, administered contracts for temporary structures, like schools and local government offices.

FRIENDLY F

story and photos by Deb Norton, natural resource specialist,
Dworshak Dam and Reservoir (stringer)

Billowing clouds of smoke filled the skies above Dworshak Reservoir Oct. 24-25 as fire scorched about 600 acres of woodland underbrush in the Little Bay area near Orofino, Idaho.

And, that's a good thing, said Dworshak natural resource personnel who helped fan the flames.



Above, yellow-clad personnel from the Clearwater Potlatch Timber Protection Association ignite designated burn sites in the Little Bay area of Dworshak Reservoir Oct. 24-25. Background, smoke hovered over the Dworshak Reservoir as calm winds allowed contractor and Dworshak crews to complete the prescribe burn in two days.

The controlled burn wrapped up a two-year project to restore healthy forest conditions at the Little Bay area to thin out trees and use a low-intensity prescribed burn to emulate the effects of natural wildfire.

Last year, Empire Lumber of Kamiah, Idaho, selectively thinned the Little Bay area near Canyon Creek, harvesting 2.5 million board feet of timber. Not considered a traditional forest thinning and logging job, loggers removed much of the smaller and less desirable species of timber rather than the large high-value trees.

“About 100 yards uphill from the reservoir edge into the thinned forest, you can see the number of large trees that were left behind – a vision of what the forest might have looked like had wildfire been part of the landscape over the last hundred years,” said Paul Pence, Dworshak natural resource manager.

Improving the forest health and wildlife habitat of the area created two by-products – lumber produced at a local mill and money. About \$150,000 (revenue after the work is completed) will serve as seed money to perform similar stewardship projects around the reservoir in the future.

“Boaters on the lake are amazed when they learn that the Little Bay hillside has already been logged” said Pence. “A person in a boat can’t see the effects of the logging job from the lake. The sale layout was executed with great care to avoid visual disturbances of the hillside.”

Prior to logging, Dworshak natural resource personnel located existing osprey nests and protected them with a 150-foot “no cut” radius surrounding each nesting site.



FIRES

Personnel also surveyed owl, woodpecker and goshawk use in order to monitor the change in wildlife as a result of the restoration actions.

Because of the rugged, sloping terrain and the fact that fire seeks to go uphill, Dworshak needed the adjacent landowners, Potlatch Corporation, Idaho Department of Lands and Reggear Tree Farms to conduct a burn on their land prior to the reservoir burn. Creating a “black line” (preburned area) on private land above Corps land greatly reduced the risk of escaped fire. It also effectively increased the amount of land receiving treatment and being improved.

To help with the costs of the thinning and burning for adjacent landowners, Clearwater Potlatch Timber Protection Association submitted a grant to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and received \$25,000.

Once logging was finished, a crew from CPTPA cleared a fire line down to bare mineral soil encompassing the projected burn area. Crews from CPTPA, supported by Dworshak natural resource personnel, burned the slash piles at log landing sites, then used drip torches to ignite the burn area. A helicopter carrying a helitorch (a specially designed drip torch) dropped an ignited flammable jell-like substance over large areas aiding ground crews.

“Approximately 600 acres involved in this controlled burn created a seed bed for the regeneration of tree and wildlife browse species,” said Russ Davis, wildlife biologist at Dworshak. “By imitating the effects of natural wildfire, a healthier forest will result, along with increased forage for elk and deer.”



Above, a Clearwater Potlatch Timber Protection Association worker uses a drip torch to burn underbrush in the Little Bay area. Below, after completing CPTPA safety and equipment training, Russ Davis, a Corps wildlife biologist, and other Dworshak personnel supported CPTPA crews, helping them complete the controlled burn before weather conditions changed.



Stream restoration project unearths cultural treasure

by Gina Baltrusch

To the untrained eye, they're just a bunch of rocks – many no bigger than the fingernail on someone's pinkie finger.

To Walla Walla District's Cultural Resources coordinator, they're pieces of history – a treasure that can help tell the story of times past, clues to what life was like for the Native American people who lived hundreds of years ago along the creeks that ran through Ladd Marsh in Southeastern Oregon.

Mona Wright oversaw work performed throughout the summer by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's Department of Natural Resources as their archeologists and cultural resource technicians unearthed hundreds of potential artifacts during a project-associated dig.

"Ladd Marsh is well known in local Native American history as an area commonly used by the tribes," said Wright. "So, when District planners proposed an aquatic ecosystem restoration project,

they knew a cultural investigation would be needed before they could move forward with their habitat improvement plans."

The investigation required archeological excavations in areas where the Corps planned to relocate about a three-quarter-mile portion of the Middle Fork of Ladd Creek and a smaller section of Barney Creek to enhance conditions for steelhead fish.

The project is sponsored by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, which manages the marsh, partnering with Ducks Unlimited.

The CTUIR researchers wrapped up their field work in August, but it will take about another year to complete laboratory and other analysis work before the District receives a report of findings from the site.

While Wright and other District archeologists wait for the artifacts gathered from Ladd Marsh to give up clues to the past, the stream restoration project progresses, improving habitat for protected fish species and enhancing Ladd Marsh's wetlands for waterfowl.



Above, Mona Wright, Walla Walla District's cultural resources coordinator, and Shawn Steinmetz, an archeologist for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's Department of Natural Resources, examine "a real find" – a stone shaped for use as a scraping tool by Native American people who long ago lived in the Ladd Marsh area of Southeastern Oregon. The stone tool is one of hundreds of Native American artifacts unearthed during the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' cultural resource study performed as part of an aquatic ecosystem restoration project. Findings from laboratory analysis of the artifacts are expected to be complete by late-summer. Left, Corps plans to reestablish about three-quarters of a mile of the Middle Fork of Ladd Creek and about one-quarter mile of Barney Creek to their original locations across a nearby meadow, will improve habitat for steelhead and enhance wetlands for waterfowl.



Above, before washing and sifting, cultural resource technicians label buckets of dirt from excavation sites with precise data recording the location and depth of the soil samples. Below, archeologists and technicians wash, sort and sift through buckets of soil, looking for potential artifacts.



Above, it takes the trained eyes of cultural researchers to identify a piece of history from a pebble. Below, plans to return the Middle Fork of Ladd Creek and Barney Creek closer to their original, natural state will reestablish habitat for steelhead fish.



Thoughts for the holidays

You have always been told that giving is more important than what you receive during the holidays. It is much more apparent here in Afghanistan. However, in giving, you do receive a greater gift.



William Stratton

To me, it's the sense of doing something great for the less fortunate.

The people of Afghanistan truly are not attached to material items as we are in America. It is

hard to explain the joy they feel to have us help them rebuild a war-torn country.

It has been so rewarding that there is nothing I could receive during this holiday period that would be of greater value to me than seeing the many faces of truly grateful people.

It is hard leaving the family during such a festive time of year,

and I am very blessed to have my wife and children.

They also know the importance of what we are doing in Afghanistan. They have not just thought of themselves this holiday, but believe that there is a greater good in the sacrifice that they are making. I am very proud of them.

So this holiday period, extend a little extra prayer for our troops, your fellow deployed Corps employees and the Afghan people.

From Kandahar, we all wish you the best.

William Stratton

**Power Plant Operator, McNary Lock and Dam
deployed to Afghanistan**



Walla Walla District file photo

It is difficult to be away from family and friends during this time of year, yet there is a compelling reason to be here – to ensure the continued success of projects, to provide the Iraqi people with basic services and to allow more stable conditions to develop.

It is my honor and commitment to serve here. But, it is only possible due to the support from you back home who carry on in our absence.

Thank you for your support and commitment!

Simeon Francis

**Structural Engineer,
Walla Walla District HQ
deployed to Iraq**

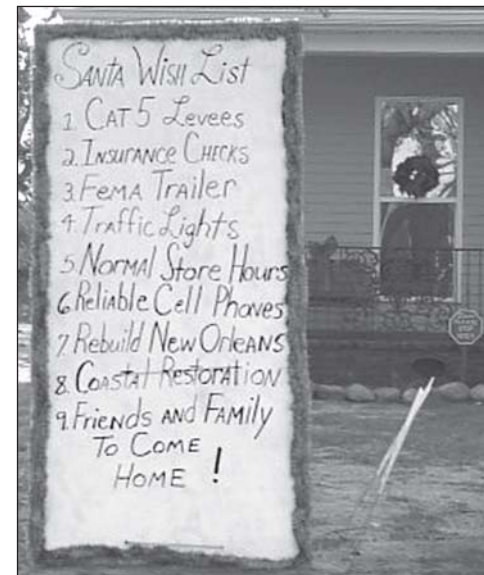


Photo provided by Matt Allen, Lower Monumental Lock and Dam operations manager, supporting hurricane recovery efforts

About 120 Walla Walla District employees volunteered for hurricane relief work since September. About 30 will still be deployed to the Gulf States during the holidays.

from far away

Just wanted to say thanks to everybody back home.

People tell me, "What a great place Walla Walla must be, that they think of you when you are away," or, "Gee, no colonel has every called my family to see if they're okay."

It is really nice to be thought of when you are so far away.

God bless you, everyone.

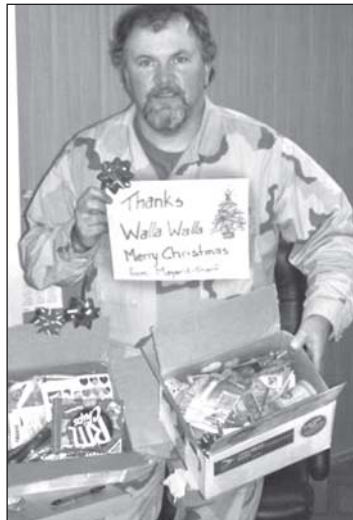


photo provided by Vincent Ruzicka

Vincent Ruzicka
Power Plant Operator,
McNary Lock and Dam,
deployed to Afghanistan

On this historic week (elections are going on as I write), I am glad I am here.

As for my days here in Baghdad, they consist of working a variety of legal issues, including lots of contracting issues.

The type of reconstruction contracts I have seen include projects such as schools, clinics, police stations, local power and water distribution facilities.



This deployment is an experience of a lifetime, and I appreciate all of you back home who allow me and others to serve. Thank you, and have a great holiday season.

Janet Smith
Attorney, Office of Counsel,
deployed to Iraq

I'm getting to interact with some of the children in the area. They seem fascinated with my mustache and ask if I am a general, maybe because of the eight armed bodyguards with me. We exchange names, handshakes and smiles. I'd like to wish everyone a great holiday and a reminder that this Christmas season, remember our military over here and say a prayer for them.

Phil Rider
Mechanic Crew
Foreman,
Little Goose
Lock and Dam,
deployed to Iraq



The innocence of children



Donna Street



photos provided by Donna Street

May the innocence, virtue and incorruptibility of these precious Iraqi children be an inspiration to us all in the days ahead, for they are the future of Iraq.

May the courage they show, walking to school in the face of danger, set an example for us all, never to relinquish freedom to terrorism.

Seasons Greetings, Happy Holidays and a Merry Christmas to all.

Donna Street
Supervisory Civil Engineer,
Construction Division,
deployed to Iraq

I am glad that I volunteered for this duty, and I can say that I feel satisfaction about the work we are doing here.

I am helping in the construction of an Afghan National Army

Brigade base camp and am involved in the construction of a series of Afghan National Police headquarters at various locations.

This is an effort to establish a security for this country provided by their own force which will enable the Afghans to sustain their people and provide what we all look for – the freedom to pursue a secure life for our families.



Bert Cerillo
Power Plant Electrician,
Lower Granite Lock and Dam,
deployed to Afghanistan

NWD reviews past year's AFEP studies

by Gina Baltrusch

It's the event of the year for Northwestern Division fish researchers.

More than 200 people attended the annual Anadromous Fish Evaluation Program research review held Nov. 14-17 at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash.

About 60 researchers presented the results of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-funded studies conducted primarily in the Portland and Walla Walla districts.

"This is the culmination of the past year's research...our first look at the 2005 data," said Mark Smith, a Walla Walla District fishery biologist. "The cool thing about this event is it gives us a full-spectrum look at

the program and what other people are doing with their research. It helps us establish what our future AFEP research needs may be."

While the research results didn't elicit "gee-whiz" gasps from the audience, comprised mostly of biologists and researchers from federal, state, academic and tribal organizations, the presentations certainly held their attention.

"In the fish world, there are not a lot of silver bullets to address salmon recovery," said Smith, "but this AFEP research often provides us with small steps toward improving salmon survival in the hydropower system."

The Anadromous Fish Evaluation Program is the set of Corps-funded

evaluation and monitoring studies designed to provide biological information and insights related to fish passage and survival at hydropower dams.

Studies include such topics as effects of juvenile fish transportation, evaluation of fish guidance devices, surface bypass systems, lamprey studies and adult fish passage at the dams.

The Corps has sponsored biological studies concerning anadromous fish (fish that migrate from the sea to fresh water to spawn) passage on the Columbia and lower Snake rivers, Oregon and Washington, since 1952.

The research, monitoring and evaluation studies are managed under



photo by Krissy Antes

Paul Ocker, a Northwestern Division fishery biologist, addresses researchers at the Anadromous Fish Evaluation Program review.

the AFEP. Studies are carried out in the Portland District and Walla Walla District offices of the Corps' Northwestern Division.

The districts work together to find efficiencies and cost savings in conducting their research, said Rebecca Kalamasz, Environmental Analysis Section chief at Walla Walla District.

"We're always looking for ways we can combine the needs of both districts into a single research project. We often share equipment, supplies, engineers and biologists," said Kalamasz. "It makes sense and saves dollars."

Working regionally also helped the districts standardize methodologies for conducting some types of research, Kalamasz added.

Walla Walla and Portland districts' partnership extends to the annual AFEP research review, as well. Both organizations' research is presented, and they take turns hosting the annual event.

More than 60 AFEP studies conducted during 2005 included research on avian predation, the new spillway weir installed at Ice Harbor Lock and Dam and delayed mortality related to fish transportation. Summaries of the research are available online at www.nww.usace.army.mil/planning/ep/fishes/2005AFEPREVIEW/index.html.



Walla Walla District file photo

Mark Smith (left-rear), a Walla Walla District fishery biologist, observes researchers conducting fish-passage tests of the spillway weir, a surface bypass structure, installed at Ice Harbor Dam in February. The results of this research were presented at the Nov. 14-17 AFEP review hosted by Walla Walla District.