



US Army Corps
of Engineers
New Orleans District

Riverside

www.mvn.usace.army.mil

March 2005

Challenge Day

FY 06 budget

Earth Fest



President's budget

Funding remains a challenge in FY 06

By Marcia Demma

Nationwide, the President's civil works budget increased from \$4.23 billion in FY05 to \$4.51 billion in FY06. The only part of the increase in the New Orleans District budget is in General Investigations appropriation.

The Louisiana Coastal Area Feasibility Study and Science and Technology Program has \$20 million of the \$95 million GI budget nationwide.

The top nine priority construction projects, including the West Bank and Vicinity project, are budgeted for \$641 million, almost 40 percent of the Construction General budget.

FY 05/06 In thousands	2005 President's budget	2005 Conference allocation	2006 President's budget	2006 Funds required
General Investigations	\$11,100	\$13,375	\$24,053	\$30,503
Construction General	\$85,985	\$94,340	\$47,722	\$192,029
O&M General	\$136,838	\$139,582	\$127,760	\$268,535
FC, MR&T	\$90,006	\$96,257	\$97,764	\$161,961
District Totals	\$323,929	\$343,554	\$297,299	\$653,028

In the President's FY2006 budget and in the Construction General appropriation, three projects are potential projects for contract suspension, with 31 potential suspensions nationwide.

The President's budget was released to the public on Feb. 7. Now the House and Senate appropriations committees and subcommittees will develop their funding priorities for all appropriations. Their priorities may be different from the President's budget. The dates for the subcommittee hearings have not been set yet, but will begin in the June/July time frame. The district's project managers will begin work on the initial FY07 budget shortly.



Lane Lefort

Construction Division volunteers talk with Job Shadowing Day students from St. Bernard Parish at a field site, Feb. 17. The annual event provides shadowing, mentoring and career exploration opportunities for students throughout the country. Students who came to the Corps expressed interest in engineering, biological, scientific and related careers, and were given the day to visit the Corps and "shadow" at least one employee, participating in and observing workplace activities.

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Lane Lefort

Volunteers help visitors with our "swamp animals" quiz during the Audubon Zoo's Earth Fest, March 19.

Corps Challenge gives students a taste of engineering



At the Soil Testing Station, Charlie Rome, Engineering, observes St. Mary's Dominican High School students as they determine the basic composition of pre-mixed soil samples.

Lane Lefort

By Susan Jackson

School teams of local seventh and eighth graders took the Corps Challenge and spent Feb. 23 in stiff competition here as part of the 54th-annual Engineers Week celebration.

St. Mary's Dominican High School took 1st place, St. Robert Bellarmine Middle School took 2nd, and 3rd place went to Adams Middle School. Each of the nine teams was recognized for its strengths. All the students walked away with certificates and Engineer Week posters.

Leadership Development Program, Phase Two, members contributed ideas for events and Phase One members developed each activity,

which included bridge building, soil classification, surveying, water purification and land loss estimation.

They were challenged to design events that could be completed by seventh and eighth graders within 25-minutes. All materials used for the events were found in-house with help from employees in the Shops Building and Soils Lab. The real test for the coordinators, after the planning and trial runs, was to be ready for a new team of students every 25 minutes.

Their goal was to expose the students to different aspects of engineering, educate them about Corps projects, and make sure each

student participated and enjoyed the experience.

"I was really impressed by the level of participation and excitement with the students," said Michelle Daigle, Operations. "Students came up with creative ways to complete the tasks and were extremely competitive."

"They were very good, bright and respectful," added Michael Sullivan, Operations. Sullivan and Daigle helped sponsor the Surveying/Hydrographic Station where teams observed a multibeam survey and were challenged to locate, identify and determine the depth of water

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over the sunken objects.

The St. Robert's team impressed sponsors by finding a glitch during the underwater survey. Many of the teams scored high in teamwork, and the St. Robert's team had been especially excited about their work.

Charlie Rome and Anthony Gallodoro, Engineering, led the soils classification exercise where students competed in classifying 10 soil samples. They both said prior planning and preparation allowed everything to run smoothly and made the activity interesting for students.

Rome said students enjoyed getting their hands dirty and were excited about learning. "One young lady worked diligently through the exercise and appeared to have done this previously. I was later told that she was the daughter of a local soil-testing lab employee. Now I'm the one hoping I 'made the grade'."

Shelly Moczygemba, Engineering, co-sponsored the Water Purification



Station with Dave Vossen. "The kids really like hands-on work and catch on quickly. Next year, we should let them do more; let the kids make their own filters and mess with it," Moczygemba suggested.

Students said they enjoyed themselves, especially at the Bridge Building Station where they were challenged to plan and coordinate with one another.

In her student/teacher survey, eighth grader Anusha Rao wrote that she enjoyed bridge building because

it was a team effort and fun to do. It made her think about possibilities and how something could work. If she could change anything about the Corps Challenge, she would allow high school students to take advance courses here. "This was a fun field trip. It taught me a lot about engineering in general."

Students may have rated bridge building their favorite, but Ethan Martin, seventh grade, said, "They were all awesome."



Dave Vossen, Engineering, explains water purification techniques to St. Angela Merici Catholic School team members. Students used coagulation and filtration techniques to treat water samples and were graded on the purity of their water.



Photos by Lane Lefort

Clockwise from top left: 1) Charlie Rome, Engineering, shows a McMinn Secondary School student how to tell the difference between soil types at the Soil Testing Station; 2) Adams Middle School students work as a team at the Bridge Building Station; 3) Trist Middle School students wait for their water to coagulate at the Water Testing Station. Teams were graded on the purity of the water after having applied purification techniques; 4) Shelly Moczygemba, Engineering, assists Trist Middle School students in developing their water filtering system at the Water Testing Station.

Teachers seemed pretty impressed too, giving high marks for each of the stations and the overall program.

“We had a great time, and it was a wonderful experience for all of my students,” said Judy Kase, Adams Middle School teacher. She said her students are looking forward to next year’s Corps Challenge.

Corps sponsors included those mentioned and Lourdes Gonzalez, Srilatha Kris, Heath Jones, Leslie Lombard, Christie Nunez, Fred Wallace, Gina Foley, Christina Montour, David Ramirez, Richard Entwisle, Jim Wolff, Barbara Garcia, Steve Roberts, Chuck Laborde, and Challenge Leader Jean Vossen.



Using historical and projected-change maps of coastal Louisiana, David Ramirez, Engineering, explains to Adams Middle School students how to measure land loss rate in average acres per year. Ramirez, Heath Jones and Leslie Lombard, Engineering, oversaw the Land Loss Station.

Teams connect with Groove software

By Eric Lincoln

A collaboration software called Groove is the latest tool being used around the district and the Corps to help members work more efficiently together.

"This is not an email system, it's better. Email doesn't have the capabilities of this software," says Susan Mabry, Information Management coordinator for Groove implementation. "I've used Groove for team meetings in the last three months. I avoided phone calls and TDY, whereas before I may have had to travel to

another city and be involved in many teleconferences, and we created a knowledge base which made me efficient and more productive."

About 250 users have logged on around the district so far, but whoever wants to download the software is free to do so. The Corps purchased 20,000 licenses nationwide, and about 9,000 licenses remain available.

With team members all logged into the same work space, meetings can be scheduled, discussions held and recorded, and files and data shared and stored, thereby bringing more efficiency into the office.

For example, in the past, if a supervisor wanted to give a presentation, he or she would have to rally team members to gather all the information and collaborate on the presentation. With Groove, though, all the knowledge about a certain project will be recorded and available in one space on the

Groove network. One person can easily organize the presentation or pose question to the team members, and the data can be corrected or changed centrally for all to see.

For meetings, users can list all members of an upcoming meeting and post information so participants will be more prepared.

Groove is used heavily in Iraq for project assessment.

Last year, Senior Leaders Conference attendees used Groove to view case studies, agendas and activities before the conference. "Everyone knew what would happen and commented on it. The conference went more smoothly because of these enhanced communications," said Mabry.

Groove is targeted primarily for team use and is not intended for use as a district-wide message board.

Currently, Logistics Management is using the software to aid employees in completing an A76 study.

To use the software, first email a request for an activation key to kme-licenses@usace.army.mil. The activation key will come with directions for installing the software, usually through Information Management.

For more information, contact Susan Mabry, x2693.

The idea behind Groove

Groove is centralized collaboration software that allows employees to work together virtually to create business documents, presentations and budgets. This allows employees to work on the same documents at the same time from different locations.

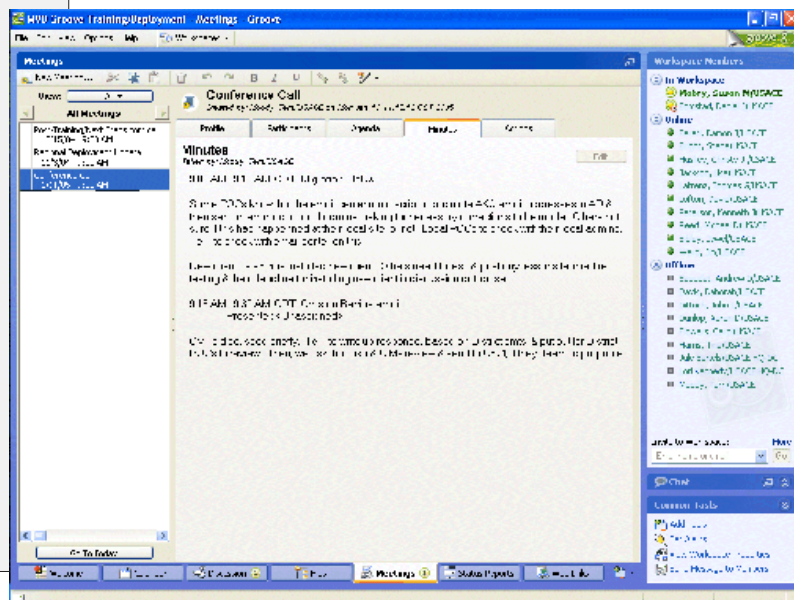
What are the advantages?

Groove works very well for organizing and centralizing information for teams. It keeps all files, projects, data and feedback in one location that everyone who is working on the project can access. This allows them to review and update the same document that everyone else has used, which essentially keeps everyone working on the same page, at the same time.

Some of the main advantages of Groove over Outlook Express are:

- ❑ Members across the nation can watch a PowerPoint presentation simultaneously; each member can see the same slide at the same time while the presenter navigates through the presentation.
- ❑ Members can review and edit a Microsoft Word Document in real time without wasting time sending it via email and consolidating the changes later.
- ❑ Project Manager Tool allows members to see the full scope and requirements of a project, allowing anyone to manage the project regardless of size.
- ❑ There is no limit to the size of data you post.

From



Employee assistance program here to help

The Corps provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as part of its employee benefit package. It is a free and confidential service available to Corps employees and their immediate families. Employees can use the EAP by self-referral or may be directed to the EAP by a supervisor.

The EAP assists in identifying, managing and resolving personal and work-related issues that may affect job performance or quality of life. The EAP provides counseling, education and consultation services to improve job performance, worker health and the well-being of the employee and their family.

In addition to individual service, the EAP provides crisis counseling for groups of employees who suffer from a shared workplace crisis such as death/illness of a colleague, inappropriate workplace behavior or any circumstance that may adversely affect the working group.

Corps employees not located in the New Orleans District can utilize a network of clinics located throughout the state and the nation. Employee Assistance Programs of Louisiana has been contracted to provide services to Corps employees.

For more information, go to www.intra.mvn.usace.army.mil/ss/sw/eap.htm.

Frequently asked questions

How do I make an appointment to see the EAP counselor?

Simply call the Employee Assistance Program of Louisiana scheduling line at 244-9898 or 1-800-749-3277 and tell them that you are an employee (or a family member of an employee) who works for the New Orleans District and would like to make an appointment to see a counselor.

What does EAP cost?

Employees are entitled to three free sessions. The purpose of these sessions is to give the counselor an opportunity to analyze and refer (if appropriate) the employee for enrollment into an appropriate program. Enrollments in these continued programs may or may not be covered under the employee's health insurance plan.

Can my family members see the EAP Counselor?

Yes, immediate family members are entitled to three visits per year.

How many times can I visit the EAP Counselor?

Employees are entitled to three visits. However, should an employee have an emergency, he/she should contact the Health Office for further assistance.



EAP counselor Marleen Billiot meets employees following her "Conflict and Resolution" lunch-and-learn session on March 23.

Can I see the EAP Counselor for a personal problem?

Yes. The EAP Counselor is available to discuss any problems that the employee may be trying to work through. Issues need not be only work related. Marital problems, alcoholism, drug abuse and problems with teens are examples of the reasons employees visit the EAP.

Examples of the reasons employees visit the EAP.

Where can I meet with the EAP Counselor?

You have the choice of where to meet. When you

contact the counselor, you can either set up an appointment to meet with them offsite at their office location (10555 Lake Forest Blvd., New Orleans) or you can arrange to have them come meet with you in the Health Office (Room 143b).

What time will the EAP Counselor be at the district?

There will be an EAP Counselor on the district every Wednesday from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. Appointments are required; walk-ins will be accommodated when possible.

Do I need to tell my supervisor I am seeing the EAP Counselor?

No, however if you are going on work time you must inform your supervisor that you are leaving your work area. If you see the EAP on your own time, you do not need to tell your supervisor.

How do I charge my work time when I use the EAP?

If you are seeing the counselor here during your normal working hours and inform your supervisor, charge the one hour to RG (overhead). If off-site, you are not entitled to travel time to and from your appointment.

If you are seeing the counselor during your normal working hours, on-site and/or off-site, and do not want to inform your supervisor, you will need to request leave (annual/sick/credit/compensatory); whichever is appropriate for your circumstance.

Where can I call if I have more questions?

Call the EAP scheduling line, or the Health Office, x2206.

**Employee Assistance Program of Louisiana
scheduling line: 244-9898 or 1-800-749-3277**

Around the District



Lane Lefort

Volunteers Greg Breerwood (OD), Rich Varuso (ED), Larry Plaisance (SS) and Beth Nord (OD) work the table at Audubon Zoo's Earth Fest, March 19. About 16,000 visitors came to the zoo over the weekend to check out the various exhibitor tables and listen to live music. Other Corps volunteers were: Sharon Richarme, Susan Mabry, Heloise Alphonse, David Pavur, Susan Jackson, Michelle Spraul, Bill Hicks, Amana Henville, Barbara Garcia, April Villa, Edmay Lincks, Anna Penna, Ezra Batte, Mike Danielson and Robert Thomson.

Congratulations

to **Jake Terranova** (ED) on his promotion to chief, Projects Engineering Section.

to **Maj. Dan Hibner** (CD) on his promotion and his award of the Purple Heart Medal.

to **Judy Kehoe** (WCSC), on the birth of her first grandchild, Mia Jennifer Kehoe, born to Judy's son, Airman 1st Class Michael Kehoe II, and his wife, Michele, Feb. 17.

Kudos

to **Ezra Batte** (CD), **Angela DeSoto Duncan** (ED), **Chris Dunn** (ED), **Kelly Dunn** (OC), **Charles Laborde** (ED), **Chad Rachel** (ED) and **April Villa** (ED) who volunteered for Mathcounts, a 6-8th grade math competition, Feb. 19 at UNO.

to **Eric Lincoln** (PA), who was awarded

Civilian Journalist of the Year in the Corps' annual Hebert Kassner Journalism Contest. He also received awards for feature and commentary articles, and Honorable Mention for Civilian Journalist of the Year in the Army's overall Keith L. Ware Journalism Contest.

to **Beverly** (Castle Kids) and **John Hall** (PA), whose son, Flannery, Yeoman 2nd Class, sailed March 1 from Groton, Conn., on a six-month deployment in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans aboard the attack submarine USS Hartford.

to **Mervin Morehiser** (PM), who spoke to the Moisant Kawanis Club about the levee systems, March 8.

to **Al Naomi** (PM) and **Mike Lowe** (OD), who were the panelists at a public forum on flood protection, held by *One Book One New Orleans* in the DARM, March 22.

to **Dr. Colin MacLachlan**, Department of History, Tulane University, who was awarded a certificate of appreciation by Col. Rowan, Sept. 15, for his work over many years to improve cooperation and communication between MVN and Tulane University.

to **Johlee Schinetsky**, daughter of **Steven Schinetsky** (OD), who received the Incarnate Word Scholarship, one of four scholarships awarded at Archbishop Chapelle High School to incoming 8th graders.

to **Toni** (PM) and **Richard Baldini** (OD-retired), whose daughter, Tani, won 1st Place in the "Patriot's Pen" contest for 7th and 8th grade students, under the subject, "What Service Means To Me." The competition was judged by a group of local veterans.

Farewell

to **Margaret Tucker** (CD), who retired April 1.

Condolences

to family and friends of **Kirt Jacob**, foreman of the Bonnet Carre Spillway, who passed away after a short illness, March 3.

to **Curtis Delaune** (ED), whose wife, Christie, passed away March 4.

to **Bruce Breaux** (OD) whose mother, Lorraine Sanell, passed away Feb. 2.

to **Ralph Racioppa** (OD) whose father, Ralph, passed away March 2.

to the family of **Charles "Chuck" Nelson** (retired, 30+ years of service), who died after an automobile accident, March 13. He was 94.

to family and friends of **Bill Evans**, the Waterways Journal magazine Gulf Coast manager, who passed away March 5.

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