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Canal groundbreaking kicks off projects in Iraq's Salman Pak region sponsored by 1st Armored Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team

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(Left to right) Iraqi Brig. Gen. Hussein, commander of the 45th Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division; contractor Sadiq Hassim; Engineer Ahmran, director of energy for water resources; and Maj. Jason Joose, executive officer of Task Force 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry, prepare to break ground on a project at the Bawi pump station in Salman Pak, Iraq, Jan. 18. The canal project is one of a series of projects to improve infrastructure and quality of life in the area with the assistance of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division.

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- Iraqi security forces, local leaders and Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division participated in a Jan. 18 groundbreaking ceremony marking the widening of the Bawi Canal in the Salman Pak region southeast of Baghdad. 2nd BCT officials said the canal work is one of a series of projects to improve infrastructure and quality of life in the Mada'in and Marquez Qadas areas as part of "Operation Iron Gator."

Maj. Jason Joose, the executive officer for Task Force Gator, which is led by the 2nd BCT's 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry, welcomed Iraqi Brig. Gen. Hussein, commander of the 45th Brigade Iraqi Army; Sheik Qais, the chairman of the Mada'in tribal council; and other leaders from the area, to the event.

"Water goes from the water station to Salman Pak and flows from Wahida to Narwhan, so this benefits a large amount of people and land," said Capt. Dustin Gray, the 4/27th fire support officer.

The widening of the canal will enable the water from the Bawi pump station to reach more people in the Salman Pak and Wahida area.

“The Bawi water pump station does not work at full capacity. It has four engines, able to put out five cubic meters of water per minute into the irrigation canal. Because of the size of the canal feeding water to the engines, only one or two engines can run at a time. By widening the canal, all four engines can run at once,” said Sadiq Hassim, the contractor for the project.

The expansion will provide the area of Wahida with more irrigation and drinking water.

The project will increase the overall capacity of the Bawi Canal an additional four cubic meters per second as the water moves through it, which is fed from the Bawi pumping station.

“This is a great day for all the citizens of the Mada’in,” said Joose. “Soon water will flow to arid areas due to the hard work by an Iraqi company, with local Iraqi labor, secured by Iraqi security forces and the Sawah. I am pleased the coalition forces can play a part in this brighter future.”

The 2nd BCT, 1st Armored Division is based in Baumholder, Germany.



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