

Earth Day
Comments for Col. Mike Burt
April 22, 2003

Welcome to the district's celebration of Earth Day, purposely held in the Spring, a season when the earth experiences renewal of its resources.

It's a time of year that makes us appreciate all that is good with the Earth. It's a time of rebirth that is evident all around us.

The idea to celebrate Earth Day began in 1969 in California and two years later, the United Nations called for all people of every nation to protect and nurture our beautiful and generous planet.

This day offers us the opportunity to recognize our planet's beautiful system of balance and abundance. And while that comes naturally, it is extremely dependant on man's cognizance of our responsibilities.

As trustees of Earth, we must make choices that will eliminate pollution and poverty and violence. We should choose to foster peace, the wonders of life and take the necessary steps to safeguard the potential for our future.

General Flower's Seven Environmental Operating Principles takes these ideals into account. He is quoted: "As an integral part of our mission, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be a national leader in environmental and natural resource stewardship for present and future generations."

His seven principles call for us to recognize the need to achieve environmental sustainability, the interdependence of life and the physical environment, and to seek balance and synergy between human activities and natural systems.

Today, the Corps can be proud of its direction on environmental matters and our unity of purpose with environmental concerns and our mission.

Closer at hand, we have some distinguished guests today. I'd like to welcome and introduce...

Mr. Don Davis, who is the Administrator of the Louisiana Applied and Educational Oil Spill and Research and Development Program in the Governor's office. Don will talk about the importance of our environment.

Chef Phillippe Parola (pron. parole uh), who runs a consulting restaurant business out of Baton Rouge, will judge our Nutria Cook Off Contest. Chef Parola is also the spokesperson, funded through the Breaux Act, to promote cooking with nutria. We wish him luck!

There are a lot more activities planned, so stick around and have fun.