

Mississippi Valley Division works to finalize regional priorities and strategic direction in support of USACE priorities

By Pamela Harrion
MVD Public Affairs

On Oct. 30-Nov. 1, 2012, the Mississippi Valley Division met with its five regional boards, namely the “R5” (which includes the Regional Command Counsel, Regional Management Board, Regional Program Review Board, Regional Program Budget Advisory Committee and Regional Acquisition Strategy Board), in Vicksburg, Miss., to finalize its regional priorities and strategic direction in support



Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody discussed MVD’s regional priorities and the strategic direction of the Corps during MVD’s R5 meeting held recently in Vicksburg, Miss.

guidance I get from our SES’ers.”

He also elaborated on the direction of the Corps. “First and foremost, what we are trying to do is get our arms around the direction that the Corps is headed from the [12 emerging priorities] that the Chief of Engineers Thomas Bostick has settled on,” he said. “And what we are trying to do is align ourselves as a region with those priorities. This is a an opportunity to build on some fantastic work that we did in Rock

Island in late June, and then advance that effort by defining more specifics of where we’re trying to go...”

He added: “At the end of the day, this is about defining direction and leading change to achieve that direction. We’re laying the foundation for the change to be made sometime in the future, but it’s got to start now.”

Maj. Gen. Peabody used the 1928 Flood Act as an example to make this point. “When you look at the 1928 Flood Control Act, that Flood Control Act would not have happened...we would not have had a Mississippi River and Tributaries project had it not been for over

of USACE’s priorities as well as to develop a common vision and framework for executing those priorities.

The R5’s intent is to come to a common corporate understanding of (1) Regional programs and the Operating Budget, (2) the USACE Vision, Mission, Campaign Plan and Priorities and (3) MVD Regional Priorities, MVD IPLAN Framework and Operational Plan.

In his opening remarks, Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody said that he was very proud of all of the leaders of the Mississippi Valley region.

“Every single day, I see what you all are doing: engaging our stakeholders, delivering projects, solving problems, and I am especially proud of the advice and

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New for employees!
EEO Policies are now available on Inet!

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Around the Bend



Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody
Commander
Mississippi Valley Division
President
Mississippi River Commission

MVD Team,

This fall has continued to be exceptionally busy with hearings and studies on Hurricane Isaac’s impacts, the entire Corps’ response to Hurricane Sandy, the intensifying drought and low-water situation on the middle Mississippi, preparations to release the 2011 Post Flood Report and strategic engagements on all of these events and others.

Hurricane Sandy dominated all of USACE’s focus and efforts this fall. One of the largest storms ever to hit the Atlantic coast, Sandy slammed into the most densely populated area of the United States. The Mississippi Valley Division deployed over 80 people at various times to respond, with a primary initial mission to unwater the New York / New Jersey complex of transportation tunnels. Led by Mr. Al Lee and populated mostly by unwatering experts from Rock

Island, and including the Rock Island and St. Louis districts’ commanders, “Task Force Unwatering” completed its mission in just two weeks. Lt. Gen. Bostick (Chief of Engineers) called me personally as the unwatering mission was winding down to let me know how decisive the division’s support was to the enormously successful unwatering response, as well as to ongoing recovery efforts. I could not be more proud of all who made this such a successful effort!

In conversations with some of our Congressional leaders, it is clear that a debate will be unfolding regarding a possible supplemental appropriation related to Hurricane Sandy and potentially Hurricane Isaac as well. Whether or not Congress appropriates a supplemental in these fiscally challenging times, it is evident that the impact of these two storms has energized a national debate about whether and to what extent this country should build storm protection systems along our coasts. Regardless of what national decisions are made, the Corps and this region will be central to this dialogue and decision.

While Hurricane Sandy wreaked havoc, the intense drought across the central United States continued to worsen and is forecast to persist well into the spring. The low-water situation in the lower Mississippi valley has improved thanks to some rain in the Ohio basin, but that impact did not affect either the Mississippi or Missouri rivers’ headwaters. Last week the Missouri River began its annual flow reductions, which will contribute to significantly decreased river stages forecast for the middle Mississippi River between St. Louis and Cairo. This is likely to affect the navigation channel authorized depths

at the rock pinnacles near Thebes, Ill.

The drought and low-water challenge can only be addressed as a long-term campaign, not a temporary emergency. The current situation is due to a persistent lack of rain, which limits Corps management options, and can only be solved by more precipitation. The Corps provides great value to the nation with the enormous investment in water resource infrastructure that enables multiple uses of this resource in all but the most extreme circumstances ... present circumstances fall into that “extreme” category. While the nation’s investment in river improvements by the Corps has increased river channel efficiency, reduced dredging, improved flood risk management and enhanced environmental purposes, there is no appropriation or authorization that can guarantee the weather, be it too much or too little rain.

The Mississippi valley has not experienced persistent drought since before the current system was completed in the 1930s, but that possibility looms today. Following the drought of 1988, the Corps began careful preparations for future severe low-water situations, and has been working closely with our U.S. Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and navigation industry partners since June to mitigate effects from the current drought, including:

1. Executing the Channel Improvement Program to install critical rock structures in the river to ensure the channel’s optimal efficiency;
2. Executing constant channel patrols and surveys in coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard;
3. Continuously dredging the channel



from July to September (when shoaling ceased), to include up to 24 dredges at a time;

4. Storing water in the upper Mississippi River reservoirs and releasing water only to achieve mitigating effects downstream;
5. Lowering the rock obstructions at the “pinnacles” via various blasting.

The Corps has been working since September to develop another blasting contract to further lower the rock obstructions at the pinnacles, but this contract will not go into effect until early next year. If the blasting contract is successful and we are able to lower the rock by the planned 1.5 feet, then shoaling and dredging operations will likely become the controlling channel depth variable.

In late September I attended America’s Great Watershed Initiative in St. Louis, Mo. This was probably the best, most thought-provoking stakeholder conference I have ever attended, with outstanding and diverse speakers, an engaging format and an enormous amount of high-quality

information. More than 180 participants attended from throughout the Mississippi watershed, representing all interest areas and governmental and non-governmental elements. We also used the conference to gain specific feedback on the Mississippi Watershed “200-Year Working Vision,” which we will review to make changes to this “living document.” Leaders from throughout the divisions are also attending a series of conferences titled “The Big River” to address watershed-level issues. Going forward, it is clear that this region must increase our watershed-level focus, along with our Corps brethren to our east and west, if the nation is to have a chance of successfully addressing the many challenging water resource issues we face. Having our leaders attend conferences and seminars such as these is a critical component of ensuring a well-informed dialogue.

To close out the year, we will have our annual Mississippi Valley Flood

Control Association meeting in New Orleans, where we will update our audience on the status of executing the 2011 flood repairs and the current low-water challenges. We have met our aggressive 2012 flood repair forecast and are programmed to substantially complete the Birds Point-New Madrid Floodway repairs.



Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody testifies during the Congressional Field Hearing about Hurricane Isaac, held in Gretna, La. on September 25, 2012.

Our most recent analysis indicates the damages prevented during the 2011 flood were more than double previous estimates - a breath-taking \$230 billion, or nearly a quarter of a trillion dollars! The return on the taxpayers’ investment is an astonishing 44 to 1 ratio, more than 10 times better than the average project funded today! We will also have a chance to work closely with our Louisiana stakeholders on a variety of challenging topics.

This week I am headed to Rock Island for a long-delayed trip to see some of the challenging lock and dam infrastructure issues, as well as a few of our lakes, and finally the dynamic Des Moines area flood risk management issues. I am looking forward to the opportunity to visit with the district leaders and their stakeholders!

Finally, we continue to work diligently with the headquarters staff on refining and improving on the Chief’s priorities and the Corps’ Campaign Plan.

Essayons! Building Strong!
Army Strong!



Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody discusses the expectations and challenges to navigation during a joint news conference Nov. 16 in St. Louis on the Mississippi River as it reaches record lows.



Leaders discuss keeping commerce moving on low Mississippi River

By Michael Petersen, St. Louis District Public Affairs

Leaders from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard and American Waterways Operators discussed their expectations and challenges to navigation during a joint news conference Nov. 16 in St. Louis on the Mississippi River as it reaches record lows.

Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody, commander, Mississippi Valley Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, talked about the measures taken by the Corps throughout the Mississippi River valley including ongoing dredging operations on the river, and plans to address rock formations that threaten navigation near Thebes, Illinois.

Peabody cited preparations for the drought that date back to the last record-setting drought in 1988-89, including the construction of river training structures that have drastically reduced the need for dredging. The investment in constructing rock dikes, weirs and other structures allowed for a better channel now than in previous droughts.

“The situation we face today would be worse, more acute earlier, had it not been for that investment,” he said.

Peabody also cited efforts from upstream to help keep the river navigable. The Corps’ St. Paul District is releasing stored water to help mitigate for low levels on the Middle Mississippi, with a slight rise expected in the St. Louis area mid-December. Peabody authorized Mississippi River reservoirs to store extra water for long-term drought management, but lack of rain has hampered that effort at most Corps lakes.

“This is not something we can solve in a few days, a few weeks or even a few months if we have a per-



Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody (center) engages with regional and national media, as well as Corps stakeholders, during a news conference on Nov. 16 about conditions and outlook on the Middle Mississippi. He stressed that the Corps continues to provide safe and reliable navigation despite record lows on the river. Other key personnel that attended the conference included Rear Adm. Roy A. Nash, Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District; Craig Philip, Chief Executive Officer, Ingram Barge Company; George Foster, President, JB Marine Service; Col. Christopher Hall, USACE St. Louis; and Cpt. Byron Black, USCG Sector Upper Mississippi. (Photo by MVD Public Affairs.)

sistent drought situation. We have to plan for the long term,” Peabody said. “We’re going to have to husband our resources for when the situation gets truly dire. In my personal estimate, we’re not there yet.”

Rear Adm. Roy A. Nash, commander, Eighth District, U.S. Coast Guard, highlighted the critical coordination that happens between the Coast Guard, the Corps and industry, especially during difficult times on the river.

“We have worked together throughout high water last year, through low water this year, and will continue to work together,” Nash said.

Daily conference calls and regional coordination between industry, the Corps and the Coast Guard are ongoing as conditions change on the dynamic Mississippi River.

“This is a vital thoroughfare linking producers and commodities from

the heartland to markets around the world,” Nash said. “We recognize the incredible importance of our collective work in keeping commerce flowing on the rivers and protecting our nation’s economic prosperity.”

Representing the industries that depend on river commerce were Craig Philip, Chief Executive Officer of Ingram Barge Company in Nashville, and George Foster, President, JB Marine Service, Inc., from St. Louis. Both men highlighted the acute impacts of potential river closures on their industries as well as the nation.

“The cooperative tenor with the industry and government partners has been a testament to intrinsic importance of this system to the nation,” Philip said. “A cessation of navigation would have a ripple effect of economic loss that would be felt most heavily in the Midwest, but would endanger our national prosperity as well.”

The St. Louis District Corps of Engineers is working on a contract to remove the rock pinnacles near Thebes in February. The Corps has also created electronic navigation charts overlays of this area at various river stages for mariners.

Video of the news conference is available on the St. Louis District Corps of Engineers YouTube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/teamsaintlouis>.



Mississippi Valley Division works to finalize regional priorities and strategic direction... (continued from page 1)

50 years of work and debate and conflict and political maneuvering and manipulation...even before the Mississippi River Commission was formally stood up in 1879, it would not have happened if a whole bunch of people hadn't been working to change the nation's focus from just navigation and commerce support on the Mississippi River to what they then called flood control as well..."

He added: "It was that effort in combination with the catastrophe of the '27 Flood that resulted in the '28 Flood. So, we need to think in those terms. Many problems we are working are not going to get solved on our watch, but we have a responsibility to advance the effort to lay the foundation, so that some day major changes can occur that will help solve these problems on a more permanent basis."

He also discussed MVD's

responsibility to leaders in the local community. "Each one of us has responsibilities to take some ownership of supporting the leaders, the mayors [all 42 of them] that are within your footprint, to engage with them, and help encourage them and see how you can help and support..." he said.

He stressed that strategic engagement is key to the Corps' success. "This really goes back to the strategic piece...and what I am starting to see...is a broader approach to watershed issues, whether it's within the main stem or within the whole watershed."

However, Maj. Gen. Peabody also stressed the downside of non-engagement. "If we don't stay engaged adequately and help shape these and ensure that sound scientific bases for conclusions are drawn, then what will happen is people's passage will overcome

science, and that will drive policy and law," he said. "And there is a long history of that happening throughout the nation, and it usually ends in sorrow and tears as part of that outcome...because you end up with solutions that aren't really solutions. They're just meeting somebody's agenda..."

Maj. Gen. Peabody concluded: "So, the bottom line requirement for the MVD is when and where we see these initiatives pop up, we really need to engage...reach out, put our arms around them, help them out and try to make sure that we're shaping and influencing all this to go in a direction that's well informed by sound engineering and scientific principles, and that they understand what the Corps can and can't do, and they look at us as a positive partner who's trying to work with them and help them out. In the long run, that will help the nation reach the best possible conclusions about the right approaches..."

MVD Employee Spotlight



Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody recently presented Mohammed Javed Ahmed (right) with the Commander's Special Emphasis Award, which recognized his selfless service and dedication for exceptional achievement in the performance of assigned duties in support of the War on Terrorism. Ahmed voluntarily deployed as a member of the Corps team to help fight the War on Terrorism and improve the quality of life for so many people. His dedication to duty and country reflect great credit upon himself, the US-ACE and the Department of the Army.

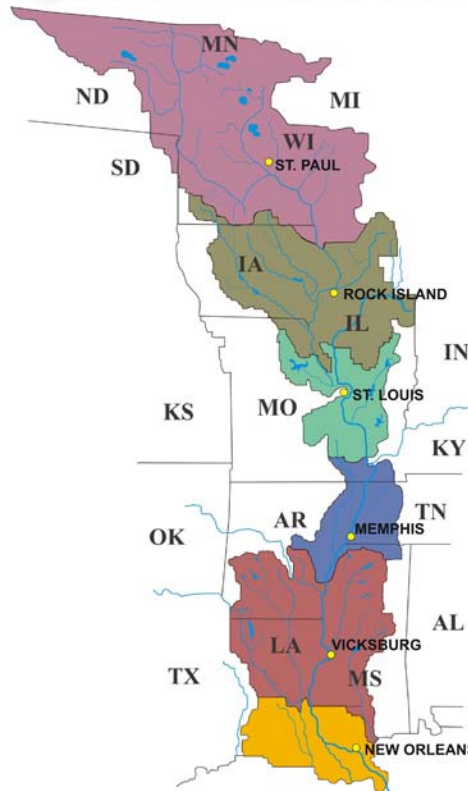


Training and technical competence: What is the return on investment?

By Toni Lowe-Fisher, Ph.D.
MVD Training Officer

The USACE vision requires a workforce that is equipped with the skills and tools necessary to move the organization into the future. Technical competence is a key factor in building a competent team with the appropriate skills to deliver high-quality products and services. Furthermore, technical competence helps the USACE workforce to set the standard for their professions, adds value to the nation and contributes to the innovative toolbox for lasting and sustainable solutions. It provides the capabilities and capacity to become great.

The USACE Campaign Plan has four goals, which is the framework for the way we do business. Goal 4 focuses on recruiting and retaining strong teams. Objective 4d, in particular, states that we should establish tools and systems to get the right people in the right jobs, then develop and retain this highly skilled workforce. Hence, the Mississippi Valley Division must identify, develop, maintain and strengthen technical competencies. One might ask “what does that really mean, and why is it important to me?” With an estimated 5,000 employees, MVD provides an unparalleled value to the nation. Through innovative solutions, MVD provides a wide range of services, from water resources, engineering and con-



struction, operations and maintenance, to emergency management. MVD’s accomplishments could not be a reality without a dedicated, resilient and technically competent workforce.

To support Goal 4 objectives, MVD has been challenged with several objectives such as increasing membership and participation in professional organizations, increasing the number of professional licenses and certifications and ensuring 100% completion of Individual Development Plans. Achieving these goals requires an inclusive effort. As a senior leader, one must establish a clear definition of what technical competence means for the specific Community of Practice. It is valuable that

senior leaders have a bird’s eye perspective of one’s organization, and the necessary workforce skill sets for that particular Community of Practice. It is also important that membership and participation in key organizations are promoted, to encourage partnerships and stakeholder engagement. Acquiring professional licenses and certifications helps USACE to set the standard as a “world-class organization.” All of these factors promote technical competence.

As an employee, knowing how one’s position fits into the organizational puzzle is essential to success. Questions to consider include: What is my career program? Is there a training plan available for my career program, and who is my career program manager? Where can I find this information? Visit the ACTEDS website at <http://cpol.army.mil/library/train/catalog/toc.html> for general career program information and other training opportunities. Consult your local training officer with questions. It is very important that an employee takes the initiative to research opportunities and work with his or her supervisor to develop a plan for success. The Individual Development Plan is the key document for employees and managers to build an employee’s toolkit for training, developmental assignments and other opportunities.

According to the USACE Human Capital Strategic Plan

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(2012-2017), nearly 40 percent of the workforce is early-retirement eligible or optional-retirement eligible. Approximately 19 percent are optional-retirement eligible, which means that they could retire at any time. Thirty-nine percent of our workforce has nine or less years of experience, 20 percent with ten to twenty years of experience, and 41 percent with more than 21 years of experience. This has resulted in a talent gap because we do not have a sufficient number of experienced workers to replace the many years of institutional knowledge lost with each retirement every year. Considering this age and experience disparity, it is imperative that the gap is bridged. Transferring institutional knowledge from senior leaders to mid-career employees plays a significant role in not only developing an employee's career path, but contributing the Corps' sustainability. It is critical to identify a method

for ensuring successful knowledge transfer. As the workforce demographics continue to evolve, we must be forward-thinking in our approach to bridging the gaps.

Mississippi Valley Division is aware that its Human Capital (i.e. workforce) is its most significant asset. However, the agency has also recognized that it is a depreciating asset, which requires consistent investments. Hence, the subsequent management of its diverse talent pool is more critical than ever. "Maintaining technical competence and skills is the lifeblood of our ability to remain in the mainstream. Investing in education and training always pays the highest returns. What's worse than training your employees and losing them? Not training/mentoring them and keeping them." Training does require time and resources, but it's the worth the investment. It improves employee morale, which

promotes employee satisfaction and retention. It promotes efficiency and effectiveness by reducing duplication. Training enhances management and leadership skills. Training saves lives!

In closing, employee training and development is an invaluable asset. Possessing the appropriate skill sets and guidance promotes the Corps' ability to provide a wide range of quality products and services to the nation. With optimal technical competence and innovation, the workforce is equipped with the necessary resources to move the organization from good to great.

Corps recognizes 40th anniversary of the Clean Water Act

*By Alice Bufkin and Charles Allred
Vicksburg District*

Forty years ago, the primary law to protect the nation's waters was passed by Congress on October 18, 1972. Originally enacted in 1948 to control water pollution, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, or Clean Water Act, was totally revised in 1972 to give the Act its current shape. The CWA set a new national goal "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the Nation's waters." Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires a Department of the Army permit before dredged

or fill material are discharged into waters of the United States, unless the activity is exempt from Section 404 regulation (e.g. certain farming and forestry activities). Under this program, examples of regulated activities in waters of the United States include fill for development, water resource projects (such as dams and levees) and infrastructure development (such as highways and airports).

The Vicksburg District, Corps of Engineers, encourages its customers to be informed and proactive regarding the requirements for obtaining a Department of the

Army permit prior to the discharge of dredge or fill material into waters of the United States.

Pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the Vicksburg District completes thousands of jurisdictional determinations and reviews hundreds of permit applications annually.

For more information regarding this program please visit the Vicksburg District's regulatory homepage at: <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/offices/od/odf/main.htm>.



Play EEO Jeopardy!

Thanks for playing EEO Jeopardy in our last issue of Open Channels.
Now, let's check your knowledge on EEO. Below are the answers to our EEO questions.

SPECIAL EMPHASIS

1. This program exists to address "special" problems and concerns of civilian minorities, women and individuals with disabilities. **Special Emphasis Program.**
2. Three programs mandated by Federal law. **Federal Women Program, Hispanic Employment Program and Individuals with Disabilities Program.**
3. Modifications that enable a disabled person to perform. **Reasonable Accommodation.**
4. This person counsels employees on promotion opportunities and career progression. **Special Emphasis Program Manager.**
5. Group that monitors recruitment efforts of women, minorities and individuals with disabilities. **EEO Committee.**

DISCRIMINATION

1. Nine bases of discrimination covered by EEO. **Race, Color, National Origin, Sex, Religion, Age, Disability and Reprisal.**
2. The minimum age you must be to be protected by the Age Discrimination in Employment Act. **40.**
3. Federal statute protects federal employees with disabilities from discrimination. **Rehabilitation Act of 1973.**
4. The Civil Rights Act, Equal Pay Act, Rehabilitation Act and AR 690-600. **EEO Laws and Regulations.**

1. Unwelcome advances that are made a condition of one's employment. **Sexual Harassment.**

COMPLAINT PROCESS

1. Who can file an EEO Complaint? **Applicant, Former Employee, Current Employee and Contract Employee.**
2. Number of Calendar days an individual has to contact the EEO Office after discrimination occurs. **45.**
3. The basis(es), claim(s) and date(s) of alleged discriminatory matters. **Complaint.**
4. Federal Agency that regulates & enforces the EEO complaint process. **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).**
5. Army's preferred method for resolving complaints. **Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR).**

AFFIRMATIVE EMPLOYMENT

1. Three EEO protected groups. **Women, Minorities and Individuals with Disabilities.**
2. A tool used to achieve equal employment opportunities. **Affirmative Action.**
3. Three areas the Affirmative Employment Plan focuses on. **Barrier Analysis, Workforce Profile and Recruitment.**
4. The % of an EEO protected group is lower than its representation in the Civilian Labor Force (CLF). **Underrepresentation.**
5. This report helps create an effective equal employment opportunity (EEO) program. **Management Directive 715.**

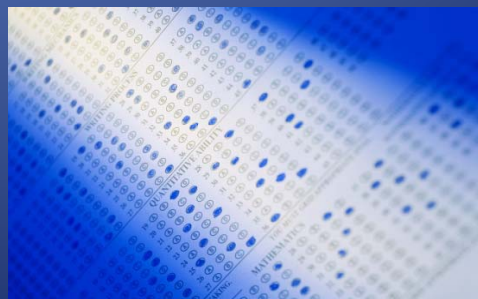
ROLES IN EEO

1. Oversees/manages the EEO and ADR Programs. **EEO Officer.**
2. Ensures that the EEO Office is given access to personnel records. **Human Resources.**
3. Implements/enforces EEO policies. **Commander.**
4. Provides legal advice on EEO matters. **Office of Counsel.**
5. Ensures that employees refrain from discriminatory actions, prevent & correct these situations. **Managers and Supervisors.**

FINAL JEOPARDY

Six essential elements of a Model EEO Program:

1. Demonstrated commitment from agency leadership;
2. Integration of EEO into the agency's strategic mission;
3. Management and program accountability;
4. Proactive prevention of unlawful discrimination;
5. Efficiency; and
6. Responsiveness and legal compliance.





Mat Sinking Unit near Blackhawk, La.

By Kavanaugh Breazeale
Vicksburg District

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Vicksburg District Mat Sinking Unit (MSU) is currently working on the Mississippi River near Blackhawk, Louisiana, on river mile 328. Thus far this season the MSU has placed 229,405 squares or approximately 527 acres of articulated concrete mats on the banks of the Mississippi River. The goal for this six-month revetment season is to place 442,786 squares covering approximately 1,018 acres. The next location for the MSU is mile 225 near Arlington, Louisiana.

This revetment season may extend through February 2013 and includes a larger than normal program that requires critical repairs to sites damaged as a result of the 2011 historic flood. Due to this longer than normal season, an additional 90 jobs may be required for temporary positions, beginning December 2012. These positions will be temporary, lasting from two weeks to six months. Those interested in applying for any of these positions should be at the bank of the Mississippi River at the mat casting fields in Delta, Louisiana, on November 19.



Pictured is the Vicksburg District's Mat Sinking Unit.

Employment representatives will be on the bank of the river at Delta Casting Field located at 100 St. Martin Street Extension, Delta, Louisiana, 71233, from 7:00 a.m until 11:00 a.m. A resume including references with phone numbers, two forms of identification and checking or savings account information are required. Those seeking veteran's preference must present your DD-214.

These positions consist of revetment workers and deckhands with a pay scale ranging from \$10.59 to \$19.16 per hour. For additional information regarding vacancies or direc-

tions to the Delta Casting field, call 601-631-7864.

Mat sinking is not an 8 to 5 job, but is seasonal work where employees live and dine on the quarter boats that tie off to the bank near the work area. These men and women work in shifts and perform one of the most important jobs in the Corps of Engineers river stabilization program. The MSU is the only one of its kind in the world and consists of the Motor Vessel Benyaurd with the quarter boats, the Motor Vessel William James with the mat sinking plant and

the Motor Vessel Harrison which all work together to distribute articulated concrete mat squares on the banks of waterways. These concrete mats assist with the prevention of erosion and to protect submerged river banks. The scope of work encompasses three Corps' districts, seven states and multiple watersheds, and utilizes proven technology in river engineering and operations.

To learn more about the Vicksburg District or the MSU, visit our website, www.mvk.usace.army.mil.

Safety Corner: Flu Shots

The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year. There are two types of vaccines:

- The flu shot - an inactivated vaccine (containing killed virus) that is given with a needle, usually in the arm. The flu shot is approved for use in people older than six months, including healthy people and people with chronic medical conditions.

There are three different flu shots available:

- a regular flu shot approved for people ages 6 months and older



- a high-dose flu shot approved for people 65 and older and
- an intradermal flu shot approved for people 18 to 65 years of age.

- The nasal-spray flu vaccine — a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses that is given as a nasal spray (sometimes called LAIV for “Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine”). The viruses in the nasal spray vaccine do not cause the flu. LAIV is approved for use in healthy people 2 through 49 years of age who are not pregnant.

For more information, you may visit the CDC's Vaccines and Immunizations web page at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/>.



Davis receives 50-Year service award with Vicksburg District

By Shirley J. Smith
Vicksburg District

Over the past 50 years, Willie James Davis has worked in many positions in maintenance and operation of numerous flood control projects. He is extremely proficient and knowledgeable in virtually every aspect of dam operations. Mr. Davis is currently the Vicksburg District's longest-tenured employee with over 50-years of service.

In August 2012 Davis was awarded his fifty-year service pin for his dedicated service to Enid Lake, the Vicksburg District and for his loyal service to the surrounding communities. Over the years he has unselfishly sacrificed his time to serve the needs of others during hurricanes, tornados, floods and other events. Willie Davis is a tremendous asset, friend and inspiration to all of the Corps family.

Enid Lake park manager, Billy Samuels states, "Willie has always been the 'go to' person for any issues related to the dam and its other features. He has seen and done just about everything imaginable when it comes to maintaining these structures.

Samuels also states, "Willie's wealth of structural knowledge has proven to be a valuable asset to the Corps of Engineers throughout his career at Enid Lake. He has always been and continues to be a valued and respected employee of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers."



COL Jeffrey Eckstein (right), Vicksburg District Commander, recently presented Willie James Davis with his 50-year service pin and certificate for his dedicated service to Enid Lake, the Vicksburg District and for his loyal service to the surrounding communities.



Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody (standing) met with MVD's Emerging Leaders, who were recently selected to participate in the Emerging Leaders Program. The ELP is a two-year program that allows employees to broaden their professional horizons through training, mentoring and shadowing of senior leaders, developmental assignments, self-evaluation and active participation in the program. The program offers opportunities for individuals to develop their regional perspective and to gain insight on effective leadership traits, MVD leadership opportunities and the Corps of Engineers' Vision and Mission.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Ecologist Receives Fulbright Specialists Award

By MVD Public Affairs

Dr. Paul DuBowy, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division (Vicksburg, Miss.), has recently returned from a Fulbright Specialists project in Portugal where he served as Visiting Professor in the Faculty of Sciences and Technology at the University of Algarve, according to the United States Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. Dr. DuBowy taught a course in Ecohydrology and Landscape Management in the UNESCO-sponsored Erasmus Mundus Master of Science Programme in Ecohydrology.

The Ecohydrology EMMSc (www.ecohyd.org) is a unique international M.Sc. program focusing on a new vision for aquatic ecosystems restoration and long-term sustainability developed within the International Hydrologic Program (IHP) of UNESCO and is supported by a consortium of Higher Education Institutions in this field, including the UNESCO Institute for Water Education (Delft, Netherlands), the University of Łódź (Poland), the University of Algarve (Portugal), the Christian Albrecht University of Kiel (Germany) and the National University of La Plata (Argentina). Students from around the world, including China, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, Serbia, Chile, Ethiopia and Nigeria, currently are enrolled in the program.



Dr. Paul DuBowy

DuBowy is Environmental Program Manager for USACE Mississippi Valley Division where he provides technical guidance, quality assurance and regional interface on ecosystem sustainability, endangered species and other environmental issues relating to river structures, levees and tributary improvements which maintain navigation and provide flood control along approximately 1,200 miles of the lower and middle Mississippi River.

Previously he taught, conducted research and guided graduate students as a professor at Purdue University, Texas A&M University and The University of Newcastle, Australia. For the Erasmus Mundus Programme DuBowy was specifically asked to lecture on ecohydrology and restoration planning, adaptive management and measuring project success. Last year he taught a similar course in the EMMSc

Ecohydrology Programme at the University of Łódź in Poland.

DuBowy is one of over 400 U.S. faculty and professionals who will travel abroad this year through the Fulbright Specialists Program. The Fulbright Specialists Program, created in 2000 to complement the traditional Fulbright Scholar Program, provides short-term academic opportunities to prominent U.S. faculty and professionals to support curricular and faculty development and institutional planning at post secondary, academic institutions around the world.

The Fulbright Program, America's flagship international educational exchange activity, is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Over its 60 years of existence, thousands of U.S. faculty and professionals have taught, studied or conducted research abroad, and thousands of their counterparts from other countries have engaged in similar activities in the United States.

Over 285,000 emerging leaders in their professional fields have received Fulbright awards, including individuals who later became heads of government, Nobel Prize winners, and leaders in education, business, journalism, the arts and other fields.



Regulatory team uses investigative skills to determine if an area is a wetland

By Bianca Jones
St. Paul District

On a plot of land in western Wisconsin this past summer, Dan Seemon, ecologist, and Greg Larson, senior ecologist and soil scientist, were in the middle of a crime scene investigation, or CSI.

They weren't looking at an actual crime scene; rather, they were investigating the land to determine if it was a wetland. Larson compares the visits, known as wetland delineations, to a CSI because he's always trying to look for clues to determine what happened. In determining whether an area is a wetland, Larson said it's about the basics. "I always tell people the first question you have to answer is 'is the site you're looking at a wetland?'"

Wetlands, though, can be difficult to identify. "There are many different kinds of wetlands. There are wetlands like sedge meadows, floodplain forests, wooded swamps, bogs and various other types," Larson said. "But that's one classification. Wetlands can be, depending on which classification system you use, characterized many different ways."

Seemon said regardless of the wetland type, the process starts out with a permit. "Usually someone calls us or someone is going to apply for a permit, and they've hired a consultant to come out and delineate their wetlands. They send us a letter [and] ask us if we can concur with the delineation."



Dan Seemon, ecologist, writes a note during a wetland delineation earlier this summer in western Wisconsin.



Greg Larson, senior ecologist and soil scientist, examines soil conditions during a wetland delineation in western Wisconsin.

Both Larson and Seemon said the primary tool used in their field investigations is the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual and the appropriate regional supplement. The manual and supplement are part of the "nationwide effort to address regional wetland characteristics and improve the accuracy and efficiency of wetland delineation procedures," Seemon said. "The [manual helps us] determine if there are hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils and wetland hydrology." He added that if these three characteristics are present, the area is usually a wetland.

The regulatory investigation process begins with looking at surface features, such as the "lay of the land" and vegetation. These steps are done before holes are dug to examine below-ground features, such as soil. Seemon said he wants to see if water is present at the site. He said he then looks at a reference site which hasn't been disturbed and compare the two

to determine whether or not the area is a wetland. "A lot of times it can be very convoluted, and a lot of times it's not black and white. [There is a] lot of gray area involved."

The challenging part for most of the sites Larson and Seemon visit is that they are usually disturbed. "When we get involved with them, many times, there are natural or human interactions on the site," Larson said. "They've been dug up, filled, drained and there is no vegetation sometimes, so you need to reconstruct what was there." Larson said examining reference sites helps him reconstruct the disturbed area. He said he uses soil and wetland maps, historical photos, soil borings and general observations to investigate the sites. "You basically connect the dots, and make a collective judgment with the team."

That collective judgment involves more than the Corps of Engineers. Seemon said he works with several state and local agencies, as well as consultants. "I think it's a partnership like a lot of things that the Corps is involved with," he said. "If we put our heads together along with the [departments of natural resources], too, we can come up with a consensus."



Welcome Aboard!



Lamarr Coleman
MVD Regional Family Readiness
Coordinator

As a Regional Family Readiness Coordinator, I am responsible for raising awareness concerning the challenges of Soldiers and their families before, during and after deployment. The primary areas of focus are financial, legal, behavioral health and faith based.

A native of Louisville, Miss., I currently reside in Ridgeland, Miss.

I have 17 years of experience in the field of mental health and substance abuse. Prior to starting work at the Mississippi Valley Division, I worked as a Substance Abuse Therapist in Jackson, Miss.

My educational background includes a bachelor's degree in criminal justice with a minor in psychology from the University of Southern Mississippi and a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling from Jackson State University.

While serving six years in the U.S. Army Reserves, I was activated in the Persian Gulf War.

I am a single parent of a beautiful daughter named LaMarra, aka "Junior." She is a junior at the Mississippi School for Math and

Science in Columbus, Miss. My hobbies include sports, traveling and cooking.

We would also like to welcome/ congratulate the following new MVD employees as well:

- Wendell Norman, MVD Regional Contracting Chief
- Glenda Jackson, MVD Chief of Civil Works, Integration Division
- CPT Gregory D. Himmel, MVD Aid-de-Camp
- Myra Crow, Emergency Management Assistant, Readiness and Contingency Operations

If you have a new employee in your office, or if you ARE a new employee to the Mississippi Valley Division, please contact the Public Affairs Office at 601-634-7729, so that we can introduce you to everyone in Open Channels.

MVD Annual Ethics Training



Bradley Hayes (standing), MVD FEST-M Attorney, presents MVD's Annual Ethics Training October 25, 2012. Hayes presented vital information and resources for MVD employees, including ethics rules and resources and the Hatch Act U.S.C. 7321 (law that addresses political activity of federal employees) and Hatch Act resources.



Around the Division



Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody (right) presents CPT Patrick Henshaw, AIDE-de-CAMP, with the MVD Commander's Coin/Award during CPT Henshaw's farewell ceremony held October 29, 2012. CPT Henshaw served the MVD Commander for 1.5 years.



Command Sgt. Maj. Roy Ward, Transatlantic Division, recently presented COL John Dvoracek, MVD Deputy Commander, with the Defense Meritorious Service Medal for exceptionally meritorious service for the Armed Forces of the U.S.

Open Channels

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division



Division Engineer

Maj. Gen. John W.
Peabody

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Dates to Remember

Holidays in December

Dec. 13—Friday the 13th - Occurs one to three times a year, when the 13th falls on a Friday.

Dec. 25—Christmas - Christmas is the biggest holiday of the year. It has both a strong religious and traditional meaning. It creates within us, a sense of kindness and concern for fellow man. At no other time are we more generous and giving. It creates a sense of family and belonging.



Dec. 26—Kwanzaa - Kwanzaa, which occurs on December 26th and lasts seven days through January 1st, is a African-American holiday celebrating history, culture, family and community. It is now celebrated all over the world, but primarily in the U.S., Africa and the Caribbean.

Dec. 31—New Year's Eve - New Year's Eve is when all the fun and festivities are. We see out the old year and ring in the new. Many people take it as an opportunity to be merry. For some, the ball dropping at Times Square in New York City signals the start of the new year in this country.



MVD's 2012 Combined Federal Campaign Kick-off



Maj. Gen. John W. Peabody (standing) welcomes MVD staff during the kick-off of MVD's Combined Federal Campaign October 10, 2012. The mission of the CFC is to promote and support philanthropy through a program that is employee focused, cost efficient and effective in providing all federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all. Last year, MVD exceeded its goal of donations toward charitable organizations. This year, MVD has raised more than \$30,000, beyond its FY 2012 goal.

Charlotta Ferguson (standing), accountant with the United Way of West Central Mississippi in Vicksburg, Miss., is a guest speaker for MVD's 2012 CFC. A local charity, The United Way of West Central Mississippi in Vicksburg, Miss., works to advance the common good by focusing on education, income and health.



Cindy McCarley (standing), executive director of the Warren County Children's Shelter, talks about the abused, dependent, neglected, runaway and homeless children, birth to 17 years of age, that the Warren County Children's Shelter helps. The 24-hour emergency shelter opened in 1991 and offers a safe, home-like refuge for children.



Engineer Safety Gram

Engineering the Edge for Safety Excellence



12-01

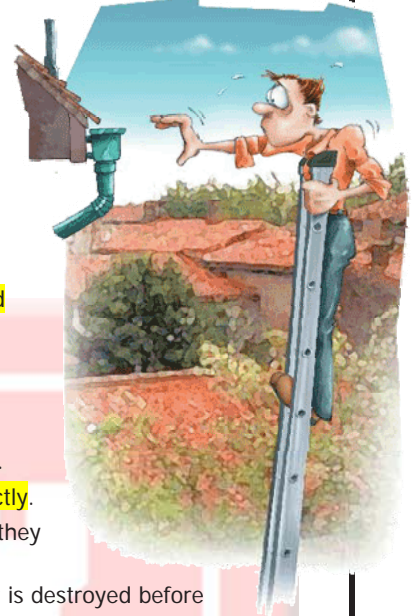
15 November 2012

Falls from Ladders

Falls are a leading cause of workplace accidents and falls involving ladders are all too common. Falls from ladders are also just as common when working around the home. Many of these accidents cause serious injury and death.

Follow these guidelines for safer use of ladders:

- ◆ Before using a ladder, make sure it is in safe repair. Check the rungs, the side rails and the feet are in good condition and secure.
- ◆ Look for any warp or twist in the shape of the ladder.
- ◆ When using an aluminum ladder, check for signs of wear and damage. These might include corrosion or loose rivets.
- ◆ Extension ladders should be checked for wear, damage to the ropes, pulleys and locks.
- ◆ With a stepladder, make sure the spreaders are in good condition and operating correctly.
- ◆ Check to see that the feet on the ladder have slip-resistant material on them and that they are clean and in good condition.
- ◆ If you find any defects in a ladder, tag it and remove it from service. This will ensure it is destroyed before someone else can use it.
- ◆ Never paint a wooden ladder. This can hide cracks and other defects. A clear finish or a wood preservative should be used instead of paint.
- ◆ Choose the right ladder for the job. Ensure the length is sufficient and it is strong enough to support you and any tools or materials.
- ◆ Never use a ladder made of metal or with metal reinforcement for any electrical work. This means you shouldn't even use an aluminum stepladder — not even for changing a light bulb!
- ◆ To set up a straight ladder safely, use the four to one rule. For every four feet in height, the base of the ladder should be one foot away from the wall.
- ◆ Place the base of the ladder on a solid, even and stable surface.
- ◆ Have someone hold the base of the ladder, or tie or block it. Also have someone hold onto the ladder while you are tying it off at the top.
- ◆ Do not climb onto the top few rungs of any ladder.
- ◆ You need to use both hands to climb safely, so carry your tools on a belt. Another alternative is to hoist tools and materials up after you climb.
- ◆ Wear non-slip footwear to climb a ladder.
- ◆ Do not reach too far away from a ladder. One way to make sure you maintain the right center of gravity is to keep your belt buckle between the two stiles of the ladder at all times.
- ◆ Moving a ladder is a job for at least two people to ensure the ladder does not fall or strike anyone or anything.
- ◆ When moving or setting up a ladder, take extreme care to steer clear of any overhead electrical installations such as wires or power lines.



Falls cause many serious injuries and deaths, and ladders are involved in many of these accidents. Whether at home or at work remember to follow these ladder safety tips.



MVD Holiday Activities

MVD Day of Caring



10 December 2012

Salvation Army Angel Tree Adoptions and Distribution Workshop



POCs:
Becky Fuson – Forgotten Angels
Eddie Whittington – Angel Adoptions

Jacob's Ladder

Collection box in Lobby
POC: Sarah Palmer

Cleaning Supplies, Canned Food, and
Kroger Gift Cards (they do their own shopping
and cooking)

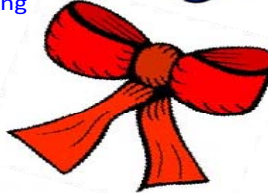


Paws Rescue

Collection box in Lobby
POC: Claire Purviance

NOTE: Specific food listed to lessen stomach
problems caused by changing foods.

Purina Dog/Puppy Chow
Purina Cat/Kitten Chow
Dog and Cat Toys
Monetary donations (tax
deductible) – Medical
ADOPT A PET!!!



Warren County Children's Shelter

Collection box in Lobby
POC: Toni Lowe

NEEDS: Gently used Luggage (Duffle Bags
preferred), Mesh Laundry bags, Journals, Plain T-
shirts, Boxers, Undergarments, Book Bags, Sports
Balls, Baby dolls, Toy Trucks, Fuzzy socks, stocking
stuffers, gift cards (Wal-Mart), Board Games,
Coloring books and crayons, Paper products,
Cleaning Supplies, and many other items!!
See attached pdf documents for ALL needs.

MVD Holiday Party December 14th 12 noon until

MRC Conference Room

Lunch will be catered by
Betty Palmertree

Cost - \$12.00 per person

Please pay Becky Fuson or
Patti Beard by Wednesday,
December 12th. Please let
Eddie Whittington know if
you will participate, as we
need to get a good
head count.



FOOD and FUN!!

We are playing
Dirty Santa, so bring a
wrapped gift—\$15 limit
(no gag gifts please)