

Open Channels

June 2015

High Water

Oklahoma and Texas were drowned by record-setting rainfall over the past three months that resulted in deadly flooding and widespread destruction.

As the rains finally subsided in early June, the massive amount of runoff water is now in the Mississippi Valley Division's area of responsibility as it floods the Arkansas and Red rivers and barrels toward the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers then on to the Gulf of Mexico.

Daily rounds of intense rain began May 4 and continued through May 30. During that time, rainfall amounts of 10+ inches fell across the entire watershed with a broad area of 20+ inches falling across northern Texas and eastern Oklahoma.

This rainfall was more than 600 percent of normal, and to put it in perspective, it is more than 60 percent of the 115-year average



Vicksburg District employees walk a levee located within the Hempstead County Levee District area in Arkansas.

ANNUAL precipitation for northern Texas.

In the early days of this event, MVD assisted the Southwest Division by providing veteran flood-fight personnel to the division and district office. New Orleans District also provided a survey crew and drone to assist in the dam and levee monitoring inspections. Additionally, the National Flood Fight Materials Center, located in our Rock Island District, provided 10,000 feet of HESCO bastions to the Southwest Division.

Both the Vicksburg and New Orleans districts are currently engaged in emergency flood fighting operations with minor to major flooding along the Red and Arkansas rivers and their tributaries. Vicksburg District currently has 50 team members engaged in flood fight activities and New Orleans District has 28 team members engaged.

The Red River at Shreveport, La., is expected to crest at 34.5 feet

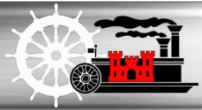
on Saturday which is the highest since the lock and dam system was completed in 1995. A minor flood stage is occurring at the Mississippi River at Red River Landing and the current stage on the Atchafalaya River at Morgan City, La., is 4.8 feet (flood stage is 6.0 feet) with the river expected to very slowly rise through Monday. Within Vicksburg District navigation is significantly impacted. So far on the Red River locks #3, 4 & 5 have closed due to high water. Lock #2 is expected to be closed June 5.

Although the rains in Texas and Oklahoma destroyed hundreds of homes and killed at least 36 people, the deluge also ended a devastating five-year drought. According to recent news reports, reservoir capacity in Texas has jumped to 83 percent with enough rain to cover nearly 23,000 square miles of land (almost one-tenth of Texas) with about a foot of water. And in Oklahoma, almost every one of the state's dozens of reservoirs has exceeded 100% normal capacity.

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Around the Bend



Maj. Gen. Michael C. Wehr
*Commander,
Mississippi Valley Division
President-nominee,
Mississippi River Commission*

MVD Team:

Teamwork abounds within USACE – which is very much appreciated by our partners and stakeholders.

That was my key take-away from listening to external senior leaders over the past two weeks of May. Events included the Army Senior Leader Development Program -Advanced Course in Memphis, Tenn.; the U.S. Coast Guard, 8th District, change of command and retirement of RADM Kevin Cook in New Orleans, La.; the 9th

Completed repairs to the starboard propeller on the dredge WHEELER. The WHEELER departed the shipyard and has returned to SWP and is assisting the dredge McFARLAND in emergency dredging operations.

Brigade Engineer Battalion Activation in Ft. Stewart, Ga.; the 307th Brigade Engineer Battalion visit during All American Week at Ft. Bragg, N.C.; the Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick’s visit with Col. Mark Deschenes’ team in Rock Island; and the Annual Senior Leader Seminar with FEMA.

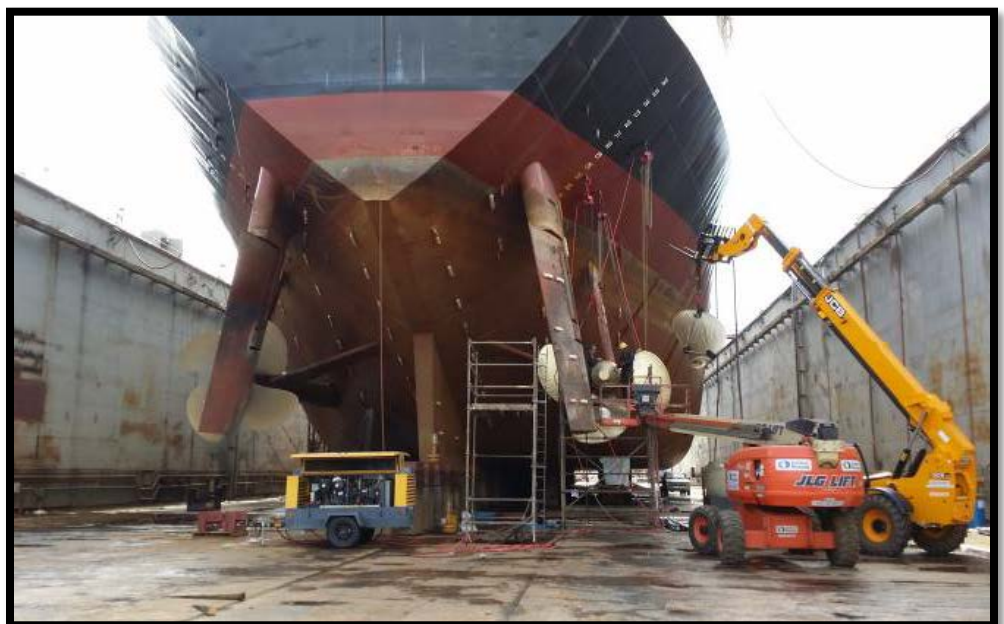
Noteworthy division news for the past couple of weeks include:

- Keeping the Southwest Pass open. I have expressed my appreciation to the North Atlantic Division for their support via the Philadelphia District’s dredge McFARLAND. With the hopper dredges WHEELER, McFARLAND and STUYVESANT all working the lower Mississippi River during the last week of May, we gained significant ground on channel deficiencies.
- Best possible channel improvement – Steve Stockton and his USACE headquarters team continue their efforts to

gain concurrence for the division’s \$13 million reprogramming request that will enable the most effective buy-down of risk within the Mississippi River & Tributaries channel improvement program. The channel improvement team released a draft schedule to industry of our revetment work for the FY15-16 mat-sinking season. There was immediate interest and we plan to engage the River Industry Executive Task Force prior to the start of the mat-sinking season (Sept. 1) to incorporate their concerns.

- Mr. Tom Holden (Regional Business director) and I attended the FEMA Region VI and Senior Leaders Seminar in Denton, Texas, May 21 – which was great face-to-face relationship building time. While the division deployed a few flood experts to support the Southwestern Division this past week, both districts declared high-water emergencies in their own areas of responsibility -- Vicksburg on

(continued on next page)





Open Channels

May 26, due to imminent flooding on the Red River; and New Orleans on May 27 due to the Mississippi River at Carrollton rising over the 11.0 foot mark. Both Emergency Operations Centers are currently activated at Level II, 7 days a week, 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Also, the New Orleans District's unmanned aerial surveying work for others continues to be an income producer thanks to Thomas Davis (MVN land surveyor in Engineering Division). While at training in Fort Hood, Texas, Thomas met with the Fort Worth District's chief of Infrastructure Support who asked the district to use its UAS for roofing inspections at Fort Bliss; along with assisting the Fort Worth District on its UAS program and air worthiness certification procedures.

Lastly, Vicksburg District employees Gloria Piazza and Raul Villegas attended the 5th Annual Navy Wounded Warrior and Veteran Career Fair in San Antonio, Texas, May 20. This career fair included employers from multiple private and government entities across the nation. Gloria, the district's interim strategic planner, coordinated support for the event. Raul is a Wounded Warrior and a park contractor representative at the Ouachita Project Office. Based on his background and experiences, Raul was able to connect with a majority of the career fair participants. More than 700 veterans, transitioning military personnel, and Wounded Warriors attended the event.

Building Strong,
Maj. Gen. Mike Wehr



Above: Rock Island District Commander Col. Mark Deschenes provided a briefing on the Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study - Brandon Road project to Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick and Mississippi Valley Division Commander Maj. Gen. Mike Wehr during their visit to the Brandon Road Lock and Dam May 20.



Above & Left: Vicksburg District employees Gloria Piazza and Raul Villegas (a Wounded Warrior) supported the 5th Annual Navy Wounded Warrior and Veteran Career Fair in San Antonio, Texas. The event supported over 700 Veterans, transitioning military personnel, and Wounded Warriors.



As Hurricane Season begins, MVD plans for Katrina's 10th Anniversary

Hurricane season preparedness is a true partnership between the Corps, local and state officials, to better prepare and protect all of the people who live along the Gulf Coast. The Mississippi Valley Division will also continue to collaborate with the states of Louisiana and Mississippi as their Hurricane Katrina anniversary planning evolves.

The division is closely coordinating on a number of preparedness events to ensure we are speaking with one voice. Our partners in South Louisiana and Mississippi will focus with us on the accomplishments of the last ten years, the incorporation of lessons learned on a local, regional and national level and the importance of transparent risk communication.

High Water

(continued from page 1)

Flooding along the Red River has caused the river to surge from an average of 12,000 cubic feet of water per second to nearly 235,000 cubic feet of water per second downriver toward Arkansas and Louisiana.

The Red River feeds into the Atchafalaya River and then empties into the Gulf of Mexico. The Arkansas River flows into the Mississippi River and the Arkansas has expanded from an average of 50,000 cubic feet of water per second to roughly 300,000 to 350,000 cubic feet per second.

Fortunately, Corps constructed flood-control infrastructure has prevented a catastrophe along the Red and Arkansas Rivers.

MRC member Mattei president-elect of ASCE

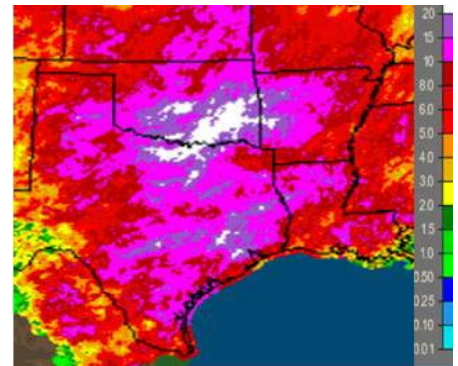


Mississippi River Commission member Norma Jean Mattei, Ph.D., P.E., recently became the American Society of Civil Engineers' 2016 president-elect. She was chosen by a majority of society members in a month-long officers election that concluded June 1.

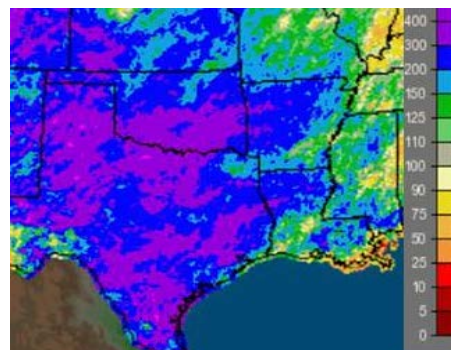
Mattei will be inducted at the society's annual business meeting in October and will become president of the 163-year-old professional association in 2017, the third woman to serve in the prestigious office.

President Barack Obama named her one of three civilian members of the Mississippi River Commission in 2012. Mattei has served ASCE for more than 20 years in local, regional and national leadership positions. A lifelong resident of New Orleans, Mattei is a professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of New Orleans. Her technical research interests include large watershed management, material and structural testing, sustainable reuse of spent construction/fabrication materials, and residual stress measurement. She is also interested in diversity, licensure, and ethics issues.

Mattei outlined her thoughts about serving as ASCE's president in a [brief video](#) recently recorded as a nominee.



Above: May observed rainfall.
Below: Percent of normal May precipitation.





Motor Vessel PATHFINDER receives special gift from partners on the river

Romanda Walker
St. Louis District Public Affairs

The U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Ohio Valley, presented the crew of the St. Louis District's Motor Vessel PATHFINDER with a custom made inscribed Louisville Slugger (direct from the factory) that reads, "From Your Grateful Friends – U.S. Coast Guard Sector Ohio Valley-PATHFINDER."



"While being acknowledged by your superiors is certainly nice, to be recognized by your peers, to me, is the finest compliment and makes going to work in the morning much easier," said Terry Bequette, captain of the PATHFINDER.

Partners on the river, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Coast Guard often work hand-in-hand to provide safe and reliable river transportation.

The St. Louis District is authorized to maintain a minimum 9-foot deep, 300-foot wide navigation channel on 300 miles of the Mississippi River from Saverton, Mo., to Cairo, Ill., the lower 80 miles of the Illinois River and on the lower 36 miles of the Kaskaskia River.

The channel patrol boat, MV PATHFINDER, identifies possible dredging locations by performing channel reconnaissance surveys.



The PATHFINDER also assists the Coast Guard with buoy positioning on the navigable waterways within the St. Louis District boundaries.

"I've been blessed with an unprecedented working relationship with the skippers of the five cutters and their respective commands which overlap in our district," Bequette added. "We have also received numerous awards and certificates from the Coast Guard over the years, but they really knocked it out of the park with this one."

2015 Soldier of the Year

Staff Sgt. Jonathan Banua, St. Louis District Security, was recognized as the 2015 Soldier of the Year for the St. Louis District.

This event recognizes outstanding performance from Soldiers who live the Army values with unquestionable ability; a Soldier who possesses the fortitude and discipline necessary to execute orders with professional manner while setting the example for all Soldiers and Civilians to model.



2015 St. Paul District Civil Servants of the Year



Aaron Buesing
Engineering and Construction

Position: Hydraulic Engineer

21.5 years with the St. Paul District, the Corps of Engineers and federal government

Previous Positions/Employment:

Project Engineer, Minnesota River Joint Powers Board;
Project Engineer, University of Minnesota Saint Anthony Falls Laboratory

Education: Bachelor of Science, University of Minnesota, 1991; Post-graduate studies, University of Minnesota

Hobbies: Recreational softball and touch football

Residence: Saint Paul, Minnesota

Comments: "It's an honor to be selected as one of the Civil Servants of the Year for the St. Paul District in 2014. My wife, Denise, and son, Seth, are always supportive when I need to put in extra time to do a good job at work. I share the award with them."



Dawn Linder
Contracting

Position: Contract Specialist

36 years with the St. Paul District, the Corps of Engineers and federal government.

Previous Positions/Employment: None

Education: High School

Hobbies: My grandkids

Residence: Prescott, Wisconsin

Comments: "This is such an honor. My career with the Corps of Engineers has been very rewarding. I work with a great group of people."



Monique Johs
Engineering and Construction

Position: Lead Administrative Secretary

5 years with the St. Paul District and the Corps of Engineers; 25 years with the federal government.

Previous Positions/Employment: Command Yeoman, U. S. Navy (20 years)

Education: Associates Degree, Columbia College; Columbia, Mo.

Hobbies: Music, quilting, swimming

Residence: Savage, Minnesota

Comments: "I'm extremely honored and blessed to receive this award. A mission can't succeed without the help of everyone. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, is truly a wonderful team of professional and dedicated individuals."



Nate Wallerstedt
Project Management

Position Title: Project Manager

~5.5 years with the St. Paul District, Corps of Engineers and federal government

Previous Positions/Employment:

Civil Engineer/Project Manager with Landform Engineering Company

Education: Bachelor's of Science in Civil Engineering - University of Minnesota Twin Cities.

Hobbies: Hunting, waterskiing, camping, downhill skiing and snowboarding.

Residence: Forest Lake, Minnesota

Comments: "I'm truly honored to be nominated for this award and feel very fortunate to work with such great, hard working individuals at the St. Paul District. I look forward to many more years with the organization."



Crump recognized for engineering excellence

By Patrick Moes
St. Paul District Public Affairs

A leader with more than 30 years of engineering experience and service to the Corps of Engineers was recently recognized by the Minnesota Geotechnical Society.

Tom Crump, regional planning and environmental division north chief, was selected as the Charles W. Britzius Distinguished Engineer Award recipient. The award recognizes lifetime achievements within the engineering profession and actions that promote the engineering image.

Citing a Corps career that started in 1980, Chris Erickson, project management chief and current Minneapolis / St. Paul Society of American Military Engineering, or SAME, Post president, said Crump has served in nearly every engineering position within the St. Paul District. “Tom has been a geotechnical engineer, a plan formulator, a project and program manager and has served in multiple supervisory positions,” said Erickson.

In addition to his role as an engineer at the district, Crump has served in numerous roles with the SAME and has supported science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education for the past 10 years.

Erickson said Crump has been very active in STEM education through the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology, or FIRST, robotics program. Crump has participated at both the elementary school level in the FIRST Lego League and at the high school level in the FIRST Robotic Competition. Crump also served as a mentor for the Fighting Calculators, a local high school robotics team.

“Whether serving as a mentor for an elementary student who is learning about STEM or serving as the district’s acting deputy commander, Tom [Crump] consistently sets the standard and is well respected within the engineering community,” said Erickson.

Chris Erickson, left, project management; Col. Dan Koprowski, St. Paul District commander; and Tom Crump, planning chief, work with students at the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) event held at the University of Minnesota April 3.

Photo by Ben Watson





Enjoy America's Waterways, Play It Safe and Return Home Alive

Greg Raimondo
Vicksburg District Public Affairs

Before you head out for a day on or near the water, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers encourages you to make sure you have life jackets for everyone and that they please wear them.

On average, 9 out of 10 people who drowned at a USACE lake or river project didn't wear a life jacket. Life jackets save lives by keeping you afloat and providing time for rescue.

Make sure you size it right and buckle it up. A child should not be put in a life jacket that is too big for them because it will slip over their head if they fall in the water and they could drown. Life jackets are categorized by a person's weight so check the label and test it to make sure it fits snugly.

Most people who drown never intended to be in the water; they unexpectedly fell from a boat or dock into the water. When this happens, a person will reflexively gasp and can inhale up to one liter of water and drown in less than a minute.

Others get into trouble swimming out to retrieve a boat that floated away, or swimming in association with a boat that floated away.

Swimming in natural waters is not the same as swimming in a pool. Even strong swimmers can get into trouble and be gone within seconds. It takes an average of 60 seconds for an adult to drown and just 20 seconds for a child to drown. Swimming ability also decreases with age.

Swim at a designated swim beach. These areas have been inspected to provide a safe swimming environment. At all Corps beaches you swim at your own risk so adults please watch your children, because most people drown within 10 feet of safety.

Many shorelines at Corps lake and river projects have drop offs and you can be in water over your head instantly or pulled under by the current.

The Corps of Engineers is the nation's largest federal provider of water-based outdoor recreation, managing more than 400 lake and river projects in 43 states and hosting more than 370 million visits per year. With 90 percent of these recreation areas within 50 miles of metropolitan areas they provide a diverse range of outdoor activities close to home and to people of all ages.

For more information on Corps recreation sites and activities, visit www.CorpsLakes.us





Welcome Aboard!



Kim Dulaney
Procurement Analyst

Kim was just selected as a new procurement analyst in Contracting Division.

She comes to MVD from ERDC where she was a contracting officer.

Kim is married to Christopher Harrington and they have one child, Chase, who is two-years old.

Kim graduated from Warren Central High School in 2000. She went on to earn a bachelor's degree in marketing from Mississippi State University in 2004, and a master's degree in business administration from the University of North Alabama in 2010.

She enjoys spending time with family and friends, shopping and traveling.

(And, yes, she is related to Henry & Alfred – she's their niece!)



Kaylee Kilgo
Student Trainee, Accountant
Business Resource Division

"I am a student at Mississippi College where I will earn my bachelor's degree in accounting in December. During my first two years at MC, I played tennis for the Choctaws, and in doing so learned so much about team work. I am currently active in a social tribe (sort of like a sorority) where I have met wonderful life-long friends.

I graduated from Warren Central High School in 2012 – it's where I developed my love for tennis. Before coming to the division, I worked as a tennis assistant at the Vicksburg tennis courts where I provided direct support to the tennis pro as well as taught children to play tennis.

I am so excited about working for the Corps of Engineers! I am looking forward to the future, and can't wait to see where the Lord takes me during my time here."

Kaylee is the daughter of Larry (retired MVD employee) and Cherie Kilgo.



Patti Beard
Administrative Assistant

Patti is coming back to MVD for one year as a rehired annuitant.

She will be working two days a week as an administrative assistant in the Executive Assistant's office. She'll be located in room 108.

Welcome back Patti!



Susan Williams
Conference Coordinator

She's baaack! Well, she will be, temporarily that is!

As of June 22, Susan will be back on a temporary assignment (up to 120-days) in Business Management Division as the division's conference coordinator.

Welcome back Susan!



D-DAY



On June 6, 1944, more than 160,000 Allied troops landed along a 50-mile stretch of heavily fortified French coastline, to fight Nazi Germany on the beaches of Normandy.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower called the operation a crusade in which, “we will accept nothing less than full victory.” More than 5,000 ships and 13,000 aircraft supported the D-Day invasion, and by day’s end, the Allies

gained a foot-hold in Continental Europe.

The cost in lives on D-Day was high. More than 9,000 Allied soldiers were killed or wounded, but their sacrifice allowed more than 100,000 soldiers to begin the slow, hard slog across Europe, to defeat Adolf Hitler’s crack troops.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower encouraged Allied soldiers taking part in the D-Day invasion of June 6, 1944, reminding them, “The eyes of the world are upon you,” before they embarked on “a great crusade.”

[Listen to Gen. Eisenhower's D-Day message.](#)



Open Channels

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division

Division Engineer

Maj. Gen. Michael C. Wehr

Editor

Pam Vedros
Public Affairs Specialist

Chief, Public Affairs

Bob Anderson

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Send articles to:

Editor, Public Affairs Office,
U.S. Army Engineer Division,
Mississippi Valley
P.O. Box 80,
Vicksburg, MS, 39181-0080
pam.vedros@usace.army.mil



This month, celebrate the natural wonder and outdoor spirit of America by getting outside during Great Outdoors Month™.

A truly American idea, the state and national parks of this country represent our natural heritage. North and south, east and west, they

stretch from the edges of our maps to the hearts of our cities, covering nearly one-third of this nation.

Once you come outside, you’ll never want to go back inside.

June is a special time to celebrate America's Great Outdoors. What started as Great Outdoors Week under President Clinton in 1998 has grown significantly under both the Bush and Obama administrations into a month-long celebration of the outdoors and all the benefits it brings - including annual economic impact of \$650 billion nationwide.