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of Engineers®
Vicksburg District

THE

Water's Edge

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and Karl Studenroth (Park ranger)

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Col Cross participates with students from Ouachita, Delight, and Murfreesboro at DeGray Lake during their Every Kid in a Park activity.
Photo by Derrick Walker

Commander's Corner

with Colonel John W. Cross



Goodbye Vicksburg District

This is my last Message to you in the Water's Edge. I am simply amazed that I have been with the Vicksburg District for over three years. A three-year command assignment in the Army is unique and three years stationed at any one place is longer than average. Since I left the University of Southern Mississippi in 1986 to report to my first Army duty assignment, my family and I have been accustomed to picking up and moving often. Most of the time this has been after a two or even a one year posting. The past three years in Vicksburg have been wonderful!

I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to serve as your Commander. During my tenure, I have traveled across the entire District's area of responsibility: from Shreveport to Slidell, Hot Springs to Hernando, and so many other wonderful places in between. The projects that the Vicksburg District has built have changed lives for the better. Since 1873, you and your predecessors have been providing world class engineering solutions responding to the needs of the Nation, the environment and the public ~ and you have done this extremely well.

While the massive flood control structures and acres of restored habitat are sights to behold, these engineering marvels are not the things that I will remember most about my time in command. Without question, my thoughts, memories and reflections will be of the wonderful people in the Vicksburg District.

For three years, we have grown the legacy of the District. We fought historic floods on the Red River and a record breaking winter flood on the Mississippi. We are designing a new Mat Sinking Unit (MSU). We started a new tradition with the MSU – A Blessing of the Fleet as they depart for the mat sinking season. We continue to deliver on such high profile projects as Plaquemines Parish work, flow line study, and support to Afghanistan.

On July 26th, I will relinquish command and pass the flag to my successor and I will retire from the Army shortly afterwards. It will be a bitter sweet time. Over three years ago, I was thrilled to learn that my last assignment in the Army would be in the Vicksburg District. Since I grew up in Laurel, graduated from and was commissioned in the Army at Southern Miss, I feel as though I have come full circle in my

career. This rarely happens in the Army. I am truly blessed to have had this experience. My family and I will be staying in Vicksburg and expect to see many of you in the future.

Thank you for making my assignment in the Vicksburg District a highlight of my 30-year Army career. I depart with a profound sense of satisfaction and a deep appreciation of the talent and dedication of the team members of the Vicksburg District.





Mississippi River crest at Vidalia Riverfront.

District Fights Two Floods Within Four-Month Timeframe

By Mike Petersen

Photos and graphics by Joseph Matthews, Mike Petersen, and Engineering and Construction Division

Winter Flood (December 2015-January 2016)

Within its 68,000 square-mile boundary of a tri-state area, the District constructed an expansive flood-control system—the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project (MR&T). This system has to date saved millions of lives, prevented billions of dollars in flood damages, and avoided the destruction of thousands of acres of property.

Despite the fact that the Historic Flood of 2011 weakened certain system components and areas of the MR&T, the District successfully fought two floods within a four-month period. Flooding occurred on the Mississippi and Red Rivers during the winter of 2005 and the spring of 2006. The flood fighting efforts required team work among Corps, local, state, and federal partners, all working to protect lives and property within the Mississippi Valley.

It all began on December 30, 2015, when Vicksburg District Commander, Col John W. Cross, signed the Emergency Declaration and the District’s Emergency Operations Center activated for Flood Fight Operations on the Mississippi River. Lock #5 on the Red River closed December 30, 2015, and Lock #4 on the Red River closed January 3, 2016 due to high water. Phase I patrol began on January 4, 2016.

Spring Flood (March 2016)

The Emergency Operations Center activated again on March 9—only weeks after the Mississippi River flooding in January when storms dumped up to two feet of rain in four days across areas in northern Louisiana and Mississippi. The rains caused rivers and tributaries to rise quickly as flash flooding inundated communities and closed roads throughout the areas.

In Bossier City, Louisiana, the first area of concern was along Red Chute Bayou, a tributary to the Red River that rose 10 feet in three days as flash flooding worked its way into the waterways.

“With so little time to prepare, our first priority was to get our engineers out on the levees to assess the situation and support the local response efforts,” said Richard Jones, area commander for the Red River Project Office and lead on the flood fight in Northwest Louisiana. “In January, we had time to prepare for Mississippi River flooding, but this event came up so fast, we had to hit the ground running.”

On March 9, 2016, Col. Cross activated Emergency Operations, totaling 25 personnel, in order to prevent overtopping or breaching of levees along the Red Chute, Pearl River, and Cold Water Rivers in Louisiana due to flash flooding occurring from heavy rain fall. Initially concerned with

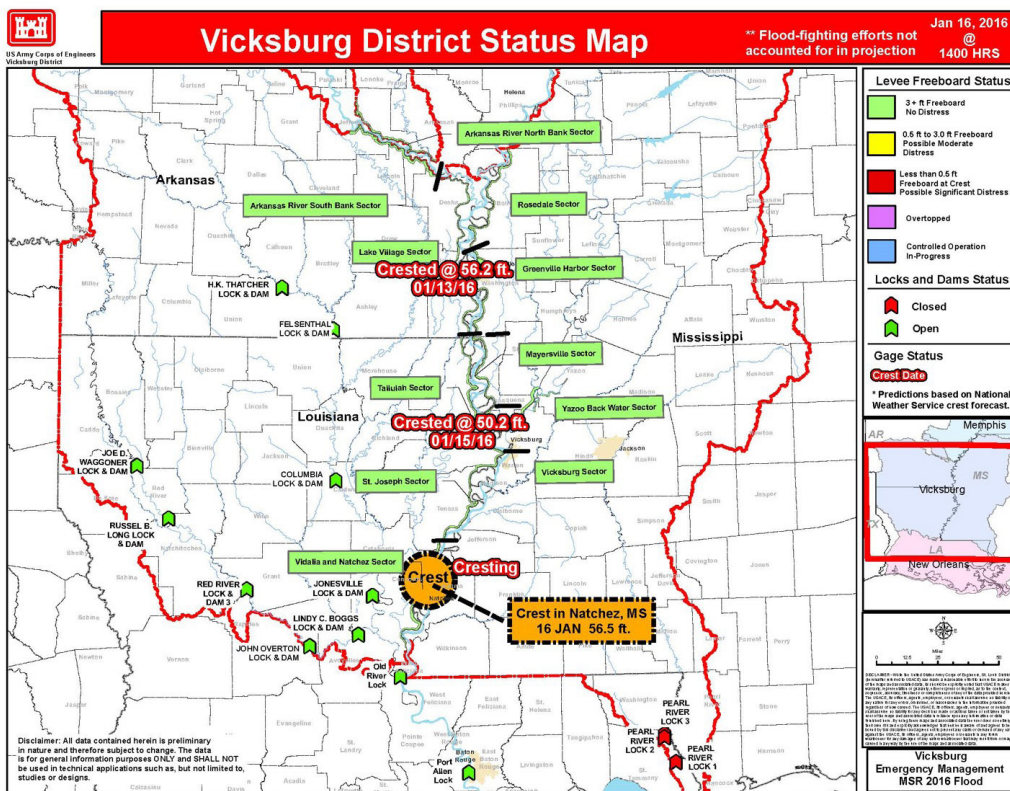
flooding from the Red Chute Bayou in Bossier City, LA, 3,500 homes were evacuated. Vicksburg District deployed Hydraulic and Geotechnical experts to support 5th Louisiana Levee Board, Tensas Basin Levee District, and local authorities as they flood fought rising inundation. The local levee boards and the support of Vicksburg district worked diligently to redirect the water and reduce the flooding, due to the risk of inundation most services were interrupted and many streets were closed.

Teams of geotechnical and hydraulic engineers were deployed to Bossier City. Local, state and federal partners established an on-site command center for 24-hour operations. As the Bossier Levee District led efforts to protect the levee and sandbags along critical areas of the levee, they were supported by engineers from the District, airmen from Barksdale Air Force Base, local residents, city and parish first responders, as well as inmate labor.

The Red River Project Office also provided technical expertise to communities downstream at Natchitoches, Alexandria and Brouillette on the Red River. Vicksburg engineers also deployed to Loggy Bayou near Coushatta, Louisiana, where the Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and the Louisiana National Guard used UH-60 Black Hawks to place two-ton sandbags to protect an area of erosion on the East Point Levee.

From March 10-14, 2016, Vicksburg District field offices begin monitoring conditions on the Red River and Ouachita/Black rivers projected to crest at flood stage. Record stages were confirmed for 14 river gages as intense rain continued. In total, 8 Sectors were activated to continue monitoring conditions at Red Chute Bayou, Marks, and Lock 2 at Pearl River, Monroe, Caddo, Wallace, Bodcau, and Red River. Vicksburg District began strategic engagements with the Quitman County Chancery Clerk, Emergency Manager and the Board of Supervisors. Corps hydraulic engineers provided recommendations concerning temporary flood fight measures. Through technical assistance, flood fight efforts built sand bag, HESCO walls, and Super sacks to at risk low areas to control water inundation and seepage. Some of the flood control measures in place such as Lock and Dam 2 of the Pearl River, in Bush, Louisiana was added to inundation inspections due to the old structure and its lack of experience with record water levels. Col. Cross along with Greg Raimondo, Vicksburg District's Chief of Public Affairs, began daily Bossier Parish Emergency Operations Center engagements, conducting both live and recorded interviews, with KTBS (ABC affiliate). Daily patrolling of Coldwater levees were conducted to support the Cities of Marks and Clarksdale Levee Board down river.

Continuing to provide technical assistance March 15, 2016, the threat of flash flooding increased, river water levels



Status Map of Mississippi River Flood.

(Red, Pearl, and Ouachita/Black) had risen, extending flooding to central Louisiana and south Mississippi. Monroe, Louisiana crested March 16, 2016, and was expected to recede. The District began to shift resources down river to Alexandria, Louisiana and Ouachita/Black also the Red River at Natchitoches, preparing for their projected crest. Inland flooding continued to be a problem, tributaries became bank full. Although no overtopping was yet to occur, seepage began to threaten sandbag construction in Marks. Local volunteers were committed to reinforce the structures with the Corps and Emergency Operations. Arkabutla Lake crested to 237.8 feet by 16 March 2016, leading to

(Continued on page 6)

PROCESS

(District Fights Floods, concluded from page 5)
approximately 97% flood control storage utilized.

Two areas of concern developed by March 17, 2016. Col. Cross and District team members conducted an on-ground assessment at Vick and Brouillette in Louisiana to meet with local officials and Red River, Atchafalaya & Bayou Boeuf (RRABB) Levee District levee board members. Farm equipment and super sacks were used to reinforce low spots on the levee. The two areas were approximately 2500 linear feet (lf) at Brouillette and about 1500 lf at Vick that required temporary flood fighting measures. As the cresting of the flash flooding moved down rivers, the Vicksburg and New Orleans districts established a clear line of coordination.

As the flood was cresting on March 13, crews worked

through the night to shore up the levees and Corps geotechnical engineers patrolled, looking for any signs of trouble on 8-miles of the levee protecting Bossier City from Red Chute Bayou. By March 18, 2016, seven major pumping plants were operating to capacity, 24 hours a day.

“It was a battle of inches for a while, and it took all the different partners working collaboratively to hold back the flood,” said Jones, who has lived in Bossier City for 36 years. “It makes me proud to be part of the Corps and part of this community.”

The District deactivated its Emergency Operations on March 25, 2016; transition from active flood fight operations to damage assessment and recovery operations began. The District brought its second flood fight within a four-month period to a close as river levels across the region slowly dropped below flood stage. ◀



Vidalia Area Office staff working with Louisiana ARNG to check boil.



Corps Field Office provided the visqueen supplies used in the Coldwater flood fight. (Photos by Joseph Matthews)



Left photo: Red River Parish, East Point Levee System, compromised by bank caving. (Photo by James McRae)

Bottom photo: Temporary embankment holding back water on Chestnt Street in Coldwater.

Right photo: Large Boil in Valewood Ditch at Mayersville.



Vidalia Area Office Receives MVD Regional Construction Safety Performance Award

By Tim Shows

Photos by Brian Bean, Tim Shows, and
Freddie Rush, Mississippi Valley Association of General Contractors

During the 2016 Mississippi Valley Construction Roundtable Meeting held recently, safety awards were presented recognizing project winners in each District within Mississippi Valley Division (MVD). The Vidalia Area Office was recognized as both the Vicksburg District winner and overall MVD Regional winner for Superior Safety Performance on the Power Conduit Coating and Lining Rehab Project at Blakely Mountain Power Plant.

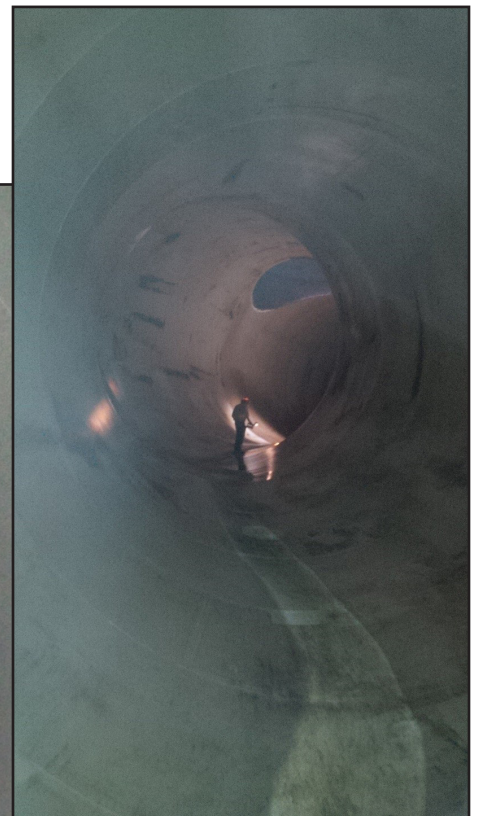
This work was performed without any lost time accidents through a \$1.7 million construction contract with Hartman Walsh Painting Company of St. Louis, Missouri. The work, beginning December 2014 through March 2015, included removal of the existing coal tar pitch lining system and application of a new coating system. The work was done in the interior of approximately 750 LF of the 24 foot diameter steel conduit as well as 240 LF of the 16 foot diameter penstock including 2 butterfly valves. This conduit and penstock function as the water intake for the hydroelectric power plant. The work required over 19,262 contractor man-hours, with most of these hours being performed in a challenging confined space environment.

Performed during a scheduled power plant outage, the contractor worked two 12 hour shifts. It required extensive efforts to unwater the conduit and maintain all the precautions necessary to work safely and to properly apply the coating

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Bottom left photo: Contractor is preparing to continue with application of the new coating system in the 24 foot diameter steel conduit (water intake) at Blakely Mountain Power Plant. Approximately 750 LF of this conduit as well as 240 LF of 16 foot diameter penstock with 2 butterfly valves were fully recoated on this contract. The contractor utilized a rolling scaffold system to minimize fall hazards.

Photo on right: A post completion inspection was performed on the new coating system.



(Vidalia Area Office, concluded from page 7)

system. Due to the confined space and limited air supply, air handlers were staged above ground and routed to all areas of the work. Air quality was monitored at all times by the contractor's onsite safety and health officer. The contractor used respirators during many phases of the work. Radio communication was maintained at all times among the workers and the confined space monitors.

Other safety concerns were effectively coordinated and addressed. To minimize fall hazards, the contractor used a rolling scaffolding system for the majority of the areas, as well as a traditional scaffolding system around the butterfly valve areas. Although the gate was closed and the conduit unwatered, there is always some minor flow of water through the conduit just from leakage around the gate.

The Accident Prevention Plan required the contractor to establish a coffer dam at the upstream limits of the work to control this flow of water through the work area. Additionally, an unscheduled dive at the intake sluice gate was required to effectively manage the leakage around the gate. The contractor worked closely with Corps team members to assure all dive concerns were addressed in an approved dive plan. A certified dive instructor of Operations Divi-

sion was onsite to ensure that the dive was conducted safely and according to the plan.

This project was truly a team effort; daily communication and coordination were required among all parties. Dusty Wilson and Brian Bean led the Power Plant team members who were responsible for day-to-day coordination on site to assure there were no unplanned impacts to the facility. They also oversaw the work when Vidalia Area Office personnel were not on site. Jimmy Coldiron, Operations Division, provided support and oversight of the contractor's dive operations. The Vidalia Area Office team was led by Rodney Nordby who performed quality assurance inspections and day-to-day general coordination; Miguel Gonzales served as the contracting officers' representative; James McRae and Richard Jones served as administrative contracting officers. Other District team members from Safety Office, Contracting Division, construction services branch, and design branch of Engineering and Construction Division, were engaged at different times throughout the project.

It was necessary for all to be fully aware of ongoing activities and for local concerns to be immediately addressed. This team effort resulted in a quality project with no lost time accidents, minimal impacts on local operations, and no damage to the hydroelectric plant facilities. ◀



James McRae, assistant area engineer, Vidalia Area Office, second from right, receives the Mississippi Valley Division 2015 Superior Safety Performance Award from Col. Michael C. Derosier, Deputy Commander, Mississippi Valley Division, far right. This award was presented to the Vidalia Area Office for their work on the Power Conduit Coating and Lining Rehab Project at Blakely Mountain Power Plant. Also shown left to right are Col. John W. Cross, Vicksburg District Commander, and Ken Chism of Hartman Walsh Painting Company, the prime contractor on the project. Chism was recognized by the Mississippi Valley Association of General Contractors (MVAGC) for his company's safety performance on the project.

An Eastern Pipistrelle. Bats use this old mine as an important hibernaculum to escape freezing temperatures during winter.

Old Mines, Salamanders, Bats and Corps Missions!

By Karl Studenroth,
Lake Ouachita Field Office

Photos by Dr. Stanley Trauth
and Karl Studenroth

One of the Corps most important missions is Environmental Stewardship. A variety of cultural history, landscapes and species fall within the array of management and responsibility assigned under this mission, either directly or indirectly.

You may be wondering how old mines, salamanders and bats can possibly be a part of the Corps' mission. The focus of this article is to highlight unknown aspects of the Corps' day to day activities and responsibilities that some people may never have realized. I invite you to read along for a different perspective of resource management.

The geological history of the lands of the Lake Ouachita project is very interesting and unique due to the lake's location within the Ouachita Mountains. A side-effect of the immense pressure and forces that built the Ouachita Mountains resulted in the formation of diamonds, quartz and other crystals and minerals. The lure of these riches attracted miners and settlers to the Ouachita Mountains since the early 1800's and resulted in one of the nicknames of Arkansas being the "Diamond State". As settlers searched for the riches in the Ouachita Mountains, many mines were dug in search of veins and pockets of hidden riches. One such old mine is located along a mountainside near the bank of Lake Ouachita.

"A rather famous mine!" Eventually the mine caught the attention of a rather significant professor and herpetologist, Dr. Stanley Trauth of Arkansas State University. In 1999, Dr. Trauth began studies of reproductive behavior of slimy salamanders utilizing the mine.

Slimy salamanders are probably the most common species of terrestrial salamanders in eastern North America. They can be found under rocks and debris in mesic, wooded areas and even yards. As children or adults, some of you may have found these distinguishable black salamanders with numerous white speckles. The occurrence of slimy salamanders in any given area isn't uncommon, but in this particular case, the salamanders have used the mine for a giant nursery to lay their eggs and raise their young. In fact this mine is so famous that Dr. Trauth's work and the

(Continued on page 10)



The entrance to the "Old Mine". This entrance is gated to keep treasure seekers out, for safety and to protect the salamanders and bats that utilize this mine.

(Old Mines, concluded from page 9)

salamanders were featured in Sir David Attenborough's documentary series, "Life in Cold Blood".

I was invited by Dr. Trauth to assist him during a recent visit to the mine. During our time in the mine, we observed about 75 salamanders, including about 40 females with their eggs or young.

Another important aspect of this mine is that it has become a roosting site for bats. Bats utilize this mine for a variety of reasons and during our visit, we observed about two dozen on the walls or flying within the mine. Because bats have lost so many of their natural roosting sites, such as caves and large trees, alternative roosting sites like mines and bridges have become very important.

So, you may be wondering: "What do old mines, salamanders and bats have to do with Corps' missions?" To answer that, we need to look at the bigger picture and the importance of salamanders and bats.

Amphibian populations have dropped significantly within the past 20 years. These declines reflect greater environmental issues and changes. Healthy populations of salamanders in a given area can be an indicator of the overall environmental health of that area. The more direct connection to people is the amazing ability salamanders have to regrow entire limbs and regenerate parts of major organs.

Studies are now underway to understand these abilities and to replicate it for human use. Just imagine being able to regrow lost limbs or damaged organs and the thousands of human lives this could benefit and save, all from a lowly, slimy salamander.

Bats are also one of the most ecologically beneficial species on earth. Bats play a critical role in the control of insect populations and one bat can consume up to 3,000 insects in one night! One colony of bats can consume tons of insects in one year. Bats also eat many harmful insects such as mosquitoes that can carry deadly diseases, and agricultural pests such as moths and beetles. The Brazilian free-tailed bat, a common species in Arkansas, consumes approximately two million pounds of insects nightly in the Texas Hill country alone! Properties of Vampire bat saliva are also being studied and used to break up blood-clots which lead to stroke. All these benefits are being derived from a tiny bat.

Salamanders and bats face many threats and their numbers have declined at an alarming rate. The benefits they both provide ecologically and to humans are immeasurable. In this case, the simple protection and monitoring of one small mine on Corps' property have implications that reach far beyond the mine, Lake Ouachita, and the responsibilities entrusted to the Corps.

In July 2006, David Attenborough visited the mine and filmed footage for the series. ◀



A Western Slimy Salamander (Plethodon albagula) guards her eggs inside the mine. Notice the tiny salamanders inside the eggs.

Salamander (Plethodon albagula) and a clutch of newly hatched young!



North Mississippi Trail Alliance

Story and photos by Chris Lockhart,
North Mississippi Trail Alliance

The North Mississippi Trail Alliance (NMTA) is 501(c) 3 non-profit composed of dedicated mountain bike riders and trail runners who are equally enthusiastic about building and maintaining natural surface, multi-use trails.

NMTA members log hundreds of volunteer hours annually to build and maintain these trails as well as the new trail in development at Hernando Point. NMTA volunteers logged over 600 man hours in 2015. Seventy-five percent of those volunteer hours were spent on Corps projects. These hours do not include the countless administrative hours the NMTA board of directors dedicates to working with land managers and planning trail development in northern Mississippi. NMTA members are responsible for developing and maintaining trails at Clear Creek Recreation Area (Sardis Lake), Olive Branch City Park, Bayou Point and Hernando Point (Arkabutla Lake), Trace State Park and Tombigbee State Park (both located in the Tupelo area).

NMTA, as a member of the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA), has access to the significant resources a national organization such as IMBA can provide in support of our trail-building mission. NMTA recently hosted the IMBA Trail Care Crew (TCC), a nationally recognized resource dedicated to teaching sustainable trail building techniques across the United States. The two-day TCC event included participants from the Corps, local city parks and recreation, equestrians, as well as the mountain bike community from all over the state. The sustainable trail-building techniques advocated by the IMBA TCC ensure that newly built trails not only meet the needs of the intended trail user group by providing a safe and challenging user experience, but also ensure that they are done in an environmentally responsible manner.

Economic Impact of Trail Systems

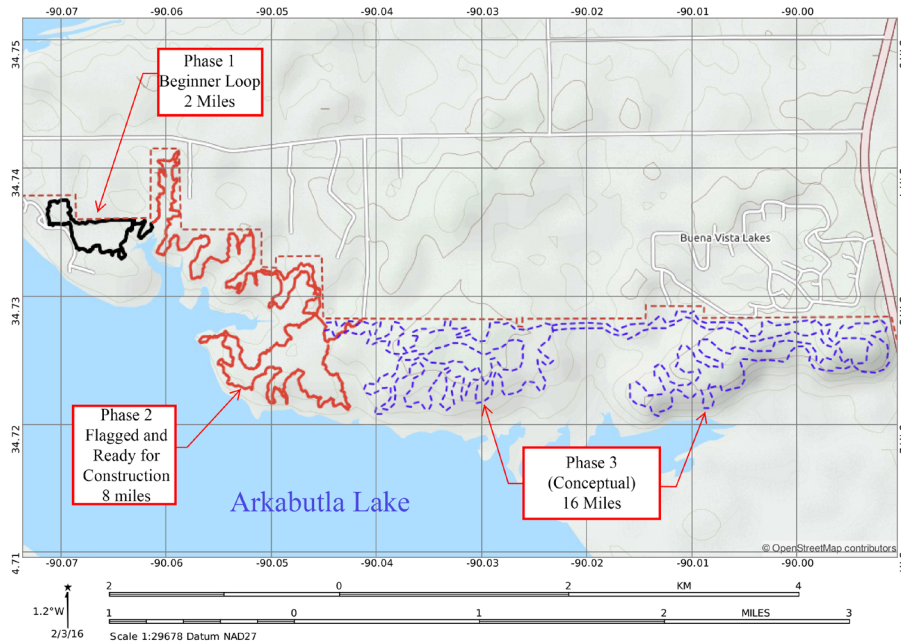
Developing and maintaining natural surface multi-use trails in northern Mississippi represent the primary mission for the NMTA. The Hernando Point trail project is one of several initiatives the NMTA is working, and when complete, the 26-mile trail will be a significant draw for all trail user groups. In addition to the health and quality of life benefits an outdoor recreational venue such as Hernando Point has to offer, there is the additional economic benefit that the new trail will bring to the area. An economic impact study prepared by the Mississippi state economist in 2014 estimated that competitive events alone would result in a nearly \$250,000 annual benefit to area businesses, mostly by users from other countries. This is in addition to the previously stated health and quality of life benefits for area residents that will be attracted to Hernando Point. Additionally, existing Hernando Point recreational assets such as the campground and day use facilities will benefit from increased park attendance due to new park visitors taking advantage of the recreational trail.

Ecotourism or nature tourism is defined as traveling to natural undisturbed areas to enjoy the scenery and wildlife. Ecotourism now makes up 10-20 percent of all tourism in the world (per the University of Alabama Center of Economic Development). Ecotourism has the potential to become big industry in Mississippi by utilizing the rustic appeal of the Mississippi outdoors. By developing and maintaining a diverse and extensive outdoor recreational system, the state can enhance its economy through ecotourism. Public demand continues to grow for more trails suitable for hiking and bicycling. With that demand will come increased tourism spending.

(Continued on page 12)

(North Mississippi Trail Alliance, continued from page 11)

Hernando Point Trail



Demand for Additional Trail Systems

Mississippi's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for 2015-2019 lists the top 5 statewide recreation needs (pg 40 MS SCORP 2015-2019)

1. Hiking and trails
2. Canoeing, rafting, and kayaking
3. Water parks and splash pools
4. Camping
5. Archery

In a survey by the SCORP, recreation providers in Mississippi were asked to rank the following facilities in order of most requested. (Page 44 of MS SCORP 2015-2019)

- 1) Picnic areas (highest score)
- 2) Trails
- 3) Hiking/Jogging/Biking
- 4) Boating/Fishing
- 5) Baseball/Softball fields
- 6) Biking areas
- 7) Camping areas
- 8) Football / soccer fields
- 9) Swimming facilities
- 10) Nature/Interpretive
- 11) Tennis courts
- 12) Public hunting areas
- 13) Golf facilities
- 14) Off roading areas
- 15) Equestrian/horse (lowest score)

Current Bike Trails at Arkabutla Lake

Bayou Point Mountain Bike Trail

Bayou Point is a 5.5 mile mountain bike only trail located in the Bayou Point Public Use Area of Arkabutla Lake. Bayou Point was originally developed by the Mid South Trail Association and adopted by NMTA in 2014. Since adopting the trail, NMTA has added a connecting trail to the nearby South Abutment Campground as well as other small additions to the trail. Additionally, NMTA has aggressively promoted the trail throughout the state and western Tennessee.

In October 2015, NMTA hosted the first USA Cycling sanctioned mountain bike race at Bayou Point. The race was part of the Mississippi off Road Cycling Series (MORCS) and drew racers and spectators from as far south as Hattiesburg. NMTA also hosts many social events at the trail throughout the year including group rides and volunteer work days.

NMTA has been granted approval for the development of a multi-use rail on the north shoreline of Arkabutla Lake. When completed, the trail will be around 26 miles in length. Trail construction began in 2015 after Cultural Resource surveys were com-

(Continued on page 18)



Bayou Point Mountain Bike Trail



Current VLDP Class Champions Community Outreach Effort

VLDP member Brian Johnson delivers donations for Baptist Children's Village to Sandra Davis of Reedy Acres at Water Valley.

**By Brooke Southerland
Photos by Brooke Southerland**

Each year the Vicksburg Leadership Development Class (VLDP) chooses a charitable cause to champion. The class of 2016 chose the Baptist Children's Village, a 100% privately funded charity that serves children in two ways, either by sponsoring them at a residential care home or by providing the necessities for them to live a viable life at home with their families.

The Residential Care Track of the Baptist Children's Village provides a network of single family homes with house parents and provides accommodations for up to 10 children. The children range in ages from 2-20 and can remain in the home until they are placed in a caring family environment or able to live independently. The children attend public schools and churches in the community in which they live, as well as participate in several recreational activities.

The Dorcas-In-Home Program is one of the Baptist Children's Village programs that allows social workers to come into the home of struggling families to help the members create a healthy, stable environment. Services include financial training, proper discipline strategies, and lessons in meal preparation. Teaching fami-

lies these skills creates a positive living environment and greatly reduces the chances that the children will be taken into state custody.

The Baptist Children's Village has multiple single family support home locations throughout Mississippi. This was ideal for the VLDP's charitable supply drive efforts, allowing members at the Vicksburg District headquarters and representatives located at District field offices the opportu-

(Continued on page 16)



Members left to right, Will McRae, Brooke Southerland, and Abe Kidder stand with Celeste Cade on campus of the Baptist Children's Village.

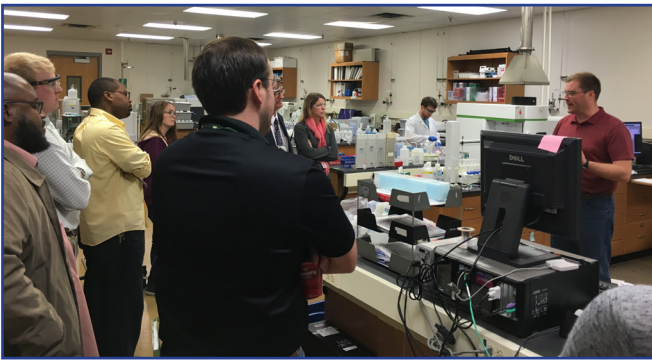
COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Photos by Alfred Dulaney



THE WATER'S EDGE

COMMUNITY OUTREACH





Class members visit site of their legacy project, a floodwall plaque regarding the historic flood of 2011.



VLDP class members are front row, left to right, Brooke Southerland, Joey Minter, Crissy Neal, and Tammy Rutherford; back row left to right, Will McRae, Abe Kidder, Jeremy Herring, and K.C. Ellis. Not pictured are Jason Mothershed, Dana Foxworth, and Brian Johnson.

(Current VLDP Class Champions, concluded from page 13)

nity to contribute to the support home located closest to them geographically. We were able to make donations to the Water Valley and Rankin County campuses. The VLDP greatly appreciates the contributions and support provided by the Vicksburg District team members. Thank you for making our charitable project a success. ◀

VLDP Class Members:

- Abe Kidder
- Will McRae
- Brooke Southerland
- Crissy Neal
- Tammy Rutherford
- Dana Foxworth
- KC Ellis
- Jeremy Herring
- Brian Johnson
- Joey Minter
- Jason Mothershed

Recent Greenwood Area Office Retirees' Service Equals More Than a Century

By Darrell Sorrels

Photos by Adam Staples and Alfred Dulaney

Three long-time employees with the Greenwood Area Office recently retired. The combined years of service for those team members totaled more than 110 years of experience and institutional knowledge.

Edward Saffold retired in December 2015 with over 35 years of service. Saffold began his career in the Greenwood Area Office in 1980 as a construction inspector and retired as construction control representative. During his tenure in the Greenwood Area Office, he served as an engineering technician in the Yazoo City Field Office and as construction inspector at the Rolling Fork, Grenada and Greenville Project offices. He worked on numerous construction projects including the Delta Headwaters Project, Upper Yazoo Projects, Steele Bayou Projects, as well as the Yazoo Delta Operation and Maintenance Contract. He also supported emergency operations on numerous events including the historical Mississippi River Flood of 2011, and the debris removal efforts in response to the Mississippi Tornado of 2010. Saffold was recognized as Greenwood Area Office Employee of the Year in 2014.

Samuel J. Horton, Area Engineer of the Greenwood Area Office, retired in January 2016 with over 39 years of service. Sam began his career in 1977 as a civil engineer in the District's Construc-



Edward Saffold



Tammy Baine and Samuel Horton

tion Division. Later he worked as a project engineer in the Greenwood Area Office. Some of the highlights from his career include his work on the construction of the Red River Lock & Dam Projects (1983–1995) to include Locks & Dams 2 and 3, and resident engineer at Lock & Dam 5. Upon completion of Lock and Dam 5, Horton returned to Greenwood in 1995 as assistant area engineer, and was subsequently selected for the area engineer position in 2002, a position he held until his retirement. He also worked on multiple temporary details, most notably as chief of Engineering and Construction Division from

Nov 2008 – Feb 2009. During his tenure in Greenwood, he oversaw construction on major projects including the Upper Yazoo Channel Projects, Delta Headwaters Projects, Mississippi River Levee Enlargement and Seepage Projects, numerous repair or renovation projects at the Mississippi Lakes, and the Greenwood Protection Works. He also participated in numerous flood events including serving as area commander during the historical Mississippi River Flood of 2011, and as deputy area commander during the Red River Flood of 2015. Especially noteworthy is his service as deputy commander of Task Force

Hope Mississippi during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

(Continued on page 23)

District Names Chief of its Design Branch

By Shirley J. Smith
Photo by Alfred Dulaney



David Wallace

The District recently selected David Wallace as chief of its Design Branch of Engineering Division.

In this position, Wallace will be responsible for supervising and managing the branch to provide engineering design activities to support the Vicksburg District's (District) civil works program. The civil works-engineering program consists of major construction of navigation locks and dams, flood control dams and reservoirs, channel improvements, floodwalls, pumping stations, and road and railroad relocations.

Prior to this selection, he was chief of the Technical Services Section of Engineering Division where he was responsible for the acquisition and management of architectural

and engineering contract services and public facility relocation services for the District.

Wallace began his career with the District in 1990 as an environmental engineer in the water quality sSection, hydraulics branch of Engineering Division. He later was selected by the Environmental Protection Agency Region 4 as a national Brownfield coordinator.

A native of Amite City, Louisiana, he is a graduate of Amite High School. He earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in civil engineering from Louisiana Tech University. He is a registered professional engineer in the State of Louisiana.

He and his wife Stephanie have four children. ◀

(North Mississippi Trail Alliance, concluded from page 12)

pleted on the proposed trail corridor. Phase 1 of the construction included development of a 2-mile beginner loop with a trail head located in the Hernando Point Day Use Area. This beginner trail will provide additional recreational facilities for campers and day users. Phase 1 is scheduled to be complete by the end of February. Phase 2 of the project will expand the trail east towards Tulane Road and provide a more intermediate biking/hiking experience. Users seeking a longer trail will be rewarded with scenic overlooks of Arkabutla Lake. Phase 2 is expected to be complete by

Bayou Point Mountain Bike Trail
US Army Corps of Engineers
Vicksburg District

Important Information
Bayou Point is 5.5 miles in total length. Segment distances between road crossings are depicted on the map. Familiarize yourself with the trail before leaving as there are currently no mile markers installed. The trail can be ridden in either direction. Ride the connector trail to the campground and back for an extra mile of distance. Unless you have a site reserved, please do not ride through the campground.

The various sections of trail are illustrated in the color of their corresponding level of difficulty. Difficulty ratings are as follows:
Easy Suitable for new riders. Unavoidable obstacles 2" or less. Unavoidable obstacles may be present.
Intermediate Not suitable for new riders or small children. Contains steep hills requiring proper use of brakes and bike control. Unavoidable obstacles 8" tall or less.
Advanced Suitable for experienced riders only. Very steep trail grade or drop offs present. Unavoidable obstacles 12" tall or less.
WARNING: Do not attempt these sections without warning them first.

Map Key
 TH Trail head
 Restrooms
 Parking
 Road Crossing
 Mileage to next road crossing
 Boat Ramp
 Playground

NMTA
North Mississippi Trail Alliance
A Chapter of
 I M B A A S O R B A
INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ASSOCIATION
SOUTHERN OFF-ROAD BICYCLE ASSOCIATION

This trail is maintained by volunteers from the North Mississippi Trail Alliance, in partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers.
 NMMA is the local IMBA-SORBA chapter and is member supported. Help preserve this trail and others in the North MS region by becoming a member or making a tax deductible donation to NMMA today.
www.nomissta.org
www.facebook.com/nomissta
Emergency Contact Information
 In case of Emergency call 911
 Arkabutla Lake Field Office 662-562-6261
 Tate County Sheriff 662-562-4434

Trail Hours
 Open daily from dawn until 10:00 p.m. unless the trail is wet.
 This trail is closed during rain and 24 hours following a rain event. Do not ride on wet trails!

late 2016 or spring of 2017. Phase 3 of the project will extend the trail even further east to Highway 51. The terrain and elevation of this section of the trail will be suitable for advanced biking or more strenuous hiking.

When all 3 phases are complete the trail will provide a variety of conditions suitable for all user skill levels. ◀

A volunteer, Mark Parks, preparing to sink fish structures into Arkabutla Lake.

14th Annual Fish Habitat Day Held at Arkabutla Lake

**By Clayton Burford,
Arkabutla Lake
Photos by Jamie Richmond**

Above average lake levels didn't hamper volunteer efforts to place fish structures at Arkabutla Lake recently at its 14th Annual Fish Habitat Day. With the lake level significantly above normal winter pool level, 35 volunteers, Arkabutla Lake ranger staff, and Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) personnel sank approximately 297 Christmas trees at various locations around the lake.

During breakfast for the volunteers, natural resource specialist Clayton Burford provided safety guidelines, the locations where materials were staged, and tips on placement of the fish habitat to obtain maximum results in the lake's bed. Due to high water, structures were created on the boat ramps and placed in the lake using boats from volunteers, MDWFP, and the Corps.

Later, lunch was served and a door prize drawing was held for all participants. The breakfast and lunch supplies and door prizes were donated by Corps volunteers and Arkabutla Lake ranger staff. Special thanks to the 35 volunteers whose hours worked totaled 175. Thanks also to the cities of Hernando and Senatobia for providing the Christmas trees.

You may contact the Arkabutla Lake Field Office at (662) 562-6261 or visit us at <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/ArkabutlaLake.aspx>.

Although the primary mission of Arkabutla Lake is flood damage risk reduction, approximately 855,000 individuals visit Arkabutla Lake annually to enjoy the camping, playgrounds, swimming areas, several types of trails, fishing, boat ramps and marinas. The lake traffic brings \$14,000,000 annually to the local economy and supports almost 250 jobs. Arkabutla Lake is one of the four lakes in Mississippi maintained and operated by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Vicksburg District. Information on Corps lakes and recreational areas can be found on the Vicksburg District Operations Division's website at <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/lakes/>. ◀



Volunteer Jimmy Thompson, left, and Coleman Pullen, right, load three anchors to be placed for fish habitat.

Third Annual Wounded Patriots Day at Ivan Lake



*Newly constructed
handicapped accessible
fishing pier at Ivan Lake.*

**By Tommy Jones,
Bayou Bodcau Dam and Reservoir
Photos by Tommy Jones and Ben Nyegaard**

It seems that cloudy, dreary weather is just part of our annual fishing tournament at Ivan Lake, so cool that a bon fire felt good that morning. But despite the less than favorable conditions, the Wounded Patriots and their guides took advantage of the cloudy conditions to “rip some bass lips”.

Four wounded veterans and their families, along with volunteers, participated in the tournament. The event began at 7:00 a.m. at the campground on Ivan Lake. Upon their arrival, participants were invited to enjoy fresh donuts and coffee. After the Meet and Greet, Lauren Lawson, daughter of Wounded Patriot Larry Lawson, sang the National Anthem; Bossier Sheriff’s Deputy Wade Allen led us in prayer. I’ve said it before but I’ll say it again, there is just something very special about standing in God’s great outdoors on the bank of a lake surrounded by military veterans; the sight of them makes it even more special. The veterans were paired with a guide that provided the boat and fishing tackle. Point of Impact Outdoor Ministries was also in attendance with extra fishing tackle and a guide if needed. Kevin Houston and members of Haughton Baptist Church were responsible for recruiting most of the guides.

The goal of the tournament was to get the heaviest five fish stringer of bass. The weigh-in was set for noon and the anglers were off.

How many times have you ever heard of somebody fishing on a lake within a reservoir? Well Ivan Lake is just that - a lake within Bayou Bodcau Dam and Reservoir. Because Bayou Bodcau Dam and Reservoir is a “dry reservoir” it holds no constant pool. Water fluctuates from its normal summertime level where the water is confined within the banks of the bayou itself to a record 21,400 acres in November of 2009. At this level, 200.27’ MSL, approximately .27 feet of water was flowing back into Ivan Lake over its spillway.

Ivan Lake is a 520-acre impoundment that was constructed in 1958 by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development with the Bossier Parish Police Jury as its sponsor. It was recently refurbished through the combined efforts of the Corps, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development and the Bossier Parish Police

(Continued on page 21)

(Annual Wounded Patriots Day, concluded from page 20)
Jury. Work was performed to restore the gate; the conduit through the dam was replaced; a secondary berm along the toe of the dam was added; a section of the bank was cleared to improve bank fishing opportunities; five fishing piers were added (including two handicapped accessible piers); boat rows were cleared and marked; and the lake was stocked with fingerling Florida Bass, Crappie, Bluegill Bream; Red Ear Bream and Channel Catfish. Threadfin Shad were also released to provide ample forage.

As an added bonus, brood fish from one of the state's fish hatcheries were released. Two hundred bass weighing a total of six hundred pounds were released. With an average weight of three pounds and some fish weighing as much as seven pounds, local anglers were immediately in pursuit of trophy bass. The largest bass that has been reported since the lake's renovation was an 11.49 pound lunker that was caught earlier this year by a gentleman who was crappie fishing. The big fish was landed on a 6-pound test line, and was photographed and released! There have been several bass in the six to seven pound range reported. You can always tell when the crappie are biting by the number of boats on the lake. Some fisherman claim it's the best lake in the area. I don't know about the best lake but the fish do taste good!

While the anglers were testing their skills in this newly refurbished lake, volunteers from Point of Impact were preparing fried fish and all the trimmings. There's nothing better than fried fish after a day of fishing! One of Momma's sheet cakes was even provided for dessert. As the cooking of fish permeated the air, we prepared for the weigh in. Some of the volunteers fished while passing the time. The

tournament's mascot, Honey, also attended the tournament. Some of the children enjoyed watching the Yellow Lab's fetching skills, I think she was exhausted by the end of the day.

Finally, weigh in! All of the teams weighed at least one bass. The lightest stringer weighed 1.8 pounds. Second place weighed 7.13, third place weighed 4.1 pounds, and the winning stringer weighed 13.12 pounds.

Prizes were donated by the National Wild Turkey Federation, Specialty Track-hoe, Tubb's Hardware, Ark-La Outdoors, Keith's Service Station and Crow Burlingame Bumper to Bumper Auto Parts. The Wild Turkey Federation also provided caps, pocket knives and flashlights for all of the veterans and guides. The winning veteran, Jeremy Miller, received rod and reel combinations along with one of the other prizes. Second place winner, Joey Hooker, also had a choice from the two remaining rod and reel combinations and another prize while Keith Hacker picked up the last rod and reel combination and one other prize. Fourth place winner, Larry Lawson picked up the remaining lure packs as his prize. It was now time to eat!!!! It got a little quieter during lunch but we did enjoy the fellowship.

The weather was cloudy and dreary but it didn't dampen our spirits. It wasn't a large event; it was a laid back kind of day on the lake. We had a good time serving and visiting with our wounded heroes. Existing relationships were strengthened and new ones were formed. This fishing tournament afforded us an opportunity to give back and to show our heroes that we do care and that we do appreciate their service, dedication and sacrifice. It was time well spent! ◀



Joey Hooker brings his bag to the scales for weigh in.



Lunch is served.

Arkabutla Lake Hosts 16th Annual Eagle Watch

Story and photo by
Kandy Alldread, Arkabutla Lake

The purpose of the Midwinter Bald Eagle survey is to monitor the status of bald eagle wintering populations in the contiguous United States by estimating national and regional count trends overall and by age.

Each January, several hundred individuals from across the nation count eagles along standard, non-overlapping survey routes. Arkabutla Lake's volunteers used the fixed point survey method at Dub Patton Campground, Dub Patton Day Use Area, Bayou Point, Kelley's Crossing, and Coldwater Point.

One mature eagle was sited in a tree off Bayou Point boat ramp. After the Watch, everyone returned to the Arkabutla Lake Field Office for a live Birds of Prey Program provided by

Kate Friedman of Mississippi Wildlife Rehabilitation. Volunteers were treated to an entertaining program and learned about local owls and hawks; they had the opportunity to see up close some beautiful educational birds and other wildlife.

The staff at Arkabutla Lake thanks all volunteers as well as the Mississippi Wildlife Rehabilitation group for ensuring this successful event.

Although the primary mission of Arkabutla Lake is flood damage risk reduction, approximately 855,000 individuals visit Arkabutla Lake annually to enjoy the camping, playgrounds, swimming areas, several types of trails, fishing, boat ramps and marinas. The lake traffic brings approximately \$14,000,000 annually to the local economy and supports almost 250 jobs. Arkabutla Lake is one of the four lakes in Mississippi maintained and operated by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Vicksburg District. Information on Corps lakes and recreational areas can be found on the Vicksburg District Operations Division's website at <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/lakes/>. ◀



Kate Friedman with Mississippi Wildlife Rehab delivers a presentation on Birds of Prey to persons at Arkabutla Lake.

2016 Youth Raccoon Hunt at Arkabutla Lake

By Coleman Pullen,
Arkabutla Lake

The 21th Annual Raccoon Hunt at Arkabutla Lake was another success. This great experience in the outdoors that has been occurring for the past eight years, was once an adult hunt but is now exclusively for youth 10 to 15 years of age.

Six successful hunting evenings were made possible with the help of 46 parent volunteers, Arkabutla Raccoon Hunting Association members, and park rangers, Coleman Pullen and Clayton Burford.

Forty-six youth from surrounding counties participated in the hunt while enjoying the fun and excitement of being able to experience the thrill of raccoon hunting. This hunt, serving as a resource management tool, affords natural resource personnel the opportunity to control Arkabutla Lake's raccoon population within the main dam's designated no hunting area. A total of 16 raccoons were harvested this year by the youth hunters. ◀

Enid Lake Hosts Two Resourceful Volunteer Efforts

By Chris Hannaford, Enid Lake

Photos by Kyle Tedford and Deborah Freeman

Enid Lake hosted its first two volunteer events of the year. These natural resource management and Environmental Stewardship events resulted in 465 persons volunteering. They teamed with the Corps and Regional Business Solutions (RBS) Contract personnel and accomplished two major endeavors that would not have been possible without their help. Major endeavors included: Restoring Fish Habitat by constructing approximately 500 fish shelters during Enid Lake 25th Annual Habitat Day. The second effort included picking up over 45 compacted cubic yards of trash during the Enid Lake Volunteers for Waste Management's 13th Annual Cleanup Day. These events were responsible for 465 volunteers contributing services to the Corps' Enid Lake Field Office valued at approximately \$72,612.00.

Enid Lake Habitat Day "Restoring Fisheries Habitat"

Enid Lake Habitat Day Volunteer Association along with Enid Lake and RBS Contract personnel recently hosted the 25th Annual Habitat Day at Enid Lake. The day was beautiful and the event proved once again to be a huge success. Two hundred fifty volunteers, 22 Corps team members, and RBS contract employees participated, which was the largest Habitat Day Event on record.

Fifteen Hundred trees and 2,000 wooden stakes were used to construct over 500 shelters that were strategically placed and anchored in many locations throughout the following areas: Bean, Dew, Wallace, and Hubbard Creeks. These man-made structures will provide future shelter for many bait fish, which are needed to sustain a healthy population of larger game fish. Due to the hard work of these volunteers these structures will also provide many enjoyable days of fishing in the future.

The Enid Lake Habitat Day began with breakfast followed by instructions and a safety review. After instructions were given everyone left for assigned work areas that included placing cedar trees and wooden stakes on the barren mudflats. Upon completion of work, everyone returned to the maintenance shop to enjoy a wonderful lunch; the awarding of door prizes and a chance to win a 14' aluminum fishing boat donated by Performance Marine of Sardis, and Top Dog Power Sports of Greenwood.

According to studies performed by Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks biologists, these shelters are showing enormous benefits to both habitat and fishing in the lake. Since inception of "Habitat Day", approximately 67,750 trees have been placed in the lake, which constructed over 22,500 fish shelters on the barren mudflats of Enid Lake.

(Continued on page 24)



Enid Lake Volunteers utilize ATV's to place cedar trees and stake beds on the mudflats of Enid Lake during Habitat Day 2016.

(Recent Greenwood Area Office Retirees, concluded from page 17)

Tammy L. Baine retired in January 2016 with over 36 years of service. Tammy began her career with the Greenwood Area Office in 1979 as a typist and retired as administrative officer. In this position, in addition to some general administrative tasks, she was responsible for all aspects of funds management and budgeting for the Area Office to include their operation and maintenance responsibilities in the Yazoo Basin. Tammy also served as a Planning and Re-

sponse Team Level II certified ENGLink Strike Team member. She supported Emergency Operations during numerous flood events at the Greenwood Area Office to include the historical Mississippi Flood of 2011. She also deployed in support to the Joplin Missouri Tornado in 2011; the Rock Island Flood Fight in 2008; and the Mississippi Task Force Hope Hurricane Katrina Recovery in 2005. Tammy was recognized on several occasions as Greenwood Area Office Employee of the Year. ◀

(Enid Lake, concluded from page 23)



Enid Lake Volunteers constructing fish shelters during the 2016 Enid Lake Habitat Day.

Enid Lake’s Waste Management’s Cleanup Day “Making Environmental Stewardship a Way of Life”

The Enid Lake Volunteers for Waste Management and Enid Lake team members conducted their 13th Annual Enid Lake Cleanup Day. Volunteers met at designated areas around the lake including Enid Lake Field Office, Chickasaw Hill Boat Ramp, and Dunn’s Country Store. Volunteers were instructed on the day’s activities and potential safety hazards by the Enid Lake ranger staff.

During the event Corps employees and RBS contractors teamed with approximately 215 volunteers ranging from small children to older adults, with one thing in mind, to pick up trash. A total of 45 compacted cubic yards of trash and 21 tires were picked up along Enid Lake’s roadways and shoreline. The morning’s cleanup was followed by a delicious lunch prepared by volunteers; raffle drawings; and awarding of door prizes.

For the past 13 years, this event has been directly responsible for removing more than 878 compacted cubic yards of trash and debris, and 730 tires from Enid Lake’s roadways and shoreline. This event has also been directly responsible for more than 2,554 volunteers contributing services to the Corps’ Enid Lake Field Office valued at approximately \$302,106.00, and making environmental stewardship a way of life around Enid Lake.

Natural resource management projects

such as “Habitat Day” and Environmental Stewardship projects such as “Cleanup Day” not only sustain and enhance Enid Lake’s fisheries and beauty, but also promote natural resources and environmental stewardship to surrounding lake communities and visitors. These volunteer efforts contribute greatly to the support of two of the Corps’ missions - protecting and sustaining natural resources, and implementing Environmental Operating Principles to preserve and enhance the environment for future generations. ◀



Enid Lake Volunteers for Waste Management’s Annual Cleanup Day is an event for the whole family. A young volunteer searches out the shoreline for trash.



Seven members from the National Guard Unit Co C 2/198th Armor from Oxford assist during the 13th Annual Cleanup Day event at Enid Lake.



“Sugarberry” Tree, Hwy 27 Camp-ground, Lake Ouachita. Measures 13 feet 1 inch in circumference.

Perspectives of a Park Ranger

Story and photo by Karl Studenroth, Lake Ouachita Field Office

As a park ranger recently beginning my career with the Corps, I am pleased and honored to have been selected to work at Lake Ouachita. Many years ago, during a visit to central Arkansas, I documented a number of interesting plant and animal species and remembered the beauty of the Ouachita Mountains. I never imagined I would be returning to this area to work as a park ranger. It is now my goal to contribute a high degree of excellence and dedication to the Corps, Vicksburg District and Lake Ouachita.

The Corps is tasked with a wide range of many important and critical responsibilities. Along with accomplishing its vital missions, it is important to remain proactive, always looking for ways to improve and enhance services provided to visitors and the general public.

As a park ranger, one of my primary responsibilities has been to participate in the project’s Visitor Assistance Program, patrolling recreational areas, providing information about the area and facilities to the visiting public, plus reminding visitors to always remain aware of the outstanding natural resources around them and how to protect them. Along with visitor assistance, the Corps has been tasked with a broad range of natural resource management - and in many ways the two are intertwined. For example, one of the most important tasks of the Corps is flood control

and wetlands management. Both of these greatly impact society and nature in multiple ways. As an agency that is assigned both public recreation and natural resource management responsibilities, finding a balance can be difficult. But in many ways, better resource management leads to better visitor assistance, recreational opportunities and public benefits.

To properly and ecologically manage any given area it is necessary to know all aspects of that area. This includes game species, non-game species (vertebrates & invertebrates), rare and endangered species, ecosystems or habitat types (especially sensitive and rare habitats), fire dependency and frequency, exotic species present, their impact, and more. The condition, status, and trends of these areas must also be monitored and managed.

In reality, minor changes or additions can go a long way and have benefits that far outweigh the minimal amount of time invested. An example of such an activity is BIG trees! An inventory and list of large trees is something that can be completed on Corps lands that requires very little time and effort. With the support of the staff at Lake Ouachita, I have initiated this project at Lake Ouachita.

Through the years, Corps lands surrounding Lake

(Continued on page 26)

(Perspectives of a Park Ranger, concluded from page 25)

Ouachita have been logged many times. Logging companies from Iowa, Washington, and Oregon moved into this area to begin harvesting the virgin timber from the mountainsides. Dierks Lumber Company and the Caddo River Lumber Company were two of the largest logging companies that harvested a majority of the timber. While Dierks Lumber Company was one of the largest land owners in the state of Arkansas, the company also established one of the largest sawmills in Mountain Pine around 1928. It was built just east of Blakely Mountain Dam due to the close proximity of the timber resources, and would reduce the distance for hauling the logs to the mill. In 1969, Dierks Lumber Company sold all their holdings to Weyerhaeuser, who maintained the mill in Mountain Pine until 2008 when it was closed.

The Caddo River Lumber Company constructed railroad trams and rights-of-way throughout the Ouachita Mountains, remnants of which can still be seen today. They established large “mill towns” that were moved on these same railroads once the timber had been depleted from an area.

While a majority of the “BIG” trees were harvested, there are still some remaining large trees; they provide a special opportunity for environmental education and conservation efforts. Simple lists or databases of large trees should include trees at least 8-10 feet in circumference. Such trees are easily 100-300 years old or older and are living museums and monuments! At Lake Ouachita 15 large trees have already been documented with the largest being a Sugarberry more than 13 feet in circumference!

Information collected for such a database can include: scientific name, common name, circumference, crown-spread, height, date measured, county, location, latitude/longitude, comments, etc.). Compiling such lists can be completed while doing forestry or other natural resource projects, or by interviewing Corps employees.

Champion and large tree programs exist in most states and additional information can be found from state forestry commissions, the U.S. Forest Service and other organizations. Brochures can also be completed about these special trees and small signs or markers can be placed at the tree for visitors and educational efforts. Another aspect of trees for educational efforts is their importance in wetlands and in erosion control, especially on Corp’s lands.

The presence of large trees in Corps campgrounds, recreational areas and along trails can be highlighted for visitors. The importance, aesthetic value and preservation of such majestic trees can also add to the positive outdoor experience and memories of visitors to Corps lands for many years and generations to come. ◀

Lake Ouachita Hosts Deer Hunt for Mobility Impaired

By Joseph Bailey, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Lake Ouachita’s recent Annual Deer Hunt for the Mobility Impaired afforded three hunters a unique opportunity to be included in a well-managed outdoor sporting event. The areas designated as hunting stand locations are off limits to public hunting at the time of the event.

It was windy and cold during the morning of the first hunt, which increased deer movement heavily. The afternoon of the first day appeared to be perfect for movement. The staff became skeptical of deer movement after no luck the first morning of the hunt, but it was much different during the evening hunt. The wind had blown heavily that morning with a steady rain. As it became colder throughout the day, activity increased later that afternoon.

After having arrived at the deer stand to track a buck, one of the hunters, Virgil Irving, was sure that he had shot at a giant. In his words: “It was the largest deer I’ve ever shot at.” It didn’t take long to recover his deer. Virgil had made a perfect shot on a great buck! After locating the buck, everyone was excited for Virgil. It was a memory not to be forgotten - he had harvested a giant 10 point! Each hunter harvested a deer, one of them being a prized buck. It was a phenomenal feeling knowing that the hard work had paid off. Later that evening, the staff cleaned the harvested deer and were in anticipation of the morning hunt that was quickly approaching.

When the hunters arrived the next morning it was very cold; calm winds present the perfect hunting weather. Once again, anticipation was great. Lake Ouachita’s staff received a call from one of the hunters stating that he had harvested his biggest buck to date. When the staff arrived they were amazed at the size of the deer that had been harvested. Jerry Norwood had harvested a buck of a lifetime. A perfect 13 point buck!

The staff at Lake Ouachita worked flawlessly in coordinating and conducting the hunt; hosting it requires much preparation and dedication to ensure safety and a successful event. Team members at Lake Ouachita were happy to have had the privilege of meeting such outstanding individuals and making new friends in the process. They continue to strive on the success of the program and look forward to the hunt each year. Safety is priority and will continue to be while ensuring successful hunts. ◀



Col Cross presents the Excellence in Partnership Award to Russ Johnson, president of Keeping DeGray Lake Beautiful.

DeGray Lake Hosts Every Kid in a Park Event

By Renea Guin
Photo by Derrick Walker

DeGray Lake recently hosted an Every Kid in a Park activity. Ninety-five 4th grade students from Ouachita, Delight, and Murfreesboro, enjoyed this outdoors event. Presentations included 'Water Safety', 'Arkansas Reptiles', 'Oh Deer', and 'Water Quality Testing'. Twenty 11th grade students from Mount Saint Mary's Academy assisted the 4th grade students with the water quality testing. Earlier that morning, the students from Mt. Saint Mary's had a tour of the Powerhouse at DeGray.

Corps personnel was supported by DeGray Lake Resort State Park, Mount Saint Mary's Academy, and Keeping

DeGray Lake Beautiful. Partners with Keeping DeGray Lake Beautiful were presented the Excellence in Partnership Award.

The teachers and volunteers were very appreciative of what the Corps is offering the students, giving them a chance to get outdoors. Mount Saint Mary's stated that they would love to come back next year and bring more students! All students enjoyed this great outdoors event.

This outdoor activity was made possible by the grant program provided by the National Park Foundation that provided the food and supplies. ◀

District Field Offices & Services

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Vicksburg, MS 39183
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601-631-5000**

Lake Ouachita (501) 767-2101
Lake Greeson (870) 285-2151
DeGray Lake (870) 246-5501
Sardis Lake (662) 563-4531
Arkabutla Lake (662) 562-6261
Enid Lake (662) 563-4571
Grenada Lake (662) 226-5911
Bayou Bodcau (318) 949-1804
JBJ Waterway (318) 677-2673

Ouachita-Black Rivers, Monroe
Navigation Project Office, &
LA Field Office (318) 322-6391
Corps Wetland Permits (601) 631-7071
Apply, ask questions, or report violations
Contracting & Bids (601) 631-7684
Vendors, status of bids, specs
Community Support (601) 631-5223
Tours, speakers, volunteers
Historical Questions & Research (601) 634-7023
Mississippi River History Center
Real Estate Issues (601) 631-5979
Corps impacts to your property
Employment Questions (601) 631-5858
Vacancies, status, qualifications
Historical Photographs (601) 631-5021
Environmental (601) 631-7156

Other Vicksburg Engineer/Federal Organizations

Mississippi Valley Division (601) 634-5760
Engineer Research and Development Center (601) 634-2504
412th Engineer Command (601) 636-1686
168th Engineer Group (601) 313-5290
Vicksburg National Military Park (601) 636-0583
U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kickapoo (601) 636-8304
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (601) 629-6607

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