

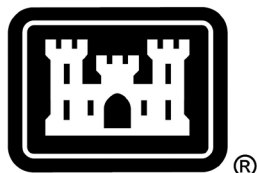
Responsiveness and Reliability:

A History of the Philadelphia District and the Marine Design Center, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1972–2008



by
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Prepared for the
Philadelphia District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Contents

Contents	iii
Foreword from the District Commander	vi
Acknowledgments	viii
Introduction	xi
Historical Time Line	xviii
1 Reorganizations and Responses: The Evolution of the Philadelphia District, 1972–2008	1
Effects of the Environmental Movement and NEPA	3
Corps Reorganization in the 1970s and 1980s	10
Corps Reorganization in the 1990s	16
Regionalization and USACE 2012	24
Project Management Initiatives	27
Perceptions of the Philadelphia District	34
2 Dams, Basin Planning, and Flood Risk Management	41
Tocks Island Dam	43
Trexler Lake Project	62
Beltzville Lake and Blue Marsh Lake	65
The Level B Study and the Delaware Estuary Salinity Intrusion Study	79
Modifications to Walter and Prompton Dams	83
National Dam Safety Inspection Program	91
Molly Ann’s Brook Project	95
Continuing Authorities Program	97

3 Coastal Engineering and Storm Risk Management	107
Early Coastal Protection Projects	109
Coastal Protection Projects in New Jersey	116
Coastal Protection Projects in Delaware	124
Inlet Navigation Improvement Projects	131
4 Waterways, Navigation, and Dredging	141
Floating Plant: The District Fleet	143
The Delaware River Dredging Disposal Study	150
Delaware River Main Channel Deepening	160
The Chesapeake and Delaware Canal	170
5 Environmental Programs	185
Regulatory Branch Operations	187
Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste Remediation	205
Ecosystem Restoration	209
6 Emergency and Contingency Operations	229
Background	230
Responses to Natural Disasters	233
Other Emergency Responses	243
Support for Military Contingency Operations	246
7 Military Construction and Installation Support	253
Installation Support: Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base	254
Installation Support: Dover Air Force Base	262
The Effects of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Program on MILCON	268

8 The Marine Design Center	279
9 Work for Others (Reimbursable Services)	297
Work for the U.S. Postal Service	299
Work for Qatar and Gabon	300
Support for the EPA Superfund Program	303
Work for the U.S. Coast Guard	314
Work for the Federal Aviation Administration	315
Work for the City of Philadelphia	316
10 Conclusion	325
Appendices	
Philadelphia District Dams and Reservoirs	334
Philadelphia District Major Vessels	336
Active Philadelphia District O&M Navigation Projects	338
High-Level Highway Bridges over the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal	340
Marine Design Center Projects, 1982–2008	342
Philadelphia District Gallery of Distinguished Employees	346
Lifetime Customer Care Award	354
Selected Bibliography	356
Index	363

Foreword from the District Commander

Essayons. Long the motto of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, this single French imperative is best translated as “Let Us Try.” At first glance, it’s an unlikely rallying cry. Just try? Doesn’t it matter if we succeed? We all know one answer: “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again.” But more important—if at first you don’t try, you won’t succeed at all.

That is how the men and women of the Corps’ Philadelphia District embody the true essayons spirit: They keep succeeding because they never stop trying.

This volume picks up where *The District: A History of the Philadelphia District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1866–1971* leaves off. Aside from the updated time period, the title of this book acknowledges the former Marine Design Division becoming a separate Corps organization in 1979, although both the location and the legacy of the Philadelphia District and the Marine Design Center have remained close together.

We also wanted the title to capture the essential qualities that best reflect the District’s reputation. We are known for trying and doing our best from the beginning (**responsiveness** to customer needs) through to the end (**reliability** in delivering solutions that meet those needs).

In these pages, we look at the changes and challenges that have affected the District as a whole, along with the programs, projects, and events that have defined its mission. A lot changed between the Philadelphia District of 1972, which had become largely a civil works district focused on navigation and flood control, and the Philadelphia District of 2008, which had evolved into a full-service district—with its historic military construction mission restored and a third mission officially dedicated to reimbursable work for non-Corps customers. We were always known as a “dredging district,” but now we dredge for shore protection as well as for navigation. We had long enjoyed a good reputation with our Army and Air Force customers; now that network of satisfied customers includes EPA, FEMA, the Coast Guard, and many others. What was always a top-notch engineering organization is now a top-notch engineering and environmental organization. We always responded

to any emergency, any contingency. We still do, but more often, and often much farther from home. For decades, one of the District's divisions handled naval architecture and marine engineering for the Corps' varied and wide-ranging fleet; now, as the Marine Design Center, its customer base has steadily grown to include the Army and other federal agencies.

Like that first volume, this is not a comprehensive record of all programs, projects, and events spanning almost four decades. That would require many more volumes. Rather, it is a continuation of the narrative about a unique organization and some of the things that made it so. We did not intend this as a bound catalog of facts, but as a book worth reading. We hope we have succeeded, and that you find it both educational and enjoyable. Most important, I hope you come away with a deeper understanding of the pride I have in serving with such a fine group of people.

Philip M. Secrist III
Lieutenant Colonel, Corps of Engineers
Commander & District Engineer

Philadelphia, 30 January 2012

Acknowledgments

Writing the history of an organization always involves the work of more people than just those doing the research and writing. This history is no different. We are indebted to a number of people for their willingness to help us with research, document collection, and general guidance. The major theme of this history is the responsiveness of the Philadelphia District to the needs of the nation. That responsiveness was certainly exhibited by many people in the district as we prepared this history. However, any errors or omissions in the publication are strictly our own.

Many thanks to Ed Voigt, head of the Philadelphia District's Public Affairs Office, for his help throughout this project. Ed tracked down photographs and information, put us in contact with the right people when we had questions, and served as a sounding board for ideas about the history. His aid has been invaluable.

Thanks as well to Linda Skale, technical information specialist and guardian of the district's Technical Library. Linda cheerfully allowed us access to the numerous holdings in the library, enabling us to prepare a better product, and provided us with space in the library to conduct our research. Monica Strucko helped us find administrative records held in storage by the Philadelphia District, records that proved useful in the preparation of this history.

Several people provided us with documents and answered questions about their areas of expertise. Jeffrey Gebert (coastal planning), Paul Gaudini (military installation support), and Kathleen "Micky" Mulvenna and Bob Eckhardt (emergency management) were especially instrumental in this regard. Anthony DePasquale, chief of the Operations Division, answered questions about the district's navigation mission, while Brian Heverin provided information about the district's military construction work in the 1980s, and John Tunnell answered additional questions about the district's coastal program. Bill Gretzmacher, director of the Marine Design Center, and Vint Bossert shared their insights about the center, while Dwight Pakan and Brian Mulvenna gave us a better understanding of the district's ecosystem restoration projects. Mark Wheeler shared his knowledge

of Superfund projects and the district's regulatory program, and George Bock helped us understand the district's DuPont Chambers Works project better. We thank all of them for their time and knowledge.

We thank also those who participated in formal oral histories with us about the Philadelphia District. John Bartholomeo, John Burnes, Bob Callegari, Vince Calvarese, Frank Cianfrani, Harry Dutchyshyn, Jeffrey Gebert, Keith Lawrence, Ralph Locurcio, Richard Maraldo, Doug Moore, Al Schoenebeck, and Joe Vilord allowed us to interview them about their experiences. Their insights enabled us to focus on the important issues in the district's history from 1972 to 2008, and we thoroughly enjoyed talking with them.

We wish to express our thanks to the Corps commanders who made this project possible. First and foremost, we thank Maj. Gen. Todd T. Semonite, Commander and Division Engineer of the North Atlantic Division, who was an ardent advocate for the importance of celebrating the Corps' illustrious heritage and history and, through his initiative, made this work possible. We also thank the previous and current district engineers who have overseen the project along the way, including Lt. Col. Gwen E. Baker, Lt. Col. Thomas J. Tickner, and current Philadelphia District Commander Lt. Col. Philip M. Secrist.

In addition, we thank Daniel Lee from the Federal Records Center in Philadelphia for his help in accessing Philadelphia District records held by that facility.

Finally, we owe a particular debt of gratitude to Anthony Bley, Philadelphia District Photographer (from 1971 to 2007), whose impressive body of work was the source for the vast majority of photographs included in this volume. His eye for both artistry and accuracy, both style and substance, was invaluable in providing so many pictures that truly helped tell the Philadelphia District story.



PHILADELPHIA DISTRICT



US Army Corps of Engineers

Introduction

This history covers the operations of both the Philadelphia District and the Marine Design Center (MDC), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, from 1972 to 2008. These were years of transition and change for the Corps as a whole and for the district and MDC in particular. In 1972, dams and other flood control structures were still seen as the most effective solutions to flooding, but by 2008—mainly because of environmental and economic considerations—dams were for the most part no longer viable. By 2008, owing to the influence of a growing environmental movement in the United States, the Corps had added a separate ecosystem restoration component to its traditional civil works missions of navigation, flood control, and military

construction. Also, the misleading term “flood control” had given way to a more realistic emphasis on risk reduction for both floods and coastal storms, the latter of which now account for the lion’s share of the district’s civil works construction program.

During this period, Congress directed the Corps to extend its expertise outside its own boundaries and to provide support to other federal, state, and local agencies. As the Corps adjusted to these new responsibilities, it undertook internal restructuring to make itself more efficient, more responsive, and more cost-effective in its work. This restructuring included the consolidation of some centers of technical expertise directly under Corps Headquarters; thus, the MDC moved in 1979 from its

Facing page: The Philadelphia District’s civil works boundaries, encompassing the Delaware River Basin and the adjacent Atlantic Coastal Plain in New Jersey and Delaware

position under the Philadelphia District to the Water Resources Support Center (although only organizationally; it has remained collocated with the district).¹ Concepts such as project management and regionalization were central to the restructuring, changing the way the Corps did its work; the restructuring caused some instability in individual districts, as some were resized or had certain components removed or added.

All these changes affected the Philadelphia District. Tracing its

origins to 1866, the district was originally drawn to include the entire Delaware River Watershed and the adjacent Atlantic Coastal Plain. Although one of the smaller Corps districts in geographic area, it encompassed more than nine million people living in eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, the Catskills region of New York, and a small corner of Maryland. It had responsibility for 550 miles of federal channels in various waterways and for 150 miles of coastline. It also had jurisdiction over 1.1 million

The Towboat William James, delivered to the Vicksburg District by the Marine Design Center in 2007



acres of wetlands. As of 2008, the Philadelphia District was charged with operating and maintaining five dams, four canals, and five highway bridges, and was the home base for the Hopper Dredge *McFarland*. It conducted military construction and contracting oversight at Dover Air Force Base, Del., and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., and aided the Baltimore District with its work at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. Finally, the district provided engineering and construction services to other federal agencies and state and local governments, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the United States Coast Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the city of Philadelphia.²

Changes in the district's workload occurred gradually between 1972 and 2008. Environmental work evolved over time, originally encompassing regulatory permitting, then adding support to the EPA's Superfund program, and then including an



Beginning in the 1980s, remediation of EPA Superfund sites grew into one of the District's largest programs

ecosystem restoration component in its civil works mission. Likewise, the district's Support for Others program evolved over time to include support for federal and state agencies, as well as nations such as Gabon. The district also saw its emergency operations role expand between 1972 and 2008, reaching the point that the district established a permanent Emergency Management Office to coordinate support for responses to both natural and manmade disasters and for military contingency operations.

Along with these new responsibilities, the district maintained its traditional duties of keeping waterways open for safe navigation,

protecting communities from floods and coastal storms, and building facilities for the Army and Air Force. Navigation work involved dredging, jetty construction, and other operations along the Atlantic coastline and both sides of the Delaware Bay, and in waterways such as the Delaware River and the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. The district's flood and storm damage reduction tasks ranged from operating five

dams in eastern Pennsylvania to constructing multiple beach nourishment systems along the Atlantic Ocean in New Jersey and Delaware. Although the military construction mission had disappeared and reappeared among the district's responsibilities at various times, this mission seemed destined for permanence when Philadelphia was redesignated as a military district in 2009. Finally, one of the bigger changes on paper was the

Delaware River flooding at Trenton, N.J., in 2006



transition of the district's Marine Design Division to the USACE Marine Design Center, although the change was less dramatic in reality: It is still in the same place, doing essentially the same things.

With its host of responsibilities, the district responded well to the changes occurring throughout the Corps, showing remarkable flexibility and ingenuity as its missions were redefined, its responsibilities altered, and its former drastic swings in workload smoothed out. A primary theme running through the district's history between 1972 and 2008 is responsiveness: to change, to the Army, to Congress, and to its customers' needs. The district prides itself on this characteristic, which defines the district in the eyes of those with whom it works.

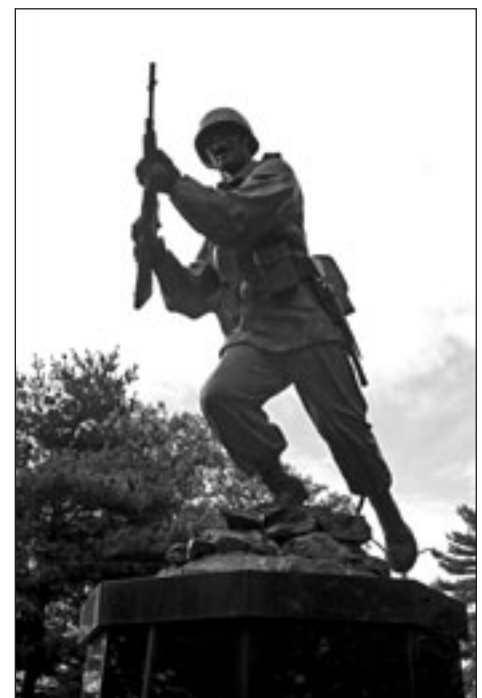
In tracing the theme of responsiveness, this history picks up where the original Philadelphia District history left off. That history—*The District: A History of the Philadelphia District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1866–1971*, by Frank E. Snyder and Brian H. Guss—noted that “the stories of

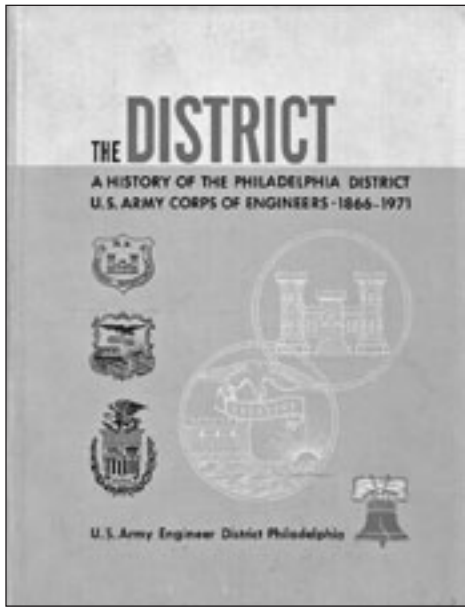


Dover Air Force Base, Del.

the Corps and of the Delaware Valley itself have been freshets feeding the same swift-running stream of American History, sometimes flowing smoothly, sometimes through dangerous rapids.” Snyder and Guss’s work “attempt[ed] to trace that journey” as it applied to the Philadelphia District.³ We have the same goal for this history. The Philadelphia District did not operate in a vacuum between 1972 and 2008; rather, its actions occurred in the context of changes in the United States and in the Corps itself. Sometimes these changes led to difficulties for the district, but Philadelphia always soldiered on, adjusting as best it

Fort Dix, N.J.





The first Philadelphia District history volume

could. The district may not have looked the same in 2008 as it did in 1972, but it still fully embraced the responsiveness, ingenuity, and “plain engineering know-how”

that Snyder and Guss observed as they traced its earlier history.⁴ The continuity of responsiveness and reliability is the overall theme of this work. 🏰

¹ Keith Lawrence telephone interview by Paul Sadin, 9 March 2009, transcript, 8-9; see also 1972–1995 working draft administrative history of the Philadelphia District, compiled by Joe Morgan, 114 [hereafter referred to as Unpublished Morgan Draft District History], copy provided by Ed Voigt, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania [hereafter referred to as Philadelphia District].

² Linda M. Toth, “Philadelphia District, FY 10 Business Opportunities,” Powerpoint presentation available at <[http://www.samephiladelphiapost.org/MonthlyMeetings/2009/Oct2009/USACE.ppt#289,2,PHILADELPHIA DISTRICT](http://www.samephiladelphiapost.org/MonthlyMeetings/2009/Oct2009/USACE.ppt#289,2,PHILADELPHIA%20DISTRICT)> (1 June 2010).

³ Frank H. Snyder and Brian H. Guss, *The District: A History of the Philadelphia District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1866–1971* (Philadelphia: U.S. Army Engineer District Philadelphia, 1974), II.

⁴ Snyder and Guss, *The District*, II.

Historical Time Line 1972–1986



Col. Carroll D. Strider
1971–1973



Col. Clyde A. Selleck
1973–1975



Col. Harry V. Dutchyshyn
1975–1978

1972

- Tropical Storm Agnes drenches the mid-Atlantic, becoming the greatest flooding event known in the Susquehanna River basin.
- A year after completion of Beltzville Lake, site of the second Corps dam within the Lehigh River sub-basin and the district's first "multipurpose" flood control project, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania officially takes over management of recreation with the dedication of Beltzville State Park.
- The Philadelphia District's only federally constructed flood control project in New York, a levee along the East Branch of the Delaware River, is completed in Hancock, N.Y.
- Congress passes the Federal Water Pollution Control Amendments of 1972, later amended as the Clean Water Act of 1977 and further amended in 1987.
- The Environmental Resources Branch is established within the Philadelphia District's Planning Division to better manage the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970.

1973

- The Freighter *Yorkmar* strikes the lift span of the one railroad bridge across the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal, closing the channel for 104 days.

1975

- The Madigan-Praeger Study (analyzing the proposed Tocks Island Dam) is released, with findings supportive of project construction. But later that same year the Delaware River Basin Commission withdraws its support for the project.
- The Philadelphia District completes construction of the U.S. Postal Service Bulk Mail Center in Philadelphia.

1976

- To save a historic structure that would otherwise have disappeared with the filling of Blue Marsh Lake, the Philadelphia District begins the relocation and subsequent restoration of the Gruber Wagon Works, which was turned over to Berks County in 1978 and marked the first such project successfully completed by the Corps.

1977

- The Corps initiates the National Dam Safety Inspection Program.

1978

- The National Parks and Recreation Act designates the Middle Delaware River as a wild and scenic river.
- The Philadelphia District provides dredging and road building expertise to the nations of Qatar and Gabon.

- The Marine Design Division is redesignated the Marine Design Center, a separate “field operating activity” of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- Blue Marsh Lake, the Philadelphia District’s only multipurpose flood control project with recreation managed by Corps Park Rangers, is officially opened northwest of Reading, Pa., serving the Schuylkill River sub-basin.
- The Philadelphia District officially transfers its Tocks Island funds and property to the National Park Service.

1979



Col. James G. Ton
1978–1981

- The Philadelphia District’s real estate function is transferred to the Baltimore District, and the district’s engineering, design, and construction missions for new projects are removed as well.

1980

- The Chesapeake & Delaware Canal is deepened to 35 feet.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency asks the Philadelphia District to manage cleanup of two sites (Bridgeport Rental and Oil Services and Lipari Landfill) under its new Superfund program.

1981



Lt. Col. Roger L. Baldwin
1981–1984

- Rehabilitation of the jetties flanking New Jersey’s Manasquan Inlet involve the first use on the East Coast of interlocking concrete structures called “dolosse” to combat erosion.

1982

- The Marine Design Center delivers a custom-built low-tech dredge to the government of Sudan, assisting the Sudanese in its operation and instructing them on its future use.

1984



Lt. Col. Ralph V. Locurcio
1984–1987

- After a twenty-five-year hiatus, the district resumes MILCON operations by gaining jurisdiction over Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base.

1985

- The never-built Trexler Dam project is officially deauthorized by Congress.
- The remediated Krysowaty Farm site in Somerset County, N.J., becomes the first site delisted from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s National Priorities List, officially closing out the district’s first of many Superfund projects for EPA Region 2.
- Congress passes the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, which establishes nonfederal cost-sharing for all new Corps civil works projects.

1986

Historical Time Line 1988–1996



Lt. Col. George W. Quinby
1987–1990



Lt. Col. Kenneth H. Clow
1990–1992

1988

- The Philadelphia District regains its engineering, construction, and design missions for new projects from the Baltimore District.

1989

- The Philadelphia District hires its first Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management.
- The Marine Design Center is established as an unaffiliated Field Operating Activity of the Corps.
- The Philadelphia District awards a contract for remediation of the Bridgeport Rental and Oil Services site, initiating one of the largest Superfund cleanup efforts to date: removal of 5,000 tons of debris and drums, incineration of 172,000 tons of contaminated sediments, and treatment of 200 million gallons of contaminated water.

1990

- Construction of the Wilmington Harbor South Disposal Area is completed.
- Completion of the Indian River Inlet Sand Bypass Plant begins the continuous pumping of sand from the south side of the inlet to the north side, facilitating the natural northerly transport of sand interrupted by the stabilized inlet. The plant is capable of pumping 100,000 cubic yards of sand annually.

1991

- The Philadelphia District completes construction of a new south jetty at Barnegat Inlet, N.J., to improve navigational safety in one of the most treacherous inlets on the Atlantic Coast.
- Initial beachfill is completed for the district's first long-term shore protection project at Cape May, N.J. Placement of 1,365,000 cubic yards of sand, along with extension of seventeen storm water outfalls, reconstruction of seven groins and construction of two more, is followed by monitoring and renourishment at two-year intervals.
- A Corps reorganization plan proposes to close the Philadelphia District.

1992

- The Philadelphia District ends its longest tenure in one location by moving from the U.S. Customs House at 2nd & Chestnut Streets to the Wanamaker Building on Penn Square, Center City.
- Due to pressure from constituents within the Philadelphia District boundaries, a new Corps reorganization plan proposes to keep the district, but with a significantly reduced mission. Neither this plan nor the one proposed in 1991 ever becomes reality.

- Tocks Island Dam, which would have created the largest Corps lake in the northeast if constructed, is formally deauthorized by Congress.
- Congress authorizes deepening the existing Delaware River Federal Navigation Channel from 40 to 45 feet from Philadelphia, Pa., to the mouth of the Delaware Bay, with appropriate bend widenings, partial deepening of the Marcus Hook anchorage, and relocation and addition of aids to navigation.
- A groundwater treatment plant begins operation at the Lipari Landfill Superfund site, ranked number one on the EPA's National Priorities List. Construction of the plant, which processes contaminated water via extraction and injection wells, followed installation in 1984 of a slurry wall and cap to contain the landfill.

1992 ctd.



Lt. Col. Richard F. Sliwoski
1992–1994

- Initial beachfill is completed for the district's second long-term shore protection project at Ocean City, N.J.

1993



Lt. Col. Robert P. Magnifico
1994–1996

- MILCON at Dix and McGuire is transferred to the New York District, while the same year the Philadelphia District is assigned MILCON duties at Dover Air Force Base.

1994

- Construction begins on a \$40 million flood control project at Molly Ann's Brook, a tributary of the Passaic River running through Paterson, Prospect Park, and Haledon, N.J.
- District personnel deploy to the Caribbean to assist with recovery from the most active hurricane season to date. Efforts include building rehabilitation, debris removal, and technical inspection services.

1995

- The combined Fort Dix/McGuire Air Force Base Tertiary Wastewater Treatment Facility is completed.
- January floods across much of Pennsylvania constitute the worst natural disaster within the district's boundaries since Tropical Storm Agnes in 1972. The District's Emergency Management Office activates its operations center and keeps it staffed 24/7 for fifteen days straight.
- Congress authorizes the Philadelphia District to construct the beach nourishment project at Rehoboth Beach and Dewey Beach, the first such project in the State of Delaware.
- The Philadelphia District recommends that the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal be deepened to 40 feet.

1996

Historical Time Line 1997–2004



Lt. Col. Robert B. Keyser
1996–1998

1997

- Improvements to the north and south jetties at Manasquan Inlet, N.J., include the positioning of approximately forty “core-loc” structures and a refinement of the previously placed dolosse, to better protect the cores of each jetty.
- The Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), for radiological cleanup at old Manhattan Engineer District and Atomic Energy Commission sites from the 1940s, is transferred to the Corps from the Department of Energy. The district is assigned the FUSRAP site at the DuPont Chambers Works complex in Deepwater, N.J.
- Dover Air Force Base’s new state-of-the-art passenger terminal, designed by the district, opens for business.



Lt. Col. Debra M. Lewis
1998–2000

1999

- The new Visiting Officers’ Quarters facility is completed at Dover Air Force Base. The concept design was among twenty-one receiving 1998 Design Excellence Award honors from the Air Mobility Command.
- The Philadelphia District completes its geotechnical investigation of sinking homes in the Feltonville and Wissinoming neighborhoods of Philadelphia. The study identified layers up to 40 feet deep of ash and cinder, mixed with varying amounts of building debris, covering the valley of the former Wingo-hocking Creek.
- One of the district’s largest design-build projects for another federal agency, the National Airport Pavement Test Facility, opens at the Federal Aviation Administration’s research center next to the Atlantic City International Airport. The new machine, designed for year-round 24/7 operation, simulates landing impacts of future passenger aircraft on various runway surfaces.
- The City of Philadelphia contracts to remove 2.5 million cubic yards of dredged material from the district’s Fort Mifflin confined disposal area and reuse it as fill for a new runway at the adjacent Philadelphia International Airport. Under this agreement the city avoids \$7 million in transportation costs and the Corps recovers \$8 million in channel maintenance costs.
- The Philadelphia District develops a single shore protection plan that combines coastal storm damage reduction for Cape May Point, N.J., with aquatic ecosystem restoration for the adjacent Lower Cape May Meadows.

2000

- Pier 34 on Penn’s Landing collapses into the Delaware River. The Philadelphia District responds to a request from the City of Philadelphia for assistance with channel clearing and engineering expertise.
- Fort Dix returns to the district’s military construction jurisdiction.

2001

- The Corps suspends work on the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal deepening.
- Starting the very day of September 11, with one of the Philadelphia District's own survey boats helping shuttle people in and out of Lower Manhattan, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers responds to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.



Lt. Col. Timothy Brown
2000–2002

2002

- Civilian volunteers from throughout the Corps of Engineers, including the Philadelphia District, begin deploying for periods from two months to a year to Afghanistan, Iraq, and other locations in the Middle East in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.
- Remediation is completed at the Tranguch Gasoline site, the district's first Superfund cleanup in support of EPA Region III. The project involved the installation of an underground soil vapor and groundwater extraction and treatment system in a mixed residential and commercial area.



Lt. Col. Thomas C. Chapman
2002–2004

2003

- The Philadelphia District designs an expansion of Arlington National Cemetery.
- Initial construction is completed on the \$23 million Townsends Inlet to Cape May Inlet Shore Protection Project, the district's first with an integrated berm-and-dune system in the original design. Approximately 4.2 million cubic yards of sand are placed on the beaches of Avalon and Stone Harbor, N.J.

2004

- The district evaluates and awards a \$500 million dollar Indefinite Delivery Contract in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.
- The district restores a vertical lift bridge for the Coast Guard at the Philadelphia Naval Business Center.
- Initial beachfill and dune construction is completed on the \$29.1 million Absecon Island Shore Protection Project. Approximately 7.1 million cubic yards of sand are placed on the beaches of Atlantic City and Ventnor to provide coastal storm damage reduction and shoreline protection.
- A new mortuary facility, designated an emergency project based on the 9/11 attacks and the continued threat of major terrorist activity, is completed at Dover Air Force Base. The district selected a design-build approach to complete the \$16.6 million project expediently.
- The Tanker *Athos I* spills approximately 265,000 gallons of crude oil in the Delaware River. The district assists the Coast Guard by conducting surveys of the channel in search of obstructions that may have caused the spill.
- The district completes the Cuddebackville Dam removal project and in 2005 receives a Coastal America Partnership Award for its outstanding efforts.

Historical Time Line 2005–2010



Lt. Col. Robert J. Ruch
2004–2006

2005

- Construction of beachfill-and-dune systems at Rehoboth and Dewey Beaches and at Fenwick Island (followed by Bethany Beach and South Bethany in 2008) lowers the risk of storm damages for Delaware's Atlantic Coast communities.
- The district, in cooperation with the city of Philadelphia and other entities, renovates a mile-long corridor of the Schuylkill River's east bank, creating a linear park for public recreation.



Lt. Col. Gwen E. Baker
2006–2008

2006

- Over the next four years, the district's Contracting Division administers more than \$2 billion in electrical power contracts for the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) and more than forty district civilians voluntarily deploy to Afghanistan, Iraq, and other Persian Gulf nations in support of post-9/11 contingency operations.
- As part of a massive Corps response to the widespread devastation of Hurricane Katrina, the district deploys 146 volunteers to Louisiana, Mississippi, and other support locations for Federal Emergency Management Agency missions ranging from electrical power and logistics to housing, roofing, and debris removal.
- The district works with the Delaware River Basin Commission, Pennsylvania state agencies, and recreational groups to develop the first annual Francis E. Walter Dam Flow Management Plan for recreational water releases.
- June marks the third straight year of widespread flood damage within the Delaware River Basin, from the headwaters in New York's Catskills region to as far down as Trenton. The combined impact of these events leads to increased support for Corps watershed studies in New York, New Jersey, and Delaware.

2007

- July marks completion of a dual-purpose coastal project to restore freshwater habitat at Lower Cape May Meadows and reduce the risk of storm damage at neighboring Cape May Point, N.J. Beachfill construction preceded enhancements to local vegetation and hydrology at this key migratory bird stop-over on the North Atlantic flyway.
- Tasked by the North Atlantic Division to support relocating the Army's C4ISR electronics research and development program to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., under the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Act, in September the district awards the first major design-build contract for what will total nearly a billion dollars in facilities and infrastructure.

2008

- The Corps and the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority sign a Project Partnership Agreement June 23 for the 45-foot, 102-mile Delaware River Main Channel Deepening Project.
- While the Navy pays the district for dredging in the old Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, capacity at Fort Mifflin is restored with the removal of 500,000 cubic yards via both truck and rail (using a newly built transfer facility) to Hazleton, Pa., to fill an abandoned 300-acre mine.
- The district is formally designated the North Atlantic Division Regional Center of Expertise for Bridge Inspection and Evaluation in September, with structural engineers and rope access technicians certified for short-span and high-level complex bridges.



Lt. Col. Thomas J. Tickner
2008–2010

2009

- The district is formally designated the North Atlantic Division Regional Center of Expertise for Groundwater Modeling in March, teaming modelers, hydrogeologists, geologists, chemists, risk assessors, and GIS experts with engineers from the Engineer Research & Development Center and from two other districts.
- In May the district helps dedicate a renovated fish ladder around historic Fairmount Dam, along one of the most photographed stretches of the Schuylkill River. The third fish passage structure built by the district, it is also just the second Corps civil works project built in partnership with the City of Philadelphia.
- After a more than forty-year hiatus, in April the Philadelphia District is officially redesignated as a Military District, to include installation support at Dover Air Force Base, Del., and Tobyhanna Army Depot, Pa., and sole contracting authority for the Overseas Contingency Operations electrical power mission.
- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 includes \$70 million for district projects, including Prompton Dam safety modifications, repairs to the St. Georges and Summit Bridges, and deferred maintenance in four navigation channels, plus another \$60 million for three Superfund sites the district is managing for EPA.
- In its first “Ready Reserve” mission, the Hopper Dredge *McFarland* deploys from 28 December 2009 to 31 March 2010, for emergency dredging in the Southwest Pass of the Mississippi River below New Orleans.



Lt. Col. Philip M. Secrist III
2010–2012

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- Construction begins in March on the Delaware River Main Channel Deepening Project, starting in “Reach C” (between the Delaware Memorial Bridge and just south of Pea Patch Island).
- Two district structures specialists deploy with the Corps’ Urban Search and Rescue Team to assist with recovery immediately after the Haiti earthquake.