

Crosscurrents

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Serving the St. Paul District since 1977



**Feasibility study
finished in
record time
-11**



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District

BUILDING STRONG®

On the Cover



Kurt Heckendorf, engineering, is the chief geo-tech engineer on the Fargo, N.D./ Moorhead, Minn., Metropolitan Area Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study. In this capacity, he is responsible for all geo-tech work from soil testing to seepage and stability analysis.

Photo by Shannon Bauer

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Articles and photography submissions are welcome and must arrive by the 15th day of the publishing month for consideration. Submissions can be mailed or e-mailed.

Submissions should be in Microsoft Word format for all written copy and photos should be no smaller than a 5 x 7 at 300 dpi. All photographs appearing herein are by the St. Paul District Public Affairs Office unless otherwise accredited.

The mission of *Crosscurrents* is to support the commander's internal information program for the St. Paul District and its stakeholders.

Crosscurrents also serves as the commander's primary communication tool for accurately transmitting policies and command philosophy to the St. Paul District community and its customers.

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Next month's *Crosscurrents* issue includes:

Roseau Diversion Channel begins taking shape
Deployed but not forgotten, district employees away for the holidays



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Comments from the top



Col. Michael J. Price
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District Commander

Team MVP,

First, I want to acknowledge the entire team for a great fiscal year! The district obligated nearly \$205 million worth of work, awarded all of our American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, or ARRA, contracts, and exceeded all of our small business goals. We also continued to provide regional support to New Orleans, maintained our 13 locks and dams and the 9-foot navigational channel for 267 miles of the Mississippi River and portions of three of its tributaries, operated our recreation sites, issued thousands of permits, led a federal task force in Devil's Lake, made tremendous headway in preparing the Fargo Moorhead Metropolitan Area Feasibility Study and responded to floods in North Dakota and Minnesota. So again, thanks for all of the hard work from everyone. The Saint Paul District has a great reputation within the Corps and with all of our sponsors.

I spent the last couple of weeks with the Corps' and Mississippi Valley Division leadership. I want to highlight some of their priorities and accomplishments. Last year, the Corps' budget was \$47 billion and our division's was \$5.2 billion. Both were historical amounts.

Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, Corps of Engineers commander, has a list of challenges that he has asked the entire Corps to help him with. Some of them are:

How do we deliver in an era of aging infrastructure, decreasing federal

budgets and lagging technical competence? What is the Corps role in global climate change and increasing demands for water? What are the impacts to the Corps with demographic shifts to urban and coastal areas? How do we reduce the civil works planning process to 18 months? What is the value of the environmental benefits regarding benefits/cost ratio? And finally, how are we going to meet future energy needs?

As we pursue the answers to these questions, the Corps will evolve into the future and some of you will play an important role.

The division continues to lead the Corps in many initiatives. One you should be aware of is regionalization efforts. The other divisions in the Corps are beginning to model themselves after how the division manages regional workload. St. Paul has to do its part. The division has just loaded project manpower needs and made regional commitments for our three-year program. Our culture will evolve into an approach

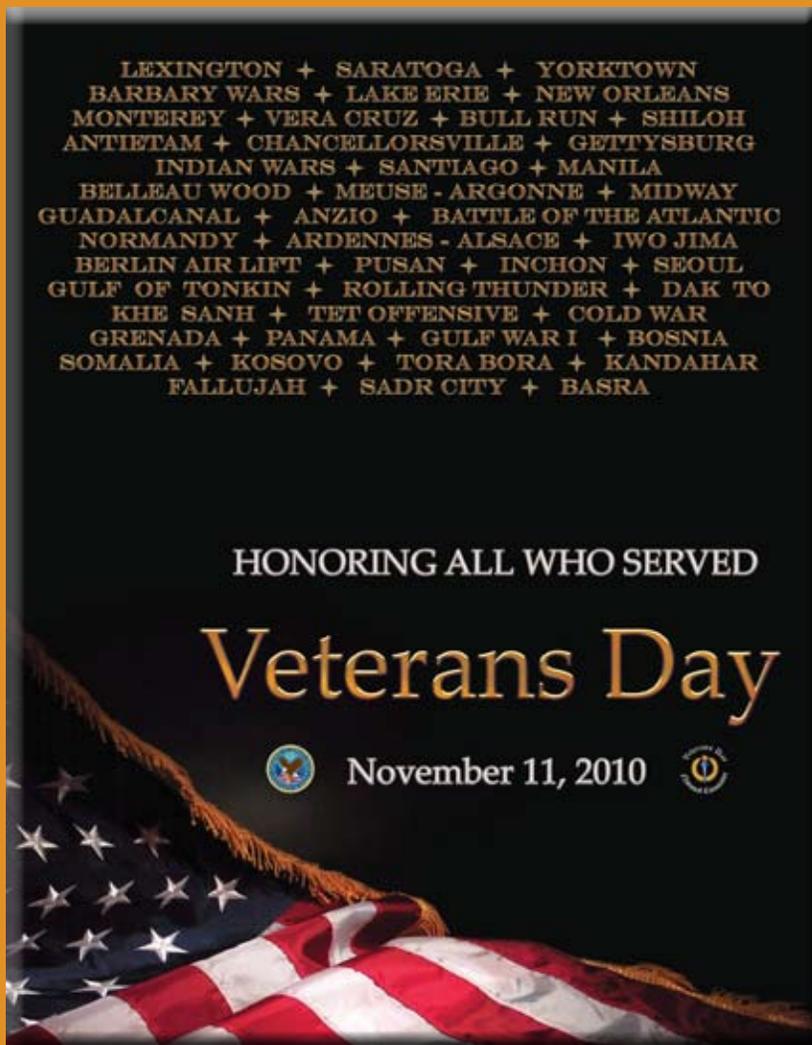
that looks at regional resources for every project and study. This is the future of the Corps, and the division is leading the way.

The division's long-range focus will be to achieve a 200-year vision for the Mississippi River watershed. The 200-year vision addresses national security and comprehensive flood control, environmental sustainability and

recreation, infrastructure and energy, water supply and quality and movement of goods. The vision is not a Corps vision, but it is multi-agency, both public and private.

This month's Army value is Duty. Duty is doing what you obligated yourself to do. The Corps gets criticized for not meeting our schedules and elevating our costs. We missed a number of milestones last year. We all need to do better; it is our duty. During my last 21 years in the Army, one of my observations is the Department of Defense epitomizes duty. The Corps and the St. Paul District are not different.

Let's have a great year and continue to strive for greatness!



Remembering Minnesota veterans

Story by Virginia Regorrah

As Veteran's Day approaches, we typically reflect on the service and sacrifice of our Armed Forces throughout our country's history. For St. Paul District employees who are Minnesota residents, the day should hold special meaning because of our connections to pivotal historic events.

In 1858, Minnesota became the 32nd state in the Union, but it was a Union on the verge of dissolution. We were a nation of separates; separate states and inequalities. Minnesota was the frontier. The Red River Valley would not see its first Indo-European settlement

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for several years.

But when war was declared, it was Minnesota that volunteered the first regiments to defend the Union. The First Minnesota Regiment was raised within days of the declaration of war and traveled east to Washington, D.C., to train. Throughout the four-year war, the unit served with distinction.

Their defining moment came at Gettysburg, Pa., where they found themselves stationed near the middle of the Union Line at Cemetery Ridge. The 1st Minnesota occupied the far left flank of Maj. Gen. Winfield E. Hancock's 2nd Corps, to their left should have been Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Sickles' 3rd Corps. But Sickles had been unhappy with the ground he occupied and ordered his units forward where they were pounded by Confederate guns.

The Confederates surged forward to exploit the error. Immediately, Col. Colvill, 1st Minnesota commander, ordered his regiment into line and they advanced across the battlefield to charge the Confederate lines. The 1st Minnesota suffered 83 percent casualties in the charge. Their flag would fall and be picked up five separate times during the engagement, but the survivors of the unit brought it safely back to Union lines. Their sacrifice bought the Union Army enough time to fill the gap left by the 3rd Corps. The following day, the First Minnesota would help rout Pickett's Charge, capturing the battle flag of the 28th Virginia Infantry Regiment.

The St. Paul District has another direct link to this pivotal battle of American history.

The district's first commander, Brig. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren, was the Army of the Potomac engineer. As he surveyed the battlefield from the bald face of Little Round Top on the Union's left flank, he realized this hill was key to the Union's position. If the Confederates held the hill, they could position artillery on the hill and make the Union positions on Cemetery Ridge untenable.

Realizing the danger, Warren rushed off the hill and directed Col. Strong Vincent's 3rd brigade and an artillery battery to take up positions on Little Round Top before Gen. John Bell Hood's Texans could climb the rock-strewn heights. The defense of the hill was immortalized by Michael Shaara in *The Killer Angels*.

But Minnesota firsts did not end with the Civil War. On the Minnesota capitol grounds, there is a naval gun, which might seem odd until you know the history. On the morning of Dec. 7th, 1941, the destroyer USS Ward was patrolling the waters outside Pearl Harbor when it spotted a submarine attempting to follow the USS

Antares into Pearl Harbor.

The Ward opened fire with its No. 1 and No. 3 guns. The No. 1 gun missed, but the No. 3 gun hit the sub at the junction of the hull and the conning tower. The sub heeled over to starboard and slowly sank beneath the waves. The Ward followed with a depth charge barrage and reported that the sub sank in more than 1,200 feet of water.

The Ward radioed the contact at Pearl Harbor, which would be attacked just over an hour later. For decades, the only evidence of the encounter was the Ward's report; but in 2002, researchers from the University of Hawaii's School of Ocean and Earth Sciences and Technology located the sub in 1,200 feet of water about five miles from the mouth of Pearl Harbor. Their photos of the sub confirm the 4-inch shell pierced the conning tower but failed to explode. The sub showed no evidence of depth charge damage and apparently sank due to flooding from the shell hole.

And the connection to Minnesota?

It was a St. Paul Navy Reserve crew manning the USS Ward's No. 3 gun, firing the first shots of World War II and sinking the midget sub.

And when we remember Minnesota veterans, we must remember Minnesota's famed 34th Infantry Division, the "Red Bulls." The 34th was the first American division sent overseas in World War II and holds the record for the number of days in combat, as they fought through North Africa and Italy. Today's generation of Red Bulls also hold a record for the number of days in combat operations, with the longest deployment overseas to Iraq.

This Veteran's Day, wander the capitol grounds to see the No. 3 gun from the USS Ward, which fired the first shots of World War II. Step into the marble-floored rotunda of the Minnesota Capitol, where you can view the battle-scarred flag of the 1st Minnesota, and reflect on the determination and sacrifice of the Red Bulls, past and present. And remember, here in Minnesota, we have a history of firsts, of sacrifice and service.

"Freedom is never free."

-Author Unknown

Saluting St. Paul District veterans

On Nov. 11, The United States will pay tribute to the men and women of the Armed Forces. Here are a few of the St. Paul District employees that have or continue to serve in the military. Thank You.



**Brian Jorgenson,
Lac qui Parle.**



**Zachary
Santjer,
Lac qui Parle.**



**Bob Ayotte, center, real estate, with
his two sons, Mike and Bill.**



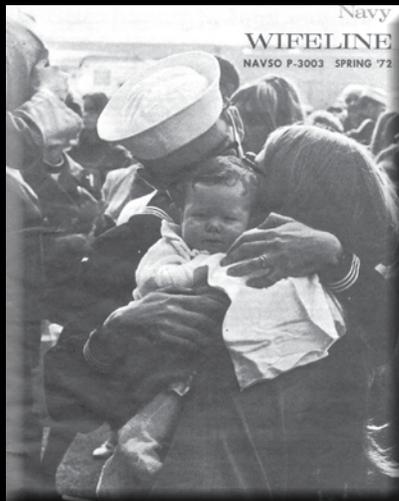
Daniel Boone, Lock & Dam 8.



Larry Hagen, personnel.



Aaron Mikonowicz, engineering.



John Shyne, environmental.



Ken Beck, real estate.



Paul Manders,
Lock and Dam 9.



Michael Evenson, Western Area Office.

“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” -John Fitzgerald Kennedy



JL Summelin, engineering,
Devils Lake, N.D.



Bob Demsey, engineering.



Leon Mucha, operations.



Chris Knotts, regulatory.



Brad Perkl, environmental.



Leonard Lettner, Lock and Dam 6.



Joel Johnston, Lock and Dam 6.



Jane Groth, Lock and Dam 6.

“This nation will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave.”

-Elmer Davis



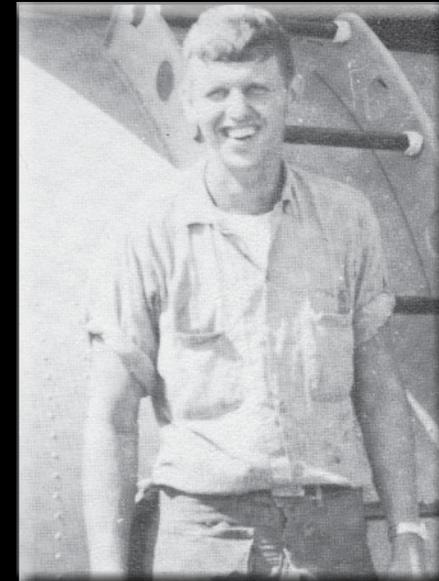
Jon Lyman, visual information.



Russ Arneson, internal review.



Steve Lenhart, Lock and Dam 2.



Steve Muller, Fountain City Service Base.



Tom Lytle, engineering.



Dick Otto, natural resources.



Darrell Morey, engineering.

***“The more we sweat
in peace the less we
bleed in war.”***
-Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit



Rodney R. Peterson, real estate.



Bill Hurley, contracting.



Paul Madison, engineering.



Shannon Matthews, contracting,
receives his Purple Heart from Sen.
James Inhofe (R-OK).



Jamie Borowiak, Lock and Dam 6.

Fargo/Moorhead feasibility study completed in record time

Story by Shannon Bauer

After working almost around the clock for more than a year-and-a-half, the Fargo, N.D./Moorhead, Minn., study team recently completed its first draft feasibility report and environmental impact statement, or EIS, for a \$1.5 billion diversion project in record time.

The team, to date, has included around 30 members of the St. Paul District working on the project full-time, another 140 people from around the Corps working on the project part-time and the engineering staff from the cities of Fargo and Moorhead. Staff from Barr, Houston and Moore engineering firms contributed, too. District project managers Craig Evans and Aaron Snyder have led the team.

The solution the team came up with to better protect the 200,000 or so residents of the Fargo/Moorhead metropolitan area includes building a locally preferred plan of a 35,000-cubic-foot per-second diversion channel. This plan would divert some of the Red River of the North to the west of Fargo, through North Dakota. The Red goes through the center of the downtown corridor, dividing the two cities. It also marks the border between Minnesota and North Dakota.

Unlike most rivers, the Red flows north. As the snow melts in the spring, the runoff makes its way toward Canada only to be joined by more runoff along the way. This, combined with extremely flat land and frozen, nonabsorbent soils, works to create any number of potential flooding problems each spring.

Already, the district has worked with two communities upstream of Fargo, Wahpeton, N.D., and Breckenridge, Minn., and two communities downstream, Grand Forks, N.D., and East Grand Forks, Minn., to build them each a project that includes a diversion



Photo courtesy of Federal Emergency Management Agency

Aerial view of Fargo, N.D., during the 2009 flood.

channel. Further upstream in Canada, Winnipeg has also built a diversion.

Evans said completing a feasibility study for such a large project would usually, at-a-minimum, take five to seven years. The district, however, began the Fargo/Moorhead study in September 2008 and presented a draft report to the public on June 1 of this year – making it one of the fastest feasibility studies ever drafted in the Corps.

Cranking up the heat

“Our pot was on simmer, and then the spring flood of 2009 happened,” said Evans. “Then, they cranked up the heat to a full boil.”

Prior to the record breaking flood of 2009, the district had worked with both cities on and off again. In addition to fighting a number of floods alongside the residents and staff of both, it has worked on a number of small flood control projects there to include the



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Jon Sobiech, left, environmental, talks with a community member during a public meeting. Meetings were held to help inform and educate the public about the district's projects in the Fargo, N.D./Moorhead, Minn. area.

Fargo/Moorhead and Upstream Feasibility Study, which is currently underway, and the Fargo-Ridgewood project, which was recently completed.

After the spring flood of 1997, in which Grand Forks and East Grand Forks flooded and Fargo and Moorhead came vicariously close to flooding, the district completed a reconnaissance study on the Red River of the North river valley and recommended doing a feasibility study for a large flood control project for the two cities.

A reconnaissance study is the first step in the Corps planning process. If it is determined through the reconnaissance

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study that there is a potential for federal interest, the Corps can then begin a more in-depth feasibility study.

At the time, though, said Evans, Fargo did not want to spend the five to seven years it would take to complete a Corps study and proceeded on a different path with a project called the Southside Flood Control Project. Ironically, Fargo was still in the planning phase of this project well into 2009 and only dropped it after committing to working on a project with the Corps during the flood fight of that year.

In 2006, after that particular year's flood fight, Fargo requested the district look into building levees and floodwalls inside the downtown corridor. From 2007 to 2008, the district completed a reconnaissance study specifically for Fargo/Moorhead and was able to convince both cities that a bigger project needed to be looked at to properly guard against the risk of catastrophic flooding.

"We started the feasibility study in the fall of 2008, and they didn't believe we would find anything," said Evans. "They were reluctant to fund a large Corps study only to find out there was nothing in the federal interest."

Further, in April of 2009, when the district came back to the cities to present its initial results, the cost-to-benefit ratio needed to

build a federal project did not look so good. Evans said it appeared levees would come in at just above a 1-1 ratio and a diversion at just about 0.65. A project must be at least a 1-1 ratio to be eligible for federal funding; and the higher the ratio, the more likely the project will be funded.

Nevertheless, the cities were just then involved in the biggest flood fight they had ever faced. With a breaking crest of 40.82 feet in Fargo as compared to the 38 feet crest of 1997, the cities decided to continue with the study. Flood stage for Fargo is 18 feet.

"At that point, it was a fairly easy decision to make," said Snyder. "Then, too, there also came at that time a lot of political pressure to

move things forward as fast as possible.”

It was then, he said, that the district and the two cities committed to such a daunting schedule of completing a feasibility study in time to present it to Congress by December of 2010. To meet this goal, a draft report needed to be complete by May of 2010. Once this goal was set, said Snyder, the team became the driving force to getting it done. “If any one member of the team had dropped the ball,” he said, “we wouldn’t be where we are today.”

In addition to an almost impossible schedule and further complicating matters, the team faced one of the most complex projects the district had ever tackled. First, said Snyder, the hydrologic record showed an increasing trend in flood volumes and frequencies. To address this, the district hosted a panel of scientific experts from across the nation in September of 2009 to look at the hydrology of the Red, and this panel determined there to be both a wet cycle and a dry cycle taking place in this valley. As such, explained Snyder, a new way to analyze the data had to be determined that involved breaking the next 50 years into three periods. One period is the current year, the next period is 25 years out and the third is 50 years out.

Then, too, because the National Economic Development, or NED, plan came out to be a Minnesota diversion channel rather than the locally preferred North Dakota plan; and because the NED plan did not protect to the same level as the locally preferred plan, a third plan, coined the federally comparable plan by the team, had to be developed. As such, figures for three different alternatives – the NED plan, the locally preferred plan and the federally comparable plan – all had to be developed to complete the draft report.

There also had to be an expansive economic analysis. Usually, Snyder explained, the Corps will only work with one set of numbers for any given project; but in this case, because of the extra sets of hydrologic data, there had to be three – one for each of the future periods.

There were, and continues to be, a number of environmental hurdles to deal with, as a North Dakota diversion channel crosses five tributaries of the Red: The Wild Rice, the Sheyenne, the Maple, the Lower Rush and the Rush rivers. A Minnesota diversion would not cross any.

Despite these complications, the team managed to stay on schedule up until the time they released a draft report June 1, 2010. Through this process, they learned that the 2009 flood was only a



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Edith Pang, engineering, greets community members who attended a public meeting in Fargo, N.D.

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50-year flood. A 100-year flood would peak at a crest of 42.4 feet, cause around \$5 billion in damages and result in up to 200 deaths if emergency levees failed unexpectedly. (This estimate does not factor into account freezing cold water that would likely increase the number of deaths.) By the end of the analysis, the cost-to-benefit ratio for all three diversion channels increased to more than a 2-1 ratio.

To stay on schedule, the team did a number of things unusual to the way the Corps routinely completes a feasibility study. These changes included working simultaneously on tasks that would normally be done sequentially, releasing information before it was perfect and being in constant communication with the study partners.

As an example, the Corps usually likes to have all of its data compiled before making a decision to narrow the number of

alternatives. For this study, said Evans, the team was working on the hydrological data at the same time they were completing the alternative screening process. The initial data they based their early decisions on did not include the 2009 flood event. "So we were using models that we knew were not calibrated to that event," he said, "but then we had to do that calibration at the end and rerun our hydrologic and economic models.

"There was a lot of uncertainty. If we had guessed wrong along the way, we could have wasted a lot of time," he said. "As it turned out, we guessed mostly right."

The team also shared a lot of its information with the public much sooner than it normally would have. "Usually, the Corps doesn't publish anything that hasn't been reviewed and approved," said Evans, "but with this study, we were routinely sharing information and telling people it was preliminary.

"It let people get gradually comfortable with where we were going," he explained. "They got used to us telling them it [the data] would change, and I think they understood what we were doing. Ultimately, because of this, I think there has been more buy in."

Snyder agreed, saying he had originally been a proponent for a lot of public involvement during the study, mainly to keep the study on track, but initially was told he had budgeted too much. "We ended up having to do even more public involvement than what was originally in the plan," he said. "The value has been that it gave the public ample time to review and digest the documents." Like Evans, he said he believes being so open has brought buy in and confidence from the public.

"Besides, it's the right thing to do," he added. "The Corps should look at this study as an example of where open and transparent government works."

Throughout the process, the team was in constant communication with its partners, the cities and its vertical team. "With other projects I've worked on, the sponsors just furnished money and didn't work with us shoulder-to-shoulder like we have done here," said Evans.

"Working with them so close has been a good thing, because the sponsors are just as aware of what's happening with the project as we are ourselves," he explained. "One of the best benefits of this relationship has been their ability to keep the pressure on us to meet the schedules. And since it's their own contractors doing a lot of the work, they have been keeping the pressure on them, too."

As for the vertical team at the division and headquarters levels,



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Scott Jutilla, district hydrologist, explains how a diversion channel would work during a public meeting in Moorhead, Minn.

Evans said they have been very involved from the beginning. “We’ve seen that they’re there to help us, and that they want to help us,” said Evans. “Because of the speed with which we’ve been moving, we’ve really needed to do things properly and follow the process, and they’ve been very important in providing guidance and feedback along the way.”

Despite being able to meet the tremendous milestone of producing a draft report and EIS in a year-and-a-half, when asked if it should be done again, both Evans and Snyder said, “No.” “The main reason is that it burns people out,” said Evans. “You can’t expect people to work as much overtime as we’ve been working and stay productive.”

From the beginning of the project to the completion of the draft report, 165 district employees have spent 47,602 hours on this study at a cost of around \$4.7 million. (This number does not include the hours of support staff, such as the attorneys and the public affairs specialists, who do not bill to projects.)

“There were some weekends where the entire Fargo team was in the office,” said Snyder. “This showed their dedication to getting this project done.”

Another reason neither project manager recommends completing a project with such speed is that there are too many possibilities that an unforeseen problem might derail the whole thing. “At any time,” said Evans, “we could have uncovered data that would result in having to go back to the beginning.”

Since releasing the draft report in June, the Corps decided to extend completion of the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study to allow for additional analysis of alternatives and impacts. As downstream impacts of a diversion were greater than first anticipated, the team determined it will need to complete a supplemental draft EIS and anticipates publishing this supplemental draft EIS for public review next spring. Snyder



Photo by Shannon Bauer

Mike Leshner, second from left, engineering, and Elliott Stefanik, district biologist, discuss the study results with community members at a public meeting in Moorhead, Minn.

said the team will continue to work diligently toward publishing a plan that will ultimately result in a permanent flood damage reduction project for Fargo and Moorhead.

He and Evans both credit the entire team for being able to produce a draft report with such speed; however, they want to particularly praise Lance Awsumb, economics; Kurt Heckendorf, geo-tech; Mike Leshner, hydraulics; Molly McKegney, Office of Council; Jon Sobiech, environmental; and Elliott Stefanik, environmental; for going above and beyond.

Unconventional pair leads feasibility study

Story and photo by Shannon Bauer

Craig Evans and Aaron Snyder, co-project managers on the Fargo, N.D./Moorhead, Minn., Metropolitan Area Feasibility Study team, have made an unlikely team.

At 30, Snyder can be described as young, bold and outspoken. Evans, a little bit more seasoned, is also a bit more soft spoken and quite a bit more conservative.

As Judy DesHarnais, deputy district engineer for programs and project management, has noticed, Snyder always orders super spicy food. Evans never gets wilder than ketchup.

Evans has called himself a pessimist and Snyder an optimist.

In other words, Snyder and Evans have made for a comical, albeit successful team.

“Our success together has been that we weren’t fighting for who was going to be in charge,” said Evans. “We have been able to work together as a team and foster that spirit of cooperation with the rest of the team – both within the Corps and with the sponsors.”

He credited the team being able to meet such a tight schedule on the Fargo/Moorhead study, in part, to Snyder being such a strong project manager. “You need somebody who is willing to crack the whip and make things happen, and Aaron [Snyder] has done that,” he said. “None of this [making the first milestone of publishing

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a draft report and
environmental
impact study by

June 2010] would have happened if Aaron [Snyder] hadn’t been in the position he’s in.”

Snyder, not surprisingly, disagreed. He has credited the team’s ability to meet its first major milestone, in part, to Evans. “Without Craig [Evans], it wouldn’t have gotten done,” he said. “Craig [Evans] really focused on all the details and made sure we dotted our ‘i’s and crossed our ‘t’s. He was willing to do the work that wasn’t fun.”

Both, however, will admit that their past participation in the Corps Planning Associates Program and a temporary assignment in Washington, D.C., on the Corps Regional Integration Team were exceptional training and preparation for leading the Fargo/Moorhead team. “The Planning Associates Program helped us to learn the policies and the processes really well, and it helped us network with people throughout the Corps,” explained Snyder. “Working for the RIT at headquarters gave us the knowledge we needed to get things up the vertical team quickly, and it helped us



Aaron Snyder, left, now chief of project management-B, and Craig Evans, now chief of planning, economics and formulation branch, pose for a photo at the Fargo City Hall. They have led the Fargo, N.D./ Moorhead, Minn. Feasibility Study team for the past year and a half.

identify issues they’d be looking for.”

All of this education must have been useful in other ways, too, since both Evans and Snyder have been promoted since beginning their work in the Fargo and Moorhead area – Evans as the chief of the district’s new plan formulation and economics branch and Snyder as the chief of the district’s project management – B branch.

Click on the photo for more information on the Corps Planning Associates Program. You can also view the requirements to apply.

Running marathons teaches engineer focus, motivation

Story by Patrick Moes

A St. Paul District employee completed the Twin Cities Marathon recently and found many similarities between running and his job.

Brian Alberto, hydrology, completed his third marathon in 3 hours, 52 minutes 3 seconds.

“My job and running both require adequate preparation, determination and patience in order to be successful,” said the Eagan, Minn., native. “Both are challenging, yet rewarding.”

As a kid, Alberto said he grew up playing a variety of sports, but started running races as a sophomore at Iowa State University.

He said it was the mental and physical challenges of running marathons that lured him to enter his first marathon in 2007. The Department of the Army intern confronted the challenges head-on by adhering to a training program that consisted of running six days a week for



Photo by Austin Hurt

Brian Alberto, district hydrologist, nears the finish line during the 2010 Twin Cities Marathon. Alberto completed the a 26.2-mile race in 3 hours, 52 minutes, 3 seconds.

three months.

The challenges taught him the value of perseverance, too. “Often times engineering projects have long life spans,” Alberto concluded. “It’s important that I am able to stay focused and motivated through their respective lifetimes in order to ultimately create a quality product. “

Library resources from your desktop

Story by Kevin Bokay

Looking for that rare, obscure journal that interests you and a handful of other like-minded people worldwide? You may be surprised to know you can find professional and academic journals on your desktop through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters’ website.

Since 2006, headquarters has offered more than 5,000 professional journals through a consortium agreement between several districts. Rock Island District spearheaded this initiative and continues to add journals to the website as the consortia listens to the needs of its customers. Most of these journals also provide online access to several years of back issues.

Some of the reference material available includes: online catalogs, electronic journals, databases, regulations and standards,

The online journals’ hyperlink will take you to the most popular electronic journal resources to which the consortium maintains subscriptions. Some of these include:

Environmental Sciences and Pollution Management: Access to international literature in the environmental sciences. Abstracts and citations are drawn from more than 6,000 serials, including journals, proceedings, reports, monographs, books and government publications;

GeoRef: This database provides access to the geosciences literature of the world;

Knovel Research Library: Full-text reference manuals on civil engineering;

National Wetlands Newsletter (1979 – present): Accurate and up-to-date information on wetlands policy; and

Science (1997 – 2010): Leading journals on original scientific research, global news and commentary.

Corps of Engineers online journals and reference resources are easy to find. From the headquarters website, click on the “library program” link under “library.” From that page, click on “services for the corps,” then “online resources.”

Contact Kevin Bokay, district librarian, if you have any questions. He can be reached at kevin.p.bokay@usace.army.mil or (651) 290-5680.

Veterans find contracting answers from a fellow veteran

Story and photo by Patrick Moes

Navigating the government procurement world to bid on jobs can be confusing. Fortunately, veterans have a helping hand in Tom Koopmeiners, the district's small business program director.

The district's small business office provides contracting opportunities to veteran-owned, service-disabled-veteran-owned, small-disadvantaged, woman-owned or HUB Zone small businesses.



Tom Koopmeiners, the St. Paul District small business program director, reviews paperwork at his office. Koopmeiners, an Air Force veteran, works with other veterans and service-disabled veteran businesses to help them navigate the government procurement world.

Retiring from the Air Force in 1986 after 20 years on active duty, Koopmeiners started his civilian career as a financial analyst with the Defense Contract Management Agency. In February of 1998, he began working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a contracting officer, moving to his current position in 2002.

When asked what his proudest moment doing his job was, Koopmeiners, who is also the U.S. Army 2009 Small Business Programs Manager of the Year awardee, said, "meeting with small businesses on an individual basis [and] addressing their specific concerns." He said he also enjoys answering questions about how to improve veterans' business opportunities.

Wally Johnson, Anderson Engineering out of Plymouth, Minn., said Koopmeiners has been a great asset to help him learn what programs are available to him and his company. "He gave advice on what it means to be a disabled vet," he said. "He's been a tremendous resource."

Johnson said that Anderson Engineering had been working primarily in the residential markets before the economic downturn, and the company was looking at new areas to keep its doors open. With the help of Koopmeiners, Anderson Engineering is now successfully navigating the government procurement world. The company has even taken the project a step further by helping mentor other disabled veterans and veterans businesses.

Koopmeiners has mentored many veterans about the opportunities available to contractors that have served in the Armed Forces. The most common program is the Service-Disabled Veteran set-aside program. This program allows the district to authorize certain acquisitions for competition among service-disabled veterans only.

In addition to the set-aside program, veterans can attend training workshops sponsored by the Procurement Technical Assistance Center or PTAC. The centers serve as a local resource that is available at no or nominal cost to businesses that want to market products and services to the government. Koopmeiners said the Minnesota PTAC is one of the best in the nation.

"I work closely with them to provide training seminars and workshops across the state throughout the year," he said. "Similarly, I work with the PTACs in North Dakota and Wisconsin, doing the same thing."

News & Notes

Editor's Note: Send your announcements (births, weddings, graduations, etc.) to: cemvp-pa@usace.army.mil.

Newcomers

Marilyn Caturia, secretary, district office (retired annuitant)

Marc Dettmann, student trainee, district office

Kari Hagenow, student trainee, Green Bay, Wis.

Shahin Khazrajafari, civil engineer, district office

Megan Kranz-McGuire, biologist, district office

Alane Maixner, construction assistant, Grand Forks, N.D.

Leon Opatz, civil engineer, district office

Daniel Sinniger, surveying technician, Fountain City, Wis.

JL Summerlin, construction control representative, Devils Lake, N.D.

Susan Taylor, civil engineer, district office

John Wojciechowski, construction control representative, Devils Lake, N.D.

Taps

Ed Rosco passed away Oct. 16, 2010. Rosco was the district's comptroller in the 1970s. Services were held at St. Pascals Church in St. Paul, Minn.

Wally Voss, 87, passed away on Oct. 4, 2010, in Bedford, Texas. Voss was the lockmaster at Lock and Dam 5A. He retired as the central area lockmaster and was a 1992 inductee to the St. Paul District Hall of Fame. Memorial service was held at Faith Lutheran Church in Winona, Minn.

Union, district sign agreement

The St. Paul District and local union officials signed the new Labor Management Forum Memorandum of Understanding Oct. 13 in the district's executive conference room.

The new MOU, created by President Barack Obama's signature of Executive Order 13522 on Dec. 9, 2009, allows for a nonadversarial forum for managers, employees, and union representatives to discuss operations and labor relations.



Photo by Jon Lyman

Front row from left. George Braunreiter, union president, Col. Michael Price, district commander. Back row from left. Jim Rand, union treasure/secretary, Kevin Baumgard operations division assistant chief, Dave Hill, union vice-president. Not pictured was Linda Krueger, personnel chief.