



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
St. Paul District

# Crosscurrents

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October 2001

## Chief discusses Corps-wide missions at Town Hall; shakes hands throughout district office

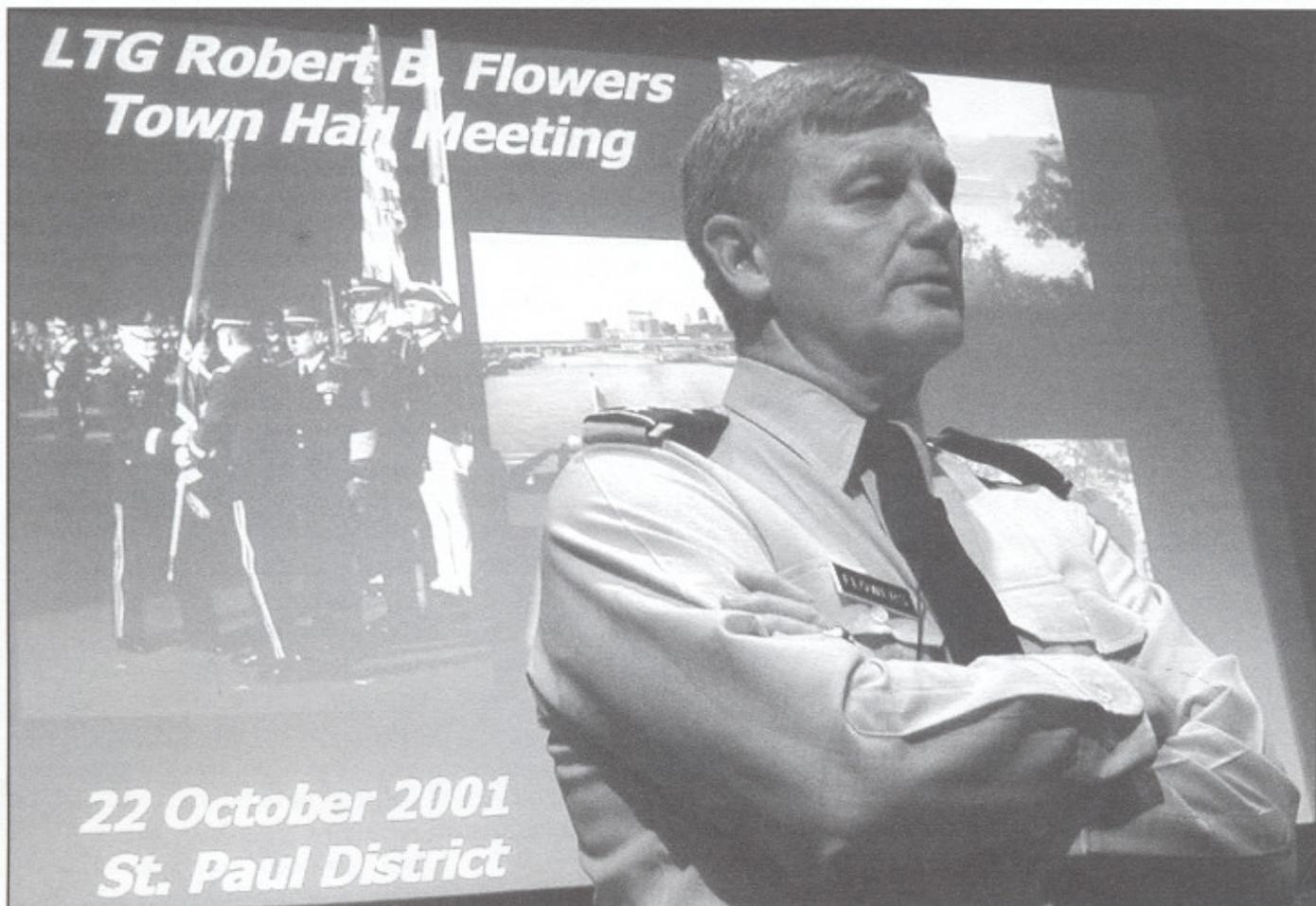


Photo by Peter Versteegen

Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, held a Town Hall Meeting on Oct. 22 in St. Paul. His philosophy was among the subjects he discussed. "Every USACE soldier and civilian has four individual responsibilities: Know your job, be situationally aware, be healthy, and treat every

individual with dignity and respect. Leaders set the example. Think through problems and let me know what you would do if you were the command general. Don't complain. Keep a sense of humor, enjoy your families, and have fun." During his visit, he shook hands throughout the district office. See pages 4-5.

## Prepare for changes in how we do business

By Col. Robert Ball  
St. Paul District Commander

This October, many members of the St. Paul District had the



opportunity to meet with the Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Flowers, during his brief trip to the district. At the

same time, I was in Washington meeting with other senior leaders of the Corps. One of the things that we heard over and over was that we are undergoing a number of changes in how we do business. If you are like me, change is pretty uncomfortable – especially if you are just trying to learn your job. I find that to get through times of change, it helps to break things down to the simplest terms possible and work on them a little bit at a time. The rest of this article will be an outline in simple terms of some of the biggest changes – as I understand them – coming down the pike.

The most encompassing change is something that you have heard about at least since 1998. It has to do with the way we do business and is called the Project Management Business Process or PMBP. You are already familiar with a number of parts of this: everything we do is a project, we assign one person

(project manager) to be the single POC for each project, work is done in teams, etc. In fact, the district in many ways is already using PMBP. But there are still areas where we and the rest of the Corps have not incorporated PMBP and we have been charged to implement it throughout the organization. A new regulation on this subject is being worked at HQUSACE and has been read by every GS-15 and above in the Corps for input. We will be working on complying with this new regulation for the next couple of years, in my estimation.

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**“The way we do business is the PMBP and the way that we manage the change inherent in that business is APIC.”**

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A central part of the PMBP is that we manage projects using a unified data system. There are two programs that will be introduced in the next two years that will enable us to do that. The first is P2 and it will be used for project management in place of a number of different systems used throughout the Corps. It will feed into a huge system called P3e that will take input from diverse systems such as CEFMS, FEMS, etc. and allow us to manage what we do with a clear view of resource implications for the first time. Or at least that's what it is supposed to do. There is a lot of work to be done on these two systems before we will see them, but they are the future and I wanted you to know their names and what they are supposed to do, in general terms. My big prediction on these: remember how much fun CEFMS was?

Whenever an organization goes through a series of changes, it is easy for individuals to feel like they are only a part of a big machine and that they do not matter. The Chief of Engineers is adamant that we not lose sight of the fact that the strength of the Corps is the 35,000 employees who continue to do the nation's engineering. One of the ways to get that message to you and me is a training package called CORPSPATH. Sometime in this fiscal year all of us will undergo training in this and I am told that we will emerge with a better sense of where we fit into what the Corps does and how our fellow Corps employees fit also. The Training Committee is trying to come up with a plan to implement this mandatory training requirement into already busy schedules.

Finally, the Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) has chosen to use the Army Performance Improvement Criteria (APIC) to be the process by which it manages change. The district leadership has been working on trying to implement APIC for about a year and the same is going on with MVD. APIC forces you to look at seven different areas as you do business, with the goal of decisions being made in a manner that is customer-focused and that follows a strategic vision for the future. That vision has been laid out for us by the chief in broad terms and will be refined by working groups into goals and objectives soon. The thing to understand about APIC is that it is a process and that it leads to improvements. The way we do business is the PMBP and the way that we manage the change inherent in that business is APIC.

*Business, cont. on page 8*

# Shafer assists FEMA on Pentagon, NYC recovery

By Mark Davidson  
Chief of Public Affairs

*On Sept. 11, Shelly Shafer of the St. Paul District's Operations Branch was working at HQUSACE, sent there in early September to work in the Corps' Readiness Branch Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the hurricane season. Here's her story in first person.*



St. Paul District photo

## Shelly Shafer

### Chaos in the streets

I was working a normal day at HQUSACE (Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) Readiness Branch when the first tower was hit. I was mobilized with two other Corps' employees to form the Emergency Support Team or EST for FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). We gathered up office supplies, other equipment and laptop computers and headed for FEMA headquarters in downtown Washington, D.C., approximately two miles away.

We were stuck in traffic when we heard radio reports that verified an aircraft had hit the Pentagon. Then we heard an airplane had crashed in Pennsylvania. There were also reports that a car bomb had exploded in front of the State Department Building. You kind of wondered what was going to happen next. It was total chaos on the streets of Washington. Government buildings were being evacuated and thousands of people were all of sudden in the streets trying to get out of town. There were police and other emergency response vehicles all over, and with no place to go.

All of the streets were clogged with vehicles and people. It took approximately two hours to travel the two miles to FEMA Headquarters.

### Concerns at home

My parents, husband and family thought I was in the Pentagon. It took about three hours before I got hold of my husband and told him I was okay because all of the cell phone circuits were tied up. My family went through some unnecessary hell. Thankfully, district employee Roland Hamborg was able to call my cell phone and reached me in the car. Roland mentioned my sister, Jo Jo Anderson, had called concerned for my welfare. Roland called her back and assured her that he talked to me and I was not at the Pentagon and was okay.

### FEMA EOC

I worked until 4:30 p.m. at FEMA on the day of the attack, assisting with coordinating missions with FEMA and USACE. Our initial missions required alerting and/or mobilizing structural safety assessment teams, debris subject-matter experts, and

Emergency Support Function (ESF) 3 public works and engineering team leaders and assistant team leaders to both New York City and the Pentagon.

Our job at the EST was to serve as liaisons between FEMA and USACE. Our primary contacts were with HQUSACE, division offices and the disaster field offices (DFOs).

I came back to work on the first day of the attack, Sep. 11, at 7 p.m. and worked until 8:30 a.m. the next day. This would turn into my normal shift for the rest of time there. I'd arrive before my shift started to get briefed on what happened and receive my shift taskings, and then stay later to brief the next shift. It's just part of what you have to do and typical of any emergency response. The most difficult thing was forcing myself to turn off CNN and try to sleep during the downtime. Like most Americans, I was awestruck by the devastation and found myself spending hours glued to the TV.

I worked until Sep. 20, a total of 10 days at FEMA headquarters. We responded to phone calls from countless people offering equipment, labor and solutions to rescuing the trapped. The number of people offering selflessly to do whatever they could to help was very heartening. I will never forget the numerous strangers, recognizing the Corps Castle and Emergency Operations shirt I was wearing, that approached me just wanting to say thanks and

*Shafer, cont. on page 8*

# Flowers walks the talk from floor to floor, c

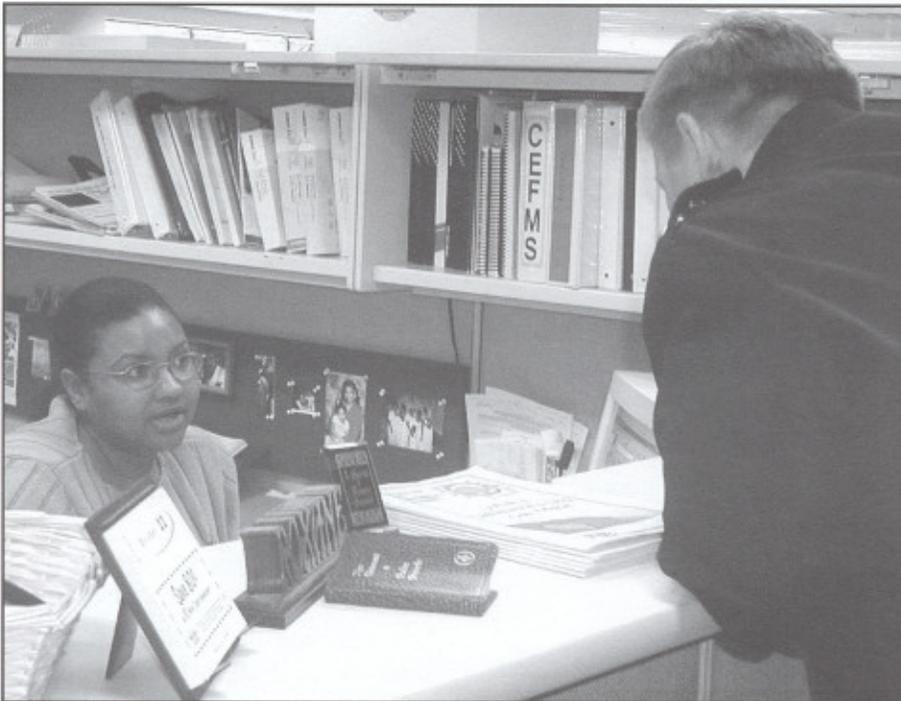


Photo by Mark Davidson

Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers listens to Andrea Childress in Engineering Division (ED). Flowers walked throughout the district office on Oct. 22 before and after his Town Hall Meeting to meet district employees.



At left is Sheila Bloom who accompanied F Project Management Branch, and Richard C Project Management, are to the right of Flow



Photo by Mark Davidson

At right is Bruce Boldon, chief of Construction Branch, part of Construction-Operations Division.



Photo by Jon Lyman

Lorriane Blake (left) works as a secretary in the Information Management Office.

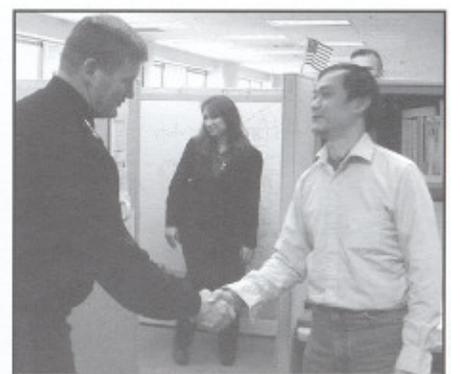
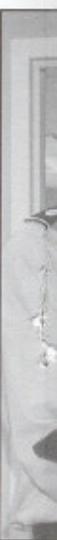


Photo by Jon Lyman

Andy Diep (right), Information Management, works on the servers for the district.



Deputy  
president  
Miss

# office to office, person to person



Photo by Peter Verstegen

Flowers on his tour of the district office. Lisa Hedin, chief of I Chaney, GIS (Geographic Information Systems) coordinator in owers.



Photo by Mark Davidson

At left is Greg Frankosky, who works in Design Branch, which is part of ED. Flower's walk and his "Permission Slip" were designed to teach empowerment. "Ask yourself: Is it good for my customer? Is it legal and ethical? Is it something I am willing to be accountable for? If so, don't ask permission. You already have it. Just do it," he said.

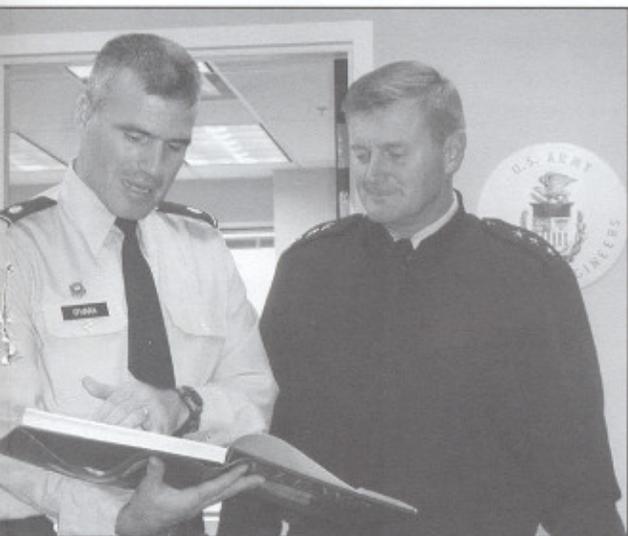


Photo by Peter Verstegen

puty District Engineer Maj. Thomas O'Hara presents Flowers a volume of historic photos of the Mississippi River taken by the Corps' Henry Bosse.

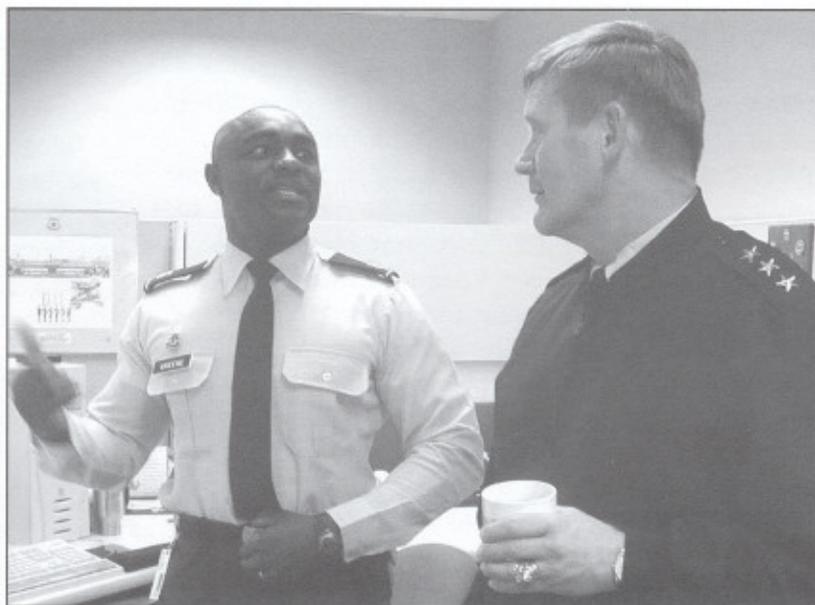


Photo by Mark Davidson

Capt. (P) Will Greene works in Contracting Division.

## MVD commander honors PRT successes



Photos by Peter Versteegen

Brig. Gen. Edwin J. Arnold, Jr., (left) commander of the Mississippi Valley Division, recognized the Project Response Team (PRT) and others at a Town Hall Meeting in St. Paul on Oct. 4. From the left are Marsha Mose, District Commander Col. Robert Ball, and team members: Tim Grundhoffer, Doris Sullivan, Dick Sundberg, Don Speulda and Dave Reynolds. Grundhoffer received recognition for an assignment at an Indian reservation in North Dakota where FEMA was providing replacement housing for people with health-threatening mold from earlier flooding. At bottom center is a sign language interpreter.

By Bonnie Greenleaf  
Mission Manager

The St. Paul District temporary housing team was deployed on August 7 to West Virginia to provide group housing sites for flood victims in the rural, mountainous regions of southern West Virginia. When we arrived, the Huntington Project Response Team (PRT) had done reconnaissance and designed their first housing site, Rainbow Village, consisting of 26 lots for mobile homes. The St. Paul team went on to design five more sites: New Hope Village, Pleasant Meadows Park, Orchard Park, Pineville Terrace, and Walnut Park, totaling 119 units. The quality assurance specialists from St. Paul supported the construction of the first site, along with the other sites as they went to construction. At times it was necessary to oversee a contractor's operation for a 24-hour period.

By Sept. 6, when many of the PRT had left, they had contributed beyond the call of duty and represented the Army Corps of Engineers and the St. Paul District with honor.

Here is a brief summary of the contributions of the members of the team. Unfortunately, there is room to

mention only a fraction of what they did.

**Tim Bertschi** was the action officer. He coordinated with the state and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and was great about getting us the answers we needed in a timely manner. He did it with a sense of humor and brought a practical perspective when things were getting bogged down.

**Doug Crum** was the cost estimator. In addition to negotiating several contracts in short time frames, he prepared specifications, provided backup for modifications, did reconnaissance and surveying.

**Rick Femrite** worked as an environmental engineer. He had the work of at least two people with the design of the sewer and water systems.



**Deb Griffith**

At some of the sites, this included prefabricated sewage treatment plants, pressure-reducing valves for the water supply, and numerous permit applications.

**Deb Griffith** conducted quality assurance at Rainbow Village, before moving on to New Hope

Village. She provided tours of the New Hope Village to



From left are Randy Melby, Jim Sentz, Rick Femrite, Doug Crum, Kari Layman, Shelly Shafer, and Dave Himmerich. Arnold recognized Shafer for her work with FEMA during the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C. (See page 3.) He honored Himmerich for contributions as a subject-matter expert during flooding in Houston, Texas, in July.

visitors and worked long hours on the construction site.

**Kari Layman** worked as a mission specialist. She backfilled behind Jim Sentz by doing briefing documents for the district, EngLink reports and preparing overall project schedules.

**Randy Melby** concentrated on quality assurance. He reported directly to the field his first day and worked through the night shift. He was the primary contact at the first temporary housing site, Rainbow Village, which had residents moving in four weeks after the ground breaking.



**Jason Hauser**

**Jason Hauser** worked in quality assurance. He focused on the debris removal and demolition missions and facilitated office management at the field office in Glade Springs. He worked there from July 24 to August 24. The rest of the time he's a ranger at Leech Lake.

**Dave Reynolds** also worked in quality assurance. He provided digital photos to document the projects and uploaded the files to the district's web site for viewing.

**Jim Sentz** was a mission specialist and action officer. As mission specialist, he did all the upward reporting, prepared project schedules, and made contacts with local officials. He then went to the DFO (Disaster Field Office) to fill in behind Tim Bertschi as action officer. He provided the team with timely responses and kept

us informed of decisions as they were made.

**Don Speulda** also worked in quality assurance. He played a big role in the second site, New Hope Village, which was a 68-unit site on the top of a mountain. He was a catalyst in adapting field changes, keeping us informed of the status of construction, and making a lot of things come together in the field.

**Doris Sullivan** was a site engineer. She designed the site layouts, maximizing the number of units that could fit on a site. The state of West Virginia as well as others praised the layout for New Hope Village, which was the most complex of the designs.

**Dick Sundberg** was a quality assurance supervisor. He arrived in time to assist in the contractor negotiations of the New Hope Village site. He assisted the resident engineer in coordinating the construction at several sites. He was also instrumental in controlling a volatile situation at one the sites, Oceana High School, which was scheduled for demolition.

**Dave Valen** was the electrical engineer. In addition to preparing electrical designs in record time, he prepared and negotiated purchase orders for the electrical work. He made numerous contacts for all of the utilities, including gas, telephone, and some initial contacts for sewer and water. He prepared a purchase order for valve and control changes and telemetry to the existing water tower for the New Hope Village.

# Bits and Pieces



Photo by Mark Davidson

**Kevin Bluhm (left), Project Management, discusses career opportunities at the St. Paul District with two of 46 career counselors who attended a career day and open house. EEO coordinated the event on Oct. 17 to enhance recruiting. The day's activities included a tour of Lock and Dam 2 in Hastings, Minn.**

## Save Dec. 14 for Holiday Awards Ceremony

The St. Paul District Holiday Awards Ceremony will be held Dec. 14, 2001 at the Prom Center in Oakdale, Minn.

"Employees, their families and retirees are invited to attend," said Dave Christenson, chief of Readiness Branch. Christenson and Ralph Augustin from Regulatory Branch are event co-chairmen. The ceremony commemorates the accomplishments of district personnel.

### *Business, cont. from page 2*

There you have it. Even in simple terms, this seems like a pretty big task to me. Fortunately, there are some great folks in the district who know a lot more about each of these programs/processes/systems than I do. They will be working with all of us to get things in place and running smoothly as quickly as possible. In the meantime, what can confused folks like you and me do? Flowers recently gave the new district engineers some good advice on how to survive these changes (perhaps he noticed that the St Paul DE's eyes had glazed over – not asleep, mind you, just confused.) He said that we would all work through this together and that "the Good Lord gives you a day; go out with a smile on your face and a Just Do It card in your pocket, and do your job with confidence." I'm going to take him up on that advice and work all of this one day at a time – having a good time along the way. I invite you to join me on the journey.

### *Shafer, cont. from page 3*

offering assistance. It was probably one of my proudest experiences as a Corps employee.

### **Other thoughts**

*Reality of what happened:*  
When I was working at the FEMA EOC, I was so busy with the tasks at hand that I didn't think of anything else. It took several days for the whole attack to sink in and for me to reflect on what happened.



**US Army Corps of Engineers**

St. Paul District

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