The End of a Very Large Project

The Corps of Engineers has completed its first large-scale nonstructural project, which is located at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. The $4.6 million project was completed in Fiscal Year 1984. To commemorate this event the city of Prairie du Chien held a dedication ceremony on September 22, 1984.

Prairie du Chien is located in southwestern Wisconsin on the Mississippi River. The city has been subjected to many spring floods, the worst being the flood of 1965. The 1965 flood exceeded the 100-year flood, and caused nearly $2.5 million in damages. Portions of the city were also flooded in 1967, 1969, 1971, 1973, and 1975, causing continuing deterioration of flood-susceptible neighborhoods. St. Feriole Island, a part of Prairie du Chien, was subjected to the most serious flooding.

The plan that was implemented for Prairie du Chien had four components: permanent evacuation of 120 residences and two businesses from the 10-year floodplain, continued regulation of the regulatory (1965) floodplain, continued availability of flood insurance, and optional flood proofing assistance for properties remaining in the regulatory floodplain.

Prairie du Chien was the agent for the Corps in acquiring land and assisting property owners, who were to be relocated, to find replacement dwellings and apply for relocation benefits. The purchased structures were relocated or raised depending on the condition and demand.

Groundwater Flooding in Wisconsin

An increase of periodic streamflows on the Trempealeau River, at Arcadia, Wisconsin, has caused groundwaters to rise and result in the flooding of more than 100 basements, mostly residences.

The high groundwater has caused problems for Arcadia to maintain their sanitary and storm sewer system. It has caused seepage into basements and sewers to backflow. The high groundwater, also, weakens the base course of the streets, causing breakup of the surface, and continuous maintenance.

Although this type of flooding is not unique for the St. Paul District, it is a very serious problem. Other communities are experiencing similar problems including the developed areas around Lake Pulaski, Chain-O-Lakes, and Prior Lake, all located in Minnesota. High base streamflows are occurring throughout the Red River of the North and in the Mississippi River basins.

This type of flooding is believed to be caused by the changing of climatic conditions which have produced colder weather and more precipitation than that experienced in the period when the region was developed. Because this type of flooding has been persistent, it is expected that it will continue into the foreseeable future, making the problems at Arcadia and other areas in the district even more significant.
Commander's View
by Col. Ed Rapp
District Engineer

The Corps is built on a tradition of service to the Army, to the Air Force, to the Nation as a whole and its people. It is an important tradition and one of which we all can be proud.

This month, Corps employees have the opportunity to carry on that tradition of service. This time, we have an opportunity to serve our communities and neighborhoods, our neighbors and even our own families. The 1984 Combined Federal Campaign is being conducted during October and will run through November 9. The CFC is the only charity campaign authorized for federal employees and military personnel at their work places. It provides an opportunity for us to make our neighborhoods and communities better places in which to live and work.

I am certain that each and every one of us has been touched by at least one of the charities which can receive donations from the Combined Federal Campaign. Our donations have supported medical research, provided needed assistance to the ill and their families, and have directly helped the young, the elderly, and the troubled. In addition, many of these organizations contribute to the continued wellness of a healthy America.

Many district employees have flood fight experience and have seen federal dollars in action in places like Minot and Grand Forks. But you may not realize that your CFC dollars were there also, providing help and assistance to people hit by natural disaster. Help that was beyond the scope of federal assistance. For example, non-profit agencies provided nearly $500,000 worth of assistance to the people of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks during the 1979 flood. This is just one example of your CFC dollars at work to help the people of this country.

Equally important are the programs and organizations that make for a strong National fiber. My personal experiences with the U.S. Olympic movement and other programs, show that you need not be sick or needy to receive benefits. I'm sure that most everyone in the Nation got a special boost in pride in watching what healthy Americans can achieve.

This year, with new rules opening up the campaign to all tax-exempt agencies and groups, the possibilities for helping yourself and your neighbors through tax exempt contributions are endless.

I urge everybody to contribute now to the organization or organizations of their choice. This is the one and only time of the year when we come around and ask for your financial support. It is a convenient opportunity to serve and to help.

Please join me in supporting the Combined Federal Campaign.

The Scouts Need You!
The St. Paul District is exploring the possibility of sponsoring a Boy Scout explorer post. This would enable Corps people to share the expertise and resources of various fields, such as environmental, computer science, emergency management, archeology, recreation management, and engineering.

What is needed is the leadership of Corps people who are interested in working with young people. Ideas are also needed as to which aspects of the Corps the scouts could be involved in. Many other Corps districts are sponsoring explorer posts and finding it a satisfying experience.

The Viking Council of the Boy Scouts of America, headquartered in Minneapolis, has offered support and assistance to the Corps. Anyone interested in this venture, through leadership and/or suggestions as to how the Corps and the scouts could interrelate, may contact Dave Parsons at 725-7603.

Crosscurrents is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-81. It is published monthly by offset for the St. Paul District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Corps of Engineers or the Department of the Army. Deadline for submitting articles is the 15th of the month preceding publication.


District Engineer . . . . . . . Col. Edward Rapp
Chief, Public Affairs . . . . Kennon Gardner
Editor . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Pamela McFaden

Heiberg 46th Chief

Lieutenant General E.R. (Vald) Heiberg III became the 46th Chief of Engineers, of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on September 14, 1984. The change of command ceremony was held at Fort Lesley J. McNair in Washington, D.C.

Weight Control Class

A weight reduction program will be held on October 23, at 4:00 p.m., in Rooms 1219 and 1220. This eight week program will cost $45.00 per person. The two hour long sessions will be taught by the St. Paul-Ramsey County Nutrition Program. The Feds for Fitness invite anyone interested to attend this program. For further information, contact Ann Marie Wright at extension 7514.
The Basins of Wisconsin

Approximately three-fourths of Wisconsin is in the St. Paul District. The entire state, however, is in the regulatory program of the district. (See Regulating Wisconsin article.) There are three major river basins located in the district, the Upper Mississippi, Chippewa-Black, and Wisconsin rivers.

The St. Croix River, a part of the Mississippi basin, begins 25-miles south of Lake Superior and travels 40-miles through Wisconsin. For the next 135-miles the St. Croix forms the Minnesota and Wisconsin boundaries until it joins the Mississippi at Prescott, Wisconsin.

A navigation project, on the St. Croix, was completed by the Corps to provide a nine-foot channel from Stillwater Minnesota to Prescott Wisconsin.

The increase in recreational use, along the Mississippi, has created a demand for public recreational facilities. To keep up with this demand the Corps constructed a number of day-use areas along the river. The majority of these facilities have been leased or licensed for special purposes to individuals or groups, except for two day-use areas, Bad Ax Landing in Pool 9 and Jay’s Lake in Pool 10.

Also along the Mississippi, the Corps operates and maintains Blackhawk Park Recreation Area, located near DeSoto, Wisconsin. Blackhawk has an excellent access to the main channel of the river. The Corps spent $325,000 in upgrading the facilities and $150,000 for a channelization project to enhance the fishing habitat of the river.

A major need along the Mississippi is to reduce the damages caused from floods. The Prairie du Chien Flood Control Project is an excellent example of this. The Corps assisted people living in floodplain areas, by relocating them to different locations or raising the buildings. (See the Prairie du Chien article.)

A major water resource problem at State Road and Ebner Coulee, tributary valleys to the Mississippi, are progressing to an increase in flood damage potential, because of additional residential developments in the downstream floodplain.

However, the Phase I report recommended design and construction of approximately 2.5 miles of concrete lined open channel for State Road Coulee. The report recommended not to proceed with the Ebner Coulee portion because of the lack of economic feasibility, and it was deleted from further study. (See the State Road article.)

The Chippewa River basin starts from a large number of lakes and swamps in north-central Wisconsin. It flows southwesterly and joins the Mississippi at Pool 4. The Chippewa deposits a large amount of sediment into the Mississippi channel, causing it to need frequent dredging. A dredging project was started in May, near Reads Landing, Minnesota to keep the sediment from collecting from the Chippewa. (See Reads Landing article.)

On the Eau Galle River, a tributary to the Chippewa, the Corps constructed a dam and reservoir for flood control measures. It is the only finished project the Corps has completed in Wisconsin. (See the Eau Galle Dam article.)

The Black River starts at Black Lakes in west-central Wisconsin and flows about 183-miles southwest to the Mississippi a few miles above La Crosse, Wisconsin. The Corps constructed a nine-foot channel to extend from the mouth of the Black River to 1.4 miles upstream at La Crosse.

The Wisconsin River basin starts in northern Wisconsin, from a network of lakes and swamps, and flows southerly until it enters the Mississippi at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. Along the river at Portage, Wisconsin a feasibility study for flood control was completed, recommending a local protection levee and floodwall be built, 0.2-mile of road be raised, road ramps be put in, interior drainage facilities, one (continued on page 8)
It's Been Tough Getting Started!

The Kickapoo River Valley, is mainly an agricultural area and is subject to destructive flooding every year. These floods are typically of short duration and the waters rise rapidly and quite often, to cause two or more floods a season.

The La Farge Flood Control Project would provide flood control, with the construction of a 100-foot high earth dam, and impoundment upstream from La Farge, levees and supplemental protection downstream at Soldiers Grove and Gays Mills, and improvement of the downstream channel at selected points.

The project has had many obstacles to overcome since it was authorized in 1962. In 1975, Governor Lucey requested that construction be terminated, because of environmental concerns. Early in 1977, a study considering the environmental, social and economic advantages and disadvantages was completed. However, later in 1977 the project was further delayed because it did not meet President Carter’s criteria for funding of water resource projects.

After a severe flood in July 1978, the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation requested a study for a specific non-structural alternative for flood control, and in March, 1979, a Federal-State Task Force completed a report which presented non-structural solutions.

Currently, the La Farge project is at a standstill. The St. Paul District, however, is managing the lands and maintaining the outlet works, service building and appurtenant road work at the dam site. No completion date has been scheduled. The project is currently under study in compliance with the House of Representatives, which provides for a study of the engineering, economic, and environmental feasibility of completing a dry dam at La Farge.

Gays Mills & Viola, Wisconsin

Local flood protection studies are being developed for Gays Mills and Viola, Wisconsin. These preliminary studies will determine the potential for developing economically feasible, environmentally acceptable flood damage reduction measures.

Gays Mills and Viola are both located in the Kickapoo River Valley in southwestern Wisconsin. These villages have suffered periodic flooding and have been affected by the fate of the La Farge project, which is now at a standstill. (See La Farge article.) The proposed La Farge dam would provide Viola with a high level of flood protection. Gays Mills would receive partial protection, because it is located a distance downstream from the proposed dam. The La Farge project also included a system of levees, ponds and a pumping station for Gays Mills, providing it with additional flood protection. Without the proposed dam or levees Viola and Gays Mills have a serious flood problem that needs a solution.

The initial appraisal study at Viola is being done under the Section 205 authority at the request of the city. The appraisal briefly examines the feasibility of both a levee and relocation plans. If the appraisal contains a positive recommendation, additional economic, environmental and engineering studies will be needed before a project could be constructed.

The flood control study at Gays Mills is being done using funds provided by Congress to review the proposed dam alternatives. The appraisal will concentrate on updating information in the March 1975 Design Memorandum for Gays Mills. The plan includes levees, storm water ponds, and a pumping station. If the study is positive, Congress would have to take additional action to provide for construction funds.

Golf League Ends 1984 Season

The fourth successful season of the able being the gorilla drive of 300 St. Paul District Golf League, ended yards plus, by Steve Larson, and Joel with a scatterball tournament at Highland Park. The finals were capped with bragwurst, prizes and trophies.

The first place team included Martin McLeery, Cliff Schlueter, Joel Face who shot five-feet from the pin on the 236 yard par 3 hole.

If you have an interest in participating in the league next season, please contact one of the 1985 committee members for information, they are Dave Haumersen, coordinator, Wayne Koerner and Dave Tschida.

Preparation for the 1985 season will begin with a league meeting in February were also awarded ... the most not- ary, 1985.
Activity at La Farge

Despite the appearance of an inactive project on the surface, the La Farge Project Lands and Facilities have seen plenty of activity in the past year. A wide variety of events have been coordinated through the Mississippi River Project Office in La Crescent, Minnesota.

In early spring of 1984, the La Crescent office was contacted by a number of agencies and groups wishing to use federal lands and facilities during the upcoming summer.

The first of three projects initiated by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, on Corps lands at La Farge, took place in the fall of 1983. It involved seed collection and the introduction of the Northern Monkshood seedlings as part of an experiment to determine survivability of greenhouse germinated plants in wild habitats. The Monkshood is a federally threatened species.

On June 23, 1984 the Wisconsin DNR in conjunction with the Blackhawk Retriever Club of La Crosse, Wisconsin, sponsored a Retriever Training Seminar utilizing the pothole and prairie mixed terrain in the valley north of the Corps maintenance building. Their seminar consisted of allowing young and inexperienced dogs to work with pheasants and non-wild ducks, and was available to anyone wishing to attend.

The third project coordinated with the Wisconsin DNR was the first year of a five-year pheasant stocking program on Corps property. Wildlife officials with the DNR identified the La Farge project land perfect for this type of program because of its excellent natural habitat, the beneficial effects of the ag lease program, and the availability of the lands for public hunting.

Also, in late fall 1983, the Kickapoo Valley Association began planning and coordinating necessary construction for establishing a cross-country ski trail on Corps property. Necessary brush removal and marking were accomplished and the trail opened to public use for the 83-84 winter ski season.

A week-end camp program was held by the Gateway Area Council Boy Scouts of America, in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on May 18-20, 1984. Seventy-five boy scouts and 30 adult leaders camped on Corps property. Their pro-

State Road and Ebner Coulees

State Road and Ebner Coulees are tributary valleys adjacent to the Mississippi River on the south-end of La Crosse, Wisconsin. The continuing development of residential homes in the downstream floodplains of the valleys is increasing the potential for flood damages.

The flood control project is designed to reduce urban flood losses, minimize safety hazards associated with rapid runoff and minimal warning times, and minimize adverse effects on the environment and on known archaeological sites.

The Phase I Report, completed in September 1981, recommended construction of approximately 25 miles of concrete-lined open channel for State Road Coulee, but the report recommended not to proceed with Ebner Coulee, because it lacked economic feasibility and was deleted from further study.

The plan of improvements for local flood protection primarily involves channel deepening and enlarging of Pammel Creek, which conveys stormwater runoff from the State Road Coulee drainage area. Principal features of the project include approximately 13,000 linear feet of concrete-lined rectangular channel, a stilling basin, three new street bridges, a new railroad bridge, and a terminus structure (similar to a sedimentation pond).

La Crosse has entered into a Section 215, an advance construction agreement, with the Corps. This gives the city $1 million of credit against future cost sharing requirements for construction work on the lower portion of State Road. Work is expected to begin in the spring of 1985.

HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

November 5-6-7

Room 1033 Time 9:00-3:00

Sponsored by Employees Benefit Fund (continued on page 8)
Eau Galle Recreation Area

If you need a place to get away and you want it to be peaceful, quiet and serene, then visit the Eau Galle Recreation Area. This area provides the camper or picnicker with all the joys of being back to nature.

It takes only an hour to get to Spring Valley, Wisconsin, where the Eau Galle Recreation Area is located, from St. Paul. Once you have arrived you will be greeted by a variety of settings, from rolling hills to grasslands...from fields to deep woods.

Each of the campsites are surrounded by a protection of trees and brush to offer the camper with privacy and serenity. Campers who have tents may enjoy camping away from the road, a short trail leading to secluded campsites located on the hillside, is provided.

The nature trails will not only provide exercise, but will give you the true feeling of the outdoors. You will travel down hill through the woods, over a creek...by using stepping stones, and follow the creek to open fields. During your hike, remember to be quiet so that you may be able to watch for deer, birds, squirrels and other animals that may be roaming the woods. The avid bird watcher, will enjoy these trails, because the woods and grasslands are filled with a variety of birds.

The fishing conditions are excellent. The reservoir is calm and still, to give anyone a chance at catching a large mouth bass or a stringer full of sunnies. At Lousy Creek, you may want to try your luck at trout fishing. Even if you don't catch any fish, the bubbling of the creek is sure to relax you.

For those that do not care to camp, there are two day-use areas located near the dam. The day-use areas are open from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily. The day-use areas provide, picnic shelters with electricity, a playground that is well equipped for children, and a swimming beach. While visiting for a day the overlook will provide for a breathtaking view.

Not only is there fishing, there is a nice sandy beach for all ages to enjoy. You can lay in the sun for a beautiful tan or go for a swim in the calm water.

Corps Recreation Areas Attract Over-Flow Crowds

For many families, Labor Day weekend was the last chance to spend some time with Mother Nature. However, Mother Nature wasn’t very cooperative. Cool temperatures, rain and generally poor fishing was reported across most of Minnesota, Wisconsin and North Dakota.

Despite the less-than-ideal conditions, thousands of families took advantage of the long weekend to visit Corps of Engineers recreation areas in the three states. Park rangers reported heavy overnight camping and day-use at most of the nine recreation areas.

In the Mississippi River headwaters area, campgrounds filled early with Pokegama, Gull Lake and Pine River campgrounds filled by Friday, August 31, before the long weekend officially began. Campgrounds at Winnibigoshish and Leech Lake were filled by Saturday, the first day of the holiday. Only Big Sandy was able to offer camping space to latecomers throughout the weekend.

More than 10,000 people used the camping and day-use facilities at the six Corps recreation areas at Eau Galle Lake and Blackhawk Park on the Mississippi River. Park rangers estimated that nearly 8,000 people visited Blackhawk from Friday, when the weekend crowds started arriving to Monday evening. Eau Galle’s attendance totaled an estimated 2,600 visitors for the four days.

At Lake Ashtabula, more than 7,200 people used Corps camping and day-use facilities from Friday to Monday.

Fountain City Service Base

The Fountain City Service Base, located in Fountain City, Wisconsin, was established in 1908, by the Rock Island District. It was transferred to the St. Paul District in 1919.

The service base assists floating plants and lock and dam structures on the Mississippi River. This facility provides mooring for dredges, a warehouse for storage, basic shop facilities and the distribution of supplies.

The Fountain City shop and yard provides maintenance support for 13 lock and dam structures, 12 reservoirs and three major dredging units.

Currently all shops and yard structures are being fully utilized.
The People Behind the Corps

Vernon Gunderson, captain of the Dredge Thompson, is a very quiet man. But when things need to be done, he’s the one making sure they do. Vern has been employed on the Thompson for 31 years.

Vern recalls, “The most exciting time on the river, was the time we were working on the Ohio River, 1956. . . . It was in the middle of the night. . . . a tow hit the stern of the dredge. It broke apart the pontoons and put a hole in the hull. Fortunately the hole wasn’t too serious.”

“The scope of dredging has changed,” says Vern. “There is more work and more equipment to haul. And because there are more environmental laws to follow, a job takes longer to finish.”

“I really enjoy working on the river, and after 31 years I have never had the same thing happen twice,” says Vern.

Tom Novak

Photo by Pam McFadden

“Many people think a park manager spends a lot of time outdoors, but most of my time is spent in the office doing paperwork and making sure that things get accomplished,” says Tom Novak, park manager for the Eau Galle Recreation Area, near Spring Valley, Wisconsin.

Tom worked at Lake Ashtabula and Crosslake before coming to manage the Eau Galle Recreation Area, in 1980. “This facility is what I would say offers the camper with all the joys of the outdoors,” says Tom. “There are so many birds, that even I have decided to learn about the different species. I also enjoy the fishing we have here, but usually I will throw them back, to catch some other day.”

“I would like to thank the people who have worked so hard for me and made the recreation area a better place for people to visit. Dan Jopp, ranger and Barb LaPierre, Co-Op, who laid out and constructed the Lousy Creek Trail. Lloyd Mathiesen, maintenance worker, and Joe Schladweiler and Doug Blegen, laborers who have done a majority of the work,” expressed Tom.

Regulating Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, the jurisdictional boundaries of regulatory functions is quite different from those for civil works. The boundaries include the entire states of Wisconsin and Minnesota, but none of Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota. This was caused by a realignment that took place several years ago, in which the district gained many miles of Lake Michigan shoreline.

Through the development of general permits, regional conditions and restricted State 401 Certification, a regionally-tailored regulatory program is implemented. There are many sensitive areas that must be protected, in Wisconsin, they include the national natural landmarks, state scientific areas, primary environmental corridors, state and federal wild and scenic rivers, and first class trout streams and lakes.

Also during the realignment, the district gained three field personnel. Recently, two of the surveillance and environmental people have been moved to a better geographic location to meet the workload and public demand. This is, also expected to enhance coordination with counties and other agencies.

Don Olson is now sharing an office with the Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission in Green Bay. Dale Pfeiffer has moved to Wauskesha and shares an office with the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Gary Knapp will remain in the Kaukauna, Fox River, office.
Combined Federal Campaign Begins Oct. 1

The 1984 Combined Federal Campaign officially began in the Twin Cities area on October 1. District office employees should receive CFC materials and information by October 15.

While most federal employees and military personnel are familiar with the Combined Federal Campaign, there are several significant changes this year which will make the 1984 campaign different from past campaigns. For employees who have favorite charities, and especially charities outside of the metropolitan area, the new rules will make the CFC more responsive to their giving needs.

In the past, CFC distributors could designate an agency or several agencies to receive their donations. Federal employees also had the option to make undesignated donations which would be distributed by the CFC committee to most of the agencies participating according to a set formula.

However, new regulations from the Office of Personnel Management have opened up the 1984 campaign to all agencies, groups or other charities which have a tax-exempt status recognized by the Internal Revenue service under 26 U.S.C. 501 (c)(3). This change will allow federal employees to designate their CFC contributions to any charity in the U.S. having the required IRS tax-exempt status.

Since all tax-exempt charities are technically participating, the CFC Committee in the Twin Cities has decided not to publish an “official” list of CFC agencies. However, the committee has issued a list of the more than 200 agencies and groups which participated in the Twin Cities campaign last year. This listing will be available to assist federal employees in designating their contributions.

Undesignated contributions will be turned over to the United Way for distribution to their member agencies in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

(Wisconsin Basins — con’t from pg. 3)

railroad stop log closure and recreation features be added. The levee and floodwall would be developed to a 500-year level of flood protection. This would reduce the average annual flood damages in Portage by $913,000. The total project cost is estimated at $7,938,000.

The Corps presently is involved in several flood insurance studies under the floodplain management program. Water supply and water conservation, and value of wetland studies are being done.

The Corps will concentrate on “old business” to finish the studies and initiate construction on flood protection projects at State Road Coulee and along the Kickapoo River where ever feasible. The district will, also, insure that information is available on Corps programs and the status of and impact of non-engineered emergency levees.

An emergency action plan, under the Flood Emergency Program was completed for Spring Valley Dam in September 1983. This action plan includes emergency notification procedures, a list of conditions leading to emergencies and ways of dealing with them, and dam failure inundation maps. Flood fight exercises are planned to be held this spring in Wisconsin. “The St. Paul District expects to participate in flood fight exercises in Wisconsin to train district personnel and to get to know the county emergency flood fight personnel that will also be participating,” says Dave Christenson, emergency management branch.