

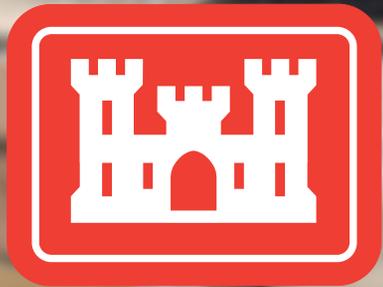
# Crosscurrents

Serving the St. Paul District since 1977

Fall 2020 | Vol. 46, No. 3

**VALUE** *people,*  
**VALUE** *added*

- Construction reaches  
new heights on Red River  
of the North  
Pages 5-6



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers** ®

St. Paul District



**(Cover)** Virginia Regorrah, western area office engineer, observes the first placement of concrete at the Fargo Moorhead Metropolitan Area flood risk management construction project near Horace, North Dakota, July 27.



USACE photo by Patrick Moes

*Crosscurrents* is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1. It is published quarterly for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Articles and photography submissions are welcome. Submissions may be mailed or emailed. Submissions should be in Microsoft Word format. Photos should be at least 5 in. x 7 in. at 300 dpi.

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.

District Commander	Col. Karl Jansen
Public Affairs Chief	Shannon Bauer
<i>Crosscurrents</i> editor	Melanie Peterson
Contributing authors	George Stringham
	Patrick Moes
	Nayelli Guerrero
	Megan Booth

Address all inquiries to:  
Editor, *Crosscurrents*  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
180 Fifth Street East, Suite 700  
St. Paul, MN 55101-1678  
(651) 290-5679 | [cemvp-pa@usace.army.mil](mailto:cemvp-pa@usace.army.mil)

## Contents

Comments From The Top: A message from Col. Karl Jansen	3
Construction reaches new heights on Red River of the North project	5
Banitt selected for prestigious headquarters award	7
Deputy commander selected by division for U.S. Army award	8
Tapp nominated by division for outstanding civilian of the year	9
Corps completes dredging for \$20 million habitat improvement project	10
Comparing natural and man-made islands on the Mississippi River	11
Public involvement continues virtually during pandemic	12
New regulatory tool delivers consistency for stakeholders	13
Corps tracks seedling growth to understand floodplain forests	14
Regulatory becomes its own division	15
St. Paul District welcomes new chief of construction	16
Urich leads recreation and natural resources branch	17
Employees of the Month: The MVPs of MVP	18
News and Notes	19



Catch up on all of the past  
***Crosscurrents* issues online at:**

<https://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Media/Crosscurrents/>



Instagram



Flickr



YouTube



Twitter



Facebook



LinkedIn

## Comments From The Top: A message from Col. Karl Jansen

MVP Teammates,

This issue of *Crosscurrents* coincides with Labor Day and the unofficial end of summer. Our district continued delivering a diverse program during a very busy field season, while coping with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and coming to terms with intense social activism driven by racial disparity.

In late May, we launched our version of the Army's 101 Days of Summer Safety Campaign with the theme "Anchored in Safety, Grounded in Life." This theme reinforces the notion that a culture of safety supports all we do. It also promotes individual wellness and resilience to thrive despite many of life's stressors. I'm very proud of our people staying safe and injury-free during many ongoing field activities.

This summer, I focused my attention and travel towards our people serving in the field supporting our navigation program,

recreation and natural resources program and ongoing major construction.

Visits included most of our reservoirs and recreation sites with overnights at three of our campgrounds; the crew of the Dredge Goetz operating in Pool 4 and in Rock Island District's Pool 15; and our maintenance and repair crewmembers supporting the McGregor Lake restoration project with dredged sand, assisting Rock Island District with major maintenance on the Illinois Waterway and addressing dredging priorities on the Mississippi River. I also visited the staff from most of our locks and dams and experienced how our channel survey crews support safe river navigation. Lastly, during multiple trips to Fargo, North Dakota, I observed tremendous delivery and momentum with the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Flood Risk Management Project there and progress at the Diversion Inlet

and the Wild Rice River structures. The Western Area Office in Fargo is growing exponentially to support the magnitude of ongoing and upcoming site work.

During these visits, I was struck by the diversity of skillsets, high level of motivation and connection to a shared purpose of public service exemplified by our teammates. Our fellow citizens should be rightfully proud of our dedicated and talented team. Our field personnel have conducted their vital mission, while staying protected from the ongoing threat of the COVID-19 virus. To do so, leaders have developed and implemented innovative risk-reduction strategies and our teammates have demonstrated outstanding discipline in following a variety of protocols. As a result, we have prevented an outbreak at our sites and have experienced minimal mission degradation. The district office remains at Health Protection Condition



(HPCON) Delta, meaning the use of maximum telework for office staff. Adjusting to a virtual environment required new approaches for team collaboration and communication; however, our project delivery teams have stayed the course with

**Continued on Page 4**

## Comments From The Top: A message from Col. Karl Jansen

### *Continued from Page 3*

accomplishing several dozen delivery milestones in this fourth quarter of the fiscal year.

We will continue taking a deliberate, measured approach for downgrading our HPCONs and safely welcoming people back to the office based on the uncertainty of the pandemic. As an unusual school year begins, use of flexible work schedules will continue to assist with work-life balance challenges.

In the grand scheme, the COVID-19 pandemic will prove short-lived. In contrast, a societal problem that has plagued America for centuries continues to be systemic racism. The killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and the social activism that ensued over the summer has once again laid bare racial inequality and injustices. Undoubtedly, our country is a tale of two Americas. While I

approach this topic from a position of white privilege and can never fully understand how it feels to live in the other America, the pain caused by racial barriers and discriminatory policies is obvious. Many of our teammates in the St. Paul District personally experience this pain, and together we can do something about it.

The Army recognizes that racial disparity is a national issue that impacts all facets of American life. To ensure equitable treatment for every service member and a more inclusive environment, the Army recently launched "Project Inclusion." This project is the Army's holistic effort to enact initiatives that promote diversity, equity and inclusion, beginning with listening to Army Soldiers, civilians and families and giving a voice to our teammates to identify barriers and bias and mitigate them.

In the St. Paul District, we are reinvigorating our Special Emphasis Program and increasing our diver-

sity, outreach and inclusion efforts. Several areas that we will consider in the coming months to make a bigger impact include amplifying the important conversations we have had about racism, training, investing in employee communication and taking an inclusive approach for developing and following through with diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

In the interim, I challenge all our teammates to confront the reality of our two Americas and acknowledge that we all have implicit bias. Simply recognizing this fact and making a personal commitment to think and act differently is a good first step to move our district and society to a better place.

Thanks for all you do!



*Col. Karl Jansen, St. Paul District commander, tours the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area flood risk management construction project near Horace, North Dakota, June 11.*

## Construction reaches new heights on Red River of the North project

Story by Patrick Moes

Construction is literally reaching new heights this summer on the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan area flood risk management project.

After more than 10 years of planning, investigations and design by a regional team, St. Paul District is making historic strides in reducing future flood risk for the more than 230,000 people

that live within the Fargo, North Dakota / Moorhead, Minnesota metro area, said Terry Williams, St. Paul District program manager and North Dakota native. The construction efforts are starting to be noticeable, she added.

The construction includes work on the diversion inlet, near Horace, North Dakota, and the Wild Rice River structure, near

St. Benedict, North Dakota. The diversion inlet structure construction had been suspended for legal reasons, but Williams said it has since ramped up and reached another major milestone the first placement of concrete at the site. "It's a huge day for our project, our design team and our sponsors," she said. "It signifies years of hard work by a lot of people to get here, and I am excited to see the structure come out of the ground."

The concrete work is expected to last into 2021 and will serve as the foundation for three 50-foot wide control gates that will be used to manage the amount of water that is diverted into the diversion channel and around the metro area. They anticipate needing 11,700 cubic yards of concrete for the inlet project, said Williams.

As the diversion inlet construction makes noticeable strides, the Wild Rice River structure is also making progress. Williams said the Corps and their contractor, Ames Construction, are taking lessons learned from constructing the diversion inlet and incorporat-



A crew of workers place the first loads of concrete at the diversion inlet site near Horace, North Dakota, July 27. USACE Photo by Patrick Moes



Jake Fall, concrete materials engineer, reviews site conditions prior to concrete placement near Horace, North Dakota, July 27. USACE photo by Patrick Moes

ing them into the Wild Rice structure. The contractor has excavated approximately 100,000 of the

**Story continued on Page 6**

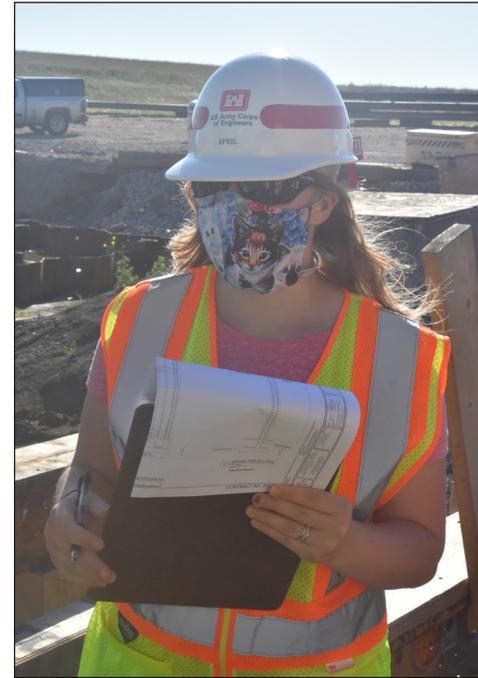
## Story continued from Page 5

required 800,000 cubic yards of soil in preparation for the foundation and concrete work. Williams said she estimates that both the diversion inlet and wild rice projects will be finished in 2023. The Corps is also preparing to award three additional construction

projects in 2021 – construction of the first segment of dam embankment, the Interstate Highway 29 road raise and the Drain 27 wetland restoration project.

While the Corps continues its efforts to design and construct the southern embankment or dam features of the project, they are also working with its partner, the FM Diversion Authority, on finalizing their P3 procurement for the design, build, finance, operation and maintenance of the 30-mile long diversion channel. This public-private-partnership delivery method allows a contractor to help fund and build the diversion channel faster than traditional construction methods. “The Corps and the Diversion Authority are working collectively to implement this \$2.75 billion project,” Williams said. “This approach helps the community receive benefits from the project faster and at a lower cost.”

Williams said the goal is to have the entire project completed in 2027. Once complete, she said the project will not only protect the people within the metropolitan area but also the economic center of the region and the state of North Dakota. “We talk about this being a regional project and important to the economy, but when you drill down to what it means



*April McCann, construction control representative, reviews site conditions prior to concrete placement near Horace, North Dakota, July 27. USACE photo by Patrick Moes*

to a family in the area,” she said, “It means that they will be able to go about their normal lives in the spring, their city will not have to shut down to flood fight.”

Duane Perkins, St. Paul District lead structural engineer for the project and Breckenridge, Minnesota, native, said he understands what it’s like to deal with flooding. His family home was flooded

by the Red River of the North in 1997. “The fear starts somewhere in December or January, when you start seeing heavy snowfalls,” he said. “People start getting worried about how the spring is going to look, whether or not there will be a flood.” He added that the project, once complete, will eliminate a lot of those concerns. “Not having to buy flood insurance, not having to volunteer to fill sandbags for weeks on end, and no longer worrying about the city flooding and people potentially losing their jobs,” he said. “That’s a whole other level of stress that hopefully will be taken care of with this project.”



*Click on the photo to watch a video on the first concrete placement at the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area flood risk management construction project or visit [https://youtu.be/6u0O3\\_mjz8U](https://youtu.be/6u0O3_mjz8U)*



*Ed Frey, transportation technician, tours the Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area flood risk management construction project near Horace, North Dakota, June 11. USACE photo by Patrick Moes*

## Banitt selected for prestigious headquarters award

Story by Nayelli Guerrero

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters in Washington, D.C., recently selected senior hydraulic engineer Ann Banitt as the recipient of its Hydrology, Hydraulics and Coastal Community of Practice Professional of the Year Award. The award was virtually presented June 24.

This award recognizes the water resource engineering contributions and leadership of members of the Corps hydrology, hydraulics and coastal community of practice. Banitt received the award for her work coordinating, supporting and leading multiple complex studies, including hydrologic modeling work on the Columbia River and studies in support of the Corps' Louisville, Memphis and New Orleans districts. Additionally, she provides technical hydrology and climate change reviews for Corps offices across the country and provides leadership and collaboration as the Mississippi Valley Division hydrologic modeling, statistics and risk regional technical specialist.

"Receiving this award is an amazing honor, and I am very grateful," Banitt said. "I am thankful for the



*Ann Banitt, senior hydraulic engineer. USACE courtesy photo*

great opportunities we have to work on challenging projects in our district, and for the flexibility to take on assignments with regional and national teams.

"I think the networking part of my job is so important because it broadens our vision on what is happening outside our office and gives the opportunity to identify

where collaboration can happen to provide the best and most responsible solutions. There is a special energy that comes from learning and sharing our engineering experiences, and I am happy to be part of that.

"We work a very valuable resource, water! Water is a necessity of life, and yet water poses great challenges if we have too much of it, or too little of it. Each water resources project comes with its own unique challenges and that keeps me wanting to learn more and stretch the application of models and analysis strategies."

Mike Knoff, hydraulics and hydrology branch chief, said, "There's no one I've worked with in my career that is more deserving of this recognition than Ann. She not only excels as a technical expert in the field of hydrology, but she has demonstrated leadership and a true passion to advance the profession both inside and outside of the Corps. She truly embodies what the Corps leadership had in mind when they established this award."

Banitt is a registered professional engineer. She has been with the Corps since 1991 and is a member of numerous teams focused on hydrology, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers National Committee on Hydrologic Engineering. Banitt also serves as the director of education for the Minneapolis-St. Paul Post of the Society of Military Engineers and is a member of the planning committee for the Annual Minnesota Water Resources Conference and the Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership Conference.

## Deputy commander selected by division for U.S. Army award

Story by *Nayelli Guerrero*

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division, recently selected Lt. Col. Patrick Sullivan, St. Paul District deputy commander, as the division's nominee for the national John W. Macy, Jr. Award.

This award recognizes demonstrated leadership of Army civilians by an Army military or civilian supervisor. Sullivan was nominated for his work improving prop-

erty accountability, increasing training completion rates, spearheading diversity and outreach efforts, upgrading technology and equipment and building relationships with local military units.

"Lt. Col. Sullivan is a highly regarded leader of character who is committed to providing outstanding service to the region and the nation," said Col. Karl Jansen, St. Paul District commander and Sullivan's supervisor. "He is the first to volunteer for difficult assignments and exemplifies a boots-on-the-ground approach, most recently assisting with the construction of alternate medical care facilities in Minnesota and Wisconsin in response to the COVID-19 pandemic."

Lt. Col. Patrick Sullivan said, "It is an honor to be recognized for leadership in an organization with truly outstanding leaders throughout the entire organization. The people of St. Paul District have been amazing to work alongside for the past two years and it is incredible to see what we all have been able to accomplish together."

Sullivan is a licensed professional engineer and a certified project

management professional who has been with the St. Paul District since 2018. His role with the Corps involves overseeing the support functions of the district. Prior to this assignment, he served as the brigade engineer and the brigade detachment commander in the 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division and as the executive officer of the 40th Brigade

Engineer Battalion. He is a graduate of Stanford University and the United States Military Academy at West Point. He has deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq and Jordan.



*Lt. Col. Patrick Sullivan, St. Paul District deputy commander. USACE photo by Patrick Moes*



*Lt. Col. Sullivan and his wife, Eleanor, exchange smiles at his promotion ceremony Jan. 6. USACE photo by Emily Chavolla*

## Tapp nominated by division for outstanding civilian of the year

Story by Nayelli Guerrero

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division, recently selected St. Paul District Channels and Harbors Section Supervisor, Steve Tapp as the division's nominee for the national Outstanding Civilian of the Year Award.

The award recognizes a civilian's contributions and support to the Corps of Engineers, including civil works, humanitarian and com-

munity achievements. Tapp was nominated for his work with the Corps' navigation and resource agency partners and the inland dredging community maintaining the Upper Mississippi River's 9-foot navigation channel.

"I cannot think of anyone more deserving than Steve to be our nominee for the Corps' Civilian of the Year," said Tamara Cameron, St. Paul District operations division chief. "Steve's 35 years of service have contributed immeasurably to our navigation and environmental stewardship missions. His technical expertise and interpersonal communication skills have made him a well respected leader both within our organization and with our agency partners."

Tapp said, "I live in a small town and since the local papers printed the story, I haven't been able to go anywhere without someone congratulating me. I was very surprised and honored to learn about the nomination and to represent the St. Paul District. I work with a great team and couldn't do it alone. I'd like to say thanks for the support I've received from everyone."



Steve Tapp, channels and harbors section supervisor, talks to a member of the public at the Pool 5 dredged material management plan public meeting in Winona, Minnesota, Sept. 26. USACE photo by Patrick Moes



Steve Tapp, channels and harbors section supervisor. USACE photo by Emily Chavolla

Tapp has worked for the Corps since 1985. He is the co-chair of the River Resource Forum and a member of the Mississippi Valley Division Regional Shallow Draft Dredging Team. As a member of these teams, Tapp works to balance navigation needs to maintain the navigation channel with the Corps' environmental commitments.

## Corps completes dredging for \$20 million habitat improvement project

Story by Nayelli Guerrero

Recreational boaters may have noticed recent dredging activity in the McMillan Island area, just north of Guttenberg, Iowa. The McGregor Lake Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project, or HREP, located in Pool 10 of the Upper Mississippi River, recently completed its dredging phase.

The 580-acre McGregor Lake HREP includes the mid-river McGregor Lake and adjacent island and slough habitat between the

main channel and east channel. The HREP will enhance fish and wildlife habitat using 70,000 cubic yards of dredged material.

“This project will improve habitat diversity by reducing shoreline erosion, sedimentation and wind-driven wave action,” said Zach Kimmel, project manager.

The dredged material wasn’t always intended for McGregor Lake. When the district navigation branch experienced a shortage

of dredged material placement site capacity, the Corps combined its Upper Mississippi River Restoration, UMRR, authority and 9-Foot navigation channel authority to place dredged material at McGregor Lake. This cost-saving solution not only provided critical placement site capacity for dredged material, it also elevated approximately 12 acres of floodplain forest and saved the UMRR program almost \$1 million dollars.

The Corps’ maintenance and repair section from Fountain City, Wisconsin began dredging March 26, and finished July 2. Using district vessels, including the Dredge Wade and Motor Vessels Lyon, Wells and McNamara, the crew dredged the Mississippi River main channel near McMillan Island and transported the dredged material to the McGregor Lake HREP site. At McGregor Lake, the crew transferred the sand from material barges, which transited as far as 14 miles from the project site, to the upper end of McGregor Lake.

before the end of the fiscal year. Project construction is scheduled to be completed within five years.

The \$20 million HREP program is funded through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers UMMR program. It was planned and designed cooperatively with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Iowa and Wisconsin departments of natural resources and local interests.



Scott Rolbiecki, operations, removes sand from the tracks of an excavator before dredged material placement at McGregor Lake.  
USACE photo by Nayelli Guerrero



Click on the photo to watch a video on the McGregor HREP dredging on our YouTube channel or visit <https://youtu.be/74780xH-HXhw>.

The McGregor Lake HREP bid opened August 11, and the Corps expects to award a contract

## Comparing natural and man-made islands on the Mississippi River

Story by *Melanie Peterson*

Environmental scientists Aaron McFarlane and Eric Hanson, recently surveyed natural islands in Pool 5, near Fountain City, Wisconsin, and Pool 10, near Guttenberg, Iowa, and man-made islands in Pool 8, near La Crosse, Wisconsin, and Pool 9, near Eastman, Wisconsin, along the Upper Mississippi River.

The man-made islands in pools 8 and 9 were created by the Corps from dredged material. The Corps has several programs for environmental restoration that partner with other federal, state and local partners. One example is the Upper Mississippi River Restoration program, which has constructed restoration projects and conducted long-term monitoring from St. Paul, Minnesota to St. Louis, Missouri, since 1986.

The islands are meant to serve multiple purposes, such as breaking up wind on large expanses of water, providing sheltered areas for vegetation to grow and creating fish and wildlife habitat, McFarlane said.

Over the course of two weeks, the team, including environmen-

tal section interns, looked at 45 plots, each 1/100 of an acre. The surveys included identifying each tree and documenting ground cover plants and their density.

Soil sampling consisted of an on-site field description of what the soils looked like. Soil samples were taken and sent to the Engineer and Research Development Center Wetlands and



*Aaron McFarlane, biologist, takes a soil sample at a constructed island in Pool 8, near LaCrosse, Wisconsin, July 22. USACE photo by Melanie Peterson*

Coastal Ecology lab in Vicksburg, Mississippi to determine physical characteristics and soil chemistry. Small cores were also sent to the ERDC Environmental Microbiology lab to be analyzed for DNA and analyzed to find out what the microbiome of the soil looks like.

"We take all that soil data, plus the data of trees and plants, and we see if we can correlate how that works together and what direction we would want to go to change the characteristics to make the constructed islands closer to naturally occurring islands," McFarlane said.

Restoration projects are often trying to replace lost, eroded land, he added. "The soils in those lost lands took thousands of years to develop. Plants, animals, microbial communities and hydrologic processes all had a part in making the soils that we now see as high-quality floodplain habitat. We're trying to rebuild these places in just a few years," he said.

"By taking a closer look at the differences between the natural islands and the constructed islands, we hope to generate ideas



*Eric Hanson, ecologist, takes a soil sample at a constructed island in Pool 8, near LaCrosse, Wisconsin, July 22. USACE photo by Melanie Peterson*

for improving our already-successful restoration projects," he added. "I'm hopeful this study and follow-up studies can show us ways to make our new construction projects act more like these older lands and support high-value ecological communities like floodplain forests."

## Public involvement continues virtually during pandemic

Story by Melanie Peterson

The COVID-19 pandemic changed many of the ways we accomplish our mission, but it didn't change the need for public involvement, which meant teams had to develop creative ways to engage the public in a virtual environment.

When COVID-19 hit, Leslie Day, regulatory mitigation coordinator, knew what it would take to ensure the public was engaged.

"An all-day workshop with mitigation bankers and consultants transitioned into virtual one-hour sessions," explained Day. "After the first session we sent out a survey to get feedback on how it could be improved." The first session was called "Ask the Agencies" and discussed agency initiatives and then opened it up to related questions.

The team for the Upper Pool 4 - Lake Pepin Study involved the public by creating a YouTube video narrating a presentation that was in lieu of a public meeting during the public review period since an in-person meeting was not possible due to pandemic restrictions. The presentation included how to submit questions

and comments, covered similar topics covered at a public meeting and included a frequently asked questions section at the end.

"It does not replace the interactive nature of an in-person public meeting, but considering the circumstances, we think it was a good alternative to offer," said Angela Deen, project manager. "Not only did it cover the slides that we would have presented at an in-person public meeting, but we also included a 'Q&A session' at the end that included common questions as well as potential questions on the project to help simulate what may have been discussed at an in-person public meeting." Deen said the presentation was well-received by agency partner, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Sam Smith, project manager, and Tammy Frauenshuh, Sandy Lake park ranger, participated in a YouTube video about the Sandy Lake Dam rehabilitation project. The original plan was to hold a public meeting during the 30-day review period of the draft Environmental Assessment. Smith said, "Once we identified that a public meet-

ing would not be feasible, we came up with the idea to develop a ten-minute informational video in lieu of the public meeting. We knew a video would be necessary based on previous high level of public interest surrounding the project; over 100 people attended a public informational meeting in November 2019."

Smith said, "The goal was to maintain an open channel of communication, keep the public

informed and ensure a successful review of the draft Environmental Assessment. We feel that we accomplished those goals with the video. Creating this video required about the same time and energy as what would normally be required to prepare for a public meeting. Just like a public meeting, we had to develop our talking points and practice the delivery. It took multiple takes to

**Story continued on Page 13**



YouTube thumbnail from the Sandy Lake Dam Rehabilitation project video. USACE courtesy graphic. Click on a photo to watch the video on our YouTube channel or visit <https://youtu.be/p121MAONYDo>.

*Story continued from Page 12*

get the delivery of our message just rights.” Frauenshuh said, “This video provided a really unique opportunity that isn’t normally afforded in a public meeting - a site tour. I was able to shoot on-site and showcase different features and perspectives of the dam and recreation site. This gave an opportunity to better explain the work that will be accomplished by showcasing the dam and give folks interested in the project a real sense of place.

In addition, a video allows people to access the information at anytime, anywhere. In my opinion, this was an advantage over a public meeting in that interested parties did not have to attend with a set time and at a set location. There are certainly pros and cons to the video, but I think it was a great alternative given the circumstances.”

Smith said, “Informational videos are a viable alternative to public meetings and will likely be utilized more frequently in today’s world.”

## New regulatory tool delivers consistency for stakeholders

*Story by Melanie Peterson*

The St. Paul District, in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency and state agencies, released a stream quantification tool to the public in Minnesota earlier this year.

April Marcangeli, regulatory project manager and stream product delivery team lead, said, “The stream quantification tool is a science-based tool that is used to calculate the improvement of function in a stream after a restoration project or the loss of function in a stream after a construction project.”

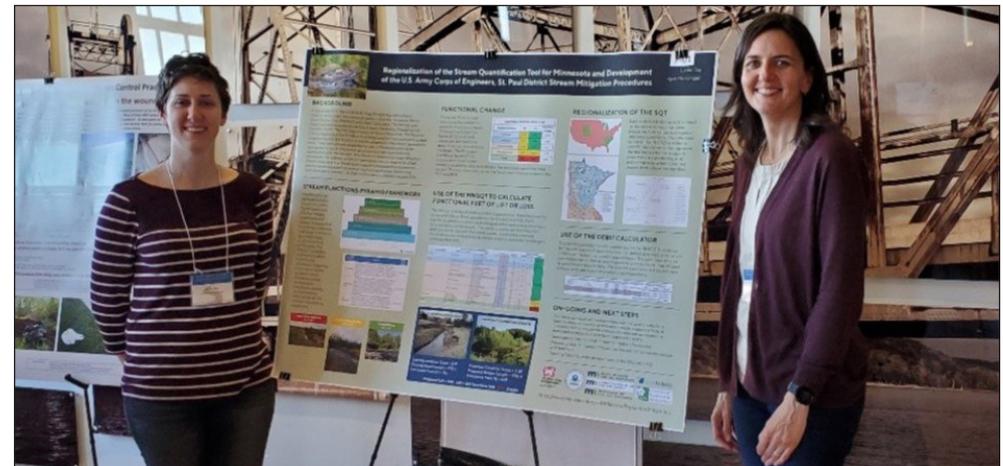
Leslie Day, regulatory mitigation coordinator, said, “The stream quantification tool helps stakeholders because it provides a consistent, transparent and predictable way to calculate the loss or gain in stream function. If you want to do a restoration site and increase the stream function to get stream mitigation credits, there’s a well-defined way to know how many stream mitigation credits you could get.”

The stream quantification tool is a

tool funded by the Environmental Protection Agency Region 5, out of Chicago, that is currently being used in Minnesota. “We are still waiting on confirmation of funding for the tool to be regionalized in Wisconsin,” said Marcangeli. The district’s regulatory boundaries are different from its civil works boundaries and include the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The development of the tool for Minnesota involved two committees, a steering committee and a

technical committee. Day said the steering committee was a decision-making body with members from the Corps, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and consultants from Stream Mechanics and Ecosystem Planning and System Restoration. Day said the technical committee developed the science-based aspects of the tool and came up with recommendations for the steering committee.



*April Marcangeli, project manager, and Leslie Day, mitigation coordinator, present the stream quantification tool at the 2020 stream symposium in Stillwater, Minnesota, Feb. 23. USACE courtesy photo*

## Corps tracks seedling growth to understand floodplain forests

Story by *Nayelli Guerrero*

In late June, the La Crescent, Minnesota, environmental section measured the growth of tree seedlings at Kain's Switch South near New Albin, Iowa. Approximately 600 seedlings were planted in late May, part of a research project conducted by the University of Minnesota through a Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit agreement with the Corps'

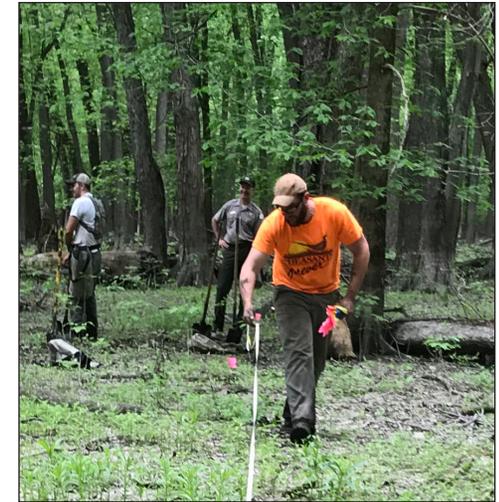
recreation and natural resource branch, environmental section. The project aims to improve understanding of floodplain forest processes, restoration and management.

"Through this study, we hope to better understand the factors limiting viable floodplain forest regeneration and develop target

tree seedling guidelines to improve our effectiveness in restoring forests. Forests can be degraded by a range of health threats, including invasive species, emerald ash borer and Dutch elm disease," said Andy Meier, Corps forester.

The project consists of nine separate planting blocks, with 64 seedlings to a block totaling 576 trees, under intermediate canopy density. The nine blocks are split across three flooding gradients: an area of high inundation with 30-40 days flooded during the growing season; an area of intermediate inundation with 10-30 flooding days; and an area of low inundation with 1-10 flooding days.

Over the next few years, the Corps will monitor seedling mortality and growth rates across four tree species: swamp white oak, silver maple, American sycamore and common hackberry. Staff will measure and record each seedling's height and root collar diameter while checking for leaf dieback and deer browse. If the seedlings survive, they should establish quickly. The intermediate light conditions in



*La Crescent, Minnesota, environmental section staff oversee the layout of a grid to evenly space trees, near New Albin, Iowa, June 17. USACE photo by Nayelli Guerrero*

the planting locations inhibit the growth of reed canary grass and other vegetation, which should allow the seedlings to grow above the height of the competition more effectively.

The initial phase of the project will be completed by 2021. If the trees survive, the plantings will continue to be monitored for many decades to come, Meier said.



*Pathways forestry interns Marshal Johnson and Mackenzie Shaffer-Smiley measure and record seedling growth near New Albin, Iowa, June 17. USACE photo by Nayelli Guerrero*



## St. Paul District welcomes new chief of construction

Story by Megan Booth

Chris Bowen started as the St. Paul District chief of construction in February. His responsibilities in this role include leading engineering division's construction branch to successfully execute and administer the construction phase of district projects.

Bowen is from Glastonbury, Connecticut. He graduated as a mechanical engineer from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, and has a Masters in Business Administration from DeVry University, Illinois.

Right after his graduation from West Point, Bowen spent three years as a combat engineer in the U.S. Army stationed in Baumholder, Germany, and another two years as an anti-terrorism/force protection engineer in Heidelberg, Germany.

After he left the active duty military, he started working as a mechanical engineer with the Corps' Baltimore District on the \$1.7 billion National Geospatial Intelligence Agency's New Campus East at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia. Upon completion of that project, he relocated to the Jacksonville District to work on the Herbert



*Chris Bowen, chief of construction. USACE courtesy photo*

Hoover Dike Rehabilitation, where the Corps is rehabilitating a 143-mile long dam surrounding Lake Okeechobee.

From there, he served as the resident engineer for the Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg resident office with the Corps' Europe District. After two years, he moved to Israel to work as the area engineer for the Foreign Military Funding program to provide military construction services to

the nation of Israel. "The Army Corps of Engineers is probably one of the most diverse organizations in existence," Bowen said, when asked why he chose to work for the Corps. "The Corps' missions take place all over the world and includes design, construction, permitting, recreation, power generation, real estate, research and development, classified projects, unclassified projects, work for the U.S., work for other governments, humanitarian projects, consulting/training services and disaster response. We employ people from every walk of life worldwide and work as a team to successfully complete missions that no other agency could accomplish and we do this on a daily basis."

Bowen said his plans for his new position include efficiently aligning the construction branch with the proper staffing size and locations to be able to meet the growing construction workload the district is experiencing. "We have a significant workload in Fargo and a growing workload in the St. Paul area," he said. "We are trying to position ourselves to most effectively administer all of these projects."

Outside of work, Bowen has a number of hobbies, including spending time with his family, wood/metal working, snow and water sports, robotics, real estate investing and crypto currency.

## Urich leads recreation and natural resources branch

Story by Megan Booth

Randy Urich started as the district's operations project manager for the recreation and natural resources branch in December 2019. Urich said, "I have the pleasure of leading a staff of very professional and dedicated team members who operate and maintain the reservoirs, recreation areas and environmental stewardship lands of the St. Paul District. We provide flood risk management, recreation and nat-

ural resource services and opportunities to the public and Corps' partners."

It is Urich's passion to be a part of and contribute to something bigger than himself. "The concept of teams, teamwork and all the positive aspects of character-building and camaraderie that play out within teams is what drives my passion," said Urich.

Urich loves the Corps for its opportunities to work with and learn from a diverse group of people with a wide range of skills and other backgrounds. His genuine interest in helping others to be successful is one of his strengths. He added, he admires anyone who clearly demonstrates that they put the interest of others ahead of their own. His advice to others in the pursuit of their dreams is, "I find that the greatest level of personal satisfaction comes from helping others. I'd encourage anyone to pursue the kind of dreams that include others."

Urich was born in north central Iowa but has been a Minnesota resident for most of his life. He

graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in forestry and worked with the U.S. Forest Service before coming to the Corps.

"Shortly after college, I spent four seasons as a temporary forestry technician on the Medicine Bow National Forest in Wyoming. Being from Minnesota and having some clerk skills from a previous part-time position, I accepted a permanent position as a clerk-typist in regulatory in St. Paul.



*Col. Karl Jansen, district commander, presents Randy Urich with the Department of the Army Achievement Medal for Civilian Service for his efforts in supporting Hurricane Michael disaster response efforts. USACE photo by Shannon Bauer*

"Within eight months, I accepted a developmental opportunity as an outdoor recreation planner in the natural resource management section, which became permanent. During that time, and due to my background in forestry, I was assigned the task of developing an initial forest inventory for Corps-owned lands along the Upper Mississippi River.

"Soon after, a permanent forester position was established in the La Crescent field office. For the next 22 years, the Mississippi River forestry program and staffing grew, and I served as the lead forester.

"In 2011, I became the supervisory forester for the work unit including responsibility for the shoreline permit and other land management activities. I've also been an active member of the emergency flood response and temporary housing teams for quite a few years."

When Urich is not working, he loves to spend his free time outdoors, doing outdoors activities with family, especially biking, hiking, hunting and fishing.



*Randy Urich, operations project manager for the recreation and natural resources branch. USACE courtesy photo*

## Recognizing our Employees of the Month: The MVPs of MVP



**April**  
**Chris Hrubes,**  
*operations*



**May**  
**Brad Bauer,**  
*engineering and  
construction*



**June**  
**Aaron Buesing,**  
*engineering and  
construction*



## News and Notes

### New Hires and Seasonal Hires

**Leigh Allison**, civil engineer (hydraulics), engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Calvin Aulwes**, lock and dam operator, operations, Eastman, Wisconsin

**Devon Bemis**, deckhand, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Colton Berg**, laborer, operations, Valley City, North Dakota

**Noah Brown**, park ranger, operations, McGregor, Minnesota

**Ben Cox**, Minnesota program manager, regulatory, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Adam Ellanson**, park ranger, operations, Crosslake, Minnesota

**Antigone Goetz**, regulatory specialist, regulatory, Brookfield, Wisconsin

**Elizabeth Golkowski**, park ranger, operations, Crosslake, Minnesota

**Rachel Gralnek**, biologist, regulatory, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Grant Halvorson**, civil engineer, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Espen Hansen**, park ranger, operations, Spring Valley, Wisconsin

**Austin Hegenbarth**, deckhand, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Raelene Hegge**, regulatory specialist, regulatory, La Crescent, Minnesota

**John Henderson**, civil engineer, engineering and construction, Winona, Minnesota

**Landon Hill**, park ranger, operations, Valley City, North Dakota

**Xenia Hillman**, park ranger, operations, Grand Rapids, Minnesota

**Logan Hoffmann**, deckhand, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City Wisconsin

**Adam Howard**, civil engineer (hydraulics), St. Paul, Minnesota

**Jacob Jandl**, deckhand, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Kraig Jashinsky**, regulatory specialist, regulatory, Stevens Point, Wisconsin

**Marshal Johnson**, student trainee, operations, La Crescent, Minnesota

**Spencer Johnson**, deckhand, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Yvette'e Jordan**, construction control representative, engineering and construction, Fargo, North Dakota

**Raymond LaPlant**, park ranger, operations, Federal Dam, Minnesota

**Sheila Larson**, cabin attendant, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Tylar Larson**, park ranger, operations, De Soto, Wisconsin

**Mitchel Lindner**, lock and dam operator, operations, Genoa, Wisconsin

**Leslie Loewenhagen**, cabin attendant, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**April McCann**, construction control representative, engineering and construction, Fargo, North Dakota

**Jackson McCoy**, lock and dam operator, operations, Winona, Minnesota

**Devon Nelson**, park ranger, operations, Brainerd, Minnesota

**Thomas Novak**, senior project manager, programs and project management, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Caden Pearson**, park ranger, operations, McGregor, Minnesota

**Travis Phend**, deckhand, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Alexander Plevak**, lock and dam operator, operations, Minnesota City, Minnesota

**Dillon Prais**, park ranger, operations, Valley City, North Dakota

**Joshua Przybylla**, deckhand, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Jacob Reinboldt**, park ranger, operations, De Soto, Wisconsin

**Faith Sandberg**, mechanical engineer, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Mackinzie Schaffer-Smiley**, student trainee, operations, La Crescent, Minnesota

**Jason Schieffer**, deckhand, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Addison Scufsa**, student trainee, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

**Omar Shalham**, civil engineer, engineering and construction, Fargo, North Dakota

**Chad Simon**, deckhand, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Lawrence Skaggs**, community planner, regional planning and environmental division north, San Francisco, California

**Austin Smith**, park ranger, operations, Valley City, North Dakota

**Dalyson Sorm**, lock and dam operator, operations, Red Wing, Minnesota

**Troy Tooz**, civil engineer, engineering and construction, Fargo, North Dakota

**Kaleb Tweite**, student trainee, engineering and construction, Winona, Minnesota

**Daniel Williams**, park ranger, operations, Crosslake, Minnesota

**Rudy Winckler**, park ranger, operations, Grand Rapids, Minnesota

**Morgan Wirth-Murray**, regulatory specialist, regulatory, Brookfield, Wisconsin

**Casey Woodhouse**, deckhand, Dredge Goetz, Fountain City, Wisconsin

**Jadyn Young**, park ranger, operations, Brainerd, Minnesota

## News and Notes

### Promotions

**Daniel Adams**, landscape architect, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota  
**Brad Bauer**, electrical engineer, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota  
**Alisa Behrens**, community planner, regional planning and environmental division north, Rock Island, Illinois  
**David Bilderback**, lock and dam operator, operations, Minnesota City, Minnesota  
**Tamara Cameron**, chief of operations, operations, St. Paul, Minnesota  
**Andrew Chambers**, biologist, regulatory, Duluth, Minnesota  
**Elizabeth Chapes**, lock and dam operator, operations, Genoa, Wisconsin  
**Michael Davis**, geologist, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota  
**Nicholas Dunham**, biologist, regional planning and environmental division north, St. Paul, Minnesota  
**Cody Fairey**, engineering equipment operator, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin  
**Evan Hill**, fish biologist, regional planning and environmental division north, St. Louis, Missouri  
**Zachary Kimmel**, community planner, programs and project management, Fountain City, Wisconsin  
**Chad Klein**, equipment specialist, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin  
**Emily Kostner**, facility services assistant, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin  
**Brent Meyer**, lock and dam operator, operations, Guttenberg, Iowa  
**Matthew Platteter**, Leverman, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin  
**Eric Rain**, lock and dam operator, operations, Alma, Wisconsin  
**Daniel Reburn**, biologist, operations, St. Paul, Minnesota  
**Matthew Rolbiecki**, engineering equipment operator, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin  
**Peter Tellin**, lock and dam operator, operations, Red Wing, Minnesota  
**Daniel Wagner**, lock and dam operator, operations, Red Wing, Minnesota  
**Eric Wittine**, civil engineer, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

### Retirements

**Rick Femrite**, civil engineers, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota  
**Antonia Huber**, administrative support assistant, operations, Grand Rapids, Minnesota  
**Pam Niebur**, lock and dam assistant, operations, Hastings, Minnesota  
**Ellen Scheppeke**, office automation clerk, operations, Spring Valley, Wisconsin

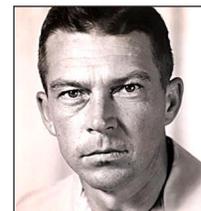
### Taps



**Lorraine Blake** passed away July 12, 2020. Lorraine was the Administrative Assistant for Information Management before she retired in 2003.



**Lorelie Blank** passed away June 1, 2020. She retired in June 2019 as Head Operator of Lock and Dam 5 after 29 years of federal service.



**Walter Hermerding** passed away May 11, 2020. He retired as the Cross Lake recreation area supervisor after 20 years of federal service.

### Congratulations

**Nate Meisgeier** is graduating with a Master of Science in Civil Engineering (Geotechnical) from Missouri University of Science and Technology  
**Colleen Meyer's**, regulatory, nephew Maj. Keenan McCall, was a 2019 winner of the Flemming Award, which honors outstanding federal employees. Keenan is a Special Agent in the Air Force, Office of Special Investigations.

## News and Notes

### Congratulations

**Alison Anderson**, regional planning and environmental division north, and husband Collin welcomed Arlo on May 2.

**Scott Barr**, Dredge Goetz, and his wife Dorothy, welcomed Christine Aug. 2



**Kevin Denn**, engineering and construction, and his wife Anna, welcomed Josephine Ann Denn on June 22 weighing 7 lbs 2 oz and was 21 inches long.



**Troy Frank**, lock and dam 8, and his wife Alicia, welcomed Otto Troy Frank on Aug 4 at 10 lbs 12 oz and 23 inches long.



**Lexi Goergen**, engineering and construction, married Nick Ousky on June 19.



**Matt Groshek**, regulatory, and his wife Nicole, welcomed Violet Emily on May 19 weighing in at 6 lbs. 3 oz.

**Nate Meisgeier**, engineering and construction, and his wife Melissa, welcomed Madelyn Rose Meisgeier into the family July 25 at 9 lbs 7 oz.

**Chanel Mueller**, engineering and construction, welcomed Peter Hans Mueller May 22, 8 lbs. 10 oz and 22.5 inches.

**Jennifer Obeso**, internal review, welcomed Natalia Paulina Obeso on 30 July at 7 lbs 4 oz.



**Kaecey Parker**, regulatory, and her husband Daniel, welcomed Miachia on May 2.



**Lt. Col. Patrick Sullivan**, deputy commander, and his wife Eleanor welcomed Xavier John Sullivan on June 29 at 5lbs 11oz and 19 inches long.

**Alex Webb**, office of counsel, and his wife Johanna welcomed a baby boy, Michael Courtland Joseph Webb on July 29 weighing in at 7 lbs.