

# Falls City Engineer

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District

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Division Commander visits district  
projects, meets staff







## Falls City Engineer

Vol. 13, Issue 2

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**On the cover:** Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Whittle Jr., and Louisville District Commander Col. Eric Crispino wait for takeoff in an aerial tour of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment footprint at Fort Campbell. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Reed Knutson)

# Commander's Comments

Team Louisville,

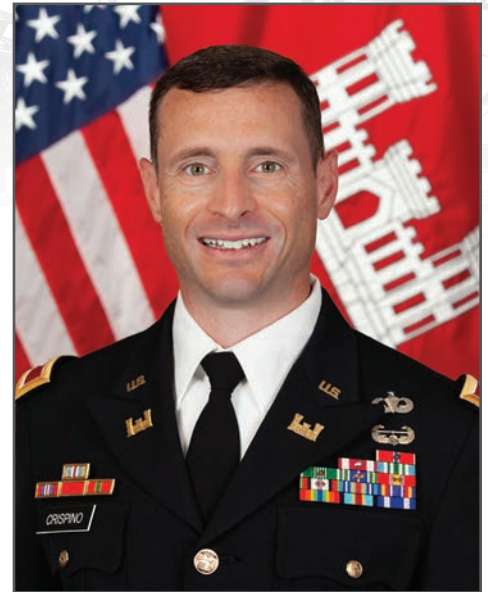
I hope everyone is enjoying this spring weather. The Kentucky Derby is just around the corner and I have been told it is a great time to enjoy the city of Louisville. Although I know things may look different from years past, I look forward to experiencing some of the festivities safely with my family and encourage you to do the same.

I recently had the opportunity to visit several of our projects and meet some of our field staff. I traveled to Fort Campbell to see a 3D virtual reality model for the new Middle School project, toured John T. Myers Locks and Dam, and visited some of our lake projects in the Upper Kentucky Area. I appreciate the project staff taking time to showcase their facilities and I continue to be impressed by everyone's hard work and dedication. I am very thankful for these opportunities to meet staff face-to-face (even if we are wearing masks and social distancing).

Please enjoy this month's issue of the Falls City Engineer as it highlights some of our recent efforts and spotlights our employees' extraordinary accomplishments outside of our office doors.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention month. We can all do our part to end sexual violence by speaking up when we see something that is not right or by letting someone in authority know. Please remember, supporting survivors does not just happen in April.

There is still risk in our community with COVID-19. I urge you to exercise caution in your daily lives. Risk levels have been steadily declining through much of the winter and early



**Col. Eric Crispino**  
Commander and District Engineer  
Louisville District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

spring. If we all continue to do our part, those risk levels will hopefully continue to decline so we can all get back to some sense of normalcy soon.

Thank you for all your hard work and flexibility. Stay safe and stay vigilant.

Building Strong! Louisville Proud!

Col. Crispino


*Eric D Crispino*

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BUILDING STRONG®

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 **Please conserve:**  
**Think before you print.**

## Turning the page: Demolition of resident office closes Olmsted's construction chapter

Katie Newton, public affairs

The Olmsted Resident Office, once bustling with more than 30 employees at the height of the project's construction, now sits dark and empty waiting to be demolished in the coming weeks.

Originally constructed in 1994 to house construction division employees for the duration of the Olmsted Locks and Dam mega-project, the building is no longer needed. Since the project became operational in 2018, the construction footprint has reduced dramatically, including the number of personnel onsite.

The demolition bookends more than 30 years of the Olmsted Locks and Dam construction project and is a historic milestone for the hundreds of employees who passed through its doors.

"This is the end of an era for the employees of construction division and their families who have worked to complete this critical infrastructure improvement for the nation," said Johnny Ringstaff, Deputy Chief Construction Division. "A debt of gratitude is owed to all of the dedicated employees who worked here showing the commitment to excellence required to complete this one-of-a-kind project."

For some employees like Bill Hunter, Louisville District civil engineer, who has spent 25 years working out of the Olmsted Resident Office, says it feels like saying goodbye to an old friend.

"I worked with a lot of fine people in that building. I have spent approximately 25 years of my career in that facility, helped give it birth and will help oversee its demise."

"Yes, I am sad," he said. "It is an old friend. I hope I was a friend in return. The



Bill Hunter, Louisville District civil engineer, sits in his former cubicle surveying the demolition of the Olmsted Resident Office around him. Hunter spent nearly three decades onsite supporting the construction of the Olmsted Locks and Dam mega-project in Olmsted, Illinois.

Olmsted project has gone full circle and so has my career."

Hunter is one of the few who has watched the site transform before his eyes from barren land to the engineering marvel that it is today.

Hunter originally worked on the project from his office nearly 400 miles away in Rock Island, Illinois, and drove to Olmsted each week before he officially relocated to the Olmsted area in the fall of 1993.

"When I started to show up at Olmsted in May of 1993, we had two construction representatives on site, Glenn Munro and Ronnie Boswell. Bill Gilmour and Rick Schipp were also traveling to the site bringing us up to a total staff of five. We first worked out of a small building at Locks and Dam 53 as we worked on getting our hands around the first contract to build

the formal Resident Office Building as well as paving the gravel county road, and building the road to the site.

"I was also trying to get the temporary office set up – computers, printers, vehicles and furniture – a fair amount of which came from the Quad Cities Area Office which was downsizing. I remember conducting a pre-construction conference for the Cofferdam project around our conference picnic table within that temporary office," said Hunter.

Fast forward nearly three decades later and Hunter, who was one of the first ones in the new Olmsted Resident Office, is one of the last ones out as the building is torn down and he finds himself once again in a temporary office, this time a construction trailer onsite.

In February, the last five staff members moved to a temporary construction trailer in the adjacent parking lot. That crew will remain onsite through 2022 to oversee completion of the demolition of locks and dams 52 and 53 and associated contract closeout actions.

"The more than 8,300 square foot office will be demolished by the site restoration contractor and the ground will be restored to its natural condition," said Greg Hales, Contract Performance Specialist.

"Once our closeout activities are completed, Construction Division will coordinate the removal of the trailer and turn the fenced parking lot over to Operations Division on our way out the gate."



Bill Hunter, civil engineer, with the Olmsted Resident Office sign, which was removed prior to building demolition.



# Nolin River Lake partnership stabilizes bank, improves fish habitat

*Libby Watt, operations division*

As part of a multi-agency partnership, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Nolin River Lake was the first reservoir in the Louisville District to install large concrete reef balls as both fish habitat and as a wave break for bank stabilization measures.

The collaboration is part of a larger effort with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR), Friends of Nolin, Friends of Reservoirs, and the Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership to complete a \$300,000 bank stabilization project. This included installing rip rap using the longitudinal peak stone toe protection (LPSTP) method to promote bank stabilization, planting native seed and shrubs to target pollinators, and creating more bank fishing opportunities by enhancing fish habitat with various fish attractors.

The concept of using reef balls as fish habitat came about due to a strong partnership with KDFWR. Jeremy Shiftlet, a fisheries biologist for the KDFWR offered to collaborate on this project and suggested a partnership with the Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership, a non-profit group that works to improve fish habitat, working alongside government agencies.

The grant awarded through Reservoir Fish Habitat Partnership included \$30,000



*Libby Watt*

*The site at Nolin River Lake in Kentucky post installation. Crews worked to slope the bank, install reef balls as wave breaks and hydroseeded the site with native grasses and wildflowers and artificial fish attractors.*

for patented fiberglass reef ball molds, supply kits, and training from Reef Innovations to make the reef balls. While the reef balls are primarily for fish habitat,

USACE also plans to experiment using the larger balls as wave breaks to further protect the shoreline.

To date, accomplishments include over 1,000 feet of bank stabilization structure installed, 2,600 square feet of fish habitat structures deployed, 48 reef balls placed, and 4,500 square feet of native seed planted. Weather permitting, the final step of the project will be planting over 1,000 live stakes with assistance from Friends of Nolin in the spring.

Louisville District plans to continue installation of bank stabilization projects in coordination with Chris Haring from the USACE Engineer Research and Development Center. Haring visited in 2019 through a water operations technical support request and has provided consultation for prioritizing projects and incorporating Engineering with Nature through the application of natural and nature-based features sedimentation and sustainability techniques.

This effort will help keep sediment in place and provide multiple benefits that include improved water quality, increased habitat for aquatic life, reduced siltation, and protecting and prolonging the function of the flood control structure.



*Libby Watt*

*Site 1 at Nolin River Lake in Bee Spring, Kentucky, during installation using the longitudinal peak stone toe protection (LPSTP) bank stabilization method.*



## Virtual Reality experience gives 3D view of future Fort Campbell Middle School



Case DeVisser, Woolpert architect, assists Fort Campbell Garrison Commander Col. Jeremy Bell in navigating the Virtual Reality technology through the future Fort Campbell Middle School project, March 31.

*Shatara Riis, public affairs*

Come 2023, the Fort Campbell, Kentucky family is slated to have a new school for their middle school students on the Army post.

Several stakeholders had an opportunity to take part in a Virtual Reality experience, March 31, to get a 3D look of the future Fort Campbell Middle School. Contractor, Woolpert, held the VR experience on behalf of the Louisville District for the Fort Campbell Middle School construction project.

“We are definitely happy to see this middle school progressing. The biggest benefit to me is having an education infrastructure that supports our children’s development into the 21st century and beyond,” said Col. Jeremy Bell, U.S. Army Garrison Fort Campbell commander. “This is a great project, and one we can’t get done quick enough.”

While traditional 1D models have been used; or interested personnel have had to wait until completion to see the final product, 3D modeling brings a new perspective to the design and construction phases.

“We’ve seen many benefits from using the Virtual Reality – in being able to present to the customer and stakeholder what (the project) will look like and talk

to the users of it,” said Louisville District Deputy Engineer Linda Murphy.

According to Murphy, using VR during the design phase helps improve efficiency during the construction phase because fewer modifications have to be made.

“This is the wave of the future – to use the 3D modeling more as you enter into the design phase and as a tool to get customer and stakeholder input, so they really know what it looks like,” Murphy said.

The Fort Campbell Middle School will

replace the old Wassom Middle School and will be more than 125,000 square feet, with the new high school and future middle school designed to have a campus atmosphere.

“We have a good appreciation for all that lies ahead for us. This is the inflection point, where we go from it being virtual to now becoming real,” said Louisville District Commander Col. Eric Crispino. “I look forward to seeing it become real over the next few years.”



Louisville District Commander Col. Eric Crispino discusses the middle school construction project with Fort Campbell Garrison Commander Col. Jeremy Bell at Wednesday’s Virtual Reality experience.



# More than 850,000 square feet of sod installed following remediation activities at Jacobsville Superfund site

*Shatara Riis, public affairs*

From 2019 to 2020, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District, on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency, removed more than 30,000 tons of contaminated soil and installed 857,980 square feet of sod at residential properties of the Jacobsville neighborhood in Evansville, Indiana.

Airborne dust, soot and smoke from manufacturing companies that once occupied the current Jacobsville neighborhood, contaminated the soil with lead and arsenic through industrial operations in the late 1800s at nearly 4,000 residential properties.

The EPA remediated about half of those at the Jacobsville Neighborhood Soil Contamination Superfund site, and the EPA asked the Corps to remediate the remaining 2,000 properties.

“The Louisville District started remediating the properties in 2019,” said Corey Knox, Louisville District Environmental Support Section project manager. “We awarded a new task order in September 2020 for \$11.2 million to continue (environmental remediation) of the properties with our current contractor, Tetra Tech, until 2023. Currently, we have an Interagency Agreement with the EPA to



*A.D. McDill, an equipment operator/leadman of one of the excavation crews, removes soil from a Jacobsville neighborhood property.*

assist with the remediation of the properties until 2025.”

Remediation is being accomplished at the Jacobsville neighborhood through excavation, disposal and backfill/restoration.

The remedial action includes excavation of contaminated soil per EPA-provided

remedial designs, backfill/restoration of disturbed areas, transportation and disposal of contaminated soil, and completion of remediation reports documenting cleanup, said Dr. Robin Sternberg, Louisville District Environmental Support Section biologist and lead technical manager.

Returning the soil to beneficial use takes time, but USACE is making good on plans to restore the Indiana soil to its former health.

USACE completed a total of 188 residential soil remediations during the 2020 field season. The team also accomplished 38 of the planned 350 (estimated) residential soil remediations for the next field season during the 2020 field season work, Knox said.

Currently, the project is in the Remedial Action-Construction phase within the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act. As per epa.gov, this phase of the process includes preparing for and doing the bulk of the cleanup at the site.

While work continues to progress, there have been some impacts to safety procedures and communicating with the residents.

“The COVID-19 pandemic affected the processes to execute the work and impacted the schedule regarding the review



*Contract workers install clean sod, consisting mostly of fescue and some with zoysia, at residential properties of the Jacobsville Neighborhood Soil Contamination Superfund site.*



Continued from previous page

and approval of the workplans,” Knox said. “However, the team adjusted and pushed forward to review and approve the workplans in a timely fashion. The contractor was able to complete the planned 150 property remediations at the end of the 2020 field season.”

Although the physical work has not been delayed, new safety measures are taken to protect personnel.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has not delayed the field work. However, it has affected the site health and safety plan,” Sternberg said. “Temperatures of site workers are taken during morning safety briefings, and site workers must always wear masks while on site. Contactless communication with property owners (e.g., phone calls, mailings) is now preferred over in person interactions.”

One key factor of safety and to the continued remediation progress, is having an onsite representative available.

“The Louisville District has an onsite project engineer/construction representative residing in Evansville, who reaches out to reluctant property owners to allay their concerns,” Sternberg said.

Not only does Brett Smith, Louisville District project engineer/construction representative, reach out to the residents, he ensures health and wellbeing protocols are followed. Brett monitors the overall remediation at the residential sites and is responsible for the coordination back to the Louisville District when historical artifacts (e.g. cisterns, old building foundations, etc.) are encountered during excavation activities.

“Brett has added additional tasks to ensure the workforce is not only protecting themselves from the harms of the work,



Brett Smith

Jeff Orisky, water truck driver/operator, performs 30 day sod maintenance by watering properties daily in the Jacobsville neighborhood.

but also protecting themselves, their co-workers and the property owners from the risk of contracting COVID-19,” Knox said. “This has taken additional effort to ensure safe practices are being followed and to obtain and maintain trust with the property owners.”

The Louisville District and the contractor are planning for the 2021 field season to begin in the spring, weather permitting.

According to Knox, the Jacobsville Soil Remediation Superfund site is a large remediation project within the Louisville District’s area of responsibility that is being executed by using a complex cost

reimbursable contracting tool.

“Projects of this nature benefit the Louisville District, specifically the Superfund program, by demonstrating to outside stakeholders that we have the resources, knowledge and capabilities to manage and execute high-profile environmental projects,” Knox said.

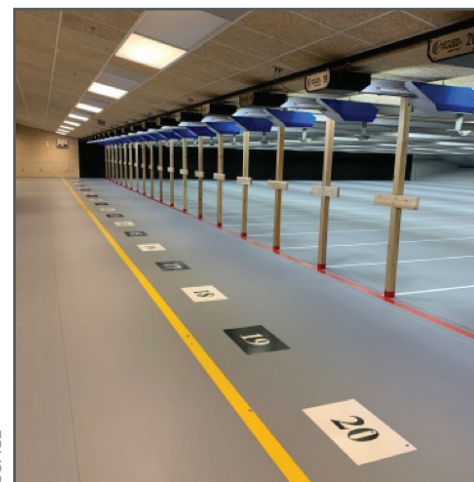
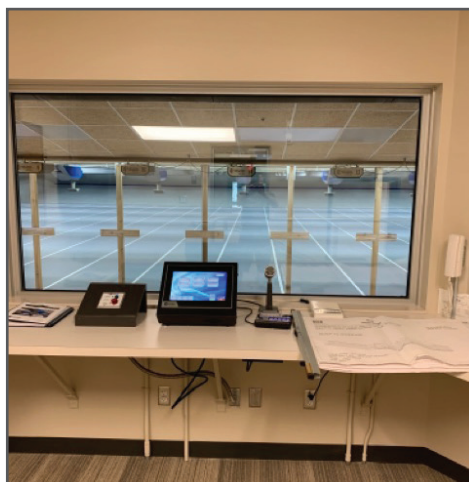
Cleaning up past environmental contamination is paramount for the safety, health and welfare of the people living in this area.

“The Louisville District is effecting change in the everyday lives of Evansville residents by making their community a healthier place to live,” Sternberg said.

## Reserve

### District completes Minneapolis Air Reserve Station Small Arms Range project

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District recently completed the Minneapolis Air Reserve Station Small Arms Range project, which included new construction of a full enclosed indoor firing range consisting of 21 lanes. This 19,394 square foot facility replaced an existing non-baffled outdoor range which was demolished as a part of this project. The support space portion of the range included a weapons cleaning room, storage, classroom, office space, restrooms and mechanical and electrical rooms. Construction was completed in August 2020 and turned over for use in September.



USACE

USACE



# Division commander visits district projects, meets staff

Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Whittle Jr. visited Louisville District project sites, March 23-24, where he recognized staff for their exemplary efforts and exceptional service and toured key projects. During his trip, Maj. Gen. Whittle, accompanied by Louisville District Commander Col. Eric Cripsino and Deputy District Engineer Linda Murphy, visited Fort Campbell, Fort Knox and Rough River Lake to learn more about the district's projects.



Staff Sgt. Reed Knutson

Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Whittle Jr., receives a flight and safety overview prior to an aerial tour of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment footprint at Fort Campbell.



Shatara Riis

Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Whittle Jr., Louisville District Commander Col. Eric Cripsino, and Deputy District Engineer Linda Murphy visit V Corps at Fort Knox.



Jack Sweeney

Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Whittle Jr., meets Adam Taylor, park ranger at Rough River Lake, during his visit to the project site to learn more about the Rough River Lake Dam Remediation.



Shatara Riis

Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Whittle Jr., presents Marcella Denton, Information Technology operations officer, with a coin of excellence.



Shatara Riis

Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Whittle Jr., Louisville District Commander Col. Eric Cripsino, and Deputy District Engineer Linda Murphy take part in a senior leader engagement with U.S. Army Cadet Command and Fort Knox Commanding General Maj. Gen. John R. Evans Jr.



# Louisville engineer uses expertise to renovate school in his hometown in India

Abby Korfhage, public affairs

Louisville District Engineering Management Division Reserves Section Project Engineer Ramarao Vuddagiri recently provided financial, planning, engineering and in-person support during his free-time to complete the renovation of a school in his hometown of Hyderabad, India.

The school, Nishulk Prabhat, which serves as a primary, middle and high school all under one roof, was originally built in 1941 and was in dire need of repair and modernization, according to Vuddagiri. The school operates through contributions and currently provides tuition-free education to 250 underprivileged students.

"I grew up in India, a third world by most standards, and thanks to my beloved parents, I was extremely fortunate to have access to good schools, food, clothing and shelter at all times," Vuddagiri said. "However, not every kid in that part of the world is as blessed as I was."

The level of poverty in parts of India, especially in the inner cities, is high and some parents are not able to afford to send their kids to schools. The current system there is not designed to give these local children a decent chance for education, therefore, a lot of these kids eventually end up in the streets and turn to crime at a very young age as a means of survival, according to Vuddagiri.

"While I can't change the entire system, I undertook renovating parts of an old school that provides free education to under privileged kids," Vuddagiri said.

The school now focuses on providing children living in the city opportunities by



Courtesy of Ram Vuddagiri

Louisville District Engineering Management Division Reserves Section Project Engineer Ramarao Vuddagiri (far left) provided financial, planning, engineering and in-person support during his free-time to complete the renovation of Nishulk Prabhat School in his hometown of Hyderabad, India.

providing access to education, food and freedom from abuse.

"This is really inspiring work from Ram," said Josh Van Bogaert, Engineer Divisions Reserves Section chief who serves as Vuddagiri's supervisor. "Thanks in part to Ram's contributions, the Phase I of the project included providing the school with a new library and a game room."

According to school personnel, not only are students enjoying reading books in their new library, but students have also improved their reading skills. Teachers have also benefited from this addition by having the ability to explore different books to help them educate their students.

Phase 2 of the project included a complete renovation of the primary wing, which includes students in grades one through five.

"Each classroom of the primary wing now has ample daylight and are equipped with a computer, printer, projector, ceiling

fans and new furniture," Van Bogaert said.

During his visits to his hometown, Vuddagiri spends time with the children at the school and offers support to the caretakers, and distributes food packages, clothes, shoes and other necessities.

"Education, in my opinion, should provide some of these kids an opportunity for the economic freedom they have longed for all their lives, possibly heal the wounds of rejection and neglect, and eventually allow them to thrive in a society that chose to abandon them."

Both phases of the project are dedicated to Vuddagiri's late parents. Vuddagiri plans to travel for the formal dedication of Phase 2 when COVID-19 travel restrictions are lifted.

Learn more about the school transformation at this link or by scanning the QR code below: <https://youtu.be/oMUKrXImmEc>.



Courtesy of Ram Vuddagiri

Both phases of the project, which include a new library, game room, and complete renovation of the primary wing, are dedicated to Vuddagiri's late parents. This memorial plaque is hung above the entrance to the new primary wing.



Scan to watch the video of Nishulk Prabhat School's renovations.



# GIS team innovates way district does business, communicates data



Lance Filiatreau, Louisville District Engineering Division geographer, explains geographical maps during a Salt River stakeholder meeting, February 2018.

## Abby Korfhage, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District workforce includes engineers, park rangers, locks and dam operators, scientists and much more – all which play a vital role within the organization. Another role, which many may not be aware of, is the role of a geographer. The Louisville District has eight geographers on staff who make up the Geographic Information Systems team.

“As geographers, we support the needs of our district through the creation of a wide variety of spatial products that could be as simple as a paper wall map to as multifaceted as building web applications and dashboards,” said Rachel Byrd, Engineer Division geographer. “I like how we work with technology like James Bond in the sense that we have a number of helpful gadgets we can pull to support any project. From programming GPS collection equipment, to flying a thermal drone, or building custom web tools.”

Geographers and Geographic Information Systems professionals, also known as GIS, do much more than just create pretty pictures of maps.

“Many people don’t realize the powerful benefits that GIS can provide to their work in regard to data management, spatial analysis, and the ability to visualize the relationships between data,” said

Paul Deatrick, Louisville District GIS coordinator. Deatrick was named USACE Geospatial Professional of the Year in 2020 for his efforts to lead the GIS team in Louisville.

Deatrick says he is proud of leading a team that has a reputation of continually meeting, or exceeding, customer’s needs and expectations. “While we are not perfect, we are able to effectively balance a large workload amongst a small team by efficiently prioritizing and understanding what the customer requires.”

The district’s GIS team has broad use of applications within the district that have

contributed to a variety of projects.

“Recently, we’ve developed a web application for gathering community comments for our lake master plans within the district,” said Eli Litzelman, Engineering Division geographer. “It’s been rewarding to see the community engage with these web-tools and to facilitate communication and feedback between lake-goers and the Corps.”

Another unique project and application that geographers helped create was the USACE National Levee Database, which Deatrick was involved with from the beginning stages – both at a district and national level.

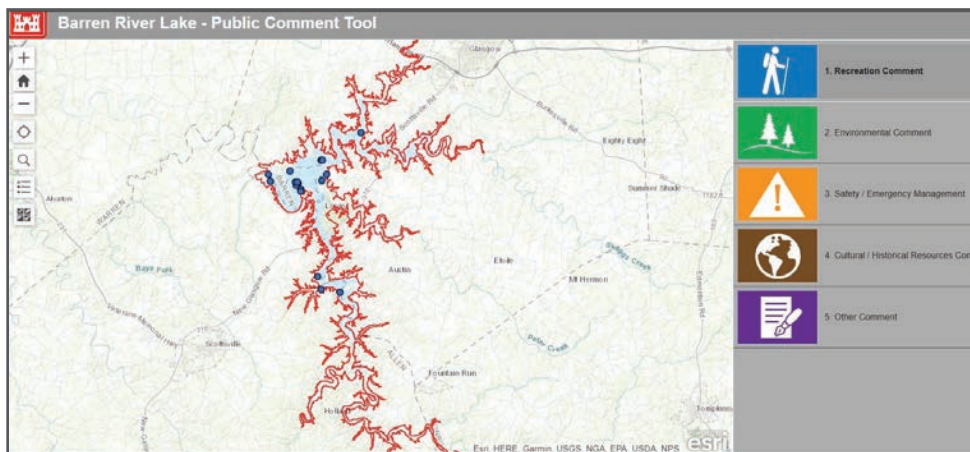
“It’s been a rewarding experience to have been involved in the early days when the levee database was just being created and to now see how it has developed over 15 years to include not only Corps levee systems, but now other federal, state and local systems as well,” Deatrick said. “The Louisville District was also the first pilot district to begin collecting and inputting data into the NLD and lessons learned assisted other districts throughout their data population.”

With Byrd’s help, the district developed a new drone program, which offers many benefits to the district.

“Some may be unaware of our new drone program that is about one year old,” Byrd said. “We have the capability to support any project with a drone and we have a remote pilot able to produce detailed terrain models, inspection footage and much more.”

Louisville District geographers help

*Continued on next page*



The Louisville District GIS team developed a web application for gathering community comments for lake master plans within the district. This is a screen shot of Barren River Lake’s interactive webpage where members of the public could view the map, drop pins and leave comments or suggestions for the team to review and take into consideration when revising the new master plan. The team also developed this tool for several other lakes within the district and around the region.



Continued from previous page

employees, and the public, understand basic physical systems that affect everyday life.

“I think the projects I’m most proud of are the ones I feel contribute to the safety and livelihood of individuals” Litzelman said. “For example, projects that involve the floodplain management and inundation mapping of towns at risk of flooding. It is nice to know that I have contributed, at least in some small way, to a plan or infrastructure project that may protect someone’s home or business.”

Byrd echoed that sentiment describing her deployment opportunity to provide support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I was deployed to support the North Atlantic Division as New York City was hit heavily with COVID-19 early in the pandemic last year and geospatial products and GIS support helped decision makers track the spread of the disease, their resources, workforce, and other hazards positioning them to make informed decisions with real-time data at their fingertips,” Byrd said. “GIS has been essential to tracking the spread of COVID-19 globally. It was a rewarding experience to utilize my professional skills to assist another division during an emergency event.”

While Louisville District geographers



Louisville District Geographer Rachel Byrd helped the district develop a new drone program enhancing the team’s capability to support any project with a drone and have a remote pilot able to produce detailed terrain models and inspection footage.

love using all the GIS technology, they all agree that working with each other and the variety of projects is their favorite part of the job.

“It’s a profession that continues to grow and working with GIS in the Corps, provides, not only myself but my teammates, the opportunities to work on all types of projects and interface with a wide variety of professionals,” said

Deatrick. “We are all involved in a wide variety of both civil and military projects that can include data management, data development and collection, cartographic production, application development and visualization, geo-processing and spatial analysis. Due to our involvement in so many areas, it is challenging but never boring.”

# Sexual Assault Awareness & Prevention Month

Building Cohesive Teams through Character, Trust and Resilience.  
Protecting Our People Protects Our Mission

