

Falls City Engineer

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District

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Corps conducts
prescribed burn at
McAlpine to promote
native plant growth





Falls City Engineer

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On the cover: Keith Chasteen conducts a prescribed burn at McAlpine Locks and Dam. (USACE photo by Carol Labashosky)

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

Commander's Comments

Team Louisville,

It appears Spring has gone south for the Winter. If you find it before I do, please let it know we are anxiously awaiting its arrival. The Kentucky Derby is right around the corner, and I am told this is a fascinating time for the city of Louisville. For those of you who will be celebrating with family and friends, enjoy the festivities and stay safe.

We are excited to have the Falls City Engineer electronically back in publication. This is our major means of informing everyone of the significant work of our teammates and highlighting some of the impressive projects and events around the district. One such project is the Olmsted Locks and Dam, the largest inland waterways civil works project known to date. Major construction is complete, the wicket lifter has arrived, training, testing and commissioning are in progress, and a ribbon cutting ceremony date has been set. We are looking forward to celebrating this major accomplishment with the local community and so many who have had a role in its completion.

As you venture through this edition of our Falls City Engineer, the VA Canandaigua Medical Center groundbreaking, Camp Ravenna's repurposed training ranges, and our Army Reserve program are great articles to read. There are also other great examples throughout capturing the unending list of activities in the district.



Col. Antoinette Gant
*Commander and District Engineer
Louisville District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*

I can't ever thank you collectively enough for delivering the program showcasing your hard work. Our program continues to progress, and that is all because of your commitment, dedication and teamwork. Thanks again for all you do!

Building Strong and Taking Care of People! We are LOUISVILLE PROUD!

Col. G

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Corps announces Olmsted ribbon cutting ceremony



A complete aerial view of the Olmsted Locks and Dam project on the lower Ohio River which will be fully functional by the summer of 2018. A ribbon cutting ceremony is planned for Aug. 29, 2018.

A ribbon cutting ceremony for the Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District Olmsted Locks and Dam project, Olmsted, Illinois, will be held August 29, 2018, at the project site. The event is open to the public.

The \$2.7 billion project on the lower Ohio River is estimated to open in the summer of 2018. The new locks are complete. The dam is more than 93 percent done, and the remaining construction to

prepare for the official opening is in the works.

With two new 1,200-foot locks and a 2,500-foot dam the project is considered the nation's inland waterways' largest civil works project. The entire project will be complete in 2020 after the old locks 52 and 53 are removed from the river and cleanup work is finished on land. Reliability will be significantly increased as the existing locks are decades beyond their designed service life.

The project is located on the Ohio River at mile 964.6, approximately 17 miles upstream from where the Ohio River merges with the Mississippi, Tennessee and Cumberland rivers. Olmsted is located on one of the busiest stretches of the inland waterways system for commercial navigation. The Olmsted replacement project is being built a few miles from the old locks. Approximately 90 million tons of products — coal, grains and iron products as examples — transit through this area annually.

Carr Creek park ranger's quick thinking minimized fire damage

Carol Labashosky, public affairs

While on patrol March 5, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Carr Creek Lake Park Ranger Kevin Wright observed a wildland fire burning in the vicinity of the Route 15 bridge near the marina recreation area.

Wright was a first responder to the scene, and he ensured that the appropriate agencies were notified. Good communication and partnership with local officials ensured success in this emergency. The following agencies responded: Kentucky State Police, Vicco and Carr Fork Volunteer Fire Departments and Kentucky Division of Forestry Wildland firefighting crew.

With further investigation, Wright discovered that repeated sparks from a cutting torch fell on Pampas grass below the bridge and started the fire. Wright stayed on scene until the fire was completely under control. Approximately a half acre was burned, consisting mostly of grass, and no property damage occurred.

"One of the things I have enjoyed most about being a park ranger is you never know what you will encounter on any given day," said Wright. "Be it good or be it bad you just have to be ready to respond."



A fire at Carr Creek Lake in Sassafras, Kentucky, March 5 was quickly caught by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Park Ranger Kevin Wright resulting in only a half-acre of damage.

Kevin Wright

Corps conducts prescribed burn at McAlpine Locks and Dam

Carol Labashosky, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District, conducted a prescribed burn at the McAlpine Locks and Dam, Louisville, Kentucky, April 5, 2018, as a tool to recreate the natural role of fire in the environment.

Grassy areas on the property are being developed into a more natural environment. Many plant communities, such as native meadows, are dependent on fire within the environment to set vegetation back to an earlier condition. Some plant communities are dependent on this occasional disturbance to maintain themselves.

For example, in a grassland area, trees and shrubs will encroach the area over time. A hot fire burning through the area will kill back the woody vegetation and release the grasses to flourish until that encroachment occurs again.

“This is why we look at a two to four-year cycle for burning grasslands and meadows,” said Keith Chasteen, USACE Louisville District natural resources management specialist.

Within these grassland and meadow communities, many of the plants will not reseed until after some sort of disturbance to the site occurs — such as fire. Once sunlight hits the soil, seeds in the soil will sprout where they would not when shaded.

Many fire-adapted plants immediately begin to sprout from existing root systems following a burn, rejuvenating the older plants with new growth.

Prior to conducting a prescribed burn, a site specific burn plan is created and approved. This plan identifies the objectives of the burn, the area to be treated and the conditions for conducting the burn. The plan includes the needed personnel and



McAlpine wildland Fire Burn Team oversee the burn of the grassy area being treated during a prescribed burn of the grassland area at the locks and dam in Louisville, Kentucky, April 5.

equipment, contingency resources in the event of an escaped fire and the contacts that must be made prior to the burn. The fire department and neighbors are alerted to provide for a safe execution to achieve the objectives of the burn.

Prior to putting fire onto the ground, participating personnel must be properly trained; personal protective equipment must be purchased; and tools, equipment and required permits must be obtained.

“The entire process takes a lot of planning to successfully complete it,” said Chasteen.

Fire is an ideal tool to use when treating on a landscape basis, especially for the management of pollinator habitats that the Corps continues to create at its projects. It creates rapid change to the vegetation which provides for rapid regrowth and benefit to the environment.

The area recently burned has been managed as a meadow community for the past few years for the benefit of pollinator insects. Many district employees and their families helped to plant pollinator plants along this hillside during the first Pollinator Day at McAlpine in 2016. Since that time, there has been some additional planting on the site, but there still exist many non-native cool season grasses and other plants.

“It was determined that prescribed burning would help to favor the warm season native species and set the cool season plants back a bit so that the warm season plants can better compete on the site. This is an alternative to the expensive spot spraying of herbicides,” said Chasteen. “The burn went very well. We started with

a test burn once we went into prescription — proper humidity levels, appropriate wind direction. The test burn went well so the burning continued.”

At one point, the winds shifted to more out of the northeast, which was not conducive to the goal due to fear of putting smoke onto I-64. At that point, ignitions were stopped and the weather was rechecked. Indications were then that the winds would come back around within the hour. After about 45 minutes, the winds did change back to a favorable direction, so ignition began again and the burn was quickly completed.

“It was a team effort with the McAlpine and Taylorsville Lake staff’s ambition and Mr. Chasteen’s expertise on the matter,” said Dewey Takacy, McAlpine lockmaster. “All involved thought it was a great experience and we all walked away with a different perspective on prescribed burns and their application—a feeling of a team accomplishment and a sense of environmental stewardship. Lots of people have thoughts and ideas on making a difference while McAlpine’s actions are making a difference.”

The team is referred to as the McAlpine Wildland Fire Burn Team comprised of members from the district operations division. Those who conducted the burn were Keith Chasteen, Evan McKinney, Mark Norton, Josh Lesch and Dewey Takacy. Support to the burn team included Henry Davis, Patrick Casto and Clifton Kilpatrick.



Completion of the prescribed burn will cause many of the plants to reseed so more can grow.

Canandaigua Medical Center breaks ground

Abby Korfhage, public affairs

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District Commander Col. Antoinette Gant and Deputy District Engineer Linda Murphy participated in a groundbreaking ceremony April 10, 2018, for the Veterans Affairs Canandaigua Medical Center Facility Project at Canandaigua, New York.

This project constructs a new 84,000 square foot Outpatient Clinic, a new chiller/emergency generator plant, renovates 85,000 square feet of existing facility space, and upgrades existing roadways and site utilities.

Attendees included VA Executive Director of the Office of Construction and Facility Management Stella Fiotes, Veterans Integrated Service Network Director Joan McInerney, Acting Canandaigua Medical Director Ken Piazza, and staff from the New York congressional delegation.

This is the first USACE construction award of thirteen Department of Veterans Affairs major construction projects identified for execution under a nationwide Interagency Agreement executed in late 2015 among the agencies, for a program totaling over \$6 billion. It has taken a multi-agency team consisting of the VA Office of Construction and Facility Management, VA Healthcare Administration, USACE Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, USACE Louisville District, and USACE Buffalo District, along with leaders from local, state, and federal government to successfully move this project forward.

“This project is somewhat unique not only because of its size and complexity, but because of the great collaboration we had among the cross-divisional, multi-



Andy Kornacki

On Apr. 10, 2018, Louisville District Commander Col. Antoinette Gant (second from right) joined other officials in a groundbreaking ceremony for the new VA Canandaigua Medical Center Facility at Canandaigua, New York.

agency project delivery team members. And achieving this milestone, the groundbreaking for construction, was truly a team effort by all involved.” said Melody Thompson, USACE Louisville District Veterans Affairs program manager.

The project was awarded on January 18, 2018, to Pike-P. J. Dick Joint Venture, and the contractor has mobilized to begin preparatory work for the construction effort. The physical construction of the major features of work is scheduled

to begin April 30, 2018, with Phase I construction set to be completed by December 31, 2021.

“What a special project for USACE and our team to be a part of,” said Matt Lowe, USACE Louisville District Veterans Affairs Division chief. “Not only is this a great project professionally, but it allows us to influence the quality of care our veterans receive, which is rewarding on a personal level.”



USACE Rendering

Exterior rendering shows what the new medical center will look like upon completion in 2021.



Andy Kornacki

Brig. Gen. Mark Toy, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Commander speaks at the groundbreaking ceremony for the medical center facility project.

Camp Ravenna burning grounds repurposed for training ranges



Up-armored excavator moves sifted soils for final munitions clearance prior to shipment for off-site disposal during the latest remedial action at Winklepeck Burning Grounds at the former Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant in Ohio.

Katie Newton, public affairs

The Ravenna Army Ammunition Plant Environmental Restoration Team has earned high honors from the Secretary of the Army for cleanup efforts at Camp Ravenna in Ohio, which have allowed for construction of two critical training ranges for the Ohio Army National Guard.

The environmental restoration team, which is a multi-agency team composed of the Ohio Army National Guard, Army National Guard, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has the critical mission of investigating and remediating more than 80 contamination sites across the installation to enable military training.

“Along with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency our team worked together to come to a timely resolution of a long-standing cleanup obstacle and the creation of two critical training resources on the installation,” said Craig Coombs, USACE Louisville District project manager.

The team targeted a key cleanup challenge at the 200-acre Winklepeck Burning Grounds, a former open burning area used for munitions disposal from the 1940s to the 1990s. There, bulk explosives, munitions debris and ash were left onsite, and restrictions hindered the construction and functionality of new ranges.

The more than 21,000-acre Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center

in northeast Ohio is the primary training resource for the Ohio Army National Guard, but historical contamination remaining from the former ammunition plant’s operations necessitated environmental cleanup before military training operations could expand.

The original BRAC cleanup action placed digging and use restrictions on the site, restricted future development of the site, and required quarterly monitoring of the 30-mile perimeter fence around the installation.

To repurpose the Winklepeck Burning Grounds into two functioning training ranges—the MK-19 grenade range and the Multi-Purpose Machine Gun Range—the environmental restoration team created with a comprehensive site solution.

“As a team we had to come up with a result that would lift the existing restrictions on the MK-19 range and allow for construction of the newly proposed Multi-Purpose Machine Gun Range,” said Coombs. “We had to do additional investigations and remediation that would achieve that less restrictive end use.”

Part of that process involved negotiating risk assessment parameters with the Ohio EPA to allow for a more flexible reuse of the site. Ultimately, the Ohio EPA agreed to a Commercial/Industrial designation for the site, meaning only one Land Use Control, pertaining to soil contamination, would

remain: non-residential use only. Due to the potential presence of munitions-related items, explosives safety restrictions will remain in place.

“This was essential to proceeding with the additional cleanup action for Winklepeck Burning Grounds and the construction of the Multi-Purpose Machine Gun Range,” said Coombs. “The process of working through this has helped our team improve our relationship with the Ohio EPA in order to complete other remedial actions at the facility.”

Soils contaminated with explosives and polyaromatic hydrocarbons were removed in 2017. The removal included excavation and disposal of 5,250 cubic yards of soil, demolition of 26 munitions, recycling of 700 pounds of scrap metal and site restoration with native grasses.

The Multi-Purpose Machine Gun range will be constructed in Fiscal Year 2019 and with the remedial action complete, crews will have full ability to build and configure the range as designed.

“The new training range will benefit all training Soldiers in the coming decades and reaffirms the compatibility of training with environmental stewardship,” said Coombs. “We are happy to have played a part in this one and are honored to have received the Secretary of the Army Environmental Award for the project.”



Excavation sites were graded and reseeded at the completion of the remedial action. A native seed mix was utilized at each excavation site for reseeded.

New Army Reserve Center to open end of April

Carol Labashosky, public affairs

The new Army Reserve Center, Taunton, Massachusetts, set to open by the end of April, will replace the U.S. Army Reserve training center in Attleboro and will be able to accommodate up to 300 Army reservists.

"We're on schedule," said Betty Beck, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District project manager. "The construction contractor, J&J Contractors, Inc. has done a wonderful job with completing the project on time with minimal changes. The designer, Michael Baker International, has designed a state-of-the-art facility that will be very easily maintained and functional to the end user."

This project was awarded in June 2016. The teamwork has paid back dividends which enhanced the construction progress.

"The construction team from New England District has done a great job with oversight of the construction contractor. Since the on-site partnering meeting, the New England Corps of Engineers has successfully provided onsite quality control, administered modifications on the project, provided status updates, timely pictures, and worked very well with the contractor," Beck said. It was great to partner with the New England District, she continued.

Jim Fielding, New England District



The new Army Reserve Center covers 49,132 square feet and is designed for approximately 631 Reservists for training.

construction representative and project engineer, works out of the New Bedford, Massachusetts Resident Office. He said that it's his job to ensure that the \$18.4 million contract is properly enforced. According to Fielding, there were very few obstacles with the construction of the Army Reserve project.

The facility, built to achieve an energy efficient LEED designation, consists of an L-shaped structure with a military vehicle organizational maintenance shop, a garage, offices and parking. The building includes classrooms, a weapons-simulation training room, kitchen, medical and gym facilities and a storage room. Landscaping

incorporates native plants for soil reinforcement.

The reserve recruits typically train one weekend per month and two weeks in the summer. The facility will be equipped to prepare men and women to deploy anywhere in the world. The soldiers can be deployed from the facility.

Speaking about the relationship between Corps offices, Beck said that it was a great partnership among Army Reserve Installation Management Directorate, end users, 99th Reserve Support Command, contractors, New England District Construction, and the Louisville District.



The training center's organizational maintenance shop is where military vehicles and equipment is serviced and maintained. This provides hands on training to the mechanical personnel.

Louisville hosts Army Reserve partnering meeting



Hans Probst, construction division, Louisville District, briefs meeting attendees on the roles of contract administrators in the project delivery team on March 20.

Carol Labashosky, public affairs

On March 20, the Louisville District, Construction Division, Reserve Branch hosted an Administrative Contracting Officer (ACO) and Contracting Officers Representative (COR) business meeting for geographic Construction Contract Administration partners supporting the Army Reserve and Air Force Reserve Construction Program. Twenty four construction personnel from 12 partner districts across the continental United States including Puerto Rico attended the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting was to calibrate roles among the Reserve Branch as a construction program office operating similar to a very large area engineer office and its supporting field offices.

The terms COR and ACO represent formal contract authority delegations that

are granted to personnel in construction who are charged with construction contract administration duties. Typically, area engineers and resident engineers are delegated ACOs, and construction project engineers are delegated CORs.

The Reserve Construction Program for the Louisville District places approximately \$220 million to \$250 million in construction annually. Across-the-command funding means a huge amount of work is administered by 33 field offices from 15 geographic districts, according to Hans Probst, construction division, Reserve branch chief. A briefing given by Probst focused on reviewing the USACE project management business process and the roles of contract administrators in the project delivery team who serve the Army Reserve and Air Force Reserve construction contracts. Among other topics, the group

held sessions related to funds management, construction management and quality assurance planning, construction schedules and partnering.

During the meeting, Probst shared his vision of the program and the vision of Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite, USACE commander, from “SemoNote #9” relating to area and resident engineer focus. Here, Semonite encouraged a “world-class mindset – one of excellence, ingenuity, and innovation, underpinned by mutual trust of our partners, stakeholders, and the public we serve.”

“As construction professionals, the best way for us to support our project delivery teams is to effectively manage construction contracts and quality assurance to deliver the project with world-class excellence,” said Probst.

“The conference is a great platform to better understand the Reserve Construction Program procedure, said Jeremy Pagoda, project engineer, New York District, Niagara Falls. “It helped to more clearly define PDT roles by providing a more intimate setting than telecommunicating provides, and to more effectively collaborate ideas that identify ways to strengthen PDT members’ ability to deliver more efficient and successful projects.”

“I had a great experience during the meeting. It was great knowing the expectations and the available support they provide in case I needed it. It was also good to know the consistent issues they have had on previous projects. That will help me focus on those particular items and make sure I keep on top of them before they become an issue. Anytime we have lessons learned, it’s always a great help for new upcoming projects,” said Elvis Garay, civil engineer, construction division, Los Angeles District.

Workforce & Family Support

Did you know?

The USACE Family Readiness program provides a range of free, confidential services to support deployees and their families throughout the deployment cycle, including 30 days following reintegration.

Services provided include:
Mental and physical health
Religious, spiritual support
Rental and utility assistance
Services for children, youth and families
Employee Assistance Program

Questions? LRL-FamilyReadiness@usace.army.mil