

Falls City Engineer

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Salvage operations continue following
barge accident





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On the cover: Salvage crews perform lightering operations to safely transfer approximately 3,500 barrels of methanol to a nearby receiver barge at McAlpine Dam, April 6, 2023. (USACE photo by Brad Stout)



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

Commander's Comments

Team Louisville,

I hope everyone is enjoying the spring weather now that we are starting to see warmer temperatures. Plus, the Kentucky Derby is just around the corner and it's a great time to enjoy the city of Louisville. I look forward to experiencing some of the festivities with my family and encourage you to do the same.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. It serves as a reminder to bring awareness to sexual assault and the devastating effects it has on not only an individual but also their family, workplaces, communities and society. 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.

April is also a month we recognize our administrative support staff. Let me be the first to say, "thank you," to everyone who is in an administrative position and everything they do for our district. We couldn't get along without you! Thank you for everything you do.

In this issue of the Falls City Engineer, enjoy several articles focused on many of our specialized programs and the efforts of our people and teams who make the district great. Stories include highlights about the district receiving funding to advance the Louisville Metro Flood Protection System Reconstruction Project, the McAlpine barge accident, Regulatory Division's role in Kentucky's largest development project, the delivery



Col. Eric Crispino

Commander and District Engineer
Louisville District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

of a new maintenance complex at Fort Campbell, Real Estate Division's Timber Program and much more.

I continue to be proud of your work ethic and your commitment to our "winning matters" philosophy. Our programs continue to excel, and that is all because of your dedication and teamwork. Thanks again for all you do.

Building Strong! Louisville Proud!

Eric D Crispino

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Salvage operations continue following barge accident

Abby Korfhage, public affairs

Salvage Operations continue following a barge accident, which occurred March 28 at McAlpine Locks and Dam, in Louisville, Kentucky.

A vessel towing 11 barges, which were owned by Ingram Barge Company, made contact with a stationary structure at the entrance to the Portland Canal near the McAlpine Lock and Dam, and as a result, 10 of the 11 barges broke loose. Seven of the loose barges were recovered the same day, however, the remaining three barges settled against the lower McAlpine Dam structure.

The lock chambers at McAlpine Locks and Dam (Ohio River mile 606.8), were temporarily closed to traffic due to the navigation accident. The river reopened to north bound traffic at approximately 7:30 p.m. that evening, and south bound traffic reopened March 29, through the use of the local vessel traffic services.

“Our Operations team worked quickly and established a command center with the U.S. Coast Guard, the shipping and salvage company, and other agencies to coordinate recovery and salvage operations,” said Louisville District Commander Col. Eric Crispino.

Although the barges were primarily carrying corn, one barge pinned against the lower dam site contained approximately 1,400 tons of methanol.

According to CTEH’s independent toxicology experts, methanol is a water



A barge, originally full of methanol which was transferred to another barge, is successfully recovered April 7, following a barge accident that occurred near McAlpine Locks and Dam, March 28, 2023.

soluble, colorless liquid. Methanol evaporates when exposed to air, quickly dissolves in water, and is readily biodegradable. However, it is potentially harmful if ingested or inhaled in significant quantities.

The Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet immediately started sampling the Ohio River downstream from the dam and shared the results with the public daily. In total, more than 3,000 air quality samples were taken, in addition to water quality samples from locations below the dam. There was never any indication that any of

the methanol barge’s cargo tanks were ever breached, and those testing results never showed any detectable methanol in the air or water.

On March 30, one barge containing more than 2,000 tons of corn was safely removed from the lower McAlpine Dam site, leaving two barges left—including the barge carrying methanol.

On April 4, crews arrived on-site to start positioning heavy salvage equipment for the safe transfer of the methanol from the settled barge to a receiver vessel in accordance with the approved salvage plan. By April 8, the methanol cargo was successfully transferred off the pinned barge and into the receiver barge.

Louisville Water’s drinking water was safe and was not ever threatened by this event. The barge incident had no impact on local water quality, according to the Louisville Emergency Management Team.

USACE continues to work closely with the USCG, navigation industry, salvage crews, and marine surveyors to recover the final barge, which was removed off the dam April 20. However, the hopper barge remains partially sunken upstream of the dam where they will begin working to salvage and remove it from the Ohio River the week of April 23.

“A big thank you to our lock and dam’s team whose efforts have greatly contributed to this milestone being reached safely,” said Waylon Humphrey, Louisville District Operations Division chief.



Two barges owned by Ingram Barge Company are pinned against McAlpine Lock and Dam’s lower dam site after the barges broke loose from the towing vessel when approaching the Portland Canal on the Ohio River in Louisville, Kentucky.

USACE receives federal funding to advance Louisville Metro Flood Protection System Reconstruction Project

Abby Korfhage, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District has received \$1 million in federal funding to advance the Louisville Metro Flood Protection System Reconstruction Project. The funds, which were received as part of the Fiscal Year 2023 Work Plan for the Army Civil Works program, will be used to initiate the preconstruction engineering and design phase of the project.

“This funding will allow the Louisville District to begin the design process of this extremely important project for the Louisville Metro Area,” said Will Ailstock, USACE Louisville District, Chief, Civil Programs and Project Management Section. “We are eagerly looking forward to working with MSD to identify priority needs to begin the Repair, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation of the Louisville Metro Flood Protection System.”

USACE, in partnership with the non-federal sponsor—Louisville and Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD), completed a study in 2020. The study concluded with a recommendation to reconstruct the existing project to ensure the system continues to function as authorized. Major components of the project include repair and rehabilitation of 14 pump stations, modifications of two road closure structures, floodwall repairs and modifications, and gate repair and replacement. Once reconstructed, these measures will provide greater reliability to the Louisville Metro Flood Protection System by bringing 1950s-era components up to current standards.

“Following Louisville’s 1937 flood, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers designed and built a system of levee, flood wall and pump stations to protect the city from flooding,” said Tony Parrott, MSD Executive Director. “More than 70 years later, the community still counts on much of that original system when river waters rise. Louisville MSD today is steward of this important asset, as flood protection joins stormwater management and wastewater treatment to comprise our three-in-one utility approach to serve our citizens on a daily basis.”

On Oct. 10, 2018, the Corps and MSD executed a Feasibility Cost Share Agreement to investigate the need and

level of federal involvement in the reconstruction of aging facilities in the Louisville Metro Flood Protection System. The system serves over 215,000 residents and approximately 80,000 structures in the leveed area—meaning the area of the city that would be flooded if the river were as high as the top of levee, but the levee was not in place.

“In 2018, an Army Corps evaluation of the entire Ohio River flood protection system resulted in a slate of approximately \$200 million in needed updates and renewals for the system to continue to protect our growing community – the only need was funding for those improvements,” Parrott added. “The inclusion of \$1 million in this year’s Army Corps work plan is a needed down payment on flood protection for Louisville and sets the stage to pursue additional federal funding to move these critical improvement projects forward. MSD appreciates the leadership of Senator McConnell and the Army Corps to secure this funding, as well as Mayor Greenberg and Louisville Metro’s continued support

of safe, clean waterways for our residents.”

These funds, in conjunction with funds from MSD, will be used to design and prepare documents for advertisement and award of the first contract. Funding will still be required to award the contract and initiate construction. The project will be constructed in phases due to size and cost; therefore, the time to complete the project will depend upon future funding but is expected to take 5-6 years at a minimum.

The Louisville Metro Flood Protection System consists of a more than 26-miles of levee and floodwall, with 15 federally constructed pumping stations for maintaining interior drainage in times of flooding. The project was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in response to devastating floods that occurred in the Ohio River Valley in 1937 and was assigned to local interests beginning in February 1957. The project affords protection for loss of life and property damage to the City of Louisville against an Ohio River flood equal to the maximum flood of record in January 1937.



Katie Newron

The Louisville and Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District, who serves as the non-federal sponsor for the Louisville Metro Flood Protection System Reconstruction Study, conducts a tour of the Beargrass Creek Pump Station in Louisville, Kentucky, for Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Commander Brig. Gen. Kimberly Peebles and district leadership, Aug. 9, 2021. The pump station is one of 15 federally constructed pump stations within the 26.5-mile levee system around Louisville.

Cecil M. Harden Lake Hosts Open Houses for Shoreline Management Plan Update



Chris DeSmit, Cecil M. Harden park ranger, explains some of the upcoming changes to the lake's shoreline management plan to participants during the open house event held April 18, 2023.

Abby Korfhage, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District in the process of updating the Shoreline Management Plan for Cecil M. Harden Lake located in Rockville, Indiana, and recently held two open house events to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the new plan. To accommodate public availability, the workshops were held Saturday, April 15 and Tuesday, April 18 at the Bellmore Fire Department in Rockville, Indiana.

"The open house held over the weekend was attended by 80 to 100 people," said Louisville District project manager, Deryck Rodgers. "We did pickup on a few things that we need to address in the plan based on a few comments, and we've made that note."



John Chassey, Cecil M. Harden project manager, answers questions during the Open House event, April 18, 2023.

The Cecil M. Harden Shoreline Management Plan is being updated due to USACE assuming sole responsibility of the program. The plan has previously been jointly managed by USACE and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources since the 1990's.

Cecil M. Harden Lake includes 1,983 land acres, 2,110 water acres and 53 shoreline miles. The purpose of the USACE Shoreline Management Program is to protect and manage shorelines of all Civil Works water resource development projects under USACE jurisdiction in a manner that promotes the safe and healthful use by the public while maintaining environmental safeguards to ensure a quality resource for use by the public. The objective of all management actions is to achieve bal-

ance between permitted private uses and resource protection for public use.

The event held on April 18 had approximately 65 people in attendance, and the team worked diligently to answer everyone's questions.

"USACE is committed to working with property owners to implement these changes," said John Chassey, Cecil M. Harden Lake project manager. "The changes to the plan implement best management practices to secure our natural resources and the future of Cecil M. Harden Lake for generations to come."

A draft copy of the Shoreline Management Plan can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Recreation/Lakes/Cecil-M-Harden-Lake/>.



More than 150 people attended the two Cecil M. Harden Open House events in Rockville, Indiana, to learn about the new shoreline management plan.



Joe Staigl, Middle Wabash Area operations manager, talks with members of the public about some of the upcoming changes to the lake's shoreline management plan, April 18, 2023.

Regulatory Division permits crucial in construction of Kentucky's largest development project

Katie Newton, public affairs

Construction of the \$5.8 billion Ford Blue Oval SK Battery Park in Glendale, Kentucky, is one of the largest economic developments in the history of the Commonwealth. What many don't know, however, is that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District's Regulatory Division played a significant role in getting the project off the ground by ensuring the developer met necessary environmental and cultural resource requirements.

The new facility will produce batteries for the next generation of Ford's electric vehicles, but even before construction could begin, USACE had to approve Ford's permit application to ensure the avoidance, minimization and mitigation of impacts to "Waters of the U.S.," in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

"The mission of our regulatory program is to protect the nation's aquatic environment and navigation while allowing for reasonable development through fair and balanced decisions," said Eric Reusch, Chief, Regulatory Division, USACE Louisville District. "Our team worked expeditiously through all facets of the permitting process to issue a permit in under 120 days, which allowed this historic project to continue on schedule."

USACE evaluates permit applications for essentially all construction activities that occur in the nation's waters, including wetlands. When applicants are planning construction or development that would impact those waters, a permit is often required.

The construction project, which sits on 1,500 acres in Hardin County, Kentucky, disturbs approximately 728 acres, including streams and wetlands. To mitigate for impacts to those streams and wetlands, the permittee paid for compensatory mitigation credits at a cost of approximately \$20 million dollars.

The district's regulatory team was also involved with ensuring compliance of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

"Those are areas of the regulatory program that most people aren't as familiar with," said Sarah Atherton, a



Sarah Atherton

Construction of the \$5.8 billion Ford Blue Oval SK Battery Park continues in Glendale, Kentucky. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District's Regulatory Division helped to ensure the developer met necessary environmental and cultural resource requirements before construction began.

project manager in the Louisville District's Regulatory Division. "As part of any Department of the Army permit, we determine whether or not the project would have an adverse effect on endangered species or historic properties. If it would cause an adverse effect, we must work with the resource agency and the applicant to mitigate for these impacts through a Biological Opinion or a Memorandum of Agreement."

During the permit process, USACE coordinates with federal, state and local agencies, interest groups, and the public.

"Our archaeologist, Leiellen Atz, who was assisting with the review, found that a family cemetery was located within the proposed footprint of the facility. Three marked graves had been relocated in 2003, however it was recommended at the time that additional survey work be conducted," said Atherton. "Therefore, the Corps requested the applicant (Ford) work with a qualified archaeological consultant to determine if additional graves were indeed present in the indicated location."

During the consultant's fieldwork, 19 additional unmarked graves were identified in March 2022.

"There was a significant amount of public interest in the unmarked graves,

but in a situation like this our primary concern is that we are being respectful of the family and ensuring that the situation is handled with the utmost care and respect," said Leiellen Atz, Archaeologist, USACE Louisville District. Once the graves were discovered, the district hosted a virtual press conference to ensure accurate information was being shared.

"Because we were easily able to identify the descendants, all parties—to include the State Historic Preservation Office and the Kentucky Heritage Council (KHC)—were able to quickly come together to agree on a path forward," said Atz. "The site ultimately did not meet requirements to be registered on the National Register of Historic Places, but we needed to ensure that all human remains and associated burial items were appropriately relocated to another cemetery."

"We held an in-person meeting with descendants of the individuals in the cemetery and representatives from the KHC to discuss the relocation plan prepared by Ford's archaeological consultant to ensure that the family felt it was appropriate," said Atz.

The cemetery relocation, performed by Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc. (CRA), began on May 18, 2022. The graves, dating

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

back to 1840-1900s, were relocated to an adjacent property owned by one of the descendants.

Representatives from the Louisville District visited the site while excavation was ongoing and observed that CRA was conducting the excavations with respect and care to ensure that all remains, and associated items were removed.

A special condition was included in the permit prohibiting Ford from working near the cemetery until archaeological excavation and removal of all interments was completed, Atherton noted. This coordination allowed the applicant to proceed with their aggressive timeline.

Atherton said the scale and complexity of this project is a testament to the breadth and depth of the Corps' Regulatory Program.

"We were also evaluating the permit application under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. Threatened and endangered species listed as potentially present in the project area included the gray bat, Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat, and snuffbox mussel. Tree clearing was proposed onsite which would remove potential roosting and foraging habitat for the listed bat species," said Atherton.

"In instances like this, when a project is likely to have an adverse effect on the listed bat species through tree clearing, the USACE, in conjunction with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, requires the permittee to perform mitigation through adherence with an existing intra-service Biological Opinion. The applicant made a voluntary contribution to the Imperiled Bat Conservation Fund to ensure the



Sarah Atherton

Regulatory Division conducts a follow-up compliance check on the site of the new Ford Blue Oval SK Battery Park in Glendale, Kentucky to ensure the applicant is adhering to permit conditions during construction. The compliance and enforcement of permit decisions ensures continued protection of the nation's aquatic resources even after construction is complete.

proposed tree clearing would not jeopardize the continued existence of the listed bat in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act," said Atherton.

USACE issued a permit for the Ford Oval SK Battery Park on May 20, 2022, after all environmental and cultural consultations were completed and all permit conditions were met.

However, issuing a permit isn't the end of the story for the district's regulatory team.

After a permit is issued the regulatory team follows up with compliance checks to ensure the applicant is adhering to the permit conditions.

"We go out and visit the site to see if they are building what was authorized and ensure they are not causing additional impacts to waters," said Atherton. "For example, are sediment/erosion control measures being implemented, is the permittee in compliance with other requirements in the permit, those types of things."

The compliance and enforcement of permit decisions is an integral part of the process and ensures continued protection of the nation's aquatic resources even after construction is complete, said Atherton.

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USACE completes maintenance complex for Army Field Support Battalion at Fort Campbell

Charles Delano, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers delivered a 117,034 square-foot maintenance complex to the Army Field Support Battalion during a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, March 15, 2023.

The project, with a programmed amount of \$44.7 million, consisted of the construction of four general purpose maintenance facilities that includes an allied shop building, engine auto shop, production control building and a paint booth building. The project also included 42,110 square feet of concrete parking.

The new complex consolidates 28 AFSBn maintenance shops, which were in 11 separate locations, into a single complex consisting of seven buildings.

The project focused on cost savings by consolidating and replacing many of the aging WWII-era buildings with energy efficient facilities that would accommodate the maintenance of large equipment used by the garrison.

“It’s been great to have the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers come up with a plan to make this facility,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Dwayne Terry, Army Field Support Battalion commander. “It’s a one stop shop. Soldiers can come here, and they can drop off their vehicles, radios, weapons, and so forth all in one location as opposed to being spread out throughout Fort Campbell.”



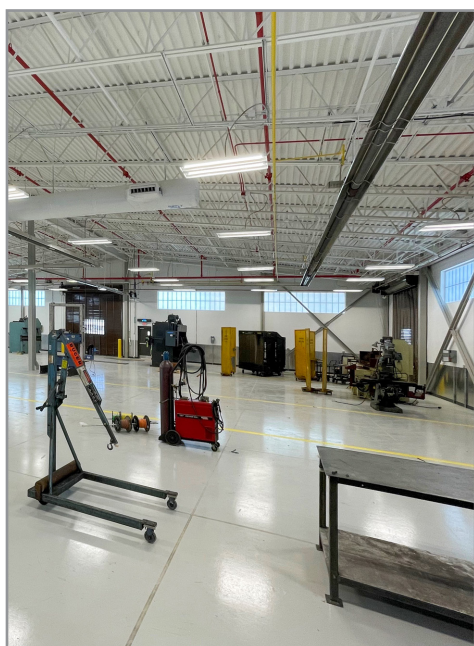
Charles Delano

U.S. Army Col. Jared Bordwell, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) chief of staff, U.S. Army Col. Larry R. Dean, 406th Army Field Support Brigade commander, U.S. Army Lt. Col. Dwayne M. Terry, Army Field Support Battalion-Campbell commander and Mark Bean, Installation Maintenance Division chief perform the ceremonial ribbon cutting at a ceremony marking the completion of the Army Field Support Battalion Maintenance Complex, March 15, 2023 at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

One of the challenges during the project was the regional cement shortage that prevented the timely receipt of concrete. Through additional planning and communication, the required amount of concrete was obtained to finish the project.

“With every success, there are bound to be challenges,” said Jason Phillips, U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers Fort Campbell resident engineer. “The Fort Campbell team consistently overcomes obstacles by leveraging the skills of our diverse professionals, using the best engineering practices and fostering strategic partnerships.”



Charles Delano



Charles Delano

Vehicles and equipment are seen in the newly opened Army Field Support Battalion maintenance building, March 15, 2023 at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. The building is part of a 123,000 square-foot complex, which modernizes and consolidates 26 buildings in 11 locations into four buildings.

Veterans Affairs

Stormwater management key to successful construction

Michael Maddox, public affairs

Thousands of things must be considered and planned for in the construction of a complex facility like a new hospital and the multiple support facilities they require. Of course, many of the decisions involved are essential to guaranteeing the new facility can provide the best quality care for patients – ensuring their health for years to come.

One consideration that may not come to mind to the average person for such a facility is how to preserve the environment underneath and around the new construction. This includes the construction of a rainwater drainage system so as not to disrupt the way water moves after large amounts of rainwater accumulate from storms.

Keeping this in mind, the Louisville District's Veterans Affairs team included the construction of four underground stormwater collection tanks in the plans for the new facility. The system is designed to comply with the federal requirement that the quantity and rate of runoff upon construction completion be less than that before construction. The stormwater management system design for this site greatly exceeds these requirements.

"The tanks on the site will allow for the temporary storage of runoff in large underground chambers before releasing it at a controlled rate to mitigate harmful effects such as erosion or flooding," said Carl Lindsay, lead quality assurance representative for the Louisville VA Medical Center mega-project. "All of the tanks are connected to storm pipes to create a complete stormwater system. This system allows water to be gathered in various tanks and be released to other places on site such as other tanks, stormwater management areas, or offsite."

Between the four storage tanks, 626,754 cubic feet or 4,688,445 gallons of water can be held and released a little at a time.

Maggie Hoehler, Quality Assurance representative for the Louisville VA Medical Center, said the stormwater system will provide better control of runoff for the project site and surrounding areas.

"This is imperative because the runoff coefficient for the 34 acres of land the VA hospital will sit on will increase due to the number of buildings and paved areas being placed on the site, which reduces the amount of natural ground surface. This



The Louisville District's Veterans Affairs team included the construction of four underground stormwater collection tanks in the plans for the new facility.

in turn increases the amount of rainwater that will not be absorbed, which creates runoff," she explained. "The stormwater system here at the VA hospital will control the amount of runoff from the site by providing a sort of "temporary storage" and controlling the release after rain events so as not to overwhelm the storm drainage systems downstream from the site."

The \$900 million project includes the construction of a new 910,115 square-foot medical center, parking structures, a 42,205 square-foot central utility plant, roadways, sidewalks, and other site improvements.

The new 104-bed, full-service hospital will provide world-class healthcare for more than 45,000 Veterans in Kentucky and

Southern Indiana by integrating modern patient-centered care concepts to provide the best possible care for Veterans. In addition, to specifically address the needs of women Veterans, the new hospital will include a Women's Health Clinic with four Patient Aligned Care Teams.

The project designed by URS-Smith Group Joint Venture is being constructed by Walsh-Turner Joint Venture II, Chicago, Illinois.

Construction is anticipated to be complete in 2026.

To learn more about the project visit: www.va.gov/louisville-health-care/programs/new-robley-rex-va-medical-center.



A contractor uses a hoe ram to clear out bedrock in preparation for installing a rainwater storage tank on the site of the new Louisville VA Medical Center Feb. 15, 2023.

USACE completes, turns over new maintenance hangar at Grissom Air Reserve Base

Abby Korfhage, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District successfully managed the completion of a new maintenance hangar at Grissom Air Reserve Base in Indiana.

The Grissom Maintenance Hangar 437 project achieved substantial completion March 8, 2023, and was made available for owner use the following day, March 9. The \$13 million project provides the 434th Air Refueling Wing with a second fully enclosed hangar.

“Previously, the Wing performed maintenance on the entire KC-135 fleet in five nose docks and one fully enclosed hangar,” said Seth Dow, Louisville District project engineer. “Grissom ARB has a fairly harsh winter climate, so the improved working conditions for airmen maintainers during the winter months will likely improve efficiency of maintenance and training.”

The Grissom Hangar 437 project consisted of an expansion and renovation to the existing Nose Dock 5 facility on Grissom ARB. The expansion, and ultimately enclosure, of the facility provided an additional 13,700 square feet of climate-controlled space to perform maintenance on the 434th Air Refueling Wing’s fleet of aircraft.

“Additionally, in conjunction with the



The Grissom Hangar 437 project consisted of an 13,700 square feet expansion and renovation to the existing Nose Dock 5 facility on Grissom Air Reserve Base in Indiana.

USACE Army Reserve National Roofing program, the Facility 437 roof was the sixth and final hangar roof to be replaced by USACE contracts within the last four years,” said Dow. “This additional space will prove to be indispensable for years to come.”

According to the team, the biggest challenge with this project was the installation of the fire suppression system. Nearly 70 percent of the way through the construction contract duration, the Department of the Air Force issued a memorandum titled ‘Sundown Policy

for Foam Fire Suppression Systems,’ and according to Jeffrey Burnett, Louisville District Indiana Resident Engineer, the Air Force Reserves requested USACE take out the old system and install a new Pre-Action Water System.

“This policy directive resulted in a significant modification that overhauled the facility’s entire fire suppression system to include 100 percent demolition of the old system and replacement with an entire new system,” Dow said. “It was originally contracted to be a tie-in, and extension-of, the existing fire suppression system.”

Ultimately the contract was modified to incorporate the new requirements.

“This challenge was overcome by stakeholder engagement and working as a project delivery team to define a new Scope of Work, modify the contract, and allow the Contractor to design and install the new system,” Dow said. “The Designer of Record, contractor, Louisville District staff, Air Force Civil Engineer Center, Grissom Base Civil Engineer, Grissom Fire Department, and many others played a vital role in executing this modification successfully.”

The entire team worked together to ensure a successful project delivery, according to Dow.

“The contractor’s management of the project’s construction, and partnering with USACE and Grissom BCE, proved paramount to the project’s success,” Dow said.



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Louisville District successfully managed the completion of a new maintenance hangar at Grissom Air Reserve Base in Indiana. The \$13 million project provides the 434th Air Refueling Wing with a second fully enclosed hangar.

District foresters see the value in trees



Charles Delano

Contractors harvest timber, April 12, 2023, at Camp Atterbury. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers district foresters manage timber sales on military installations in the five-state area of Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio and Michigan.

Charles Delano, public affairs

Trees are not the first topic one thinks of when describing the Louisville District mission. In the Real Estate Division Forestry Team reside Barry Tucker, Certified Forester, and Martin Wilson, who are dedicated professional foresters with a “Can Do” attitude.

As part of the mission of the Real Estate Division, foresters administer the management and disposal of real property for both civil works and military projects. In this case, real property is trees and the disposal is in the form of timber sales. The USACE Forestry Team ensures the execution of the Army’s forest and land management goals through various disposal and real estate actions.

“It’s not about the timber sale or revenue generated,” said Barry Tucker, Louisville District Forester. “It is about enabling the Army mission of training troops, stewardship of the environment and contributing to the quality of life by providing goods and services to the American people for the present and future generations.”

Louisville District foresters manage the timber sales on military installations located in Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio. But that is not all they do. They have also crossed district and division lines to carry out forestry tasks such as timber assessments on trespasses, wetland

mitigation and land purchases. They have even been called to assist with large forest fires.

“Our Fort Knox forestry program has a solid and professional partnership with the Louisville District,” said David Jones, Forestry Program manager, Fort Knox Directorate of Public Works. “Through the experience and expertise provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, our forestry program functions well.”

Although timber sales are a large portion

of a USACE forester’s job, it might be easy to overlook the fact that they are foresters with an extensive skillset. These skills are used to advise and assist the Department of Defense and federal land holding agencies with matters relating to timber as real property, land management, forest inventories, forest insects and diseases, forest industry trends and market conditions, and wildland and prescribed fire implementation and risk assessment.

“During a timber sale at the Fort Knox



USACE

Martin Wilson, Louisville District forester, measures a white oak during timber inventory. District foresters ensure multiple-use of forest resources to support the mission objectives of military installations and civil works projects.

Wilcox Range project, we were able to identify 1000 loads of harvestable timber from an impact zone,” Tucker said. “Metal from range ammunition that was embedded in the trees caused the timber not to be harvestable. By identifying the clean timber, we were able to salvage 2.1 million board feet of lumber and 9,000 tons of pulpwood.”

Another important aspect from timber sales is the revenue generated from the tree disposal. With annual timber proceeds are excess of \$13 million, the Army boasts the largest forestry program within the Department of Defense. Of that total, annual revenue from timber sales on military installations within the Louisville District have averaged more than \$1 million for the past ten years which ranked the district fourth out of ten districts. State and county governments receive forty percent of the net timber income which is used for schools and roads.

“The Army Corps of Engineers is a great resource for the forestry program at Camp Atterbury,” said Devin Fishel, Camp

Atterbury lead forester. “It is a win-win for us. We get the timber ready and USACE makes the sales happen.”

In addition to timber sales, district foresters also manage agricultural land outgrants on military installations. This serves the two purposes of reducing mowing and maintenance of many acres of land on installations as well as provides a revenue stream from farmers who use the land to grow hay or crops. Projected revenue of agricultural leases this year is more than \$600,000 which ranks the Louisville District third nationally out of 15 districts for 2022.

“Not only does the Louisville District forestry program assist the military mission, it also provides ecological benefits such as enhancing wildlife habitat, improving timber quality and increasing forest regeneration,” said Nancy Davis, Louisville District Real Estate Division deputy chief.

Which ever way you look at it, district foresters are tasked with the important job of managing timber, supporting the Army

mission and maintaining a healthy forest through good land stewardship practices.

“Army forestry works,” Tucker said. “For the mission – for the environment – for the people.”



Barry Tucker, Louisville District forester, stands near harvested timber.

Spotlight

Former Co-op student now leads District's current largest project

Michael Maddox, public affairs

With hard work and perseverance, anything is possible, just ask Tara O’Leary. Little did she know that when she started working for the Louisville District in 1996 that she would one day be leading the team on one of its mega-projects.

O’Leary, who is now the Deputy Chief of the Veterans Affairs Division and Louisville VAMC project manager, started her journey with the district as a co-op student while attending the University of Louisville to study engineering.

“I did three semesters of co-ops, in the Engineering Division - in Environmental, Structural, and Geotechnical. The co-ops gave me a great overview of what the Engineering Division does,” she said.

She eventually graduated from the University of Louisville’s Speed Scientific School, now known as the J.B. Speed School of Engineering, and holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering and a Master of Engineering in Civil Engineering.

“When I graduated I came back to work full-time in the Environmental Branch. The district worked with me to



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determine my placement upon graduation, but with my degree being more focused on environmental, I thought that the Environmental Branch would be the best fit,” she said.

O’Leary said she enjoyed her time in the

district’s Environmental program, where she worked for about 10 years.

“I worked a lot on Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) projects focused on soil and groundwater cleanups on

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bases that had been closed or excessed. I also worked on the Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) program where the government took control of older properties that were formerly owned or leased by the government. Many of these sites were used back in World War I and World War II, so it was really interesting to get to work on historical types of sites,” she shared.

She later decided to take a position in the Engineering Management Branch.

“When Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) occurred in 2005, there was a lot of Army Reserve work in Engineering Management. I had done a previous rotation in there, and they asked if I would come back and help out with the increased workload. I managed designs of Army Reserve facilities for about 10 years,” she said.

The new position allowed her to try something new, learn about another of the district’s missions and grow personally and professionally.

“Traveling the country was good. I got to travel to the west coast and visit some places I would have not normally have visited. I also worked on a lot of projects in the northeast,” O’Leary said. “It was great – I got to get to know and work with some great people on my teams. I still reach out to and talk to many of them today.”

O’Leary joined the District’s Veteran’s Affairs Division in 2018.

“At the time the Louisville VA Medical Center project was scheduling to award, I had an opportunity to come over and transition out of what I had been doing. I was excited – at the time I had been with the Corps for over close to 20 years but had never worked on a project in my own state let alone my home city,” she said.

O’Leary was named the project manager for the \$900 million project last year after the former project manager retired. She said it’s challenging and exciting to be managing such a large project for the district.

“I didn’t know that when I started out that I would ever picture myself in this type of role,” she explained. “The magnitude is exciting because you can’t miss seeing the project. People drive by the site on the interstate and know it’s there and what it is. I am proud to be involved in building something in my own community that’s going to be here for 50-plus years. I am proud to be building something that is going to serve the Veterans in the area for many years to come, especially since these are my co-workers, my family, and people I go to church with.”

“My position is also multi-hatted, while I’m the project manager, I’m also the deputy of the VA Division – I have had to find my balance of how best my time is used. It all comes down to prioritization That’s probably my hardest challenge right

now, balancing all of the demands with my time, but having good team members helps me achieve that balance.”

“An important part of any team, especially a newly established one, is communication – just learning how to talk to each other and work together, what the needs are of a certain agency or team member versus what your needs and priorities are. If you peel back the layers and get to the root of any successful teams, a lot of it leads back to communication and how you build that spirit of teamwork,” she said. “You have to surround yourself with good people that can work together as a team and who understand where you may need help, support or backup.”

O’Leary attributes her success to her upbringing from a young age.

“I came from a background of where I was empowered and supported to do anything I wanted. So when I made the decision to go into the engineering field, I felt I could succeed,” she said. “You just have to be confident in who you are, what your abilities are, and what you can do and not let those around you tell you otherwise. People will see what you bring to the table and that you are a valuable member of the team. A lot of it comes from being passionate about what you are doing and confident in who you are and that you can do what you want to do.”



Tara O’Leary, Deputy Chief of the Veterans Affairs Division and Louisville VAMC project manager, speaks to members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Regional Leadership Development Program, LDP3, as they toured the site of the Louisville VA Medical Center Dec. 12, 2022.

Michael Maddox

Louisville District Deputy Commander gets promoted to lieutenant Colonel

Abby Korfhage, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Great Lakes and Ohio River Division Deputy Commander Col. Jason Buursma promoted Louisville District Deputy Commander Maj. Guillermo Guandique to lieutenant colonel in a promotion ceremony held at McAlpine Locks and Dam in Louisville, Kentucky, April 14, 2023.

"I am honored to be here for this special occasion," said Buursma.

Lt. Col. Guillermo Guandique commissioned as an engineer officer in 2007 from the United States Military Academy and has held several different critical positions throughout his Army career. Guandique joined the Louisville District as the deputy commander, June 16, 2022.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to continue to serve, now as a lieutenant colonel," Guandique said. "The last 16 years feel like they've flown by, and I'm still learning every day. Thank you to everyone for their support."



Louisville District Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Guillermo Guandique is pinned by his wife and children during his promotion ceremony held in Louisville, Kentucky, April 14, 2023.

