

# TOWER TIMES

April/May 2025

## RAMPING UP FOR RECREATION SEASON



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Rock Island District





## Mission

The Rock Island District's mission is to deliver vital engineering and water resource solutions in collaboration with our partners to secure our Nation, reduce disaster risk and enhance quality of life, providing value to the region and Nation.

## Vision

A premier public service, engineering organization of trusted, talented professionals delivering innovative and sustainable solutions to the region and Nation.

**Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District**  
Col. Aaron M. Williams

**Deputy Commander**  
Maj. Matthew Fletcher

**Chief, Corporate Communications**  
Allen Marshall

**Editor**  
Sam Heilig

**Editorial Contributors**  
Jim Finn  
Frances Candelaria  
Jordan Raiff

## Disclaimer

This publication is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the Tower Times are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or the Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

It is published bimonthly by the Corporate Communications Office, Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Articles or photographic submissions are welcome and should be submitted by the 15th of each month preceding publication. Circulation 1,000.



**US Army Corps of Engineers**  
Rock Island District  
Clock Tower Building  
P.O. Box 2004  
Rock Island, IL 61204-2004  
Email: cemvr-cc@usace.army.mil  
Phone: (309) 794-4200

# TOWER TIMES

## CONTENTS

- 3 Honoring 250 Years of Service: A Legacy Built by People**  
Col. Aaron M. Williams, District Commander
- 4 From Sediment to Sustainability:**  
**Making Beneficial Use of Dredged Material**
- 6 Deployment Spotlight: Helping Georgia**  
**Communities Recover from Hurricane Helene**
- 7 Ecosystem Restoration Project Taking Shape on**  
**Mississippi River - Sabula Lakes**
- 8 Ramping Up for Recreation Season**
- 10 Temporary Exhibit Traces Illinois River's**  
**History Past and Present**
- 11 Employee Spotlight: Jeff Dupont**
- 12 Emergency Operations Center Activated**  
**for Muscatine Island Levee System**
- 14 Around the District**
- 15 Learn Before You Launch: Boating Safety**



### On the Cover

A man stands with bow drawn, ready to shoot a target at the Saylorville Lake archery range. Located in the Bob Shetler Recreation Area, the range is open daily, sunrise to sunset April 15-November 1.

*Photo by Frances Candelaria*

View on the web: [www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Media/Publications/TowerTimes.aspx](http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Media/Publications/TowerTimes.aspx)

## Honoring 250 Years of Service: A Legacy Built by People

Rock Island Team,

June is quickly approaching, and with it comes our celebration of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' 250th Anniversary. This historic occasion provides an opportunity for reflection, pride, and recognition of the significant contributions by USACE and ALL employees past and present.

Our rich history is and remains a direct reflection of our workforce. Since its inception when General George Washington appointed Colonel Richard Gridley as the first Chief Engineer on June 16, 1775, USACE has been at the forefront of engineering excellence. Throughout the centuries, USACE has played a crucial role in the expansion of the Nation's waterborne and land-based transportation networks, and the building of dams and levees to reduce risk and safeguard our communities serves as a vital asset to our fellow Americans.

Though the character of our requirements and technology has and will continue to change, the nature of our business remains the same. We will continue to push the bounds of possibility by continuing advanced research, leveraging materials, methods, and innovative concepts, and providing the very best workforce to keep America at the forefront of scientific and engineering breakthroughs to deliver our critical programs. We are problem-solvers, and we are the very best in the world.

Rock Island District has some of the very best experts in all of USACE. The District's long history has been solidified in the legacy that surrounds us. Your can-do attitude and dedication to the mission —and to each other —continue building this legacy.

In my many engagements across our District, it remains evident that our powerful workforce is always looking for the next challenge and a better way to deliver our mission, regardless of the task. I am proud to step foot in our District every single day and I can see the immense pride our workforce takes in their work.

Although over the last 250 years our missions have evolved, USACE remains steadfast as an unmatched provider of capability. Together, we will continue delivering engineering solutions for our Nation's toughest challenges.


I encourage you to take a few moments to reflect on our past, present, and future. Consider those who came before us and the impact past leaders and supervisors may have had on you. Also, think about the impact you have on others around you and the contributions you provide daily to make our Nation better. No mission is too small or trivial. Essayons, or "Let Us Try", the USACE motto, embodies the spirit of our workforce. Our workforce displays the character of our organization every day.

Continuing Building Strong and Essayons!



Col. Aaron M. Williams  
District Commander

Appreciate you,

Col. Aaron M. Williams  
Rock Island District Commander  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 



# FROM SEDIMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY: MAKING BENEFICIAL USE OF DREDGED MATERIAL

By Sam Heilig, Public Affairs Specialist

**T**he largest and oldest mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District is navigation which involves operating and maintaining the 9-foot navigation channel on the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway. These critical transportation corridors are essential for moving billions of dollars in cargo each year. This work includes the continuous operation and maintenance of 18 lock and dam sites, as well as dredging approximately 750,000 cubic yards of material annually from the navigation channels.

The lock and dam system operated by the Rock Island District is vital for maintaining water levels and ensuring vessels can safely navigate shallow or seasonally fluctuating areas. River regulating structures (wing and closing dams) were designed to increase flow in the navigational channel. However sediment buildup or shoaling is inevitable and must be addressed through regular removal of this material.

To keep the channels open, the District operates a floating plant that includes dredges, barges, and support vessels. These crews work continuously during the navigation season to address “trouble spots” where sediment accumulates and threatens safe passage for commercial vessels. Problem areas are identified through hydrographic surveys and real-

time reports from river users, allowing the District to respond quickly and prevent disruptions to navigation.

Sediment removed during dredging is evaluated for placement through the Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP), which ensures materials are managed in a safe, cost-effective, and environmentally responsible way.

According to Wendy Frohlich, program manager for the USACE Rock Island District’s DMMP, the DMMP is essential for the long-term sustainability of navigation along the Illinois Waterway and Upper Mississippi River. The program identifies, evaluates, and secures placement sites for dredged material. When going through this process, the Rock Island District prioritizes operational efficiency, environmental acceptability, and social responsibility to ensure placement sites meet the federal standard.

“The District strives to take a proactive, long-term planning approach by identifying and securing placement sites before existing ones reach capacity,” said Frohlich. “However, as dredging needs continue, cost-effective placement options are becoming limited. That’s where the Beneficial Use Program becomes essential – turning a challenge into an opportunity.”

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Beneficial Use Program promotes the reuse of dredged materials



**A contractor uses dredged material from the Rock Island District’s Beneficial Use Program to build up the head of Steamboat Island for an Upper Mississippi River Restoration – Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project near LeClaire, Iowa. Photo by Matthew Martin**



for environmental restoration and community benefit. Rather than viewing sediment as waste, the program transforms it into a resource.

Common beneficial uses include:

- **Habitat restoration** – Creating or enhancing wetlands and wildlife habitat
- **Beach nourishment** – Replenishing eroded shorelines and improving recreational use
- **Land reclamation** – Restoring degraded areas for agricultural or recreational use
- **Construction applications** – Maintaining or rehabilitation of levees

Frolich said, about 60% of dredged material nationwide is reused for beneficial purposes. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers aims to increase this to 70% by 2030, and the Rock Island District is leading the way with approximately 86% of its current dredged material being put to beneficial use.

“We’ve been working closely with federal, state, and local stakeholders to identify opportunities where dredged material could be used,” said Frohlich. “Whether it’s enhancing wildlife habitat or utilizing material for levee rehabilitation, we’re always looking for new and innovative uses.”


By evaluating the reuse potential of sediment at every project site, the District maximizes value while minimizing environmental impact. A recent example of this integrated approach is the collaborative effort to restore portions of Steamboat Island on the Mississippi River.

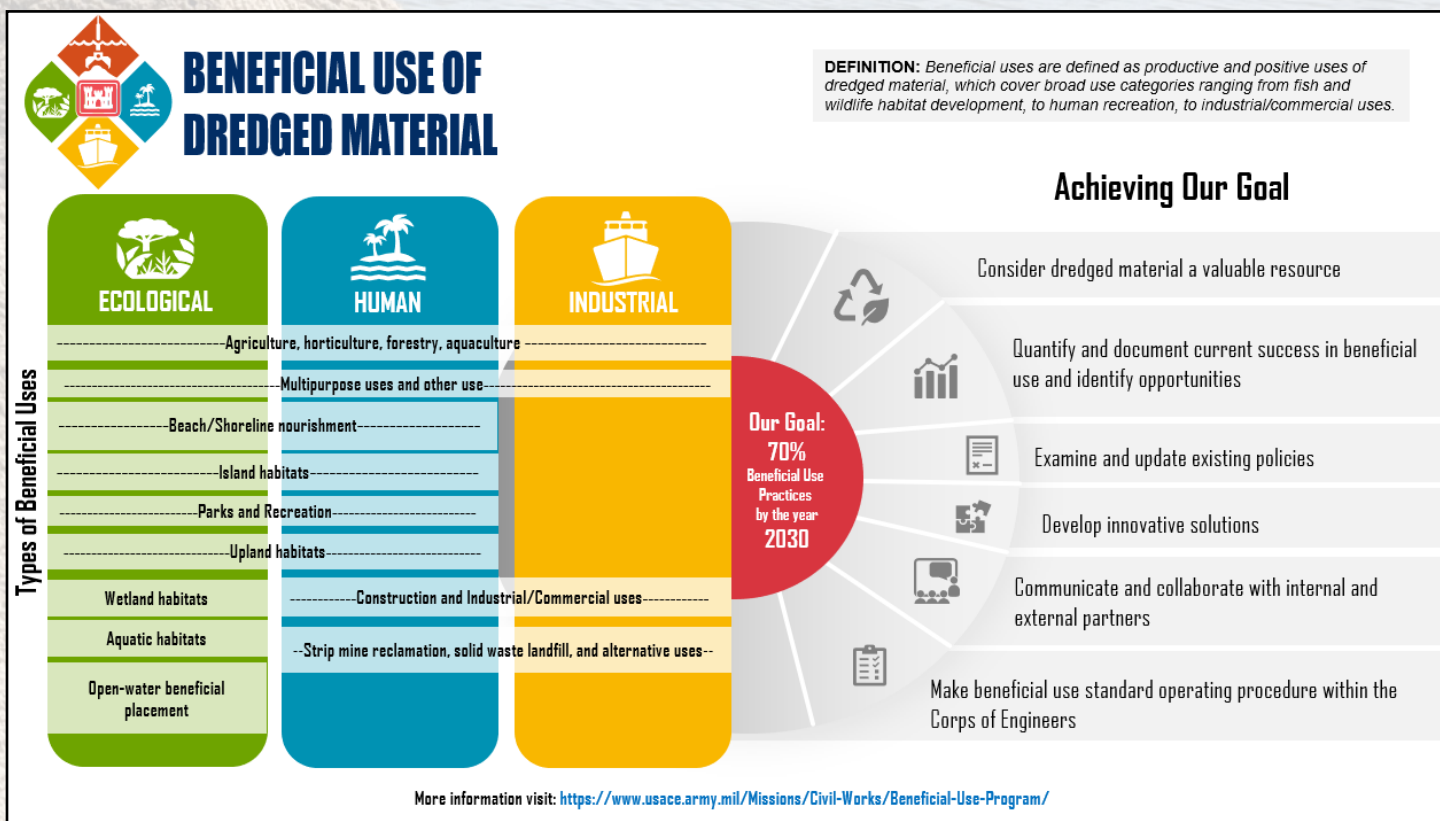
“For the first time in Rock Island District history, the Operations Division’s Channel Maintenance Program partnered with the Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program to use dredged material from the main channel of the Mississippi River on the Steamboat Island Habitat Rehabilitation and Enhancement Project,” said project manager Jessie Dunton. “Approximately 12,500 cubic yards of dredge material was beneficially used to reestablish the head of Steamboat Island.”

This collaborative effort resulted in cost and time savings for both programs due to the reduction in distance the material needed to be moved. The project also strengthened relationships between USACE programs and provided an opportunity for project sponsors from other agencies to work with the different USACE programs.

“This collaboration has paved the way for future opportunities and innovative ways of working together,” said Dunton.

Through its integrated approach to sediment management, the Rock Island District is not only keeping commerce moving, but helping to support commercial endeavors, protect communities and restore habitats for long-term ecological health of the river.

To learn more about the Beneficial Use Program or how to request free dredged material, visit: [www.mvr.usace.army.mil/missions/navigation/dredging/beneficial-use/](http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/missions/navigation/dredging/beneficial-use/). 





# DEPLOYMENT SPOTLIGHT: HELPING GEORGIA COMMUNITIES RECOVER FROM HURRICANE HELENE

By Sam Heilig, Public Affairs Specialist

For 55 days, Abigail Culloton traded her civil engineering job in the USACE Rock Island District's Hydraulic Engineering Section for life in the field as part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' emergency response to Hurricane Helene in Georgia.

Supporting the debris recovery mission as a quality assurance (QA) representative, Culloton's deployment spanned three counties and included long days, demanding work schedules, and meaningful connections with local residents and fellow USACE staff.

"This was my first deployment," said Culloton. "It was really fulfilling to be on the ground helping a community recover from a disaster."

The mission began in Jenkins County, where Culloton spent her first month monitoring crews removing hazardous trees and storm debris from rural roads. Days were spent driving between work sites, logging progress in an online reporting system, ensuring safety standards were being met, and helping to determine what could be cleared. After the initial cleanup phase ended in late February, her focus shifted to debris disposal operations in Montgomery and Lowndes counties.

"At that point, I was stationed at various debris storage and final disposal sites," said Culloton. "I worked either up in towers making load calls and photographing debris or collecting and logging load

tickets from contractors on the ground."

Throughout the deployment, life centered around long 12-hour shifts, hotel stays, and takeout meals, but small moments made a lasting impact.

"There was a local restaurant in Jenkins County where the staff learned our names and our orders like we were part of the community," Culloton said. "One day, one of them told us how much we meant to them and the town. That moment really stuck with me."

The engineer recalled hearing personal stories from residents affected by the storm, many of whom endured weeks without power due to washed-out roads and fallen trees. While much of the debris was cleared by the time she arrived for her deployment, remnants of the storm—damaged trees, rooftops, and signs—still lingered.

"People were willing to help each other even with limited resources," she said. "Their kindness and resilience reaffirmed the importance of what we were doing."

Despite the physical demands and fast pace, the experience offered valuable insights—both professionally and personally.

"As a civil engineer, it was interesting to see how the systems we build hold up in major events and how critical it is to invest in resilient infrastructure," she said. "It deepened my appreciation for our work on flood risk and sustainability."

Looking back, Culloton says she would deploy again without hesitation.

"In talking with others, I learned that every deployment is different, and there's always something new to learn," she said. "I also made great connections with Corps employees from across the country—people I hope to work with again."

For those considering deployment, Culloton's advice is simple: "Take the opportunity to get to know people—both in the Corps and in the communities. That's where you find the meaning in the mission."



While deployed for the Hurricane Helene Debris Recovery mission quality assurance representatives, like Culloton, monitor crews like the one shown here as they removed roadway hazards such as downed trees and broken limbs. *Photo by Abigail Culloton*



# ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT TAKING SHAPE ON MISSISSIPPI RIVER - SABULA LAKES

By Sam Heilig, Public Affairs Specialist



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, is moving forward with plans to restore a portion of the Sabula Lakes complex located in Pool 13 of the Upper Mississippi River near Sabula, Iowa. This effort is part of the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP), which is a first-of-its-kind initiative that integrates navigation improvements with large-scale ecosystem restoration. The project, which is anticipated to cost more than \$10 million, aims to revitalize 257 acres of critical backwater habitat.

“Over the years, the Sabula Lakes complex has experienced habitat degradation due to reduced hydrologic connectivity to the main stem of the river, shallow water depths, overpopulation of aquatic nuisance species, increased nutrient cycling, and loss of aquatic diversity,” said Elizabeth Bruns, lead water quality engineer on the project. “These changes have impacted critical habitats for native fish and aquatic plants, waterfowl, and other wildlife species. The restoration project aims to reverse these trends by increasing depth diversity and quality of backwater habitat.”

Proposed restoration features for the area include dredging to increase water depth, using dredged material to construct islands, installing a fish barrier to reduce access to spawning habitat heavily used by nuisance fish species, and building fish habitat structures to create habitat diversity.

“These actions will help improve backwater habitat for native fish, promote native vegetation growth, and enhance resting and feeding habitat for migratory birds,” said Bruns.


Every ecosystem restoration project on the Mississippi River is different, but this one is particularly unique due to its proximity to the city of Sabula and the community’s strong interest in the project.

“The majority of our projects are more remote and don’t often involve potential impacts to a levee or a city’s infrastructure,” said Bruns. “This one being located next to ‘Iowa’s Island City’ presented a new level of special considerations for us during the planning phase.”

A tentatively selected plan for the project was recently finalized and is now available for public review on the project’s website at: [www.mvr.usace.army.mil/nesp/sabula-lakes/](http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/nesp/sabula-lakes/). The public comment period is open until June 20. Construction is anticipated to take approximately two years to complete.

“NESP represents a balanced approach to river management,” said Andrew Goodall, program manager. “It recognizes that the Mississippi River is both an economic lifeline and an ecological treasure.”

By combining navigation reliability with environmental restoration, NESP aims to support the long-term sustainability of the river system. The Sabula Lakes restoration, along with other habitat restoration projects across the basin, is expected to deliver lasting ecological benefits for fish, wildlife, and the surrounding communities.

For more information on the Sabula Lakes Project or the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program, visit [www.mvr.usace.army.mil](http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil) or contact the Rock Island District at 309-794-4200. 



# RAMPING UP FOR RECREATION SEASON

By Frances Candelaria, Public Affairs Specialist

As temperatures rise and grass begins to green, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recreation sites across the Rock Island District are reopening for the spring and summer seasons. After being closed for the winter, many areas such as campgrounds, day-use areas, boat ramps, and beaches, often need a lot of work.

"Every spring, natural resource management staff conduct thorough inspections and perform a variety of maintenance tasks to ensure the safety and enjoyment of our guests," said Sierra Phipps, park ranger at Saylorville Lake.

This work includes activities such as removing potential hazards like overhanging branches, leveling camping pads, repairing or replacing damaged picnic tables and fire rings to meet safety and usability standards. Rangers also test each campsite's electrical hook-ups, clear winter debris from trails, take care of landscaping needs, install courtesy docks at the boat ramps, place safety buoys, and restock life

jacket loaner stations.

"All this is done to create a safe and welcoming environment for all visitors," Phipps said.

According to Phipps, USACE recreation areas rank among the nation's most visited outdoor destinations with many parks located within 50 miles of major metropolitan area.

"These parks serve as convenient gateways to nature for urban residents seeking outdoor experiences," said Phipps. "From wildlife observation and hiking to camping and water activities there are plenty of excellent adventures to enjoy."



From the Visitor Center to the life jacket loaner stations, around the lake everything must be prepared for recreation season to begin. Photos by Frances Candelaria and Kelcy Hanson





**Park Ranger Maxwell Zimmerman clears tree debris from a hiking/biking trail at Saylorville Lake.**

*Photo by Justin Edwards*

While the USACE Rock Island District offers recreational opportunities suited to every visitor's interest and ability, natural resource management staff encourage the importance of safety when enjoying these spaces.

"For everyone's safety and enjoyment visitors should always observe posted signage and restrictions," Phipps stated. "When recreating in, on, or near water, each person must wear a properly fitted life jacket—this essential safety measure protects everyone participating in water activities. Remember: life jackets save lives!"

Phipps also clarified how the warmer months increase the types of activities available, yet visitors are welcome all year-round.

"Spring and summer are ideal times for recreating at Saylorville Lake," she said. "Fall and winter offer their own kinds of enjoyment. Many people still use the bike trails and pursue wildlife observation and winter hiking. If we're lucky, we have enough ice for ice fishing as well. The lake remains a valuable recreational resource throughout the calendar year."

For Phipps, connecting people to the outdoors is one of the most rewarding parts of the job.

"I get to do environmental stewardship, education and outreach, and visitor assistance all within the same week. I meet a variety of people from different cultures and backgrounds who visit the parks, and I get to help them and educate them about the nature around them."

For more answers information on Saylorville Lake and other Rock Island District recreation sites visit:

[www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/](http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/). 

## ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES



### SAYLORVILLE LAKE

4	CAMPGROUNDS
3	BOAT RAMPS
1	BEACHES
7	PICNIC AREAS
1	VISITOR CENTER

### LAKE RED ROCK

CAMPGROUNDS	5
BOAT RAMPS	4
BEACHES	2
PICNIC AREAS	7
VISITOR CENTER	1



### CORALVILLE LAKE

7	CAMPGROUNDS
5	BOAT RAMPS
3	BEACHES
5	PICNIC AREAS
1	VISITOR CENTER

### MISSISSIPPI RIVER

CAMPGROUNDS	10
BOAT RAMPS	21
PICNIC AREAS	5
VISITOR CENTER	1



### ILLINOIS WATERWAY

1	VISITOR CENTER
---	----------------



Learn More:



# TEMPORARY EXHIBIT TRACES ILLINOIS RIVER'S HISTORY PAST AND PRESENT

By Corporate Communications Staff

**T**he U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, is currently hosting a temporary art exhibit at the Illinois Waterway Visitor Center titled *Reversing Course: The Illinois River in 1900 and Today*.

Created by Watershed Cairns® artists Libby Reuter and Joshua Rowan, the exhibit pairs historical black-and-white photographs with recent color images of glass sculptures placed at sites along the river. The work is part of a broader project the artists began in 2011 to draw attention to the streams, wetlands and rivers of the Mississippi River Watershed.

In 2022, the project expanded to include the Illinois, Des Plaines and Chicago rivers, exploring their link to Lake Michigan and the changes that followed construction of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal in 1900.

"When we learned about the Watershed Cairns® exhibit, we thought it would be a great way to showcase the river's history at our facility," said Julie McDonald, a natural resource specialist at the visitor center.

To accommodate the exhibit, minor adjustments were made to the visitor center's theater room, allowing for future use of the space for similar displays at minimal cost.

"We were looking for a way to enhance the use of our theater room," said McDonald. "With the addition of some simple hardware, we now have a space suitable for hosting exhibits and rotating displays."

The glass sculptures, known as cairns, are assembled from antique household glass collected by Reuter during her travels with Rowan. The cairn currently on display stands about three feet tall and is one of the largest in the artist's collection.

Unlike traditional stone cairns, which can damage natural landscapes, Watershed Cairns are temporary. Each sculpture is assembled on site, photographed, and then removed.

"The exhibit exemplifies the golden rule of land management: leave no trace," McDonald said.

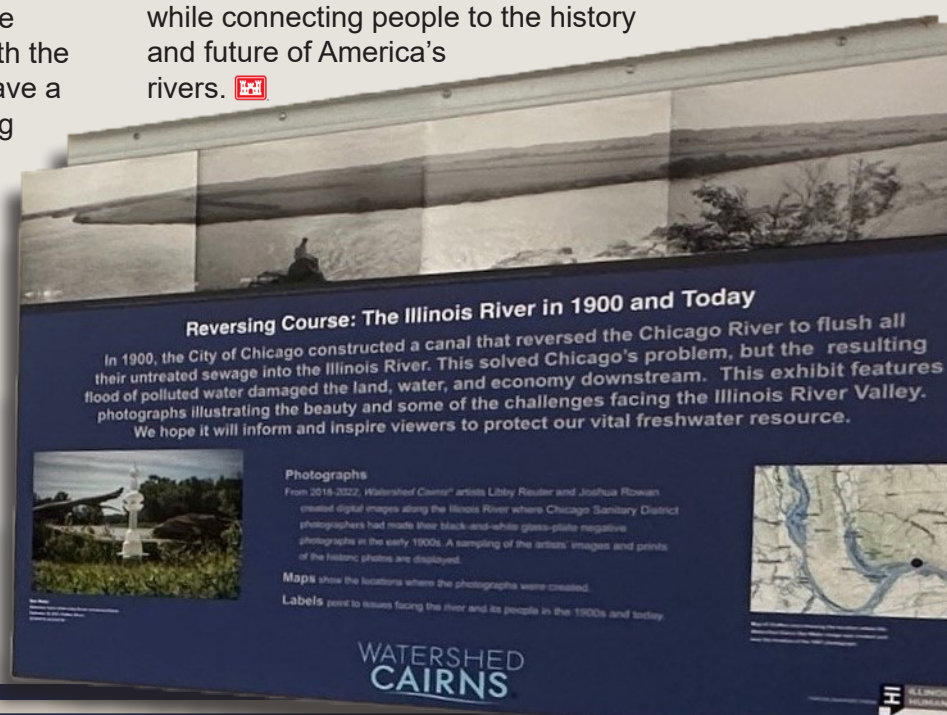


**Natural Resource Specialist Julie McDonald talks with guests about the Watershed Cairns® exhibit on display now at the Illinois Waterway Visitor Center.**

Photo by Bob Petruney

The *Reversing Course* exhibit is open to the public daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. through June 1. Admission is free.

The exhibit is part of a broader effort to engage the public and highlight USACE's role in shaping the nation's waterways. In 2025, the agency marks its 250th anniversary, commemorating a legacy of engineering, environmental stewardship, and public service. Exhibits like this reflect the Corps' ongoing mission to manage and preserve water resources while connecting people to the history and future of America's rivers. 🇺🇸





# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

By Sam Heilig, Public Affairs Specialist

## Jeff Dupont Lead Mechanical Engineer



**Lead Mechanical Engineer Jeff Dupont receives a Blue Devil Award and medallion from Commanding General of the 88th Readiness Division Major General Matthew Baker for his many years of service providing the 88th RD with engineering support. Photo by Jim Finn**

For over 25 years, Lead Mechanical Engineer Jeff Dupont has spearheaded the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District's support to the U.S. Army Reserve 88th Readiness Division (RD), headquartered at Fort Snelling, Minnesota, and Fort McCoy, Wisconsin. This partnership began in 1999, building on Dupont's decade of experience within the Rock Island Arsenal.

The 88th RD, a two-star command, provides critical facilities, direct support services, and Base Operations Support to more than 57,000 Army Reserve personnel across a 19-state region, with a high concentration of projects in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.

The Rock Island District functions as a full-service engineering resource for the 88th RD, offering a range of services including design, technical support, and investigations. They also leverage the District's broader expertise in areas like geotechnical engineering, real estate, and environmental compliance.

"Basically, we are like a small A/E [Architectural/Engineering] firm for the 88th," explains Dupont. "We provide professional services for architectural and engineering design and planning related to construction projects."


Projects typically involve renovations and repairs to existing reserve centers and maintenance facilities – encompassing offices, shops, and parking areas. Work scopes vary but often include upgrades to HVAC and electrical systems, energy-efficient lighting replacements, fire alarm system updates, and architectural improvements like flooring and painting.

Dupont emphasizes a commitment to sustainability, stating, "Whenever possible, we use green energy and high-efficiency mechanical systems."

Support to the 88th RD has increased over the years, fueled by strong relationships and a deep understanding of the Division's needs. The Rock Island District currently designs, contracts, and constructs 5-7 projects for the 88th RD annually, with average fiscal year contract awards totaling \$12-15 million. These projects are coordinated with the USACE Louisville and Omaha Districts, which manage larger military construction projects.

Dupont credits the partnership's success to a straightforward approach: "Assess the situation, understand your resources, present the facts, and find a way to say 'Yes' to the customer."

This dedication was recently recognized when he and his team were awarded the Blue Devil Award and medallion, presented by Major General Matthew Baker, Commanding General of the 88th RD – an rare honor acknowledging the collective effort of the group. Dupont specifically asked that the 88th RD recognize the team rather than an individual, because he values his teams above all else.

When asked about his favorite part of working for the USACE Rock Island District, he noted, "the variety of the work, the closeness and unity of my product development teams, and the lifelong friendships that have been made at the Rock Island District." 



# EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER ACTIVATED FOR MUSCATINE ISLAND LEVEE SYSTEM

By Jim Finn, Public Affairs Specialist

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) March 13, to provide supplemental pumping capacity for the Muscatine Island Levee District-Louisa County Drainage District No. 13 Segment of the Muscatine, Iowa, Flood Risk Management System. The activation follows a request from the State of Iowa due to a critical reduction in the levee system's pumping ability.

The system, protecting both urban and agricultural areas along the banks of the Mississippi River, is facing challenges after two pumps failed, leaving it operating at only 30% of its designed capacity. An initial pump failure occurred during the 2024 flood event, with the second pump failing more recently. The system relies entirely on pumping for interior drainage, making the reduced capacity a significant concern.

The USACE Rock Island District deployed three 18-inch diesel pumps from its National Flood Fight Materiel Center (NFFMC) to supplement operations while the damaged pumps are repaired. This marks the first deployment of these larger pumps since their addition to the NFFMC's inventory a few years ago.

"While we have extensive experience with smaller pumps, deploying the 18-inch models presents unique

challenges," explained Cory Haberman, National Flood Fight Materiel Center Program Manager. "These require substantial coordination for hose and fuel connections – the high-density polyethylene pipe (HDPE) hose needs to be fused on-site – and necessitate the use of heavy equipment like a crane for proper placement."

The decision to deploy three pumps, despite only two being inoperable, stems from capacity limitations within the NFFMC inventory.

"The two permanent pumps that are currently down provide a combined capacity of 238,000 cubic feet per second (CFS)," Haberman stated. "Unfortunately, we don't have pumps readily available that can fully replace that. Each of our 18-inch pumps provide up to 9,500 CFS."

He added that the EOC anticipates one of the levee district's pumps will be back online soon, further improving capacity.

Providing this assistance offers several benefits to the NFFMC. "We own these pumps and maintain them internally, eliminating rental costs," Haberman said. "If a pump malfunctions while deployed, we can quickly mobilize our maintenance personnel to troubleshoot and restore operations."

He also highlighted the NFFMC's ability to provide continued support while the permanent pump is repaired.

While both the USACE Rock Island District and the Muscatine Island Levee District-Louisa County Drainage District will incur costs, Haberman explained the situation is unusual.

"This wasn't triggered by riverine flooding, but by the imminent threat of interior flooding due to the reduced pumping capacity. A moderate rainfall event could overwhelm the remaining pumps."

He noted there is close collaboration between the USACE Rock Island District and the levee sponsor, as both are contributing labor and equipment. The pumps are expected to remain on-site until permanent pumping operations are restored through the completion of the PL 84-99

**An 18-inch diesel pump from the National Flood Fight Materiel Center at the Rock Island District sits near a segment of the Louisa County Drainage District levee in preparation for emergency installation along the Mississippi River. Photo by Frances Candelaria**






rehabilitation project. During this time, the levee sponsor will be responsible for fueling and operating the pumps.

This deployment also presents a valuable learning opportunity for the NFFMC.

“Since this is our first time deploying the 18-inch pumps and HDPE pipe, we’re focused on capturing lessons learned and developing a checklist to streamline future deployments,” Haberman said. “We’re evaluating optimal pump placement, fueling procedures, hose routing, and discharge locations to ensure efficient and safe operations.”

Personnel from USACE Rock Island District’s Engineering, Operations, and Emergency Management Divisions were on site to oversee installation and ensure proper anchoring of the hose.

The levee sponsor’s support has been crucial throughout the process.

“This is a coordinated effort, and we’re committed to supporting the levee district in mitigating this risk,” Haberman concluded. “We’ve also included temporary pumping in the cost estimate for the PL 84-99 rehabilitation project, as a Phase 2 option, in case we need to rent larger pumps for additional support.” 



**A specialized machine that uses a thermofusion process to connect high-density polyethylene pipes was used at the site to build a continuous leak-free system from the temporary 18-inch pumps to the river.**  
*Photo by Frances Candelaria*



**A view of the completed installation of emergency backup pumps and piping at the Muscatine Island Levee District-Louisa County Drainage District No. 13 Segment of the Muscatine, Iowa, Flood Risk Management System.**  
*Photo by Doug Vogel*



# • AROUND THE DISTRICT •

## CONGRATULATIONS...



To Natural Resource Specialist Sarah Fisher and her husband Lance Wilson on the birth of their son Henry Franklin Fisher Wilson.



To Lucy Goosey and Honk Solo on the birth of their newest addition, Tom Honks!

Lucy and Honk (who were named by the workforce) selected a planter in front of the Clock Tower this spring as their ideal location for nesting. Employees of the Rock Island District watched carefully and gave them space as they patiently awaited the arrival of the new gosling.  
*Photos courtesy of Julie Loose and Lance Weipert.*

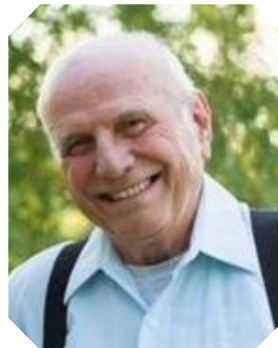
## RETIREMENTS...

Thomas M. Karnish officially retired March 29 after serving as a construction control representative in the Construction Branch, Central Area Office.

## CONDOLENCES...



Shirley E. Rodgers, 88, of East Moline, Illinois, passed away February 9. Before retiring, Rogers worked at the Rock Island District as a contract specialist.



Eugene P. "Gino" Bianchetta, 83, of Coal Valley, Illinois, passed away February 22. He served in the U.S. Navy and retired from the Rock Island District as a lock and dam operator.



Don Logsdon, 89, of St. Patrick, Missouri, passed away April 26. Retired from the Rock Island District after working for many years as an engineer.

Send family news to:

[jordan.n.raiff@usace.army.mil](mailto:jordan.n.raiff@usace.army.mil)

## STAY CONNECTED

The USACE Rock Island District actively posts content to the following social media platforms.






# LEARN BEFORE YOU LAUNCH: BOATING SAFETY

By Sam Heilig, Public Affairs Specialist

Each year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, offers free boating safety courses through the Illinois Boating Safety Education Program. Classes are held at the Mississippi River Project Office in Pleasant Valley, Iowa, and the Illinois Waterway Visitor Center in Ottawa, Illinois. These courses aim to equip boaters of all experience levels with essential safety knowledge before heading out on the water.

Participants age 12 and up who complete the eight-hour course and pass the final exam will receive a Boating Safety Certificate from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. This certification is recognized in both Illinois and Iowa. Illinois residents born on or after January 1, 1998, are required to complete the course to obtain a boating license.

The curriculum covers boating laws, navigation rules, emergency procedures, and equipment requirements. While no on-the-water training is provided, the classroom-based instruction offers comprehensive knowledge to promote safe boating practices.

Classes have already wrapped up for the season on the Mississippi River, but the Illinois Waterway Visitor Center still has several classes available. Call 815-667-4054 to register today! 



Natural Resource Specialist Mike McKean discusses boat trailer safety practices with participants during a boating safety course at the Mississippi River Project Office in Le Claire, Iowa. Photo by Brent Groesch

## 2025 Illinois Waterway Visitor Center Boating Safety Courses

Register  
Today!



Still Available:

June 21  
July 19

Aug. 16  
Sept. 20



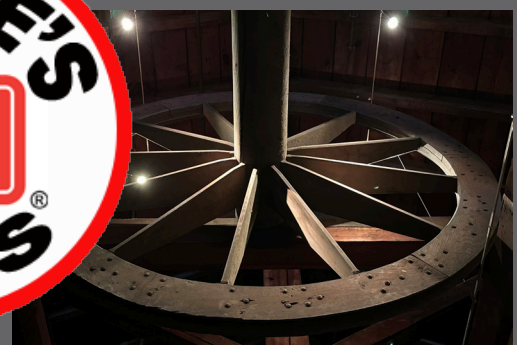
Can you name where this photo was taken?



Send guesses to: [jordan.n.raiff@usace.army.mil](mailto:jordan.n.raiff@usace.army.mil)



Last Issue's Winner



Answer: 4th Floor Clock Tower Hoist  
Winner: Tom Heinold



**Correction:**

Julie McDonald correctly guessed this fossil gorge photo from the November/December of the Tower Times. This was noted incorrectly in the last issue.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, ROCK ISLAND  
CLOCK TOWER BLDG. - P.O. BOX 2004  
ROCK ISLAND, IL 61204-2004

## RETIREE REMINDERS



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Rock Island District

### Rock Island District - Corps Day

Aug. 1, 2025

### Annual Retirees Luncheon

Sept. 5, 2025

SAVE  
THESE  
DATES!

*If you are a retiree and would like more information about these upcoming events,  
email: [cemvr-cc@usace.army.mil](mailto:cemvr-cc@usace.army.mil) and request to be added to the retiree distribution list.*