



JAXSTRONG®

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- THE YEAR IN REVIEW
- 2013 BROUGHT CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES
- DISTRICT TEAM EXCELLED
- ...AND MORE



# JAXSTRONG

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OUR WORK • OUR PEOPLE • OUR DISTRICT

JANUARY 2014 | Volume 6 Issue 1



## COMMANDER'S CORNER

### MESSAGE FROM COL. ALAN DODD

SMALL BUSINESSES BIG PART OF DISTRICT

Now that the holidays are behind us, I hope you have fond memories of family gatherings, lights and feasts. As we look to 2014, I want to focus on what small businesses do for our district and the national economy, and what we do for small businesses. Small Business Saturday does a lot to help small businesses nationwide during the holiday season, but the Corps of Engineers is concerned about their economic viability every day of the year.

In fiscal year 2013, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, awarded 239 contracts to small business firms in Florida for a total of \$98,777,392. That's a sizeable economic impact.

Our district actively works to promote contract awards to small businesses by setting aside work for small businesses whenever possible. The federal government sets a small business statutory goal of 23 percent; however, Jacksonville District goes above and beyond by setting our goal at 43.3 percent. Furthermore, our effective use of outreach events, pre-proposal conferences and personal counseling helps to educate small businesses on how to work with the Corps and the federal government.

Each acquisition of supplies or services with an anticipated dollar value between \$3,000 and \$150,000 is reserved exclusively for small business concerns, unless the contracting officer determines there is no reasonable expectation of obtaining offers from two or more responsible small business concerns that are competitive in terms of market prices, quality and delivery. Additionally, if there is a reasonable expectation that offers will be obtained from at least two responsible small business concerns at fair market price, the contracting officer may set aside any acquisition of more than \$150,000 for small business participation.

In fact, every requirement exceeding \$10,000 is reviewed by our Small Business Office to ensure small businesses are being considered.

Led by Beth Myers, our Small Business Office is a proponent and advocate of the small business community. The office reviews all justifications, approvals, acquisition plans and strategies, conducts market research, recommends potential companies to the contracting staff, serves as an advisor to the contracting officer for procurements that include the small business participation factor, conducts capability briefings with companies wanting to do business with us and represents us at various conferences. The office is a conduit from the small business world to ours.

Why do we focus so much on small businesses? Small business is big!

- The 23 million small businesses in America account for 54 percent of all U.S. sales.
- Small businesses provide 55 percent of all jobs and 66 percent of all new jobs since the 1970s.
- The more than 600,000 franchised small businesses in the U.S. account for 40 percent of all retail sales and provide jobs for approximately 8 million people.
- The small business sector in America occupies 30-50 percent of all commercial space, an estimated 20-34 billion square feet.
- While corporate America has been "downsizing," the rate of small business start-ups has grown, and the rate for small business failures has declined.
- The number of small businesses in the United States has increased 49 percent since 1982.
- Since 1990, as big business eliminated 4 million jobs, small businesses added 8 million new jobs.

The bottom line is that we contribute to Department of Defense, Department of the Army and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers small business goals. I invite you to read the in-depth article in this issue of JaxStrong to learn just how much our Small Business Office contributes. Small business is everyone's business, and to keep our nation economically strong, small business is smart business.

Army Strong. BUILDING STRONG®. JaxStrong.

Alan Dodd  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
District Commander

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## ON THE COVER

Contractors operating heavy construction equipment move dirt as they work on the Rio Puerto Nuevo project in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The contract is part of a large flood risk reduction project in Puerto Rico. (Photo by John Campbell)



# Construction Division accomplishes big things in 2013; prepares for bigger 2014

BY JOHN H. CAMPBELL



Crews work on the De Diego bridge in San Juan, Puerto Rico as part of the Rio Puerto Nuevo flood control project. The contract is one of 100 contract awards worth a combined \$1.6 billion that's being overseen by the Jacksonville District Construction Division. (Photo by John Campbell)

In 2013, the Construction Division was involved in more than ensuring that authorized projects were built; they were also involved in another type of construction project.

They were rebuilding the division.

"We entered 2013 severely understaffed," said Steve Duba, Construction Division chief. "During the year, we were able to hire a new deputy, a new chief in the Antilles Office, a new area engineer for the Gulf Coast, and six new resident engineers. We were able to do this despite challenges brought about by sequestration and the government shutdown."

The new staff members are assuming their positions just in time. After a year in which the Construction Division was responsible for placing \$385 million worth of work across dozens of projects, the workload is forecast to increase in 2014.

"2014 is going to be a huge year for us," said Duba. "Placement will almost double what we did in 2013 and possibly set a new record for the district."

The projects touch every part of the Jacksonville District

footprint, including harbor deepening in Miami, rehabilitation of the 80-year-old Herbert Hoover Dike and finishing a brand new dam on the Portugués River in Puerto Rico, the last component of the Portugués and Bucana Flood Control project. In 2013, the Construction Division managed 100 contracts with a combined value of more than \$1.6 billion, which, Duba says, was also an all-time record.

"We've been a part of dredging in Jacksonville, Tampa, Canaveral and Port Everglades," said Duba. "We've been working Everglades restoration projects in the Kissimmee River and the Seminole Big Cypress Basin, and we've been supporting the construction efforts of our Department of Defense partners at Naval Air Station Jacksonville and at Fort Buchanan in San Juan."

The division finished work on the Tamiami Trail bridge west of Miami, and on a refueling facility for the Florida Air National Guard.

Despite the pace of the work and the staffing challenges, great strides were also made on work site safety.

(CONTINUES ON PAGE 4)

**CONSTRUCTION** (continued from PAGE 3)

"Working closely with Tony Santana and the staff of the district safety office, we saw a 70 percent reduction in contractor accident rates on our job sites," said Duba.

Duba had high praise for his staff.

"They bring a lot expertise and experience," he said. "Even the new people have extensive experience in other districts. We're very diverse. We may be stretched thin at times, but they got us through a difficult period while at the same time putting up with a cantankerous chief." ♦



A contractor works in the intake canal as part of the C-44 Reservoir and Stormwater Treatment Area project near Indiantown in Martin County, Fla. The Jacksonville District Construction Division placed \$385 million of work during fiscal Year 2013, and leaders expect a bigger year in 2014. (Photo by Jenn Miller)



An intake canal was excavated and sodded as part of the ongoing construction at the C-44 Reservoir and Stormwater Treatment Area project near Indiantown in Martin County, Fla. (Photo courtesy of Phillips & Jordan, Inc.)

## Regulatory Division is meeting environmental, economic needs

BY NANCY J. STICHT



Endangered wood storks fly over Cowbone Marsh in central Glades County, Fla., one of the most valuable aquatic and wildlife resource areas in the country. The marsh was protected as a result of the resolution of a Regulatory enforcement case in 2013. An approximately 5,500-acre freshwater marsh system, Cowbone Marsh acts as a filter for Fisheating Creek and eventually Lake Okeechobee. (Photo by Brian Cornwell)

Protecting the nation's aquatic resources while simultaneously meeting its economic needs requires dedication and an ability to balance often competing needs. Through the execution of the Department of the Army's responsibility, authorized under the River and Harbors Act of 1899 and the Clean Water Act of 1972, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' regulatory program reviews multitudes of proposed projects annually, and either issues or denies permits based on these and other applicable laws.

"Jacksonville District's regulatory program is the largest in the Corps, and our team set a high standard by exceeding every national performance goal for the program for the fifth consecutive year," said Donnie Kinard, chief of the Regulatory Division.

The Corps routinely performs jurisdictional determinations, to determine whether or not a site for a proposed project falls within the jurisdiction of the Department of the Army regulatory program and therefore would require a permit. More than 2,800 jurisdictional determinations were completed by Jacksonville District during 2013.

Individual Permits are specific to proposed projects, which must also comply with other environmental laws that protect endangered species, marine mammals and cultural resources. During its review of a permit application, the Corps consults with other regulatory agencies and issues public notices and takes all input received into consideration in its decisions. Last year, Jacksonville District issued 855 Individual Permits and denied one permit with prejudice for a proposed project to dredge 29 acres of seagrass and fill four acres of wetlands.

When a proposed project or action will impact the nation's aquatic resources, the Corps may require mitigation as a condition of the Department of the Army permit. This is a central premise of federal wetlands programs, and is one way in which the Corps balances decisions to meet both economic

(CONTINUES ON PAGE 5)

REGULATORY (continued from PAGE 4)



Sand Hill Lakes Mitigation Bank is located near Panama City, Fla. and managed by the Northwest Florida Water Management District. Florida has a total of 61 mitigation banks, which are wetland areas that have been restored, established, enhanced or preserved and set aside to compensate for future conversions of wetlands for development activities. (Photo by Nancy J. Sticht)

and environmental needs. Applicants must first demonstrate that they have made all practicable efforts to avoid impacts; then to minimize impacts and finally to compensate for unavoidable impacts. Most commonly, mitigation involves the creation, enhancement or restoration of wetlands and their functions. Mitigation banks are wetland areas that have been restored, established, enhanced or preserved and set aside to compensate for future conversions of wetlands for development activities. In 2013, Jacksonville District completed 94 mitigation site compliance inspections and 17 mitigation bank compliance inspections. Further, it issued three new mitigation banks, for a total of 61 banks in Florida.

Jacksonville District also implemented one in-lieu fee program in 2013, the first in-lieu fee program implemented in the district following the 2008 mitigation rule. In-lieu fee programs involve the restoration, establishment, enhancement and/or preservation of aquatic resources through funds paid to a governmental or non-profit natural resources management entity to satisfy compensatory mitigation requirements for Department of the Army permits. They are similar to mitigation banks in that they sell compensatory mitigation credits to permittees.

Some minor activities, such as aids to navigation, bank stabilization, aquatic habitat restoration, boat ramp construction, agricultural activities and modifications to existing

marinas may be authorized through a General Permit. General Permits are issued on a nationwide or regional basis for projects that are substantially similar in nature and cause only minimal individual or cumulative impacts. Jacksonville District verified more than 2,400 General Permits and maintains 17 Regional General Permits and nine Programmatic General Permits.

Through its partnering efforts, Jacksonville District expanded a State Programmatic General Permit (SPGP) into the Florida panhandle and improved efficiency of the SPGP by designating Hillsborough County and the St. Johns River Water Management District to administer SPGPs within their areas of responsibility. Additionally, a new Programmatic General Permit was issued to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for "Live Rock and Marine Bivalve Aquaculture" in navigable waters of the United States within Florida territorial waters.

Federal regulations provide authority for the Corps to respond when activities are conducted without required permits (unauthorized) and when activities are not conducted in compliance with the terms and conditions of issued Department of the Army permits (non-compliance). Jacksonville District resolved 84 enforcement and non-compliance cases. Of particular note was the resolution of an enforcement case leading to the protection of Cowbone Marsh, an

**REGULATORY** (continued from PAGE 5)

approximately 5,500-acre freshwater marsh system that acts as a filter for Fisheating Creek and eventually Lake Okeechobee, and the closure of a 2006 Clean Water Act violation case against Century Homebuilders with the receipt of \$400,000 in civil penalties plus the purchase of \$60,000 in mitigation credits from Everglades National Park.



The Antilles Regulatory section was honored with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) National Award for Exemplary Human Environment Initiatives, for its collaborative efforts on the Dos Hermanos Bridge project in Puerto Rico. The bridge reconstruction addressed safety and travel needs in an area of Puerto Rico known for its tourist attractions, sensitive environmental habitat and fragile historical and archaeological sites. (Photo courtesy of the Federal Highway Administration)



Jacksonville District completed four Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) in 2013, including the Areawide EIS for Continued Mining in the Central Florida Phosphate District (CFPD), an approximate 1.2 million acre area located in Hardee, Hillsborough, Manatee, Polk and Desoto counties. The Areawide EIS will support decision making on current and future phosphate mining permit applications in the CFPD. (Photo courtesy of Mosaic Fertilizer LLC)

In the interest of navigation safety and waterway accessibility, Regulatory Division rolled out its revised setback guidance for structures placed along certain federal channels at a series of four public meetings, held in Deerfield Beach, Palm Beach Gardens, Palm Valley and Clearwater, Fla. in August and September. The setback guidance was established to provide the criteria by which structures proposed to be constructed along certain federal channels are evaluated.

Four Environmental Impact Statements were completed in the last year, including the Areawide EIS for Continued Phosphate Mining in the Central Florida Phosphate District, the A1 Flow Equalization Basin, Levy Nuclear Plant and the Titan/Tarmac King Road Limestone Mine. The district is further serving as a lead federal agency on one additional EIS for Southern Palm Beach Island Comprehensive Shoreline Stabilization Project

in Palm Beach County and as a cooperating agency with Federal Highway Administration, Nuclear Regulatory Agency, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Federal Railroad Administration, and U.S. Coast Guard on seven additional EISs for various projects.

Regulatory Division team members regularly serve in their communities throughout Florida and Puerto Rico, as well as nationally and internationally. Team members participated in 26 outreach and education events concerning the Clean Water Act, Rivers and Harbors Act, National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Endangered Species Act and others. Two notable events included the International Conference on Ecology & Transportation (ICOET) in Scottsdale, Ariz. and the 27th Annual Environmental Permitting Summer School at Marco Island, Fla.



Regulatory Division rolled out its revised setback guidance for structures placed along certain federal channels at a series of four public meetings in 2013. The setback guidance was established to provide the criteria by which structures proposed to be constructed along certain federal channels, like Palm Valley, pictured here, are evaluated. (USACE file photo)

Four team members deployed to Afghanistan in support of the Corps' Overseas Contingency Operations and one served a six-month assignment in the Pentagon office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

Jacksonville District was honored in 2013 with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) National Award for Exemplary Human Environment Initiatives, in recognition of its collaborative efforts on the Dos Hermanos Bridge project, which the FHWA reconstructed to address safety and travel needs in an area of Puerto Rico known for its tourist attractions, sensitive environmental habitat and fragile historical and archaeological sites.

Eddie Rivera, Federal Highway Transportation Administration, cited the project as "a model...for other jurisdictions in how preservation of the historical and environmental elements in transportation projects can be achieved."

"The mission of the regulatory program is to protect the nation's aquatic resources, while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions," said Kinard. "Florida and Puerto Rico have abundant natural resources that attract economic development. Every team member is dedicated to maintaining the required balance and meeting the needs of the communities we serve - I'm proud of what they have accomplished this year." ♦



# Contracting Division exceeds expectations

BY NAKEIR NOBLES



Contracting Division awarded a \$221 million contract for the Miami Harbor Deepening Project, which will deepen the channel to 50 feet. This prepares the Port of Miami to receive larger shipping vessels following the completion of the Panama Canal expansion in 2015. (USACE photo)

With a staff of dedicated, hard-working employees, Jacksonville District's Contracting Division executed 1,218 contract awards for a total of \$573 million in obligations during fiscal year 2013, the highest number of awards the district has ever executed in a single fiscal year.

Carlos Clarke, chief of the Contracting Division, said that the \$221 million award for the Miami Harbor Deepening project, to deepen the channel to 50 feet, topped the list. "This will prepare the Port of Miami to receive larger shipping vessels following the Panama Canal expansion, which is scheduled to be completed in 2015," Clarke said.

The contract for the Miami Harbor Deepening project was awarded to the Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company, LLC in May 2013. Dredging operations began in November.

Additionally, Clarke said, the division awarded a contract for construction of the Miller Pump Station. It is the third and final pump station for Picayune Strand Restoration Project.

The \$75.5 million contract was awarded Sept. 5 to Archer Western Construction, LLC of Tampa, Fla., to construct the station, which includes a 1,250 cubic feet per second (cfs) pump station, a tie-back levee system, a spreader basin and road removal and canal plugging which will rehydrate a portion of the 55,000-acre project.

The division also granted contracts for repairs at Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD). As part of the ongoing HHD rehabilitation, the Corps awarded a contract to Harry Pepper & Associates of Jacksonville. It calls for replacement of Culvert 8 (S-268) near

Okeechobee along the north side of the lake and Culvert 13 (S-272) near Canal Point in Palm Beach County. Work on this project is expected to be complete by the spring of 2017.

Other HHD rehabilitation contracts were awarded to Edens Construction, Co., in the amount of \$4.7 million for replacement of Culvert(s) 7, 9 and Taylor Creek Culvert; WRS Infrastructure & Environmental, Inc., in the amount of \$10.8 million for the Seepage Management Test facility (Pilot Test). Two contracts were awarded to Thalle Construction Co., Inc., one in the amount of \$31.8 million for the replacement of Structure S-281 (C-5A) & S-282 (C-5) and the other in the amount of \$36.3 million for the replacement of Structure S-273 (C-10) & S-275 (C-12).

"We continue to make excellent progress rehabilitating Herbert Hoover Dike. We have awarded contracts to address half of the 32 structures around the dike that are seen as the greatest points of potential failure," said Col. Alan Dodd, district commander.

In 2011, the Corps began to replace or remove 32 federally owned water control structures around the dike. With this contract, the Corps has taken action to address 16 of the structures.

In fiscal year 2013, Jacksonville District exceeded all expectations by entering contracts for dredging and beach nourishment projects in Florida. They were valued in excess of \$134 million for emergency repair of damages brought about by Hurricane Sandy. ♦

## Operations Division overcomes challenges

BY JOHN H. CAMPBELL



An estimated 5,000 protesters march near the St. Lucie Lock August 3 to demonstrate opposition to water releases from Lake Okeechobee. Jacksonville District's Operations Division released water from the lake throughout the summer in response to heavy precipitation that fell from April to July in the Lake Okeechobee watershed. (Photo by Art Ruebenson)

An early arrival to the wet season set the stage for the rest of the year. As the rains increased, so did the water levels in Lake Okeechobee. Through it all, the Operations Division persevered despite an unforgettable summer that brought visits from the governor and thousands of demonstrators.

However, the water management activities at the lake overshadowed other significant accomplishments of the division, including acquisition of new survey boats and repairs at Canaveral Lock.

"2013 was a year full of challenges," said Jim Jeffords, Operations Division chief. "Our biggest challenge was the historical rain event that occurred from April to July. The event tested all aspects of the district – our water managers, inspections of the dike, emergency operations, dam safety and corporate communications."

Wet-season rains, which normally arrive in mid-May, came a month early. The April to July precipitation total in south Florida was the highest since 1932, causing Lake Okeechobee to jump from its dry-season low of 13.4 feet May 1 to 16.05 feet by

August 10. The water management section began releasing water from the lake May 8, and with the water level rising, opened the gates to maximum capacity July 25.

"Our staff took a lot of criticism for the amount of water that was released from the lake," said Jeffords. "We overcame those challenges by following our water control plan and the inspection schedule for the dike. All of these plans were developed by hard-working people throughout the district. We communicated what we were doing weekly through media calls. Although people didn't necessarily like the results, they understood the reason we had to release water was for the continued safety of those communities closest to the lake."

While water management activities may have garnered most of the headlines in 2013, the Operations Division experienced significant success in all of their branches and sections.

"We took delivery of a new survey boat, the *Florida II*," said Jeffords. "We completed repairs on the wall of the Canaveral Lock, and we started a new project working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service."

**OPERATIONS** (continued from **PAGE 8**)

Acquisition of survey boats allowed the division's Surveying and Mapping Branch to have a successful year. With the addition of *Florida II* and boat SB-46, the branch now has a fleet of nine vessels.

"The new vessel and the state-of-the-art equipment allow us to work in rougher seas, and it cuts the travel time from Jacksonville to Miami in half," said Jeffords. "We completed 223 surveys in fiscal year 2013, which is a 25 percent increase over our numbers from three years ago."

The Operations Division, through the South Florida Operations Office (SFOO), is responsible for the locks and recreation areas along the Okeechobee Waterway (OWW), which connects

the Gulf of Mexico with the Atlantic Ocean through Lake Okeechobee. The SFOO also has responsibility for a lock at Port Canaveral.

"The repairs at Canaveral Lock removed a safety hazard," said Jeffords. "We've been working to get funding for those repairs for some time."

In addition to Canaveral Lock, SFOO also operates five locks along the OWW. Those locks and associated recreation areas draw millions of visitors each year.

"We had more than five million people visit our facilities in both 2012 and 2013," said Jeffords. "We have one of the smallest recreation staffs in the Corps, but Jacksonville District is among the leaders across the nation in terms of total visitors."



Calvin Grinslade, civil engineering technician with the South Florida Operations Office, takes a close look at a seepage site on the Herbert Hoover Dike as part of the weekly inspections on the earthen structure surrounding Lake Okeechobee. The Operations Division conducted weekly inspections as part of its response to elevated water levels in the lake due to heavy rain this summer. (Photo by John Campbell)



The *Florida II*, Jacksonville District's new survey boat, takes to the water as part of its final testing before delivery in 2013. The state-of-the-art vessel can collect data at depths of 30 to 1,000 feet and has a top cruising speed of 36 knots. (Photo courtesy of All-American Marine)



A barge makes its way up the Okeechobee Waterway near Moore Haven in June. The 154-mile waterway operated by the Operations Division provides a shipping connection between the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean through Lake Okeechobee. (Photo by John Campbell)

Other key accomplishments in the Operations Division include coordination of deployments by the Emergency Management Branch to support missions associated with Hurricane Sandy and Overseas Contingency Operations in Afghanistan. Additionally, the division continued to experience success with its Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) program, with missions flown at Eagle Bay in support of invasive species management and over the Herbert Hoover Dike as part of rehabilitation efforts.

"The Operations Division is the most diverse organization in the district," said Jeffords. "It is truly an honor to be associated with this organization. They always amaze me with their drive and execution." ♦

## Another banner year for district's ecosystem restoration program

BY JENN MILLER



After visiting the Tamiami Trail bridge site, Maj. Gen. Michael J. Walsh, former Corps deputy commanding general for civil and emergency operations, took an airboat ride through the Everglades alongside Dan Kimball (left), superintendent of Everglades National Park, Col. Alan Dodd, Jacksonville District commander (right), and Howie Gonzales, chief of the Ecosystem Branch Jan. 23, 2013. (Photo by Tim Brown)

With major contract awards, dedication ceremonies and the completion of the first Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) project this past year, it is safe to say that 2013 was a busy and productive year for Jacksonville District's ecosystem restoration program.

"It has been another banner year for the district's ecosystem restoration program and the Ecosystem Branch," said Howie Gonzales, chief of the Ecosystem Branch. "Our team has made significant progress in the planning, design and construction of critical ecosystem restoration projects for the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Program (SFER), including the CERP Mega-Project. In fiscal year 2013 alone, the SFER program executed approximately \$110 million in work that will continue to provide for the restoration of the south Florida ecosystem and America's Everglades."

Amidst the multiple CERP components currently in planning, design and construction phases, a fully completed CERP project was delivered in 2013. The Melaleuca Eradication and Other Exotic Plants Research Annex is the first CERP project to be completed. At the new facility, insects will be raised and

used as a biocontrol measure, to manage invasive plants. Construction began in July 2011, with federal funding provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. Construction was completed on the facility August 30 and the project was transferred to the local sponsor, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).

Progress also continued on the Central Everglades Planning Project this year. The draft report was released for public and agency review in August and a series of public meetings was held in September to discuss the draft report and solicit public comments. The public comment period closed Nov. 1 and the project team is currently revising the draft report based on the input received during the comment period.

"The progress made to date on this report is precedent-setting," said Eric Bush, chief, Planning and Policy Division. "In two years, this team has accomplished what has previously taken six years, or even longer, to complete for Everglades restoration projects. Not only is this project setting the foundation for future restoration efforts in the central Everglades, but is also setting the foundation for future planning efforts as well."

(CONTINUES ON PAGE 11)

**ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION** (continued from PAGE 10)

Partnership and collaboration has always been a key component of Everglades restoration, and 2013 was full of joint efforts and celebrations. The year started with federal and state partners coming together to celebrate the completion of a key component in improving freshwater deliveries to the southern end of the Everglades ecosystem at the C-111 Spreader Canal Western Project Dedication Ceremony Jan. 11 in Homestead, Fla.

Another project aimed at rehydrating the southern end of the Everglades ecosystem accomplished a key milestone when the one-mile bridge was completed for the Tamiami Trail Modifications project. A dedication ceremony was held atop the 5,280 linear feet of restoration progress March 19 in Miami, Fla.



At the Tamiami Trail One-Mile Bridge Opening Ceremony, held March 19, 2013 in Miami, Fla., Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Jo-Ellen Darcy and then-Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar cut a ribbon on the bridge deck prior to taking the inaugural drive across the fully constructed bridge. (Photo by Jenn Miller)

"Today marks a critical milestone for the Tamiami Trail Modifications project," said Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Jo-Ellen Darcy, who spoke at the ceremony alongside then-Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, Everglades National Park Superintendent Dan Kimball and South Florida National Parks Trust Board Chairman Neal McAlleley. "But, there is still more to do. With the continued support of the administration, the state of Florida and our partnering agencies, we will continue our work to restore this American treasure."

The bridge is part of the Tamiami Trail Modifications project, a key component in the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades



Water is now flowing beneath the newly constructed CSX Railroad Bridge after the northern earthen plug was removed at the Kissimmee River Restoration (KRR) project May 8. (Photo by Erin Duffy)

National Park project that, once completed, will allow for increased water flow into Everglades National Park.

As part of the project, on May 15, the old Tamiami Trail roadway was broken through during roadway removal efforts. The road served as a longstanding physical barrier, preventing water from flowing into Everglades National Park.

Earlier in the year, Maj. Gen. Michael J. Walsh, former Corps deputy commanding general for civil and emergency operations, visited district project sites in south Florida, including the Tamiami Trail Modifications project and the Herbert Hoover Dike Rehabilitation project.

"Jacksonville District has the second largest civil works program in the Corps and is responsible for some of our most significant civil works projects," said Walsh. "By visiting Herbert Hoover Dike and ongoing Everglades restoration efforts, I saw the great progress that has been made to date. Equally as important, I was impressed by this district's dedication to delivering the best possible engineering solutions and services that contribute to the nation's economy, environment, safety and quality of life."

Water is also now flowing beneath the newly-constructed CSX Railroad Bridge after the northern earthen plug was removed at the Kissimmee River Restoration (KRR) project May 8. The

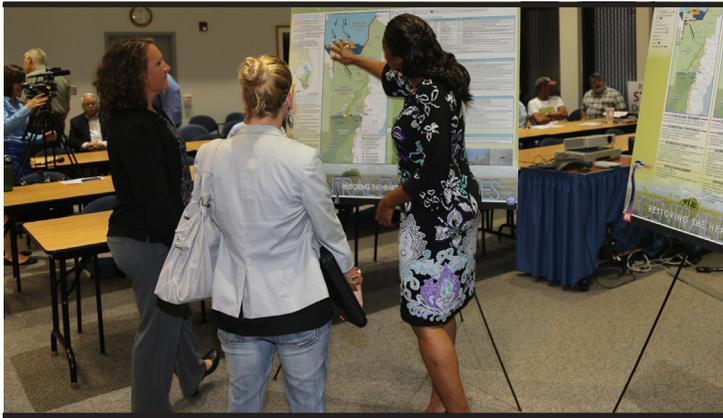


The old Tamiami Trail roadway was broken through May 15 during roadway removal efforts, as part of the Tamiami Trail Modifications project in Miami, Fla. (Photo by Chris Rego)

**ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION** (continued from PAGE 11)

bridge will allow for restoration of the historic Kissimmee River channel. The channel was dredged through the previous railroad embankment to recreate the historic riverbed as part of the KRR project which, once completed, will restore more than 40 square miles of river-floodplain ecosystem.

Progress also continued on the Indian River Lagoon-South C-44 Reservoir and Stormwater Treatment Area in Martin County, Fla. Construction on Contract 1, for the intake canal and access roads, is approximately 81 percent complete. As a result of the SFWMD receiving unexpected funding from the state, the contract execution schedule is currently being adjusted. The SFWMD will now construct Contract 3, the stormwater treatment area, early next year. Jacksonville District and SFWMD are currently discussing how to best implement the features for Contract 2, the reservoir.



A series of public meetings was held in September to discuss the draft report for the Central Everglades Planning Project. (Photo by Ty Erickson)

On Florida's west coast, the third and final pump station for the Picayune Strand Restoration project is now under contract for construction in Collier County, Fla. The \$75,714,070 construction contract was awarded to Archer Western Construction, LLC of Tampa, Fla., Sept. 5. The contract is for the construction of the Miller Pump Station, which includes a 1,250 cubic feet per second (cfs) pump station, a tie-back levee system, a spreader basin and road removal and canal plugging that will rehydrate a portion of the 55,000-acre restoration project.

"By awarding this contract, we are one step closer in our restoration goals," said Lacy Shaw, project manager. "When we first broke ground on this project in 2010, we hit the ground running and we look forward to maintaining this momentum alongside our partner, SFWMD, to bring this restoration project to completion."

The Picayune Strand Restoration Project was the first CERP project to break ground in January 2010. Once completed, the project will restore water flow across the landscape, rehydrate drained wetlands, provide aquifer recharge, improve estuarine waters and return habitat to threatened wildlife communities. Both the Faka Union and Merritt pump stations are currently under construction. The Merritt Pump Station is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year, the Faka Union Pump Station is scheduled to be completed in fall 2014, and the Miller Pump Station in 2018.

With respect to contract awards, a construction contract for the Site 1 Impoundment Project was awarded Jan. 18 to



The Faka Union Pump Station is one of three pump stations for the Picayune Strand Restoration project. The construction contract for Miller Pump Station, the third and final pump station, was awarded in September. Faka Union is scheduled to be completed in fall 2014. (Photo by Jenn Miller)

Munilla Construction Management, LLC, of Miami, Fla. The nearly \$48 million contract will bring Phase One of the project to completion. When completed, the Site 1 Impoundment project will capture and store excess surface water runoff from the Hillsboro watershed as well as releases from the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge and Lake Okeechobee.

Not only was the first CERP project completed this year, but the interim study used to determine if the goals and objectives of CERP are being met was released this year as well.

An Interim Update on the System Status Report (SSR) was released this April. The full SSR is scheduled for release in 2014, with the draft scheduled for review this spring. The SSR is developed using data collected by the Restoration Coordination and Verification (RECOVER) Monitoring and Assessment Plan (MAP) program for CERP, and evaluates data from different geographic regions, including Lake Okeechobee, the Northern Estuaries, Greater Everglades and Southern Coastal Systems.

"The data presented in this report is used to not only summarize changes in the ecosystem that are consistent with the goals and purposes of CERP, but also to recognize and discuss, when necessary, why goals are not currently being met," said Andy LoSchiavo, RECOVER adaptive management coordinator. "It also identifies any unanticipated findings during the duration of monitoring that may require future attention and correction through adaptive management."

Science in action was also witnessed with the commencement of the Water Conservation Area 3 (WCA-3) Decompartmentalization and Sheetflow Enhancement Physical Model (DPM) Nov. 5. The DPM is a field test being conducted along a 3,000-foot stretch of the L-67A and L-67C levees and canals in WCA-3A and 3B that is designed to address scientific, water flow and water management uncertainties that require clarification prior to future planning and construction of Everglades restoration projects.

Whether it is project planning, project execution or project completion, the district's ecosystem restoration team serves as a driving force to maintain momentum on critical ecosystem restoration projects. Jacksonville District has the largest ecosystem restoration program in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and, based on the accomplishments the team has made in just the past 12 months, it is apparent that the district continues to excel in its endeavors. ♦

# Who ya gonna call? BY NANCY J. STICHT



Amanda Ellison (right) of CCO covered President Obama's visit to Jacksonville Harbor in 2013, and also took a turn in front of the cameras to talk about the district's remedial investigation work at the Mullet Key Formerly Used Defense Site at Fort DeSoto Park near St. Petersburg, Fla. (Photo by Nancy J. Sticht)

When Lake Okeechobee is rising, when media cameras show up and when public meetings attract standing-room-only crowds – “who ya gonna call?” Ghostbusters can't help, but Jacksonville District's Corporate Communications Office (CCO) is on point, always ready, willing and able to be of assistance.

In 2013, CCO supported 27 public meetings for the Central Everglades Planning Project, seven for ports, five for the Miami-Dade sand replenishment scoping, five for the Formerly Used Defense Sites projects and four for Regulatory's revised setback guidance rollout, as well as individual public meetings for Portugués Dam, Herbert Hoover Dike, Kissimmee River Restoration River Acres and Wares Creek. CCO also participated in outreach events with the Invasive Species Management team and at events such as Everglades Day at Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge and Engineering Career Day in Jacksonville.

Additionally, CCO supported senior leader visits, both in preparation and in coverage of the events; in 2013, these visits included President of the United States Barack Obama to Jacksonville Harbor and both Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, commanding general of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Maj. General Michael J. Walsh, former Corps deputy commanding general for civil and emergency operations to



CCO team members are often behind the camera, so it's a rare occasion to find a photo of them in action. John Campbell (center), pictured here, deployed to New York for 45 days in 2013 to support Hurricane Sandy recovery. (USACE file photo)

## ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION (continued from PAGE 13)



CCO's Erica Skolte, a former middle school teacher, spoke to eighth grade students at Polo Park Middle School at an outreach event in May. She described what the Everglades were like prior to being altered by man. (Photo courtesy of Polo Park Middle School)

Jacksonville District. The team also supported preparation for congressional briefings and multiple presentations to the Rivers Coalition, Lake Okeechobee 16-County Coalition, Everglades Foundation, Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association and the American Association of Port Authorities meetings.

CCO distributed more than 100 news releases, conducted a dozen media roundtables, answered more than 350 media and more than 150 public queries. More than 20 media visits were conducted at Jacksonville District project sites, including national media such as CNN, Fox News, Discovery Channel and National Geographic.

"Our most significant accomplishment was the message development, delivery and strategic engagements following heavy spring and summer precipitation in south Florida that resulted in major water releases from Lake Okeechobee," said Terry Hines, CCO chief.

The decision in summer to maximize flows from the lake was met with organized public protests and the attention of state and local elected officials. Regular media roundtables, media site tours and maintaining current information on the district website and social media outlets provided transparency and contributed to balanced coverage, including emphasis on the fact that much of the outflow from Lake Okeechobee to the east and west coast estuaries is the result of watershed runoff as opposed to Corps releases, and that the focus must now be on long-term solutions such as the Central Everglades Planning Project, to enable more water to flow south rather than east and west.

Stories written by CCO team members were published by the Department of the Army and by the Department of Defense websites, garnering a broader reach to a national audience.

In 2013, CCO added a LinkedIn company page to its suite of social media outlets, providing another venue to share

information about the district's program and projects. Also added was a separate Lake Okeechobee and Okeechobee Waterway Facebook page, a comprehensive source for information on water releases, navigation, recreation, emergency operations and Herbert Hoover Dike and more. The district's social media outlets are followed by reporters and bloggers as well as legislative, government and advocacy groups, contractors and business representatives; and when they "Like," "Share" or "Re-Tweet" our information, it has the potential to reach a much broader audience.

CCO team members are recognized for their expertise Corps-wide. One team member deployed to New York to support Hurricane Sandy recovery for 45 days. One team member graduated from the regional Leadership Development Program, and one serves as an instructor for several Corps PROSPECT training courses and as a member of the steering committee for the Collaboration and Public Participation Community of Practice. CCO received six individual writing awards in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' annual Herbert A. Kassner Journalism Competition.

"CCO is most effective when we are included as a member of the team from the beginning," said Hines. "That is how we are best able to leverage our skills and expertise to equip teams with the ability to clearly and proactively communicate with a variety of audiences." ♦

## Be ready for your close-up

BY SUSAN JACKSON AND JENN MILLER

With Jacksonville District's large workload and numerous high-visibility projects, media engagements are constant. Some of the requests we receive are from national and international publications wanting to film ongoing work, while other media interests may simply show up on job sites with cameras in hand, ready to roll. All Corps employees represent the district and as such, are considered spokespersons for the district. To be better prepared for a time when you may come face-to-face with a camera and a microphone, here are some helpful tips to remember:



Remember that the cameras are always rolling and the microphone is always "hot" – even when you're not standing in front of them. (Photo by Jenn Miller)

(CONTINUES ON PAGE 15)

**CCO MEDIA** (continued from **PAGE 14**)

You cannot predict what nature throws at you when filming in the great outdoors, so remember to be aware of your surroundings. (Photo by Jenn Miller)



Always make sure everyone on site is wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), even those who do not intend to be on camera. (Photo by Jenn Miller)



Always relax and be personable during an interview. But don't become too "chatty," because you could accidentally mention something that plants a seed for a story you don't want to grow. (Photo by Terry Hines)



Always look your best for an interview. Seriously, Hawaiian shirts only enhance the image of Magnum P.I. They won't enhance your image and other patterns such as stripes, plaids or checks cause vibrating lines on a camera. Wear solid colors; you usually can't go wrong with a shirt with a Corps logo. Unless you're asked to perform reggae on stage, avoid large jewelry and wearing accessories on the nose, lip or brow.



Always keep the audience in mind, and speak in terms familiar to them. Avoid using acronyms, technical terms and jargon, such as "EIS," "operational low sub-band" or "refugium." (Photo by Susan Jackson)



Always respond in a positive manner. To get colorful quotes, reporters may ask a negative question or plant a buzzword in a question to get you to repeat it, if only in denial. Take a moment to consider your response; this pause will seem thoughtful and natural (if you don't close your eyes, too). Respond in a positive way that ignores the negative and replaces objectionable words with more acceptable terms. (Photo by Jenn Miller)

CCO MEDIA (continued from PAGE 15)



Studies show that voice inflection and body language are even more important than the words themselves when it comes to how messages are received. To help the audience focus more on your messages, keep your arms loose, and gesture naturally. This will help you appear calm and confident. (Photo by Susan Jackson)



Always remain calm. You can tell a reporter you prefer not to comment (explain why), but don't get angry and give him the stinkeye. In taped interviews especially, viewers may only hear or see your angry response and not what prompted it. (Photo by Jenn Miller)



Always be prepared. There's only one reason to give an interview: to communicate your messages. Those messages may be about facts from a new study, a public concern, an environmental crisis or regarding the economic benefit of a project. Regardless of the issue, supporting products such as fact sheets, graphics and other data, can assist you in clarifying your messages. The Corporate Communications Office is always available to help. (Photo by Nancy J. Sticht) ♦

## Water Resources Branch prevails through challenging year

BY SUSAN JACKSON



A miles-long rainbow settles on a Broward County beach that the district began renourishing in November. The nourishment project will reconstruct areas of the eroded beach and increase storm protection to upland development along portions of the Broward County Segment II shoreline. (Photo courtesy of Jose Bilbao)

Two of the most powerful influences in the world challenged Jacksonville District's Water Resources Branch in 2013: nature and the President of the United States.

The influences actually began in 2012 and then "led to an unprecedented year in execution," said Jerry Scarborough, branch chief.

Nature struck powerful blows against Florida in 2012 with storm-force winds, rain and large swells that caused more than \$68 billion in damages and brought a record amount of emergency navigation and beach restoration work to Jacksonville District.

Also in 2012, President Barack Obama launched the "We Can't Wait" initiative to expedite nationally significant infrastructure projects, including modernizing and expanding major ports in the United States. This included Jacksonville Harbor and Miami Harbor.

For the Port of Jacksonville, the initiative included the project team completing a feasibility study by April 2014, months ahead of previous projections. Jason Harrah, project manager, said the only obstacle preventing the team from achieving this goal will be the late submission of the biological opinion from National Marine Fisheries Service. The port's Mile Point Project design work and collaboration also continues as the Mile Point Navigational Study awaits congressional authorization and appropriation.

As for the Miami Harbor project, this is another success story. "We awarded a base and options contract for the largest navigation contract (\$206 million) in the country," Scarborough said. But wait – there's more. "Miami Harbor is also the first 50-foot project in South Atlantic Division history and it set the precedent for future sponsor funding of large construction projects," he said.

Miami Harbor construction started in November, said Laurel Reichold, project manager, with crews expected to excavate 2.1 million cubic yards of dredge material. A contract option was executed in December and Reichold anticipates another option execution this month.

"We also completed the Civil Works Review Board for Canaveral Harbor 203, which received unanimous approval to

(CONTINUES ON PAGE 17)

**WATER RESOURCES** (continued from PAGE 16)



An aerial snapshot depicts the progress of Broward County beach renourishment. (Photo courtesy of Eastman Aggregates)

move forward. Efforts continued on major navigation studies at Port Everglades and Lake Worth Inlet, and also on the Flagler County coastal study," Reichold added.

"We anticipate four Civil Works Review Boards in 2014 as a result of these study efforts," Scarborough said.

These port project teams tackled new processes and overcame barriers to meet their critical milestones. And while they were doing all that, they were also making plans and preparing designs to get critical sand on heavily eroded federal beaches and clear navigation channels.

"Hurricane Sandy and Tropical Storm Debby brought an unprecedented amount of emergency projects to us and resulted in 22 unscheduled projects in fiscal year 2013," Scarborough said.



President Barack Obama visited the Port of Jacksonville this year, to discuss the importance of ports to the nation's economy. (Photo by Amanda Ellison)

More than \$145 million in emergency contracts were awarded by the end of September. In the end, about 8 million cubic yards of material will restore 38.5 miles of eroded beaches, and maintenance at nine ports or channels will make navigation safer. By the start of the 2014 hurricane season, a majority of the coastal projects rehabilitation will be complete with a few still under way, providing for essential protection of lives, infrastructure and the environment.

In addition to challenges posed by powerful influences, the Water Resources Branch also awarded ten contracts that were previously scheduled, totaling more than \$60 million.

"This adds up to a tremendous year in execution," Scarborough said.

Scarborough added that the emergency work success was due in large part to Engineering Division's Jim Lagrone. "He was a real champion for us this year. Jim was saddled with the task of preparing the plans and specifications for the majority of emergency work and really came through for us."

Scarborough said that he'd have to name a very long list of people who contributed to making great strides in the past year. "It took a huge team effort and each person was a part of it in one way or another." ♦



The Port of Miami, one of two Jacksonville District projects included in the administration's "We Can't Wait" initiative, welcomed four million cruise passengers last year and anticipates doubling its cargo traffic over the next decade. A contract for the project was awarded in March 2013. (USACE file photo)



The Port of Jacksonville is one of two ports included in President Obama's "We Can't Wait Initiative," launched in 2012. The district is making progress towards its goal to complete a feasibility study by early 2014 and the Mile Point Navigational Study is awaiting congressional authorization and appropriation. (USACE file photo)



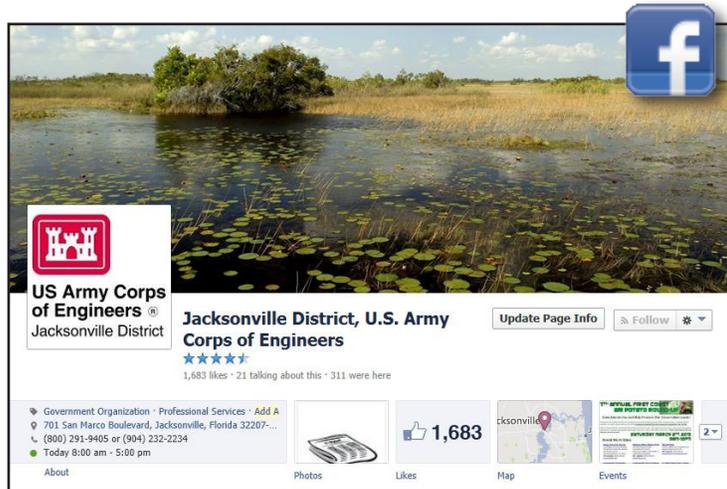
A major navigation study is under way on Port Everglades.

# Social media and Web roundup

BY ERICA SKOLTE

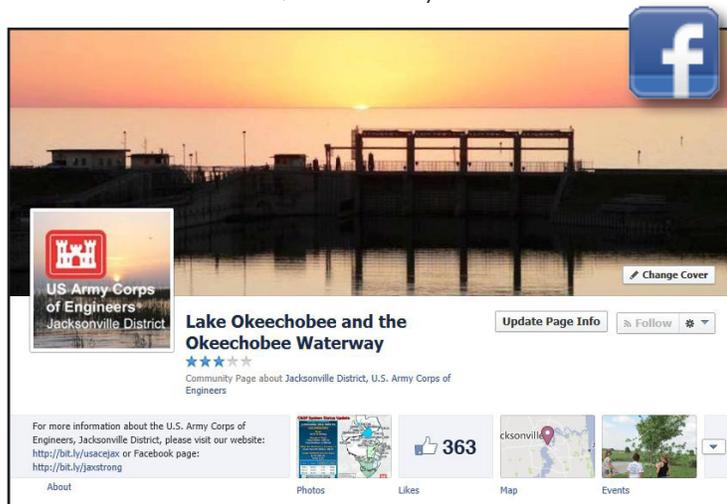
Here's a look at some of the social media and Web resources Jacksonville District's Corporate Communications Office used in 2013 to engage and inform the public.

Facebook is a social utility that helps people communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and coworkers. Jacksonville District's Facebook page includes news, photos and information about our missions, programs and events.



"Like" Jacksonville District on Facebook [www.facebook.com/JacksonvilleDistrict](http://www.facebook.com/JacksonvilleDistrict).

The Lake Okeechobee and the Okeechobee Waterway Facebook page provides daily Lake Okeechobee water levels as well as information about water releases and water management, the Okeechobee Waterway, lock and dam maintenance work, invasive species and treatment schedules, Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail closures, news releases and stories about recreation, water safety and more.



"Like" Lake Okeechobee and the Okeechobee Waterway on Facebook [www.facebook.com/LakeOkeechobeeOWW](http://www.facebook.com/LakeOkeechobeeOWW).

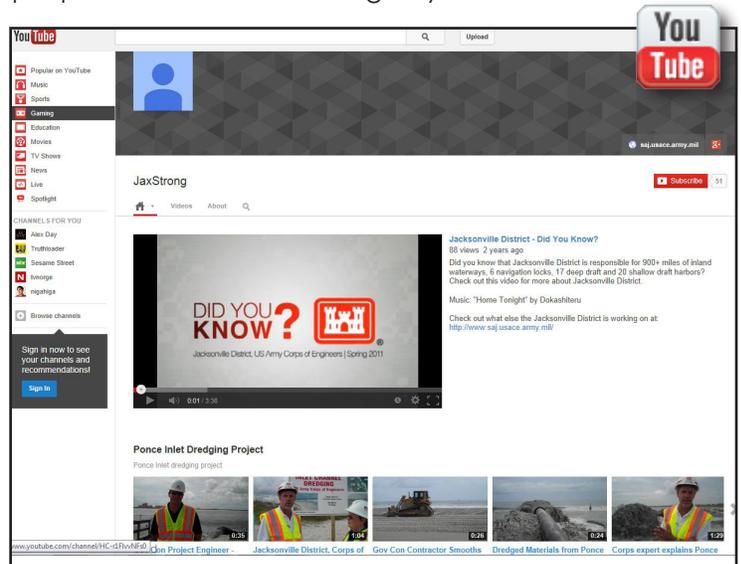
Twitter is a social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read other user posts called "Tweets." A Tweet is a text message limited to 140 characters. Our "Twitter handle" is @JaxStrong. Our Twitter followers include

media outlets and government officials, and they can "re-Tweet" our messages, increasing the reach of our audience.



"Follow" Jacksonville District's Tweets at: [www.twitter.com/JaxStrong](http://www.twitter.com/JaxStrong)

YouTube is an online video community, allowing millions of people to watch and share originally-created videos.



Visit and subscribe to our YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/JaxStrong](http://www.youtube.com/JaxStrong) to see videos on regulatory, invasive species management, Everglades restoration, Lake Okeechobee, munitions safety, ports and more.

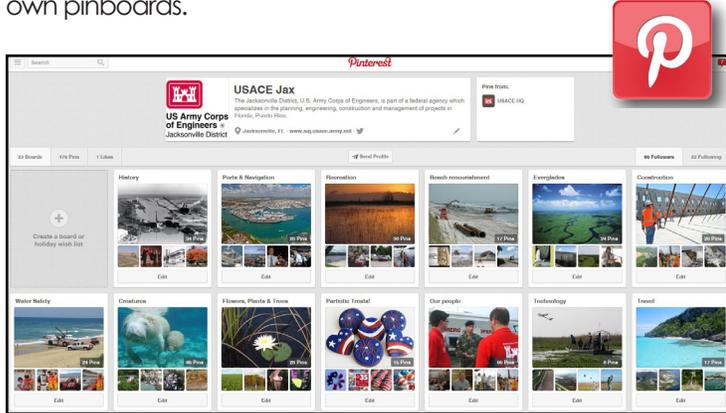
**SOCIAL MEDIA** (continued from PAGE 18)

Flickr is an image and video hosting website, which is a popular way for users to share and embed photographs.



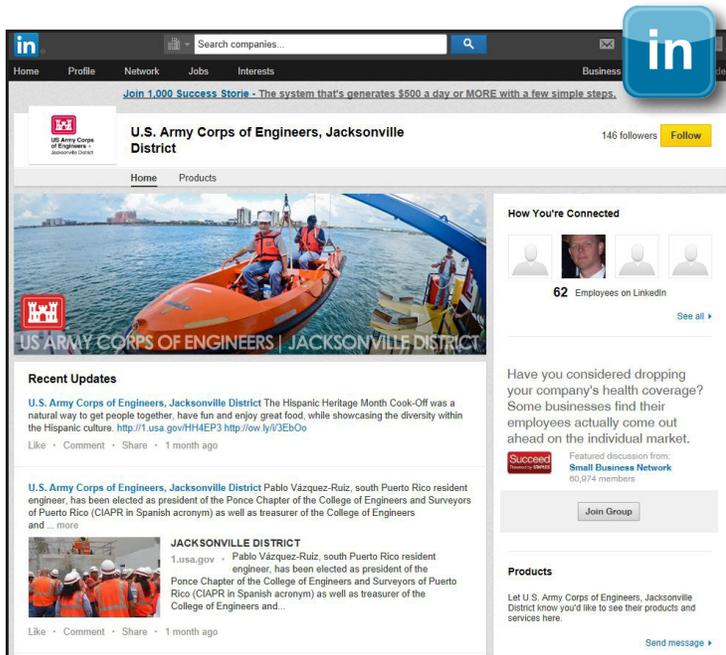
View Jacksonville District photographs at [www.flickr.com/jaxstrong](http://www.flickr.com/jaxstrong).

Pinterest is a content sharing service that allows members to "pin" and organize images, videos and other objects on their own pinboards.



Follow us on Pinterest at: [www.pinterest.com/usacejax](http://www.pinterest.com/usacejax)

LinkedIn is a social networking website for professionals.



Join our network at [www.linkedin.com/company/u-s-army-corps-of-engineers-jacksonville-district](http://www.linkedin.com/company/u-s-army-corps-of-engineers-jacksonville-district).

The Defense Video & Imagery Distribution System, or DVIDS, is a state-of-the-art platform that provides timely, accurate and reliable connection between the media around the world and the military serving at home and abroad. Here you'll find the latest news about Jacksonville District.



Visit our DVIDS page at: [www.dvidshub.net/unit/USACE-JV](http://www.dvidshub.net/unit/USACE-JV).



Jacksonville District news and information, and links to our social media sites, are available at: [www.saj.usace.army.mil](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil).



Find information on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) at [www.evergladesplan.org](http://www.evergladesplan.org).

## Big year for small business programs office BY ERICA SKOLTE



Beth Myers, deputy for the Small Business Programs Office, helps Corps employees, small and large businesses, contractors and others understand and navigate complex rules and regulations and the government contracting process. (Photo by Ty Erickson)

"Small business is everyone's business." That is Beth Myers' motto, and the philosophy she truly believes, lives and works by. As the deputy for the Small Business Programs Office, she knows that it is important for every member of Jacksonville District to understand and support the small business mission. Though she works with contractors and small businesses, one of Myers' main jobs is to educate the district team. "It takes an entire team to work this program, not just my office," she said.

Though much of its work is done behind the scenes, the Small Business Programs Office plays an important role in achieving most of Jacksonville District's missions. It is involved in all contracts, regardless if they are awarded to a small or large business, so the support of the Small Business Programs Office is crucial to the functioning of the Contracting, Construction and Operations Divisions.

In fiscal year 2013, Jacksonville District awarded 239 contracts to small business firms and 357 contracts to all businesses, and the Small Business Programs Office had a hand in all of them. Before solicitations for contracts are advertised, Myers must concur that the strategy is in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR).

Small Business supports the Jacksonville District team by reviewing and evaluating sub-contracting plans and small business utilization plans. It also serves as a liaison between the district and the Small Business Administration, and represents

the views of the Small Business Office, the contracting officer and the district when explaining concerns.

"We work hard to make smart decisions that further the overall execution goals and don't just further the goals of small business and lose sight of the big picture," said Myers. "But we always make sure that small business is represented and their voice is heard in multiple forums, including acquisition strategy board meetings, project delivery team meetings, project review board meetings, corporate staff meetings or other meetings."

"FAR tells us that we must consider small business first. That's where Beth comes in," said contract specialist Beau Corbett. "She helps us to understand how we are to consider small business. It is our responsibility to know FAR, but we rely on Beth as our expert."

"The world is very dynamic, and laws are constantly changing. It can be very confusing. It helps to have someone like Beth to help interpret the laws and navigate the constantly changing small business laws."

Myers serves both internal and external customers - fellow Corps employees and members of the public, each with very different needs.

"Beth understands both sets of needs. She adds a human side I really appreciate, and I think a lot of others do too," said Corbett. "I am the point of contact for many solicitations on our website, and when someone calls with a question, I always give them Beth's contact information. I feel confident that when they call Beth, they will get the right answer. I have [received] a lot of feedback from small business [representatives] who have been very satisfied with the assistance that Beth has provided to them."

Jacksonville District does business with qualified small, small disadvantaged, Historically Underutilized Business Zone, veteran-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned and woman-owned businesses. The Small Business Programs Office



Veronica Taylor (left), contract specialist, Brig. Gen. Donald E. Jackson, Jr., South Atlantic Division commander and Beth Myers (right), deputy for the Small Business Programs Office represented the Corps at the Small Business Conference in Kansas City, Mo. in April. (USACE file photo)

**SMALL BUSINESS** (continued from **PAGE 20**)

promotes contract awards to small businesses in a variety of ways: it sets aside work for small business firms when possible, educates and counsels small business firms about how to work with the Corps, participates in outreach events and holds pre-proposal conferences.

Large Corps projects also represent opportunities for small businesses. A recent award for the Miami Harbor deepening project could bring as much as \$37 million in sub-contracting opportunities to small business firms.

One of Jacksonville District's largest ongoing projects is the rehabilitation of Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD) around Lake Okeechobee. From fiscal year 2011 through 2013, Jacksonville District executed construction contracts for HHD valued at \$230 million. Although this sum represents prime contracting dollars to large firms, the small business sub-contracting opportunities are significant, considering almost 30 percent of those dollars have and will go to small business firms.

"All of our contractors are supported by the Small Business Programs Office," said Ingrid Bon, forward project manager for the HHD project. "This year, there has been a lot of construction activity around Herbert Hoover Dike. Currently, we have several active culvert replacement or repair construction projects: Culverts 11 and 16, Culverts 10 and 12, Culverts 8 and 13, Culverts 5 and 5A, Culverts 3 and 4A, Culverts 1 and 1A and the Seepage Management Test Facility."

Many opportunities exist at HHD for small business firms, including environmental work, hauling, site work, sheet pile construction, clearing and grubbing, materials testing, electrical, diving services, pile driving, dewatering and surveying – to name a few.

"We are planning to rehabilitate four more culverts at Herbert Hoover Dike in 2014," said Myers. "Due to the size of these projects, they will be unrestricted acquisitions, but they will still provide plenty of small business subcontracting opportunities."

There are also plans to award additional surveying contracts, and at least one of those will be set aside for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses. Also planned is the first contracting tool for invasive plant management.

Though there is much to look forward to in the future, there were many successful contract awards in 2013. The Wares Creek Flood Control project included three phases, which were all awarded to small business firms. Phase I – Dredging, awarded in 2011, was successfully completed by an 8(a) small business firm; Phase II - Sheet Pile Construction was competitively awarded to an 8(a) small business firm and Phase III - Channel Widening was awarded to a small business firm at the end of fiscal year 2013. The purpose of this project is to reduce flood risk and related issues within the Cedar Hammock-Wares Creek basin near Bradenton in Manatee County, on the west coast of Florida.

A \$10 million contract for quality assurance services in Puerto Rico was awarded to a local Puerto Rican firm. Working to educate small local businesses about the federal contracting process not only helps the local economy, but it also expands the industrial base of qualified firms that the Corps can draw upon to execute missions in Puerto Rico.

All of the district's work at the Jacksonville Naval Air Station for sustainment, restoration and modernization has been accomplished by 8(a) small business firms.

Small businesses are often able to provide solutions to specific problems that arise during the execution of the district's many missions. Myers says that small business firms are widely known as important sources of innovation and believes that it is important to help develop those small businesses. For example, the air frames and payloads for the unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were designed by two University of Florida students who went on to form a small business. The company now employs more than 30 people and they have a major contract with the U.S. Army.



At the Wares Creek Flood Control Project in Bradenton, Fla., crews prepare for the installation of sheet pile, using a chisel beam to penetrate the dense limestone layer below. Each of three phases of the project was awarded to an 8(a) small business firm. (Photo by Jean Wilson)

They got their start when the Corps needed a contractor to provide a UAV with strict design specifications. To be useful in rainy south Florida, it had to be sealed and waterproof, but still able to dissipate heat so that the delicate electronics in the payload would not be destroyed. The ability to hand-launch from land, water and swamp buggy was also crucial, since there are no long runways or landing strips near the flight locations.

"The UAV, built to our design specifications, gives us the capability to do things that others cannot do," said Larry Taylor, biologist, who is the UAV coordinator in the Multi- Projects Branch of Operations Division. The Corps uses the UAVs for various operations, including monitoring invasive species,

**SMALL BUSINESS** (continued from PAGE 21)

beach erosion, the structural condition of levees and canal banks and for conducting biological investigations and wildlife census.

The Small Business Programs Office used a variety of outreach strategies in 2013. Myers participated in ten outreach events, and spoke at eight of them. Four of these events were pre-proposal conferences for important projects.

Myers spoke to nearly 100 members of the local Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) at an April luncheon in Jacksonville, discussing upcoming district activities and opportunities for small business contractors. In November, she joined senior leaders and contracting personnel at the SAME 2013 Small Business Conference for Federal Engineering, Construction and Environmental Programs in Kansas City, Mo.

In addition, Myers met and counseled with 19 small business firms, arranged and participated in eight small business capability briefings, and kept the fiscal year 2013 acquisition forecast updated and available to the public on the district website.

Myers participated in five pre-proposal meetings and provided briefings on small business participation evaluation factors. There were two meetings for the rehabilitation of HHD culverts and others for the Miller Pump Station, part of the Picayune Strand Restoration Project near Naples in southwest Florida, Miami Harbor deepening and the Tampa Harbor Dredged Material Disposal Facility.

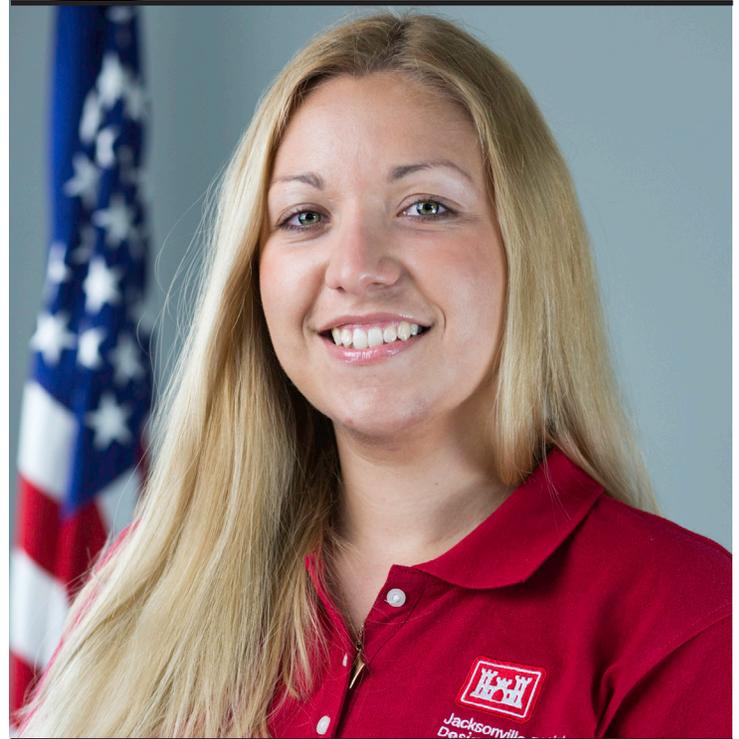
"Our pre-proposal meetings are one of the things I am most proud of," said Myers. "Businesses both big and small can learn about our upcoming projects, government contracting and our small business program. It's also a great opportunity for them to network."

"We must support small business. It's the economic engine of the United States," said Myers. "Even if you buy something at a big box store, it is likely that a small business was involved in some way, whether it was the creation of the product, fabrication of a part, the delivery of the product, or in some other way." ♦

## Engineering Division: Hard work results in significant achievements

BY NANCY J. STICHT

"It was a big year for execution," said Lauren Borocharner, chief of Jacksonville District's Engineering Division. "We already had plenty of work, and then took on a lot of additional, unplanned work besides. Much of that work was in-house design of complex major projects."



Viktoria Bogina, E.I.T. was one of the Corps' nominees for this year's New Faces of Engineering Program, sponsored by the National Engineers Week Foundation. She was recognized for her outstanding contributions to the success of the district's Modeling, Mapping and Consequences team. (Photo by David Kimery)

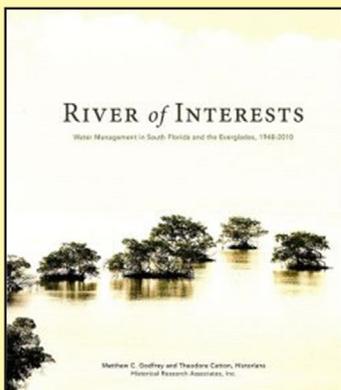
Rehabilitation of Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD), which surrounds Lake Okeechobee, is designated as one of several national mega-projects. Engineering Division executed in-house plans and specifications for five HHD contracts worth \$120 million. Also, work continued on one of the Corps' most complex and challenging dam studies at HHD, which will potentially result in remediation of much of the structure.

Jacksonville District's levee safety program is the third largest in the nation in terms of levee segments. Engineering Division issued 26 levee system inspection reports and completed and submitted for higher-level review 44 screening-level levee risk assessments.

Engineering Division completed in-house design for the Miller Pump Station, the last of three pump station projects at Picayune Strand. The \$75 million contract was awarded in 2013.

"Engineering Division is a 'can-do' organization," said Borocharner. "We developed 23 sets of in-house plans and specifications for coastal and navigation projects, contributing to awards of more than \$400 million. Thirteen of these were unscheduled contracts that came to us late in the year, and our team worked long hours to get them done."

## Publication honored by American Library Association



In June 2013, Jacksonville District's "River of Interests: Water Management in South Florida and the Everglades, 1948-2010" became the first U.S. Army Corps of Engineers publication to be placed on the American Library Association's (ALA) 2012 Notable Documents list. It was one of 20 federal publications to be so honored by the ALA's Government Documents Roundtable panel. ♦

(CONTINUES ON PAGE 23)



The 10th Annual Engineering Career Day was held in February with the theme "Future Connections." It attracted more than 120 high school students, parents and teachers from nine northeast Florida schools for a project competition and the opportunity to learn about Everglades restoration, STEM college programs and future careers. (Photo by Ty Erickson)

The team's work isn't confined to projects in Jacksonville District's area of responsibility. They have developed three proposals for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for work in Haiti, the largest of which is the Haiti Ports project. Engineering Division is partnering with the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) in Vicksburg, Miss. to plan a new port facility.

"Our significant experience in the design and construction of deep-draft harbors, combined with that of the ERDC experts, will provide USAID and the government of Haiti with the best technical expertise the Corps has available," said Boročaner. "This project could also be a gateway to other projects to help the Haitian people recover from the devastating earthquake of 2010."

At the forefront of coastal engineering, Jacksonville District also partnered with ERDC to develop a path forward for using remote sensing data to define "coastal resilience" and evaluate near-shore placement of dredged material for beach renourishment, a method that potentially has national application within the Regional Sediment management program.

"The depth and breadth of experience on our team means that we are often requested to support regional and national programs," said Boročaner. "We are working with the experts in meteorology and ocean circulation modeling on the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study, to determine future vulnerability of the north Atlantic region to tropical storms and hurricanes. We are also one of the 'go-to' districts for technical support to the national Modeling, Mapping and Consequences (MMC) program. We support the program with hydraulic and hydrologic modeling, inundation mapping and application development. And we contributed to the Design Guidance Memorandum for Seismic Evaluation of Earthen Slopes."

Jacksonville District is a leader in the Corps' Value Engineering (VE) program, and was requested to lead several initiatives,

including updating VE regulations and leading regional programmatic VE studies as well as studies for several districts. Engineering Division also supported the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Inter-basin Study Report to explore alternatives to reduce the risk of aquatic nuisance species migrating between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River. Scott Leech, technical specialist, supported Chicago District on efforts to minimize deformation on the McCook Reservoir and Bernard Siefert, geologist, worked with Sacramento District to support the American River jet grouting cutoff wall project.

Closer to home, easily one of the most successful and best attended Engineering Career Days Corps-wide attracted more than 120 high school students, parents and teachers from nine northeast Florida schools February 22. The 10th annual competition promoted science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) careers and taught students about restoration of the Everglades. The day-long event was co-sponsored by Jacksonville District and the Society of American Engineers (SAME) Jacksonville Post during National Engineers Week. The event offered area high school students the opportunity to talk to engineering and science-related companies, and receive information from state universities about educational opportunities and curriculum.

Civil engineer Viktoria Bogina, E.I.T. was one of the Corps' nominees for this year's New Faces of Engineering Program, sponsored by the National Engineers Week Foundation, a coalition of engineering societies, major corporations and government agencies that recognize young engineers who have shown outstanding abilities and leadership. Bogina's nomination was based on her contributions to the success of the district's MMC team.

"Despite our many challenges in 2013, the Engineering Division team excelled. They maintained their positive, 'can-do' attitude, produced the highest quality work and completed it on schedule," said Boročaner. ♦

## The battle against invasive species rages on BY ERICA SKOLTE



Invasive aquatic plant growth continued to be a problem this year. Floating mats of water lettuce and water hyacinth temporarily blocked Route 2 of the Okeechobee Water Waterway. More than 24,000 acres of invasive aquatic plants were treated on the St. Johns River and Lake Okeechobee in 2013. (Photo by David Lattuca)

Invasive species management is much like fighting an ongoing war while battling multiple insurgencies. Once an area is cleared, constant, diligent defense against new and known invaders is needed to maintain the ground won. In Jacksonville District, the battle against invasive species rages on.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers involvement in invasive species management dates all the way back to the introduction of water hyacinth in the 1880s. By 1890, the population had grown to such an extent that it impeded private and commercial river traffic in both Florida and Louisiana. Both states requested assistance from Congress to solve the problem. In the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, the Corps was tasked with solving the invasive aquatic plant problem in affected federal navigable waterways. Since then, more than 50,000 exotic species have been introduced to the U.S. Approximately 4,300 of these exotic species are considered invasive and pose a serious threat to navigation, agriculture, public health, flood control, and native plant and animal communities.

Jacksonville District is the only district in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with an Invasive Species Management (ISM) Branch. It provides guidance, administration and technical support for the removal and control of aquatic plants and other invasive species, and prepares and manages the annual budgets for these programs.

The ISM Branch also serves as the Aquatic Plant Control Operations Support Center for the nation, providing assistance with invasive species management issues nationwide. It is a big job. The Corps is responsible for the environmental stewardship of 456 water resource development projects located in 43 states and occupying 5.5 million surface acres, 237 navigation locks, 926 harbors, 75 hydropower projects, and 25,000 miles of inland and coastal waterways. Jacksonville District biologists travel around the country to assist in aquatic plant management and other invasive species management issues.

In 2013, the Jacksonville District ISM Branch continued established programs and initiated several new projects.

Due to the mild winter and an early wet season, aquatic plant growth exploded again this year. In fiscal year 2013, ISM treated 24,432 acres of invasive aquatic plants on the St. Johns River and Lake Okeechobee, more than any previous year. "There was a lot of pressure on our crews and on our contractors. They worked hard to try to stay on top of the growth," said biologist Jessica Spencer.

In April 2013, ISM took on a big new project administering work for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). The NRCS manages conservation easements on private, county and state-owned land and restores the sites as part of the easement agreements, while the landowner retains the right to hunt, fish, camp and even potentially graze cattle if it will not impact the restoration. "If the land is privately owned, we try to work with homeowners to maintain the use of their land," said Spencer.

In the brief span of time between April and November, ISM awarded several contracts, resulting in the successful completion of significant amounts of work and the initiation of other projects. The Corps completed exotic removal on four NRCS projects totaling 2,256 acres, and surveys and vegetation assessments were conducted on 59,138 acres of WRP easements. In addition, they were able to obligate \$3.45 million to an 8(a) small business firm. The 8(a) Business Development Program helps socially and economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs gain a foothold in government contracting and access to the economic mainstream of American society. The scope of work for the contract award included the requirement to conduct vegetation management activities on 72,560 acres of WRP easements during fiscal years 2014 and 2015.



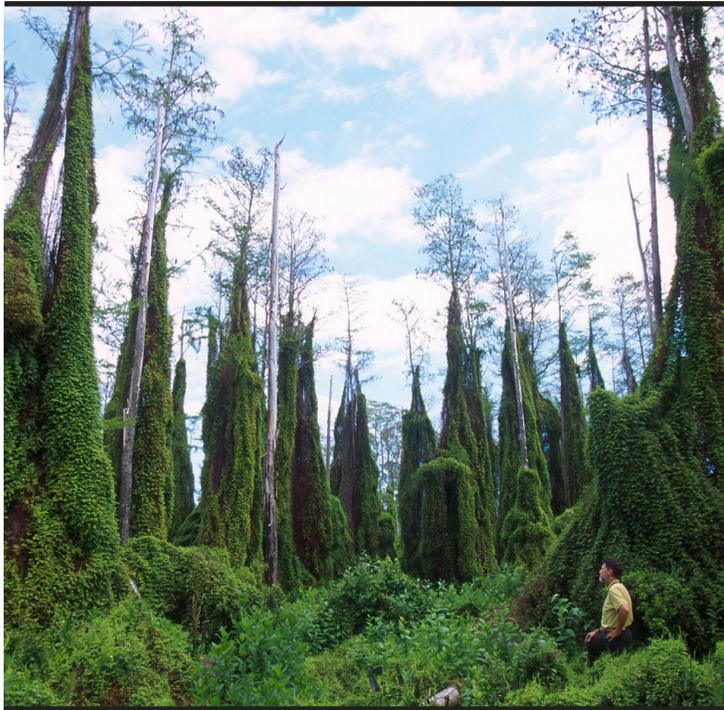
Salt cedar seedlings colonize the mud flats as the water draws down in a spoil disposal cell. These conditions create the perfect habitat for the tiny seeds to germinate. (Photo by Jessica Spencer)

"We are hoping to receive additional funding from NRCS again this year," said Spencer. "We have demonstrated that we are very effective at putting together the contracts and obligating the money for these projects. It takes a significant amount of effort, and it's nice to have another agency recognize our ability to get the job done."

**INVASIVE SPECIES** (continued from PAGE 24)

Many of the sites targeted benefit the greater Everglades ecosystem, including 32,000 acres in the Fisheating Creek basin on the west side of Lake Okeechobee. The work includes control of invasive plants such as Brazilian pepper, old world climbing fern and cogongrass.

Jacksonville District has also been involved as part of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) team, a regional, collaborative effort that includes various Corps offices, as well as centers of expertise and research laboratories, in the effort to conduct the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) in Chicago.



Monitoring and treatment programs are important to prevent invasive species, such as old world climbing fern, from spreading north to other areas. (USACE file photo)

The study identifies potential options and controls that could prevent aquatic nuisance species transfer between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins. The bighead carp and the silver carp, collectively known as "Asian carp," are two of the species of concern. They are presently in the Mississippi basin, but have not yet invaded the Great Lakes. Conversely, there are other nuisance species in the Great Lakes that have not yet made it into the Mississippi River basin.

Some of the issues associated with GLMRIS include significant natural resources such as ecosystems and threatened and endangered species; commercial and recreational fisheries; current recreational uses of the lakes and waterways; effects on water users; effects of potential controls on current waterway uses such as flood risk management, commercial and recreational navigation, recreation, water supply, hydropower and conveyance of effluent from wastewater treatment plants and other industries; and statutory and legal responsibilities relative to the lakes and waterways. The complex analysis and report was finalized in mid-December.

In January 2014, the GLMRIS Report will be released to the public and submitted to Congress. The report presents a

range of options and technologies to prevent aquatic nuisance species movement between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins through aquatic connections. Through an expedited structured study process, the Corps identified aquatic nuisance species of concern established in one basin with the risk for transfer to the other, analyzed and evaluated available controls, and formulated alternatives with the goal of preventing aquatic nuisance species transfer between the two basins, within the Chicago Area Waterway System. The term "prevent" includes the reduction of risk to the maximum extent possible, because it may not be technologically feasible to achieve an absolute solution. As part of this study, the Corps conducted a detailed analysis of various controls, including hydrologic separation.

Another area where Jacksonville District manages invasive species is in the Corps' dredged material management areas (DMMA's). When the Corps dredges for navigation projects, the spoil may be used for restoration projects, or may be stored on spoil easements on upland areas or "spoil" islands created from dredged material. It is said that "nature abhors a vacuum," and whenever a bare new soil surface appears, pioneer plant species are not far behind. Monitoring, follow-up and treatment of invasive species are important missions in these areas. While monitoring one site in St. Johns County, Spencer identified old world climbing fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*), an aggressively invasive plant with a northern extent that had previously been restricted to the I-4 corridor near Orlando and a few sites such as the Tomoka area in Flagler County. "This represented a significant jump north and has a lot of people concerned that this population could contribute to an even greater expansion of this plant's range. Old world climbing fern spreads via miniscule spores, and is dispersed quickly by both wind and water."

Jacksonville District is part of the First Coast Invasive Working Group, a five county task force working to prevent and control invasive species in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties. Volunteers in the working group responded quickly to get the fern under control with herbicides, before it could be established and spread further. "We had to get on top of it immediately," said Spencer.

Spencer has also been battling salt cedar (*Tamarix canariensis*) on some of the DMMA's. "Salt cedar seedlings colonize the mud flats as the water draws down in a spoil disposal cell. These conditions create the perfect habitat for the seeds to germinate. The seeds are wind dispersed, so if we don't control the plants on our spoil islands, they have the capability of spreading seeds for miles," she said.

Another important achievement in 2013 was the implementation of CERP Guidance Memorandum 062.00 (CGM-62) (Invasive and Native Nuisance Species Management) into the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP), a component of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP). The CGM provides guidance to CERP projects on how to assess and incorporate invasive and native nuisance species management throughout a project's lifecycle. The CGM requires each project to develop and implement an Invasive and Nuisance Species Management Plan (INSMP), which is intended to be a living document, updated throughout the life of a project.

## INVASIVE SPECIES (continued from PAGE 25)



Construction of an addition to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service biological control laboratory in Davie, Fla. was completed in 2013. The new annex houses a mass-rearing facility for permitted biocontrol agents to combat invasive species. (USACE file photo)

CEPP will be the first CERP project to address invasive species issues and impacts during every phase of the project: planning, design, construction and operations, maintenance, repair, replacement and rehabilitation. It is also the first CERP project to address both invasive plant and animal species. The CEPP Project Implementation Report (PIR) and INSMP thoroughly addressed each proposed project feature and the potential new pathways that could result and contribute to the spread and establishment of invasive species. The PIR/INSMP also evaluated the potential adverse impacts to intended ecological restoration benefits. The INSMP thoroughly addresses potential spread and establishment of invasive species due to project implementation, impacts to anticipated project benefits and methods for preventing and managing invasive species. The creation and inclusion of the first in-depth INSMP in a PIR required significant effort and provides a model for future projects.

This year, there was another first. An in-depth invasive species assessment was completed in 2013 for inclusion within RECOVER's System Status Report (SSR). This will be the first time that the SSR includes an invasive species section. The 2014 SSR will be the fifth in a series of systemwide reports that provide an accounting of the CERP Monitoring and Assessment Plan program. The invasive species section discusses trends in invasive species spread and establishment within the CERP system and associated impacts that could affect the success of Everglades restoration. The invasive species section also assesses invasive species issues/impacts associated with CERP project features that have been constructed and are operating, and projects that are currently under construction.

Construction of an addition to the existing U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) biological control laboratory building was completed in 2013. Located in Davie, Fla., the new annex houses a mass-rearing facility for large-scale rearing, dispersion and monitoring of permitted biocontrol agents to combat established invasive

species such as melaleuca (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*), Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*), Australian pine (*Casuarina equisetifolia*), and old world climbing fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*), and to facilitate a rapid response to new non-native introductions. The construction was done as part of the Melaleuca Eradication and Other Exotic Plants Project, a component of CERP.

Alligatorweed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*) invades aquatic areas and adjoining uplands throughout the southern United States. The thick mats often displace native vegetation and wildlife habitat, clog waterways, restrict water oxygen levels, increase sedimentation, interfere with irrigation and prevent drainage. One of the successful biological controls for alligatorweed is the flea beetle. Every year, Jacksonville District biologists collect alligatorweed flea beetles from local waters for shipment to locations where alligatorweed is becoming a problem. In May, the Aquatic Plant Control Operation Support Center collected and sent 49,799 alligatorweed flea beetles to six different states. These hungry creatures are such effective biocontrol agents that three years after the release of the alligatorweed flea beetle in Florida, the Corps was able to suspend herbicide spraying of alligatorweed.

ISM also maintains ongoing treatment and surveillance at projects such as the Picayune Strand Restoration Project near Naples in southwest Florida, Water Conservation Area 3 (WCA-3), Decentralization (Decomp) and Sheetflow Enhancement Physical Model (DPM) in the heart of the Everglades.

"In 2013, the Invasive Species Management Branch successfully executed several big new challenges in addition to our ongoing efforts," said Jon Lane, ISM chief. "We will continue to pursue every key strategy for invasive species management, including control, prevention, coordination, early detection, rapid response and public outreach." ♦

# Military, Interagency and International Services Branch has far-reaching mission

BY AMANDA ELLISON AND NANCY J. STICHT



Crews install a new athletic track at Odyssey Middle School in Orlando, Fla. following completion of remedial actions for the Pinecastle Jeep Range Formerly Used Defense Site. (Photo courtesy of ITSI Gilbane)

Jacksonville District's Military, Interagency and International Services (IIS) Branch marked its 19th anniversary this year with a program featuring Richard Bonner, retired deputy for programs and project management and Jim Boone, retired chief of IIS, both of whom played key roles in the development of the program.

Bonner, referred to as the district's "grandfather of IIS," said IIS is one of the few branches that has direct customers. "These customers have an option and can choose whom they want to do business with. We're a customer-oriented service."

Jim Boone is regarded as the father of Jacksonville District's IIS program, serving as the champion for this business line for years at the national and local level. "Without Jim's dedication, Jacksonville District would not have a MIL-IIS Branch," said Michael A. Ornella, chief, MIL-IIS Branch.

The IIS program operates on a limited budget of approximately \$70 million out of an approximate \$500 million district budget; however, the branch contributes approximately 10 percent of the district's full-time equivalent.

In support of the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Coast Guard, a contract was awarded for operation and maintenance dredging of the Kings Bay entrance channel. The permit process is in coordination with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for the inner channel at Blount Island. The team is also coordinating with the U.S. Navy in preparation for planned dredging at Naval Air Station Mayport next fiscal year, conducting hydro surveys at Navy Fuel Pier 111, and addressing the potential need for additional Dredged Material Management Area capacity for the Canaveral Naval Ordnance Test Unit.

Projects in support of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Immigration and Customs Enforcement include emergency electrical repairs on the island of St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands and renovations to the Krome Service Processing Center in Miami, Fla. Projects are also under way for the DHS, Customs and Border Patrol as well as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Projects to serve international customers include providing technical assistance on the rehabilitation of the Port of Cap-Haitien, rural farm road development, review of a dam design in Haiti for the U.S. Agency for International Development and a water resources infrastructure workshop requested by the World Bank for the Caribbean nations of Saint Lucia, Dominica and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Jacksonville District also provides reachback support to the Middle East District for their efforts with the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The Defense Environmental Restoration Program for Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) program in Jacksonville is the fourth largest in the Corps. The FUDS team achieved all fiscal year 2013 metrics by processing 50 contract actions via multi-district teams, doubling performance-based contracting obligation metrics for fiscal year 2013; obligating more than \$14 million on 112 projects and phases active in fiscal year 2013; achieving regulatory closure of two chemical warfare sites and one petroleum site; achieving phase completion on 15 sites; and completing all six five-year reviews in the first quarter of fiscal year 2013. All of this was achieved despite furloughs of project managers and multi-district technical team members.

(CONTINUES ON PAGE 28)

MILITARY-IIS (continued from PAGE 27)

<p><b>Safely Enjoy Culebra. Follow the 3Rs. Take only your memories. Leave only your footprints.</b></p> <p>Looking for these shells can be fun.</p>  <p>Looking for these shells can be dangerous.</p>  <p>Munitions may remain on Culebra from the Navy's past training activities. They are not souvenirs. Although they are old, they may still be dangerous. Your safety is important to us. If you find an unusual item, follow the 3Rs of explosives safety:</p> <p><b>Recognize.</b> What you found may be dangerous.  <b>Retreat.</b> Do not touch or move the object.  <b>Report.</b> Call 787.742.3501 and say you may have found munitions.</p> <p><b>Recognize</b> <b>Retreat</b> <b>Report</b></p> <p>Safely Enjoy Culebra's Beaches. Follow the 3Rs. Take only your memories. Leave only your footprints.</p> <p><small>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District          Email: FUDS.PuertoRico@USACE.Army.mil          Call (Toll Free) 866-279-4880</small></p>	<p><b>Disfruta con seguridad Culebra. Siga las 3Rs. Llévase sólo sus recuerdos. Deja sólo tus huellas.</b></p> <p>Buscar éstas conchas o caparazones puede ser divertido.</p>  <p>Buscar éstas conchas o caparazones puede ser peligroso.</p>  <p>Puede que en Culebra aún queden municiones de pasadas actividades de entrenamiento de la Marina. Estas no son recuerdos para llevarse a casa. A pesar de que tienen muchos años, pudieran seguir siendo peligrosas. Su seguridad es importante para nosotros. Si observa algo inusual, siga las 3Rs de seguridad para explosivos:</p> <p><b>Reconozca.</b> Lo encontrado pudiese ser peligroso.  <b>Retroceda.</b> No toque o mueva el objeto.  <b>Reporte.</b> Comuníquese al 787-742-3501 y notifique que puede que usted haya encontrado municiones.</p> <p><b>Reconozca</b> <b>Retroceda</b> <b>Reporte</b></p> <p>Disfruta con seguridad las playas de Culebra. Siga las 3Rs. Llévase sólo sus recuerdos. Deja sólo tus huellas.</p> <p><small>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District          Email: FUDS.PuertoRico@USACE.Army.mil          Call (Toll Free) 866-279-4880</small></p>
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A new public information campaign was developed for the Culebra, Puerto Rico Formerly Used Defense Sites project after a young tourist was injured by munitions she found and carried from Flamenco Beach into town. Materials were produced in both English and Spanish, with input received from the community, to promote the 3R safety message of Recognize – Retreat – Report whenever munitions are encountered.

The FUDS team also tried new technologies this year. The Mullet Key FUDS project at Fort DeSoto Park, near St. Petersburg, Fla. marked the first time that the Corps has employed the services of explosives detection dogs at a FUDS. The innovative technology is being used for demonstration purposes, to evaluate its potential for further use in the program. A community availability event was held at the park in September, to explain the project and respond to questions.

An April meeting of the Restoration Advisory Board for the Culebra FUDS in Puerto Rico was well-attended, following the reported injury of a young tourist by munitions she found and carried from Flamenco Beach into town. A new public information campaign was developed to further promote the 3R safety message: If suspected munitions are encountered, **Recognize** that they may be dangerous, **Retreat** without moving or touching the munitions, and **Report** to local law enforcement.

Final Decision Documents were signed for three of four Munitions Response Sites (MRS) at the former Pinecastle Jeep Range in Orlando, which the district has been remediating since 2008. The signed Decision Documents represent the approval of Corps headquarters of the final recommended alternatives for each of the three areas of the site. Remedial work was completed this year at Odyssey Middle School and in two nearby residential areas, and a final report is in development and will be shared with the community when completed. The Decision Document for the fourth and final MRS is pending headquarters review and approval.

Public meetings were held in June to present the Proposed Plans for Brooksville Turret Gunnery Range and Bushnell Army Airfield.

Debris removal took place at the Fort Pierce Naval Amphibious Training Base project at Vero Beach, Fla. Contractor crews worked offshore to search for and remove underwater objects known as horned scullies. Horned scullies are obstacles, made of steel beams welded together and placed in concrete, that were used by the military for the purpose of damaging landing craft.

Jacksonville District's recommendation for a Time Critical Removal Action for the pyridine burn area at the former Lee Field Naval Air Station FUDS was approved by headquarters and a contract will be awarded upon receipt of funding.

It has been a very busy, productive year for the Military-IIS Branch, an integral component of Jacksonville District's mission.



The Mullet Key Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) at Fort DeSoto Park near St. Petersburg, Fla. marked the first time that explosives detection dogs were employed to search for munitions on a FUDS. The innovative technology was used for demonstration purposes to evaluate the potential for further use in the program. (Photo by Nancy J. Sticht)



Many areas in Florida and Puerto Rico were used by the military for training during World War II, and although the sites were cleaned up to the standards of the day, munitions and munitions-related contamination may remain. If encountered, follow the 3Rs of explosives safety: **Recognize** that munitions may be dangerous, **Retreat** without touching or moving the item, and **Report** the finding to local law enforcement.

# Real Estate Division's varied program touches every project

BY NANCY J. STICHT



Real Estate Division team members review an ownership map for beach renourishment land interest requirements. Pictured (l to r) are Tamara Crocker-Howard, Hansler Bealyer, Don Crabtree, Darrin Rosenau and Karl Nixon. (USACE file photo)

"Real Estate Division has a much more varied program than many people realize," said Audrey Ormerod, chief of the Real Estate Division. "In fact, we touch every district project in some way."

The Real Estate Division is responsible for ensuring the federal government has sufficient real estate interests necessary to support the construction, operations and maintenance of both civil works and military projects.

Realty specialist technical leads from the division's Acquisition Branch serve on project delivery teams, contribute real estate appendices for project planning reports and coordinate with and support non-federal sponsors. They identify and manage the acquisition of lands, buildings, structures and linear structures for project construction as well as for operations and maintenance activities. In 2013, those projects included the Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD) Rehabilitation project and the HHD Dam Safety Modification Report, a comprehensive study to adequately address problems and alternatives for HHD rehabilitation. Jacksonville District was also tasked in 2013 with the mission to identify, design, advertise and award within a very short timeframe a number of contracts for the emergency renourishment of beaches on both the east and west coasts of Florida. And by sifting through hundreds of pages of documentation and receipts, the team is in the process of reviewing supporting crediting documentation for more than 17,000 tracts of land at a value of \$1.474 billion.

The Appraisal Branch is a small group of state certified and licensed professionals who estimate and review real estate values for project planning and real estate actions and prepare economic updates for projects, which are used to calculate cost-benefit ratio. Noteworthy projects handled by this team included the Pinellas and Duval Counties Shore Protection Projects, which included full structure inventories of all buildings fronting the ocean and estimating depreciated replacement cost for each structure. The total depreciated replacement cost for these two counties was more than \$1 billion.

Once a project achieves operations and maintenance status, if it remains in the federal inventory and does not transfer to the

non-federal sponsor, the Management and Disposal Branch becomes involved. This team manages real estate for district projects and disposes of it when no longer needed. In 2013, they processed more than 2,500 consents to easement, more than 1,000 real estate encroachments (resolving 287 of them), nearly 150 military and civil works outgrants of Army-held property to tenants and 170 rights of entry in support of the Defense Environmental Restoration Program for Formerly Used Defense Sites. A notable disposal was the accreted lands at Huguenot Park to the state of Florida, relieving the federal government of custodianship and potential environmental liabilities.



Hansler Bealyer, chief of the Real Estate Acquisition Branch, leads a team that identifies and manages the acquisition of lands, buildings, structures and linear structures for project construction as well as for operations and maintenance activities. The team is in the process of reviewing supporting crediting documentation for more than 17,000 tracts of land at a value of \$1.474 billion. (USACE file photo)

"Despite furloughs during both the sequestration and federal government shutdown, the In-Leasing Section met execution and reduction requirements for the fiscal year 2013 Military Recruiting Program and maintained almost perfect scores on their customer surveys," said Ormerod. They processed more than 170 actions, including new, renewal, build-out, expansion/reduction and closure activities and managed more than 220 military and civil works in-leases, contributing \$13 million in rent, utilities, support contracts and labor.

The Antilles Section team, which was also furloughed twice in 2013, works all phases of real estate actions in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands: from acquisition to disposal, civil works plans, military recruiting leases, non-federal sponsor support, and military outgrants such as a consolidated permit to update and document the Department of Defense Education Activity's presence, rights and responsibilities associated with schools at Fort Buchanan in Puerto Rico. The Antilles Section also works with a very diverse list of civil and military organizations: Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, the Puerto Rico Ports Authority, Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army Reserve, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Island National Guard, a list limited only by the lands impacted by the actions they are working. ♦

## Multiple wins, zero losses for Office of Counsel

BY NANCY J. STICHT



The Portugués Dam project in Puerto Rico is nearing completion and a dedication ceremony is scheduled for early 2014. Although a contractor had appealed the contracting officer's decision on its claim, the Armed Services Board of Contract Appeals ruled in favor of Jacksonville District. (Photo by John Campbell)

Jacksonville District's Office of Counsel racked up an impressive record in 2013, with litigation victories of nearly \$30 million won and zero dollars lost.

Appeals of contracting officers' decisions for the Rose Bay restoration and Portugués Dam projects were made in the amounts of \$2.3 million and \$2.7 million respectively. However, when the claims were reviewed by the Armed Services Board of Contract Appeals, the board ruled in favor of Jacksonville District.

In a recent tort action, *Downs v. United States*, plaintiff Dwight Downs sought \$25 million in damages when he suffered quadriplegia after diving head-first into a surf zone while under the influence of alcohol. The trial court found in Downs' favor and determined the Corps' liability to be nearly \$2 million. However, the Eleventh Circuit Court, finding that Downs had not proven the Corps' negligence or causation, reversed the district court's judgment and entered judgment in favor of the Corps. Although Downs filed a motion for a rehearing, the Eleventh Circuit denied the motion.

"In each case in which a monetary claim was filed against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and a verdict was reached in 2013, Jacksonville District prevailed," said John Kasbar, deputy district counsel.

Office of Counsel has a heavy workload that supports Jacksonville District's wide-ranging programs. It executed 28 civil works agreements in 2013, the highest number on record for Jacksonville District. The agreements describe the responsibilities of the Corps, its federal partners, and non-federal project sponsors in carrying out programs and projects.

"Without these agreements in place, we cannot execute projects and programs that serve the public," explained Kasbar.

Also in 2013, Office of Counsel processed 263 requests filed under the Freedom of Information Act and reviewed 544 contract actions. It also plays a key role in providing counsel for the largest Regulatory program in the nation.

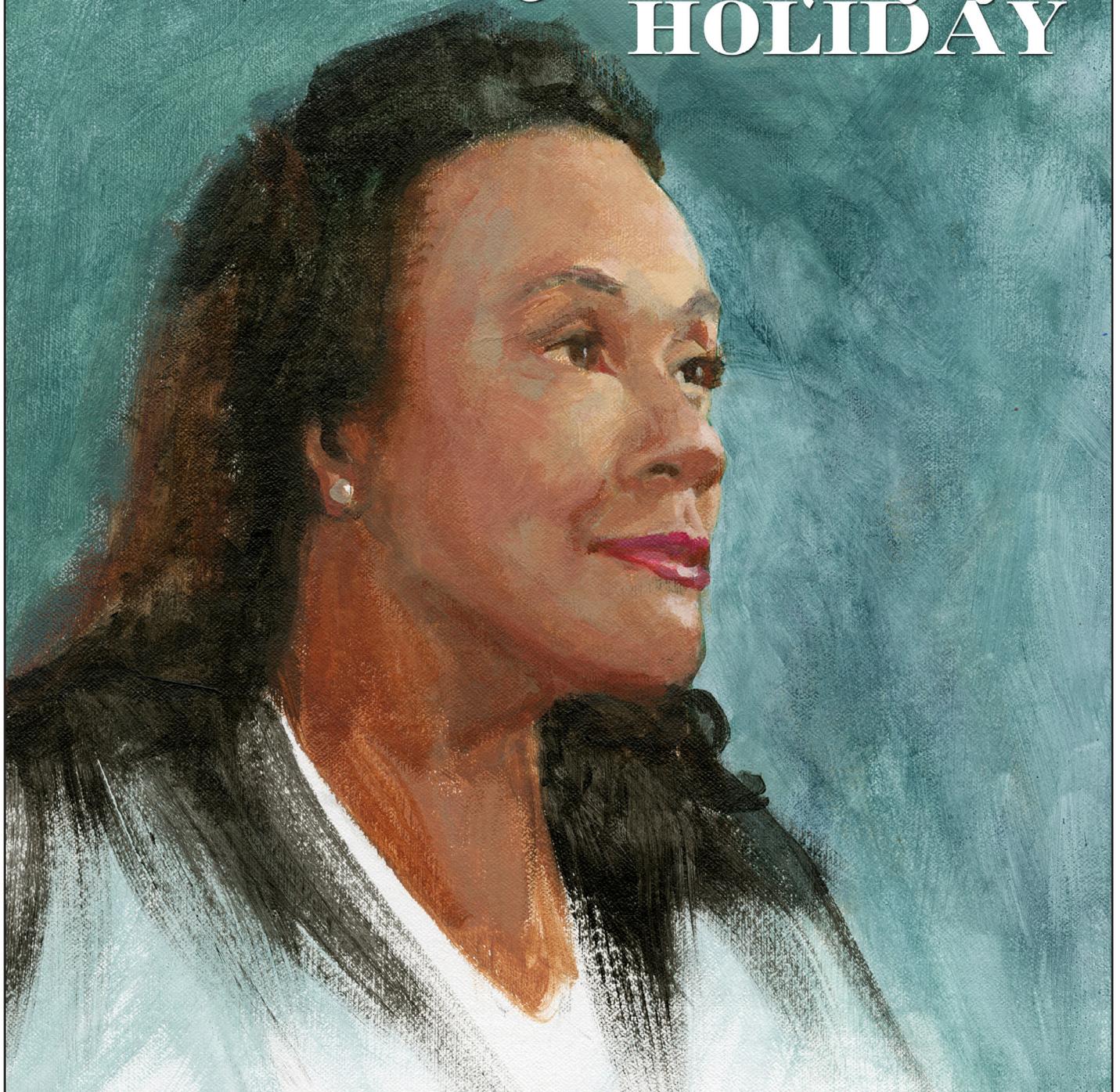
"Office of Counsel's primary missions are to provide preventative counsel and litigate cases so that the Corps can successfully execute its public service mission," said Kasbar. ♦



In this 2010 photo, a Port Orange resident watches as a dredge removes accumulated sediment from the bottom of Rose Bay. When the contractor appealed the contracting officer's decision on its claim, the Armed Services Board of Contract Appeals ruled in favor of Jacksonville District. (Photo by Jasmine Chopra-Delgadillo)



# *Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.* **HOLIDAY**



*“The greatness of a COMMUNITY is most accurately MEASURED BY the COMPASSIONATE ACTIONS of its members... a HEART of grace and a SOUL generated by LOVE.”* Coretta Scott King

# Jax Facts: How well do you know Jacksonville District?

BY NANCY J. STICHT



Congratulations to **Vicki Tipton**, Contracting Division, the first district team member to submit the correct answers to all ten of the following questions, based on stories that appeared in the December issue of JaxStrong. (Photo courtesy of Vicki Tipton)

**1. Name three ways in which the Invasive Species Management Branch reaches out to the community around Lake Okeechobee?**

A: Personal contact, social media, Jacksonville District Facebook, Lake Okeechobee and the Okeechobee Waterway Facebook, Twitter, Jacksonville District website, Lake Okeechobee Interagency Aquatic Plant Management Task Force website, permanent signs, monthly visits to fish camps and bait stores, monthly meetings, public meetings, meeting people out in the field. (Invasive Species Management Branch ramps up outreach, pg. 13)

**2. The 152-mile Okeechobee Waterway connects what two communities in south Florida along the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico?**

A: Stuart and Fort Myers (Rangers educate boaters on Okeechobee Waterway anchoring policy, pg. 11)

**3. Florida is home to 45 native species of snakes, but only six of them are venomous - do you know which six?**

A: Coral snake, Florida cottonmouth, dusky pigmy rattlesnake, the eastern diamondback rattlesnake, southern copperhead, timber or canebrake rattlesnake. (Presentation on poisonous species benefits field staff safety, pg. 6)

**4. How many times has the federal channel on the St. Johns River been deepened in the past 40 years?**

A: The channel has been deepened three times in the past 40 years. (COL Dodd's column, pg. 2)

**5. What district project is employing explosive detection dogs as an innovative technology?**

A: Mullet Key Formerly Used Defense Site. (These noses know no limits, pg. 3)

**6. What poisonous animal has been found under rocks and in some of the monitoring well sleeves at Herbert Hoover Dike?**

A: Florida bark scorpions. (Presentation on poisonous species benefits field staff safety, pg. 6)

**7. What methods are being used by rangers to enforce the policy that prohibits long-term anchoring on the Okeechobee Waterway?**

A: Education, citations, penalties and fines. (Rangers educate boaters on Okeechobee Waterway anchoring policy, pg. 11)

**8. True or false – if bitten by a poisonous snake, it is a good idea to make an X-shaped cut in the skin and suck out the venom.**

A: False. Call 911, keep the limb below heart level and head to the emergency room. (Presentation on poisonous species benefits field staff safety, pg. 6)

**9. The Department of Defense contributed to a national certification standard for the canine detection dog industry to ensure what?**

A: The standard ensures that canine teams can perform consistently in any environment. (These noses know no limits, pg. 3)

**10. What exception to the Okeechobee Waterway anchoring prohibition is allowed?**

A: Boaters who are making progress to cross the waterway may drop anchor for up to 24 hours in the same location. (Rangers educate boaters on Okeechobee Waterway anchoring policy, pg. 11) ♦

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## Partnering at JaxPort



Lisa Holland (left), Surveying and Mapping Branch, is pictured with Kyle Ward of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Office of Coast Survey, when they attended the Jacksonville Marine Transportation Exchange meeting Wednesday, Dec. 4. Holland gave an update on Jacksonville District's hydrographic survey operations and new survey capabilities, as well as a briefing on the challenges facing the Corps, with relocation of navigation aids for Mile Point and the General Reevaluation Report for the port deepening project. The quarterly meeting allows an open forum for the Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA and other maritime industry partners to share information regarding port operations and dredging projects. (Photo courtesy of Lisa Holland)

## Brown honored as 27th Black Engineer of the Year

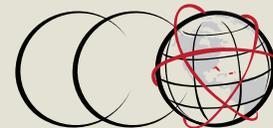


Timothy R. Brown, senior project manager, was honored as the 27th Black Engineer of the Year in February 2013. The Black Engineer of the Year Award is one of the most prestigious and competitive honors in science, engineering and technology management. (Photo by David Kimery)

## Toys for Tots



Pictured from left to right, Kellie Tyler, Carrie Bond and Brittany Jones pose with toys collected by the Jacksonville District team and donated to the U.S. Marine Corps' Toys for Tots program. The drive was sponsored by the Sandcastle Club, the district's Morale, Welfare and Recreation organization, to provide local children with gifts for the holiday season. Team members in the South Florida Operations Office also collected toys for distribution in the Clewiston area. (Photo by Ty Erickson)



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*U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District*

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