

Operations holds annual training at Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest

By Jason Tremblay, Project Manager

Edward McDowell Lake

The 2016 Operations Division Training was held on Oct. 25-27 at the Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, a research facility operated by the U.S. Forest Service in North Woodstock, New Hampshire, situated within the White Mountain National Forest.

During his remarks, Scott Acone, Deputy District Engineer for Programs/Project Management, said the research conducted at Hubbard Brook on watersheds and hydrology influenced the engineering and construction of the flood control dams in New England.

The goal of the annual training was to increase the operational knowledge and situational awareness of the Natural Resource Management staff working at the flood control and navigation projects as well as the associated parks.

With improved understanding the staff is able to provide a safer and more enjoyable experience for the visiting public. In addition, the training is a great opportunity for team building and to update on mission objectives, and goals for the coming year.

Acting Operations Chief, Dave Margolis, and Deputy Operations Chief, Eric Pedersen discussed the changes within Operations, as well as the entire District.

Highlights from this year's training included New Hampshire State Police Trooper Andrew Frigon who provided valuable information on signs of drug manufacturing and dealing in public places such as Corps parks. State Trooper Frigon also discussed what Park Rangers should watch for when suspected contraband items are found in the parks. This session gave important information to ensure the safety of the Park Rangers when dealing with potential drug issues.

Danielle Fowles, Training Coordinator for Tread Lightly, traveled from Utah to speak about her agency's mission and potential partnerships with the Corps. The goal of the partnerships is to protect natural resources and promote sustainable use by the public.

Dr. Jim Haney, Professor of Biology at the University of New Hampshire, discussed cyanobacteria and its potentially harmful effects on people, pets and wildlife. The session was relevant as many of the lakes across the District have been affected by cyanobacteria in the past. The professor talked about his regional research, the health concerns related to cyanobacteria, and provided information that can be used by Park Rangers when addressing the public.

Event host Ian Halm, U.S. Forest Service Site Manager, presented an overview of the research station and discussed ongoing projects for watershed and forests ecology.

Chief of Counsel, John Astley, accompanied by attorney Kiersten Haugen, presented the required annual Ethics training to more than 70 employees in attendance.

Amy Smagula, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, and Joshua Levesque, Merrimack River Basin, presented a session on Aquatic Invasive Species Management. They discussed the treatment and methodology of combating aquatic invasive plants at Hopkinton-Everett Lake using research and development from the Corps' Engineer Research and Development Center on field trials of a new aquatic herbicide. This product, which uses less herbicide to accomplish the treatment, has been a case study on the national scene. More research is being conducted on the concentration refinements.

The project delivery team responsible for putting together the training included: Natalie McCormack - Operations Technical Support, Samantha Russo - Operations Technical Support, Kimberly Russell - Operations Technical Support, Jordan Luks - Upper Connecticut River Basin, Matt Coleman - Lower Connecticut River Basin, Dan Defiore - Naugatuck River Basin, Elisa Carey - Cape Cod Canal, Jason Tremblay - Merrimack River Basin, and Jim Hachigian - Thames River Basin.

In addition, many District employees gave their time to travel and present at the training within their field of expertise; Shelia Winston-Vincuilla, Deb Acone, and Steven Lehmann on dealing with problematic contracts, Kate Atwood on cultural resources, Kane Turmelle on safety, Joseph Brossard on maintenance of Flood Risk Management tools and technology, John Pribilla on the Invasive Species Interpretive Trunk, Elisa Carey and Samantha Gray led the team building activity, Eric Pedersen on resume development and interview techniques, and Karen Hoey provided the team trivia activity and tour of the Franklin Falls Dam.