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BUILDING STRONG®



District strives to exceed beneficial use material goal
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Yankee Voices

Bob DeSista and Sue Mehigan



Sympathy

... to **David Heislein**, Engineering Division, on the passing of his father, **John Thomas (Tom) Heislein**, Dec. 15. Mr. Heislein faithfully served his country as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army Signal Corps 1945-1956. His obituary can be found here: <https://www.contefuneralhomes.com/obituaries/John-Thomas-Tom-Heislein?obId=30135232#/obituaryInfo>

Thank you

My wife Mary Ann and I would like to thank you all for such a memorable retirement event. I've been to many over my career and this one was perfect! It was truly a great time and meant a lot to me that so many of my friends and colleagues were there to celebrate with us.

I hope you all have great holidays and a fantastic New Year!

Thank you,

- *Bob DeSista*



Otter Brook and Surry Mountain hold open house on Master Plans

The Otter Brook and Surry Mountain team held a public open house on Oct. 31 to discuss proposed updates to the Master Plans. The open house provided an opportunity for public officials and concerned individuals to give input to the process. About half a dozen citizens came to hear the presentation and to ask questions.

Project Manager Christie Baker and Park Rangers Michael Servant, Jessalyn Stockwell and James Chevalier represented the District at the open house.

In the presentation, Baker said that a Master Plan establishes a foundation of principles from which project lands and waters are managed.

"A master plan provides guidance for future development on project land," said Baker. "It covers all project resources such as fish and wildlife, vegetation, cultural, aesthetic, interpretative, recreational, outgranted lands easements and water."

Otter Brook's Master Plan was last completed in 1967 and Surry Mountains was last completed in 1981.

Public comments were sought until Nov. 30.



Commander's Corner: 90-Day Assessment

by Col. Justin R. Pabis, PE
New England District Commander

One of the tasks I had to complete after taking command was to deliver to the Chief of Engineers a 90-day assessment of the district. I'm sharing this with all of you for complete transparency.

This is what I see:

-We have an amazing team doing incredible things every day. We need to tell our story to the public. This helps us relay important information and guidance in later times of emergency as well as helps us cultivate and attract talented potential teammates.

- We are in a business of people and relationships. Communication is key. Being present is paramount. We solve hard problems with interaction with our teammates



at critical locations.

- I define innovation as doing what we are required to do better and more efficiently. Sometimes that requires a material solution. Sometimes it requires new ways of thinking and changing paradigms. Most of the time it requires both as well as taking calculated risks that I as the commander can underwrite.

My top priority is ensuring we have a safe and secure work environment where all our teammates feel welcomed and afforded opportunities to excel. Coming up through the ranks, I have always charged myself to be the leader that my Soldiers deserve.

As we complete our counseling for our progress reviews, I encourage everyone to talk to their supervisors and mentors about what it is that you need to excel. But also talk to them about the very things that make us uncomfortable, such as helping our supervisors see their blind spots or the things that make us feel uncomfortable. In the end it will make us a stronger team with diversity in thought that will ultimately pave the way for the innovation we need to remain a world class organization.

North Atlantic Division Commander promoted to Brigadier General

by Joshua Voda
North Atlantic Division

Col. John P. Lloyd, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, North Atlantic Division commander and division engineer, was promoted to brigadier general during a promotion ceremony here Dec. 20.

Lt. Gen. Scott Spellmon, the 55th chief of engineers and USACE commanding general, hosted the ceremony at the Fort Hamilton Community Club. Lloyd's family, friends and colleagues past and present attended the event.

Spellmon delivered remarks centered on Lloyd's achievements, including presently leading the largest regional military construction program in USACE at more than \$2.1 billion, as well as strengthening relationships to key U.S. and international partners that enhance national security.

As the ceremony progressed, Lloyd's wife and children pinned the brigadier general rank on his epaulets, and per custom, he received the General Officer's pistol belt to accompany the GO's sidearm, an M18 modular handgun system, and the one-star general flag was unfurled in his honor. During his remarks, Lloyd reflected on his professional experiences and those who have made a difference in his journey, especially his family and those who have supported

them along his career. He specifically referenced several people, including Army officers and non-commissioned officers, civilians and close friends who have shaped him as a leader. Lloyd finished his remarks with a tribute to his wife.

"Through it all, the most challenging of times, Stacy stood by my side and weathered the storm when most would have left," he said. "For this reason, this promotion would not have been possible without her."

Lloyd has served in various roles with USACE throughout his career including as the commander of the Pittsburgh District and as the USACE chief of staff. He became the 59th commander of the North Atlantic Division in June 2022.

As division commander, Lloyd oversees a regional team of more than 3,600 professionals and an annual program of more than \$6 billion to plan, design and construct projects that support the military, protect America's water resources, mitigate risk from disasters, and restore and enhance the environment. He is responsible for a mission set that includes a \$1.1 billion Civil Works program, the largest Military Construction and International, Interagency and Environmental programs executed within USACE in Fiscal Year 2023, and world-class support teams including Contracting, Small Business, Real Estate, and other essential enablers.

Bob DeSista retires after 47 years of federal service

Robert “Bob” DeSista, Deputy Chief, Regulatory Branch, devoted 47 years of his life to federal service before making the decision to retire. To honor all that he has done for the people of New England, and the nation, the Regulatory team held a retirement lunch in his honor, Nov. 7 in the Concord Park cafeteria.

Eighty-six people traveled to the Concord Headquarters to celebrate DeSista’s distinguished career and, for some, to welcome him to the New England District retirement community.

Frank Delgiudice, Chief, Permits and Enforcement C, and DeSista’s coworker and longtime friend, hosted the event. He had everyone stand so that DeSista and his family could enter the lunch in grand style.

Delgiudice introduced DeSista’s wife, MaryAnn, and his son, Gregory, who attended the lunch with him. Delgiudice then thanked the event organizers and contributors before introducing the 16 retirees who came out to welcome DeSista into their ranks. A bouquet of flowers was presented to Mrs. DeSista at the beginning of



Bob DeSista cuts his retirement cake.

Photos by Brian Murphy

the retirement luncheon as a token of appreciation for sharing her husband with the District for so many years.

The host read a letter from Col. John A. Atilano, former District Commander, who was unable to attend but wanted to be a part of DeSista’s day.

“Congratulations on your well-deserved retirement!” read Delgiudice. “I want to wish you and your family all the best in this next chapter of your life.

You are a true gentleman and will be greatly missed.”

After reading Col. Atilano’s letter, Delgiudice delivered his Power Point presentation entitled, “47 years of Bob.”

He started off by touching on DeSista’s family roots in Rhode Island. Although his parents grew up and married in Rhode Island, DeSista is a Texan by birth. The family moved several times when DeSista was a child as his father became the USACE Headquarters Regulatory Chief. Ultimately, he was raised in Maryland.

He returned to his parent’s home state of Rhode Island to attend college and never left New England after that. DeSista graduated in 1971 from the University of Rhode Island with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography with a minor in Community and Land Use Planning. He served in the U.S. Army from 1971 to 1979 and at the time of his discharge he was promoted to Captain.

Delgiudice transitioned from DeSista’s education and military service to his career. Prior to joining the New England District, he worked



Lt. Col. David MacPhail presented Bob DeSista with this retirement certificate.

for the state of Rhode Island on its statewide Planning program.

In 1976 DeSista began his career with USACE New England in the Old Murphy Federal Center in Waltham, Massachusetts. He stayed until 1982, leaving to open a liquor store on Route 1 in Foxborough just a mile away from Gillette Stadium. DeSista returned to USACE in 1986 and he never left again, citing Susan Mehigan convincing then Chief of Regulatory, William Lawless, to take him back.

Delgiudice said that during his career, DeSista has worn many hats – from Project Manager through Acting Chief of Regulatory.

DeSista worked on many high-profile projects in his career to include the Naval Silo in Groton, Connecticut, the Rhode Island Special Area Management Plan, the Block Island Windfarm permit, the Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun Casinos permits in Connecticut, the Wentworth by the Sea Marina permit in New Hampshire, and the TF Green Airport running expansion permit in Rhode Island.

Although mostly known for his accomplishments in the District's Regulatory Division, DeSista worked various details throughout his career. From 2001 to 2003 he served as a Project Engineer for Construction Division. As the on-site project manager, DeSista worked on several improvement projects to include the \$14 million concrete wall at West Hill Dam, \$250,000 Smelt Hill Dam removal in Maine, the \$300,000 dam crest and recreational parking area paving project at Buffumville Lake in Massachusetts; and work at the Devens Airfield and Devens Reserve.

In 2013 DeSista served a 120-day detail as Deputy Chief, Regulatory Program, HQUSACE, Operations and Reg. Division Community of Practice. He also served as New England District's Executive Officer/Chief of Staff.

Some of the impactful work DeSista accomplished including initiating Brown Bag sessions, developing the project description for both the Chief of Staff and the Knowledge Manager and the on boarding of both positions. DeSista also oversaw the removal of run down sheds, boats, trailers and random vehicles from the lower parking lot at Concord Park.

When the nation called for volunteers to assist with disaster response, DeSista answered numerous times. His first deployment was in 1992 for the Hurricane Andrew Disaster recovery in South Florida. In 1994 he assisted with the Northridge Earthquake recovery in Los Angeles, California. In 1996 he deployed to North Carolina for the Hurricane Fran disaster recovery efforts. In 1998, he went to Puerto Rico to assist in the recovery after Hurricane Georges.

Concluding his presentation, Delgiudice said DeSista's final deployment was to New York as part of the New England District team to respond to the 9/11 World Trade

Center Disaster. There he served as Deputy Commander for the Division Forward Support Element as part of the Emergency Response Team. He was responsible for supervising the emergency support element and for tracking the operations mission manager assignments including Urban Search and Rescue, debris removal and monitoring, emergency dredging operations and administrative and logistical support.

Following the presentation, DeSista cut the retirement cake to serve as dessert.

Delgiudice called out to the audience for anyone to say a few words about DeSista. Speakers include Dale Beter, Crystal Gardner, Sue Mehigan, Ruthann Brien and Charles Farris, Scott Acone and Tammy Turley, Chief of Regulatory Division.

Lt. Col. David MacPhail, Deputy District Commander, marveled at DeSista's 47 years of service commenting that DeSista had been working longer than MacPhail had been
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Frank Delgiudice makes his presentation during Bob DeSista's retirement lunch.

District repairs breakwaters on the Isle of Shoals

By Suzanne Grant
Construction Division

The New England District is repairing Breakwater 1 between Star Island and Cedar Island, on the Isle of Shoals which is located in New Hampshire and Maine. The project will consist of repairing three stone rubble mounded breakwaters located between the four islands of Star, Cedar, Smuttynose and Malaga.

Over the years, the rock structures were damaged in particular areas along the length of each structure by intense wave action during storm events. In some areas along Breakwaters 1 and 2 the armor stones were loosened.

The Isle of Shoals is a three-mile-long cluster of eight rocky islands and ledges located off the coast of New Hampshire and Maine approximately



Sunset at the Isle of Shoals.

Photo by Randy Lecuyer

six nautical miles southeast from the entrance to Portsmouth Harbor, New Hampshire. Four of the islands, Star, Cedar, Smuttynose, and Malaga, are situated such that they create a small harbor, known as Gosport Harbor. The

harbor is 32 acres in area and is used by commercial and charter fishing boats, recreational vessels, the U.S. Coast Guard during search and rescue operations, and excursion boats from Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Bob DeSista retires after 47 years of federal service

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alive. Kidding aside, Lt. Col. MacPhail praised him for his many years of service, saying that all his work had a significant impact.

Delgiudice said that DeSista had been nominated for the Meritorious Service Medal and that Sen. Edward Markey would be sending along his own award in appreciation for all DeSista's dedicated work. Acone presented DeSista with his retirement and certificate.

Turley presented DeSista with gifts from the audience, including a framed picture of him receiving an award that the Regulatory team found on eBay. Turley explained that the seller wanted \$15 but she was able to talk the gentleman down to \$12.

The Chief of Regulatory presented DeSista with a certificate to one of his favorite restaurants. DeSista said he was at the restaurant so often the two bartenders started calling him the

Notorious B.O.B. DeSista received gift certificates to another restaurant and a country club.

Turley said that during COVID, to keep Regulatory virtual team meetings interesting, DeSista would often start with a show and tell session. To commemorate that time, she presented DeSista with an old compass. Turley also gifted him a book that Turley would be reading at her next book club meeting as well as a minuteman statue.

DeSista took to the podium after all the presentations and kind words from the audience. He said that his retirement and his lunch were exciting and special. He thanked everyone who put his lunch together, especially Delgiudice for his amazing presentation. He also thanked his wife, children and grandchildren for supporting him throughout his career.

DeSista gave a little background on parts of his life that wasn't covered in the slides. He talked about this love for the band the Grateful Dead

and talked in a little more detail about his liquor store. Looking back at his career, DeSista said that it was filled with amazing experiences and that he has seen a lot in his 47-year career. He said Regulatory was filled with a lot of people he called friends.

DeSista plans to relax, fish and spend time with family and friends during his retirement.

Distinguished Civilian Gallery member Jay MacKay attended the lunch. Other retirees who attended DeSista's event were Angie Vanaria, Bill Mullen, Brian Valiton, Diane Ray, Farrell McMillan, Jay clement, Jeff Preston, John Kennelly, Judy Antonellis, Karen Adams Laura Lally, Mark Otis, Marty Abair, Susan Mehigan and Tom Fredette.

Event organizers and contributors were Andrea Williams, Art Harmon, Delgiudice, Greg Penta, Leslie Martin, Turley and Tina Chaisson.

District strives to exceed beneficial use material goal

Since Lt. Gen. Scott Spellmon's announcement that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would reuse 70 percent of quality dredged material by 2030, the New England District has strived to exceed it.

In Fiscal Year 22-23, approximately 88 percent of New England District's dredged material was beneficially used. Four ongoing projects in New England are expected to achieve 100 percent beneficial reuse when they are completed.

"The District is continuously dredging along New England shores and has been very active in the USACE Beneficial Use of Dredged Materials Program," said Col. Justin R. Pabis, New England District Commander.

When the New England District team goes out to dredge a project, it has material after the work that is disposed of. Dredged material is a valued resource that can be used to benefit not only public use at beaches, but also the ecosystem and the economy.

Four ongoing projects will make

maximum use of the program. The first is the Cape Cod Canal O&M Dredging project on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The District's contractor, Weeks Marine, began dredging the Cape Cod Canal on Oct. 22. Once the dredging is complete, project managers John MacPherson and William Kavanaugh, Jr., anticipate 100 percent of the dredged material will be beneficially reused and placed on Town Neck Beach in Sandwich, Massachusetts.

"Dredging is expected to wrap up by mid-December with roughly 80,000 cubic yards of material placed on the beach," MacPherson said.

The second project is the Milford Harbor Dredging in Milford, Connecticut. Approximately 55,000 cubic yards of material is being dredged from the entrance channel and inner harbor of Milford Harbor, Connecticut.

Project Manager Coral Siligato anticipates 100 percent of the dredge material will be beneficially used, with placement of sandy material at a nearshore site to nourish Bayview

Beach and the silt to be placed within Central Long Island Disposal Site for the purpose of restoring a historic experimental disposal mound in the site. "The expected completion date is Jan. 17, 2024," said Siligato.

Siligato is also Project Manager for a dredging project at Wells Harbor in Maine that is set to begin in early January 2024. She estimates that 107,000 cubic yards of material from that dredging will be placed on Drakes Island Beach. Siligato estimates that the project will be complete in March.

The Scarborough dredging project began mid-November and includes the hydraulic dredging of about 110,000 cubic yards of material that is scheduled to be placed on Western Beach. Project Manager Craig Martin estimates that the work will be completed mid-January 2024.

Michels Construction is the contractor for both the Wells Harbor and the Scarborough dredging project.

The New England District schedules dredging projects five years out and they are listed on a public website - <https://ndc.ops.usace.army.mil/dis/>. Potential entities and sponsors who believe they would benefit from the program are strongly encouraged to identify the opportunity early enough for the District team to complete the necessary investigation and planning.

"I encourage all those who would like to participate in this program to go to the website to see what we are dredging, where we are dredging and contact us as soon as possible with your recommendations and opportunities to use the dredged material," said Col. Pabis. "This is a beneficial situation for everyone. We get closer to our goals of maximizing beneficial use, and stakeholders get a great resource for projects and needs across the business spectrum."



Beach nourishment at Western Beach.

Dredging up the past



Photo by C.J. Allen

Jerry Nunziato (left) and Duban Montoya celebrate at the annual District Holiday Party in Concord Park on December 17, 1999.