Crosscurrents

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St. Paul District

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St. Paul District assists hurricane recovery efforts

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(cover) Jeff Stoner, lock operator, supports the Hurricane Helene mission as a quality assurance specialist in Montgomery County, Georgia, Dec. 9, 2024. USACE photo by Nakeir Nobles

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Articles and photography submissions are welcome. Submissions may be emailed. Submissions should be in Microsoft Word format. Photos should be at least 5 in. x 7 in. at 300 dpi.

The mission of *Crosscurrents* is to support the commander's internal information program for the St. Paul District and its stakeholders. *Crosscurrents* also serves as the commander's primary communication tool for accurately transmitting policies and command philosophy to the St. Paul District community and its customers.

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Comments from the top: A message from Col. Eric Swenson

Teammates,

It's time to get cozy and read the latest issue of *Crosscurrents*. It may be chilly outside, but we're bringing the heat with our ongoing projects. It's a new year and I hope whatever your resolutions are, you're successful.

As for me, my resolution for the St. Paul District is to deliver solutions for the nation as we gear up for another successful season of construction and navigation. Check out the "Year in Review" to see some of our accomplishments from last year.

While navigation is currently closed on the Upper Mississippi River, we continue to provide a vital service as we maintain and improve our lock and dam system. A huge shout out to our staff that is working in the cold weather months to accomplish this important work SAFELY.

Speaking of cold weather, you know that safety is something I am passionate about. You've seen a couple messages from Jeff Kirkey, our safety chief, about being prepared for cold weather and using caution with heat sources such as fireplaces, candles and space heaters. These are important reminders, and everyone should take this seriously.

If you're driving this winter, make sure you have an emergency kit in your car. It should include things like jumper cables, an ice scraper, blanket(s) and a car cell phone charger. Visit ready.gov for more information on winter weather safety and travel.

We're working toward completing stage 3 of the Corps of Engineers Safety and Occupational Health Management System, or CESOHMS. You can read more about this effort in the pages ahead. Everyone should know how to report an accident, good catch or near miss (hint: check out the safety intranet page). I hope you all feel comfortable reporting incidents, and if there's something in your workspace that is not safe, please let your direct supervisor, or me, know about it so we can resolve the problem.

I am currently deployed in Los Angeles. My heart goes out to the people there that have lost so much.

Unfortunately, it's been a big year for natural disasters. However, I am so proud of all our teammates that have stepped up to deploy for disaster response. So far, 80 St. Paul District employees have deployed to help with recovery in the wake of hurricanes Helene and Milton. We've also continued to provide support for the Maui wildfires. Thank you to those that have volunteered and thank you to the coworkers that have helped to cover for them during this time. Your selfless service is an inspiration to me.

I hope you continue reading to learn about what else is going on in the district, including celebrating our small business awards (way to go Christine Davis and team!) and highlighting our important critical incident stress management program (thank you Greg Wachman for sharing your experiences).

Respectfully,
Col. Eric Swenson

St. Paul District assists hurricane response efforts

Story by Shannon Bauer

Once again, St. Paul District personnel answered the call to serve.

To date, 80 district employees voluntarily deployed east to support response and recovery efforts for the aftermath of hurricanes Helene and Milton. Another 44 have provided reach back support. Hurricane Helene made landfall Sept. 26, 2024, as a Category 4 storm near Perry, Florida, causing damage in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee and even Virginia. Two weeks later, Hurricane Milton made landfall as a Category 3 storm near Florida's Siesta Key, Oct. 7, 2024, causing more damage across mainly Florida.

FEMA tasked the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with the Emergency Support Function 3 missions of emergency power, water system assessments, debris removal and temporary roofing. Additional subject matter experts in emergency management, GIS, logistics, public affairs, and more also deployed. USACE had personnel ready to support emergency response efforts for both storms.

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Adam Kiedrowski, heavy mobile mechanic, supports debris removal in Montgomery County, Georgia, Nov. 21, 2024. USACE photo by Nakeir Nobles

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Aside from the Sacramento District, St. Paul District has provided the largest number of volunteers for recovery efforts. Most St. Paul District personnel who deployed supported the debris removal mission in Georgia.

St. Paul District Deployment Manager Kris Fairbanks with the readiness operations center, or ROC, said, “I’m so proud of our St. Paul District volunteers and how quickly they responded to the needs of this year’s missions. These people represent our district well, and the timing of this response allowed our seasonal employees to work through the winter.”

She said she is also “thankful to the team of people that assist the ROC in taking care of our deployees. Bonnie Meyerhoff (operations), is invaluable to the ROC on any deployment, making herself available to assist with any and all travel and timekeeping issues. Resource management folks know their roles and answer the call, day or night. On any mission, home station timekeepers/ admins end up with added responsibilities, to include vouchers and FEMA timekeeping processes, and are unsung heroes. These folks make mine and the employees’ jobs easier!”

St. Paul District Park Ranger Colin Nicklay said he deployed to McIntosh County in Georgia as a quality assurance inspector for the debris mission. He said he was part of a team that mapped all the vegetation debris piles in the right of way around the county.

“Once all the debris piles were identified, the contractors could start with the debris clean up,” he said. “[After the mission was up and running], I spent most of time in a tower calling out percentages of loads of vegetation debris coming into the temporary dump site. I also followed contractors around who were cleaning up vegetation debris within the right of way.”

“I enjoyed working with Corps of Engineers employees that came from different districts and fields of work, hearing about the work they did back home, and then working as a team and using everyone’s strengths and special skill sets to accomplish the mission,” he added.

Shua Xiong, program analyst, also deployed as a quality assurance inspector for the debris mission. About her deployment, she said “I met a lot of great knowledgeable coworkers, and I hope to work with them again in the future.”

Shua Xiong (bottom left), programs and project management, and Lee Sorm (bottom right), operations, and USACE emergency responders pose for a photo in Georgia. USACE courtesy photo

Small business takes home three awards

Story by Elizabeth Stoeckmann

The St. Paul District small business office took home three awards at the 2025 Society of American Military Engineers annual Small Business Conference, held in New Orleans, Nov. 20, 2024.

• Largest dollar award to small business for fiscal year 2024 for the Fargo/Moorhead Southern Embankment Phase 4 for $23.9 million
• Recognition in the Women-Owned Small Business category
• Over 50% of fiscal year 2024 awards granted to small businesses

USACE leaders presented 45 individual and team awards for small business contracting accomplishments in fiscal year 2024.

“For the second year in a row, USACE obligated over $10 billion to our small business partners. Those dollars contribute directly to the Army mission and small business program, accounting for 41% of the Army’s small business spend, and fulfilling our mission statement to be the Army’s leader in utilizing small businesses for the delivery of the USACE mission,” said Lt. Gen. William H. “Butch” Graham, Jr., 56th Chief of Engineers and commanding general of USACE. The annual conference had over 6,000 attendees with opportunities to meet and network with every USACE district and center.

“We are following up with over 200 contractors from the conference with our fiscal year 2025 projections in hopes of engaging new contractors, expanding opportunities for existing contractors and assisting other contractors with leads to other offices,” said Christine Davis, small business program manager.

“We make it a priority to use small businesses in accomplishing our mission and look forward to continuing to partner with those entities in the future,” said Kevin Henricks, contracting chief. USACE small business awards publicly recognize individuals and organizations that have significantly contributed to the achievements of the small business program.

(left to right) Elizabeth Walker, USACE Director of Small Business; Lt. Gen. William H. “Butch” Graham, Jr., 56th Chief of Engineers and commanding general of USACE; Kevin Henricks, St. Paul District chief of contracting; Col. Eric Swenson, St. Paul District commander; and Command Sgt. Maj. Douglas Galick, 15th command sergeant major of USACE, receive an award at the SAME Small Business conference in New Orleans, Nov. 20, 2024. USACE courtesy photo.

St. Paul District improves polluted oxbows

Story by Elizabeth Stoeckmann

Congressional and headquarters leaders were concerned about the unsightly and odorous oxbows, or channels, along the Souris River.

In response, the St. Paul District, in collaboration with the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center, and the city of Minot, North Dakota, entered into a cost-share agreement to organize a workshop aimed at assessing and improving the disconnected oxbows along the river.

In 1979, when USACE and the city of Minot constructed the Souris River flood risk management project, some side channels known as oxbows were disconnected from the river. Over time, these natural features deteriorated due to lack of flow connectivity, buildup of flood debris and pollutants.

In June 2024, an agreement was executed between USACE and the city of Minot under the planning assistance to states program to address these degraded oxbows that became stagnant and polluted over time.

The district and the city hosted a workshop in August to identify and evaluate measures that could enhance water quality and biodiversity of the Souris River. They also defined solutions that do not impact the function of the flood risk management project.

The total project cost is $50,000 with the city and federal government evenly splitting the amount.

“The planning assistance to states agreement with the city of Minot is an important step in bringing the USACE’s’ technical assistance capabilities to the city of Minot,” said Karla Sparks, St. Paul District project manager. “The workshop offered low-cost strategies for the city to improve natural water features for flood management and ecological health.”

The Corps delivers national value through its planning assistance to states program by supporting sustainable water and land resource management.

An example of one of the oxbows along the Souris River near Minot, North Dakota. USACE courtesy photo

An example of one of the oxbows along the Souris River near Minot, North Dakota. USACE courtesy photo

Corps of Engineers gets a sense for new technology

Story by Melanie Peterson

Taylor Adams, senior geotechnical engineer along with the geotechnical and geology branch is at the forefront of using new technology to further the Corps of Engineers' mission."We're working ahead of the game to increase our understanding of this new technology and how it can be beneficial in the future," Adams said.

InSAR

Adams first learned about Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar, or InSAR, at a geotechnical, geology, and materials conference in 2022. Synthetic Aperture Radar is a type of remote sensing that uses satellites to bounce radar waves off the Earth's surface and measures the radar waves that bounce back. This activity creates an image of that location at a single moment in time.

InSAR compares images taken at different times to detect changes in the surface. These images are independent of weather and can detect movement, such as landsides, structural settlements, and tectonic faults.

"This has been a learning experience," Adams said. "This is out of my normal wheelhouse of soils and foundations." He added that they have been in close contact with the geospatial information system section to look at applications for this technology.

Taylor Adams, senior geotechnical engineer. USACE St. Paul District photo by Wendy Wells

This technology was used at Mosul Dam, in Iraq, between 2016 and 2019 to detect sinkholes. Ground truthing and subsurface boring was used to corroborate the results, Adams said. In this case, the satellite data was useful because it was dangerous to send out surveyors.

Application for the St. Paul District

Since the effort at Mosul Dam, there has been a desire within the Corps of Engineers to further investigate the use of InSAR to monitor critical infrastructure assets.

One of the things that Adams said he is looking into is the difference between free and paid data. In 2025, NASA and the Indian Space Research Organization will be launching a new satellite called NISAR, which will provide free data at a higher resolution than current free satellites.

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Adams, along with his teammates, explored how the data could be used at the Corps-operated Baldhill Dam in North Dakota. Unfortunately, when examining the data, they found that the radar waves were not smoothly reflecting to the satellite for a clear image.

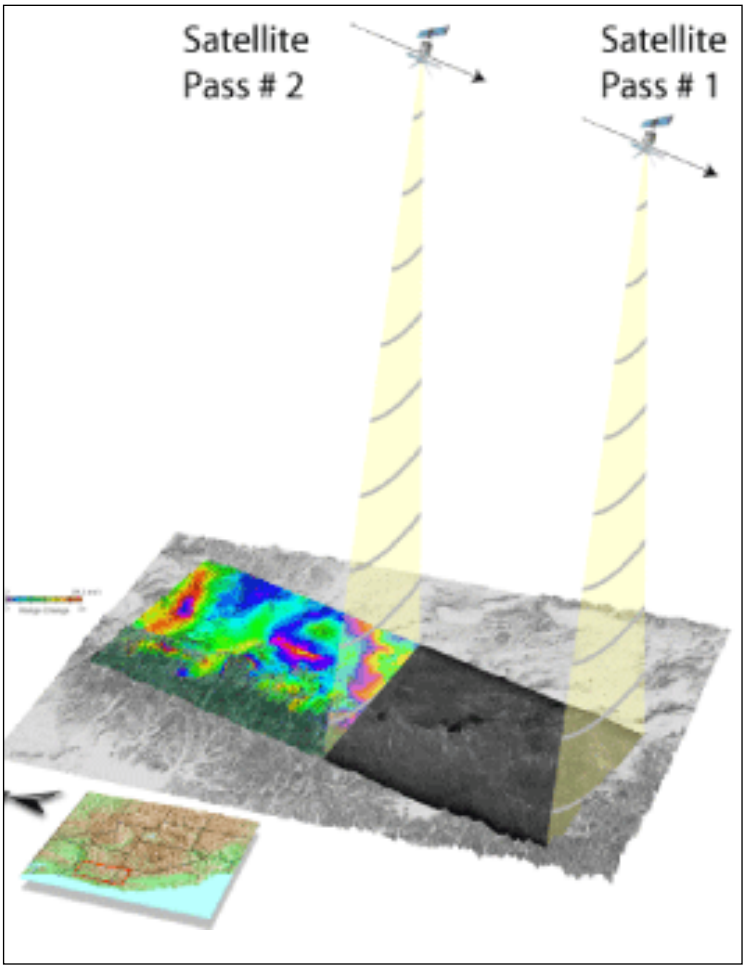
“There are factors like vegetation and snow cover that can be contributing factors to the decorrelation,” Adams said. “At Mosul Dam, it was a large, relatively dry site with little vegetation and large riprap slopes – so those results were much clearer.”

“There are certainly pros and cons to this new technology. We will continue to explore our options,” Adams said.

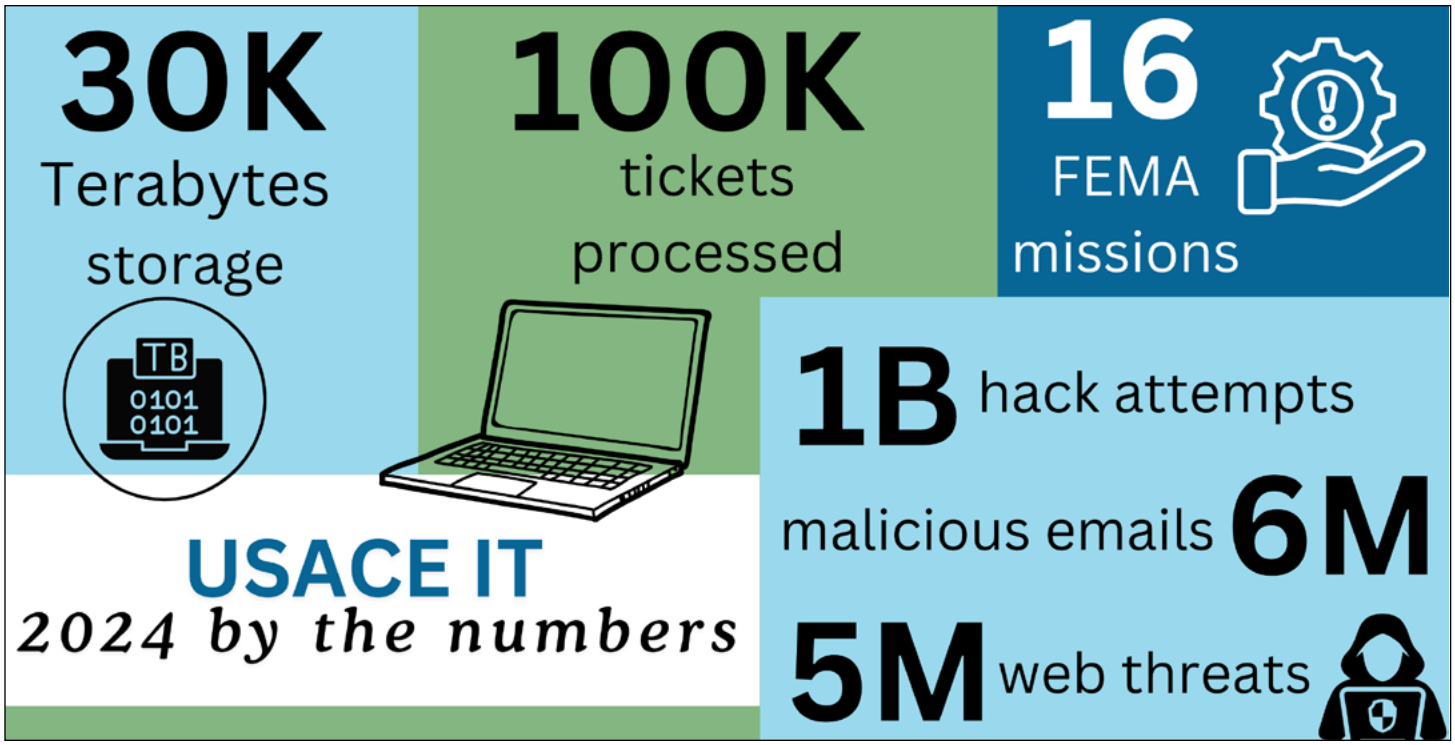
Next steps

The next steps include more training and collaboration. Adams has an eye on the Engineer Research and Development Center, where they are conducting research on modeling predicted results, or forward modeling.

“The team will also continue to provide training to others and look for other site candidates to test remote sensing technology,” Adams said.



A satellite passes over an area and records data about it. Two or more passes are needed to create the InSAR images to examine changes in ground height. USGS public domain photo



Wiechmann expands role in forestry

Story by Renwick Martin

With the recent addition of the forestry job series to the regional planning and environment division north, Lewis Wiechmann's job description has changed drastically in the two years he's worked for USACE.

In 2022, armed with a master's degree in forestry and statistics from Iowa State University, Wiechmann became a forester in the environmental stewardship section. "Department of Defense foresters generally work as stewards of federal lands with a focus on restoration and conservation," Wiechmann said, adding that this is what interested him in applying to become a member of USACE.

While in the environmental section, Wiechmann performed 'stand recon' where he would walk through the woods to determine the best forest managements practices to implement for that specific group of trees or 'stand.' These practices included tree planting, invasive species removal and stand thinning, among others. Once a practice was chosen, he would write up a plan that would either be completed in-house or outsourced to a contractor.

Foresters in the environmental section also conduct tree plantings for Upper Mississippi River Restoration projects, manage contracts and assist foresters of other districts with projects. There are also additional opportunities to get involved in research. Noting the operational freedom they are given, Wiechmann called it, "one of the best jobs in the Corps of Engineers."

After a year of working in operations, Wiechmann transitioned to working in the planning division. Now that he works in an office setting, Wiechmann finds that he mostly becomes involved in projects to conduct environmental compliance or to provide information as a subject matter expert. As a specialist in forestry, he is often relied on for information pertaining to planting, invasive species removal and post-project monitoring.

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Lewis Wiechmann, forester, at a tree planting in Indian Slough, near Wabasha, Minnesota, May 1, 2024. USACE St. Paul District photo by Melanie Peterson

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"The planning division has a really good group of subject matter experts who are very knowledgeable in their fields," Wiechman said.

Wiechman said one of the biggest benefits of the transition to planning is the availability of cross district collaboration. RPEDN employees work in St. Paul, Rock Island and St. Louis, allowing them to pull individuals from any of the three districts to support the needs of another. Collaboration also allows for better coordination of environmental compliance and projects across the districts.

Wiechmann regards his recent work on the Fargo-Moorhead Flood Risk Management project as the highlight of his career. The purpose of the project is to reduce flood risk, flood damages and flood protection costs related to flooding in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area. Wiechmann helped create and write forest management plans and contracts for floodplain forest planting and restoration in the Fargo-Moorhead area. These are part of the Corps environmental mitigation responsibilities.

Within the next four to five years, USACE expects to plant and restore over 300 acres of new and existing forest to mitigate for forest loss due to the construction of the project.

Wiechmann lives in Woodbury with his partner and their 120-pound Great Pyrenees dog. He enjoys fishing, video games and model building.

A geospatial engineer's internship: bridging military experience and engineering insights

Story by Elizabeth Stoeckmann

Marcus Seibel, geospatial engineer. Courtesy photo

Tell us a little about yourself:
I am Marcus Seibel, a geospatial engineer in the U.S. Army, as well as a scholar at United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Tell us about your internship experience:
I had an opportunity to intern with the Western Area Office in Fargo, North Dakota, where I learned about and observed project sites and construction efforts. I split my time between the office and the construction sites, overseeing construction processes and internal office operations. Overall, I completed a 45-hour internship over five 9-hour days, and enjoyed the experience.

How did you hear about this opportunity?
The opportunity was presented during an internship class and a job fair at my college, where the Army Corps of Engineers had a presence. Dean Zwiefel, St. Paul District outreach manager, informed me about the internship with the Army Corps of Engineers and provided his contact information. After reaching out to him, he helped facilitate the internship, for which I am very grateful.

What did you learn from this opportunity?
I gained a greater appreciation for the awe-inspiring work of engineering. For fellow enlisted soldiers, this experience highlighted ways to further a military career, as the Army Corps of Engineers shared valuable insights in that regard.

St. Paul District eyes Army's safety star

Story by Elizabeth Stoeckmann

This January, the St. Paul District achieved a milestone with a technical assistant visit from the Mississippi Valley Division in preparation for Stage 3 closeout of Corps of Engineers Safety and Occupational Health Management System, or CESOHMS.

Upon successful implementation of Stage 3, the district is eligible to receive the Army's Safety and Occupational Health Star evaluation.

Obtaining the Army Star evaluation is "a culmination of hard work and cohesiveness toward a broader safety culture for the district, which is a key component of any safety program, not just compliance," said Jeff Kirkey, chief of safety and occupational health.

CESOHMS is the safety management system for the Army Corps of Engineers. The three-phase implementation program is comprised of six different capability objectives below, spanning 3-5 years:

CO1 – Leadership Engagement and Personnel Readiness
CO2 – Investigate and Report Mishaps, Incidents and Illnesses
CO3 – Conduct Safety and Occupational Health Training and Promotion
CO4 – Conduct Inspections and Assessments
CO5 – Conduct Hazard Analysis and Develop Countermeasures
CO6 – Health Protection and Readiness

The St. Paul District is well ahead of the 2030 goal set for all Army commands and organizations. Since 2021, the district has been navigating CESOHMS through various stages of maturity: documentation, implementation and execution, and sustainment and continuous improvement.

St. Paul District Commander Col. Eric Swenson is pleased with the CESOHMS Champion, the CESOHMS working group, the safety office and every district teammate who invests in our safety program each day.

"Safety isn't just about managing programs; it's about prioritizing people," Swenson said. "When we care for our people, they are empowered to care for the mission."

CESOHMS, is a methodology required by regulation and supported by USACE leadership to fully integrate safety and occupational health functions into all USACE business operations, to ensure risk is managed properly at the correct level resulting in reduced injuries and illnesses of our employees and contractors, while enhancing USACE ability to complete our mission on-time, within budget, and at a quality expected by our customers.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers kicks off year long celebration of 250 years of service to the Nation

Story by Patrick Bloodgood

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is highlighting 250 years of service to the nation by celebrating its birthday throughout 2025. USACE was established on June 16, 1775, when the Continental Congress authorized the first Chief Engineer to oversee the construction of fortifications and other military infrastructure.

Over the centuries, USACE has been at the forefront of engineering excellence, responding to the nation's most complex challenges with unmatched expertise and dedication. From constructing fortifications during the Revolutionary War to building the infrastructure that saw America grow as a military and economic powerhouse, USACE's mission has always been clear: deliver engineering solutions for the nation's toughest challenges.

For the past 250 years, as the nation expanded USACE's missions expanded as well to meet the needs of the country. Flood risk mitigation, navigation, water supply, environmental restoration, providing state-of-the-art facilities for the nation's warfighters and emergency response were all areas added to USACE's responsibilities.

Today, USACE continues to lead in engineering, environmental and water resources management.

The USACE 250th official logo

USACE is responsible for:

- Operating and maintaining over 700 dams and reservoirs, which provide flood control, water supply, and hydroelectric power to millions of Americans.
- Maintaining over 12,000 miles of inland waterways, which facilitate the transportation of goods and commerce.
- Managing over 150 million acres of public lands, which provide habitat for wildlife and recreational opportunities for the public.
- Providing emergency response and recovery support to communities affected by natural disasters.
- Conducting research and development to help solve the nation's most challenging problems in civil and military engineering, geospatial sciences, water resources, and environmental sciences for the Army, Department of Defense, civilian agencies, and the nation's public good.

"For 250 years, the Corps of Engineers has been working to safely deliver quality projects on schedule and within budget," said Lt. Gen. William H. "Butch" Graham, 56th Chief of Engineers and commanding general of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "I am proud to be a part of this elite organization, and I'm extremely proud of the 40,000 committed USACE teammates who wake up every day to solve some of the nation's toughest challenges."

To commemorate this milestone, the USACE will be participating in events and activities, nationwide throughout the year, including ceremonies, exhibits, and community outreach programs. Learn more about USACE's 250th activities at www.usace.army.mil/250th.

Wachman emphasizes stress management

Story by Ren Martin

After enduring some personal struggles, Geotechnical Engineer Greg Wachman decided to try and help USACE employees with more than just his engineering expertise. Motivated by the gratitude he felt for those who helped support him through his own personal challenges, Wachman joined the Critical Incident Stress Management team as a peer supporter in 2022.

CISM is a program designed to lessen the overall impact of stress and to accelerate recovery through peer support. This peer support is provided both confidentially and discreetly to anyone experiencing a 'critical incident,' which may include serious injury, an unexpected death of an acquaintance and extended negative media exposure, among others. The CISM team helps provide support in an atmosphere of empathy and care to those impacted.

Stress Management

"Successful stress management starts with awareness," Wachman said. "You can ask yourself where is the stress felt in the body? What does it feel like? What are the circumstances and thoughts that lead to the feeling in the body?"

Cultivating an open, non-judgmental curiosity about these questions creates a space where change can occur naturally, he added. Sometimes we can change the circumstances associated with stress, but sometimes we are better served by finding acceptance for challenging circumstances. "We often don't recognize the ways in which our beliefs and patterns of thinking are stress triggers, and they too can change when we become aware of them," he said.

"I have found a great deal of benefit in a daily meditation practice, but others might find it useful to journal, talk with a friend or loved one, spend time outdoors, or engage in a creative outlet. It's very easy for us to distract ourselves from stress with media, but that may not be the best long-term strategy for managing chronic stress," Wachman said.

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Greg Wachman, geotechnical engineer, in Arcadia, Wisconsin, Nov. 12, 2021. USACE St. Paul District photo by Melanie Peterson

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Resources

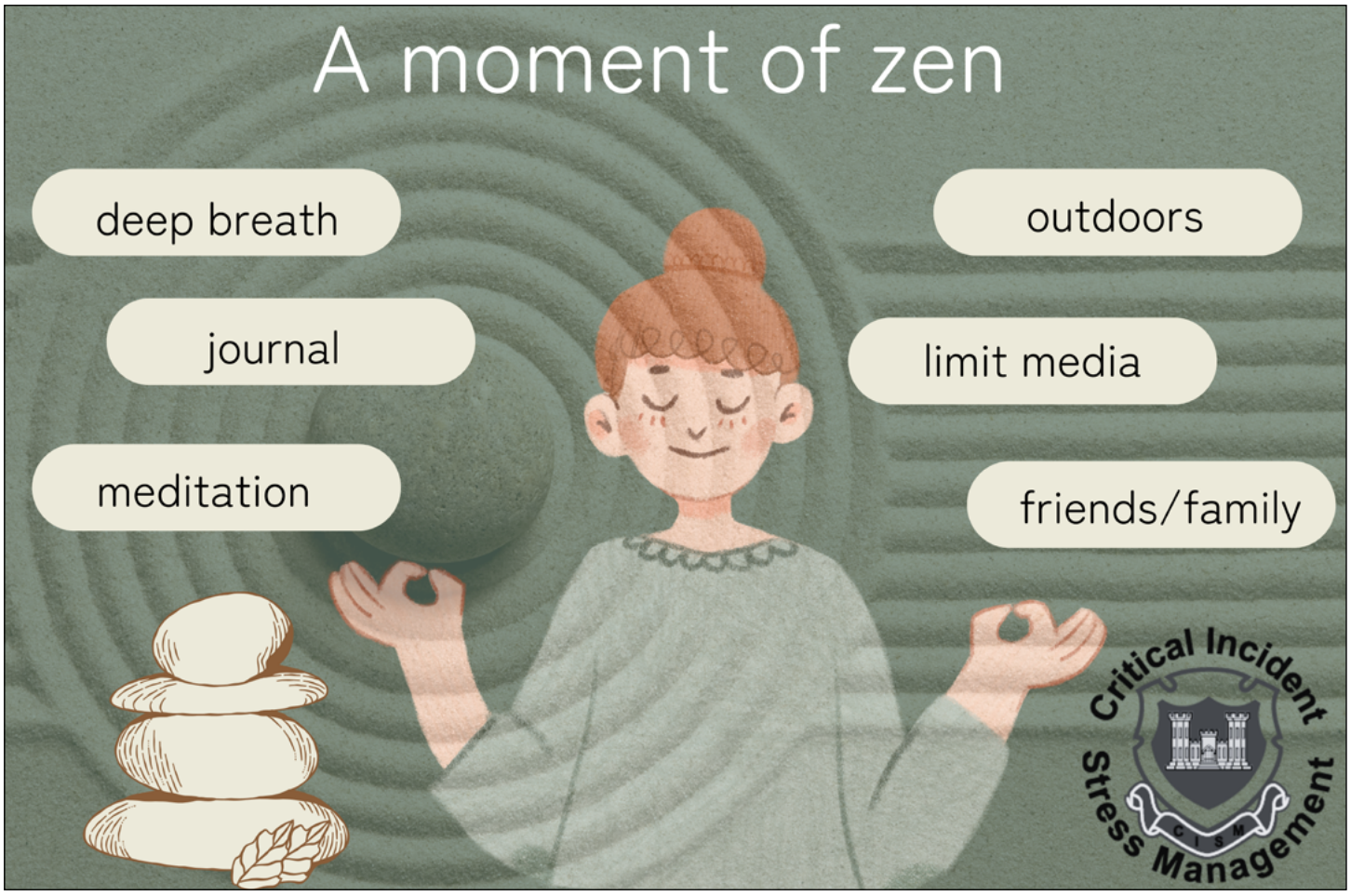
"While it may feel like we are alone in our challenges, there are always people who want to help. We are fortunate in USACE to have resources like CISM peer supporters and the free Employee Assistance Program. CISM peer supporters are trained to listen, support, and provide resources to employees who want to talk through a challenge they're experiencing. The EAP provides free professional coaching and counseling, among other services," Wachman said. "I encourage people to make use of these and other resources that may be available to them through their health care provider and personal networks."

Minnesota Native

From New Ulm, Minnesota, Wachman graduated from the University of Minnesota with a master's degree in geological engineering. With USACE since 2008, he spends most of his time in the office performing engineering evaluations and design analyses of the many USACE projects. As a geotechnical engineer, much of his work focuses on the use of earthen materials as foundations and engineering materials for levees, dams and other infrastructure.

When not working, Wachman can be found traveling with his wife, two daughters and their dog, Waffle.

CISM Peer Supporter Team:
General line (314) 925-5250
cism-vm@usace.army.mil



Programs team benefits from varied backgrounds

Story by Melanie Peterson

The programs team, in the programs and project management division, thrives on teamwork, according to Nicholas Lorenz, project scheduler. The key to their team? A variety of backgrounds and experiences. Some of the team members come from other districts, some from other offices in the St. Paul District and some from other federal agencies. The result? A team that is innovative and can adapt to a continuously changing environment, Lorenz said.

The programs team helps oversee and coordinate various projects with lifecycle schedules and budgets to produce products and other strategic initiatives, Lorenz said.

Dawn Polensky, chief of programs, added, "We handle the finances for programs and projects being funded within the district." Polensky has been in this position and with St. Paul District for over three years. She has been with USACE for eight and a half years and with the federal government for 16 years.

Lorenz said, "Programs is evolving and involved in every aspect of the district's execution with regard to projects and budgets. Having a team that is innovative and adaptive with the changing environment is a testament to their prior experiences and backgrounds and is crucial to our team's success."

Lorenz has a varied background with USACE. He has been a construction officer representative for Detroit District and within the St. Paul District he has been a survey technician, quality assurance/quality control inspector for the Dredge Goetz and an equipment specialist. He has been with the federal government for 12 years.

"The team is amazing! They all have areas they are subject matter experts in and work great together. They help me understand aspects that are new to me and continually help each other to grow so the entire team can become experts,"
- Dawn Polensky, chief of programs

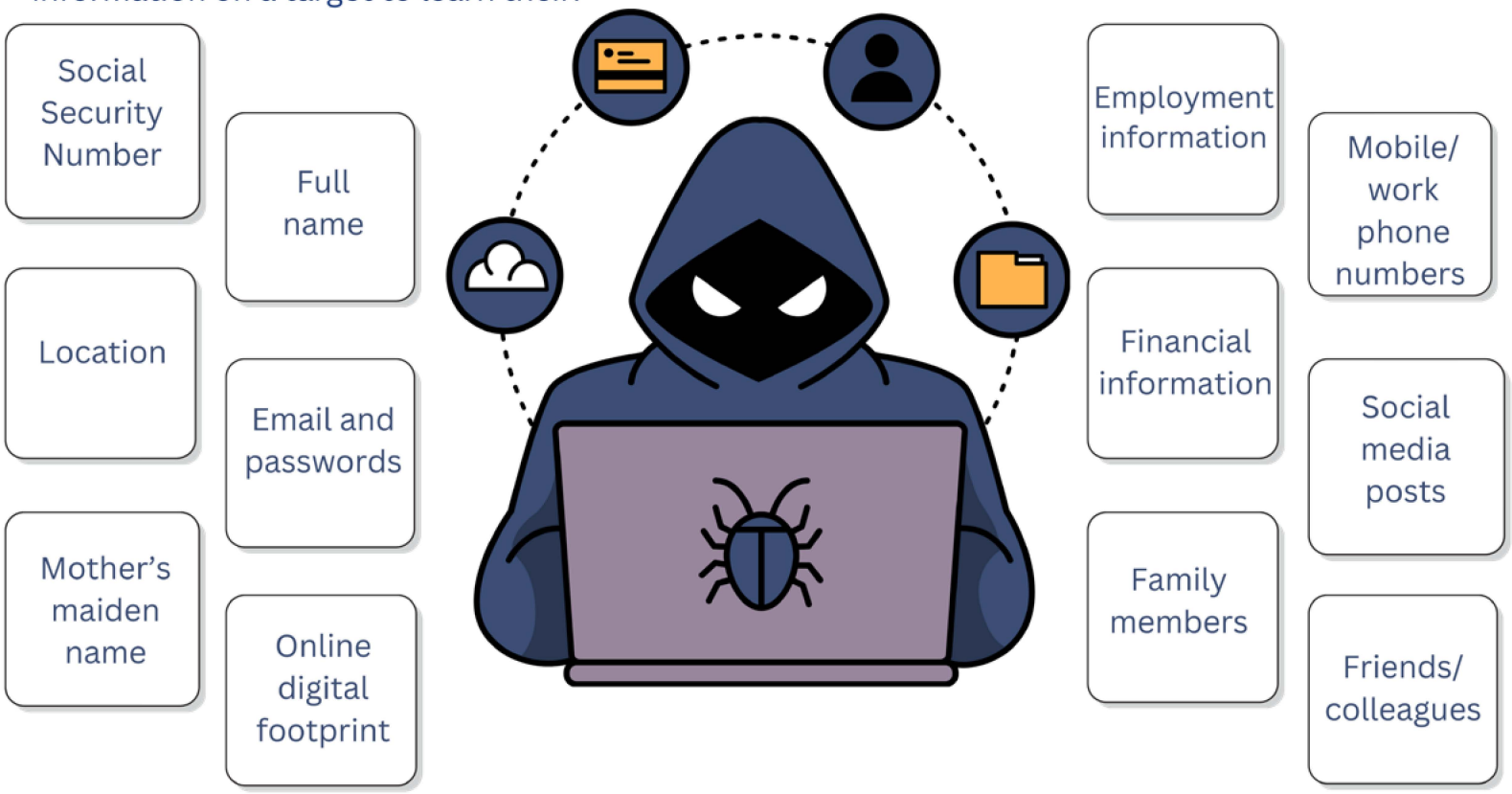
"Programs is a strategic subpart of the project management branch that helps to oversee and coordinate the various projects with lifecycle schedules and budgets to produce products and other strategic initiatives across an organization," he said.

"I think our team is successful because of our experiences, trust, open communication and dedication to data integrity. We accomplish our mission with communication and active listening through guidance and teamwork."
-Nick Lorenz, project scheduler

Cybersecurity: **Staying safe online**

Story by Jinah Lockwood

The reality is that everyone has something they want to hide from the general public. The key is identifying what form this information is in, how well it is protected and if compromised, what the personal/professional impact would be. Attackers are constantly profiling targets looking for potential weaknesses in operational security and it can take less than four hours of online reconnaissance using manual and automated open source intelligence techniques to gather enough information on a target to learn their:



Armed with the above information, a motivated attacker could do some serious damage – especially if you reuse passwords, use the same email as a log-in for multiple web apps, or use an email/username that can identify something about you. These basic mistakes are reported almost on a monthly basis in the media, including numerous examples of where criminal operations have been dismantled through leaving breadcrumbs of information that link a real person to their pseudonym(s).

Let's all remain vigilant of the information we share. Stay safe.

Recognizing our Employees of the Month: The MVPs of MVP

November
Daryl Wierzbinski
Regulatory

December
Kory Warrington
Operations

2024 BY THE NUMBERS

NAVIGATION

1M cubic yards
river sand dredged by **5** different dredge plants

440 surveys
covering **32,000** acres

11M tons of goods
passed through Lock 10

- **1,600** commercial vessels passed through Lock 10
- **26,000** total lockages at St. Paul District locks

RECREATION

800K day-use visitors
to St. Paul District recreation areas

- **150,000** overnight visitors/campers to St. Paul District recreation areas
- Over **$1M** in fees collected

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

106 people deployed

REGULATORY

3.5K regulatory actions

CONTRACTING

734 contracting actions

$202M
in awarded contracts

82%
of contracts went to small businesses

- **33%** of contracting dollars went to small disadvantaged businesses
- **3%** of contracting dollars went to service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses
- **12%** of contracting dollars went to women-owned small businesses

SAFETY

46 good catches

HUMAN RESOUCES

680 full-time employees

new hires **84**

8 retirements

OFFICE OF COUNSEL

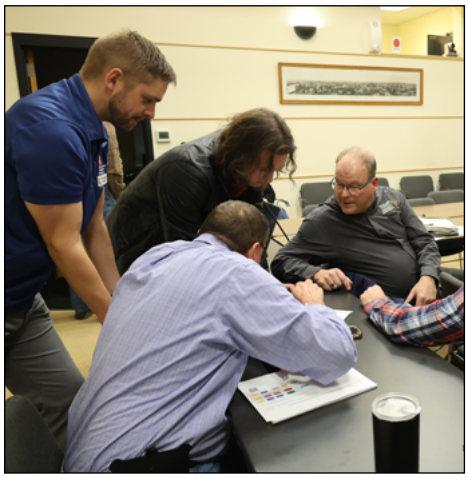
45 FOIA requests

ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION

$130M in construction placed

Around THE DISTRICT

Caree Kovacevich, regulatory senior project manager, inspects a wetland on 120-day detail with Jacksonville District, Sept. 10, 2024. USACE St. Paul District courtesy photo

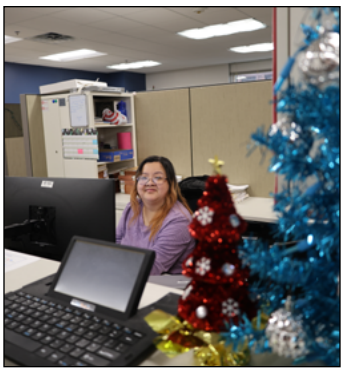


St. Paul District employees talk to members of the public at the Lake Traverse water control manual update public meeting, in Wahpeton North Dakota, Nov. 19, 2024. USACE St. Paul District photo by Shannon Bauer

Dennis Decker, former St. Paul District employee, presents at History Day, Nov. 13, 2024. USACE St. Paul District photo by Shannon Bauer

Cube decorating contest (photos by Shannon Bauer)

Top (left to right) Michelle Prosser (programs and project management), Jake Moser (engineering and construction), Paul Fleming (engineering and construction), Pa Xiong (operations)
Bottom (left to right) Molly Stansberry (engineering and construction), Cindy Ward (programs and project management), Mike Snyder (engineering and construction), Barb Griffin (executive office)



St. Paul District celebrates the holidays in style

Photos by Shannon Bauer, Ren Martin and Melanie Peterson

NEWS & Notes

New hires

Paul Abts, welder inspector, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin

Steven Bodovinitz, lock and dam operator, operations, La Crescent, Minnesota

Emily Dietz, fish biologist, regional planning and environmental division north, St. Louis, Missouri

Jessica Kampa, lock and dam operator, operations, La Crescent, Minnesota

Kaden Miller, maintenance worker, operations, Wheaton, Minnesota

Kollin Nogosek, deckhand, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin

Tyler Oldenburg, deckhand, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin

Jordan Pearson, deckhand, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin

Michael Risch, deckhand, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin

Jordan Winter, mechanical engineer, engineering and construction, Fargo, North Dakota

Promotions

Jeremias Alcon, lock and dam operator, operations, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Kyle Anderson, lock and dam operator, operations, Trempealeau, Wisconsin

Terry Anspaugh, lock and dam operator, operations, Winona, Minnesota

Mariah Berg, lock and dam operator, operations, Trempealeau, Wisconsin

John Fromuth, construction control representative, operations, Fargo, North Dakota

Kevin Hanson, geographer, regional planning and environmental division north, St. Paul, Minnesota

Joel Hermann, lockmaster, operations, Trempealeau, Wisconsin

Connor Jacobs, lock and dam operator, operations, Minnesota City, Minnesota

Andrew Meier, forester, operations, La Crescent, Minnesota

Tristan Meyer, lock and dam operator, operations, Guttenberg, Iowa

Aaron Mikonowicz, landscape architect, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

Reid Olson, civil engineer (geotechnical), engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

Ceres Parsons, administrative support specialist, engineering and construction, St. Paul, Minnesota

Promotions, cont.

Logan Rivers, lock and dam operator, operations, Winona, Minnesota

Thomas Rohrer, facility operations specialist, operations, Fountain City, Wisconsin

Austin Smith, natural resources specialist, operations, Valley City, North Dakota

Dalyson Sorm, lock and dam operator, operations, Hastings, Wisconsin

Chad Urich, lock and dam operator, operations, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Travis Zabinski, lock and dam equipment repair supervisor, operations, Genoa, Wisconsin

Retirements

Christine Afdahl, civil engineer, engineering and construction, 38 years of federal service

Jacob Bernhardt, facilities manager, operations, 23 years of federal service

William Csajko, civil engineer, project management, 45 years of federal service

Stephanie Dupey, supervisory realty specialist, real estate, 42 years of federal service

Dan Ford, engineering and construction, 36 years of federal service

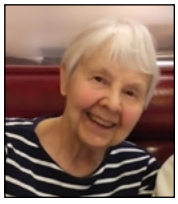
Joseph Gurin, lock and dam operator, operations, 27 years of federal service

Theresa Thury, programs and project management, 42 years of federal service

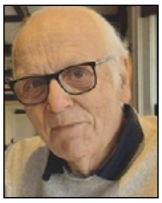
Taps

Gerald "Jerry" Blomker passed away Nov. 27, 2024. Blomker was a civil engineer with USACE who inspected dams across the U.S.

Alan Kraft passed away Jan. 9. He joined USACE in the late 1970s and served as the training officer for 17 years.



Joanne Lewis passed away Jan. 9. Lewis worked as an administrator with the Corps in the 1950s and 1960s then took a break to raise her children, returning as an administrator before retiring.



Byron D. Nelson passed away Jan. 6. Byron was an electrical engineer with the design branch and retired in 2008.

Keith Schindler passed away Oct. 26, 2024. Schindler worked at Lock and Dam 7 for nearly 15 years.

Chris Settles passed away Nov. 23, 2024.Settles worked at USACE for over 17 years, most recently as a contracting officer's representative at the Eastern Area Office.

Florence Wright passed away Nov. 15, 2024. Wright was a secretary for USACE.

St. Paul District recognizes its employees

Meredith McBride
Office of Counsel
Civilian Service
Commendation Medal

Becky Smith
Engineering and Construction
Administrative Professional
of the Year

Jhon Cerna
Engineering and Construction
Innovator of the Year

Aaron Pieplow
Operations
Public Affairs Supporter
of the Year

Rebecca Seal-Soileau
Engineering and Construction
Awards from Others

Engineering and Construction Division
Greg Hammons - Critical Lift Award
Aaron Mikonowicz - Mission Possible Award
Anthony Levine - Never Take you for Granite Award
Leigh Youngblood - Steward of the Waters Award
John Fromuth - Raise your Hand Award
Jessica Bowers - Teacher Award
Molly Stansberry - Mood Lifter Award

Operations Division
Jon Saunders - New Employee of the Year
Larry Kjellberg and Aaron Springer - Collateral Duty Safety Officer of the Year
Matthew Stanton - Operations and Maintenance Castle Award
Donald Strittmater - FEM Star of the Year
Kyle Anderson - Operations Rookie of the Year
David Mikrut - 2024 Outstanding Maintenance Professional

Programs and Project Management Division
Denise Julson - programs and project management Employee of the Year
Michelle Prosser - You Make it a Better Place Award
Marianna Aho - Rookie of the Year

Regional Planning and Environment Division - North
Katie Leslie, Alison Anderson, Collin Moratz - Regional Rockstars
Janet Buchanan - Calmer of Storms
Jacquie Kovarik - Supervisor of the Year
Evan Hill and Mike Walker - Unsung Heroes
Bethany Hoster - Above and Beyond Award
Katy Fechter - Planner of the Year
Chloe Foster and Kyle Bates - Team of the Year
LeeAnn Glomski - Mentor of the Year
Schuyler Bucher - Lord of the Numbers
Keith Barta - 2024 RPEDN Admin of the Year
Steve Acuff and Lewis Wiechmann - RPEDN Co-Rookies of the Year
Dave Potter, Travor Cyphers, Kyle Bales, and Lane Richter - RPEDN Innovators of the Year

Regulatory Division
Erik Madaus and Jennifer Hubert - Teammates of the Year
Leslie Day - St. Paul District Regulator of the Year

Support Offices
Kelsey Voytovich-Berndt - Resource Management Employee of the Year Award
Tom Yang - “Due Diligence” Award from Real Estate
The logistics team - logistics support to the district

Length of Service Awards

10 years
John Fromuth, operations
Christopher Hrubes, operations
Emily Kostner, operations
Meghan McKinney, regulatory
Duane Perkins, enigneering and construction
Eric Rain, operations
John Riederer, contracting
Lyle Spring, operations
Aung Win, engineering and construction
David Wivinus, real estate
Brian Yagle, regulatory

15 years
Jill Bathke, regional planning and environment division north
Jessica Bowers, engineering and construction
Jeffrey Cook, operations
Anthony Feilzer, engineering and construction
Jason Foss, engineering and construction
Ryan Frykman, engineering and construction
Matthew Groshek, regulatory
Long Le, engineering and construction
Leanna Martin, engineering and construction
Paul Morken, engineering and construction
Hlee Moua, engineering and construction
Darold Sanderson, engineering and construction

15 years
Robert Stout, regulatory
Nicholas Thorson, programs and project management
Eduardo Torrens-Bonano, engineering and construction
Nathan Wallerstedt, programs and project management
Cody Wiig, operations

20 years
Brent Meyer, operations
Jesse Onkka, contracting
Jerome Stussy, operations

25 years
Shannon Bauer, public affairs
Samuel Mathiowetz, operations
Robert Stanick, operations
Miray Thompson, engineering and construction
Byron Williams, programs and project management
Eric Wittine, engineering and construction

30 years
Melissa Beaty, operations
John Dehnke, operations
Judith Denzer, operations
Brian Johnson, regional planning and environment division north
Camie Knollenberg, regional planning and environment division north

35 years
Kimberly Bahls, resource management
Jeff Huseby, operations
Aaron Mikonowicz, engineering and construction
Michael Walker, regional planning and environment division north

40 years
Rojean Heyer, operations
Roberta Just, contracting

45 years
William Csajko, programs and project management

10 years

35 years

25 years

15 years