

Flagship

SEATTLE DISTRICT

Seattle District says farewell to Colonel Buck



Volume XXXIII
No. 3

Flagship

SEATTLE DISTRICT

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Cover: Seattle District employees pose for a group photo on Corps Day, June 29, 2017.

Photo by Dan Collins

Flagship

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Shelly Trulson:

This Flagship is for you

We dedicate this Flagship to Shelly Trulson, Seattle District Librarian. She provides outstanding customer support in responding to requests for library services and conducts comprehensive research for many NWS project managers as well as outside customers. Shelly's positive attitude makes her great steward for welcoming the District's new employees. Furthermore, she a great networker and demonstrates leadership for library services throughout the region. Thank you Shelly.



This Flagship is for you!

Seattle District: Farewell and thank you!

It is hard to believe that this will be the last column that I write as your Commander and District Engineer. The past three years have truly flown by for me and I'm proud of what we have achieved during my time with you. Throughout this time, you have continually taken on and solved some of our nation's hardest problems including disaster response, environmental restoration, protecting people and property while powering our nation's economy through our water resources.

As I reflect back upon what we have accomplished, it is easy to focus on the "big" moments, programs and projects. However, it is important to remember that there is an immense amount of work that is being done daily by quiet professionals in our midst. From construction sites, to operating projects, to regulators issuing permits, to members of our team working administrative or support functions – it is a true team effort that allows us to DELIVER THE PROGRAM.

From my earliest days in the District, I have sought feedback from our staff and stakeholders. My goal was to lead our organization in a positive direction building on the great foundation those before me had built. To that end, I asked the District's leadership team to engage in developing a strategic vision for our future. The outcome of that planning effort was a shift in how we approached our future while proactively shaping it.

Now more than ever as we prepare to transition district leadership, it is vital that we continue to strive to achieve our vision of, "Excelling in a Dynamic Environment: Mission First, People Always." I challenge each of you to strive towards our three goals of achieving Efficient and Effective Mission Execution, Care for Our People, and fostering a culture of Leadership and Accountability at all levels. With a can-do spirit and dedication to learning and continual improvement, I am confident the District has an extraordinary future.

On a personal note, this is my final assignment in the Army. Thirty years ago, on July 1st, 1987, I

reported to the United States Military Academy just weeks out of high school. That day launched me down a path that as a young teenager I never expected – a career in the U.S. Army. My approach to the military was one of having fun and enjoying what I did. I knew the day that I stop having fun it was going to be time for me to change careers. After 26 years as a commissioned Engineer Officer I can



**Seattle District Commander
Col. John G. Buck**

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than themselves.

My time here in the district has been no different. From top to bottom, our district is filled with incredible professionals who are passionate about the Corps and dedicated to public service. You have made coming to work every day for me exciting. Each day presented new opportunities to make a difference for the district or in someone's life. I have tried to give you and the citizens of the Pacific Northwest my very best.

As I depart from the District and the Seattle area, I will take with me nothing but fond memories. I'm proud to have had the honor and privilege to serve as your 50th District Engineer & Commander.

-Essayons!

The Locks turn 100



Spectators gather for the ceremony.

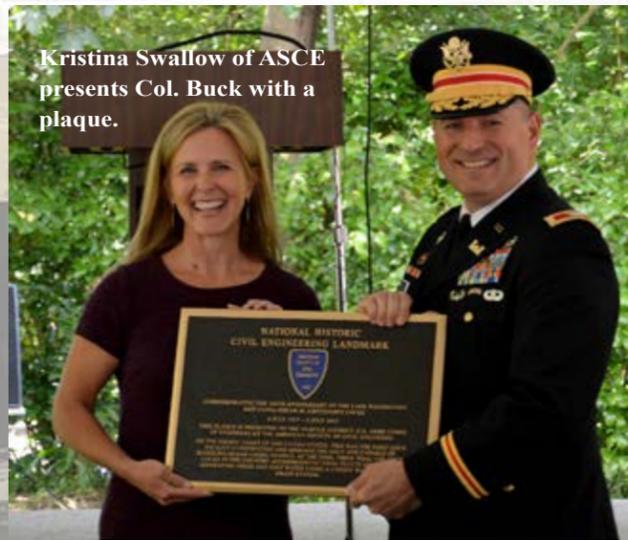


(Top Left) Col. John Buck makes comments during the ceremony.

(Left) The official party arrives including Pramila Jayapal, Washington's 7th District, Ed Murray, Mayor of Seattle, Rear Adm. David Throop, U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, District 13.

(Right) Visitors enjoy the Locks.

(Bottom) The Letter Carrier Band plays patriotic music before the ceremony.



Kristina Swallow of ASCE presents Col. Buck with a plaque.



The U.S. Navy conducts a flyover before the ceremony.

The Hiram M. Chittenden Locks held a ceremony to commemorate the site's 100th anniversary, July 4, 2017. Special guests included Cheryl Petersen, the great-granddaughter of Chittenden, Rep. Pramila Jayapal, Washington's 7th District, Ed Murray, Mayor of Seattle, Rear Adm. David Throop, U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, District 13, and Councilmember Jeanne Kohl-Welles, King County Council, District 4. The Letter Carriers Band provided the music and the U.S. Navy kicked-off the event with a flyover.



Seattle District scientist earns DoD environmental program research grants

By Scott Lawrance
Public Affairs

Competing against hundreds of researchers vying for limited funding, a local U.S. Army Corps of Engineers scientist had not one, but two, research proposals selected, securing more than \$2 million in 2017 grants.

Each year scientists from federal organizations, universities and private industry submit research proposals to the highly-competitive Environmental Security Technology Certification Program (ESTCP). Thirty-six new projects were funded by this Department of Defense environmental research program in 2017, including two led by Seattle District scientist Dr. Mandy Michalsen. One project aims to standardize “passive” porewater sampling methods for measuring the amount of freely dissolved organic contaminants present in sediment porewater – the water that fills pores between grains of the sediment. Historically, sediment characterization involved using chemicals to extract organic contaminants from bulk sediment samples. However, this bulk extraction approach doesn’t necessarily tell you how much contamination sediment-dwelling organisms are actually exposed to. That’s where direct porewater measures come in. Researchers have already adapted existing laboratory technologies to concentrate organic contaminants in water samples, called solid-phase microextraction. The process involves using small fibers coded with a polymer that absorbs contaminants. When extracted, the organic contaminants are concentrated, allowing scientists to quantify very low concentrations. Taking the research a step further, scientists are using this process to measure porewater concentrations by deploying these fibers directly into sediment. The technology is relatively well established within academic and research circles but it isn’t standardized nor commercially available “off the shelf.” That’s where Michalsen’s project comes in. “We are collaborating with seven commercial laboratories and three universities to establish a standard method for preparing, deploying and extracting these samplers,” Michalsen said. “By the end of this project we will have seriously accelerated acceptance of this technology. We’ll have a standard method others can utilize and seven labs able to offer that service. Also, the universities will produce tutorial videos so anyone who is interested in getting these methods up and running in their lab can do so.” Although excited about porewater sampling technology, Michalsen says it’s not as cutting edge as the second project receiving funding. “This one is really scientifically juicy and has the potential to make a significant scientific impact,” she said. Under the umbrella of bioremediation, where organisms are used to degrade contaminants, the proteomics project aims to demonstrate how measurement of proteins can help track microbial activity in environmental samples. “A special type of bacteria has the capability to use chlorinated solvents like we use air,” Michalsen explained. “They gain energy converting these solvents into non-toxic end products, much like we inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide, gaining energy in the process. So oxygen is to us, as these contaminants are to the bacteria. We often call them halo-respiring bacteria” In bioremediation remedies at DoD sites, where contaminated groundwater from chlorinated solvents like trichloroethylene, or TCE, is prevalent, scientists measure the number of genes, or DNA, associated with halo-respiring bacteria to decide if enough bacteria are present and can be stimulated to treat groundwater. It’s not an exact science, however, since DNA measurements indicate bacteria are present, but not if they are active. “For example, you may detect DNA of halo-respiring bacteria, but DNA alone doesn’t tell you if the cell is actively expressing proteins and actively degrading TCE,” Michalsen said. “In other words, DNA provides only a measure of activity potential because the DNA-carrying cells could be inactive.” This research goes to the next level, measuring proteins expressed by bacteria carrying out the detoxifying activity. “Protein measurements are directly linked to activity because it’s the proteins that mediate the detoxification activity we care about – and only active cells produce these proteins,” Michalsen explained. By demonstrating a link between protein measurements and the rate of detoxifying activity, scientists have a more compelling relationship that could allow for better predictions and decision making at contaminated sites. “Cleaning up tens of thousands of TCE-contaminated groundwater sites is a really expensive, long-term challenge for DoD,” she said. “If we can develop technologies that can get the government out of the cleanup business cheaper, better and faster, that’s a good thing.”

trict’s own Dr. Mandy Michalsen.

“Hundreds of projects were in the running for grant funding, so it was exciting to learn that we competed successfully and had two projects selected,” said Michalsen, principal investigator for both projects.

Competition for funding is a months-long tiered process beginning with initial proposals for consideration. If selected to proceed to the next round, researchers submit a more extensive proposal including funding requirements and study details that they must defend in front of a scientific panel.

Both Seattle District studies are related to environmental cleanup efforts at contaminated DoD sites and each is expected to be complete in three years.

One project aims to standardize “passive” porewater sampling methods for measuring the amount of freely dis-

solved organic contaminants present in sediment porewater – the water that fills pores between grains of the sediment.

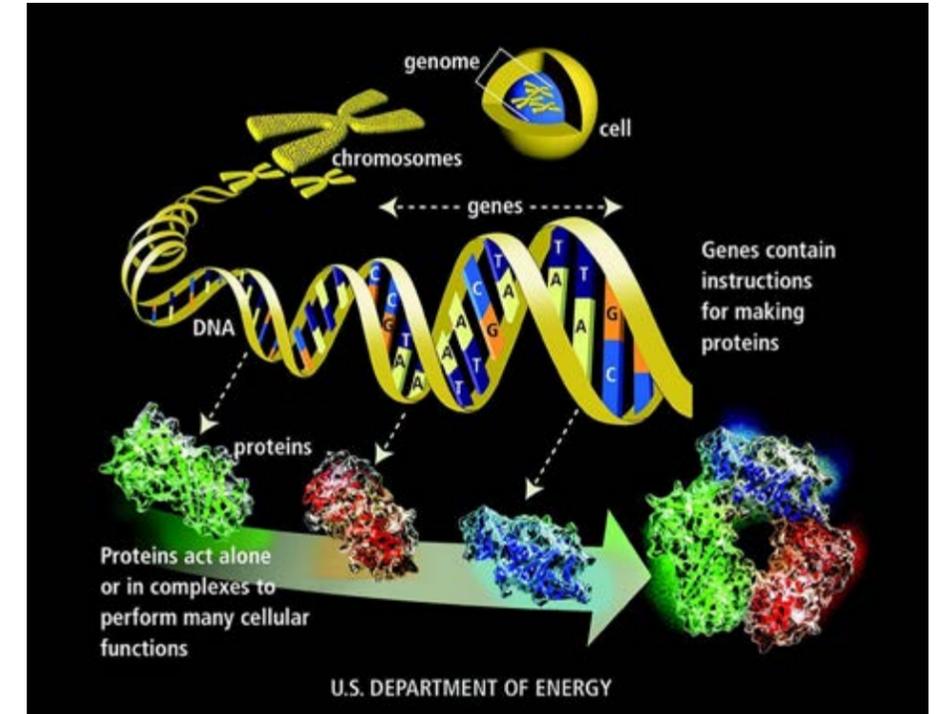
Historically, sediment characterization involved using chemicals to extract organic contaminants from bulk sediment samples. However, this bulk extraction approach doesn’t necessarily tell you how much contamination sediment-dwelling organisms are actually exposed to. That’s where direct porewater measures come in.

Researchers have already adapted existing laboratory technologies to concentrate organic contaminants in water samples, called solid-phase microextraction.

The process involves using small fibers coded with a polymer that absorbs contaminants. When extracted, the organic contaminants are concentrated, allowing scientists to quantify very low



Scientists work at a bioremediation site at Naval Base Kitsap.



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Final interview with Col. Buck

By Patricia Graesser
Public Affairs

Col. John G. Buck assumed command during turbulent times, following a work-force reduction leading to a re-evaluation of the district's future mission and relevancy. He oversaw the development of a new strategic vision replacing a 20-year old outdated vision and implemented specific plans across the district to achieve that vision.

He sought to improve personal accountability, modeling it by establishing an anonymous Commander's Suggestion Box and holding regular lunch sessions for employees to provide feedback. His leadership was critical as 80 percent of the district's corporate board members changed during his tenure due to death, retirements and promotions.

In the last three years, the district continued to achieve significant milestones on very complex projects. The Chief's Reports for both the Puget Sound Nearshore Restoration Project and the Skokomish River Ecosystem Restoration Project were approved and congressionally authorized in 2016 - the first favorable Chief's Reports in Seattle District in nearly a decade. The district oversaw critical upgrades to aging infrastructure across the six operating dams. Additionally, the Mud Mountain Dam Fish Passage Project met all critical design milestones, successfully cutting the design time in half.

The district also completed several critical military projects including: the Mountain Home Air Force Base airfield reconstruction, Joint Base Lewis-McChord Connector Road and JBLM Wastewater Treatment Plant. Each of these represent important high visibility projects that improved combat capability and infrastructure in strategically important ways for the Army and Air Force.

What were your expectations about commanding Seattle District prior to arriving here, and were they borne out?

I knew it would be a different experience than it was when I served here 12 years ago. The breadth and perspective are completely different than being a PM. I knew it was a great place full of professionals dedicated to public service and I was excited to come back. I came in after sequestration and furloughs, so morale was a major concern in the first 90 days. In general, I expected to spend more time on military construction, and spent much more on regulatory issues. There were maybe some unique items like bulk terminals and shellfish aquaculture consultations that drove that.

What achievements did Seattle District accomplish during your command of which you are particularly proud?

Civil Works



program execution, particularly in 2016, was a highlight. We started Grays Harbor deepening and had two General Investigations [Skokomish and Puget Sound Nearshore] authorized by Congress.

What were your greatest frustrations?

Time was a challenge- I didn't spend the time I wanted to with the people in the District. There were also challenges to close-out long-term projects.

What do you take away from your experience of leading Seattle District?

Things evolve quickly. It is important to continue to



improve how we do our work every day. We need to develop strategies to execute within our financial constraints.

What would you do if you had an opportunity to serve another year here?

I'd like to start the next phase of key projects: Puyallup GI, Seattle Harbor, Mud Mountain Dam Fish Passage and the Veterans Administration Hospital. I would also evaluate our District structure to see if there is a way we can improve how we deliver the program.

What do you hope will continue after you leave?

We've poured our heart and soul into the Strategic Vision, and I hope that the District can continue to focus on the three goals of Leadership and Accountability at All Levels, Care for Our People, and Efficient and Effective Project

Execution. It's all about continuing to take control of our own destiny.

Was there any one event that stands out as being most memorable for you?

There are three – the successful Civil Works Review Board for the Skokomish GI, the opportunity to meet with national leaders in Congressional visits and the Gateway Pacific Terminal decision-making process.

What are you looking forward to most about your retirement?

I'm looking forward to reconnecting with family, settling down and living somewhere for more than a couple of years, and maybe trying something completely different.

What will you miss the most about serving in the Army?

I'll miss the people, the Soldiers. The reason I stayed in as long as I did was for the camaraderie – serving alongside of great people with a common objective.

What advice would you give the incoming commander?

This is a great team. Continue to strive for continuous improvement. Push our organization forward. Ask questions; it never hurts to ask hard questions. And enjoy the ride – it goes by fast.

Anything else you would add?

I learn something new every day in this job. The breadth of our mission is incredible. What we do on any given day is amazing: cleaning up the environment, building for Soldiers and Airmen, generating power, reducing flood risk, navigation. This organization has a lot to be proud of.



(Top) Col. Buck does an interview for KIRO7 News during a joint spill response exercise, Manchester, Washington.

(Left) Capt. Buck during a deployment.

(Bottom Right) Col. Buck and Santa Claus (John Hicks) pose for a Christmas photo.



Daniel Johnson
Commander's Leadership Award (Supervisor)

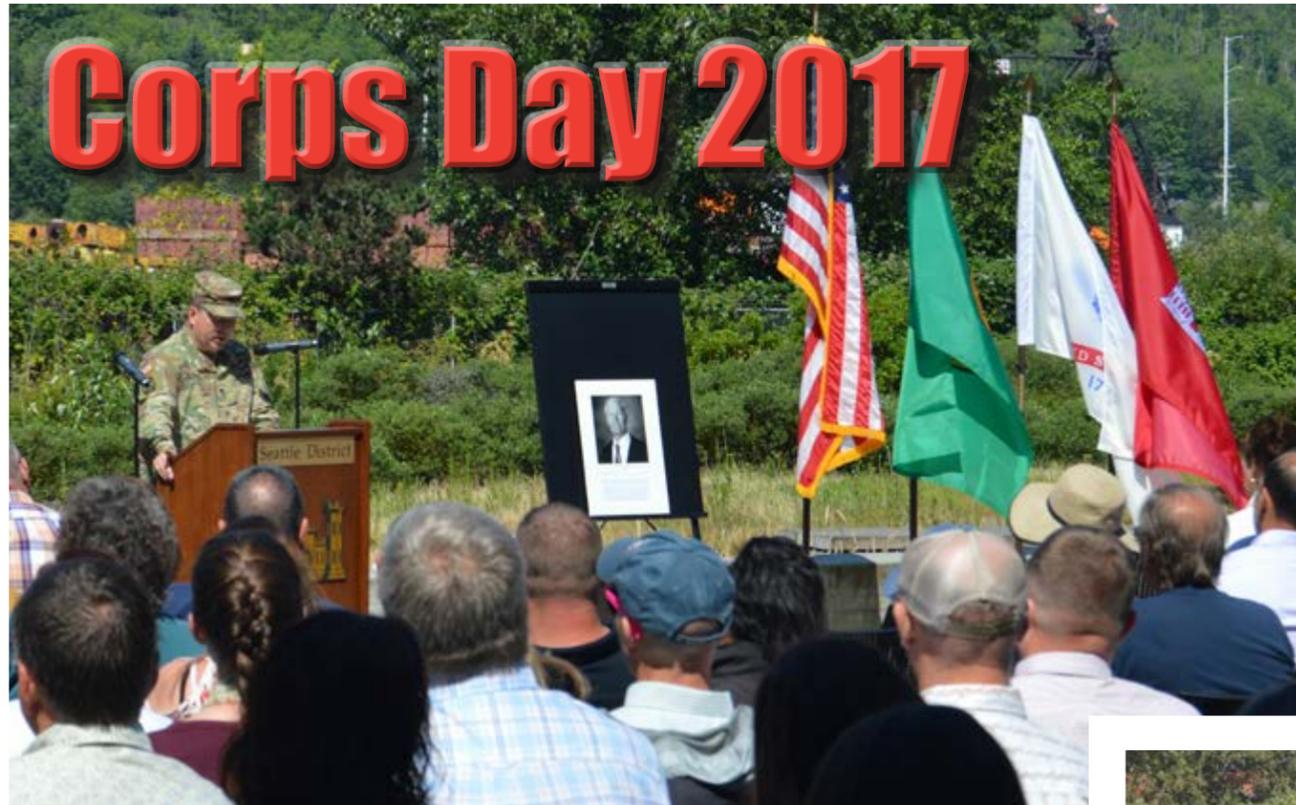


Scott Britt
Commander's Leadership Award (Non-Supervisory)

Not Pictured:

Josh Erickson
Project Engineer of the Year
Tisa Richardson
Support Employee of the Year (Up to GS-09)

Alan Manville
Project Manager of the Year



Retired Construction Division Chief **Arill Berg** inducted as a Seattle District Distinguished Civilian.



Amy Ebnet
Scientist of the Year



Scott Brown
Engineer of the Year



George Bonney
Individual Safety Award



Leadership Development Program 2016-2017 Graduates, **Scott Lawrence, Steve Kuan, Brian Hooper, Kevin Waring, David Alkins, Morgan O'Brien, Joel Fenolio and Katherine Garon.** Not pictured, **Mark Kerr, Catherine Petroff, Melissa Leslie, Catherine Johnson and Virginia Ryan.**



Team of Teams Project Delivery Team of Teams, Wastewater Treatment Plant, **Chad Adamson, Ken Weaver, Susan Dollaga, Wendy Liner-Arms, David Mullerleille, Ken Kober, Jodie Ramsey, Cheryl Sauro, Rob Didenhover, Jim Byne and Jim Lampman.**



Team Safety Award: Chief Joseph Dam, Rescue Retrieval Team, **Brent Cornell, James Balken and K.C. Ayling.**



Team Safety Award: Lake Washington Ship Canal Pump Replacement Team, **Paul Francois, Seth Hansen, Carey Mellott and Natalie Vander Hulst.**



Theresa McVey
Employee of the Year (Up to GS-09)



Laurence Lin
Employee of the Year (GS-10 and Above)



Juliana Houghton
New Employee of the Year (Up to GS-09)



Casey Huber
New Employee of the Year (GS-10 and Above)



Dannell Fillius
Support Employee of the Year (GS-10 and Above)



Travis Ball
Program Manager of the Year



Zachary Corum
Innovation of the Year



Robert Didenhover
Outstanding Accomplishment at a Project or Field Office



USACE photo by Tracy Robillard

USACE announces new safety program: CE-SOHMS

By Tim Grube
Safety & Occupational Health

A big change is coming to the way the Corps is running its safety program. It is a break from the past way of thinking about safety, which will put more emphasis on enforcing safety with employees and management. The USACE safety offices will move from a tool of enforcement to a support role. This will require all employees to become more aware of safety and it will be everyone's job to make USACE a safe place to work as part of our culture. Below are some Q & As to

help introduce you to the new program called CE-SOHMS.

What is CE-SOHMS?

The Corps of Engineers Safety and Occupational Health Management System is a USACE-wide management system intended to be similar to other management systems we use. One of the purposes for implementing CE-SOHMS is to transform our safety program from a compliance-based U.S. Army occupational safety and health program to a comprehensive performance management system where safety becomes part of the

culture in the way employees perform their jobs. We already have one of the best safety cultures in the Federal government, CE-SOHMS is going to help us manage our safety program similar to how we manage the great projects, programs, and services we deliver every day.

How will CE-SOHMS affect the District?

The Seattle District will be one of the first in the Corps to implement CE-SOHMS. The implementation will occur over about a three-year period and involves three "Maturity Stages:"

Year 1, Maturity Stage I: Development of Programs, Policies and Procedures. The District got a jump on this in 2016 when we did an internal assessment similar to what the CESOHMS team will do in August 2017. Key tasks in the stage are the appointment of a District CE-SOHMS "Champion," compiling existing district safety policies and procedures that fall into approximately 40 different categories/objectives, conducting an analysis to identify gaps in district policies and regulation and the development of a corrective action plan.

Year 2, Maturity Stage II: Communication, Training and Implementation. This stage will overlap slightly with Stage I and we are scheduled to be complete NLT July, 2019. Key tasks in this stage relate to completing our corrective action plan and reporting on progress. There is an additional assessment to evaluate the District's implementation upon completion of this stage.

Year 3, Maturity Stage III: Full implementation and Continuous Improvement. This stage will also overlap with the previous stage as we begin to function fully under the CE-SOHMS framework and integrate all CE-SOHMS criteria into the culture of

the organization. The focus will shift from implementation to continuous improvement. A final assessment will be performed to review the maturity of the District's SOH program and validate successful CE-SOHMS implementation.

What has been done so far?

Although the strategic engagement won't happen until July 25-26, the safety office has been working with key personnel to gather all of the District's policies, procedures, supporting documents, etc. related to safety into a single, organized location in preparation for the upcoming Stage I Baseline Assessment.

What is the next step?

On July 25, the Northwestern Division Safety and Occupational Health manager, will lead a team of assessors from other Corps districts and the Safety Management Center of Excellence will be in the District conducting what is called a strategic engagement; essentially a briefing for senior leaders with the goals of educating leaders and of selecting a champion, outside of the safety community, for this effort.

From August 22-24, the NWD Safety and Occupational Health manager, will lead a team of assessors from other Corps districts and the Safety Management Center of Excellence as they baseline our policies and procedures against a standardized checklist. This visit will also include in- and out-briefs to the Corporate Board and potentially a few requirements to provide backup information to the assessment team.

How will CE-SOHMS affect me?

First and foremost, CE-SOHMS will bring you a safer work environment by transitioning from a safety checklist environment to a culture where each employee identifies and mitigates risk as part of daily business. In terms of the implementation, experiences will vary. In Stage I, we collected information and that did not involve every employee. However as we begin to work on our corrective action plan, we will be seeking input and collaboration with all of the District's employees to ensure that the system we develop enables us to deliver on our commitments while we continue to take care of each other.

Quarterly Awards



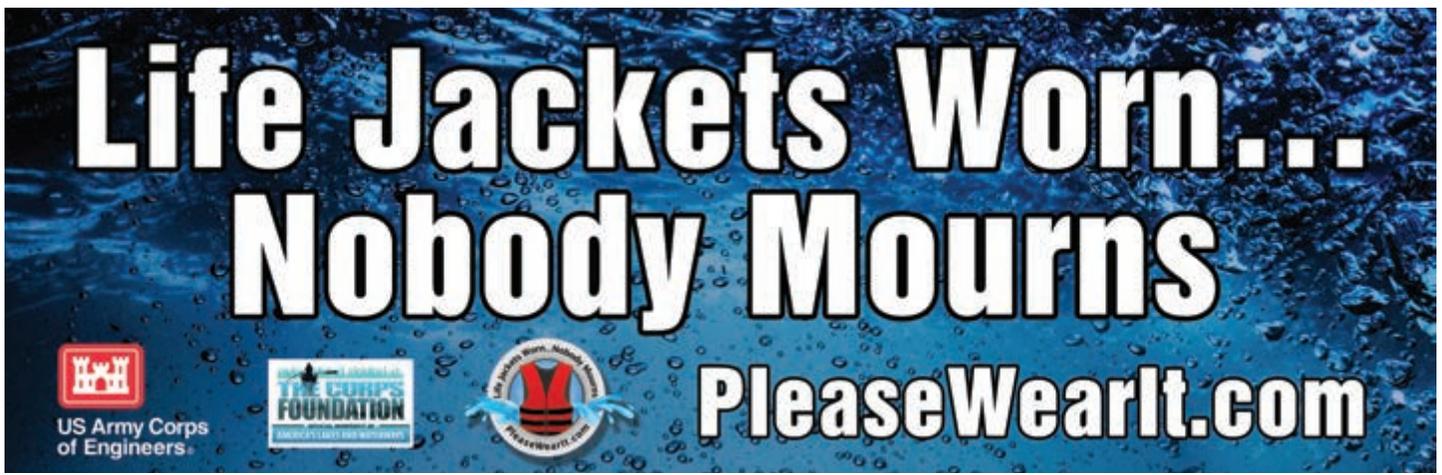
Stacie Keller
Up to GS-09



Bill Dowell
GS-10 and Above



Dana Dysart
Supervisor



More public recreation fatalities occur in July than any other month, so the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) asks you to please play it safe while on, in, or near the water because drowning is a leading cause of death this time of year. USACE public recreation fatality statistics show 88 percent were male, 89 percent were not wearing a life jacket, and 47 percent were swimming in areas not designated as a swimming area.

Most people that drown would have survived if they had worn a life jacket. Life jackets come in many styles, sizes and colors. Choose the right one that fits you properly and make sure to wear it correctly. There is a life jacket for every kind of water activity including swimming. One of the most comfortable life jackets for adult swimmers to wear is a manual belt type inflatable life jacket. If you wear an inflatable life jacket of any kind make sure you know how it works, how to inflate it, inspect it before every use, how to rearm the CO2 cartridge, and repack it properly.

Here are some more tips to help you have a safe and enjoyable time this summer. Swimming in open water is different and more difficult than in a swimming pool. You can tire more quickly and get into trouble due to waves, current, lack of experience, exhaustion, or your abilities to swim. You could find yourself in a situation where you are fighting for your life. Even the best swimmers can misjudge

their skills and abilities while swimming in a lake or river. Conditions can change quickly in open water, so before entering the water, please wear a life jacket. While wearing a life jacket you will not use as much energy, it will help you float, and most importantly it will be there when and if you ever really need it.

Every year several people lose their lives because they were encouraged to do something, such as swim across a lake, cove or pond, out to the nearest buoy, to retrieve a beach ball or something else that floated away or some other activity like jumping off a cliff or bridge. Your actions can have deadly consequences, so you should never encourage anyone to do these types of activities. Friends should do things like swim in designated areas and encourage each other to wear a life jacket.

While on or near the water watch out for each other at all times. It only takes 20 seconds for a child to drown and 60 seconds for an adult to drown. It is a misconception that if someone is drowning they will yell for help. Several people drown every year within 10 feet of safety because the people around them were not paying attention and did not recognize the signs of drowning. The signs of drowning can resemble someone just playing in the water. The signs include head back, mouth open gasping for air, no yelling or sound, and arms slapping the water like they are trying to climb out of the water. Properly rescuing

someone should never include contact with them unless you are a trained lifeguard. Reach out to the victim with something to keep your distance or throw them something that floats to pull them to safety.

Avoid prolonged breath holding activities and games while swimming or in the water because it can lead to shallow water blackout.

Boaters or those swimming near boats should be aware that carbon monoxide is an odorless, invisible, and silent killer that clarifies another reason why wearing a life jacket is so important. Carbon monoxide can accumulate anywhere in or around your boat regardless of what type of boat you have. It is heavier than air and lighter than water, so it floats on the water's surface. Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include eye irritation, headache, nausea, weakness and dizziness. One breath of carbon monoxide at the water's surface can cause you to pass out and drown. Avoid areas where exhaust fumes may be present. Do not let anyone swim under or around the boarding platform because this silent killer could be waiting for them.

Increased water safety awareness can help ensure that you and your loved ones have fun this summer and return home safely. Always remember to wear a life jacket because it could save your life or the life of someone you love. Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns.

Visit www.PleaseWearIt.com.



Out and About:

Nate McGowan will speak to the Northwest Hydroelectric Association on safety and security in high-traffic recreational areas.

Congratulations:

Congratulations to our LDP graduates: **David Alkins, Mark Kerr, Kevin Waring, Morgan O'Brien, Catherine Petroff, Joel Fenolio, Katherine Garon,**

Melissa Leslie, Catherine Johnson, Brian Hooper, Steve Kuan, Scott Lawrence and Virginia Ryan.

New Positions:

Kym Anderson as a new Branch Chief in Operations Division.

Glen Smith has been selected as our District's

Deputy Chief, Operations Division and Chief, Operations Support Branch.

Craig Juckniess was selected as District Counsel.

Susan Buis accepted a position with WS-DOT to be a regulatory liaison to the Corps.

Richard Spiger is Libby Dam's new Operations Project Manager.

Moving On:

Marcia Bilyeu

Retirements:

**Col. John Buck
George Henry
David Martin
Cynthia Masten
Larry Schick
John Zabucovec**

Please submit *Around the District* announcements to DLL-NWS-PAOTeam@usace.army.mil

Welcome

TO THE DISTRICT



Adan Perez
Laborer
Chief Joseph Dam



Amanda Sparks
Supply Technician
Chief Joseph Dam



Andrew McLean
Mechanic
Chief Joseph Dam



Capt. Lamar Cantelou
Project Manager
PPPM Div.



Chad They
Maintenance Worker
Chief Joseph Dam



Charles Ayers
Laborer
Chief Joseph Dam



Charles Boswell III
Contract Specialist
Contracting



Hossein Avazpour
Student Trainee
Chief Joseph Dam



Jeffrey Turner
Power Plant Shift Op.
Libby Dam



Jonathan Springer
Electrical Engineer
Design Branch



Kyle Mundy
Natural Resource Spec.
Chief Joseph Dam



Thomas Banham,
Eng. DA Intern
Eng. Division



Todd Bishop,
Architect
Architecture & Structures



Whitney Anson
Student Trainee
Chief Joseph Dam



Zach Day
Nat. Resources Spec.
Chief Joseph Dam



Zach Zimchek
Deputy Ops. Project Mgr.
Chief Joseph Dam

Better Know a Section The Yakima Project Office



The Yakima Project Office oversees construction for Facility Sustainment Repair Maintenance (FSRM) and Military Construction projects at the Yakima Training Center, which is the premier ground combat training center in the Northwest. Over the past several years, the team delivered many projects to improve infrastructure and facilities as well as new ranges (Convoy Live Fire, Sniper and Machine Gun). They are presently working a wide variety of FSRM projects and are poised for the next

round of MILCON projects which include a new Fire Station and Washington Army National Guard Barracks/DFAC complex.

The Yakima Project Office includes:

Rob Didenhover, Carole Perkins, Kris Keffer and Randy Ellison.