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undergoes military
munitions cleanup

Big hearts, many brushes
make "Brush Up Nebraska
Paintathon" a success

Minot runway
replacement project
nearly complete

Omaha Outlook



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On the cover: Gordon Lewis, geotechnical engineer, Omaha District explains the measuring tool, Dynamic Cone Penetrometer to TANROADS's engineers in Tanzania as they assess the roads to provide a report back to the Millennium Challenge Corporation. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)



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The Omaha Standard was created to be met

This has been another amazing year for our team—THANK YOU. We have great people, a great mission, and a great 80-year heritage. Like many other great organizations, we are working hard to become even better and stronger.

In 2013, we revisited our Army Values, the foundation of our organization. Our Values show us what we need to be in every action we take. In 2014, we focused on our first line leaders, improving their training while showcasing and celebrating their contributions. First line leaders lead where the rubber meets the road. They inspire teams to achieve their best while delivering quality projects, products and services that meet or exceed expectations. And now in 2015, we will talk about standards, specifically the “Omaha Standard.”

Standards enable our success—they show us what we need to do and to what level of quality. If you achieve the standard, you succeed. In most cases, standards are the marks on the wall against which we measure ourselves

and our work efforts. Leaders establish those standards and then resource their teams to achieve them. Standards are created to be met, not waived. The road to mediocrity begins with the first compromise of a standard.

We are an organization of standards, from design standards, to construction standards, to acquisition standards, to the

We are an organization of standards, from design standards, to construction standards, to acquisition standards, to the standards for operating our projects...In the end, it is a leader's role to ensure they are known, communicated and followed to ensure excellence in all we do.

standards for operating our projects. Some of our standards are set by laws, regulations and policies, and others are set by our leaders. In the end, it is a leader's role to ensure they are known, communicated and followed to ensure excellence in all we do.

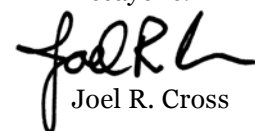
Today, the Omaha workforce consists of five biological generations, so our ability to not only maintain but communicate the Omaha Standard is more important than ever. As we approach 2015 and talk about the Omaha Standard, I ask you to think about how that standard sets the level of expectations we have of each other. Are we doing our best?



Joel R. Cross

Colonel

Omaha District Commander

Essayons.

Joel R. Cross



Military Munitions Remediation at Camp Hale: the project, the history, the public



Camp Hale, Colo., played a unique role in World War II; one that means potentially hazardous military munitions and unexploded ordnance exist in the area. Through the Department of Defense's Formerly Used Defense Sites mission and under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District is cleaning up contamination, addressing military munitions, and removing safety hazards caused by past activities.

"In places where there are munitions or there is historical evidence munitions may be present, we revisit the site to determine if we need to address concerns or perform more in-depth surveillance," said Adam Little, project manager for the clean-up.

The current clean-up phase involves a remedial investigation, which defines areas requiring potential remedial action.

The Project

In April 1998, the Omaha District completed an Inventory Project Report identifying Camp Hale as eligible for funding under FUDS programming. The District's Military Munitions Response Program is responsible for the clean-up effort.

Through their efforts, which include researching historical archives, performing site inspections, time critical removal actions, and remedial investigations, the team has successfully reduced the potentially impacted area from 226,000 acres (or about 312 square miles) to 101,116 acres.

The MMRP team's goal is to shrink the area requiring cleanup by determining the nature and extent of impacts and to identify contaminated areas or specific hazards.

"Through the process, we're eliminating areas that do not require cleanup so we can reduce the overall cleanup cost and focus efforts on areas needing the most attention," said Little.

The History

In 1940, after learning that Finnish troops held off Soviet invaders for three months using winter warfare tactics, National Ski Patrol founder, Charles "Minnie" Dole, penned a letter to the War Department offering to help train U.S. soldiers. Training for six U.S. Army divisions was ordered to prepare troops to fight in cold weather and mountainous regions.

Among the units was the 10th Light Division (Alpine), established July 13, 1943, at Camp Hale. The Division's year-long training at the 9,200-foot high camp, near Vail, Colo., honed the soldiers' fighting and survival skills under brutal mountain conditions.

Redesignated as the 10th Mountain Division in 1944, its soldiers were known as "Ski Troops" with

high altitude, sub-zero temperature survival skills that included carrying 90 lb. packs, scaling sheer cliffs, and skiing treacherous mountain passes. The division was among the most decorated of World War II.

It was the 10th Mountain Division's veterans who contributed to Colorado's winter ski vacation industry and growth in the sport's popularity.

The military, including the 38th Regimental Combat Team, 99th Infantry Battalion, and soldiers from Fort Carson who conducted mountain and winter warfare training exercises from 1942 to 1965, used up to 247,000 acres at Camp Hale. The Army also tested weapons and equipment there. From 1959 through 1965, the CIA secretly trained Tibetan soldiers at the camp.

In July 1965, Camp Hale was deactivated. Since 1966, much of the land within Camp Hale's boundaries has been managed by the U.S. Forest Service, located in the White River, San Isabel, and Arapaho National Forests. There are also some privately held properties where the camp was located.

The Public

A risk management plan and community involvement program helps inform visitors about Camp Hale's military history alerting them to the presence of munitions. The plan includes education efforts about what to do if a suspected military munition is discovered and follows a formal response protocol.

"Public safety is very important; 'the three R's, Recognize, Retreat and Report,' are a primary education message with brochures available at Forest Service offices," said Little. "We want people to enjoy the National Forest and let experts handle the munitions."

Thus far, two time critical removal actions have occurred, in 2001 and 2003. In all, 26 live items were destroyed by Fort Carson Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel. Other munitions and munitions-related scrap metals were properly disposed of and removed from the area.

Once the remedial investigation defines the areas requiring potential action, a feasibility study will review the available options and costs, which will be shared with the public once the proposed plan has been completed.

Opposite: PFC Thomas Boulson and PFC Howard McDowell, huddle in a hole in the snow as McDowell sights a 60 mm mortar. The men fired practice rounds while on maneuvers at Resolution Mountain in Eagle County, Colo., in April 1944. Photo part of the Western History Collection at the Denver Public Library. (U.S. Army Signal Corps photo)

Opposite: Letting experts handle munitions for proper disposal. A landmine was located during the remedial investigation field work. The landmine was properly disposed of by detonation within the field by USACE contractors. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo)

Corps Section 14 project facilitates Scribner's promising future

The town's motto is "Strong heritage...promising future." Founded in 1870 as a bustling railroad town, Scribner, Neb., has endured many financial hardships throughout the past two centuries including the locust plague in the mid 1870s; the Elkhorn River flood of 1944, which claimed two lives and caused thousands of dollars of damage; and the loss of service by a major railroad in the 1980s. Despite these difficult times, Scribner remained steadfast and now considers itself a prosperous, family-oriented community.

Scribner, located about an hour northwest of Omaha in Dodge County, boasts a vibrant downtown area with museums, shops, and parks, including Riverfront Park which provides visitors with public access to the Elkhorn River. Many people who live, work and recreate in Scribner rely on County Road F, a major thoroughfare that crosses the Elkhorn River Bridge on the east side of town.

According to the latest vehicle count conducted by the Nebraska Department of Roads, 177,000 vehicles traveled one-way on County Road F and the Elkhorn River Bridge that year, which averaged out to 485 vehicles per day. This heavily traveled two-lane highway is vital to the town because it provides access to Highway 77, a major route to the state capitol in Lincoln, and is used as a primary road by Scribner's fire and rescue services and school buses. County Road F is also important to local farmers who transport their grain to the elevators in town.

In the spring of 2010, a major flood from the Elkhorn River caused the left river bank just upstream from County Road F and the bridge to erode back 200 feet and decimated an entire tree line several hundred feet long. Scribner town officials were concerned the erosion would continue to cut the bank and eventually damage the highway taking out the bridge. At the town's request, a team from the Omaha District conducted a site visit shortly after the flood confirming the highway and bridge were facing imminent threat and qualified

for assistance under USACE Section 14, Emergency Streambank and Shoreline Protection Program.

Corps' Continuing Authorities

Under Section 14, USACE has authority to construct projects to reduce streambank erosion to protect public infrastructure such as highways, bridges, hospitals and schools. According to Gwyn Jarrett, Section 14 Program Manager, "The benefit of constructing a project under Section 14 is that it falls under a standing authority, a Continuing Authority, provided by Congress to allow the Corps to respond to situations when public infrastructure is imminently threatened. The result is a decrease in the amount of time it takes to get smaller, less complex projects constructed."

Each of the 'Continuing Authorities' carries with it pre-approval for construction without the need for additional congressional authority, provided the recommended project falls within the parameters of the specific program including specified limits on how much federal money can be spent on a project. Currently, the federal investment in a Section 14 project is limited to a maximum of \$1.5 million per project.

Erosion Solution

The Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District, who is the project sponsor, the town of Scribner and Dodge County, decided that Section 14 was their best course of action and agreed to cooperate and bring this project to a reality with each paying one-third of the non-federal portion of the project. In 2013, following a public review period and collaboration with the sponsor, town and county, the Omaha District completed a feasibility study, which identified the construction of spur dikes along the eroded section of the river as the most cost-effective, feasible solution.

The project will consist of a series of five spur dikes at various locations along the eroded bank.

Right: In 2010, high Elkhorn River flows caused extensive bank erosion and tree damage just upstream of County Road F and the Elkhorn River Bridge east of Scribner, Neb. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)



Left: Illustration shows a series of rip rapped spur dikes used to slow down river flow and reduce bank erosion. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)

Each spur dike will be an earthen structure between 37 and 122 feet long and covered with rip rap. The purpose of a spur dike is to slow down the flow of the river, thus reducing erosion along the bank. As the water slows, silt will settle behind the dike on the downstream side and fill in the eroded bank.

“Even though this is a smaller project,” said Jarrett, “the same amount of communication and collaboration occurs as it does with a large, multi-million dollar project. There was coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to ensure no impacts to wildlife, the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office to confirm there were no archeological resources located in the proposed project area, and the Dodge County engineer to certify the water level in the floodplain would not rise more than one foot as a result of the project.”

In addition to these and other state and local agencies, Jarrett communicated closely with the

landowners who own the riverbank where the work will be taking place. “I kept the landowners in the loop throughout the entire feasibility process including explaining everything from real estate easements to the development of alternatives. They appreciated the two-way communication and had a better understanding of the Corps’ process. I think this helped contribute to their support of the project.”

Now that the feasibility phase is complete, the project moves into the construction phase with the recent award of the contract in August 2014 to Iowa-based Niewohner Construction, Inc. for approximately \$289,000. Once notice to proceed is given, the project is expected to take no more than six months to complete. The District’s Fort Crook Project Office will provide construction oversight to ensure design specifications are met, safety standards are adhered to and construction remains on schedule.

Runway replacement project nearing completion

The United States has two B-52 bomber squadrons and Minot is home to one of them. The base began as an Air Defense Command Base with its original runway constructed in 1957 to provide a quick route to Russia over the Arctic Circle. Minot, as part of the Air Force Global Strike Command, remains a strategically important air base to the United States.

The runway at Minot Air Force Base in Minot, N.D., has seen numerous maintenance, repair, and airfield lighting upgrade projects since its original construction in 1957 but in 2012, work began on a three-phase \$67 million program to completely replace the air base's runway.

Following an Air Force Civil Engineering Service Support Agency study of the runway's condition in 2011, the Air Force made reconstructing the runway one of its top infrastructure priorities. In 2012, the west end of the runway was completely replaced and in 2013, crews replaced the east end.

The third and final phase, which is currently underway, required completely shutting down the runway. In April 2014, the \$32.8 million construction contract began with all but a handful of Minot's B-52s temporarily relocating to Anderson Air Base in Guam and Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota.

Following the precedent set with the construction of the original runway, the new runway is paved with asphalt in 100-foot wide sections on each side and a 100-foot wide concrete lane at its center.

"The B-52 Stratofortress is in a design aircraft group with some of the largest and heaviest aircraft in the U.S. Air Force so the runway's geometrical and pavement thickness design can accommodate other aircraft from the Air Force inventory, if necessary," said John Hawkins, Materials and Pavements Engineer with the USACE Transportation Systems Center.

The engineering specifications and design for the project were completed through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, Engineering Division's Geotechnical Branch Soils A Section. The Transportation Systems Center, also located within the Omaha District, as mandated by HQ USACE provided design document review at the various levels of design, 35 percent and final design,

and technical assistance during construction. The TSC is a mandatory center that provides technical assistance to all USACE-managed airfield pavement projects and assistance to projects managed by the Air Force.

Contractors began the project to replace the larger, remaining segment of the runway by removing the existing runway. The asphalt was milled and used to improve the surface of some of the gravel roads around the runway area on base. The remaining asphalt, all of the concrete, and the original base course was removed and hauled to an off base site where it will be crushed and reused for other purposes.

The primary contractor, Sundt, and asphalt sub-contractor Lagan, each brought batch plants onto the base and are working across the runway from the base's cantonment area, which reduces the impacts of construction traffic, up to 200 trucks a day, to the city of Minot as well as on base.

The on-site batch plants also offer more control over the project materials and helps avoid issues caused by asphalt cooling during transport and delivery. The batch plants also provided a storage area for construction equipment and materials along with aggregates for the concrete and asphalt that were brought in via rail from Sioux Falls, S.D.

The non-reinforced concrete was primarily placed through slip-form paving in four lanes, with the two outside lanes paved first and then two narrower inside lanes to make up the crown of the runway.





Throughout the project's construction, the contractor has taken core samples from various paving sections to ensure that the concrete meets the stringent design specifications that are aimed at providing a runway that will support another 50 years of service.

"You're looking for an even distribution of the aggregate," said Brad Jones, Chief of the Soils A section of the Omaha District's Geotechnical Branch. "If there isn't enough aggregate at the surface layer, it means the concrete was overworked during placement and may experience spalling, or chipping away from the surface, and degrading the integrity of the concrete."

"Spalling wouldn't just impact the runway," said Jennifer Aldrich, a project engineer overseeing

construction quality on the project. "Spalling can lead to debris which can result in foreign object damage to aircraft engines over time. Our goal is to ensure airfield quality helps sustain the aircraft and provides a safe landing surface for the aircrews and their aircraft."

The asphalt contractor Lagan, a Europe-based contractor, brought with them equipment that is growing in popularity in Europe on horizontal construction projects.

"The Vogele Super 1900-2 tracked paver, is something we haven't seen before and hasn't been used in this part of the United States," said Aldrich. The paver is designed to handle a large variety of applications including placing base course, bringing it to elevation and achieving up to 94 percent compaction moving along behind a feeder which provides an uninterrupted supply of materials to the paver.

The trucks carrying the base course empty the material into the feeder, which supplies the material to the paver. The next day, the same equipment is then used to place the asphalt.

Also in use is a unique three-wheeled roller, which crews are using for initial asphalt compaction. According to Aldrich, the three-wheeled roller provides tighter joint compaction between the concrete and asphalt.

The project is on track for completion in early October.

Paving for the runway project completed August 11. The main portion of the 8,900 foot long runway is 14.5 inches thick and widens to 18 inches at the outer edges.

The project includes 41,400 cubic yards of concrete and 35,650 tons of asphalt.

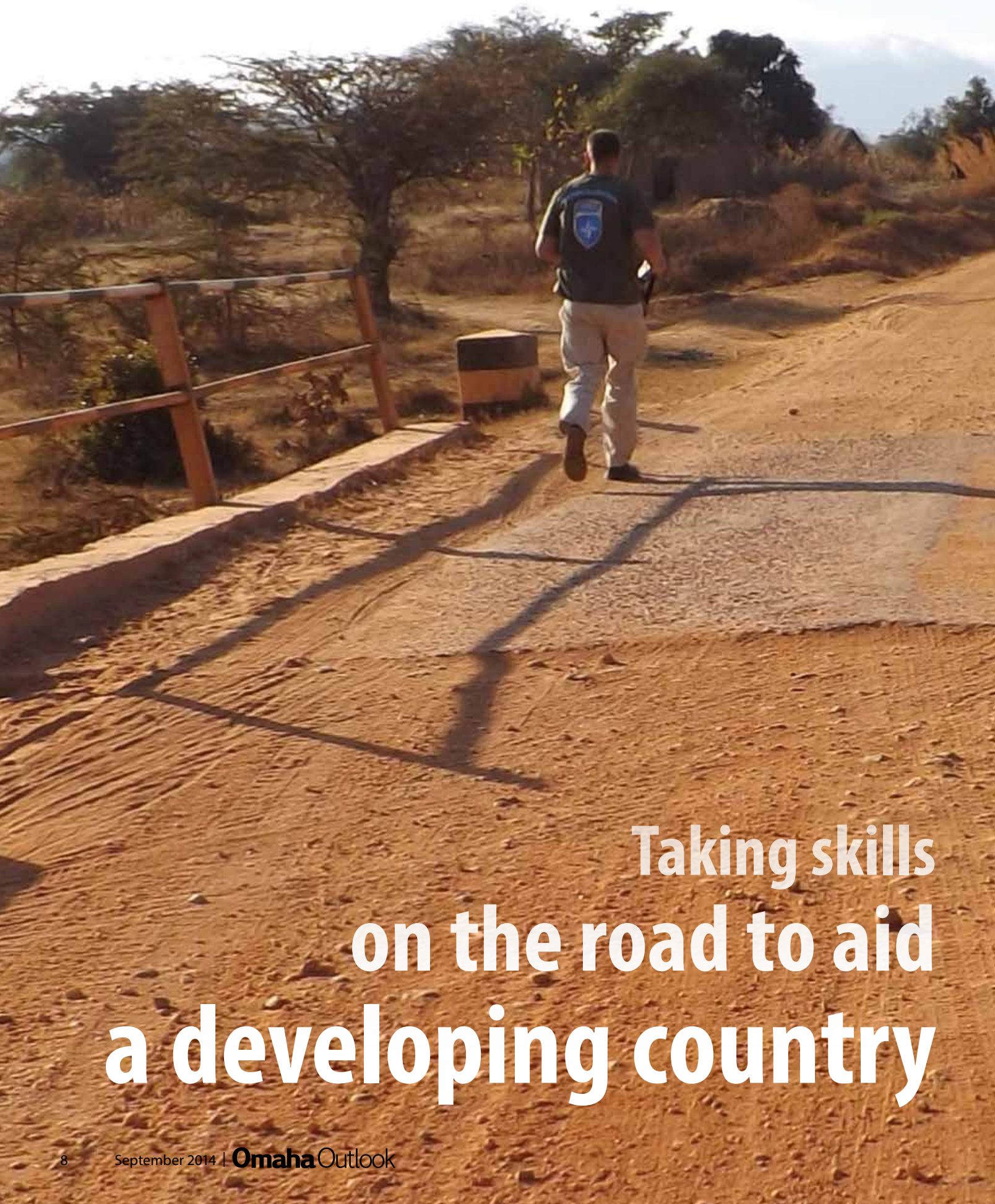
Once paving was complete, crews began to groove the surface to help direct rainfall and snowmelt away from the crown of the runway and another crew will paint the runway striping.

Other work included installing storm drains and replacing airfield lighting.

Through the duration of the runway closure, a taxiway was converted to function as an emergency runway and once the B-52s and support crews return to Minot the final project phase will be to restore the light stands at the mass parking area located adjacent to the taxiway, which were removed to establish the emergency runway.

Opposite: The Vogele Super 1900-2 tracked paver being used by the Minot Air Force Base runway replacement asphalt subcontractor, Lagan, is a piece of equipment not commonly used in the central United States. The paver can set the base course, bring it to elevation, achieve up to 94 percent compaction and be used the next day to place asphalt. It is also capable of roller compacted concrete placement. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo by Public Affairs Specialist Eileen L. Williamson)

Above: Throughout the Minot Air Force Base runway replacement project's construction, the prime contractor, Sundt, has taken core samples from various paving sections to ensure that the concrete meets the stringent design specifications that are aimed at providing a runway that will provide another 50 years of service. Here a consultant with the U.S. Air Force inspects the aggregate distribution at a hole drilled during the core sampling process. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo by Public Affairs Specialist Eileen L. Williamson)



Taking skills on the road to aid a developing country



Engineers from the Omaha and Philadelphia Districts recently teamed up with a biologist from the Europe District and an environmental engineer from Fort Benning, Ga., after being retained by the Millennium Challenge Corporation to provide technical assessments for prioritizing road projects in Africa. They inspected more than 450 miles of roadway, determined overall road upgrade costs, and planned road investment budgets for the next fiscal year supporting Tanzania's Government.

Omaha District engineers Dave Ray, Chief of Geotechnical Sciences Branch; Danny Klima, a civil

engineer; and Gordon Lewis, a geotechnical engineer; were joined by Vanessa Pepi, a wildlife biologist from the environmental branch in Wiesbaden, Germany, Europe District; Robert Lawrence, a civil engineer from the Philadelphia District; and Patrick Chauvey, Chief of Environmental Programs, Fort Benning, Ga.

These six individuals formed two teams, each with a geotechnical engineer, a civil engineer and an environmental specialist. Collectively, they were part of the Tanzania Market Access Roads Project, spearheaded by MCC, a U.S. Government corporation started during the Bush administration as part of

(continued on p.11)



Reverse: Robert Lawrence of the Philadelphia District assesses one of the dirt roads in Zanzibar used by cyclists and other modes of transportation. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)

Above: Many types of vehicles, and thousands of them, travel the roads of Tanzania on a daily basis. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)



Above: Dave Ray, chief of geotechnical sciences branch, Omaha District USACE shares a western piece of engineering equipment with the local TANROADS engineers, while villagers in Zanzibar, Tanzania look on. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)



Above: Robert Lawrence, civil engineer from the Philadelphia District compiles his notes during an assessment of the roads in Tanzania July 2014, while local children look on. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)

the State Department and tasked with providing aid and economic aid to developing countries around the world.

“They are similar to USAID, a government agency, which provides aid in developing countries,” said Klima. “MCC is more particular about what they fund. Therefore, they have strict criteria a country must meet before projects are considered.”

MCC organizes “Compacts”, agreements to lead projects for a country. Team members from the Omaha District have journeyed to Tanzania in the past to perform assessments and recommendations for the first Compact, which allowed road projects to get underway. Construction is nearly complete on those projects. Now, the Republic of Tanzania has proposed new projects for MCC to fund another Compact. The USACE team went to assess the viability of those proposals and provide MCC the data needed to determine if the projects meet their criteria.

Ray said colleagues in the Europe District, which is operationally responsible for Africa, remembered previous work performed by the Omaha District and recommended them again to MCC.

Pepi said this was her first time in Tanzania. Most of her previous work for the Department of Defense has been integrating Natural Resources Management Plan updates and Threatened and Endangered Species Surveys.

According to Lewis their task was to gather information about the roads, photograph existing conditions, and inventory all bridges and other structures. They also performed a preliminary environmental and social assessment along the roadways, and obtained documentation on vehicle traffic, population and area economics. With that information, they prepared a preliminary cost estimate for upgrading the road to paved standard, improving or replacing the drainage structures, and the cost of compensating residents whose land would be impacted.

“The roads we looked at were mainly dirt and gravel,” said Lewis. “We were there during the dry season. Other than being very rough in places, we didn’t have much trouble getting around. The people

living there have to deal with it on a daily basis... since nearly 80 percent make their living from agricultural activities, transportation and access to markets is vital.”

Klima said improving the roads is very important to these countries because during the rainy season, which usually lasts four or five months, many of the roads are basically impassable. He said, “If the locals have fruits or whatever they are growing, and they can’t get them down a road to ship out somewhere, they’ll just sit and rot.” One aspect of this particular project is to look at improving market roads in all weather conditions, allowing people to sell their fruits and vegetables while they are in season, and grains or other products when market prices are at their highest.

For assessments, the two teams drove each road segment, looking at the existing alignment to determine whether changes are needed to make the road wider, or avoid natural or man-made obstructions. Lewis said, “Nearly all the bridges are one lane and old, some dating to the 1920’s or even earlier.”

Bridges would have to be replaced with two-lane bridges while keeping the existing ones in service during construction. The teams looked at alignment options or whether a second one-lane bridge could be built to allow two-way traffic.

Lewis said geotechnical engineering relies as much on direct observation and experience as on formal testing, especially during an investigation that has to be completed as quickly as this one. He used a Dynamic Cone Penetrometer, which is a sliding weight on a pointed rod, used to get information about the road’s subgrade conditions. “You pick the weight up, drop it, and count the blows that it takes to penetrate the rod into the ground,” said Lewis.

Klima said, “When you drive along the roads, it’s just clouds of dust, and it gets everywhere. It’s a respiratory problem for the people there.” MCC is looking for the greatest benefit for the money they would invest. “Social benefits would be one of the benefits, as would dust suppression. It would improve the quality of life for the people that live along the road,” he said.



The third Saturday of any given month represents an annual event taking place somewhere.

Across the U.S. the third Saturday in May honors military men and women in Armed Forces Day events.

For volunteers from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District that third Saturday of the month takes place in August.

It's called Paint-A-Thon. This year it took place on August 16.

It has nothing to do with engineers painting at any of our six main-stem dams; nothing to do with the commander getting his office walls upgraded; and nothing to do with one of the division secretaries putting in an order for paint supplies.

If you ask any of the employees who volunteer, it's much bigger and much more rewarding.

Twenty-six years ago, Brush Up Nebraska came to life as a community-based volunteer program that paints homes of qualified low-income elderly and low-income permanently disabled homeowners, in the Omaha Metropolitan Area. The upgrades to the home helps homeowners maintain their property, and beautify the community.

Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give." The Omaha District and the many volunteers who support this annual event have been giving for more than 25 years.

"Sequestration in 2013, had leadership choosing not to take on this volunteer effort as it was not in the best interest of our District employees," said Joyce Ridout, who has participated in Brush Up Nebraska Paint-A-Thons since 1995. Ridout became





team leader in 2008 after serving as clean-up leader since 2003, and coordinating the T-shirt order since 2001.

A lot of work needs to be done prior to the actual paint day, including calling for volunteers, ordering T-shirts, for a nominal fee, for each volunteer, and setting up an after-working-hours volunteer schedule. Next comes preparing the chosen house for the big Paint-A-Thon day.

“My effort is always to paint and I enjoy it, but I feel that it is a small contribution compared to the other work our volunteers do to get the project to that point,” said Monika Seeba.

Preparation began the last day in July with washing down the two-story home with detergent, scraping the old paint off of the house and garage, and cleaning out and raking up brush on the property.

Ridout put the call out for tools needed that evening such as hammers, crowbars, small sledgehammers, drills, gloves, and last but not least...ladders. During the first week, many volunteers who came forward were busy with minor repairs and scraping away old paint. “This was my first year volunteering for the Paint-A-Thon,” said Amy Schmidt. “It’s nice to be able to help make a difference for people who really don’t have the money or people around to help them out, and to give back to the community.” Schmidt said she really enjoyed working as a team with other



Opposite page top: The finished house painted by the Omaha District Corps of Engineers Paint-A-Thon volunteers. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)

Opposite page: John Bertino, Engineering Division Chief at Omaha District does some last minute paint touch ups during the 2014 Paint-A-Thon, while his daughter Jill peeks through the steps of one of the many ladders used during the painting of the home in Council Bluffs, Iowa. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)

Above left: Joyce Ridout, Brush Up Nebraska Paint-A-Thon team leader, reveals the completed home to its homeowners in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Erich and Arlene Schwartz. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo by Public Affairs Specialist Cheryl A. Moore)

Above right: Victoria Duncan, a U.S. Air Force Technical Sergeant, along with her son Ethan, volunteered their time to support the Omaha District Corps of Engineers Paint-A-Thon volunteers. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)

Corps employees who she would normally not get a chance to interact with in the District.

That sentiment was echoed throughout the diverse group of volunteers. “Doing the volunteer work with co-workers lets you interact in a completely different way than at work,” said Doug Hemsley.

The week before paint day, volunteers were busy priming the house and garage and finishing little projects. One of those projects included removing an old tree stump from the front yard. Taking on that challenge were Gary Hinkle and Bob Willcuts, both engineers by day. Nothing would stump these guys from getting the job done.

“Helping those in need, in the local community is a civic duty that more people should be doing,” said Margaret Hollandsworth. She added that she finds volunteer work meaningful, interesting, and helps her escape from her day-to-day routine with work and family commitments.

The Omaha District went above and beyond the call of volunteering this year. Senior leaders along with new employees to the Corps, and family members pitched in to support the cause. In all, around 67 volunteers stepped up to the challenge throughout the two-week period of the Paint-A-Thon, with approximately 40 on hand, or maybe ready with paint brush in hand to wrap it up on paint day.

Hector Santiago, who has volunteered for Paint-A-Thon for almost 10 years said, “In the past I also took advantage of this volunteer endeavor to bring my son, and that was a great opportunity to show him what can be accomplished as a team for our community.”

John Remus who has been a Paint-A-Thon volunteer for more than 15 years said, “This is a big thing for the homeowners and the community. Every year, there is at least one neighbor that stops by and thanks us for helping.”

Schmidt, who brought one of the youngest volunteers with her on paint day, her son Colton, said although he spent the majority of the time eating and playing, the only thing he could talk about after leaving was how he had helped paint a house for somebody that needed help. Schmidt said he was extremely proud of it.

Volunteers showed up with enthusiasm, support, and were ready to tackle all sorts of projects. Corps volunteers took on projects without hesitation. Chris Wiehl constructed a one-step entrance to the front porch of the house, while also installing a new air-conditioning unit that was donated by yet another volunteer group, Operation Santa, within the District.

The Regulatory chief “dug up dirt” in order to edge along the sidewalks. Construction and Engineering



Left: Jim Pakiz, Assistant District Counsel and a member of the 2014 Omaha District Leadership Development Class, paints the lower section of the house, while John Remus, Hydrologic Engineering Branch Chief, gets the higher portions of the Paint-A-Thon house. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)

Opposite: Homeowners Erich and Arlene Schwartz stand among just a couple dozen of the more than 67 volunteers from within the Omaha District Corps of Engineers, along with their family members, who donated their time, talents, and giving generosity to this year's Paint-A-Thon 2014. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Victoria Duncan)



chiefs were up on ladders reaching high places of the house, while others were doing some ground leveling by the back door.

Walking tacos were just one of many treats served to the volunteers by Tammy Smith, also a volunteer. Local food sponsors provided donuts, milk, and homemade brownies.

Homeowners Erich and Arlene Schwartz of Council Bluffs, Iowa mentioned that it would be nice to keep the squirrels out of the tomato plants in their garden. Volunteers Mary and Greg Adolf accepted the challenge by Ridout to construct a raised garden and on paint day arrived with a beautifully constructed wooden garden box, which sits high off the ground and is covered to keep the pesky squirrels away.

There was nothing that could keep the many volunteers away from this home on 2nd Avenue. "In each of the Brush Up Nebraska Paint-A-Thons in which I have taken part, the individual or couples would never have been able to do what was needed without our help, said Larry Janis. "The thankfulness of those we have helped over the years

is very gratifying and rewarding. With Joyce's great leadership and Tammy's great food, it is always a well organized event."

Colonel Joel Cross, Omaha District Commander commended Joyce Ridout for her leadership. "For more than two decades Joyce has been the catalyst, the backbone and the center of gravity for this long-standing District community service effort," said Colonel Cross. "She has annually rallied the District team in house selection, preparation efforts, small project initiatives, priming and ultimate Paint-A-Thon day activities that have literally changed the life of a local family each and every year."

After this year's Paint-A-Thon day drew to a close, Ridout summed it up, "You know what happens Sunday don't you?" she said chuckling, "My annual truck washing!" Following a whole month of loading and unloading supplies, and packing gallons of paint and tools, it all gets packed up and put away for next year's annual Brush Up Nebraska Paint-A-Thon...the third Saturday in August.

USACE publications begin moving to digital environment

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its many missions, roles and responsibilities build a large catalog of reports, documents and publications that are all in the public interest.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Digital Library is working to give all these documents a permanent home. The materials within the collection include information by and about the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. All content is contributed by offices throughout USACE and is enriched with metadata designated by its contributors and librarians. The digitized materials are uploaded into the CONTENTdm® Digital Collection Management System which allows for greater search and retrieval of items. The digital library is managed and maintained by the USACE Library Program.

“The corps is unique in that we are a Department of Defense entity but, in the United States, our primary interaction is outside the DoD and mainly with the public,” said Tesia Williams, Project Manager for the USACE web migration.

Two years ago, USACE migrated all of its District, Division, Headquarters, and Laboratory level websites to the Defense Media Activity’s content management system.



Raquel Santos, a librarian with the Humphreys Engineer Center Support Activity Library, uses CONTENTdm® and follows a set of guidelines that establish what content qualifies for the library. Santos works with public affairs offices and district librarians to collect and catalog publications into the library. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District photo)

While the web migration served routine communication efforts, it was never intended to address the thousands of studies, reports, maps and various publications produced across USACE added Williams.

That’s where the USACE Digital Library comes in.

“Using CONTENTdm® and following a set of guidelines to establish what content qualifies for the library, we began working with public affairs offices and district librarians to collect and catalog these publications,” said Raquel Santos, a librarian with the Humphreys Engineer Center Support Activity Library.

Once a publication is submitted, it becomes publicly accessible via the library’s website, <http://cdm16021.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/>

“Most of the materials we acquire were published by USACE, but some collections contain materials by other government agencies written about USACE,” said Santos.

“It has really worked out great for our planners and our cultural resources program,” said Jennifer Salak, an outreach specialist in the Omaha District Planning Branch.

Many projects constructed or evaluated by USACE involve the public. The National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, process requires federal agencies to integrate environmental values into the decision-making process and to work with the public when considering the environmental impacts of a project’s proposed actions and to evaluate reasonable alternatives to those actions.

These values and impacts are captured in an Environmental Impact Statement prepared by the agency proposing the project. Then, impacted Federal agencies, as well as local entities and the public can review a project’s plans and the potential impacts of a project before construction begins.

The public involvement process that moves from a draft, to collecting public comments, to establishing a final environmental assessment can be housed within the library collection.

The library places the materials in a collection that keeps the related documents together. The collection has a web address and each item in the collection also has its own address.

“The USACE Digital Library is a great resource for managing documents,” said Maggie Oldham, Chief of Public Affairs for the Omaha District. “It allows us to place our focus on communicating with the public via our website about what is in the document rather than worrying about document management and file storage.”

Added Documents

The Omaha District’s environmental branch recently added nearly 300 documents to the library, totaling nearly 60,000 pages of information on the history of environmental remediation efforts at the Pueblo Chemical Depot in Colorado.

“We needed to make the information accessible in support of a request for proposals for a future project,” said Missy Holland, project engineer for an upcoming project at Pueblo Chemical Depot.

It took an initial effort to ensure the reports complied with the library’s specifications, but the library offered a no-cost solution to get the information to potential contractors.

“The solution also improves the corps’ efforts toward transparency of operations,” added Holland. The next step is to incorporate plans to make the reports available as they are prepared.

As more publications become cataloged, it may help with Freedom of Information Act requests as well.

Inaccessible

“Oftentimes, we will get requests for a project or program that ended several years ago. The items may have been posted online during the project’s planning phase or public comment period, but once built and complete, a web page was no longer needed and reports sat either inaccessible on a web server or in the virtual equivalent of an unmarked box on a shelf,” said Linda Burke who manages the Omaha District’s FOIA program.

With these reports in the library, something as simple as a Google search may help the public locate the report.

As more district and division libraries catalog publications, moving forward and backward with more frequently requested items, the amount of available information available from the USACE Digital Library will continue to grow.



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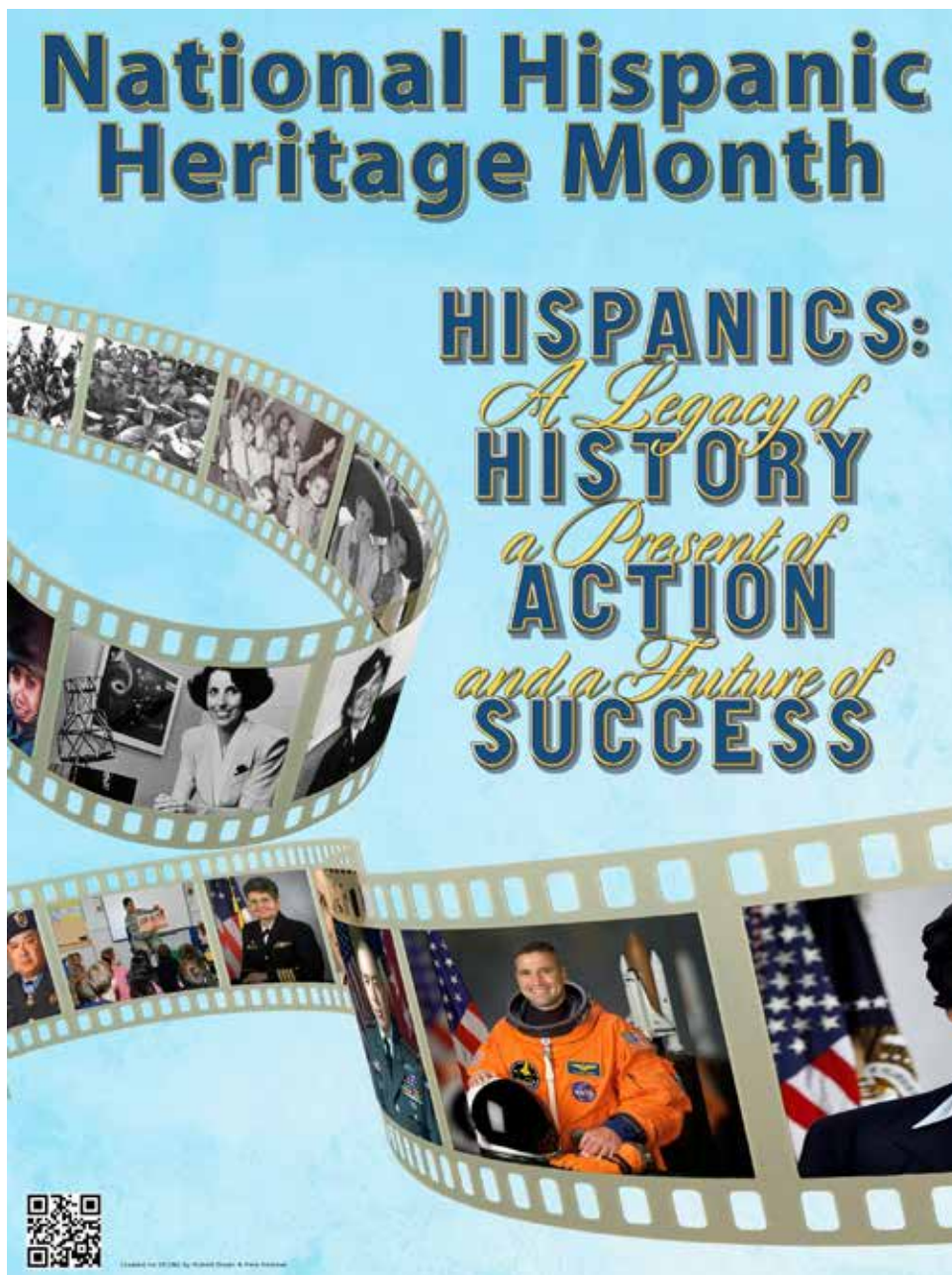
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through October 15.