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**US Army Corps
of Engineers
New England District**

Volume 42, No. 2

Yankee Engineer

November 2006

Wetland restoration a priority for Connecticut and Colebrook River Lake Flood Control Facility

by **Judith Johnson**
Engineering/Planning

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District manages approximately 54,000 acres of land in association with flood control facilities and recreation in the Northeast which includes thousands of acres of wetlands. These wetlands play an important role in flood control operations by providing temporary storage of flood waters and reducing erosive forces (by slowing water velocity and lessening wave action). Other wetland functions and values include fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, and water quality benefits including ground water recharge and pollution and sediment filtration.

Operation and maintenance activities performed at Corps flood control facilities periodically involve unavoidable impacts to valuable wetland resources. In order to mitigate for these in-

evitable impacts, work began in 1997 towards potentially establishing "wetland banks" in each Corps river basin.

As a result of this Wetland Mitigation Banking program, approximately nine high quality potential wetland restoration sites for use as "banking" were identified. Based on the ranking evaluation, these sites had high potential for restoring wetland function, increasing habitat quality, were cost effective and readily accessible.

The next step in the process in-

volves efforts to complete the procedural requirements to establish the "wetland bank" with federal and state agencies, prepare design plans for selected sites and acquire construction funds. However, in an environment of limited funding and competing needs over the last several years, no further progress has been made on the Wetland Mitigation Banking Program.

With uncertainty as to the future of the Wetland Mitigation Banking Program, the Colebrook Lake dam flood control facility

Project Manager (PM) Robert "Ben" Moretz and Mark Wilmes, the Environmental Compliance Coordinator (ECC) (at that time) for the Naugatuck River Basin exercised an environmental stewardship opportunity by making the restoration of one high priority site identified below the Colebrook River Lake dam a clear priority for the
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Colebrook River Lake Wetland Restoration Before Picture.

Picture provided by Colebrook River Lake.

Yankee Voices

Santos Lara
Construction/Operations



Inclement Weather Program Update

The New England District Inclement Weather Program has added another radio station to its notification list:

WCAP 980 AM - Lowell, MA

Inclement weather cards have been printed and distributed throughout the District with all contact information. If you did not receive your blue Inclement Weather Card, please drop by the Public Affairs Office.

Words worth repeating

"A pessimist is one who makes difficulties of his opportunities; an optimist is one who makes opportunities of his difficulties."
- Reginald B. Mansell

"With willing hearts and skillful hands, the difficult we do at once; the impossible takes a bit longer."
- Author unknown

Congratulations

...to Corps Construction Representative, **Michael J. DeGrazia Sr.**, and **Lisa Morris**, on the birth of their first child, Michael J. DeGrazia Jr., June 9. Michael Jr., weighed eight pounds, nine ounces, and was 20.5 inches long.

...to **Tina Chaisson**, Regulatory, and her husband, **Dennis**, on the birth of their son **Drake**, Nov. 2. Drake, the couple's second child, weighed six pounds, four ounces and was 20 inches long. He joins his brother, **Austin**, in the family circle.

... to **Chris Mackos**, stay-in-schooler in Regulatory Division who has been chosen as the WE Committee's Employee of the Month for November 2006. According to the nomination, Mackos is a stay-in-schooler whose value to the Regulatory Division is indispensable. He does the work of a high-paid computer specialist, saving our Division thousands of dollars.

Sympathy

...to **Ed O'Donnell**, Navigation, on the passing of his father, **Patrick O'Donnell**, Oct. 12.

... to the family of **Odias J. Laroche**, retired project manager of the Franklin Falls and Blackwater Dams who passed away Nov. 7. He retired in February 1991. Mr. Laroche was also a World War II veteran, serving in the U.S. Army in Europe as a combat engineer.

... to **Janet Brayden**, Logistics, on the passing of her mother, **Faith Brayden**, Nov. 8.

...to **Richard Drew**, Budget Officer, on the passing of his father **Leonard B. Drew, Sr.**, a U.S. Army veteran, WWII, Nov. 23.

...to **Joan Gardner**, Construction/Operations, on the passing of her mother, **Anna M. DiPietro**, Nov. 24.

...to the family of retired Chief of Survey and Korean War veteran **John "Jack" Clyde**, who passed away Nov. 30. Mr. Clyde retired in 1987.

YANKEE ENGINEER is an authorized unofficial Army newspaper under provisions of AR 360-1 published monthly. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Contributions from readers are solicited, but publication depends on judgment of the editor. No payment will be made for contributions. Published by the Public Affairs Office, New England District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 696 Virginia Road, Concord MA 01742-2751, 978-318-8777. Printed by the offset method on recyclable paper by the Defense Printing Office in Boston, Mass. Circulation 1600. The YANKEE ENGINEER can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/news/yankee.htm>

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Commander's Corner: Volunteerism during the holiday season

by Col. Curtis L. Thalken
District Commander



Once again the Holiday Season is upon us and I hope everyone takes some time to enjoy the season with their loved ones. We've had a busy year and we all deserve some time to relax and enjoy this season of joy and hope. Yet while we enjoy the comforts of home and family, many of our compatriots remain separated from their families and I ask that you keep them in your thoughts and prayers during this time of joy and reflection.

In Afghanistan and Iraq, volunteers from USACE Districts continue to drive the development of each nation's infrastructure. Functioning infrastructure serves as the backbone upon which a stable government is built. It is therefore essential that we maintain the momentum that past and present volunteers have realized at great cost.

Similarly, the efforts of USACE volunteers this past year in the wake of Hurricane Katrina's devastation last year has been Herculean. New Orleans' levees have been repaired to pre-Katrina levels. Most of the storm debris has been removed and many of the area's citizens have returned to pick up the pieces of their lives, but much more remains to be done.

Volunteers are still needed. The heroes currently deployed in the Middle East, will rotate home to well deserved reunions with their own friends and families, but their work is not yet done. Along the Gulf Coast, both the recently activated Hurricane Protection Office and New Orleans District need help as well.

So as you prepare to make your New Year's resolutions for the upcoming year, consider whether a deployment could be one of them. The nation's needs are still great.

Happy holidays and a joyous New Year to everyone and thank you for your efforts to make the District a better place to work.

Essayons!

Wetland restoration a priority for Colebrook River Lake Flood Control Facility

Continued from page 1
project.

As part of the construction of Colebrook River Lake, completed in 1969, a one acre wetland had been filled to accommodate the construction of the original project office. The building and septic system had long been abandoned and the building was being used for storage.

To reclaim the aesthetic quality, fish and wildlife habitat and recreational value of the area, the Colebrook River Lake PM and ECC began the incremental efforts toward restoration of the site; acquire a new storage building, enlist the Environmental Resources Section to prepare a wetland restoration design and hire a local contractor to excavate the site along with a multitude of other tasks, all in an environment of tight operations budgets.

The positive outcome of this effort is testimony to the power of cooperation and communication between different groups and disciplines towards a similar goal pursuant to the USACE Environmental Operating and

Communication Principals.

The end result, worthy of recognition, is an aesthetically pleasing view from the Colebrook River Lake dam and a fully functioning one acre wetland which provides passive recreational opportunities and wildlife habitat.



Picture provided by Colebrook River Lake.

Colebrook River Lake Wetland Restoration After Picture.



PFC Frederick C. Murphy crawled over a landmine on his way to help fellow soldiers.



Col. Curtis Thalken leads the procession during wreath laying ceremony.

District Commander, federal, local officials honor World War II hero on Veterans Day

Col. Curtis Thalken, New England District Commander, served as the keynote speaker during the National Archive's celebration to honor the nation's veterans. The Open House and Recognition Ceremony, was held Nov. 10, at the PFC Frederick C. Murphy Federal Center in Waltham.

A wreath-laying ceremony honoring the memory of PFC

Murphy began the celebration, whose amazing story of sacrifice earned him the honor of having a federal facility named after him. "It is the sacrifices and heroism of soldiers like PFC Murphy that we remember today during Veteran's Day," said Col. Thalken. "It is truly a privilege and an honor for me to be here today to lay this wreath on behalf of a



Col. Curtis Thalken lays the ceremonial wreath at PFC Murphy's memorial plaque at the Murphy Federal Center.



Col. Curtis Thalken and local veterans conclude the wreath laying ceremony with a final salute to honor PFC Murphy.



The U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center Honor Guard prepare to start the ceremony.

grateful nation in honor of one of our fallen heroes.”

Other activities during the all day event included exhibits, films, the rededication and unveiling of the Purple Heart Stamp, and a tribute to the American flag. Attendees were also able to send messages of support to U.S. Troops by utilizing computers to access Americasupportsyoud.com. Additional speakers included State Representatives Peter Koutoujian and Thomas Stanley; Joseph Giordano, Jr., Councilor and Veterans Services Chair; and Waltham Mayor Jeanette McCarthy.

Murphy was an Army medical aide assigned to the 259th Infantry Regiment of the 65th Infantry Division when he gave his life during an attack on the Seigfried Line near Saarlautern, Germany on March 18, 1945.

The Boston native was first wounded in the shoulder, but would not withdraw and continued to treat other wounded soldiers while under heavy fire. He was more severely wounded when he stepped on a mine, which severed his foot. Still, he refused to be evacuated and continued to treat others by crawling to them. Murphy’s life ended when he dragged himself across a mine in an attempt to reach yet another wounded soldier.

Congress posthumously awarded Murphy the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest military award, for his valor on Nov. 2, 1945. A dedication ceremony naming the Waltham Federal Center facility after Murphy took place on April 18, 1994.



Photos by C.J. Allen

Many veterans attended the Veterans Day ceremony which honored PFC Frederick C. Murphy.



The U.S. Postal Service’s Purple Heart stamp was rededicated and unveiled during the Veterans Day events.



A Jay Cashman, Inc., clamshell dredge begins work on the Fore River dredging project.

Photos by Mark McInerney

Dredging begins at Fore River project in Massachusetts

Col. Curtis Thalken, New England District Commander, joined Congressman William Delahunt, federal, state, and local officials in celebrating the kick-off of the Fore River Dredging Project at the Quincy, Mass., Shipyard, Nov. 28.

“Shoaling, which has occurred since the completion of the improvement dredging in 1976, significantly impacts the navigation community that uses this federal project,” said Col. Thalken.

Jay Cashman, Inc., of Quincy, Mass., is currently performing the work

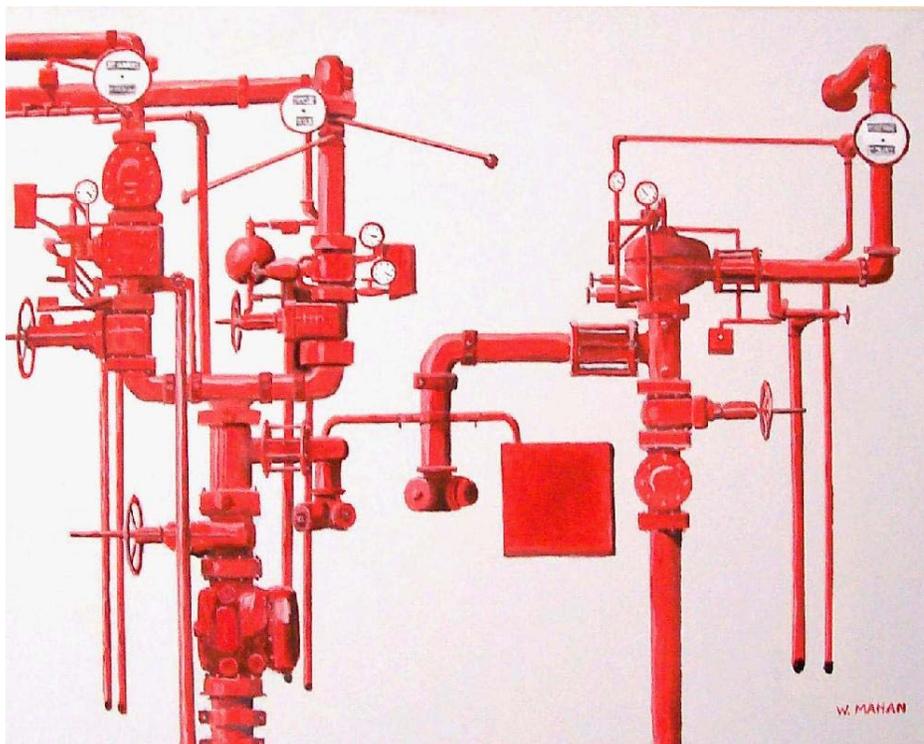
on the \$4.6 million contract. Work involves removing about 350,000 cubic yards of material to return the project to its authorized dimensions. Material that is dredged from the site will be placed in the Massachusetts Bay Disposal site. Work actually began on Nov. 15, which coincided with the beginning of the project’s environmental window. The project is anticipated to be completed in four months.

“This is an important project to the people of the Commonwealth as this is one of the two primary ways that petroleum products get to Boston and to the South Shore,” said Col. Thalken. “With winter drawing near, the need for this work will become more apparent due to the increased need for heating oil and other raw materials.”

The city of Quincy, Mass., and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are the non-federal sponsors of the project. Congressman Delahunt and his delegation were instrumental in securing federal funding for the project.



(from left) Col. Curtis Thalken, Bobby Byrne, and Congr. William Delahunt examine debris found while dredging the Fore River.



"Happy Pipes" will be on display at the Charles Playhouse for one year.

Mahan's artwork receives recognition from musical group

Bill Mahan, the New England District's Chief of Logistics, is also a talented artist. New England District employees know this because they enjoy his paintings when they walk down the hallway of Building One at Concord Park. Mahan's reputation as a talented local artist was solidified once more when one of his pieces, "Happy Pipes" was selected to grace the walls of the famed Charles Playhouse in Boston.

Mahan's painting, which had been displayed at the District, placed third in the over 18 Category of the musical band, Blue Man Group's art contest entitled, Vortex 2006: A Juried Exhibition. Mahan and the Blue Man Group unveiled the painting during a party at Limelight Studios in the Boston Theatre District.

"About ten years ago I went TDY to Camp Smith Hawaii to upgrade a MILSTAR system," he explained. "These pipes were on the outside wall of the building it was housed in. I liked the look and took a photo. I finally got around to painting it this year a few months before I heard of the contest. When the Blue Man Group announced the Vortex contest they said the theme would be 'interconnectivity.' Nothing is more interconnected than this series of pipes and I thought from the start that

I had a good shot at this one."

The artist arrived at the gala in style via a limousine provided by the Blue Man Group. Mahan was then met by the evening's host, local celebrity Bill Costa of Kiss 108 FM radio, who brought all of the artists up to the stage and unveiled the paintings while the artists talked about their works. Costa concluded the ceremony by presenting the artists with cash prizes.

Over the more than 30 years that he has been painting, Mahan has won a number of blue ribbons and cash prizes for his work. A member of the Chelmsford Art Society and the Concord Art Association, Mahan has had his work exhibited on local television and has sold his work at local art shows.

Mahan's "Happy Pipes" will be on display at the Charles Playhouse until October 2007.

Public Hearing held for Department of Justice permit

New England District officials participated in a joint public hearing on Nov. 16 in Berlin, N.H., to hear comments on an application from the U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP).

Lt. Col. Andrew Nelson, Deputy Commander for the New England District, welcomed the audience, saying that the Corps and the other agencies welcomed their comments on the project. "No decision has been made by the Army Corps of Engineers with regard to the Corps permit decision," he said. "My job tonight is to listen to your comments and to make sure the Corps of Engineers is fully informed of all the issues as we begin our deliberations on the permit application."

The agency is proposing to construct a medium-security Federal Correction Institution in Berlin, N.H. It is requesting a permit from the Corps to fill 12.7 acres of wetlands and waters within the Androscoggin River watershed in conjunction with the construction of a correctional institution on a 700-acre site off Success Loop Road in Berlin. The BOP has also applied for a New Hampshire, Department of Environmental Services, Wetlands Bureau Dredge and Fill permit to impact 16.72 acres, of which 12.7 acres is proposed fill.

The BOP proposes mitigation that would involve eight acres of environmental restoration and 493 acres of habitat preservation to compensate for the wetland impacts. The application for the Corps of Engineers permit was filed in compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which regulates the discharge or fill of material in U.S. waters, including wetlands.

Dredging up the past . . .



Photo by C.J. Allen

Attendees of the 2000 New England District Ranger's conference take an after hours tour of a U.S. warship docked in Boston Harbor in this April 10, 2000 photo.

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