



# RIP RAP

## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Albuquerque District

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Conducting a fish rescue at Conchas Lake. Photo by Michael Porter. See story on page 8.



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
Albuquerque District

Volume 24, Issue 8  
August 2012

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District Engineer,  
Lt. Col. Antoinette Gant

RipRap is an unofficial publication authorized by AR 360-1. It is published by the Public Affairs Office, Albuquerque District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army. Reader input is welcome. Photographs are official USACE photos unless otherwise indicated. For submission and writers' guidelines, contact the editor at 505-342-3171 or send email to: [kristen.skopec@usace.army.mil](mailto:kristen.skopec@usace.army.mil)

## Albuquerque District Welcomes New Commander

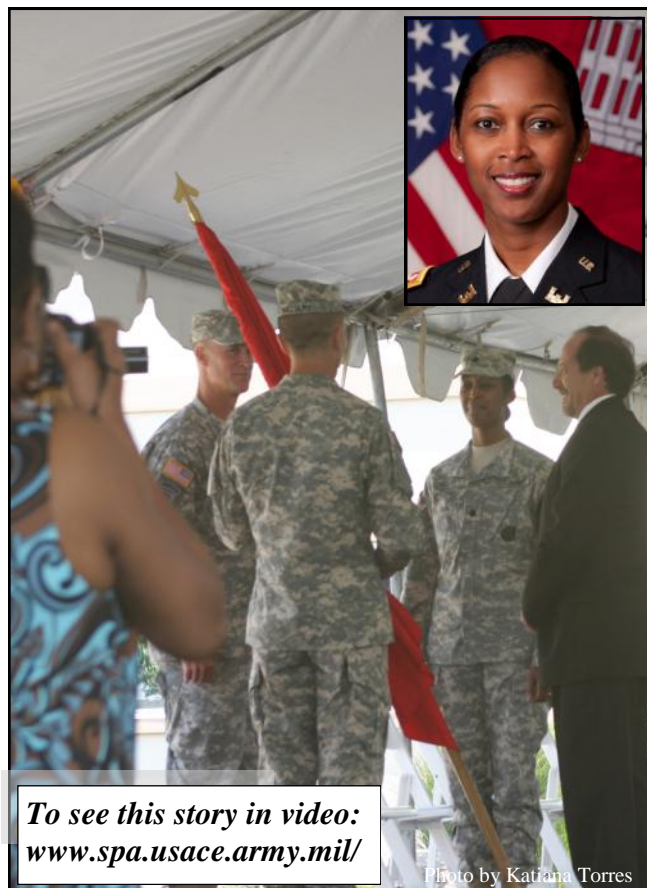
Lieutenant Colonel Antoinette Gant assumed command of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Albuquerque District July 12, during a formal change of command ceremony at the District headquarters. The purpose of a change of command ceremony is to emphasize the continuity of leadership and unit identity, despite the change in individual authority.

The District's area of responsibility includes the entire state of New Mexico, as well as portions of southern Colorado and far west Texas. The District performs design, construction and operations and maintenance services for three Air Force bases and conducts a robust civil works program.

Lt. Col. Gant's most recent assignment was Chief of Operations, Deputy Chief of Staff Engineer Directorate, U.S. Army South, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Previous duty assignments include Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Benning, Ga.; Mount Clemens, Mich.; Indianapolis, Ind.; Arifjan, Kuwait in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom and Afghanistan in support of the 82nd Airborne Division and the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team in the Nangahar Province.

Lt. Col. Gant was commissioned in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate in 1994. She holds a bachelor's in Civil Engineering from Prairie View A&M University and a master's in Engineer Management from Missouri University of Science and Technology, formerly University of Missouri-Rolla. Military schools include the Engineer Basic and Advanced Officer Courses, Combined Arms Services Staff School, Recruiting Commander Course, and the Command and General Staff College.

She is joined by her husband and two children.



**To see this story in video:**  
[www.spa.usace.army.mil/](http://www.spa.usace.army.mil/)

Photo by Katiana Torres

*Brig. Gen. Michael Wehr (left) conducted a change of command ceremony where command responsibility transferred from outgoing District Commander Lt. Col. Jason Williams (holding flag) to incoming District Commander Lt. Col. Antoinette Gant, on July 12. This transfer of leadership was physically represented by passing the ceremonial flag from the old commander to the new. The custom of acknowledging the change in commanding officer dates back to, at least, Roman times. (Also pictured is the District's civilian Deputy for Planning, Projects and Program Management, John D'Antonio.)*

# Flood Fighting

## District Assists Effort to Lower Bonito Lake

By Ariane Pinson, Technical Writer / Editor

The June 2012 Little Bear Fire burned 44,330 acres of private and Lincoln National Forest land in southern New Mexico, the majority in a wedge of prime timberland surrounding Bonito Creek. Beautiful, clear Bonito Lake, water supply for the City of Alamogordo and for Holloman Air Force Base, was overrun by the flames, which also burned 242 homes and 12 additional structures on the checkerboard lands adjacent to the lake. Looking up the steep hills from Bonito Lake, high and moderate severity burned land extends to the top of the ridge and most of the pinion, juniper, Ponderosa pine and other conifers are dead and blackened; the litter of pine needles has turned to ash. Loose sediment, charred woody debris and dead trees cling precariously to the slopes.

What made the area around Bonito Lake a beautiful refuge for people and animals is now the region's enemy; with ridge tops exceeding 11,900 feet in elevation, the mountains surrounding Bonito Lake promote the development of thunderstorms during the summer monsoon season. The abundant summer rain trickling through the dense canopy and sinking into the deep litter of the forest floor had nourished the forest and provided the clear water to Bonito Creek that had collected behind the dam at Bonito Lake.

But in the now-devastated watershed, such storms are the enemy. Heavy rainfall on the denuded, unstable slopes does not sink into the ground, but runs off with frightening speed. Dirt and woody debris are stripped from the hillsides and carried down slope in a churning mass of debris that flows faster than a man can run. Such immensely turbulent flows destroy whatever is in the way, including roads, unburned forest and structures of all sorts. Everyday storms become deadly in post-fire moonscapes such as the Little Bear Fire burn area.

The onset of the 2012 monsoon season in late June put everyone on edge. The first major storm struck the basin on June 22, washing soil from

portions of the drainage at a rate of about 30 tons per acre according to the *Little Bear Fire Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team White Paper* (July 3, 2012). A storm on July 5 washed a great quantity of silt, debris and ash into the lake from the surrounding watershed, plugging the outlet pipes. The lake rapidly rose to seven feet below the spillway as water continued to flow in but not out.

During the next several days, two pumps borrowed from Doña Ana County and one from the Bureau of Reclamation were installed to drain water from the lake, but the pumps could not keep up with the rising water.

Desperate, the downstream Village of Ruidoso called upon the Albuquerque District for assistance and found that the District's Readiness and Contingency Operations (RCO) Branch had anticipated their need. As a matter of fact, funding had already been requested and received from Division before the official state request came in. Under the PL 84-99 Advance Measures – Direct Assistance (Class 510) program, the Corps is able to assist communities threatened with imminent flooding potential in order to protect life, public facilities and infrastructure.

On Saturday, July 7, 15 District employees worked a long day identifying a vendor and awarding a contract for two additional pumps. The employees represented Resource Management, Emergency Management, Contracting, Program Management and Planning and Project Management.

Don Gallegos, the Albuquerque District's Natural Disaster Preparedness Program Manager, had already been down to the Little Bear Fire area twice to help coordinate flood control efforts as this year's monsoon set in. After the rain event of July 5, he was dispatched to oversee the installation of the pumps and to provide additional assistance along with Hydraulic Engineer Steve Boberg, Civil Engineer John Stages, Regulatory Specialist Eddie Paulsgrove

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and Chief of Geotechnical Engineering Shelley Ramos.

The two new pumps from Rain for Rent arrived on July 9, and the race was on to install them. The pumps had to be placed on level ground at the same elevation as the dam spillway, and land that fit the criteria was hard to come by on the steep slopes surrounding the lake. Ultimately, the pumps were situated on the north shore and nearly 1600 feet of piping had to be laid in the pouring rain for the two new pumps (and the three existing pumps) to take the water from the pump intake down to and across the dam crest to the spillway. As if to underscore the urgency of the situation, the lake rose another 18 inches during the night, despite the three pumps already active on site.

By the next evening, the first new pump was operational and, by the following day, the second was active, a day ahead of the contract schedule. Even with continued fouling of the pumps due to the large amount of debris in the water, water levels in the lake began to slowly drop. Quiet weather over the weekend of July 14 and 15 allowed water levels to fall to a little less than 10 feet below the spillway. By July 19, lake levels stood at 14.1 feet below the spillway, having dropped just under a foot per day with the addition of the Corps' pumps.

That same day, the contract for operation of the pumps was passed to the City of Alamo-gordo. "The District's swift action fulfilled a critical safety need until the City could enact longer term solutions," said Acting Chief of RCO Cheryl Buckel.

All is not roses, however, and no one is walking away just yet. It is still early in the monsoon season and, despite all the excitement so far, there has not really been a significant precipitation event over the burn scar.

"The goal of the pumping is to create as much space in Bonito Lake as we can to contain the next event. But if that event is large, the potential exists for a flood to go through the emergency spillway," said Gallegos.



Photo by Don Gallegos

*Pumps pull water to help lower Bonito Lake.*

Gallegos also points out that only a portion of the burn scar has drainages that enter into Bonito Lake or Bonito Creek above the lake. The remainder of the high and moderate severity burn slopes drain either into the Bonito Creek below the lake or into the adjacent Eagle Creek drainage above Alto, posing significant threats to downstream areas, including Alto Reservoir, which supplies water to the Village of Ruidoso.

Significant precipitation over any portion of the burn scar could have devastating consequences for downstream communities, nearby municipalities and Holloman Air Force Base.

Ultimately, the amount of assistance that can be rendered to fire-stricken communities by the Corps is limited by the nature of the authorities that govern assistance. Laws enabling Mississippi Basin communities to prepare for spring floods a month or more in advance don't always apply where the "inevitable big one" is less predictable in time, but comes with only an hour's warning. Yet, as large fires increase in size and frequency, this is the kind of flood emergency that is increasingly common for communities in and downstream of burned areas of the West.

"We're all committed to helping affected communities, but the way the authorities are written, we are limited in how we can help," said Hydraulic Engineer Stephen Scissons.



Photo by Ronnie Schelby

*United States Senator Tom Udall (top) and members of the District took a tour of Santa Clara Pueblo's burned canyon July 7. Udall stands next to a Corps' bulldozer that was destroyed during flooding following last year's Las Conchas Fire. Also pictured (bottom right) is Kris Schafer, chief of Project Management, and Walter Dasheno, governor of Santa Clara Pueblo.*

## What Can the Corps do? Wildfire Effects Mitigation Authorities Explained

The Corps has some limited authority to address flood hazards within watersheds affected by wildfires.

Under Public Law 84-99, the Corps can provide emergency assistance during flood events. However, Corps resources can only be requested by a state emergency management agency or by Tribal governments and can only occur once state, Tribal and local governments have committed all available resources (i.e., workforce, supplies, equipment, funds, National Guard assets, etc.). Activities are limited to the protection of life and the protection of public facilities

or infrastructure in imminent danger of flooding, and the law specifically excludes assistance to individual homeowners and businesses, including agricultural property.

The Corps' emergency assistance is intended, by law, to be temporary in order to meet immediate threats. It is not intended to provide permanent solutions to flooding problems. Categories of emergency assistance permitted under Public Law 84-99 include: **Emergency Preparedness and Planning (Technical Assistance) Activities:** The Corps can provide technical assistance to state and Tribal governments for emergency preparedness

and planning activities.

Assistance is intended for state and local agencies to develop contingency plans, evacuation plans, and exercises to gain preparedness.

### **Post-Flood Response:**

Following a flood event, but prior to a Presidential declaration pursuant to the Stafford Act, the Corps may provide Post-Flood Response assistance. Post-Flood Response activities are limited to actions necessary to save lives and protect public facilities, and residential or commercial developments. The assistance

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can include clearance of debris from transportation routes, critical infrastructure and water courses when it is required to prevent loss of life or significant damage to public property.

**Advance Measures:** The Corps may build Advance Measures flood damage reduction projects on a case-by-case basis. Specific areas that have been impacted by forest fires leaving denuded terrains will be considered based on National Weather Service forecasted rainfall models and expected impacts to life and improved property.

The Corps may perform Advance Measures prior to flooding or flood fighting activities to protect against and mitigate loss of life and significant damages to urban areas, public facilities, and/or critical infrastructure.

**Flood Risk Evaluation Prior to Flooding: Flood Risk Management Program**

**(FRMP):** The Corps established the National Flood Risk Management Program in May 2006 for the purpose of integrating and synchronizing the agency's flood risk management programs and activities, both internally and with counterpart activities of the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, other federal agencies, State organizations, and regional and local agencies. Specific goals of the

program include: reduce flood risk prior to an event through planning, review of existing flood risk information, review and update flood information after a wildfire or change to the watershed, create current and accurate flood risk information, identify and assess flood hazards posed by aging or damaged flood control infrastructure, and improve public awareness and comprehension of flood hazards and risk.

Upon request, program services are provided to state, regional and local governments, Indian tribes and other non-federal agencies without charge. Program services can also be utilized by other federal agencies and the private sector on a 100 percent cost recovery basis.

**Regulatory Program**

**Authorities:** Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, a permit is required from the Corps for activities involving discharge of fill materials into waters of the United States or the redistribution of rocks, gravel and sediments already in the water. This requirement is not waived in emergency situations. Corps regulations at 33 CFR 325.2(e)(4) define an emergency as a situation that "...would result in an unacceptable hazard to life, a significant loss of property or an immediate, unforeseen and significant economic hardship..." Projects associated with emergency and disaster response situations will receive

priority review and expedited response. Potential responses include informing the applicant that a permit is not required for the proposed work, that the project meets the terms and conditions of an issued general permit, or that an individual permit is required. The first two responses can occur within one to three days, if necessary to respond to an emergency.

Using emergency processing procedures, the Corps can issue an individual permit in a week (normally requires two to four months). Determining which waters qualify as a water of the United States can be a complex determination. Any stream, including ephemeral channels, that connect to the larger tributary system, reservoirs and lakes on those streams and wetlands adjacent to the above waters are potentially waters of the United States.

**Permanent Flood Protection Solutions:** The Corps has the authority to construct large-scale flood risk management projects, including dams and engineered levees, through the Civil Works Program. FRMP projects are cost-shared and require a non-Federal sponsor. Cost-sharing varies from feasibility phase (50/50 fed/non-fed) to construction phase (65/35 fed/non-fed). Smaller-scale projects may be constructed through the Corps' Continuing Authorities Program.

District Happenings

## Corps' Rain Gauges Contribute to Safe Monsoon Season

By Katiana Torres, Public Affairs

Last year, the Corps' Albuquerque District purchased and installed rain gauges to act as an early warning system in canyons heavily burned by the Las Conchas Fire, which, at the time, was the biggest fire in New Mexico history and torched upwards of 150,000 acres.

The gauge data provides information on rain falling on Bland, Cochiti, Medio, Sanchez, Capulin, Alamo, and Lummis canyons. The information also helps predict the likelihood of slope failures or landslides.

New Mexico's monsoon season normally produces small rainfall events, almost daily. As these short duration, high intensity rains fall on areas burned by fires, large floods may occur, particularly because the fire turned the soil to a water repellent state. The hydrophobic soil causes the rain to run off the canyons and collect all types of debris in the process. The lack of vegetation, or the waxy remains of melted vegetation, exacerbates the problem.

The gauges, called tipping bucket gauges, have a small bucket resting atop the gauge that collects water. When enough rainwater enters the bucket (0.01 inch), an arm rocks and keeps a tally of the total rainfall. In this way, the gauges monitor precipitation.

For the most part, the gauges are located in rugged terrain full of steep slopes with little vegetation. For one of the gauges, it is a six-mile hike from the closest road.

At nearby Cochiti Dam and Reservoir, a large earthen embankment dam which helps to control the amount of water released downstream to the Rio Grande, District employees use the information to estimate the potential amount of inflow to the reservoir.

Excessive rain during a short period triggers text message alerts. These text alerts are received by the District and organizations such



*The tipping bucket rain gauge the Corps installed in Peralta Canyon is shown here. The gauge reports local precipitation amounts.*

as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pueblo de Cochiti, USGS, National Weather Service and the Forest Service. The alert system is activated when one of the gauges measures a quarter of an inch of rain in fifteen minutes. When rain falls at this increment flash flooding is expected, so alerts notify emergency responders and allow them to determine if evacuations are necessary.

District Civil Engineer Carlos Aragon said, "One of the limitations [of rain gauges] is that they are only able to measure the rainfall falling directly over the gauge."

Regardless, the current rain gauges contribute data to the pool of information collected by local and federal agencies to help protect people. District employees are looking to improve the early warning system even further by adding video cameras and stream gauges, which will provide further insight into a storm event.

District Hydraulic Engineer Stephen Scissons said, "The rain gauges are a great tool for monitoring rain trends during monsoon seasons and help to provide accurate safety measures."



# Step by Step — How the Corps Responds to Emergencies

*Public Law 84-99 dictates how the Corps will manage emergencies and provide flood-related technical assistance, as well as flood flight support to state and local governments.*

## Emergency Management

- Commander declares a flood emergency and activates the Emergency Operations Center
- Emergency Management Branch requests EOC Activation Funds
- An emergency event is created in ENGLink (a computer program that tracks events)
- EOC gathers data for situation reports
- EOC coordinates emergency response actions

## Loan of Flood Fighting Materials

- State requests the loan of flood fight materials
- Requester signs a “replace in-kind” agreement
- State or tribal official picks up materials  
(If the president makes a disaster declaration, there is no requirement to replace materials)

## Technical Assistance

- Request for technical assistance comes (and clearly explains assistance required of Corps)
- EOC requests Technical Assistance Funds
- EOC identifies and deploys personnel

## Flood Fight

- Governor or representative makes a request
- EOC coordinates with agency to receive help
- EOC must verify that the state or tribal government has committed all available resources
- The water level is bank full or the weather service is predicting bank full, as Corps’ assistance ends when water is bank full
- State or tribal governments provide a description of the flood activities requested
- Corps must evaluate the request to determine if it is a flood fight activity and that the Corps can mobilize and complete the work while the threat is present
- Sponsoring state or tribal government must sign an agreement with the Corps
- EOC requests flood fight funds
- Corps hires contractors to execute work that will augment the best efforts of state and tribal governments



*District Civil Engineers Carlos Aragon (left) and John Stages deployed to a forested area near Colorado Springs, Colo., in mid-July to perform a flood risk assessment following the devastating Waldo Canyon Fire.*



*The Santa Clara Pueblo in New Mexico has four fishing ponds that became flood control structures, although they were never meant to be. The surrounding area was heavily burned by the Las Conchas Fire, and subsequent rains brought debris down the canyon and toward the Pueblo. The ponds caught much of the debris and were significantly damaged by the floods and are now considered hazards. The Pueblo has requested technical assistance from the Corps for the myriad problems they are facing, which includes the consideration of a controlled breach of the ponds.*



## Fish Rescue to Reduce Impact when Basin Drained

A small team from the District and the New Mexico Department of Game & Fish went to the Corps' Conchas Lake June 21 to conduct a fish rescue in the lake's stilling basin. The rescue was conducted in anticipation of draining the stilling basin this summer for an inspection of

the dam by the District's Operations Division.

The team included District Fisheries Biologist Michael Porter, biology student Erica Quinn (working in the Environmental Resources Section as part of the Student Temporary Employment Program) and Game & Fish

Fisheries Biologists Casey Harthorn and Eric Frey. The biologists felt the effort was worthwhile to reduce the impact to aquatic life when the draining takes place.

All fish (10 largemouth bass and 50 sunfish) were released near the marina at Conchas Lake the same day.

## Ranger Converses with Kids

Children from the Pajarito Environmental Education Center in Los Alamos, N.M., visited the Corps' Abiquiu Lake project June 7 to learn about environmental issues affecting the lake and watershed. Park Ranger Austin Kuhlman led a discussion with the group, which included about 30 people.

The Abiquiu staff loaned lifejackets to the children for swimming in the lake. They also gave them water bottle "koozies" that look like a small life jacket. Ranger Kuhlman said, "I've seen the koozies around town on stuffed animals and being worn as gloves."

Following the visit, the group's coordinator wrote an email to the District explaining that



Ranger Kuhlman is talented, not only in his breadth of knowledge but also in his ability to engage with children and bring about discussion on important topics.



## West Ramp Areas of Base Protected From New Station

By Kristen Skopeck, Public Affairs

**F**ire fighters at Holloman Air Force Base, six miles west of Alamogordo, N.M., are settling into a new crash and fire rescue station recently constructed through a contract between the Corps and Anthony & Gordon Construction Co, Inc.

Serving the west ramp areas of Holloman, the new station was completed June 13 at a cost of nearly \$6.5 million.

“The project was constructed and completed without any significant issues because of the work and cooperation of a very good construction contractor,” said Robert Reynolds, acting office engineer in the Holloman Resident Office. “The Air Force requested changes that extended the contract performance period about a month; otherwise, the contractor would have finished the project early.”

Key individuals who contributed to the successful completion of the project include:



Photos courtesy of Robert Reynolds

*The nearly 20,000 square foot building has 10 equipment bays, fireman living quarters, crew chief living area, fully equipped kitchen, weight room with sauna and a parking lot with spaces for low-emission vehicles and bicycles.*

Corps’ Project Engineer Ron Niemi, Quality Assurance Representative Tom Flanigan, Air Force Project Manager Stan Rymarowicz and fire department customer Rick Widmark. Interestingly, the

Corps’ involvement is not over, as “demolition of the old crash and fire rescue station is pending a contract award by the District, and this work should take about eight months,” Reynolds said.

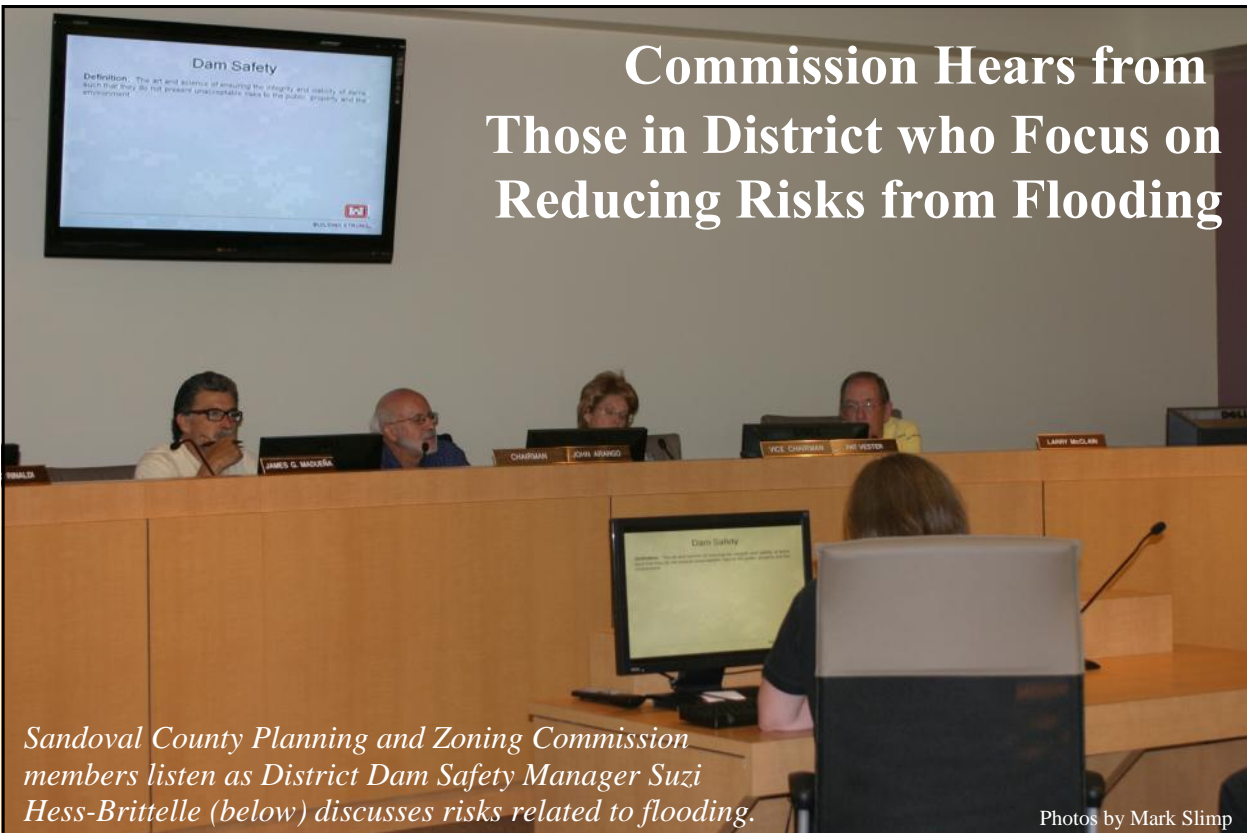
## August is Antiterrorism Awareness Month

*Chief of Security Master Sgt. Bernie Lujan reminds everyone during Antiterrorism month that terrorists depend on us!*

*He offers a number of proven security techniques to limit opportunities to be targeted. **Be Prepared for the Unexpected**—Look for tampering. Look under and around your vehicle. At all times, keep your doors locked and windows rolled up. Alter routes and avoid choke*

*points. Alternate parking places. Plan safe locations along your route. **Guard Information About Yourself** - Avoid car markings that identify you as DoD personnel. Instruct family not to provide strangers with information about you. Be cautious about giving out information. You are the first line of defense against terrorism. Be aware of your surroundings, and report anything suspicious!*





## Commission Hears from Those in District who Focus on Reducing Risks from Flooding

*Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission members listen as District Dam Safety Manager Suzi Hess-Brittelle (below) discusses risks related to flooding.*

Photos by Mark Slimp



The Emergency Manager for Sandoval County, N.M., Assistant Fire Chief David Bervin, approached the District to provide a presentation to the county's Planning and Zoning Commission about Cochiti Dam. Bervin is a copyholder of the Cochiti and Jemez Canyon Dam Emergency Action Plans.

Members of the District attended the Commission's meeting June 28 and took a

multi-disciplinary approach for providing information about Cochiti Dam and more.

"Presentations were prepared from the District's subject matter experts from all programs that interact on behalf of the public safety to reduce risks related to flooding on the Rio Grande system," said Dam Safety Program Manager Suzi Hess-Brittelle.

Besides Hess-Brittelle, information was contributed by Reservoir Control Branch's Ryan Gronewold, Readiness & Contingency Operation's Cheryl Buckel, Regulatory Division's Chris Parrish, Flood Risk Management Program's Tamara Massong and Chief of Engineering and Construction John Moreno.

"Commission members were highly engaged in all presentations and asked questions throughout," Hess-Brittelle said. "After the meeting was adjourned, Commission members thanked presenters and asked if members of the District could come back in the future to present information on levee safety."



## District's Small Business Deputy Speaks to SAME

The Albuquerque Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) invited Daniel Curado, District Deputy for Small Business, to be the speaker at their meeting July 11.

Curado talked about the Corps' Small Business Program and how to conduct business with the District. Additionally, he discussed the role and responsibilities of the Small Business Specialist, how the District buys things, different set asides available to small businesses and the District's small business goals for fiscal years 2012 and 2013.

"The presentation was mainly focused on helping small businesses better understand our mission and the overall District program, as well as how to position themselves to pursue contracting opportunities," Curado said. "Although the briefing was geared

towards small businesses in general, it also gave large businesses a better understanding of the importance of our Small Business Program and an overall outlook on fiscal year 2012 and 2013 contracting opportunities."



Photo courtesy of Daniel Curado

## Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army Visits Albuquerque

The District was visited July 11 by Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) Terrence C. "Rock" Salt. Salt is the

principal policy and legislative advisor to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and assists the Assistant Secretary in providing

policy and performance oversight for the Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works directorate. He also serves as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Legislation. In both these capacities he provides direction for the Army Civil Works legislative program, the development and articulation of the Department of the Army's policies affecting Civil Works activities and is responsible for the coordination of the Army's policies and practices in support of the Clean Water Act, the Rivers and Harbors Act and the related regulatory programs. During the visit, Salt was taken to see environmental restoration projects.



Photo by Ronnie Schelby

District Biologist Ondrea Hummel explains work to restore habitat in the Middle Rio Grande Bosque.

## Rio Grande Study on Conservation Options Complete

*Interior Department news release, July 11*

Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar officially unveiled the results of a six-month study by local community stakeholders on conservation efforts and the future of the Rio Grande that will help achieve increased river access and opportunities for outdoor recreation as part of President Obama's America's Great Outdoors initiative July 11.

While in Albuquerque in January 2012, Salazar appointed the Secretary's Committee for the Middle Rio Grande Conservation Initiative and charged it with developing recommendations to achieve the objectives of the President's America's Great Outdoors initiative by enhancing conservation, recreation and education in the Middle Rio Grande. As part of the effort, the committee conducted numerous public meetings, consulted with public and private organizations and sought input from the general public.

"The Rio Grande is a treasure for New Mexico, serving as an economic engine for local communities and a source of heritage," said Salazar. "Today's meeting is important as we come together as a community to think about how best to protect, preserve and promote the Rio Grande for future generations."

The committee's report, *A Citizen's Report: Strengthening Our Heritage in the Middle Rio Grande*, is at: [www.middleriogrande.com](http://www.middleriogrande.com). Click on the Middle Rio Grande conservation initiative icon.

"The report documents the strong partnerships that already exist in this area and high-



*Secretary Ken Salazar spoke at a town hall-like forum to relate recommendations from the report and to provide updates on ongoing initiatives. One of the recommendations is the purchase of Price's Dairy, part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's proposed Middle Rio Grande National Wildlife Refuge.*

lights additional opportunities for conservation, recreation and education to further strengthen the Rio Grande. This is exactly the kind of locally-driven, landscape level conservation effort that is the cornerstone of President Obama's America's Great Outdoors initiative," said Salazar. "It will take a strong commitment from the community to make this work, but we have a great foundation from which to ensure the Rio Grande continues to be the lifeblood of local economies."

The Monday before Salazar's visit to Albuquerque, he released a report that found the economic activities of the Department contributed \$385 billion to the U.S. economy and supported more than 2 million jobs in 2011. DOI activities contributed \$18.45 billion to New Mexico's economy in 2011 and supported 113,402 jobs in fields ranging from energy and mineral development to tourism and outdoor recreation. That report also discussed the economic importance of increasing recreational opportunities on the Rio Grande.





## Peer Supporters Stand Ready to Assist Employees

By Katiana Torres, Public Affairs

For the past eight years, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been providing emotional first aid to employees through the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) program. CISM began in the Southwestern Division after employees started having adverse reactions following several instances of people drowning at local Corps' projects.

Albuquerque District employees Beverly Noel, Valerie Mavis and Kelly Allen are peer supporters in the CISM program for South Pacific Division. Noel, who is the District's chief of Technical Support Section, Lake Operations Branch, describes the response team as a "band-aid," since they "help those who have experienced trauma to recognize their feelings and refocus in order to get back on their feet." She said talking about trauma with peer supporters can reduce the amount of employee anxiety and sick leave.

"CISM helps Corps employees who have experienced an event such as a line of duty death or injury, employee suicide, natural disaster or other trauma," she continued.

Through stress education, confidential on-scene group or one-on-one interventions, post-visit follow-ups and referrals to the Employee Assistance Program, the CISM team provides

emotional first aid that is beneficial to those experiencing stress brought on by trauma.

People requesting support from CISM are everywhere, and the three members from Albuquerque, at times, travel outside the region to deliver aid. Mavis, a Natural Resources Specialist and recent transplant to the District from San Francisco District, was chosen to deploy for an incident in Nashville, Tenn., in late July.

Peer supporters must be willing to deploy at a moment's notice, endure emotionally and physically draining situations and be good listeners. However, the team members in Albuquerque all agree the work is rewarding and satisfying and allows them to support others in a meaningful way.

### Peer Supporter Tips

- Listen carefully.
- Spend time with the traumatized person.
- Offer assistance and a listening ear, even if the person has not asked for help.
- Reassure the person they are safe.
- Help with everyday tasks like cleaning, cooking and caring for the person's family.
- Give the person private time.
- Don't take their anger/feelings personally.

# New Military Faces in the District

The District's new Deputy Commander, Major Gary S. Bonham, was born in Reno, Nev. His last assignment was as the executive officer for the 84th Engineer Battalion in Hawaii.

Major Bonham graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Nevada, Reno where he was commissioned through the ROTC program as a second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers. He also holds a Master of Science in Geological Engineering from the University of Missouri-Rolla and a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College.

He and his family enjoy outdoor activities and are excited about the many opportunities available in the local and surrounding area.

Major Bonham said he is enthusiastic about joining the District team. He asks that when you see him around the District, introduce yourself and say hello.



**MAJ Bonham**



**CPT Deal**

You will find Captain John Deal in the Readiness and Contingency Operations section, where he is working on projects for the Strategic Integration Group. This is his first assignment with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Captain Deal has been in the military for 17 years, 11 years in the enlisted ranks and six years as an officer. He has a bachelor's degree in Occupational Education and a master's in Geological Engineering. As an engineer, he has been assigned to the 70th Engineer Battalion at Ft. Riley, Kan., from Sept 2006 to June 2008; the 2d Engineer Battalion at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., from July 2008 to April 2011; the Engineer Captains Career Course July 2011 to May 2012; and the Albuquerque District in June.

He enjoys camping, boating and doing outdoor activities with his family.



## Two Employees Selected for Leadership Opportunities

The District congratulates Mechanical Engineer Daniel Garcia who was selected for the Regional Leadership and Development Program (RLDP III) orchestrated by the South Pacific Division.

According to Training Coordinator Craig Lykins, Garcia expressed the desire to continue his leadership journey and earned the opportunity to expand upon his leadership potential by being a part of this program. "RLDP is a means for developing and enhancing leadership skills to better meet

the ever changing and challenging needs of the Corps," Lykins said. "Participation enhances and further develops leadership skills through training, self-development and an assigned project dealing with a division-level issue. This diversity will challenge and reward the class members with some of the best opportunities and experiences available in leadership development today."



Photos by Ronnie Schelby



South Pacific Division's Regional Training Coordinator, Allison Bremner Conn, recently announced the employees who will attend the 2012 Senior Leaders Conference in Little Rock, Ark., in August. District

Electrical Engineer Paul Cravens was among the few selected to attend.

"Outstanding team members have been selected by our senior leadership and represent some of the Division's finest talent to build the bench of the

next generation of Corps' leaders," Bremner Conn said.

In the photo (left to right) is Craven's mom, Elizabeth Cravens; Paul Cravens; his brother's wife, Melanie; and his brother Kent Cravens.



## Unexploded Ordnance

If you see UXO,  
**stop**, do not  
move closer  
**Never** transmit radio  
frequencies near UXO  
(two-way radio, citizens  
band radio, or cell phone)

**Never** touch, move,  
or disturb UXO

**Never** remove  
anything near UXO

**Call 911**  
and report UXO

**Avoid** any area  
where UXO  
is located



## Voting Guidelines

On June 19, the Department of Defense published a set of guidelines outlining what is allowed and what is restricted for active duty personnel and DoD civilians when it comes to participating in political activities. The memo states, "Generally, all members are prohibited from acting in any

manner that gives rise to the inference of approval or endorsement of candidates for political office by DoD or the U.S. military."

While the main intent of the document is to outline what political activities are authorized, the document also says how important it is for all DoD personnel to vote. For more: <http://tinyurl.com/c5bshlw>

## Quality Management System TRIVIA

It is time again for QMS Trivia for the month of August. Remember, the first three personnel who respond to [gregory.s.allen@usace.army.mil](mailto:gregory.s.allen@usace.army.mil) with the correct answers will receive Level 1 Corps Bucks to our Corps Store. Here's this month's questions:

- 1) Which USACE Directorate is responsible for QMS & Continuous Process Improvement?
- 2) What is QMS Operational Process 100?
- 3) What are the four search fields in Location Sensitive Search on the QMS SharePoint?
- 4) What is the QMS process number for the Real Estate Process for Right of Entry?
- 5) In the USACE Quality & Performance Improvement Framework, if we meet our Customer Requirements and Expectations it equals to Customer \_\_\_\_\_?

## Finance Corner



Did you know if one person in the District is late in meeting the deadline for time and attendance reporting, it could prevent the entire District from being paid? Also, supervisors must certify time based on end-of-month deadlines, otherwise we are not in compliance for labor costing. Each month, labor is to be accrued through the last day of the month. This requirement is found in ER 37-1-30 Ch 6 dated 15 SEP 2010. Accrual accounting ensures that the accounting records portray

an accurate and complete picture of revenues and expenses for a given accounting period and of the financial condition at the end of the period.

Did you know the option is offered by this District for an employee to enter their own time in CEFMS? It is up to your supervisor. Do you know who your Customer Service Representatives for Payroll/Labor are for this District? Frances Williams 342-3248, and Lisa Lopez (alternate) 342-3459.