



# RIP RAP

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

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The 2012 Cochiti Triathlon was held at Cochiti Lake July 29. See the story on page 12.

Photo by Ronnie Schelby



### US Army Corps of Engineers® Albuquerque District

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District Engineer,  
Lt. Col. Antoinette Gant

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## District has Two Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Winners

By Kristen Skoepck, Public Affairs

The Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Corporation's Great Minds in STEM 2012 HENAAC award winners include two District teammates: Arthur E. Maestas, chief, Geotechnical & Environmental Engineering Branch, in the category for Civil Engineer; and Carlos Felipe Salazar IV, chief, Construction Branch, one of two HENAAC

Luminaries. Both employees will be recognized at the Salute to STEM Military & Civilian Heroes Awards Dinner at Disney World in October.

"What an awesome accomplishment," said District Commander Lt. Col. Antoinette Gant. "The entire District is so proud of Art and Carlos and congratulates them on this achievement."

A press release from Great Minds in STEM™ announced that HENAAC has been recognizing award winners in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics for 24 years and that those selected are America's best and brightest engineers and scientists within the Hispanic community.

"Since I have young children, I've noticed a positive trend in the promotion of science, technology, engineering and math education, which



**Maestas**



**Salazar**

creates critical thinkers, increases science literacy and enables the next generation of innovators," Gant said. "Work in the Corps depends on employees having a solid knowledge base in STEM areas, so I recognize that the promotion of STEM is of dire importance to the sustainment of this organization."

In the United States, the U.S. Department of Labor estimates there will be more than 1.2 million job openings in STEM-related fields by 2018, but not enough people to fill them.

"With the HENAAC recognition there is a responsibility for Art and Carlos to mentor employees and students working with the Corps," Gant said. "And, as the leaders of tomorrow, it is important for today's youth to take an interest in STEM classes and careers."

*Abiquiu Lake Park Rangers gave an environmental presentation, dam tour and water safety class July 26 to students on the National Hispanic Environmental Council. The NHEC consists of the top, national Latino 16-19 year-old science and math students in the U.S. See the story on page 14.*

# Quick to Provide Regulatory Assistance!

By Elizabeth Lockyear, Public Affairs

## Regulatory Employees Rapidly Respond to Whitewater-Baldy Fire

The largest wildfire in New Mexico's history burned through an area of largely remote wilderness from May to July in southern New Mexico's Gila National Forest, leaving debris and a burn scar that will affect several small, remote communities for years. It was dubbed the "Whitewater-Baldy" Fire.

Multiple federal, state and local government entities including the Corps, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the N.M. Department of Transportation (NMDOT), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and county officials joined the effort to prevent and minimize a myriad of potential post-fire threats in the region.

The first phase, begun before the fire was fully contained, identified emergency stabilization projects to minimize further damage to life, property or natural resources. The USFS's Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team – composed of an interdisciplinary group of specialists – rapidly evaluated the affected area and used risk analysis to determine the probability and severity of threats. Then, they identified and prioritized projects for places most at risk.

Many of the high priority projects identified were in or near rivers, creeks and other drainage areas, which the Corps regulates under the authority of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Basically, the Corps reviews proposed projects and issues a permit, if needed, before any work can start in regulated waters. Some applications do not require permits. While the Corps won't waive permit requirements in emergency situations, they can be expedited. For the areas affected by the Whitewater-Baldy Fire, the projects received priority review and response. In a non-emergency situation, the permit process can take up to 45 days for general permit authorizations and four months for complex permits.

The District's Las Cruces Regulatory Office handles permit applications in 19 counties in West Texas and seven counties in Southern New Mexico, including Catron and Grant counties, the two most affected by the fire. Richard Gatewood, an environmental engineer, and Justin Riggs, a regulatory specialist, are the District's primary regulators who reviewed permit applications

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### Fast Fire Facts:

—The Baldy Fire, started May 9 and the Whitewater Fire, started May 16, merged May 23, forming the Whitewater-Baldy Complex Fire. (Lightening caused both).

—Strong winds of 40-50 mph accelerated the fire's burn area from an estimated 1,824 acres the evening of May 22 to more than 70,000 acres on May 24. It quickly became the largest wildfire in New Mexico history.

—The two counties most affected were Catron County, population 3,733, and Grant County, population 29,380. The total population of New Mexico is slightly over 2 million. Catron County, with 6,923 square miles, is New Mexico's largest county in land size, but the least populated.

—The fires burned primarily in the Gila Wilderness Area – steep, rugged and largely

remote terrain. Flame lengths up to 200 feet were observed as the fire burned through mixed conifer, ponderosa pine and pinion juniper.

—As of July 23, with the fire 95 percent contained, more than 297,845 acres had burned, which eclipsed 2011's Las Conchas Fire (156,593 acres). But, it was far from the largest U.S. fire, since several have burned in the millions of acres.



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**Nationwide General Permits authorize categories of activities that result in minimal individual and cumulative impacts to the aquatic and riparian environment.**

related to the White-water-Baldy Fire.

Gatewood and Riggs said that of all the categories of Nationwide General Permits the Corps issues, they primarily issued three types – permits 3, 13 and 37. Permit 3 covers structure maintenance, permit 13 covers bank stabilization activities necessary for erosion prevention and permit 37 covers emergency watershed protection and rehabilitation work done by, or funded by, the NRCS, USFS and the Fish and Wildlife Service.

“Customer service is an action, not a noun,” Gatewood said, explaining how he and Riggs approach working with the communities affected by the fire. Gatewood said his goal was a three to five day response for these permit applications.

He and Riggs spent significant time reviewing and evaluating applications so work could be done in a timely manner and ahead of the monsoon season. The region receives approximately 15 to 16 inches of rain a year and much of that falls during the monsoons from mid-July through October. The regulators knew that even a small rain event over the burned area can bring lots of water and debris downstream, causing flooding.

At one project, the regulators received applications for emergency repair of levees. They issued permits within two to three days, and the work was done just in time. The night after it was completed, flood flows came down, but the levees held. “Residents credited the Corps’ efforts as having helped save their homes and properties



Photo by Chris Ader, USFS

*Smokey’s sign is surrounded by fire in a photo of the Whitewater-Baldy fire taken by Chris Ader from Three Points Fire District in Tucson, Ariz.*

from being flooded,” Gatewood said.

Gatewood added that a resident who lives next to a levee told him that, once the levee work was completed, she slept her first peaceful night in 28 years, because she didn’t fear being flooded.

Darrel Allred is a community leader in the recovery effort and lives in Glenwood, N.M. He said that while the fire was not the fault of residents, they have to deal with the effects of it. Allred praised Gatewood and Riggs, who he said, “went out of their way” to help the community. This sentiment was echoed by other Glenwood residents during a meeting Aug. 14 with representatives from several government agencies to discuss the current situation. Allred and other residents also thanked the USFS and NMDOT employees for their hard work.

However, while many residents expressed their appreciation for the agencies, there was also frustration at what Glenwood resident Larry Blount called “bureaucratic foot dragging.”

Anthony Gutierrez, Grant County planning director, said it is usually “difficult going through the permitting process” for non-emergency restoration and maintenance projects. He added that the planning requirements are a time-consuming process, involving multiple agencies, and can cost

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so much there often isn't much money left for the actual project construction. This is especially difficult, he said, for local sponsors with limited funds and resources.

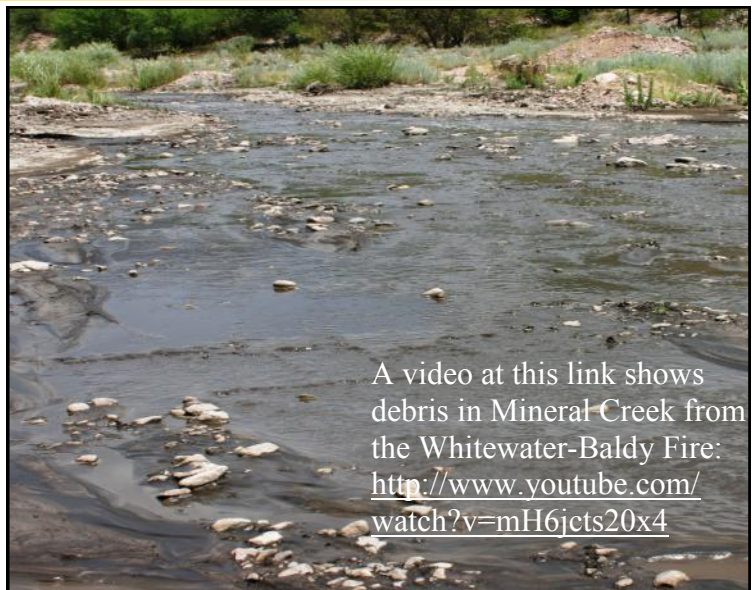
The other common complaint Gutierrez and others mentioned is vegetation growth in the river beds. The local sponsors, such as the county, are responsible for riverbed maintenance. However, different regulating agencies must approve maintenance work, so, he said, getting maintenance authorization is sometimes difficult to obtain, especially if endangered species have moved into the vegetation growth. Thus, in many places, minimal maintenance was done, resulting in more work after the fire.

Gatewood summed up what he said he sees as the main lessons learned from the Whitewater-Baldy Fire. "Across the board the lessons are, during the onset of an emergency, the Corps' actions must be swift and decisive, and the Corps must remain engaged and dedicated throughout the recovery period. During times of crisis, the Corps can provide leadership and focus its considerable expertise and resources to make a difference and add value to the response effort."



Photos by Elizabeth Lockyear

*Emergency work by the NMDOT removed 3-5 feet of sediment and debris to increase channel capacity under the Highway 180 Bridge over the Gila River. The sediment is seen piled in the background. The bridge is approximately 40 miles downstream from the Whitewater-Baldy Fire's burn area.*



A video at this link shows debris in Mineral Creek from the Whitewater-Baldy Fire:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mH6jcts20x4>

*Residents of Glenwood, N.M., have seen their wells begin to run dry after the fire. As rain washes ash and debris into streams and creeks, they turn black. The fire causes soil to become hydrophobic, repelling water and keeping it from percolating into the local aquifer.*





Photo courtesy of Will Trujillo

*The Holly Wildhorse Creek and Arkansas River levee in Holly, Colo., east of Lamar, Colo., is one of many levees in the District's area of operations. Its features include a railroad closure section with stop logs in place, levee with protected area to the right, and a highway bridge.*

## Levees Can Contribute to Flood Damage Reduction

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' national portfolio of levee systems is large (more than 2,500 systems totaling more than 14,700 miles), aging (most are 55+ years), incredibly beneficial to communities (more than 14 million people live and work behind them and they contributed to more than \$141 billion in damages prevented in 2011 alone), and relied upon to be the quiet sentinel against unpredictable flooding.

However, in addition to the physical condition of levee systems, risks are influenced by the dynamic natural environment (changing flood frequency and increasing ground subsidence), unacceptable vegetation and increased

development in and upstream of communities with levees.

The Corps' Levee Safety Program's mission is to work with others to assess, communicate and manage inundation risks to people, property and the environment resulting from potential breach or malfunction of components of levee systems.

The Levee Safety Program applies to all completed storm and flood damage reduction systems, including levees, channels, floodwalls, and hurricane and shore protection systems that 1) the Corps operates and maintains, 2) are federally authorized projects in the Inspection of Completed Works Program, and 3) are non-federal projects in the Rehabilitation and Inspection Program.

The Corps' Levee Safety Program emphasizes the role of levees in flood damage reduction to avoid loss of life and property damage. The program will help achieve three goals: 1) reduce risk and increase public safety through an informed public, empowered to take responsibility for its safety, 2) develop a clear national levee safety policy and standards, and 3) maintain a sustainable flood damage reduction system that meets public safety needs. The Albuquerque District's Levee Safety Program Manager is Will Trujillo, and questions can be directed to 505-342-3487.

## District Happenings

# District, UNM Use Physical Modeling to Improve Jemez Weir

By Elizabeth Lockyear, Public Affairs

When the Corps is tasked with designing and building a structure, how do the designers know if it will perform as intended? Since trial and error is a costly and uncertain method to determine future structure performance, engineers use models to reduce uncertainty and help ensure a structure's performance will be up to par.

Before a weir was constructed on the Jemez River upstream of Jemez Canyon Dam in 2003, numerical modeling was used, although it was "limited to the extent of data supplied," said Stephen Scissons, civil engineer in hydrology and hydraulics.

A weir is a low dam built across a river to raise the water level, divert the water, or control its flow. The Jemez weir was designed to stop erosion and the lowering of the local water table along the



Photo by Elizabeth Lockyear

*Looking upstream at the Jemez weir that was built in 2003.*

Jemez River, upstream of the former reservoir, behind Jemez Canyon Dam.

The dam, constructed in the 1950s, helps provide flood control for the Rio Grande near Albuquerque. In the 1980s, the Corps and the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission (NMISC) established a pool of water behind the dam to increase sediment retention.

However, in December of 2000, the NMISC discontinued providing the water for this pool, and all waters were released and the reservoir was emptied on Nov. 1, 2001. The riparian habitat that grew up around the pool was threatened with erosion and a lowering of the local water table. Thus, the weir was installed

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



*Jemez Canyon Dam*

Photo by Richard Banker



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to help mitigate these issues.

The river's behavior upstream of the weir has been a success, but downstream there has been excessive channel degradation and incision that could result in failure of the structure unless the channel reaches a stable condition or protection is added to the weir.

While building a physical model is unusual for the District, Supervisory Hydrologist Tamara Massong said the circumstances warranted having the District work with the Hydrology Lab at the University of New Mexico to gather data for modeling the structure to better understand and stabilize the weir and prevent further environmental changes on the Jemez.

"This particular model is assisting us with determining the deformation characteristics of the large rock apron just

downstream of the weir, so we know how to address it," Scissons said. "UNM has been used in the past; however, this is the first time that a mobile-bed, physical model has been made. It is just one example of how the District effectively leverages

our relationships in the professional community to solve complex problems for the nation."



Photos by Elizabeth Lockyear

*Upstream of the weir, the riverbed has a stable elevation.*

*Downstream, the channel has degraded leaving a large drop from the top of the apron to the bottom of the channel.*



*The physical model of the weir allows for test runs of potential stabilization solutions without the expense or manpower involved in physical construction at the actual site.*

## Charrettes Help Ensure Projects Come to Fruition

By Elizabeth Lockyear, Public Affairs

It's not a party game or a new type of cigarette; the technical term *charrette* (pronounced shuh-ret) can often be heard in the District's Design Branch and in Military and Interagency and International Services (IIS).

The modern use of the word *charrette* most likely has French origins in the word *charrette*, ("cart" or "chariot"). Student architects would commonly continue to work furiously, at the last minute, on their design presentations, even while riding in the school cart (*en charrette*) through the streets of Paris en route to submit projects to their professors. Thus, the term came to mean working up to deadline.

It might also derive from a second meaning. Centuries ago, when travel took long periods, a *charrette* referred to long carriage rides in which politicians and policy makers would be sequestered together in order to collaborate in solving problems over the duration of the trip.

The Corps most often uses charrettes at the beginning of the design process, not at the end, to meet with the customer and explore design options for a particular project. Or, according to Jim Marshall, an architect in the District's Design Branch, it's an intensive, hands-on meeting where "everything related to the project is laid-out for analysis, interpretation and scrutiny."

There are two main formats a charrette can take – the programming or planning charrette and the design charrette. They can be held in a single session or spread out among multiple sessions. The goal of both formats is to capture the vision, values and ideas of the customer.

"At the conclusion of a charrette, the participants should feel like they have a vision and a clear direction forward," Marshall said.

According to George Sims, a mechanical engineer in the District's Facilities Design



Photo by Ronnie Schelby

*In January, representatives from the District's El Paso Resident Office, Border Patrol and Mirador Enterprises (and subs) met for an important design charrette on a Border Patrol project.*

Section, "the programming or planning charrette is done before the project's justification documents are sent forward for congressional authorization and are very high level and focus on ensuring the overall scope is accurate and that the cost is correct in terms of the project scope."

Sims said that a design charrette is done when a facility design is just starting. At this point, the Corps meets with the customer because this is when the functional and operational needs of the facility are worked out to meet the customer's expectations.

The District's Engineering and Construction Division Chief, John Moreno, said that, "at the end of the charrette process, a presentation is made that demonstrates the Corps' initial understanding to the owner."

Moreno added that in the Military and IIS programs, the District is actively involved in planning charrettes and design charrettes. Two were held in April at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., with a regional Corps team from both Albuquerque and Sacramento districts meeting with the Air Force customers.

"In terms of success and keeping a project on task, this is typically the most important meeting conducted," Sims said.



## Kirtland to get New Nuclear Weapons Sustainment Center

By Kristen Skopeck, Public Affairs

District personnel are overseeing the design work on a project to build a new Nuclear Weapons Sustainment Center at Kirtland Air Force Base.

According to project specifications, the new facility will expand the existing mission's capability by providing a new, two-story, 55,000 square-foot building. The state of the art, highly-flexible facility will consolidate personnel into one location for increased efficiency and effective, timely communication. The new center will have extensive electronic infor-

mation systems and graphical displays to meet the mission requirements. It will unite the entire organization and maximize synergy among all the mission components.

According to Project Manager Connie Runyan, "the contract was awarded to KL House Construction through the Albuquerque District, and the construction period is 660 days for the design-build project." Runyan explained that a design-build project is one in which the design and construction services are contracted by a single entity

known as the design-construct or design-build contractor.

"In contrast to "design-bid-build," design-build relies on a single point of responsibility contract and is used to minimize risks for the project owner and to reduce the delivery schedule by over-lapping the design phase and construction phase of a project," Runyan said.

District and Air Force engineers met with the contractor for a design charrette the week of July 9, and the design is expected to be complete in late fall.

### Dear Albuquerque District Employees,

I wanted to take a minute to let you all know how pleased I was with the job done on our El Paso ICE facility re-roofing, roof repairs and HVAC upgrade project. I wanted to compliment you on a job well done.

Ruben Casas, El Paso Facility Manager, and his managers were very pleased with the completed work too. Yes; we had our issues during the construction period as most construction projects do. However; throughout the construction, you demonstrated your commitment to providing a quality product for us (ICE), paying attention to detail while coordinating all aspects of the work. I am a strong believer in giving credit where credit is due. I especially want to thank Kamal Otman and Art Aranda for their good work in the field.

Attached is a picture taken of some of the "team members" involved in this project that was taken during my site visit on July 26, 2012, during our final walk-through inspection on our completed project.

Again, thanks for a job well done.

Sincerely,

Darrell Jordan,  
Program Manager, U.S. Immigration and Customs  
Enforcement, Office of Facilities Administration



(L to R) Art Aranda (USACE), Kamal Otman (USACE), Tim Kreitingner (USACE), Darrell Jordan (ICE), Ruben Casas (ICE), and Roger Shields (USACE).





Photo by Craig Trinkle

## Snakes in the Southwest: Too Close for Comfort?

By Katiana Torres, Public Affairs

Daily work and play can be affected by our neighbors. While acknowledging this fact, consider those reptilian neighbors which may be lurking near us during outdoor excursions. Corps employees are often on location, visiting project sites, lakes, dams, military bases, etc. These outdoor activities can prove risky if snakes are not taken into consideration.

One of the Southwest's most notorious snake species is the rattlesnake. Rattlesnakes are a venomous snake, which means that their bite is potentially fatal.

The ability to identify a rattlesnake can prevent a lot of panic. First, look and listen for their signature rattle. The rattle, which sits at the tip of their tail, is a mechanism to scare away threats. Baby rattlesnakes, however, do not have rattles. This makes baby rattlesnakes some of the most dangerous of snakes. Second, look for a diamond shaped head, which is a trait shared by the snake family referred to as pit vipers. All pit vipers are venomous, so identifying the diamond shaped head will alert you to many different types of venomous

snakes (including the rattlesnake). A third identifying characteristic is vertical pupils, and a fourth is a slim neck with a heavy body that has a single row of scales on the underside of the tail. Ultimately, if you spot a snake, do not disturb it. Snakes are fearful of humans and will not readily approach a human.

While walking in the Bosque or on a mountainous trail, watch where you walk. Remember that snakes may be anywhere, including under logs, rocks, brush piles, or inside of abandoned buildings. Snakes will naturally seek out protection from the elements in covered and cool places.

While outside this summer, whether inspecting a project site for work or playing with family members, remember to share the environment with wildlife neighbors in a safe manner by keeping your distance.

If bitten by a snake, look at the bite to try to determine the snake type; venomous snakes will leave two distinct puncture wounds and non-venomous snakes may leave marks that resemble a scratch. Regardless, it is best to seek medical help as soon as possible.



## Sustainability Solutions for Special Wastes

*By Don Doran, Hazardous Waste Manager, Kirtland Air Force Base, and husband of Karen Doran, Equal Employment Opportunity Manager*

**C**ontributing to the Problem or Solution? — All of us encounter “special” wastes at some time or another. What we do with them can have a big impact on the environment!

Okay, compact fluorescent lamp (CFL) light bulb replacements have become “the way to go” for saving energy, but can you throw the used ones in the trash? Let’s put it this way, you won’t go to jail for putting your CFLs (or any household fluorescent tubes) in the trash. However, all CFLs and other fluorescent tubes have trace amounts of mercury and other potential contaminants that should not be released into the environment. Home Depot and other stores provide free, safe disposal and recycling of these items. Just look for the large green receptacle near the front of those stores. Also, industrial and commercial entities are required to follow a higher standard, ensuring that they safely dispose of Universal Waste, so many office buildings offer one-for-one trade-outs to supply a new tube and properly dispose of old ones.

**Tires** — Wow, where people will leave their old tires never ceases to amaze me. On the side of the road, vacant lots, behind buildings, in ditches and in waterways — all wrong! The best way is to let your tire dealer get rid of them when you

buy your new tires. They are required to do it lawfully and may charge you a buck or two to do it, but let them handle it. Don’t even try to find a proper way to dispose of them on your own; they’re a pain and nobody wants them.

**Auto batteries** — Just like the tires, let the vendor who sells you your new battery deal with the old one. These can be recycled, but must be safely drained and the acid properly disposed. It truly doesn’t belong on the ground out behind the garage.

Most home-use paints, cleaners, lubricants and so forth are what is termed household hazardous waste, or HHW, and are exempt from federal EPA and state hazardous waste regulations. That doesn’t mean they should be dumped on the ground, down the drain or sewer, or allowed to sit out in the shed until they are ruined or, worse yet, the container rusts out and leaks its contents onto the floor. Ugh, not healthy for you or the environment! If you can’t use it up, offer usable materials to someone who can, like a neighbor or a non-profit. Or, at least, turn them in during your community’s special waste collection day. Leaving

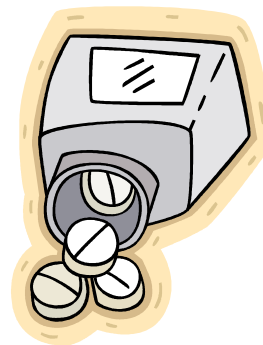


them sit around the house poses too many risks to children, pets and the environment.

**Excess or expired medicines** — Now here’s an ugly one! Please, please, please don’t flush them down the toilet. Many human medications contain all sorts of chemicals or hormones that should not be flushed down the drain.

We’ve all heard of the two-headed frogs and sterile fish and even the streams where most of the fish are female.

Be kind to the environment and take old prescription medications back to a pharmacy for disposal. Or, at the very least, pour loose pills into your trash can instead of flushing them.



## Cochiti Lake Hosts Second Annual Triathlon

By Ronnie Schelby, Public Affairs

Before dawn, in the wee hours of July 29, the swim beach at Cochiti Lake was already thriving with activity. It was the morning of the second annual (2012) Cochiti Triathlon. Approximately 260 participants, already dressed in wet suits, excitedly awaited the race's 7:00 a.m. start time.

The Cochiti Lake Triathlon, organized by Chasing 3 Race Productions, is an official triathlon, sanctioned by USA Triathlon, the national governing body for many types of sports and racing events and a federation member of the U.S. Olympic Committee. All participants in this triathlon were members of the USA Triathlon or needed a one-day pass in order to compete.

This was the second time the triathlon was held at Cochiti; the first time was in 2010. A race was scheduled for last year, but the Las Conchas Fire forced organizers to cancel the event.

According to Angie Kandalaft, organizer for Chasing 3 Race Productions, Cochiti is the pinnacle place for a triathlon in New Mexico.

"Cochiti is situated between Albuquerque and Santa Fe, which allows easy accessibility from both the north and south," she said. "The swim beach and boat ramp are contained areas that lead to open water, and this makes for a safe, controlled environment where every participant can excel."

Two simultaneous races occurred in the morning, the Olympic and the Sprint. Both races consisted of three legs: swimming, biking and running, only the lengths were different. The Olympic race was a swim just under one mile, a 40 kilometer bicycle ride and a 10 kilometer run. The Sprint was one-half the distances of the Olympic. There were approximately 130 participants in each race.

Kandalaft said the race went really well, and

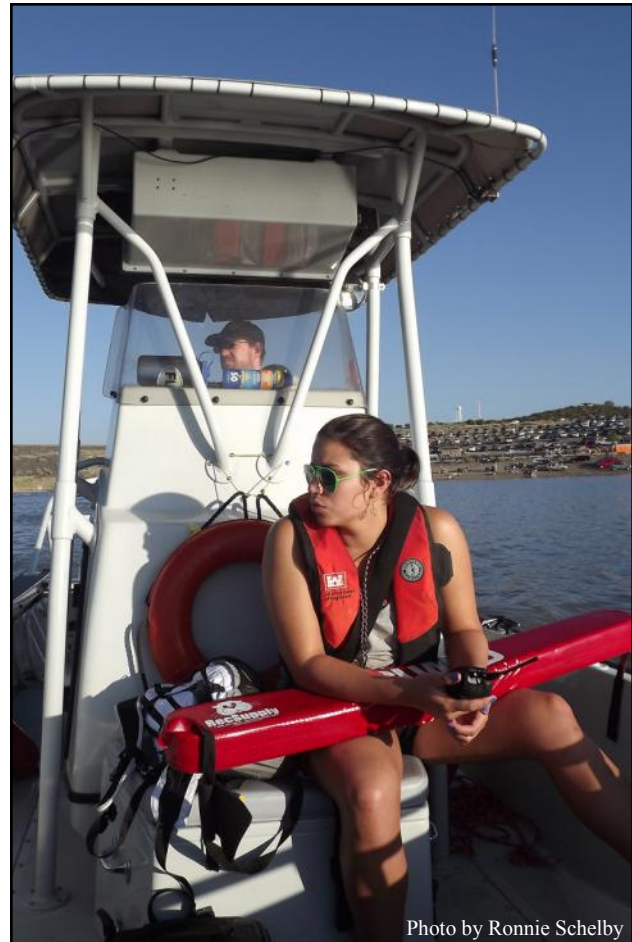


Photo by Ronnie Schelby

*Cochiti Park Ranger Chris Schooley (driving boat) and Kelly Burggraaf, a lifeguard from UNM, stay vigilant during the swimming leg of the Cochiti Triathlon.*

one of the main reasons was the coordination effort between Chasing 3 and a number of essential partners, especially the Corps of Engineers' team at Cochiti.

"Working with the Corps of Engineers folks was a fantastic experience; they were helpful, accommodating and ready to help wherever they were needed," Kandalaft said. "The race could not have happened without them."

Nicholas Parks, Cochiti park ranger, took the reins as the primary coordinator for the event, and the Corps' —Continued on next page





Photo by Ronnie Schelby

*Cochiti park rangers Chris Schooley (center) and Nicholas Parks direct race participants and answer questions about the race and the Corps' Cochiti Lake project.*

team was on the ground assisting people as early as 6:00 a.m. The Cochiti Project staff supported the race by performing their typical functions, such as boat patrolling, greeting visitors and monitoring the project's entrances.

Kandalraft said another important partnership was between Chasing 3 and Cochiti Pueblo.

"We felt it was of utmost importance to involve the pueblo, as the race embodies athleticism at its best," Kandalraft said. "We met with Phillip Quintana, governor of the Pueblo de Cochiti, and expressed how thankful all the participants were to be able to utilize their beautiful pueblo land."

Chasing 3 hired 17 pueblo members to assist with the race. Other essential collaborative partners included New Mexico Kayak Adventures, the Sandoval County Sheriff's Department, Motion Picture Medics, Set Comm Communications, lifeguards from the University of New Mexico and a myriad of other volunteers.

Interestingly, the winner of the Olympic race, Alex Willis, a 24-year-old, was just picked up by the Olympic training team for 2016. Originally from Leadville, Colo.,

Willis' participation in the Cochiti race, along with other previous races, gave him enough points to qualify for an invitation for the USA Triathlon race Aug. 20, which is where he was picked up for the Olympics team.

The next Cochiti Marathon is scheduled for July 28, 2013. Kandalraft believes the amount of participants will double by next year.

"As these types of races grow, one tends to see a more male-dominated event," she said. "The Olympic race is very male-dominated; however, the biggest growth for the Sprint is women within the 39-54 age range."

Kandalraft also hopes to include two children's open water events, so they can become involved early. She and her team are working with the City of Albuquerque to set up children's clinics, similar to the ones that were held for adults this past year at Cochiti Lake.

"We are looking forward to working again with the terrific Corps of Engineers team next year," she said.

**Race Logo**

## Minority Students Gain “Experience of a Lifetime”

By Katiana Torres, Public Affairs

The National Hispanic Environmental Council (NHEC) is a non-profit organization which provides advocacy, programs and policy work to fulfill its mission of “representing the interests of Latinos before federal, state and green-group decision-makers.” NHEC is based in Alexandria, Va., and is the only national Latino environmental organization in the country.

Annually, NHEC sponsors a national Minority Youth Environmental Training Institute. The institute is held for 11 days in Northern New Mexico and exposes minority youth to environmental opportunities within the Environmental Protection Agency, Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service. These organizations co-sponsor the institute and provide students with role models, normally minority employees, who have successful careers in environmental fields.

In early July 2012, I applied to and was accepted for the institute. This year, it was held at New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, N.M., and students stayed in the dormitories, except for two nights at the beautiful campsites along Abiqui Lake.

My journey with NHEC began July 20, as I joined students and instructors arriving from all over the country at the Albuquerque International Sunport. I met people arriving from Oregon, Maryland, California, New York,



*Katiana Torres ascends from a Kiva, an underground chamber used by Pueblos for religious rites, at the Pecos National Monument.*

Puerto Rico and Texas right off the bat. There were 29 students, four instructors and two student assistants, all completely unique in background, interests and manner. However, we had the commonality of being minorities, youth and interested in making a difference in the environment.

During the course of 11 days, we became a family. We overcame obstacles together, and we bonded throughout each trial.

I came to understand that most students in the institute live in urban areas of the country, such as Brooklyn, or Los Angeles, and they had never been exposed to the outdoors at such a magnitude. For my friends from

—Continued on next page



*Several students get stuck in the mud during a visit to the Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge.*



*From previous page—*

Puerto Rico, hiking at Pecos National Monument provided a first encounter with a hail storm. For a friend from Houston, seeing a deer for the first time in his life was a highlight of the experience.

While camping at Abiquiu Lake, I saw the Milky Way for the first time and more shooting stars in five minutes than I ever thought possible. Students also faced the challenge of setting up tents for the first time. Unfortunately, right before setting up our tents, the area was hit with a hard rain, so the area was a

muddy, soaked mess. We got through this challenge by reminding ourselves of the s'mores we would be consuming later. Also, many students suffered from altitude sickness, but they endured because they were truly passionate about the work we were doing.

Field studies included water quality testing, soil sampling, catching (and releasing) macro and micro organisms from riparian habitats and presenting all of our findings. Students also became familiar with equipment that many of us will go on to use in our professional lives. We used technology and software such as a surveying tripod, automatic level, total station, AutoCAD, GIS, Google Earth and multi-parameter water quality sensors.

Mentors from the federal agencies showed us how they applied these tools in their career, and it was interesting to learn that many of the role models came from backgrounds similar to the students. This factor put into perspective for many of us the idea that “if they can do it, so can we.” Some of the role models had traveled from as far as Puerto Rico to educate and encourage students. Role models told us jobs are now offered through the Pathways program (which is replacing the STEP and SCEP programs). Most importantly, role models gave



Photo courtesy of Katiana Torres

*The students examined organisms found in the Pecos River at the Greer Garson Ranch.*

students the confidence to apply for jobs and become minority leaders of tomorrow.

An inspirational person to me was Pamela Bingham. She operates her own consulting firm and talked to students about environmental justice. Environmental justice is what the EPA defines as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.” Pamela played an integral role in providing aid to Hurricane Katrina victims after the storm hit. Her lessons on environmental justice affected me deeply. As a matter of fact, I’m now interested in doing environmental justice advocacy work because of her lessons and NHEC.

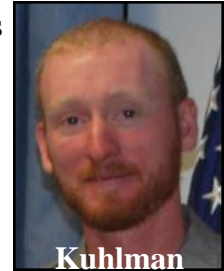
Roger Rivera, president of the organization, promised a life-changing experience, and I can proudly say that NHEC did change my life. I am inspired to give back to the community by engaging in environmental justice advocacy. The experiences I gained from “11 days of Learning and the Experience of a Lifetime” are ones I will take with me forever, and the NHEC class of 2012 has kept in touch and is planning a reunion next year in Puerto Rico.

# Kudos, Congrats, Good Job, Well Done!

Austin Kuhlman, a park ranger at Abiquiu Lake, was selected to be on the Natural Resource Management Park Ranger Community of Practice Advisory Board. The board is a cross-functional team of advisors aimed at supporting the ranger community, addressing many important safety and program issues and facilitating communication and education about the roles of the Corps' park ranger.

The board will undertake three critical tasks in fiscal years 2012 and 2013, as identified in the board's management plan: champion the

items provided to headquarters from Michigan State University's recommendations following its analysis of the Visitor Assistance Park Ranger and Manager surveys; lead the effort to select one primary and one alternate park ranger to go to the Pre-Command Course at HQ each June; and brief the Chief, Operations, Directorate of Civil Works, HQ, on program activities and progress.



*District Commander Lt. Col. Antoinette Gant gave the Oath of Office to three, new District employees Aug. 13. From left to right are: Christopher Lannutti, transportation technician; Megan Grande, senior administrative officer; and Merrie Cartwright, natural resource management specialist for lake operations. Welcome to the District, we're glad you're here.*





*The District's Lake Operations Technical Support staff works on dam safety, environmental stewardship, recreation, and shoreline management programs with the employees in lake offices in New Mexico and southern Colorado. The support staff includes (left to right): Tony Urquidez, Seyfollah Etemadi, Steve Thomas, Bev Noel-Chavez, Leverett Bogle. Seated (left to right): Kathleen Bennett and Kelly Allen.*

## **TECH TIPS** — Changing Blackberry Passwords on 8300s and Newer


1. Press the **Menu** button on the BlackBerry home screen. Scroll down to select the **Options** command (wrench icon).
  2. Select the **Password** command. Select **Change Password**.
  3. Type existing password in the text box and press enter. Type the new **8 character** password in the text box and press the enter key. Retype new password and press enter.
  4. **TO TEST** - Wait for the phone to go into lock mode. Press any key to bring up the "Enter Password" window. Press unlock and enter the new password to ensure it works.
- \*NOTE: Password must be 8 characters. At least one num.**



### — Changing Passwords on Older Models

1. In the device **Options**, click **Security Options**.
2. Click **General Settings**.
3. Press the **Menu** key.
4. Click **Change Password**. Type existing password in the text box and press the trackball. Type the new **8 character** password in the text box and press the trackball. Retype the new password and press the trackball.
5. Verify you have set a BlackBerry device password. On the Home screen or in the application list, click **Lock**. To unlock device, on the Lock screen, click the trackball. Click **Unlock**. Type your device password. Press the **Enter** key. (Eight characters and at least one number)

**Unexploded Ordnance**  
**Don't touch!**



If you find any object that resembles this, do not touch or move it. It's UXO and still could explode. **Even fragments are dangerous.** Note the location and **call 911.** Remember, if you **did not** drop it, **do not** pick it up!

**Recognize**  
**Retreat**  
**Report**

<https://www.denix.osd.mil/uxosafety>

## Feds Redesign Recreation.gov Web site

As part of the President's initiative to fuel the economy and create jobs by promoting travel and tourism, the administration announced a new design, improved navigation tools and expanded content for Recreation.gov, the interagency Web site that guides visitors to 90,000 sites on federal lands such as national parks, wildlife refuges, waterways, forests and recreation areas. The new site

at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) is said to be an initial step in a multi-year strategy to engage visitors with enhanced interactive content and more multimedia, mobile, trip-planning tools.

The 7 million visitors who use the Web site every year will be able to make reservations, see ready-made itineraries for destination cities and search for activities on an interactive map. The goal is to have 100 million visitors by 2021.

## Quality Management System TRIVIA

It is time again for QMS Trivia for the month of September. 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) What icon is used for the QMS SharePoint on your desktop?
- 2) What number series do Public Affairs processes fall within?
- 3) How do you submit comments on published or draft processes in the QMS SharePoint?
- 4) What is the definition of Continuous Process Improvement?
- 5) What is QMS Operational Process 310?

## Finance Corner

### Asset Management Part 1:

Did you know that the Corps of Engineers is the fourth largest federal landholding agency?

The Albuquerque District, alone, maintains and operates capital property within the District Office and our nine lakes and dams, to include assets such as land, dams, buildings, structures and equipment. Public law requires that all federal agencies have processes that exercise physical and financial control over property.

The Corps is responsible to

Congress, external auditors and the public for providing adequate controls and good stewardship. How do we define an asset? Capital property and equipment consists of long-lived assets of a fixed or permanent nature that are tangible, used in operations, are not held for sale in the ordinary course of business, have at least a two-year life expectancy and meet or exceed the established capitalization threshold of \$25,000. See the next Rip Rap for Part 2.