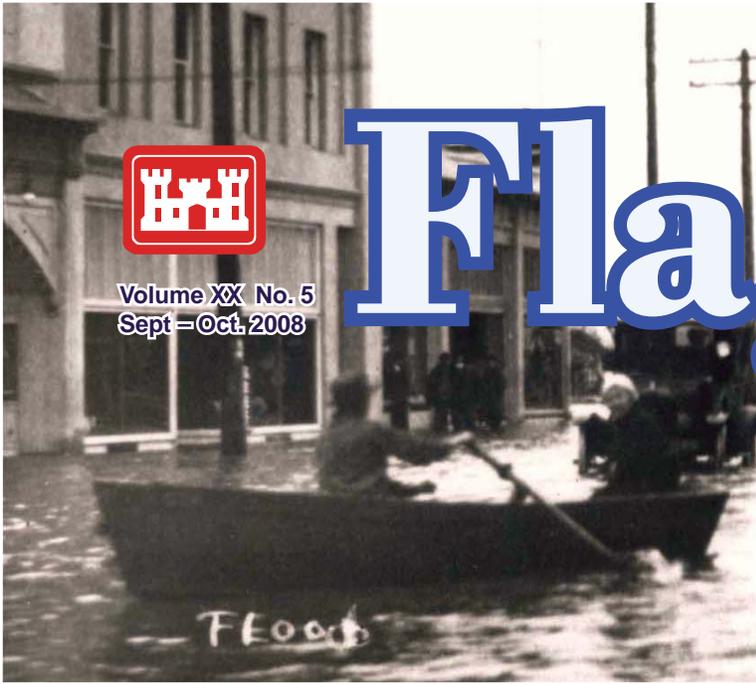




Volume XX No. 5
Sept - Oct, 2008

Flagship

SEATTLE DISTRICT



**Changing history
in Skagit Valley
Pages 6-7**

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Flagship is your Seattle District news and feature magazine, published bi-monthly. If you have news, suggestions for articles or ideas you think would be useful for **Flagship**, we'd like to hear from you. Send your ideas to the editor or call the Public Affairs Office at (206) 764-3750.



Cover: The Skagit Valley has been subjected to flooding throughout its settled history. The Seattle District is working diligently to assist the local stakeholders in the Skagit area to create a workable plan to provide a new level of flood risk management. (Casondra Brewster Photo Illustration)

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

Vol. XX

No. 5

Fiscal new year spotlights new goals, vision, work

Happy fiscal new year! Now that I've been here a few months, I've had a chance to get around and meet many of you, but I still have quite a few offices and job sites I want to visit.

In the many places that I have been, one thing remains constant – the passion for their jobs and the professionalism that the people I've met have shown.

That's what I'd been told to expect here, and you haven't disappointed!

When I held my July 28 town hall meeting with district employees I talked about three key goals in my vision for the Seattle District:

Provide service to the nation – including the members of the nation that may not have an advocate

Demonstrate integrity – integrity takes years to build up and can be lost in seconds

Be the standard bearers and standard setters for your profession – raise the bar, carry the flag

The district is on track and in sync with this vision, exemplified by your superb professionalism and mission accomplishment.

You support military and contingency operations through deploying to wherever we are needed — from New Orleans to Baghdad, or picking up extra work while others deploy, or through your messages of support to our deployed co-workers and welcoming them back upon their return.

You also are providing engineering expertise to deployed engineer units in Iraq and Afghanistan and to local communities during flooding in basins from the Kootenai to the Nooksack, and you are working with other agencies at all levels to prepare and exercise our emergency response plans.

You are delivering essential water resources across the northwest. You are working with our non-federal and federal partners every day to protect, restore and sustain our resources and our way of life.

You provide flood risk management at Mud Mountain Dam, water supply at Howard Hanson, and hydroelectric power at Libby, Albeni Falls and Chief Joseph dams. You protect functional wetlands across Washington state, restore solid levees across the district, and provide clear navigation channels from Willapa to Bellingham and through the Lake Washington Ship Canal.

You provide sustainable solutions to the armed forces and the nation, building facilities for airmen and Soldiers and their families, including designing LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified buildings and diverting waste during deconstruction at Fort Lewis.

You are improving the structural integrity and reducing the environmental impacts of our dams through projects like the pintle bearing repair at the Locks and flow deflector installation at Chief Joseph Dam.

You are cultivating a capable team through your continued personal and professional development, open communication with coworkers, colleagues and project partners, and through sharing your expertise and continuing to improve our processes and knowledge. You are managing our military property and district expenses, and making sure work gets done according to our plans and contracts.

Every day you provide service to the nation, and I thank you for all you are doing. I'm proud to be a part of this organization, and I am looking forward to a productive and rewarding three years here.

**Col. Anthony O. Wright**



This Flagship is dedicated to Patric "Mac" MacDonald, the ultimate team player, dive inspector, **Puget** crewmember, lineman on the lockwall, crane operator and yard crew foreman. With 36 years of federal service, he has done it all and is a credit to civil service. He is a positive, upbeat force at the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks and is frequently called on to support other operating projects. He can fix anything and does it with a smile almost hidden by his abundant moustache. All of his work is marked by his caring nature. Each day he roars off the project on his Harley, leaving it a better place.

Flagship

- Col. Anthony O. Wright, Commander
- Patricia Graesser, Chief, Public Affairs
- Casondra Brewster, Editor
- Dick Devlin, Contributor
- Nola Leyde, Contributor
- Andrea Takash, Contributor
- Elizabeth Townsell, Contributor

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Viewpoint

District poised to embrace diverse future



Steve Horne, EEO

diversity. No. We have lots to learn.

In fact, every one in the work force should make themselves aware about the changing demographics of the United States of America and how we as the Seattle District might prepare for the much anticipated "Silver Tsunami," a term coined by the Internet Media as 78 Million aging Baby Boomers — those born between 1946 and 1964 — begin to retire.

No matter if we're part of the "Silver Tsunami" or just entering our Corps career, each employee should know that by 2028, just 20 years from now, the 18 to 29 age group will have no racial or ethnic majority and eight years later the 30 to 44 age group will join that distinction.

If you're don't realize now the differences between the four generations in our workplace and how they are just that, differences, with no right or wrong. The things I hear being said today about new employees are similar to those said about you and I and our cohort group when we entered the workforce. Did you think "young" when I said new employee?

We all need to spend time exploring how Seattle District could align its recruitment and retention strategies to capitalize on women's continuing increase as science & engineering graduates. In 2005 more than 50 percent of biological sciences, 45 percent earth sciences, 33 percent physical sciences and 22 percent of engineering graduate students were women. Experts agree that the trend that seems to be growing!

A prime example of diversity at work in Seattle District is shown by the facts that

Normally during the autumn months — October and November — the Seattle District takes some time to observe diversity. That's not going to happen this year.

It's not because we've learned everything there is to know about

between the end of fiscal year 2003 and the end of fiscal year 2008, there was a two percent increase in women, and a one percent increase in minority (non-white) representation overall in our workforce.

Additionally, during fiscal year 2008, our district hired two individuals with a targeted disability which moved us closer (from 1.15 percent to 1.33 percent to the Equal Employment Opportunity Council's Federal Government's workforce goal of two percent individuals with targeted disabilities by the year 2010. Seattle District also hired and participated for the first time in the Workforce Recruitment Program for students with a disability.

But the change in timing (moving from November to January) of our observance does not minimize the importance of diversity, its relationship to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, or what could be done to help ensure the Corps is **Building Strong** into the 21st century.

Please be sure to join the EEO team and a diversified audience the week of Jan. 26, 2009, with a variety of topics being presented, a plethora of information via eNeWS and a display on what diversity really looks like in your Seattle District. — Steve Horne

Diversity is:

Differently

Innovative

Various

Experiences

Respecting

Status

Individual

Talent

YOU...



2008 Reaching Out! Raising Hope!

Contact your coordinator today!

Wetland bank soggy success

Frogs chirrup and birds rustle in the undergrowth hidden by thick young alders in a wetland laboratory of a sort in south Everett, Wash., while dignitaries and volunteers gather nearby to celebrate the creatures' soggy home.

The Paine Field mitigation bank was the first bank ever approved by the regulatory agencies in Washington state.

In April, regulatory agencies determined the bank sites had matured enough to be considered an ecological success, allowing the entire site to be made available for mitigation. Agency officials, community leaders and volunteers gathered Sept. 25 to celebrate the final approval.

"This bank was only possible through the collaborative efforts of the federal and state agencies, Snohomish County and the airport nearly a decade ago," said Col. Anthony Wright, commander of the Seattle District.

In 1996, Snohomish County began developing a wetland mitigation bank with the help of the Department of Ecology, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Aviation Administration. The district's Evan Lewis and Gail Terzi were the Corps' key players in the effort, along with a multi-agency team and Snohomish County Airport's Bill Lewallan, also known as the "Frogfather" by local volunteers.

As a regulatory agency, the Corps of Engineers must balance the need for development and protection of the environment. Mitigation banking is a product of that need for balance, providing wetland functions in advance of impacts, and improving the certainty of mitigation success.

The bank is actually two separate sites—Swanson and Narbeck—that provide 58 acres of wetlands and buffers—13 and 45 acres respectively. The sites provide storm and floodwater storage, wildlife habitat for small mammals, amphibians, and aquatic insects, environmental education with a shelter, nature trail, interpretive signs, and greenhouse for the public.

Built in 1998, this project came a decade before the federal government's mitigation rule encouraging mitigation banking was instituted this summer.



The EPA and Army Corps of Engineers issued new federal rules regarding mitigation in June 2008. In order to reduce risk and uncertainty and help ensure that the required compensation is provided for wetland impacts, the rule established a preference hierarchy for mitigation options. The most preferred option is mitigation bank credits, which are usually in place before the activity is permitted. However, the mitigation sequence (first avoid, then reduce, then mitigate impacts) has been retained in this rule.

"The future of wetland mitigation will look like the Paine Field bank," said Jay Manning, director of the Department of Ecology. "We can use this project as a model, applying the lessons learned from this banking approach to future projects throughout the state."

"Our region's wetlands and small streams are not only home to salmon and other threatened and endangered wildlife, but they also prevent flooding and protect us from storm damage," said Elin Miller, EPA's region 10 administrator. "Our new wetland mitigation rule will help ensure ecological success, while providing greater consistency and predictability for property owners and developers."

Thanks to Bill Lewallan, the Snohomish County Airports' deputy director, and a host of forward-thinking individuals at all levels of government, future county airport projects can tap into the bank's credits to offset wetland losses that cannot be avoided, and community members—people, birds, frogs and bugs—can enjoy a peaceful retreat in the heart of south Everett.

Editor's Note: The Army Corps of Engineers, Washington State Department of Ecology, U.S. EPA, and Snohomish County all contributed to this story



ABOVE: Krista Rave with the Environmental Protection Agency shares information about mitigation features with Everett Herald reporter Bill Sheets. LEFT: Seattle District Commander Col. Anthony Wright discusses mitigation banking with Snohomish County Airport director, Dave Waggoner, and Pete Mills, with Congressman Jay Inslee's Office. (Patricia Graesser Photos)

District meteorologist sees rivers in the sky, producing big floods on the ground

Forecasts indicate a winter with slightly warmer than normal temperatures and near normal rainfall. This is a neutral year — neither El Nino nor La Nina, for those of us in the Pacific Northwest. The National Weather Service does not see the record snow pack of last year. But intense flooding rains are more likely in these neutral years.

District meteorologist, Larry Schick, says these neutral years are more conducive to floods caused by the traditional Pineapple Express, which are a type of “atmospheric river.”

“It’s called atmospheric river because it is a long and narrow weather pattern — much like a river in the sky — which transport and produce huge amounts of moisture,” he said during a recent hydro-

lics and hydrology brownbag session.

He explained that these atmospheric rivers move moisture from the lower latitudes at no less than 30 miles per hour and could fill a pipe 100-yards wide. It is like a 3,000-mile long and 100-yard wide fire hose aimed directly along the North American West Coast.

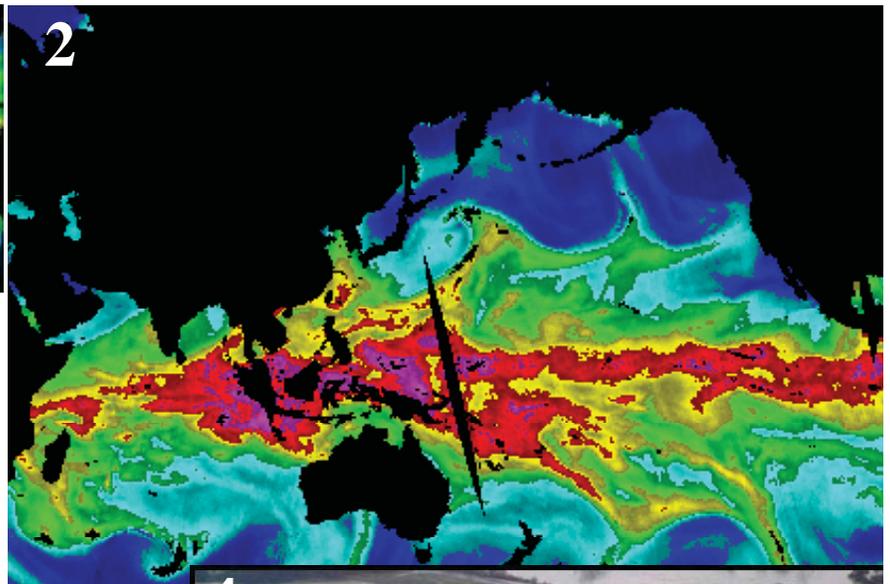
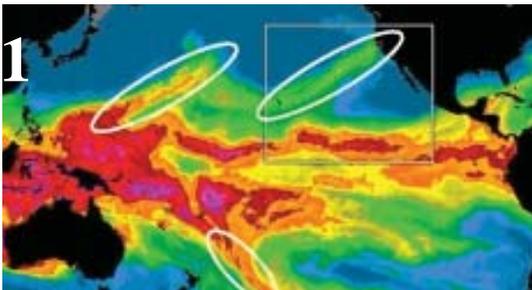
Schick has been studying the history of flooding in the river basins for which the district has responsibility. He’s looked as far back as the 1800s. He combined that research along with the latest technology to aim a spotlight on these important weather features. Then Schick matched peak annual flow with known atmospheric river patterns for the water years 1997 through 2007.

Most importantly he found that

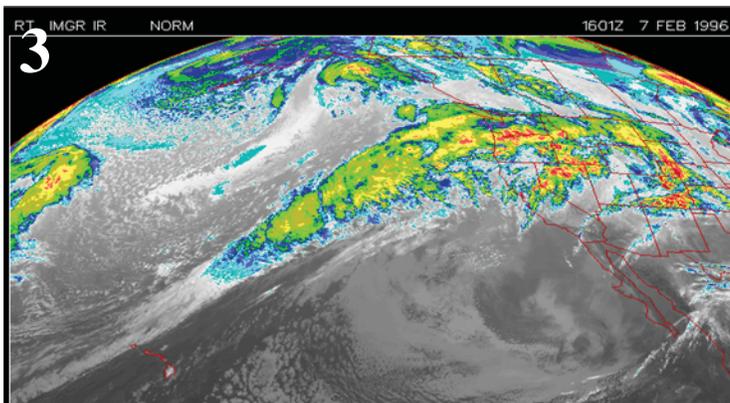
atmospheric rivers are perhaps the key to understanding West coast extreme precipitation. He believes his research shows that atmospheric river weather patterns were responsible for all major floods and most modest winter floods in Western Washington.

“Although they can occur year-round, we see them in the Northwest traditionally between October and March,” he said. “It’s easy to understand how any river basin would be overwhelmed when these ARs (Atmospheric Rivers) move 1.8 million cubic feet per second of warm moisture-laden precipitation.”

Continued on page 8



The series of photos below shows in sequence development of atmospheric rivers from the Pacific Ocean, then to full-fledged “rivers in the sky,” then as scene on weather-radar before it hits the North American West Coast and then finally the resulted flooding as shown in the Snoqualmie Valley in November 2006. (Extracted from Larry Schick’s *Impacts of Atmospheric Rivers on Flooding*)



Skagit Valley flood risk manage



The Seattle District flood team and local community members participate in the annual sandbagging exercise in Mount Vernon, Wash. (File photo)

As the 2008 flood season approached, Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers unveiled the long-awaited preliminary flood management measures for the Skagit River General Investigation Study.

With much anticipation, the district team presented the 37 measures to a standing-room-only crowd of more than 100 people in Mount Vernon, Wash., Aug. 18. "The Corps of Engineers has been involved in looking for potential flood control in Skagit County since at least the early 1920s," said Linda Smith, Seattle District's plan formulation section chief and project manager for the Skagit GI. "Over the past several decades, Congress authorized two projects, but due to various issues the projects were not built. The current GI started in 1997 when the district signed a Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement with Skagit County."

Since 1997, the project management team looked at a variety of issues — ranging from economics and environmental conditions to hydraulics and hydrology data. This detailed analysis aided in the establishment and screening of preliminary measures. These measures include any potential project that may reduce flooding in the Skagit River basin, which is located in northwestern Washington and encompasses 3,140 square miles.

"The measures analysis directs the team to focus on the design and study of successful solutions to flooding and environmental restoration for the basin as whole," Smith said.

Once the team completed the preliminary measures, they went to the public to ask for input and feedback on the measures. Specifically, the Corps and county wanted to hear what measures the public thought would work and which ones were not practical.

"The community members have lived in this area for generations. They know what social and cultural issues exist," Smith

Without the public's support, a flood control plan will not succeed." — Linda Smith, NWS

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ement planning moves ahead

said. "We really need the community's help to refine these measures into workable alternatives. Without the public's support, a flood control plan will not succeed."

The Corps and county looked at more than 100 potential measures before narrowing the list down to 37. The team organized the measures into distinct areas: modifications of existing non-federal dams (operational and structural changes), additional storage (non-dam related), bypass systems, levees, nonstructural, ring dikes and restoration. Smith said in some cases measures from one area would need to be combined with a measure in another area to provide the most benefits.

Despite the release of the preliminary measures, the team continues to work on examining each measure, especially to determine the benefits and costs.

"When we study measures, we conduct an economic analysis to see where we get the most benefits for the least cost," Smith said. "For the preliminary measures, we only examined the measures designed to protect up to a 100-year storm. Later on in the analysis, we will develop a cost curve that looks at measures designed to protect

st flooding from five-year to 500-year events." The cost e shows the optimum level of protection to achieve the big-benefit.

Measures designed to protect one area may have positive or negative effects on other areas. Seattle District economist Douglas Symes explained that when evaluating the benefits of a particular measure, the Corps looks at the effect of that measure on the entire study area, not just the area where the measure would be implemented.

The comment deadline was Sept. 30 and now the team plans to read every comment and provide responses. The team intends to use pertinent comments in refining the measures.

District Advisory Committee also continue to analyze the sures.

"The county has forwarded the measure report to its Flood Control District Advisory Committee for review and comment,"



TOP: Flood events, like this one in Sedro Woolley, Wash.; in 1909, continue to reek havoc across the Skagit River basin. Seattle District and Skagit County remain committed to developing the best flood protection plan. (File photo) **ABOVE:** The Seattle District team plans to evaluate debris management as one of the possible methods of reducing flood damage in the Skagit River basin. Debris buildup, as shown here at the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Bridge in Skagit County, Wash. limits flows of water and puts pressure on the bridge. (File photo)

said Jim Voetberg, the director/county engineer for Skagit County Public Works Department. "It will likely take a few months for the Advisory Committee and its subcommittees to review the measures and get back to the Board of County Commissioners with comments."

After Corps Headquarters approves the final measures, the team will combine the best measures into alternatives and a recommended plan. Smith said she anticipates presenting the final feasibility report to Congress in 2012, depending on funding. — Andrea Takash

District featured in Idaho Air Force Day

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers joined in Idaho's largest parade as part of Mountain Home's Air Force Appreciation Day celebration on Sept. 6. Thanks to the graphics and production expertise provided by the district's public affairs team, combined with a little light construction by the resident office, a superb public outreach display was crafted and driven down the streets of Mountain Home in front of an estimated 20,000 people.

Personnel and family members from the resident office took part in handing out candy to eager kids lining the streets while the primary message was conveyed to all: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, executing Mountain Home Air Force Base's most critical construction since 1943.

The district and resident office also supported the following air show at Mountain Home on Sept. 13 and 14. By staffing an information booth in amongst the static display aircraft, the Corps provided public outreach information to an estimated 80,000 people from throughout southwest Idaho. — *Photos and Report by Mark Slominski*



TOP: View of the parade route through Mountain Home, Idaho. ABOVE: Corps' Mountain Home Resident Office employees and family members showing off their corps (and Boise State) pride. LEFT: Resident office staff and families spreading the word about the district's military construction mission during the Air Force Appreciation Day parade.

Sky rivers

Considering that, he explained, major flooding can be caused solely by an atmospheric river without normal pre-existing flood conditions. In short, an atmospheric river can cause a major flood with no other contributing factor, like snow melt or moist soil conditions.

"Knowing this," Schick said, "could aid forecasters evaluating flood potential. When we see an atmospheric river approaching, we can perhaps incorporate that into our response."

He said the Pineapple Express



Larry Schick, meteorologist, sits at his weather-systems terminal. (Kayla Overton photo)

can cause big floods here in the Northwest, but other atmospheric rivers originate in the Western Pacific off Asia.

"Sometimes they are coming at us further west than the Hawaiian Islands — closer to Asia," he said. "They don't always have to get their moisture from the tropics."

"Clearly this needs further research," Schick said. "But, the evidence is there that these ARs can be pointed to as the root cause of winter flooding in Western Washington and perhaps all of the West Coast" — *Cassandra Brewster*

Continued from page 5

New contracting office

Special Projects Branch opens doors for customers and employees at Fort Lewis

In less than five years, Seattle District's Military Program more than doubled the dollar amount awarded for military projects — from \$250 million in fiscal year 2003 to nearly \$760 million in fiscal year 2008.

With this increased workload primarily affecting projects at Fort Lewis, Wash., Cheryl Anderson, chief of Seattle District's Contracting Division, developed a strategic move to address the needs of both customers and her employees.

"The workload has grown exponentially for the Small Projects Team and department of public works (DPW). The Military Branch used to award \$20 million in DPW contracts and \$30 million in small projects. Currently contract awards for both total approximately \$75 – \$100 million," Anderson said.

To address this growing contract work, Anderson established the Special Projects Branch at Fort Lewis.

"The establishment of the Special Projects Branch has been in the works for a while," Anderson said. "I placed Patty Ortiz, purchasing agent, and Gayle Hanson, contract specialist, in the area office in October 2007. But the branch wasn't official until Shannan Lewis came on board as the branch chief in June."

Even though the Special Projects Branch is still in its infancy stage, the staff hit the ground running and made a good impression on customers from the start.

"Once the Fort Lewis Team is fully staffed, I expect to experience a level of service unlike Public Works has had before," said Randall Hanna, deputy director of Fort Lewis' public works. "I can tell you that all of my engineers are very excited about this new level of service. Until full staffing arrives, Shannan and the Fort Lewis team continue to do the work of 10 with the staff of two."

Both Ortiz and Hanson agreed that the situation. They said the positive impact was evident at the end of the fiscal year and will continue to grow as the team focuses on establishing new policies and contract vehicles next year.

In addition to the positives for the end-of-the-year crunch, Lewis also explained the impact of being involved from start to finish of the project.

"DPW has wanted a dedicated presence at Fort Lewis for OMA (Operations and Maintenance Army) contracts for a long time," Lewis said. "With on-site employees, we can tackle issues right out front of the project. We are at the planning meetings and go to the project site, if necessary. Geoffrey Mueller, office of counsel, also is here to review contracts from a legal perspective and is a wonderful asset to the team."

In addition to tackling the growing number of contracts at Fort Lewis, Anderson also looked at two big-picture issues when setting up the new branch — the combining of McChord Air Force Base's Base Civil Engineer with Fort Lewis' DPW and recruitment and retention of contract specialists.

"Once McChord's Base Civil Engineer office completes the restructuring with Fort Lewis' DPW, I anticipate even more work," Anderson said. "When this happens, Seattle District will have the staff in place to absorb the work from McChord."

For recruitment and retention, Anderson explained most government agencies maintain a huge demand for contract specialists. She said the Special Projects Branch opens up a new pool of potential employees who want to work down at Fort Lewis.

"Not only does this office enable

me to hire a broader range of people, it also helps me retain the great employees I already have in the division," Anderson said. Hanson and

Ortiz concurred that working closer to home provides many benefits — both personally and professionally.

"I appreciate the fact that I was selected as being part of the team to establish the new contracting cell at Fort Lewis. It has been quite challenging at times; but also it has been rewarding to meet the customer's needs. It also has benefited me after returning from sick leave," Ortiz said. "It allowed me to be close to my doctors and closer to home."

Hanson also appreciates working for the new Special Projects Branch. "I love being here. I decided to take this position with the Corps because I was excited about setting up a new office and taking on new challenges. I believe we are making good progress, and I'm excited for the opportunity to make things even better next year."

Limited staffing presents the biggest challenge for the branch. Anderson explained that the abundance of contract work at Fort Lewis supports the need for more employees on the front line interfacing directly with the customers and contractors.

"We are affecting positive changes and will be able to do more when we staff up," Lewis said. "I believe we have made significant progress, but there is still a lot of work to do." — *Andrea Takash*



Patty Ortiz, purchasing agent, along with her fellow contract colleagues make progress with the new Special Projects Branch at Fort Lewis, Wash. (Andrea Takash Photo)

Around the district

Kudos

Seattle District's Chief of Engineering and Construction spent some time in Washington D.C. in early October. **Mark Ohlstrom**, a 28-year federal servant, was awarded the Association of the United States Army (AUSA)'s Sixth Region Exceptional Civilian Service Award at a luncheon attended by more than 400 people.



Mark Ohlstrom

He was nominated for his proven leadership in several headquarters functions undergoing significant nationally directed changes, including information technology, hazardous waste, design and engineering and construction. Also noted on the award was his service and leadership outside of his routine duties. In his volunteer capacities, Ohlstrom has been the leader of the district's leadership development program and works also with the Society of American Military Engineers as a co-chair for the Design Excellence Award Competition.

"Mark is a true team player who does his job in a way that makes the jobs of those around him easier," said Olton Swanson, deputy district engineer, project management. "His ability to 'see around the corner' allows him to be the type of leader who has the trust and confidence of staff not just in his organization, but throughout the district."

The award also highlights his involvement in Seattle's annual summer festival, Seafair, which he's been a part of since 1972.

Steve Wright recently returned from visiting his newly promoted daughter and former district employee, **Courtney Wright**. She is stationed in Pearl Harbor as an Intelligence Specialist. She has just been promoted to Petty Officer Second Class and is enrolled in Hawaii Pacific University working on her AA degree. She was nominated for Sailor of the Quarter in June.

Retirement

James (Jim) W. Clark, Chief, Military Branch, Planning, Programs, & Project Management Division, Military Programs Branch retired Sept. 3.

Eyland Washington, formerly Records Manager; most recently employed in Real Estate, worked for Seattle District for a decade. Washington remarked that he enjoyed "working on the A76 Performance Work Statement team while working as records manager in the Information Management Office." Washington also noted that he'd worked for about a decade as a Peace Corps Volunteer and as a United Nations Volunteer in the South Pacific.

Moving Forward

Alan Eastridge, Chief Joseph Dam, Iraq

Michael Baldaia, Chief Joseph Dam, Iraq

Glen Tauscher, Albeni Falls Dam, Afghanistan

Kathryn Carpenter, Environmental Management, Afghanistan

Sarasha Schmeets, Mud Mountain Dam, Afghanistan

Chris Borton, Real Estate, Iraq

Melinda Marquis, Records Information, Iraq

Michael Peterson, Libby Dam, Afghanistan

Rod Furby, Resource Management, Iraq

Connie Burris, Resource Management, Iraq

Roger Kohls, Northwest Area Office, Iraq

David Loi, Construction Assurance, Afghanistan

Jim Hilario, Northwest Area Office, Iraq

Anton Klein, Design Branch, Afghanistan

Vincent Daniels, Contracting, Iraq

Susan Newby, Contracting, Iraq

Julie McLeod, Emergency Management, Iraq

Mahon Good, Chief Joseph Dam, Iraq

Avril Jones, Design Branch, Iraq

Mark Roush, Small Business Office, Afghanistan

Su-Chen Chen, Project Services, Iraq

Kirt Silva, Libby Dam, Afghanistan

Daniel Miller, Contracting, Afghanistan

Linda Wright, Operations, Iraq

In Memory

Moses (Moe) Beerman, long time Seattle District graphic artist, died on Aug. 16. Services were held on his birthday, Sept. 29, at Fauntleroy Church UCC in West Seattle. Moe would have been 88 years old. Along with Beerman's service to the Corps, he also contributed to the community of Seattle. He was instrumental in the creation of the 11 murals that dot West Seattle. Former Corps' employee **Charles Tsukasa "Chuck" Kato**, passed away on Aug. 18. Chuck Kato worked in the Design Branch for many years in the 60's and 70's before moving to another government agency. He is remembered at Seattle District for his art work on special occasion cards. He worked on Samamish River and Libby Dam projects. Chuck was born in Seattle in 1933. In 1942, his family was sent to Minidoka Relocation Center in Hunt, Idaho. Back in Seattle after the war, Chuck graduated from Franklin High School. He joined the Army in 1953. After serving in the Army, Chuck attended the University of Washington and earned a degree in civil engineering.

Correction

In the July - August 2008 issue of the Flagship, **Felisha Talk** was incorrectly identified. She is correctly identified with the proper picture in this issue. The Flagship staff regrets the error and apologizes for any confusion. — *Compiled by Beth Townsell*



The Wright family pictured in Kaneohe Bay Hawaii at a burial-at-sea ceremony for Steve Wright's Father, who was stationed there in WWII. (L to R) Jorin, Steve and Linda Wright.

Welcome to the district family



Pete Jones
Gardener
Chittenden Locks



Gwendolyn Hannam
DA Intern Biologist
Technical Branch



Randy Dyson
Construction Control Rep.
Northwest Area Office



Aaron Jensen
Park Ranger
Chief Joseph Dam



Joel Fenolio
Hydraulic Engineer
Technical Branch



Jeremy Wong
Timekeeper
Project Management



Brandie Silkman
Admin. Support Clerk
Contracting



Michael Peele
Civil Engineer
Engineering & Construction



Stuart Cook
Chief of Operations
Electrical Engineer



Alexandra Little
Office Admin. Assistant
Executive Office



Anna Welland
Gardener
Chittenden Locks



James Van
Contract Specialist
Contracting



Virginia Ryan
Law Clerk
Office of Counsel



Ken Richards
Mechanical Engineer
Design Branch



Terry Borne
Civil Engineer
Northwest Area Office



Justin Jameson
Cadd Tech
Design Branch



Cynthia Hall
Budget Analyst
Operations Division



Richard Ulrich
Program Manager
Military Branch Chief



Donald Reid
Engineering Technician
Engineering



Kari Harrison
Soil Scientist
Regulatory



Pam Sanguinetti
Biologist
Regulatory



Diane Kameya
Accountant
Resource Management



Marcia Heer
Biologist
Project Management



Eugenio Bultedaob
Construction Control Rep
Northwest Area Office



Calvin Kameya
System Accountant
Resource Management



Faith Sandretzsky
Biological Sciences Tech
Environmental Resources



Dave Ah Quin
Construction Control Rep
Engineering & Construction



Felisha Talk
Support Assistant
Regulatory



Michelle Matte
Biologist
Project Management



Wanda Pedraza
Realty Specialist
Real Estate

Flagship is published bi-monthly. Let us know when you're retiring so we can feature you in our next Flagship. We also want to know about professional accomplishments, speaking engagements, wedding engagements, marriages, births and memorials. guest features are welcome, or if you just like to write or take pictures, we want to hear from you. Please contact casondra.brewster@us.army.mil or (206) 764-6958 for details on deadlines, photo requirements and article guidelines.

Public Affairs Office
 Seattle District (CENWS-PA)
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 4735 East Marginal Way South
 Seattle, WA 98134-2392

Postcards From the Front....



Mike Padilla, right, is at the halfway point of his deployment to Afghanistan. (Courtesy Photo)

Hi Everybody,

I have been extremely remiss in mailing status updates from Afghanistan. I was waiting for good photos of my projects that include me in the frame but they are hard to come by since I am usually the photographer. I've just sent what I have. I have been extremely busy, but I know so have all of you. We are working 12 hours, six days a week but only eight hours on Friday as a sort of "day off."

A lot has happened since I e-mailed in May. I got promoted to a GS-14 program manager (I came here as a GS-13) for the Support for Others Program. The "others" are U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of State, Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Outside Afghani-

stan, Counter-Narcotics Program, and Border Management Initiatives. I was also appointed acting roads program manager in the month interim before the new guy got here. Our new commander, Col. O'Donovan, and new deputy project manager, Kris Mullins, just arrived; so, I did plenty of program briefings as you can imagine. We have lots of funds to execute, and it can be pretty chaotic, but all we can do is try to use our talents to make things a little better.

The challenges here are mostly ones of security. For you contractors out there, imagine trying to execute a multi-million dollar contract when every night someone buries a bomb on the job site. The contractors do their best to keep making progress, but there are a lot of insurgent-related fatalities. Another challenge is the relative inexperience of Afghani contractors. After award of a contract we have to work with them intensely to keep moving forward. The end of the fiscal year causes problems because many of our partners wait to the last minute to ask us to execute funds before they expire on Sept. 30. There is a lot of parochialism here also. For example, I asked an Afghani customs official what features he wanted in a customs facility at the border with Iran, and he replied a fence between his customs people and the border police. They don't trust each other and they all want a piece of the pie. Another example, the Afghan Police keep showing up at one of our sites for counter-narcotics and telling our contractor to quit working. The police want the site for something else even though the Afghani government told us to build there. The police have lots of guns, so the contractors shut the job site down. Stuff like that is a daily occurrence here.

So far it has been a great experience and is very worthwhile. I am directly involved in building new schools, new roads, new hydroelectric facilities, etc. Some areas of Afghanistan have never had electricity before. This is a very poor country, but I think we are making it a little better.

~Mike Padilla

Editor's Note: When Padilla returns to the Seattle District he will be chief, Civil Projects Section, in Civil Programs and Projects Branch