



VOLUME XV, NO. 1  
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# Flagship

SEATTLE DISTRICT



## Helping Hands

Critters saved, released as Seahurst Seawall  
comes crashing down



# FLAGSHIP

Seattle District

## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Volume XV, No. 1

### Looking ahead

**Inside this issue:**

**Commander's Column** 2

**Change is coming; are you ready?** 3

**Strategy for safe passage** 4

**Seahurst Park seawall goes down** 5

**A fish tale** 6/7

**Modularity at Fort Lewis** 8

**Regionalization** 9

**Do you really want to retire?** 10

**Around the District/ What it's like to be a soldier?** 11

**Welcome to the District/ Global War on Terror deployee ceremony** 12

**“Faith is the strength by which a shattered world shall emerge into the light.”**  
- Helen Keller

I am not sure any of us could have envisioned a catastrophe on the scale that South Asia experienced the day after this past Christmas. Even as I write this article over two weeks later, the full impact has yet to be defined and won't likely be for some time. My Aunt Zelza lived in Seattle for over 30 years with much of that time spent on the water sailing. She used to warn me that “Mother Nature is a hanging judge.” To her, it was an important matter of fact and one I will never forget.

You may know that U.S. military forces, such as the P3 Navy aircraft, provided some of the earliest reports in South Asia, with many other military units continuing to steam in or fly to the hardest hit areas to provide needed support and aid. Recovering from natural or manmade disasters is where U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' employees play a key role, as we do for our own nation and have done in many parts of the world. Be proud that a number of you have already volunteered to deploy there, where your skills are desperately needed. Out of this horrific event has emerged many examples of great personal strength, heroic acts, selfless actions, warring factions putting aside their decades of differences for a period, and generous acts on a world scale never thought possible as aid pours into these devastated areas.

Corps employees supporting the Global War on Terrorism fol-

low world events too, while working hard to overcome the influence of an intolerant enemy whose reach and extent of possible manmade harm and devastation continues to grow. Every day, your actions and those of all Corps employees are making a difference in giving others a chance for a future.

Our lives are filled with many blessings. Yet, given the events in our world, will our challenges get easier this year or next? Hardly! Our DET—District Executive Team discussed the future at a recent offsite and concluded that our challenges will be more frequent, difficult and complex. Is there one fundamental process that is crucial for us to get right given these challenges? Imagine our potential if every district team member consistently and deliberately sought to create the most high-performing teams possible. After all, many of us are on many teams, not just one. But would you call any of yours high-performing and able to sustain the peak performance of all individual team members? What would it take to achieve that?

At a minimum, how important do you think it is for individual members to have quality relationships and productive group dynamics? Would such a team be possible without some basic ground rules, such as following the Consideration of Others guideline, and the Gold & Silver rules (explained in an earlier Flagship article)? Many other daily actions and individual skills (such as brainstorming, active listening, etc.) must be integrated to consistently give high-performing teams the ability to possess and leverage needed strengths, skills and disci-



**Col. Debra M. Lewis, Seattle District Commander and District Engineer**

plines that can quickly create opportunities critical to shaping desirable future outcomes. How might high-performing Seattle District teams benefit others when they issue quality guidance and make quality decisions that affect execution, including quality work products, schedule and cost?

Your DET is committed to achieving and sustaining our peak performance as a team and to helping all other district teams do the same. In this way, we continue to shape the future of the Seattle District's positive contributions to our Northwestern Division, Corps headquarters, and nation's priorities.

As we look ahead this next year, your DET will be mapping out our strategic focus areas for 2005 and the years to come. We will work on two fundamental building blocks to get us there—improving our work environment and our project manager processes. If it



**Cover: A little crab smiles for the camera before its released out of harm's way. To protect them, many marine critters were captured and released at a safe distance from the demolition of the degraded Seahurst Park seawall.** (Cover photo by Maria Or; Col. Lewis, Seattle skyline and watermark are file photos)

Special thanks to David Harris, retired Chief of Public Affairs, for his copy-editing support even when he's on vacation. He's as sharp as ever.

# Change is coming, are you ready?

## COMMENTARY

As we go through life we are faced with change—changes in the way we do our jobs and changes in the way we live our lives. Not surprisingly, these are the two areas that affect our happiness and health the most. What if we were faced with some tough decisions concerning change—are we ready to make them?

I am a person who thinks about what may be coming my way. It's probably because I ride a Harley and I don't want to get creamed by a driver that didn't see me on the road. For my survival I must see him first. Or maybe it is because whenever I wait for a bus and I stand with my back facing the street, the bus always passes me by. You will say it is common sense about the Harley and the bus stop, but there are people that will never look for the car and never turn around and face the street.

Today in the workplace, with ever-decreasing budgets, our leaders are faced with tough decisions. Shrinking funds have challenged the way managers must do business. As a worker, you might be needed today and tomorrow you might not. Have you prepared for change? Have you taken a look at your personal portfolio to see just how much employment stock you have?

I can say from experience, don't wait till the last minute; take charge of your future right now. I worked for Washington state for nine years and one day I was handed a letter saying that due to funding cuts my services were no longer needed, in

*Editor's Note: Change is no longer a surprise in the workplace. Dennis Graham, a park ranger at the Hiram Chittenden Locks, shares his personal experiences and thoughts.*



Dennis Graham at the Hiram Chittenden Locks with a frequent visitor, Tigger, who is notorious for posing for photographs. (Photo provided by Dennis Graham)

12 days. It was a shocker, but I knew it was coming, and so I had a plan.

What's your plan? What if you were told tomorrow that your services were no longer needed—what would you do? Would you pass the blame to your supervisor, or their manager, or possibly Col. Lewis? They don't have that much power and control over the dollar situation to make a difference, but you do have that much control over you.

Question, is your Resumix up to date? Is there a class you can take to

improve your worth in the workplace? Maybe you are stuck in such a rut that you cannot, or will not, attempt to change. Are you willing to relocate? Can you turn your house into a rental and make some additional money? Are you an empty nester? If so, where would you like to go? Have you looked to see if there is a job market out there for you?

Hey, wake up, it is 2005 and our employment arena has changed. The specialty worker is the demand, and with NSPS—National Security Personnel System coming why not make you a more valuable commodity?

These are just a few examples of what may be looming over the horizon. Shortfalls in funding, loss of jobs and family relocation are possibilities for all of us in the future, but don't panic. Step back and take stock of your abilities; get ready for it now. Try and see what is coming, and get yourself ready for any change that might come your way.

**-Dennis Graham, Lake Washington Ship Canal Park Ranger**

## continued...Looking ahead

were easy, it would have been done! So expect plenty more to come and know that your active efforts are an integral part of our team's plan to positively shape our future together.

**“Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy**

**purpose.” -Helen Keller**

*Debra M. Lewis*



This issue was especially prepared for Ed Benton. He is a small craft operator/deckhand on the survey vessel Shoalhunter in Aberdeen. He also participates on voluntary emergency flood teams. Benton helped rebuild a section of the South Skagit Highway after a winter flood event. (Photo by Maria Or)

## Flagship

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# Strategy for safe passage

**T**he Pacific Ocean pummels the Washington coast with wind-driven waves that can tower two stories above the shore. The port and marinas of Grays Harbor offer mariners protected havens from the ocean's fury.

The Seattle District has been providing a safe route into Grays Harbor ever since the district was established more than 100 years ago. From jetty construction and rehabilitation to channel dredging, the district continues to ensure Grays Harbor has a reliable, safe navigation route for commercial and pleasure vessels alike.

In the past decade, concerns have arisen about the stability and safety of the navigation project where the channel lies near the south jetty.

In 1993, the Pacific Ocean pushed through into Half Moon Bay, breaching the land mass that had connected the jetty to South Beach. There were concerns about potential risks to navigation and the ability to maintain the jetty, and the Corps filled in the breach in 1994.

In 1997, a Corps study concluded that the most efficient and effective long-term solution would be to extend the south jetty eastward to meet a buried southward extension of the Point Chehalis revetment and to place dredged material in Half Moon Bay. However, the plan raised environmental and recreational concerns, and the 2,500-foot jetty extension was not built.

In 1999, the Corps placed a diffraction mound, gravel and cobble on the beach at Half Moon Bay to reinforce the landward end of the south jetty to withstand the undermining effects of a future breach and to help reduce wave-caused erosion of the unprotected portion of the Half Moon Bay shoreline.

The ocean and bay continue to bite away chunks of the breach fill, and the Corps has placed sand on the breach fill twice in the past two years.

A district team is now working again with the Port of Grays Harbor to find an acceptable long-term management strategy for the Grays Harbor navigation project. The first step is to understand the existing situation as well as current science and observation allow. With that understanding and with input from the affected communities, the Corps will look at strategy alternatives.

The study purpose is to assess the threat to the federal navigation project of a breach between the south jetty and adjacent land mass and to recommend the most appropriate long-term strategy to maintain and protect the federal navigation project. The study focuses on the south

jetty, Half Moon Bay, South Beach, Point Chehalis and the navigation channel. Previous studies were conducted on the north jetty and Ocean Shores.

The Corps' Engineering Research and Development Center has been conducting engineering analyses, including research on waves and tides and physical modeling of the Grays Harbor south jetty and Half Moon Bay area. This initial round of data and analyses has been reviewed by district engineers, and will be independently reviewed by experts selected by the Committee on Tidal Hydraulics and conclusions shared with the public this winter.

In addition, the Corps is undertaking numerous environmental studies, including assessments of the benthic community, fish use and feeding, and shorebird use of the area.

The ongoing engineering and environmental studies will provide the district a broader and more thorough basis on which to fully evaluate potential long-term strategies for managing Grays Harbor navigation.

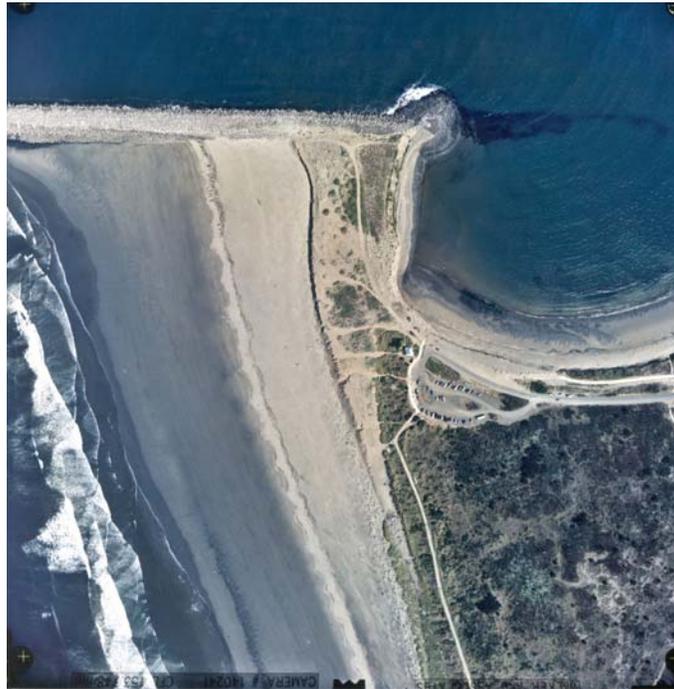
The study schedule and milestones are designed to include opportunities for meaningful public involvement and collaboration. To help create collaborative public workshops, the team's public involvement contractor, ECO Resource Group, has had discussions with more than 30 interested parties. ECO Resource Group will share discussion outcomes, such as common concerns, shared goals and other issues in an initial workshop in February 2005. That workshop will provide the study team and the public an opportunity to begin to collaborate on criteria for evaluating and selecting a long-term strategy.

Following this workshop and a presentation of engineering findings, ECO Resource Group will hold a second workshop to discuss potential strategy alternatives. From there the district can evaluate numerous alternatives, and narrow the list for detailed study.

Many team members also serve on a team charged with preventing a breach of the material placed adjacent to the south jetty until the risks of a breach are more fully understood. This team has conducted an interim action sand placement for the south jetty breach fill in December and January while the long-term strategy is being studied.

If funding and milestones continue as planned, a preferred long-term navigation management strategy could be presented as early as spring 2006.

-Patricia Graesser



**Halfmoon Bay at the south entrance to Grays Harbor is part of the area under study as part of the long term maintenance strategy for the Grays Harbor federal navigation project. Watermark: The South Beach area near the Grays Harbor south jetty is popular with surfers year-round. (USACE file photos)**

# Seahurst Park seawall goes down



Col. Lewis, District Commander; and Lori Morris, Corps project manager, go over documents at the park. (Photo by Maria Or)

The armored seawall that stood guard for 30 years protecting the trail that winds along the southern portion of Seahurst Park in Burien, Wash., came crashing down Dec. 20.

The removal of the 1,400 foot seawall is the focal point of the \$1.5 million Seahurst Park Shoreline Restoration project, which broke ground Dec. 6.

"The gabion seawall, which is a pile of metal-meshed rock baskets, was in disrepair, threatening the beach with further degradation," said Lori Morris, Corps project manager.

Not only did they remove the seawall and associated riprap but the team also added sand and gravel to supplement and regrade the beach to more natural conditions, Morris said.

They also reconnected two natural drainages to Puget Sound.

"This will directly benefit salmonids that skirt the nearshore during migration and acclimation to salt water," Morris said. "The eel-grass beds located directly offshore should expand after construction and provide a nursery for juvenile salmonids."

"Seahurst Park is a critical and unique ecosystem restoration project that will have immediate ecosystem benefits to an important area of Puget Sound," she said. "The project is designed to restore the natural functions and historic estuarine habitat of the Puget Sound nearshore."

The citizens of Burien will also benefit from this project.

"The community understands the environmental benefit and that there will still be good recreational use after the project is finished," said Larry Fetter, Burien city parks and recreation director.

The Corps and the city of Burien worked closely together to ensure minimal disruption to the public.

"For public safety purposes, the beach near the construction site was closed during con-

struction," Morris said. "Also to minimize public disturbance and property damage, our contractor, MarVac, used a barge to remove the riprap and bring in the sand and gravel."

This project has been in the works for many years, said Noel Gibb, mayor of Burien.

"It has required the combined efforts of local, county, state, federal and tribal government to begin this first phase of beach restoration and for the purpose of restoring salmon habitat in Puget Sound," Gibb said.

"This monumental project is the first of several to be constructed under Section 544 Puget Sound and Adjacent Waters Restoration program," said Bernie Hargrave, Corps program manager. "Washington state's congressional delegates, Patty Murray, Maria Cantwell and Jim McDermott, have been very supportive."

Look for more Puget Sound restoration projects to follow in the upcoming months and years under this program, Hargrave said.

-Andrea Takash



Top: Community volunteers waded into the shores of the Puget Sound to set free buckets of critters that were captured near the construction site. Watermark: Seahurst Park beach is also home to several species of birds. (Photos by Maria Or)

Left: Demolition begins when the park has the least visitors. The seawall was located on the south end of Seahurst Park. (Photo by Andrea Takash)



# A fish tale...

**T**he negative impact humans have upon the survival of Northwest salmon is a recurring theme but the dedicated actions of many stalwart individuals and organizations who work on behalf of the salmon and their future are seldom recognized.

One such dedicated person is Charles “Chuck” Ebel, a fish biologist with the Seattle District, Corps of Engineers. He has worked for the Corps for four years, and has a burning passion for his work. His primary responsibility is as an environmental coordinator for numerous projects, two of them are the Lake Washington General Investigation west and for the Upper Baker projects.

Salmon are synonymous with things Northwest. They are an integral part of the natural landscape of our waterways and of great importance to the regional economy and the culture of Northwestern tribes of Native Americans. The secrets of the salmon’s long distance journey intrigue and astonish us and serve as the symbol of the resilient Washingtonian spirit. Yet their existence is often taken for granted and the success of their long and arduous struggle for survival is largely misunderstood.

Even though they are a hardy and amazing species, many groups of salmon populations have been, and continue to be, threatened. Many obstacles and changes to their environment, at one time or another have greatly reduced or nearly exhausted their numbers in many locations where they once thrived.

The survival story of the sockeye salmon from Lake Washington and Baker Lake is an interesting story of “fish tale” proportions. It is the story of two populations of fish, that nearly disappeared, are now separated by two counties, and have not interbred for over 50 years, yet they are genetically related and share the same ancestral history. “Just after the turn of the century, after the Locks’ construction and river re-routing, there were very limited numbers of sockeye in Lake Washington and by the 1920s and 1930s the sockeye were nearly non-existent,” Chuck explained.

“Aggressive actions were taken to rejuvenate their numbers and secure a successful future for the sockeye in both locations. From 1915 through the 1950s over 3.5 million sockeye were transplanted into Lake Washington from Baker Lake,” Ebel said. “There is a very insightful study that was performed in 1995 that revealed an interesting phenomenon about the connection between the salmon in Lake Washington and those in the Upper Baker Lake,” Chuck pointed out.

According to the study by Andrew P. Henry, Thomas P. Quinn, and Fred M. Utter, “Genetic Evidence for the Persistence and Divergence of Native and Introduced Sockeye Salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) within Lake Washington,” there is a direct genetic relationship.

Two divergent populations were identified. One population group, comprised of salmon from Cedar River, Issaquah Creek, and Lake Washington Beach, showed a genetic affinity to collections of the sockeye salmon from Baker Lake.

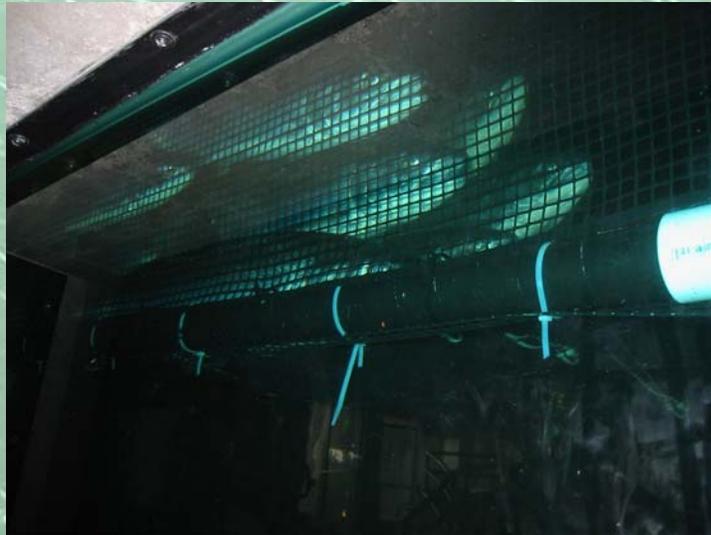
In contrast, the other population group, made up of Bear Creek and Cottage Creek, was distinct from either of the putative non-native ancestral populations (Cultus Lake, B.C., and Baker Lake). They inferred that the first group was comprised of fish from the Baker Lake lineage (transplanted to Lake Washington in the 1930s and 1940s), and that the second population was predominantly of native ancestry.

Sockeye salmon are an anadromous fish. That means that they migrate from salt to fresh water. These fish hatch in lakes,



Deceased adult sockeye found in the Cedar River that was tagged previously at the Lake Washington Ship Canal. The first fish detected in the new LWSC adult PIT—Passive Integrated Transponder tag detection system were sockeye tagged as smolts in May 2001. (Photo by Jennifer Newell)

# The incredible Northwest journey of the Sockeye



Adult sockeye are trapped in the Lake Washington Ship Canal fish ladder as a part of a University of Washington and Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife study to determine whether lake entry date is correlated to spawning location. (Photo by Jennifer Newell)

rivers and streams, or fish hatcheries. After a short growth period in fresh water, they head out to sea. When mature, they return to spawn in the same river, stream, or lake where they were hatched. Fresh water is needed for the fish to spawn, their eggs to hatch, and for the protection and survival of their young. There are only two examples where unequivocal evidence exists that shows that salmon, within their native range, have established self-perpetuating, anadromous salmon populations.

The first example is the Frazier Lake Alaskan sockeye salmon that became self-sustaining after intensive stocking and removal of a barrier to anadromous migration. The second example is in Lake Washington located in Western Washington near the Puget Sound where sockeye salmon transplants also became self-perpetuating within a body of water that did not block migration before or after the introduction. Thus, the success of sockeye salmon introduced to Lake Washington represents a

rare and possibly unique example within the native range of a Pacific salmon transplant that established a self-perpetuating anadromous population in a system without a historical barrier to anadromy.

“The long-term success at Baker is directly attributed to the teamwork of Puget Sound Energy, local Native American tribes, governmental and non-governmental organizations and private citizens,” Chuck proudly reports. “The continuing success would not be possible if all those involved weren’t so driven and dedicated. Everyone has invested incredible amounts of time, energy and

resources. This is an example of how a collaborative process, involving all stakeholders, can work.”

As the generations of sockeye continue to thrive, there are generations of tribal members,

biologists, and many others that work side by side to support them. Chuck’s fascination with fish actually follows a family tradition. His chosen profession follows the example of his father, Wesley J. Ebel, Ph.D., who is a retired fisheries biologist and division director for the National Marine Fisheries Service. Both Chuck and his brother, James Ebel, a fish biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, are professional stewards for Northwest salmon.

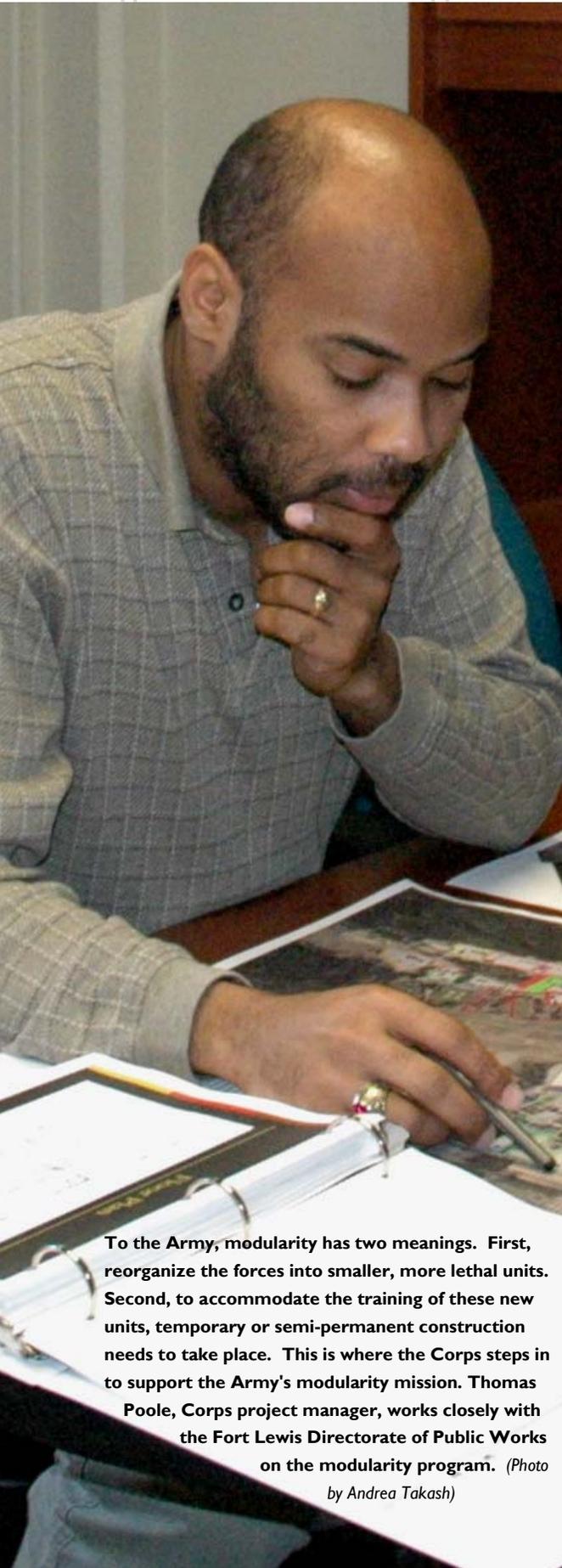
Today the populations of sockeye in Lake Washington and Baker are considered healthy and their numbers continue to rise even as population growth and diminishing natural resources put pressure on their survival. This is not by luck or chance but because many Northwestern people work very hard to protect them, their habitat, and assist in facilitating their journey to and from the sea.

—Melanie Reeder



Typical adult sockeye that was tagged. Approximately 400,000 sockeye returned to Lake Washington the summer of 2004. (Photos including watermark, by Jennifer Newell)

## How to accommodate when the Cavalry is coming



To the Army, modularity has two meanings. First, reorganize the forces into smaller, more lethal units. Second, to accommodate the training of these new units, temporary or semi-permanent construction needs to take place. This is where the Corps steps in to support the Army's modularity mission. Thomas Poole, Corps project manager, works closely with the Fort Lewis Directorate of Public Works on the modularity program. (Photo

by Andrea Takash)

3040

**W**ith the approaching dust clouds of the cavalry in its sites, Fort Lewis, Wash., will ally with the Corps of Engineers to accommodate thousands of Soldiers.

The 2nd Cavalry Regiment is coming, and Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, prepares to reshape the post, which will grow by approximately 4,700 Soldiers in April.

Fort Lewis is the fourth Army installation to undergo modularization. Fort Campbell, Fort Hood and Fort Stewart previously went through the transformation.

Fort Lewis Directorate of Public Works and Seattle District work closely together to analyze lessons learned from the other Army posts.

"We have spent the last eight months partnering with the Directorate of Public Works," said Thomas Poole, Corps program manager. "Not only is this an important project for Fort Lewis but also the Army."

Applying the lessons learned and the needs of Fort Lewis, the Corps divided the program into three segments: re-locatable buildings, repairs to barracks and the renovation of existing facilities.

The re-locatable buildings consist of brigade and battalion headquarters, company operations, storage and maintenance facilities, medical hold barracks, showers and latrines. Approximately 140 buildings should start arriving in March.

Before the buildings actually arrive at Fort Lewis, a Corps quality assurance representative will visit the manufacturing plant to inspect the buildings.

"We learned from the Fort Stewart experience that more quality assurance of the re-locatable buildings was necessary at the manufacturing plant," Poole said.

The quality of life for the Soldiers is high on the priority list for both the Corps and Fort Lewis.

To house the single Soldiers of 2CR, the Corps will repair barracks on the main part of the post. Repairs consist primarily of paint and patch work.

Under the renovation portion, the Corps will restore four dining facilities and two aircraft hangars. They will also build a new concrete aircraft apron.

All three segments will have separate contracts. This concept is based on a lesson learned from the other installations.

"We learned not to put all of the contracting eggs in one basket," Poole explained.

"Dec. 17, 2004, we awarded a contract to Alutiq Manufacturing Contractors for pre-construction services on the re-locatable buildings," said Susan Sherrell, Corps contracting officer. "We plan to award the remaining contracts for construction of the re-locatable buildings and the renovations of the current facilities in the January timeframe."

After the Corps awards the contracts, Poole said he anticipates starting site work for the re-locatable buildings at the end of January. Renovation work will start in April.

"We should complete everything by September," Poole said. "This is ambitious, but we are confident that we can do it."

Col. Steven Perrenot, DPW director, said he is also confident in the Corps' ability.

"The Corps has been involved since day one in planning this program," Perrenot said. "This process is a three-legged stool: the Corps, DPW and the contractor. We all work together to ensure success."

The Corps and DPW also have included the chain of command of 2CR in the planning process from the very beginning.

"The Soldiers are the end-users. So, it is important that we get their feedback early on. Our dedicated liaison, Tom Olsen, meets with the unit representatives weekly," Poole said.

The units are satisfied with what they see so far. This is a great way to measure success. The Army is depending on us to deliver suitable facilities so the Soldiers can concentrate on training," Poole said.

"We will deliver."

-Andrea Takash

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# Regionalization

## *Collaboration strengthens teamwork and professional relationships*

The Regionalization of the Northwestern Division, Corps of Engineers, is well underway and represents an integrated and strategically focused approach to performing our mission and providing customer service. Using the Regional Business Center Concept, the division employs a corporate approach to efficiently and effectively managing available resources. As the region moves forward in the implementation a common theme that has appeared is the positive impact upon teamwork and newly forged professional relationships.

All assets within the division are an integral part of a collective capability. These assets include, but are not limited to, the division's headquarters offices located in Portland and Omaha; and the Kansas City, Portland, Omaha, Seattle, and Walla Walla districts. But it is the people who comprise these organizations that breathe life into the concept of regionalization.

The many benefits resulting from strengthened teamwork and relationships are a topic of discussion by many in the district:



"The concept of regionalization leads us to work together as a Corps and we are learning to leverage the knowledge and capability of our people throughout the agency. The crux to success is a positive professional relationship where there is mutual trust and respect. What makes this a great place to work is the ability to call upon the extensive skills of all those within the division."

**-Mark Ohlstrom, Chief, Engineering and Construction Division**



"Regionalization has facilitated strategic communications among subject matter experts and provides an efficient forum for the flow of information. The result is a common understanding, clearer goals and objectives and the cross-fertilization of creative solutions."

**-Melanie Reeder, Chief, Public Affairs**



"In Resource Management we have experienced increased opportunities for developmental assignments as a result of regionalization. We share communication on all position vacancies to ensure coordination. Relationships across the division and Corps have opened the scope of management in hiring plans and increased opportunities for career development."

**-Albert Candelaria, Chief, Resource Management**



"Regionalized planning and emergency response training really started 10 years ago and we continue to realize the benefits. It wasn't always like this, but as missions got bigger and more complex we needed to make the best use of all available assets. From across the district and the nation, we pull together as a high powered team to combine our resources and expertise."

**-Paul Komoroske, Chief, Emergency Management**



"Before formalized regionalization, we in Regulatory Branch already did a good job partnering and working with other Washington state organizations. But the push toward broader regionalization has helped strengthen and augment efforts across the division. By sharing information and ideas through the Regional Regulatory Chiefs Board we have gained knowledge and consistency. We would not have without the spotlight of regionalization."

**-Muffy Walker, Acting Regulatory Branch Chief**



"Tribal Liaisons work very closely together on a regional level. Sharing information, we are valuable resources to each other on Native American issues."

**-Diane Lake, Tribal Liaison**



"We here in Seattle have worked under the team concept for quite some time but the value has now been formally recognized as the way to success."

**-Dave Spicer, Executive Assistant**



"Organizational cultures that promote isolationism, or evaluate success as actions you do entirely on your own, will become a thing of the past given our existing complexities. Rather, initiatives such as regionalization better serve our needs when they encourage or require everyone to apply those interpersonal and process skills that best tap all available or needed resources to apply to any situation."

**-Colonel Debra Lewis, Commander, Seattle District**

*(Quotes compiled by Melanie Reeder, Photos by Maria Or)*

# FLAGSHIP Seattle District

## *Do you really want to retire?*

**T**hinking of retiring? Think again. Oh, I don't mean to abandon your retirement dreams. I just mean to ponder retirement resplendent with actual facts and not myths. And history doesn't support retirement. Don't retire. Retread. If you are burned out with your current vocation, do something different.

### Five reasons not to retire:

- Don't retire because of a personality conflict in the office. Forgive. Love that person into insignificance, as far as your retirement is concerned. Love is an action word. Why would you want to throw away tens of thousands of dollars of lifetime income because of a jerk? If that's your reason, the jerk wins.
- Don't retire to lie back and take it easy. A lot of presidents took office in their 60's and 70's. There's a great retirement gift for those who choose the hammock or La-Z-Boy: it's sometimes called by its no-spin name, Death.
- Don't retire for more time to golf, keep up with TV or read. There's only one reason to retire: purpose. Why on earth are you here?
- Don't retire to collect money. If money is the issue, retirement is not where it's at.
- Don't retire to do all the things you haven't gotten around to doing for 30 years. As retiree Cy Jones says, if you haven't done those things for 30 years, you probably never wanted to do them in the first place. Someone else said you will get your garage and yard cleaned up in one to three months.

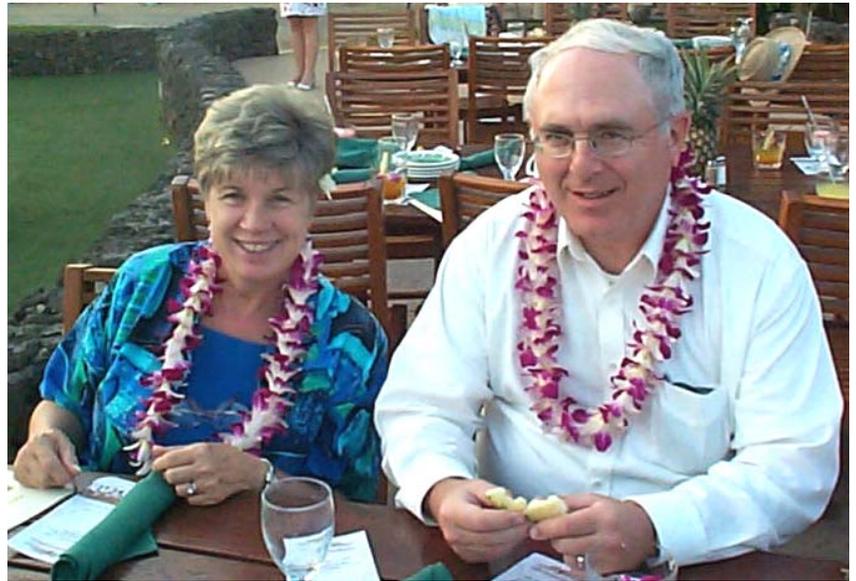
### OK, that's not what you wanted to hear, and so here are five reasons to retire:

- You have another vocation that more closely fits your purpose in life, such as educating your grandkids who could be failing to read for all the time they spend in social engineering.
- You are physically unable to continue working every day.
- Your gifts convince you that you are mismatched with your job.
- You have unconscionable philosophical differences with the Army Corps of Engineers (e.g., you don't believe in preserving the environment, you don't believe in diversity, you don't believe in liberating oppressed women and children, and you don't believe in stimulating the economy).
- You have already essentially retired in place.

Expect to get a retirement check right away? I don't think so. Plan on a four-month delay. Selling back leave is good stop-gap grocery assurance.

Retire on the last day of the month or the first three days of the new month. If you retire on any other day, you don't get paid that month. I retired on June 17. No pay credited until July 1, which I collected Oct. 1.

In spite of some setbacks, I can't say enough praise for the Army Benefit Center (Do you have your password? Get it. And check out their telephone menu. You can talk to a live person) and Office of Personnel



**Dave Harris and his wife Suzanne spend their time traveling and enjoying their grandkids.** (Photos provided by David Harris)

Management. They may be slow, but for the most part, they know what they're doing. Take names. Next time, ask for people by name and send thank-you e-mails to their supervisors when they deliver. Practice cordial confrontation with emphasis on the cordial. I once won an academic appeal at the University of Washington after taking the suggestion of my advisor and adding the words "respectfully request."

### Tips for a good retirement:

- One of your top considerations should be to become an expert and practitioner of good health. Walk. Lift weights. Eat healthy. The top 10 healthiest foods: whole grains such as oatmeal; blueberries; spinach; olive oil; garlic; salmon or tuna; almonds; green tea; tomatoes; and red grapes. Eat one-third to one-half of a normal portion and drink water when you feel hungry.
- Save.
- Give.
- Volunteer.
- Assume positive intent of your loved ones first, and then everyone else.
- Be ready to meet your Maker.
- Stay in touch with your Corps family.
- Write down everything you spend and make a budget based on reality and not on ignored hidden expenses.
- Consolidate your investments in the Thrift Savings Plan (I recommend 80 percent in the "G" Fund and the remainder equally distributed in the others. The "G" Fund does better than most commercial fixed-income funds.)
- Loosen up. Enjoy your retirement. Spend it and don't hoard it. Laugh. Love. Live. Get your mind off your problems by focusing on solving the problems of others.

**-Dave Harris, Twice Retired Seattle District, Chief of Public Affairs**

## Around the District

### Speaking Outreach

**Fred Goetz** spoke at a Wild Steelhead Coalition meeting about Snohomish and Skagit Basin bull trout Dec. 1.

**Cheryl Anderson** presented the Corps' role in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the Army's

move toward modularity at the West End Puget Sound Kiwanis Club in Tacoma Nov. 10.

### In Memory

**Jim Waller**, retired two years ago as the chief of Civil Programs after more than 30 years of service to the Corps of Engineers. He was the

project manager for the Grays Harbor Deep Draft dredging project beginning in 1983 and one of the first to encourage the use of the concept of "Earned Value."

**Sylvester Tee Thornton**, property book officer and friend to many at the district.

## What it's like to be a Soldier?

*Editor's Note: Corps of Engineers employees may often think of the dangers to Soldiers in Iraq, because fellow civilian employees are serving there, and some have family members serving there. A number of employees have volunteered to go more than once. Flagship has published their stories, but what is it like to serve there? It's difficult to explain, unless you serve there yourself, as expressed by Jackie Hopkins' brother.*

**M**y brother, Tony, just returned from serving nine months in Baghdad, Iraq. He is a specialist in the Army National Guard and a member of the 81st Armored Brigade based out of Camp Murray, Wash.

He's limping from a knee injury, weakened after a close call. The knee gave out entirely several weeks later during physical training. While returning from an uneventful mission, the armored humvee he was traveling in was hit by a roadside bomb, he explained. It was the last of four humvees, each manned by four Soldiers. He remembered being thrown from his post where he was manning a 50-caliber machine gun. Dirt and rock sprayed up in his face and right arm and he lay motionless on the ground.

As he came to, he heard the muffled voices of his platoon members asking him if he was OK, thankful he was alive. When he staggered to his feet holding his head he said, "I felt as if an explosion had gone off in my brain." Barely able to see clearly, he remembered resting by the vehicle and in the distance, he saw a group of Iraqis pointing and laughing.

He controlled his anger and survival instinct that says fight back and get the enemy before he gets you! They had heard and seen too many similar incidents that ended with sniper fire after the vehicle was ambushed and rattled by a roadside bomb. I, myself, can remember earlier reports in the media that showed celebrating villagers, women and children included, chanting and dancing in the streets as a charred and burning military vehicle lay smoldering in the background.

But his life, and the lives of those in his unit,

though spared, will never be the same. This is evident as the tears well up in his eyes as he retells the story. Although visibly shaken by this incident, it didn't rattle his feelings of pride, dedication to duty and most importantly, the love for his country and family. At the time, making it back to safety and the welfare of his three children, should something happen to him, was uppermost in his mind. How do you know, while fighting a war, the best way to handle any situation when your life, and the lives of so many others, are always on the line?

When Tony was returning to Iraq after two weeks Rest & Relaxation in June 2004, he said an older gentleman in the airport asked him what it was like to be a Soldier. Feelings of honor, selfless bravery, and wanting to serve his



**Jackie Hopkins and her brother Tony** after his deployment to Iraq. (Photo by Lynnae Wilson)

country came to mind but he was dumbfounded. He said he really couldn't give him a straight answer. The question stayed in his mind. Being a musician who loves to play the guitar, he wrote a song and put it into words in his music. He decided as the lyrics of his song convey, "What's it like to be a Soldier? You wouldn't know, even if I told ya."

**-Jackie Hopkins**



**Left to Right: Spc. Tony Hopkins, Capt. Matt Shea and Spc. John Fisher** named their band "The Big Baghdaddies". (Photo provided by Jackie Hopkins)

# WELCOME to the District Family



Arlene Lamont-Cubitt  
Industrial Hygienist  
Technical Branch



Julie Bowlin  
Contractor  
Information Mgt Office



Stephen Jesse  
Contractor  
Information Mgt Office



Theresa Cosgrove  
Cultural Resources  
Regulatory Branch



Derek Hookano  
Logistics Mgt Office



Kathy Murphy  
Real Estate



Barbara Gateley  
Contractor  
Engineering & Const



Elizabeth Townsell  
Contractor  
Public Affairs Office



Owen Lewis Kinney  
Son: 7lbs, 15.4 oz  
Aimee Kinney, ERS



Kathryn Didenhover (Vicky Didenhover's daughter) & Eric Oien  
Engaged to be married: 17 Dec 04

#### Not Pictured:

Robert Stotts, Information Mgt Office  
Tim Spiro, Information Mgt Office  
Michael GrayWolff, Operations Division

*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, we want to hear from you. Please contact the editor. maria.or@usace.army.mil or (206) 764-6896*

## Global War on Terrorism deployee ceremony honoring friends and coworkers Feb. 9

**I**t's not easy being green, but what is it like being brown? And how heavy is that turtle-shell-like flack vest in the heat of the dry desert? Our district veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan know.

Come honor our returned deployees and those who have supported them, Feb. 9 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the Galaxy Room. All are invited, so bring your friends and family.

This will be an enjoyable and unique opportunity to meet Col. Lewis, hear guest speakers and recognize everyone's efforts in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Following the program, the deployees will be invited to an informal luncheon at Col. Lewis' home at the Ballard Locks courtesy of the District Executive Team.



Seattle District has deployed more than 50 people to Iraq and Afghanistan. A handful have gone on their second and third tours. (Photos provided by deployees)

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