



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, CHARLESTON DISTRICT

PALMETTO CASTLE



**HARBOR DEEPENING COMPLETION
CELEBRATION**



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Charleston District

**Deepest Harbor on the
U.S. East Coast**

December 5, 2022



US Army Corps Of Engineers® Charleston District

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Lt. Col. Andrew Johannes and the District's new deputy commander, Maj. Pat Ripton, participate in the Charleston Holiday Parade.

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The Charleston District issued the permit for the repairs to the Folly Beach fishing pier. The new, updated pier includes upgraded covered shelters and widened sections allowing for additional fishing opportunities and more efficient pedestrian access. The reconstructed pier opened this past December and is a local treasure that many enjoy.



Photo By Francisco G. Hamm

Happy 2023! The year is flying by already. By now, most of us have packed away the holiday decorations and are thinking about Valentine's Day and the ones we love. A new year's tradition for my family is writing down goals, aspirations and wishes for the new year. I wished time would slow down because before I know it my command of the Charleston District will come to end. My transition with the new commander will start this summer, and we will hold a change of command in July. It saddens me that I only have six months left in the seat in this great organization, but I still have a list of things I'd like us to accomplish together. So buckle up and let's get going!

Before we dive into the new year, please take a look our infographic (page 12) to see the team's accomplishments in 2022, I think you will be quite impressed.

The Charleston team took a well-earned respite during the holidays and came back firing on all cylinders. This renewed energy will serve us well as our workload continues to grow throughout the year. Between funding we received through the Omnibus bill and the potential supplemental funding related to Hurricane Ian, we'll have a busy, productive year ahead. We look forward to working with our great customers, partners, and stakeholders as we support the engineering needs of the nation.

We are working with some great new leaders, internally and externally. Welcome to our new South Atlantic Division commander, Brig. Gen. Daniel Hibner (page 14). He is not new to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers however; he was previously the commander at one of our sister districts. Many of you met him during his visit to the Lowcountry after Hurricane Ian. He came back for some holiday cheer and participated in the city of Charleston's holiday parade with us. This winter and spring he will visit the Lowcountry again and continue to engage with our team and partners.

Another familiar face, Brig. Gen. Jason Kelly, is also highlighted in this issue (page 16). Hibner took Kelly's

place as Kelly transitioned to the U.S. Army Training Center and Ft. Jackson as their commanding officer and the leader of one of our biggest military customers. We look forward to supporting him in his mission to train the over 55,000 soldiers entering the Army every year, creating tomorrow's fighting force.

Amanda Heath became the district's new Regulatory chief (page 20). Her leadership will be crucial as this group tackles its heavy workload balancing the environment with development. We also have a new small business program chief, Tonya Willis, who is here to help small businesses connect with us (page 18). Last year 61% of our contract dollars were obligated to small businesses. Selfless service is what will come to your mind as you read about Molly Holt (page 10). Holt volunteered to go to Florida after Hurricane Ian.

We celebrated a huge milestone this winter, completing the Post 45 Harbor Deepening project (page 6). This \$580 million infrastructure project was delivered on time and on budget. With the deepest harbor on the East Coast, mega container ships can call on our port at any tide, fully loaded. We were honored to be part of such a historic moment for our state and nation and enjoyed working with our cost share sponsor, the South Carolina Ports Authority and the many other partners involved. It was a great example of partnerships between federal, state and local agencies.

The team is also constructing a new barricade to provide security at the Savannah River Site which is vital to our nation's nuclear program (page 22). We are honored to help with this endeavor. Speaking of energy, maybe next edition will include something with batteries.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the Palmetto Castle and let's hope Mother Nature will take it easy on us until spring arrives.



Andrew Johannes, PMP PE PhD
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army
Commander and District Engineer

A MILESTONE CELEBRATION: CHARLESTON HARBOR BECOMES DEEPEST PORT ON THE EAST COAST

By Dylan Burnell

Charleston Harbor is now the deepest port on the East Coast at 52 feet, a milestone definitely worth celebrating.

On Dec. 5, 2022, Gov. Henry McMaster, Sen. Lindsey Graham, Sen. Tim Scott, Rep. Nancy Mace, state leaders, representatives from the South Carolina Ports Authority, and other partner agencies who helped the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District, make this project a reality gathered to celebrate the last dredged scoop of sediment in the deepening construction.

Graham, who pulled the lever starting the deepening

construction in 2018 in another milestone celebration, stood onstage once again, but this time to help commemorate its completion. Pulling the same lever, Graham made history for South Carolina.

"It is a truly historical moment to be celebrating this monumental achievement. Charleston Harbor has been deepened to 52 feet," said Barbara Melvin, CEO and president of the SCPA. "With the deepest harbor on the East Coast, we can efficiently work mega container ships at any tide. This investment will bring economic success to South Carolina for generations to come."



Photo By Nathan Wilkes



Photo By Dylan Burnell

Beginning in 2011, the \$580 million Post 45 Harbor Deepening Project aimed to deepen Charleston Harbor from 45 feet to 52 feet. The additional depth allows for the largest fully loaded container ships in the world to call on the port, no matter the tide. With the completion of the project, Charleston is now seeing record-breaking levels of cargo travelling through its port, and new businesses are taking advantage of the depth.

"Many great things come from humble beginnings, and Charleston Harbor is no exception. In 1760, during the age of sail, the harbor averaged a depth of only 12 feet," said Lt. Col. Andrew Johannes, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District. "Today, the Army Corps of Engineers, working with

our great partners, has deepened Charleston Harbor to a depth of 52 feet and the harbor can now safely accommodate the largest cargo ships in the world at any time, thus strengthening the economy of South Carolina and the nation."

Over 250 years, Charleston harbor was deepened eight times to accommodate the world's rapidly growing cargo vessels.

"South Carolina can now proudly say that we have the deepest harbor on the East Coast," said McMaster. "The 52-foot depth gives South Carolina a major edge in recruiting new jobs and investment while announcing to the world that this is the place to do business."

“

Many great things come from humble beginnings, and Charleston Harbor is no exception. Today, the Army Corps of Engineers, working with our great partners, has deepened Charleston Harbor to a depth of 52 feet.



Photo By Dylan Burnell



Photo By Francisco G. Hamm

Throughout the course of the Post 45 project, a wide array of new businesses moved to South Carolina to benefit from this depth. Less than 50 miles from the Port of Charleston, a new 624-acre industrial campus opened with a Walmart distribution facility. Major auto manufacturers like Volvo, BMW and Mercedes located their new electric vehicle production plants in the state. The growth is not only in large corporations, as a host of small businesses who support the growing port have opened here.

The SCPA is one of the largest economic drivers in the state, providing over \$60 billion in statewide economic impact. More than one in 10 jobs in the state are directly related to port activities. The port has set record numbers of imports nearly every month for the past two years and recently opened the new state-of-the-art Hugh K. Leatherman terminal in 2021.

The completion of the deepening allows for the largest ships in the world to visit no matter their load, the tide, or the time of day. Before the project was entirely complete however, records for the largest ships to visit Charleston were already being broken when

conditions allowed. First to break the record was the CMA-CGM Marco Polo in May 2021, followed by the COSCO Camellia in March 2022. In September of the same year, with a draft of 48 feet, 11 inches, the MSC Rayshmi visited Charleston Harbor, officially taking the title as the largest ship to ever visit.

The USACE team worked tirelessly to complete the project on time and on budget and it was the first large navigation project in the nation to be completed under the Corps' streamlined civil works planning process. The team was comprised of engineers, navigation specialists, scientists, economists, planners and project managers from across USACE representing the best and the brightest in their fields. The deepening occurred over the course of seven district commanders and three of them returned to join Johannes for the celebration.

Elected leaders, including Sen. Graham and his staff and Melvin, frequently attended meetings and updates with stakeholders. Their attendance was driven by a collective understanding this project had to be completed.

"When we started this project in 2011, we understood that failure was simply not an option," said Graham. "The future of jobs, in every corner of our state and across a range of industries from manufacturing to agriculture to everything in between, hung in the balance. Today, we take time to remember the important milestones, look back at the hard work that brought us to this point, and celebrate our success in completing this project."

The project finished the way it started a decade ago, with a radio call to the dredge operator.

Barbara Melvin: "Clamshell Dredge 58, do you copy?"

Dredge Operator: "This is Clamshell Dredge 58, go ahead."

Melvin: "It's time to finish what we started."

Operator: "10-4, standing by."

Sen. Graham: "Clamshell Dredge 58, this is Senator Graham, let's do it. Officially finish 52 feet in the Charleston Harbor."

It was now official. At 52 feet, Charleston Harbor is now the deepest port on the East Coast. Truly a milestone.

“

Clamshell Dredge 58, this is Senator Graham, let's do it. Officially finish 52 feet in the Charleston Harbor.





CHARLESTON DISTRICT ENGINEER HELPS PICK UP THE PIECES LEFT BEHIND FROM HURRICANE IAN

By Nathan Wilkes

With roaring winds, relentless rain, and surging waves, Hurricane Ian made landfall near Cayo Costa and Fort Myers, Florida shortly after 3 p.m. on Sept. 28, 2022. For the next 24 hours, Ian would carve a path through the sunshine state, gradually weakening to a tropical storm before reaching the Atlantic Ocean.

Following the aftermath, more than 800 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers personnel and contractors, including Charleston District civil engineer Molly Holt, were deployed in support of emergency response operations.

"I arrived in Fort Myers on October 16, and even though the storm was long gone, the damage it left behind was heartbreaking," said Holt. "All we kept saying to people was that the damage was incredible and not in a good way."

Deployed for 30 days in support of the response effort, Holt served as the mission manager and training officer for the infrastructure assessment team tasked with inspecting the safety and stability of the structures left standing.

"Our mission was to structurally assess buildings for safety and factor in life safety risks like electrical hazards and access issues," said Holt. "I was getting chills the whole time. I'm doing my job, taking pictures and writing down notes. It was so hard to look at."

A high-end Category 4 storm, Ian was the strongest hurricane to hit Florida since Michael in 2018 and the first Category 4 hurricane to impact Southwest Florida

since Charley in 2004. The extreme winds, torrential rain, and storm surge caused between \$50 to 65 billion in insured damages in western Florida.

For Holt and her team, a greater reality of the destruction was revealed as families began to come back to the places their homes once stood.

"You're walking through this rubble and not only are many of the homes completely destroyed, but you see little pieces of personal belongings, like broken picture frames with family photos in them, clothes and children's toys," said Holt. "Seeing those types of things laying there makes you think about the families that lost so much and what memories and traditions these homes held and now they are just gone."

An Ohio State University alum, Holt joined USACE in February 2020 to design and inspect projects to support civil works and military construction mission. For her, the work responding to Hurricane Ian magnified the importance of her work and provided a clearer picture of the larger USACE mission.

"Responding to Hurricane Ian and working with other engineers and inspectors from many other districts around the country provided me with a broader view of USACE and our hurricane response mission," said Holt. "Being away from home and learning to work with people that I have never met before was a valuable experience. Though our part in the greater recovery efforts was small, I'm proud to have had the opportunity to help."

◀ FISCAL YEAR AT A GLANCE

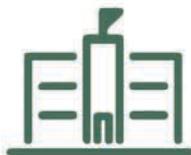
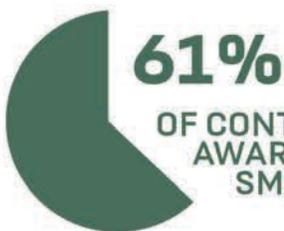
2022

BIG PICTURE



760
CONTRACT
ACTIONS

\$293M
TOTAL OBLIGATED



\$365M
IN TOTAL
COMPLETED
("PLACED")
CONSTRUCTION

REGULATORY



1515
PERMITS
REVIEWED

1457
JURISDICTIONAL
DETERMINATIONS
COMPLETED



850+

OTHER ACTIONS,
INCLUDING
PRE-APPLICATION
MEETINGS.

INTERAGENCY & INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT



106
PROJECTS
CONDUCTED IN
10 COUNTRIES



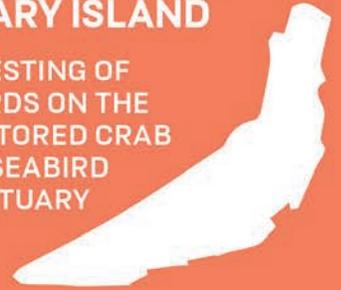
10
NEW DLA, MFR, AND
DEPT. OF ENERGY
CONSTRUCTION
PROJECTS

CHARLESTON HARBOR



CRAB BANK SEABIRD SANCTUARY ISLAND

FIRST NESTING OF
SHOREBIRDS ON THE
NEWLY RESTORED CRAB
BANK SEABIRD
SANCTUARY



POST 45

FINAL DEEPENING
CONTRACT
COMPLETE

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION

CHARLESTON PENINSULA STUDY

CHIEF'S
REPORT
SIGNED



38,957

SERVICE CALLS AT FORT
JACKSON AND 81st
READINESS DIVISION



\$239M

TOTAL OBLIGATED FOR
PROJECTS AT FORT JACKSON,
JOINT BASE CHARLESTON, AND
81st READINESS DIVISION

WATER DISTRIBUTION



41K

LINEAR FEET OF NEW
WATER LINES UNDER
CONSTRUCTION
THROUGH THE WINDING
WOODS PROJECT



500K

GALLONS PROVIDED
THROUGH THE WINDING
WOODS WATER TOWER
(LAKE MARION & MOULTRIE
WATER SYSTEM PROJECT)

COOPER RIVER REDIVERSION PROJECT

40,000 HOMES
POWERED

NAVIGATION



467

MILES OF THE
FEDERAL CHANNEL
SURVEYED FOR
PROJECT CONDITIONS

254K

FISH PASSED
THROUGH FISH LIFT

\$36M

SAVED ON
DREDGING



NEW SOUTH ATLANTIC DIVISION COMMANDER EXCITED TO BE BACK IN USACE

By Francisco G. Hamm

A district commander doesn't often become the division commander in the same region. In the summer of 2022, Brig. Gen. Daniel H. Hibner, made this scenario a reality by becoming the new South Atlantic Division commander.

"I'm so glad to be back in the SAD footprint," Hibner said. "I am familiar with most of the projects throughout our region due to the quarterly regional governance meetings and other touchpoints."

Considering this opportunity an absolute advantage, Hibner said. "Now I have the opportunity to 'deep dive' and learn more about what our role is throughout the entire southeast – and as I do I gain a greater appreciation for the incredible work we do in SAD."

Family is very important to Hibner as his family is also delighted with the move. "This is where my family and I wanted to be and I couldn't be happier," he said.



Photo By Dylan Burnell

“

Now I have the opportunity to 'deep dive' and learn more about what our role is throughout the entire southeast – and as I do I gain a greater appreciation for the incredible work we do in SAD.

Speaking of family, Hibner has a twin brother who was also in the military, since retired to serve in a senior executive service position. So, since his promotion to brigadier general, the question begging to be asked is, "has he had a chance to pull rank?"

"I have to laugh at this question," he said, acknowledging that they have always been the same rank throughout their career.

"We have literally been promoted the same day for every rank we held. And within a month of my promotion, my brother, now retired, was inducted as a Tier 1 SES. I can't win," Hibner said.

When he left SAS and went to Fort Leonard Wood to be the commandant at the U.S Army Engineer School, one thing he took with him from USACE was the importance of the amazing Department of Army (DA) civilians. "They are critical to everything that we do. I was able to work with many civilians at the Army Engineer School as well as the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence and was happy to find the quality was the same. Reliable committed teammates."

When he was picked to go to SAD, he says he took "an appreciation for our 'regiment,'" and hopes to do more to integrate USACE into regimental activities.

While at the Savannah District, Hibner, had an opportunity to be involved in the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project which was completed in 2022. Now he's involved in many deepening projects across the Southeast.

"The harbor deepening projects that are occurring or have occurred throughout our area of operation are extremely important to our Nation," said Hibner, who has deployed in four combat tours to Iraq during

Operation Iraqi Freedom and one deployment to Afghanistan in support of Enduring Freedom.

"We all learned an important lesson during the pandemic when the shipping industry was heavily impacted."

In December 2022, he joined Charleston District's commander, Lt. Col. Andrew Johannes during the Post 45 Charleston Harbor Deepening Project.

"To take a project of this scale and impact from a feasibility study to completion in 12 years and within just six years of its federal construction authorization is a testament to the vision of the Port, the cooperation of local leaders, and the determination and professionalism of the Charleston District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers."

He sees the division continuing to execute all the historically large programs "in the incredible and professional way they do it," he said.

One of the challenges he cites facing the division, is a challenge many organizations face, the new paradigm of teleworking.

"We need to remain connected in our 'new normal.' I believe great professional relationships are grounded in personal relationships. As we work more remotely and have more telework, I hope we still find time to check in on our teammates, look out for each other, and find opportunities to make each other better every day – whether we're in person or not!"

When asked if he had any new year's resolutions, the general was succinct. "No hurricanes in '23."

ARMY TRAINING CENTER, FORT JACKSON COMMANDING GENERAL LEADS CADENCE FOR PROTECTING THE NATION

By Francisco G. Hamm

It's early morning. As the sun slowly rises over the horizon, a cacophony of sounds ring in the distance. As the echoes meander closer, distant figures make their way over a hill. Now more pronounced, melody blends into a crescendo. It's a platoon of Army Soldiers running, lined up like precision, bellowing out in unison, a military cadence. The cadence is so strong, you can feel it building camaraderie and boosting morale, transforming these Soldiers into a cohesive unit. Just another morning in the life of Fort Jackson.

Located in Columbia, South Carolina, Fort Jackson provides the Army with trained, disciplined, motivated and physically fit warriors who espouse the Army's core values and are focused on teamwork. Leading this mission is Brig. Gen. Jason E. Kelly, the 53rd commanding general of the Army Training Center and Fort Jackson.

Accomplishing this mission means training more than 45,000 basic training and 12,000 additional advanced training Soldiers every year.

"The responsibility of Fort Jackson is to use its will and resources to protect the nation by generating tomorrow's fighting force," said Kelly.

Kelly says this is accomplished by creating and maintaining an environment where people are enabled, empowered, and protected to work to their natural best with a true sense of belonging.

"There is no place I'd rather be than right here. I am honored to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Team Jackson and train the future generation of our Army," Kelly said.

Positive, engaged, and hyper-aware, the general has a

vision for his tenure. He wants to boost Fort Jackson's current trajectory as the flagship training center and a destination of choice and create a climate and culture of putting people first, recognizing that it is our people who accomplish the mission supported by their families.

"I want to engage, reach out, and be an ambassador for our installation and our Army. Perhaps most importantly, I want to be a good ancestor. I want to make intelligent, forward-looking decisions that will positively affect generations of Soldiers and families," Kelly added.

Prior to Fort Jackson, Kelly was the South Atlantic Division commander, so he understands the importance of partnerships from both sides.

"I learned a lot watching the Savannah District rehab Pope Army Airfield a couple years ago at Fort Bragg. I witnessed the power of collaboration, transparency, and persistent engagement," he said.

Now he can experience the partnership as a customer.

"We enjoy great collaboration with the Charleston District. We trust the District and the District is actively engaged here at Fort Jackson," said Kelly.

According to Kelly, USACE must have good partners.

"We are dependent on strong relationships and good partnerships. We are dependent on you," he said.

Kelly enjoys being a partner and said, "I'm doing my very best as a senior commander to make sure Fort Jackson is a good partner," he said.



"Every day is an opportunity for me to be and do better than I did yesterday," he said.

One of Kelly's favorite books is "Think Again" by Adam Grant. He explains that the author suggests that we should be deliberate about our efforts to reconsider, rethink, reevaluate and reimagine our beliefs, thoughts, and identities.

As for effective leadership, Kelly believes every day is a turning point.

"I subscribe to this. What I am today is provisional. Everything is on the table. I reserve the right to learn and grow," he said.

According to Kelly, what makes the mission of Fort Jackson so special is it generates readiness for the nation.

"I never lose sight of what we do here at Fort Jackson. We create disciplined, trained, physically fit, resilient, and morally grounded Soldiers for the nation. The leaders and Soldiers that we provide are our legacy," he said.

And on most mornings, you can witness the early stages of this legacy forming, platoon after platoon, Soldier after Soldier, in the form of a song.

TONYA WILLIS: CHARLESTON DISTRICT'S SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMS 'DOOR TO THE CORPS'

Story and Photo By Francisco G. Hamm

For small businesses looking to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District, the easiest way is to listen to the excitement and passion coming from the voice of Tonya Willis, the office of small business programs chief.

Willis, with her infectious smile and energy, leads the small business program efforts and relishes her role as a facilitator to others.

"I love to connect small businesses with the government and keep them in the forefront of government thoughts," said Willis. "We create contracts with different entities and are always thinking about how to employ and engage small businesses."

It's an important job, as the number of small businesses in the United States as of 2022 is 32.5 million and comprises 99.9% of all American businesses, according to the Small Business Association. In fiscal year 2022, the district had a successful year, obligating 760 contracts totaling \$293 million with 61% of contract dollars obligated to small businesses.

Willis recently worked in the district's contracting office as the business oversight branch chief for about three years before moving into her current position.

An 10-year Army veteran, she has been trained to achieve success in everything she does. She joined the Army after high school graduation as a graphic specialist and a paratrooper for six years. A military spouse who moved often, including several international assignments, she began working on a bachelor's degree through American Military University online, as well as completed her master's degree from the University of Phoenix in 2011.

"After the Army, I started to look for transferable skills since I was moving a lot as a military spouse," she said. "I fell into contracting by asking a question while in Germany," she said, referring to the moment when she asked about intern opportunities in the contracting office within the European District in Wiesbaden where she eventually landed a job as an intern.

She has been a contracting specialist and small business champion ever since.

There has been a variety of interesting and smart people she has met and worked with over the years, but one in particular became her role model and mentor.

"Lisa is such a great ambassador and storyteller of the district," she said, referring to Lisa Metheney, the Charleston District's senior civilian. "She is a wonderful leader who cares about the district's people, purpose, and plans. I try to emulate that in my role working with small businesses."

For small businesses wanting to work with the federal government, one of the first things to do is register on the systems for acquisition management website at www.sam.gov. Once registered, the website, U.S. Federal Contractor Registration, vets the small businesses, helps streamline federal sector onboarding and lets agencies know the business has been screened by the government.

"They can also reach out to small business representatives such as myself or to their local PTAC which is a local procurement technical assistance center," she said. "Each state has a PTAC who connects with their local communities to help small businesses understand how to work with federal, state and local levels of government."



According to Willis, there are a lot of resources that can aid small businesses who want knowledge and growth.

"My job is to be their first contact and get them in the door," she said with a smile.

Willis believes the small business contractors are great partners who are essential to helping us accomplish our important missions.

"We couldn't do it without them and our door to the Corps is always open," she said, with pride and that big welcoming smile.



AMANDA HEATH TAKES “PLAYING WITH DIRT” TO NEW HEIGHTS

Story and Photo By Francisco G. Hamm

Sand sifts through her fingers as a small clump of dirt attracts her attention. Standing in the marsh with a tall, hefty pair of boots and a ball cap to shade the sun, she studies it, looks in her sample book and decides, this is a hydric soil. Meet Amanda Heath, a regulator with the Charleston District, who has taken “playing in the dirt” to new heights.

The regulatory field includes a unique and diverse group of specialists including biologists, ecologists, botanists, engineers, environmental engineers, environmental protection specialists, geologists, physical scientists, and administrative support staff. They have an important role, responsible for protecting many of the nation's aquatic environments including oceans, rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, and wetlands while balancing it with development.

It's the role of this regulatory team to balance reasonable economic development with environmental protection. Leading this important mission is Heath, who was recently selected as the new Regulatory Division chief.

From Maine, Heath discovered and caught the travel bug early. She went to California and earned a undergraduate degree in chemistry from Sonoma State University in 2002 and then travelled to New Mexico, where she received a master's in chemistry from the University of New Mexico in 2008.

After her studies, she packed her bags once again and ended up as a chemist for the Alaska District's engineering division. It's there in the last frontier, where she discovered her future was in regulatory.

“I worked really hard learning all about regulatory from the ground up and was happy to be in a position where I could work in the field and also help the public,” said

Heath, who made Alaska home for nine years.

Bags packed once again, she landed in Charleston.

Now five years with the Charleston District, Heath says the regulatory program here has been a rather dynamic one over the past few years with numerous regulation changes that has required more coordination with outside agencies and the public, not to mention internal training.

“The regulatory field is very challenging,” said Heath. “We represent the federal government and we're telling people what they can do with their private land. It's a difficult requirement for folks, but it's due to laws that say water, whether the water is a wetland, a stream, or a harbor, is a public resource.

“It's our job to help the public navigate these legal requirements,” she added.

In the 2022 fiscal year, the Charleston District's Regulatory Division processed 1,515 regulatory permits, reviewed 1,457 jurisdictional determinations and over 860 other actions, including pre-application meetings.

One of her favorite aspects of the regulatory process is working with her team.

“I love my team,” she said beaming with pride.

Although she now works mostly behind a desk, any chance she gets, she goes to the field.

“Out in the field is where you can see and feel the environment,” she said, “and it helps the legislative words we read and interpret come to life.”

NEW BARRICADE TO PROVIDE VITAL SECURITY AT SAVANNAH RIVER SITE

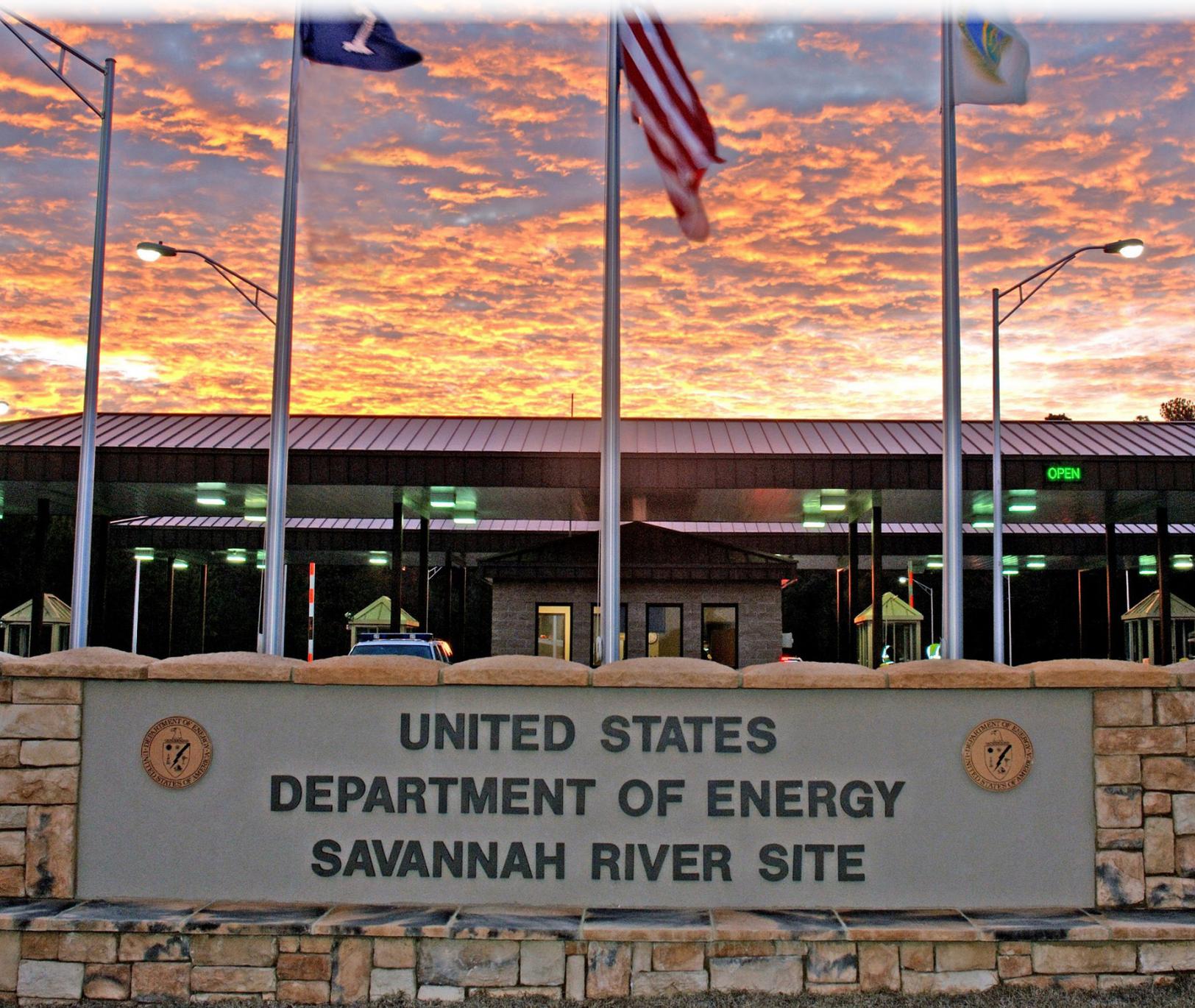
By Dylan Burnell

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District is constructing a new entrance barricade at the Savannah River Site near Aiken, South Carolina.

The \$3.2 million project will replace a more than 20-year-old barricade at the site, which was originally intended to be temporary. It is now the third most

utilized entrance to the site. The new permanent barrier will consist of a ballistic-rated guard house, restrooms, inspection canopies, guard booth, and expanded driving lanes with traffic control devices.

The project is scheduled to complete by the end of the year.



“

The Savannah River Site is unique. Due to their mission, very tight security must be maintained. It is necessary to upgrade these facilities due to the sensitive nature of what is done there.

“We’re constructing a permanent facility that expands their capabilities by providing more space, increased traffic throughput and more inspection stations,” said Robert Sorenson, Charleston District IIS project manager. “All of this greatly improves the security of SRS and the officers manning the site.”

The SRS is an approximately 310-square-mile site managed by the Department of Energy that is spread across Aiken, Barnwell and Allendale counties.

Established in 1950 by the Atomic Energy Commission, initial construction at SRS began in the early 1950s to support the production of tritium and plutonium for the nation’s defense programs and became a nuclear stockpile facility. Nuclear weapons stockpile stewardship, atomic materials stewardship, and environmental stewardship are currently supported at the site. Focus on these areas has led to continuing missions in tritium reprocessing, defense waste processing, environmental remediation, and waste cleanup efforts.

The Charleston District supports the SRS through an interagency agreement dating back to 1985. The District’s primary responsibilities are project management and design/construction services. One of the areas the district supports at the site is enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear energy and the non-proliferation of nuclear materials.

“The Savannah River Site is unique. Due to their mission, very tight security must be maintained. It

is necessary to upgrade these facilities due to the sensitive nature of what is done there,” Sorenson said.

Following a conceptual study, several options were presented for the new barricade. SRS selected the current concept and the District solicited and awarded a design-build contract. Completion of the design will happen in the coming months. After which, demolition of the temporary barricade and construction of the new one will immediately begin.

A strong partnership with DOE is vital to a project like this.

“We worked closely together to understand their needs and they were involved on a weekly basis in our planning,” said Sorenson.

To construct such an important asset meant understanding their needs completely. Through strong communication with DOE, the Charleston District was able to design a facility that would significantly enhance the security of the site.

“It’s a critical project for Charleston District,” Sorenson said. “It is a small project that’s critical to the mission of SRS, it’s important to show we can deliver on the small projects with the same level of quality as we do the large project.”

The new barricade will provide the enhanced security needed at the site, something the Charleston District is proud to do.

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This issue is dedicated to our Charleston District Construction Control Representative

Robert "Bobby" Edward Crosby, Jr.

Nov. 25, 1954 - Jan. 20, 2023



Photo By Francisco G. Hamm