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**@CharlestonCorps**

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# From the Commander

Greetings to all of our loyal Palmetto Castle readers!

This is a very special issue of the Palmetto Castle that will look quite different than usual. This is our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue, celebrating a decade of our quarterly magazine! If you've been following along with us since the beginning, you've certainly seen a change in the magazine over the years. Our Corporate Communications team has done an excellent job of refining their skills in producing a highly-professional product to convey the many ways Charleston District is making a positive impact on the community, state, and nation.

This issue of the magazine is formatted differently than we've ever done before. We're looking back at some stories from over the years about major projects and programs, and we're giving you an update on their current status. You'll see on each page a copy of an old article and in what issue it originated. On the right side of each page, you'll see a shorter, updated article about how things have progressed over the last 10 years. Along the bottom of each page there will be some quick facts about how the project looks now. I think you'll be as impressed as I was at the tremendous impact we have had in such a short period of time.

It's not often you get to reflect back over a full decade. We're often too busy making sure we meet the next deadline and moving forward rather than looking back at what we've done. This issue of the magazine allows us to do that.

For the Palazzini Family, it's also a time to reminisce because our time in Charleston is already over and we'll be moving on this summer. As the Palmetto Castle looks back at the last 10 years, I've been looking back at the last two years. It has been my incredible privilege to serve as commander of the great Charleston District. This team of professionals is unrivaled and I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of delivering so much benefit to the nation.

I simply can't thank our partners enough for the many ways you've joined with the District in tackling some very complex problems. The process is rarely perfect, and it takes strong communication and enduring relationships to solve the complicated things demanding our attention. I've benefitted greatly from the pro-



fessional interactions with all our partners and would like to thank each of you for your dedication and teamwork.

You and the Charleston District will be in good hands for the next two years. I'm happy to announce I will be succeeded by Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd at a Change of Command ceremony on July 12<sup>th</sup>. LTC Honderd brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from several USACE assignments, including her most recent job as the deputy district commander in Rock Island District. I know you'll welcome her as fully as you welcomed me.

It has truly been a pleasure to serve you all and I appreciate how fully my family has been accepted here over the last two years. THANK YOU, and I wish you all the best!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Palazzini".

Jeffrey Palazzini, PMP  
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army  
Commander and District Engineer





Photos and article by: Sean McPhee

It was a packed house when nearly 400 residents of Kershaw, S.C., and Lancaster County, S.C., piled into the Andrew Jackson Recreation Center to hear about the latest developments in the Haile Gold Mine permit process and voice their concerns and questions to representatives of the Charleston District.

The community meeting began with an hour long meet-and-greet session where residents were able to talk with representatives from the District and other agencies about the project. Here, the Corps debuted a new interactive, graphic presentation of the proposed mine plan and its environmental effects. The map, available at [www.HaileGoldMineEIS.com](http://www.HaileGoldMineEIS.com), takes users through the various elements of the mine during different stages of the proposed 14-year mining project. The map shows the proposed site as it appears now and what differences there would be each year if the project is approved. The map also has user-friendly pop-out boxes with explanations of each element of the project.

After the meet-and-greet session, Dr. Richard Darden, project manager and biologist, led a presentation on the District's alternatives analysis report, progress on groundwater modeling work, and schedule milestones for the remainder of the project. The applicant's July 2013 revised mitigation plan to compensate for losses of wetlands and streams at the gold mine site prompted comment and questions from many attending the meeting. The plan proposes acquiring three ecologically important tracts of land, Rainbow Ranch in Lancaster County and Cooks Mountain and Goodwill Plantation in Richland County, for donation to the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' Natural Heritage Program.

"The proposed plan is unusual, but not unprecedented," said

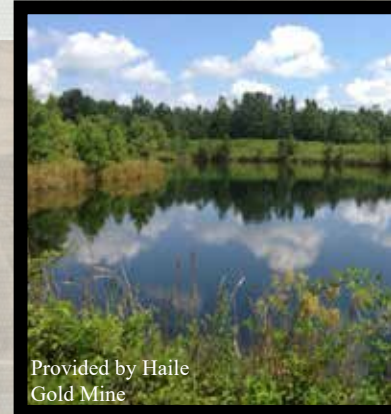
Darden. "Haile Gold Mine proposes a large-scale project with significant impacts, which may necessitate the need to look beyond the local watershed for compensation."

Darden stressed that the proposed mitigation plan is only in the review stage now. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement, scheduled for release in March 2014, will address the entire project's impacts as well as mitigation plans.

At the project's first public meeting, in October 2011, residents asked for future meetings that would help explain the process along the way. While not a legal requirement, this community meeting was held as an extra effort to keep the public informed about the project and the Corps' process.



Opposite left: Alison Uno of Cardno Entrix, the District's third-party contractor, shows local residents the new interactive graphic presentation of the proposed mine plan and its environmental effects during the meet-and-greet session.  
 Opposite right: John Robinson (far right) of Cardno Entrix discusses project updates with local residents during the meet-and-greet session.  
 Opposite middle left: The proposed plan includes leaving three out of eight excavated mine pits as pit lakes, such as this one.  
 Opposite right: Dr. Richard Darden leads a presentation on the Haile Gold Mine project before answering questions from the community.



Provided by Haile Gold Mine



## REGULATORY DIVISION ACTIONS SINCE 2009

Issued **7,043** general permits

Performed **2,249** compliance inspections

Issued **1,960** individual permits

Resolved **241** non-compliance cases



UPDATE 2019

By Sara Corbett

The Haile Gold Mine permit decision is one of the Charleston District's largest regulatory actions in the last 10 years, and it was an application that the Corps spent several years studying and reviewing to ensure that due diligence was done before issuing the final permit in October 2014.

The permit application, which was submitted to the District in January 2011, was a request to place fill in waters of the U.S. during reactivation of the mine and included opening new mine pits, building new ore storage and processing facilities. However, reactivating the mine meant that 120 acres of wetlands and 24,460 feet of stream would be directly impacted where the mine was located in Lancaster County, South Carolina.

"Since the proposed project would make such a big impact, we spent three-years completing an Environmental Impact Study," said Shawn Boone, project manager. "That included detailed data collection and mathematical modeling of predicted groundwater drawdown and potential effects on the wetlands and streams before issuing the permit."

Mining operations began in 2016 and started producing gold in January 2017, 190 years after the original mine opened prior. The applicant had the intention of mining approximately 200 million ounces of gold but, since opening, has discovered that there is more gold below an open pit. To extract this gold, Haile Gold Mine will require a modification to their permit as well as a supplemental EIS from the Corps.

Haile Gold Mine, Inc. has proposed to expand mining operations at their existing Haile Gold Mine located in Lancaster County in north-central South Carolina. The proposed project would include expansion of surface mining and associated mine pits and overburden storage facilities, initiation of underground mining at the Horseshoe deposit, and increased ore processing through optimization of the mill and related infrastructure. This includes expansion of the water management system and existing tailings storage facility.

A SEIS request was submitted to the District in April 2018, and since then the District has once again been diligently studying and researching the impacts, which are projected to be approximately 90 acres of wetlands and 14,000 linear feet of stream.

"During the SEIS, we will be analyzing groundwater hydrology and geochemistry to see what potential impacts the new construction could have on the surrounding environment," said Boone. "In April 2019, we held a public scoping meeting to give the surrounding community the opportunity to provide comments and concerns they have for us to take into consideration during the SEIS."



Opened **One** new branch in Greenville, SC

Completed **17,452** jurisdictional determinations



# Post 45 Construction Underway

By: Sean McBride

At the scene of most kickoff events or groundbreakings, you'll see ceremonial shovels digging into the ground or framed blueprints of the new facility standing proud and tall. However, if your groundbreaking is actually taking place three miles off-shore, your ceremony looks a little different.

On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, a ceremony was held aboard the USS Yorktown to celebrate the start of construction of the Charleston Harbor Post 45 Deepening Project. The event, put on by the South Carolina Ports Authority, was a celebration of eight years of planning and hard work to begin deepening the federal channel portion of Charleston Harbor to 52 feet.

"The Corps has been maintaining the Charleston Harbor for more than 140 years and today's celebration is proof of our commitment to the generation of jobs, the movement of imports and exports, helping to grow a stronger economy, protecting our environment and improving the quality of life for all Americans," said USACE Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite. "Together we will provide world class service to the nation and will continue to lead in finding ways to deliver our infrastructure through innovation."

The event featured a handful of speeches from Semonite, South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster, U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, SCPA CEO Jim Newsome, several state senators and others. Each talked about the impact the port has on the state and nation and how the economic engine will be

able to continue growing thanks to the deepening by the Charleston District.

Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company deployed its hopper dredge the next day and begin pumping material from the Entrance Channel. The Entrance Channel will take the longest of the three reaches that need to be deepened, so it was started first. The Entrance Channel is actually being dredged to 56 feet, where the dredge will encounter harder material, such as limestone, that will be more difficult to remove, not to mention the more difficult sea conditions. The current dredging cycle will end on March 31<sup>st</sup> in order to avoid turtle nesting season.

"I am committed to the Corps becoming an agent of change in addressing the water resource needs for this nation," said Semonite. "We will find ways to deliver first class water resource solutions to the nation as effectively and efficiently as possible, to be innovative and forward thinking."

The project has come a long way since the Charleston District began the reconnaissance phase of the project in 2011 to determine if there was federal interest in this project. Now, the Charleston District is looking at a 40-76 month window to complete the entire dredging of the federal channel. For the next several years, expect to see at least one dredge, if not more, at pretty much any given point as we work toward a deeper channel that will reduce transportation inefficiencies in Charleston Harbor.



Left: Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite addresses the crowd at the Post 45 celebration. Opposite page left: Gov. Henry McMaster talks about the impact of the project. Opposite page right: The Post 45 officially started.



**60** million cubic yards of material to be dredged

## POST 45 HARBOR DEEPENING

**8** artificial reefs constructed with dredged material

**\$549** million is the cost of the project

**140** years of maintenance by the Corps

**3** years saved under SMART planning



By Sean McBride

When Charleston Harbor was deepened to 45 feet from 1999-2004, people were amazed at the potential. Fast forward just a few years and advancements in technology more than doubled the capacity for container ships, driving the need for a deeper harbor yet again.

In 2010, the Charleston District conducted a reconnaissance study to see if there was federal interest in doing a study on the feasibility of improving the harbor. The reconnaissance study found that the benefits of deepening Charleston Harbor would likely exceed the costs, so the District and SC Ports Authority began the Feasibility Phase of the Charleston Harbor Post 45 Project. This phase was meant to conclusively determine what specific plan for deepening and/or widening the harbor, if any, best balanced economic benefits to the nation, costs, and environmental impacts.

It was determined that the inner harbor would be deepened to 52 feet and the Entrance Channel to 54 feet.

The project has drawn the attention of many high-profile political figures over the years. President Barack Obama named the project in his “We Can’t Wait” initiative in 2011 and Vice President Joe Biden visited in 2013 to see the harbor for himself. The District has hosted former Gov. Nikki Haley on the S/V Evans for a personal tour and has met with Gov. Henry McMaster, Sens. Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott, and numerous members of the House of Representatives and mayors about the status of the project.

Then, the District moved into the Preconstruction Engineering and Design Phase in 2015. The project moved into the Construction Phase in 2017 with work beginning in the Charleston Harbor Entrance Channel.

The District plans to remove approximately 20 million cubic yards of material from the Entrance Channel. During this time, contracts will also be awarded for the Upper and Lower Harbor portions of the project to remove another 40 million cubic yards of material. The total project cost is planned to be approximately \$549 million and take 40-76 months.

“We’re proud of the efficiency in which we’ve conducted the Post 45 project,” said Lt. Col. Jeff Palazzini, district commander. “This project is critical to our region and the nation and we’ve worked hard to get it started and moving forward.”

The new depth of Charleston Harbor will allow for neo-Panamax container ships to come in and out of the port at all times of the day. Right now, large ships are tide-restricted, causing transportation inefficiencies. The deeper harbor will benefit Charleston, South Carolina and the nation for many years to come.



ation.  
Post 45 project on South Carolina.



**52** feet is the new depth

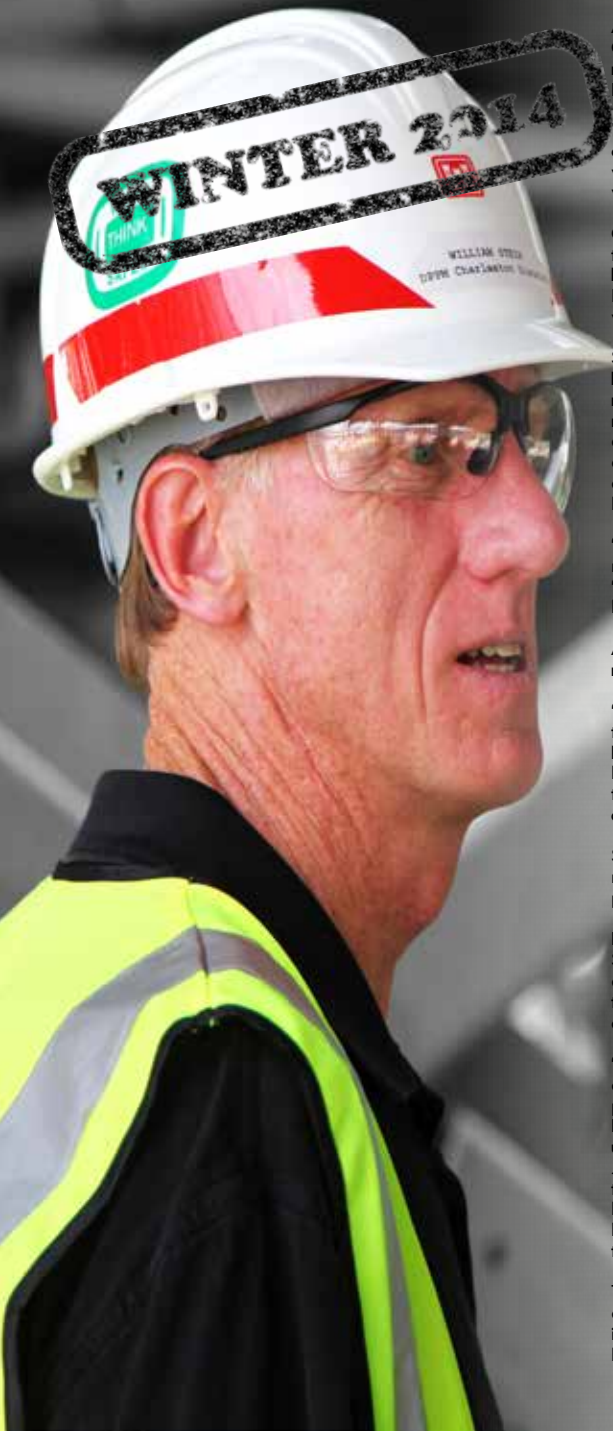
**\$9** million saved under SMART planning

**4** different types of dredges used



# Looking Back...

Article and photos by Sara Corbett



*"You can let things happen, make things happen, or wonder what happened."*  
-Unknown

After 39.5 years of making things happen with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bill Stein retired as Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management of the Charleston District.

While a senior studying engineering at Bucknell University, one of Stein's professors encouraged him to apply for a position with the Baltimore District as a trainee. Stein interviewed and was offered the job before he even graduated from college.

On July 22, 1974, Stein started his civil service career as a trainee with the structural design team, but he quickly worked his way up to a structural engineer. After three years with the Baltimore District, he moved to the Savannah District where he worked on projects at Moody Air Force Base and Fort Stewart.

Stein landed in the South Atlantic Division in Atlanta, where he found, and spent 20 years working on, his passion: business process. While serving as the acting chief of the project management branch, he realized that the districts he oversaw didn't talk to each other, much less work together. Seeing this as a flaw in the system, he started a "regional village" for districts to come together, collaborate and streamline their business practices.

"I spent six years working on this concept, but I continually received resistance and pushback from the districts," said Stein. "It was difficult to handle, but I trudged ahead because I truly believed this process would help the Corps grow."

After several attempts at a promotion at SAD, Stein threw his name in the hat for the DDPM position in the Charleston District.

"Aside from the several interviews, I had been passed over for the regional business position at SAD, which was a position I knew I would be great at, since it was what I had done for the last six years," said Stein. "But it ended up being the best thing to happen to me. If I had gotten the job, I would never have come to the Charleston District and I have loved my time here."

Since he was now the head civilian, he could take his years of research and ideas and finally put them into practice with no pushback.

It didn't take Stein long to put his plans into action. In 2006, Stein hired Lauri Newkirk-Paggi to lead the contracting team, and in 2008 the Savannah District gave the Charleston District the construction projects at Fort Jackson; these two coinciding events led to the "perfect storm."

"Two of Lauri's former co-workers were about to lose their jobs due to base realignment and closure," Stein said. "They were project managers for the U.S. Marine Force Reserves. So when I hired them, it brought MARFORRES on as customers. It ended up being the best thing we could have ever done. With Fort Jackson and MARFORRES as customers, we were able to go to other agencies and showcase our work. Since then we have been hired by nearly 20 other federal agencies and our workload has grown from \$60 million a year and 118 employees to \$260 million a year and 231 employees."

The District continued to grow due to Stein's outreach to other agencies and soon other districts started asking him for advice, ironically, it was the same districts that pushed back in the beginning, and Stein was more than happy to help them.

"Bill has excellent foresight and the ability to execute a plan," said Lt. Col. John Litz, District Commander. "It is incredibly fortunate to have had his guidance for as long as we did."

Stein had finally accomplished what he had set out to do. It was time to retire.

"My ideas are well established within the Corps and are catching on in the other districts," said Stein. "The process is complete. And I am ready to spend my retirement on my own course, not in meetings."

With Stein's retirement came a vacancy to fill the role of DDPM. Lisa Metheny was a perfect fit for Lisa Metheny, who had 14 years experience with the Corps, 14 of those years in the Charleston District, as the deputy assistant chief, project management for Stein. As deputy, she was promoted into the role of DDPM without missing a beat.

"It was a tough choice with a high level of competition. Bill was the best fit for the District," said Litz. "It was a smooth transition, which is exactly what I needed."

Metheny started with the Huntington District as a project manager. She worked part time in the Corps while obtaining her master's in business administration from Marshall University. Upon graduation, Metheny worked as an economist by the Huntington District. There she decided to head to warmer climates and joined the Charleston District.

During her past 20 years with the Corps, Metheny has worn a variety of different hats including project manager, Europe District, public affairs officer in the Charleston District and volunteered to deploy on disaster relief projects. Metheny took on exciting projects at Fort Jackson Harbor Post 45 deepening project and protection projects.

"I love to learn, so I took every opportunity to move to different positions and projects so I could learn. There was no time to know about the Corps and the District," said Metheny. "The more I learned, the more I loved it for the Corps."

And learning is exactly what Metheny has done. She is the "unofficial-expert-on-everything" in the Corps at the Charleston District and makes sure to ask her for input on their projects. She has a responsibility of mentoring to several Districts. Metheny offers them career advice and guidance and is always herself available to them.

"We are extremely lucky to have Lisa on our team. I know that when I am with Lisa, we can handle anything. She will have the answer or a viable solution."

But Metheny will be the first to tell you she doesn't know where she is today without having someone to guide her during her career and her list of mentors is long. It is due to all of her experiences.

"She is so eager and such a quick study, it is a pleasure to work with her," said Stein. "I couldn't be more than happy to have her as the new DDPM. She will do a fantastic job leading the District."

Happy golfing, Bill, and congratulations, Lisa!

## BUILDING STRONG ACTIONS

#18 in program size for USACE

76% increase in staff size in 10 years

5,731 contract actions since 2009

Work conducted in 11 states and 2 countries

29 Professional Engineers in the District



# ...Looking Forward

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Charleston District  
aid Stein. "My work  
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UPDATE 2019

By Glenn Jeffries

As we celebrate this ten year milestone, we wanted to reflect on our senior civilian leadership. Our head civilian provides the important continuity to our District in comparison with our two year rotation cycle of the District Commander. Bill Stein was our Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management, or DPM, from 2003 to 2013. He retired after nearly 40 years of service to our nation. Lisa Metheny filled his shoes starting in January of 2014. As Metheny was previously Stein's deputy, she was able to hit the ground running after she was selected for this executive role. Metheny is one of a handful of female DPMs around the country and is one of the youngest.

In his last five years as DPM, Stein says he is most proud of the growth the District made in the area of outreach and reimbursable work. "A drastic movement was started to plant seeds with other federal organizations so that we could do design and construction work for them," said Stein. "At the start, we knew we didn't have the expertise to accomplish the work, but we knew that we did have sister districts that could be utilized." Once known as just a small "dredging only" District, we are now busy with millions of work for Department of Defense, plus a host of other federal agencies. Since retirement, Stein and his wife are enjoying traveling to parts of our country they hadn't seen before and have even taken a few international trips. Being able to spend so much time with their five grandchildren has been his greatest joy.

Metheny says it seems more like five days ago than five years ago since she began this fun, but tough job. "I truly believe this is the best job in the Corps," says Metheny. "Though there are challenging and long days and days when it seems nothing is going right, there are far more days when I leave the office with a sense of accomplishment for the work that has been done and the problems that have been solved."

She has enjoyed watching the District's largest project, the Charleston Harbor Post 45 Deepening project, continue to have such great success. She was the Civil Works Chief when this project kicked off and was knee deep in the day-to-day technical aspects of the project. Now she is involved only in the much bigger picture of the project, responsible for communicating with our Division, Headquarters and our Congressional delegation on its progress. Although this is the largest project in the District's history, she is proud of our smaller successes as well. "I am so proud to be a member of the Charleston team where employees give their best every day," said Metheny. "It is an honor and a privilege to serve as the District's head civilian and I will do my best to keep moving the District forward the next ten years."

**\$2.5** billion awarded  
in contracts since 2009

**4,527** social media followers



# Folly & Myrtle Getting Sandy

By: Sean McBride

Pretty soon, the more than 15 million visitors each year to both Folly Beach and the Grand Strand will have new sand to set their chairs on. But, more importantly, the people and property behind the dunes will have a reduced risk from storms.

Stabilizing beaches and dunes through renourishment is a critical mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Charleston District is concurrently renourishing both Folly Beach and the Grand Strand, consisting of Myrtle, North Myrtle, and Garden City/Surfside beaches, in order to minimize the impacts to people and infrastructure during a storm event like South Carolina has seen in each of the previous three years.

The \$10 million Folly Beach project is being funded through federal emergency beach rehabilitation funding from Hurricanes Matthew and Irma. Through the project, approximately 750,000 cubic yards of material are being placed on Folly Beach.

"The project is unique in that it is considered a beach renourishment project," said Wes Wilson, project manager. "The sand being placed on the beach is being dredged from the federal channel for recreational boaters, meaning two projects are being completed at once. Sand was also pumped from Folly River in March for wildlife habitat construction."

While the Folly Beach project is scheduled to begin in September, the Myrtle Beach project will begin in the beginning of August. This \$34.8 million project is 100% federally funded and will place approximately 1.3 million cubic yards of material across the three beaches. This follows up the 1.3 million cubic yards of sand that were placed just last year in Myrtle Beach and Garden City/Surfside beaches through the project due to Hurricanes Matthew and Joaquin.



Top photo: Sand being pumped on to Folly Beach.  
Photo: Myrtle Beach being renourished.



## STORM DAMAGE REDUCTION PROTECTION

48 miles of beach renourished

21 turtle nests relocated out of the project's footprint

7.4 million dump trucks worth of sand

7 dredges used: Hopper dredge used for Myrtle Beach & Cutterhead dredge used for Folly Beach

# Hurricane



...ed a beneficial use  
...ager. "The material  
...ged from Folly River,  
...onal and commercial  
...ompleted at once.  
...onto Bird Key Stono  
..."

"We acknowledge that people may see temporary inconveniences while the project is underway, but it has many long-term benefits, especially during storm season," said Wilson. "Barring mechanical or weather delays, active construction moves quickly and should only be in front of any particular building for three to four days."

The Myrtle Beach project is scheduled to be completed in December. Work on each project happens 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and approximately 500 feet of beach is completed per day. As a portion of the projects are taking place during sea turtle nesting season, the contractor is complying with the requirements of the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammals Protection Act.

The public can view the progress of each project in real time on the Charleston District's website.

...uled to wrap up in  
...st kicked off at the  
...project is 100 percent  
...approximately 1.4 million  
...reaches that make  
...illion cubic yards of  
...North Myrtle and  
...emergency funding



**UPDATE 2019**

By Sara Corbett

Protecting the infrastructure behind the dunes along the South Carolina coast has always been a priority at the Charleston District, and during the last 10 years, the District has completed 10 beach renourishment projects.

"South Carolina has weathered several major storms over the last several years," said Wes Wilson, project manager. "Through each storm, the beach renourishments have done their job of protecting the people, homes and businesses beyond the beaches."

Folly Beach was renourished in 2014 as part of a 50 year agreement with the City of Folly Beach and was the first periodic renourishment the beach received since 2005. This particular project placed 1.4 million cubic yards of sand along 5.34 miles of beach, which cost \$30 million.

In 2017, approximately 1.2 million cubic yards of material was placed on North Myrtle, Garden City and Surfside Beaches along 16 miles. Prior to this project it had been nine years since the Grand Strand had been renourished. That renourishment had been a planned periodic renourishment project, but this \$21 million project was funded through federal emergency beach rehabilitation funding from Hurricane Matthew, along with cost-shared construction funding that was appropriated through Congress. Also in 2017, Murrells Inlet received 519,000 cubic yards of material along two miles of beach. That was part of a beneficial use of dredged material projects that was taken from the navigation channel and cost \$6 million.

The 2018 beach renourishment project on Folly Beach was funded through federal emergency beach rehabilitation from Hurricanes Matthew, Irma and Florence, which cost \$15 million and placed approximately 1.2 million cubic yards of sand along the beach. This project also provided the District with the unique opportunity to dredge the Folly River Federal Navigation Channel and place the dredged material on the beach, as well as renourishing Bird Key Stono Heritage Preserve, which is a 35-acre protected bird sanctuary.

"This project was a win-win," said Alan Shirey, environmental engineer. "We were able to be good stewards of taxpayers' money since pumping the dredged material onto Bird Key was the cheapest way to dispose of material and protects the environment by increasing the footprint of Bird Key."

Approximately 3 million cubic yards of material was placed on Myrtle, Surfside, and Garden City Beaches during 2018 and will be placed on North Myrtle Beach in the upcoming 2019 renourishment. This \$45 million project was 100 percent federal funded through federal emergency beach rehabilitation from Hurricanes Irma and Florence.

**\$117** million  
federal and non-federal money  
spent on beach renourishment

**Irma** had the biggest impact to the beaches



# Our Biggest

## 2009

Reestablished the Palmetto Castle

Issued the permit for the Haile Gold Mine in Kershaw

Upgraded to a multibeam sonar system for the SV Evans

Awarded 7 American Recovery Reinvestment Act projects

Issued the permit for the expansion of Boeing South Carolina in North Charleston

## 2010

Celebrated the 25th anniversary of the start of operations at the St. Stephen Powerhouse

Held the inaugural Sweetgrass Pulling Day at the Cooper River Rediversion Project

Completed the Reconnaissance Phase of Post 45

Completed construction of the Mental Health Research Facility at the Charleston VAMC

Launched a Charleston District Twitter page

## 2011

Expedited permits for the construction of the \$350 million BMW manufacturing facility

Renovated the St. Stephen fish lift

Completed the construction of the MARFORRES headquarters building in New Orleans

Hired 21 new employees to support a new preventative maintenance and municipal services contract for the 81st Regional Support Command

Deployed to Alabama to support recovery efforts following the spring tornadoes

## 2013

Launched a Charleston District Facebook page

Began the Post 45 Feasibility Study

Renovated a former bowling alley into the new Department of State HR and resource management headquarters at the Federal Complex in Charleston

## 2012

Completed construction of the Matthews Industrial Park water tower to bring clean drinking water to Orangeburg County



# Accomplishments

of the last 10 years...

## 2015

Completed the FR/EIS for Post 45, determining to deepen the harbor to 52 feet, with an estimated cost of \$549 million

Issued the permit for the construction of the first Volvo automobile plant in the United States, in Ridgeville

Launched a Charleston District Instagram page

Responded to the historic 1,000 year flood throughout South Carolina

Continuing to provide great service to our customers for another 10 years and beyond

## 2019

Responded to South Carolina flood following Hurricane Florence by installing flood barriers to protect critical roadways and infrastructure

Issued a \$213 million contract for dredging in the Charleston Harbor Entrance Channel, the largest contract in the history of the District

Completed the building renovations for our District headquarters office

Recognized as a "World-Class Workplace" within USACE

## 2016

Post 45 moved into the Preconstruction Engineering and Design Phase

Exceeded our small business goals for the fifth year in a row

Christened the new S/V Heiselman

Opened a new regulatory satellite field office in Greenville, SC

## 2017

Conducted the groundbreaking for the new Pierce Terrace Elementary School at Fort Jackson

Post 45 moved into the Construction Phase

Issued the permit for Interstate 73, the South Carolina portion of a roadway to connect Myrtle Beach to Detroit, Mich.

## 2018

Awarded the Public Relations Society of America's Silver Anvil Award of Excellence for the communications campaign around the annual sweetgrass pulling day

Responded to relief efforts resulting from Hurricanes Matthew and Irma



# Feeding 5,200 Soldiers in 90 minutes



Article and photos by Sean McBride, specialist

2012 was another huge year for the program at the Charleston District. Over completed construction on five projects got underway on two projects for \$45 awarded contracts on nine additional million. This was a great year for the by providing first-class facilities for the Soldiers to Basic Training at Fort Jacks

One of the most unique facilities completed this year was the Quad Dining Facility. Construction on the Quad DFAC actual end of FY11 and culminated with a ribbon on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

The Quad DFAC is only the second of try and will serve as the centerpiece of with four battalions of Soldiers being educated in nearby "starship" barracks. have an extremely tight schedule they day, so increasing the efficiency of the was a top priority for the leadership of adjoined two two-story dual DFACs had of feeding three meals per day to 5,200 90 minutes. This efficiency allows for the back to work quicker and prepare for lay ahead.



## FORT JACKSON CONSTRUCTION

**29** District employees at Fort Jackson resident office

**38** buildings constructed in the last 10 years

**50,000** Soldiers trained per year

**15** buildings renovated

**33,076**



public affairs  
 military construction  
 overall, the District  
 s for \$157.8 million,  
 .2 million, and  
 projects for \$97.4  
 Charleston District  
 e 50,000 incoming  
 on this year.

pleted on the base  
 (Quad DFAC).  
 ily began at the  
 ribbon cutting event

its kind in the coun-  
 of a mini-campus  
 housed, trained and  
 ks. These Soldiers  
 must live by every  
 air meal routine  
 at Fort Jackson. The  
 ave the capability  
 200 Soldiers in just  
 ne Soldiers to get  
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A truly unique aspect of the Quad DFAC is the installation of two sets of vacuum tube array-type solar panels, which provide a 30 percent savings in energy costs compared to standard equipment. This system has easy maintenance, simple design, and positive life-cycle cost characteristics. The system, known as the Sun Equinox, will mainly be used to produce energy associated with hot water usage within the Quad DFAC. The solar panels are a great stride forward in the push for making all of our construction projects Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certifiable. Following the guidelines of LEED certifiable buildings puts the Charleston District on the forefront of design and construction of "green" facilities.

Prior to the ribbon cutting, a test meal was held in which the staff of the Quad DFAC hosted a lunch to practice procedures before opening the facility to Soldiers. Several members of the Charleston District team attended the test meal which worked out all the kinks in the system and allowed the staff to figure out and solve any issues with their procedures. Due to a successful test meal, the ribbon cutting, hosted by Fort Jackson Commander Brig. Gen. Bryan T. Roberts, was held a week later to showcase the new facility.

The Charleston District looks at the Quad DFAC as a milestone in constructing all of our projects in the most energy-efficient manner possible. The Quad DFAC was a perfect example of the amazing work completed by the Charleston District's military construction program in FY12.



**UPDATE 2019**

By Sean McBride

It's hard to believe that the responsibility for handling military projects at Fort Jackson was only returned to the Charleston District 10 years ago. Previously, the Savannah District executed projects at Fort Jackson, due to having a military program history. But, in 2008, the Charleston District became a "military district" once again after a reorganization shuffled responsibility for Fort Jackson back to Charleston. This brought a new division to the District and several new jobs.

Since then, the Charleston District has built basic training facilities, barracks, headquarters, physical training tracks, dining facilities and much more for Army Soldiers. With each new upgrade, Soldiers are getting the newest technology and the best opportunity for success.

When the Charleston District first took over the Fort Jackson program in 2008, the military mission was approximately \$59 million. In fiscal year 2019, the military program is approximately \$123 million. Not only that, but the District has executed more than \$1 billion in work at Fort Jackson during that time, increasing the program every year.

This growth showcases how far the program has come. In 10 years, the District military program has gone from a few small renovations and construction projects to building major battalion training complexes and schools. The District is now even building a school for military families, complementing all of the training schools that have been built for Soldiers. Each project showcases experience and trust gained from the project before. As old facilities are phased out, the continued expertise of the District's people is critical to building quality projects for the future.

The District's overall military programs workforce has grown to 37 people. There are currently 29 people in the Fort Jackson Resident Office and eight people dedicated to military programs in the District headquarters. These dedicated professionals serve as design engineers, contracting officers, contracting specialists, construction engineers, quality assurance representatives, project managers and more. Over the last five years, the District has averaged a 4.61 out of five score on the annual Military Customer Satisfaction Survey. These scores come straight from the customers, like Fort Jackson, that we serve and are a testament to the work that is put into building strong for our nation's Soldiers. As with experience, constructive feedback aids in making the District better.

The District sees a continued increase at Fort Jackson with three construction projects planned for FY 20 and projections for many years out. The District is proud to serve as a military district and work with Fort Jackson, where "Victory Starts Here!"

**60%** of the females in the Army attend basic training at Fort Jackson

**\$1** billion of work completed in the last 10 years

maintenance calls, happening 24/7 since 2009



# Sharing The Engineering Motive

By: Clayton Buckaloo, student intern

## “So what would you like to know?”

This is the question I was asked repeatedly over a two week period. Finalizing my junior year at Ashley Hall, I spent two weeks at the Army Corps of Engineers interning with the purpose of learning more about the engineering field and sparking an interest for a potential career. What did I want to know? I knew that civil engineers built roads, buildings, and parking lots, but that’s about all I could say. Much to my excitement, I was immersed into a constant learning atmosphere of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Engineering creates opportunity for the individual and it

fosters opportunity for the greater community. It is a field with a purpose. Each day, I experienced a new and exciting project focused on an individual goal. The most rewarding aspect of it all was witnessing the systematic drawings done by the engineers being translated into the field and implemented on a real life scale.

For instance, I got to see with my own eyes a dredge in Charleston Harbor. It was an immense machine with a large turbine-shaped saw, connected to a large pipeline depositing the sea floor of the harbor onto the Clouter Creek disposal site. For me, not only was I able to enjoy an afternoon out on the harbor, I was able to learn about the dredging process. We met the soil on the other end of the pipeline and witnessed a massive pool of mud collecting below the pipe exit. On the other side of Clouter Creek was this same type of mud, but several months into the drying stage and being broken up by backhoes to allow more water to drain. It was a chance to touch the different sediments and see the various layers of soil. Dredging is an arduous process, but it works.

To be an engineer, it is necessary to collaborate well with contractors, the public, other scientists, and engineers, and any animal species that may be affected by a certain project. A dam that an average citizen is a blocked water passage. Instead of a water passage that could be opened and closed, I saw an involved mathematician working with the ability to manage water flow in Lowcountry. Every specialty of engineering was involved in the dam. Someone had to design the organized maze of wires. Someone had to install and maintain the turbines. Someone had to manage the nearly one million fish, which pass through the locks and are still able to navigate through on account of the functioning fish lift.

My experience at the Corps of Engineers was both fun and enlightening. I realized the importance of a potential career field over the past couple of years. Taking everything I learned, from defining a problem to building a veterans’ center for post-traumatic stress disorder, it is now my job to show the next generation entering the work force that engineering is a field with scientific design that has a critical and lasting impact. And now, I can ask those kids the question – “So what would you like to know?”

SUMMER 2013



One

national USACE STEM Outstanding Team Achievement Award won

STEM

Hosted 75 STEM events

22

Bobber the Water Safety Dog school visits

27

Partnered with colleges, universities, private and public elementary, middle and high schools

7

Summer hires participating in the City of Charleston Mayor’s 2019 Summer Youth Employment Challenge



**UPDATE 2019**

By Sean McBride

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is dedicated to exposing students to a science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) field. STEM subjects are critical to the development of young children and are critical in the Corps' day-to-day activities. In order to grow the future workforce of the Corps, the Charleston District participates in numerous STEM outreach events each year.

Ten years ago, the only STEM activity the District participated in was National Engineers Week. During this week, the District would usually invite a couple of school groups to come to the office and hear slide-show presentations from our engineers about what they did. While this was educational, it was not hands on, and then sat on the shelf until the next year.

Over the last 10 years, the District has vastly improved the number of STEM activities conducted per year, as well as the quality of the events.

The District still regularly speaks to school groups, but there is now an interactive element. Students in recent years have learned how to build towers from cardboard rolls, how water filters through various natural elements by pouring it through fictional ecosystems, or even how to properly conduct a job interview. Interactive opportunities abound when students come to the office for temporary job shadowing and internships as well, where they are immersed in the day-to-day activities of their mentor.

Local students have also been able to take field trips to various project sites in order to see STEM careers in action. These have included trips to Folly Beach to see beach renourishment activities, to the St. Stephen Powerhouse to see the fish lift, and to the new elementary school being built at Fort Jackson.

The District also participates in annual Charleston events, such as SEWE and STEMFest, where thousands of kids learn about wetlands. And, while not directly STEM-related, the District has also been actively seeking opportunities to promote water safety in the community through the use of Bobber the Water Safety Dog, who visits schools and attends events to remind kids to always wear their lifejackets.

The District is committed to teaming with others to strengthen STEM-related programs that inspire current and future generations of young people to pursue careers in STEM fields. Today's students are tomorrow's engineers.



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**31** students hires have worked at the District while in school

**7** articles written for the Palmetto Castle by student interns



# Serving our Customer; No Job Too

Article and photos by Sara Corbett

Updating security systems, replacing carpeting and installing access ladders are all small projects that add up to one big project.

Two years ago, the Charleston District issued its first Job Order Contract (JOC). The JOC is the perfect vehicle for the District to award smaller projects; it allows for a large number of repair, maintenance and minor construction projects to be completed under a single contract rather than issuing individual contracts for each small project. The JOC saves time and money for the District and for the customer, Joint Base Charleston (JBC). JBC encompasses a wide range of organizations such as Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command, Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, Army Strategic Logistics Agency-Charleston, Nuclear Power Training Unit, Naval Munitions Command and Mission Support Group, just to name a few. The District has done work for all of these agencies.

The five-year JOC, that was awarded to Northcon, Inc., won't exceed \$15 million, and of that amount, \$7.5 million

has been awarded on task orders with another \$2.5 million expected to be awarded by the end of fiscal year 2014.

"We anticipate that we will hit the \$15 million limit by this time next year," said Josh Mueller, contracting specialist. "Once that happens, we will set up another JOC to continue serving our customers."

The District has awarded approximately 30 task orders under the JOC that vary greatly. One order can have several small projects under it. For example, ASLAC has a lengthy list of items such as repairing overhead lighting, upgrading restrooms, constructing new offices and installing an HVAC system; the total of all these projects combined was approximately \$865,000. Other orders under the JOC can have just one project. For example, replacing rotting timber cap rails with a sturdy composite rail along the TC Dock for SDDC, which was approximately \$80,000 to replace.

"I have projects that are approximately \$640,000 to projects that are \$1.5 million," said Charlie Johnson, architect

and project manager. "No job is too big for Corps to do."

One of the more unusual projects the District is currently working on is relocating an antenna field for SPAWAR. It wasn't very big, it required a fair amount of work.

"The site the antennas were on was re-purposing an existing site, so we moved the four antennas to a new site," said Brendan Kight, project engineer. "Before we could do anything we had to remove all the trees and the ground and grade and grub the area, which required a lot of work from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control."

Diverse contracting tools and an experienced workforce give the District the ability to complete any size project and provide the best service possible to all of our customers.



Left: Kight inspecting cap rails at the TC Dock  
 Top Right: Kight working on a project  
 Middle Right: A general view of the site  
 Bottom Right: The installation of 55-gallon fuel tanks for ASLAC.

## JOINT BASE CHARLESTON CONSTRUCTION

**\$130** million in contracts awarded

**100** projects completed by the District on JBC

**3,000** lights replaced on the runway

**One** fire protection engineer working on JBC projects



**Small**

or too small for the

istrict has done was  
While the budget  
of work.

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nerator the Corps  
C.  
District replaced 300  
with 1,500 gallon fuel



**UPDATE 2019**

By Helena Owens, A1C, Public Affairs, JBC

Going back to 2012, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District, has partnered with Joint Base Charleston on many projects. These projects range from small jobs such as repaving a bridge or remodeling short stay rooms to bigger jobs such as building brand new living quarters and replacing all the lights on the flightline.

JBC's facilities support more than 90,000 service members and civilians, as well as their dependents. The 24,000 acre base not only has full-time permanent personnel, but also some that come for a short time and need a place to stay. The new Visitor's Quarters will help accommodate the base's large population and its guests.

"The biggest project we have done with JBC is building the Visitor's Quarters," said Dan Klingshirn, USACE project manager. "The Visitor's Quarters will be a 266 room hotel on the Charleston Air Force Base valued at \$59 million. It will be used for personnel who are coming to JBC on official business, such as meetings and trainings."

Klingshirn said the most exciting project for the Corps is the water intrusion repairs project at the Naval Health Clinic.

"The project grew in scope as more leaks were found in the building and it took several years from the time forensic investigation started to the time the construction contract was awarded," said Klingshirn. "The building will remain operational as the contractor replaces the entire exterior enclosure. There will be a lot of moving parts, but our team in the field is up to the challenge!"

The partnership between the Corps and JBC started back in 2010, when the 628th Civil Engineer Squadron commander approached the Corps about executing some projects. The squadron was overwhelmed with work and had hiring restrictions in place, so they needed to find another way to execute the workload.

"We have established a great relationship based on trust and we've built confidence in each other by meeting the commitments we make on both sides," said Klingshirn. "Since the Corps has delivered on promises over the years, JBC's trust in us has increased and we've seen the corresponding increase in workload. It's a win-win situation because we serve as 'overflow capacity' for their CES staff when there are too many projects to handle, allowing us the opportunity to serve military customers locally."

Working with a joint base instead of a traditional base gives the Corps the opportunity to work with many different customers. JBC has Air Force, Navy, Army, Marines and Coast Guard units, as well as 60 mission partners, opening numerous partnership opportunities.

"We value our relationship with every customer at JBC," said Klingshirn. "We take pride in helping solve some of their toughest facilities problems."



**8** agencies supported: JBC, ASLAC, Brig, SPAWAR, SDDC, NHC, NPTU, NNPTC

**1.6** million square feet of office space where janitorial services are conducted



# Innovative Partnerships By: Sean McBride

In 2008, the military construction mission at Fort Jackson, in Columbia, S.C., was turned over to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District from the Savannah District, resulting in an increasingly large workload to support the base that sees 50 percent of all Soldiers entering the U.S. Army each year. While this mission has thrived, it has also provided new opportunities to serve fellow Department of Defense agencies, like the mission the District is now handling for the U.S. Army Reserve's 81st Regional Support Command.

The 81st RSC is headquartered at Fort Jackson, so the District's portfolio and physical proximity to the base made this partnership a perfect fit. The U.S. Army Reserve is broken into four regional support commands, with the 81st RSC managing nine southeastern states and Puerto Rico, which cover approximately 700 Army installations, and are further broken down into 11 sub-regions, labeled by letters.

In fiscal year 2010, the 81st RSC's Deputy Director of Public Works, Frank Eubanks, requested support from the Charleston District. During FY 10 and FY 11, the District was given several design projects and sustainment, restoration, and modernization projects. After performing well with these projects, in FY 12, the District was asked to do a base operating services and preventive maintenance pilot project in Region A, which consists of Louisiana and part of Mississippi. The project included doing inventory on the installations in the region, performing tasks such as identifying equipment that needed maintenance and validating the square footage of facilities. The District then developed contracts for municipal services (custodial, pest, refuse and grounds) and preventive maintenance and emergency repairs in all facilities throughout Region A. The District also completed several additional SRM and design projects, including waterside repair in Morehead City, N.C., and HVAC resets in Vicksburg, Miss., and Fort Jackson, S.C. The success of the work completed by the District has warranted the receipt of preparing the BOS and PM contracts for the remaining regions of the 81st RSC's command, starting with Region G.

The District will soon be awarding a BOS and PM contract in Puerto Rico and is presently completing inventory on the remaining eight regions. Currently, in Puerto

Rico, multiple contracts exist for all BOS and PM work. Upon award of the contract in Puerto Rico, the various services will be provided by just one contractor who can perform all of the required services. Implementing this forward-thinking approach in each region will reduce the multitude of contracts required by the 81st to perform the same level of effort, thereby considerably reducing contract administration, manpower and cost to the government. Also, the benefits of preventive maintenance will extend the service life of all equipment and provide better support and care of each installation.

"The ultimate goal set by the leadership of the 81st RSC is to eventually be able to have Utility Monitoring Control Systems throughout the regions, which are computer systems allowing them to manage both servicing and usage of HVAC, lighting, and water systems at every installation," said Lonnie Nielson, project manager. "Once in place, many of their maintenance problems can be detected and isolated immediately at the headquarters level, thereby providing timely response and corrective actions at each installation while also conserving more energy."

The Charleston District is providing project management, contract administration, design, engineering support, and construction management, while collaborating with Corps districts across the southeast to provide quality assurance during service contract tasks and SRM projects for the 81st RSC regions. The District strives to create more sustainable solutions with all new projects, and this is one step forward.



## FACILITY INVESTMENT SERVICES

32,300

service calls for the 81st RSC

349

football fields is the size of the area we manage

FIS support to  
Army Reserves installations

300

1,500

service calls for MARFORRES





**UPDATE 2019**

By Sean McBride

Facility Investment Services is one of the most important programs the Charleston District has. FIS isn't as well-known as construction, but that doesn't make it any less valuable. In fact, FIS is a longer term, bigger project. Typically, renovations and construction are deemed as "major projects" but keeping previously-constructed buildings in good shape is critical. Maintaining facilities is a lot cheaper than building new ones, and a lot less wasteful, leading to less taxpayer money spent.

FIS is typically broken into the "golden triangle," incorporating three categories: service calls, task orders and preventive maintenance. Service calls can happen 24 hours a day, seven days a week, where the District responds to repair needs at facilities, such as fixing or replacing door handles, pumps, showers, toilets or ceiling tiles. These aren't usually critical, but need to be fixed before they reach that point. Task orders are the same, but typically take more time and cost more money, such as replacing a building's HVAC system. These projects are usually needed quickly, but are more involved. Preventive maintenance is the art of addressing potential problems before they happen so as not to cost much time or money for the customer, such as replacing filters or greasing parts. Identifying these needs is critical to the long-term success of any tangible product.

For the last 10 years, the District's FIS portfolio has grown steadily. What started as a small contract doing work for just the Marine Forces Reserve has expanded to Fort Jackson, the 81<sup>st</sup> Regional Support Command and two Defense Logistics Agency facilities. The reputation has grown for the District's abilities and these agencies have continued to call on the District's experts. The District is now providing FIS on buildings totaling more than 20 million square feet. Many of these buildings are even buildings that the District constructed 10-15 years ago. Being involved with maintenance of buildings we have built allows us to be better-informed on how easy or difficult the buildings are to maintain. This allows us to make changes in future designs to keep maintenance costs reasonable on other projects.

The District continues to look for new opportunities to provide the best service to our customers. We're proud to build new buildings for all of these customers, plus customers like the Veterans Administration and the Department of State, but maintaining existing structures is just as important to the missions of our interagency partners. Keeping them running allows all of our missions to be met and allow each agency to better serve the nation.

**982** buildings for the  
81st, DLA, MARFORRES, Fort Jackson

**23,000** service calls for DLA



# PROUDLY SUPPORTING THE WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT

Article by Sean McBride  
Photos by Sara Corbett

The sounds of exclamation and nervous squealing were prominent on March 20, when the Charleston District hosted their inaugural Wounded Warrior Project fishing tournament with Wounded Warriors from around the Lowcountry. Approximately 20 Wounded Warriors attended the event, which was held at the District's St. Stephen Powerhouse and fishlift.

The Wounded Warriors spent the morning fishing in the tailrace canal for American shad, blueback herring and catfish, and were rewarded with lots of success, which accounted for the sounds of exclamation. But the day wasn't about fishing. It was about providing an activity for our nation's heroes.

"I've reconnected with a lot of old friends and met a lot of new ones and the Corps has been great," said Matthew Witkowski, a Wounded Warrior. "We're catching fish or we're not catching fish and we're still having fun. You're around guys and gals that understand. You don't have to explain if something happens and you start to get the shakes because you can recognize other people's symptoms and they can recognize yours and lend a hand and you know you're amongst friends."

The day was also an opportunity for STEM outreach with Ashley Hall School. Junior girls from the marine biology class came out to aid the Wounded Warriors, as well as learn about fish biology from the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. The girls were put in charge of collecting fish, and then measuring and sexing the fish, as well as collecting scale samples, which is where the sounds of nervous squealing came

from.

"[Fishing] is very important to the biological aspect of South Carolina and DNR because we're taking data of fish that are going through the fishlift," said Liz Walters, a junior at Ashley Hall. "It means so much to be around the Wounded Warriors and my classmates and builds a strong sense of character in the community and builds that connection that we'll remember even as we get older and recognize service members."

The event was held in the middle of fish spawning season, which runs from February 1 through May 15. During this time, most of the 750,000 fish that pass through the fishlift each year will swim through to spawn. This heavy influx of fish made it an ideal time to hold the fishing tournament and collect data on the spawning fish.

The event was a successful day of outreach with both the Wounded Warrior Project and Ashley Hall. The Charleston District is proud to aid in the recovery of our nation's heroes and help grow the minds of our future leaders.

**This page, bottom left: Joe Moran, fish biologist, teaches a student from Ashley Hall how to fish. Bottom right: The students gather around one of the Wounded Warriors who they awarded a fishing pole to for the best example of the schools motto: "Girls who have the will have the ability."**

**Opposite page, top: Wounded Warriors enjoy a beautiful day fishing. Bottom left: Students measure and take scale samples from a fish. Bottom right: A Wounded Warrior casts his line in hopes of catching the biggest fish of the day.**



## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

**5** FEA Expos held to educate the public about government agencies

**33** federal & state agencies at the FEA Expo yearly to display their equipment and missions

**4** Sweetgrass Harvesting Days

**One** PRSA's Silver

**430** students have attended the FEA Expo

**90** students have attended SHD to learn from the experts

**200** sweetgrass pullers have attended



**UPDATE 2019**

By Sara Corbett

The Charleston District prides itself on being actively involved in the Charleston community. Over the past 10 years, the District has hosted many community outreach events, and they have grown exponentially to become huge successes.

In 2014, the District hosted the Inaugural Sweetgrass Harvesting Day (SHD) at the St. Stephen Powerhouse. Sweetgrass basket makers and pullers from all over the Charleston area came to the powerhouse to pull the naturally growing sweetgrass, which they use for their craft. While sweetgrass is not an endangered species, it is declining, due to development, and this makes it difficult for basket makers to find grass. After it was discovered growing naturally and abundantly at the powerhouse, the District started planning the event to occur in late summer, which is harvesting season, and partnered with the Sweetgrass Cultural Arts Festival Association to spread the word. Fifteen basket makers and pullers attended the first event, but each year participation has grown. For a variety of reasons, the sweetgrass basket craft is dwindling, so the District invited students from Miracle Academy to attend the event to learn how to properly harvest the grass. Corps employees and sweetgrass weavers even went into their classroom after their grass had dried to teach them how to weave it into small discs. At the 2018 event, more than 55 harvesters and 25 students attended the event.

Also at the powerhouse property, Wounded Warriors from around the Lowcountry attended the inaugural Wounded Warrior and Veterans Fishing Tournament in the spring of 2014 and the inaugural Dove Hunt that fall. The fishing tournament takes place during fish passage season, which is from February 1 through May 15, to ensure that the conditions are optimal for fishing. Since its inception, students have participated to help the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources collect biological data of the fish that are caught. The 2019 event was the biggest to date, with nearly 50 Veterans and 20 tenth grade biology students from Timberland High School in attendance. The Dove Hunt takes place during SCDNR's designated dove hunting season and, in 2018, 26 Veterans attended.

To cultivate relationships between federal agencies and to educate the public on the services that the agencies provide, the District pioneered, implemented and executed the Federal Executive Association's Annual Government Agencies Exhibition starting in 2015. Federal agencies use displays, equipment and vehicles to interact with and showcase their missions and programs to the public. In 2018, the expo expanded to include state government agencies increasing the number of participants by 25 percent. After the first event, schools were invited to attend in future years to interact with federal civilian and military employees and learn about STEM careers.



Anvil for Excellence award for SHD

Hosted **9** Wounded Warrior events with SCDNR

**80** students have attended WW events

**90** Wounded Warriors engaged





## Past Commander's Quotes:

### Col. Matthew Luzzatto (2015-2017):

Having now served with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, I have witnessed the efforts of almost all of the Corps' districts. This experience has only made it more clear to me that the Charleston District is taking on challenges similar to the Corps' larger districts, and, as a result, the Palmetto Castle not only provides one with a sense of what is happening in South Carolina, but provides a window to the efforts of USACE nationwide.

### Col. John Litz (2013-2015):

Greetings from Baltimore! It is hard to believe it has been almost four years since I left the Charleston District. I am incredibly proud of Charleston District's successes and I expect that will continue into the future. I am very thankful for the friends, partnerships and experiences I gained in Charleston and it's great to see my former SAC teammates around USACE. Keep up the great work!

### Col. (ret.) Jason Kirk

(2009-2011):

My time serving with the Charleston Team was an absolute honor. Communications - via the Palmetto Castle and other means - are key to telling the story of our great group of selfless servants committed to bettering South Carolina's quality of life, economy and military infrastructure.

### Col. (ret.) Ed Chamberlayne (2011-2013):

Serving as the Commander of the Charleston District was THE most enjoyable and rewarding experience of my 25-year military career.

I certainly miss the friendly, professional, hardworking, and fun-loving professionals of the District. My time with the District was focused on pushing the planning process along to achieve the authorization to deepen Charleston Harbor—I am very pleased to see the deepening underway now just six years later, which is "lightning fast" for a civil works project! I treasured my time exploring the beautiful ecosystems throughout the Lowcountry with the Regulatory Division.

There is no greater challenge than to balance the massive economic development primed in South Carolina with protecting delicate ecosystems and valuable wetlands. Congratulations on 10 years of the Palmetto Castle and getting the word out about the amazing contributions of the Charleston District!

