

# PALMETTO CASILE



Fall 2020  
Volume 13/Issue 4  
Charleston District



# In This Issue



- |    |  |    |   |
|----|--|----|---|
| 04 | Final pieces installed in Semmes Dam before water returns to basin | 14 | Partnering with Charleston Southern for a new commander |
| 06 | Corps approves permit for top SC corridor improvement project      | 16 | New division commander meets South Carolina leadership  |
| 08 | Transmitting water where it needs to be                            | 18 | COLA desk dudes   |
| 10 | Final harbor deepening contracts awarded                           | 20 | Warriors and veterans on the hunt                       |
| 12 | FY20 accomplishments infographic                                   | 22 | Meet Our:   |

On the cover: The CMA Brazil became the largest ship to ever call on the Charleston Harbor and the east coast. Ships of this size will be a regular occurrence with the deepening of Charleston Harbor. Photo by Dennis Franklin

Above: The Charleston District's St. Stephen Dam and Powerhouse on the morning of the annual Wounded Warrior dove hunt. Photo by Dennis Franklin

**Commander:**  
Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd  
843-329-8000

**Deputy, PPM:**  
Lisa Metheny

**Corporate Communications Chief:**  
Glenn Jeffries

**Editor/Writer:**  
Sean McBride

**Writer:**  
Jackie Pennoyer

**News Magazine of the  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Charleston District  
Circulation: 1,100  
www.sac.usace.army.mil**



**@CharlestonCorps**

The Palmetto Castle is a quarterly unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1 under supervision of the Corporate Communications Office. Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Corps of Engineers or the Department of Defense. Inquiries, comments and requests for electronic copies can be forwarded to the editor of the Palmetto Castle by e-mail to: PalmettoCastle@usace.army.mil

# From the Commander

It is hard to believe that fall has come and gone. If you are like me, the days go by so fast that you aren't even sure what day it is in this virtual world. We have certainly never seen a year like 2020. But with all the good news of the vaccine trials, I am hopeful there is some light at the end of this dark tunnel.

I could not be prouder of my team, especially for their performance during the last quarter of our fiscal year. They did not miss a beat taking us to the finish line successfully, delivering for our customers and stakeholders. The District's dedicated people are what makes us a world-class team. See our accomplishments infographic (page 12), and you will see what I mean. During FY20, we executed over 686 contracting actions, a programmed total of \$326 million.

The recent leadership changes that occurred at USACE, with the new Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Scott Spellmon, and within our Division, with new division commander Col. Jason Kelly, have shifted our focus a bit with a new way to look at solving South Carolina and the nation's toughest engineering challenges. I have four key areas that are written at the top of my office whiteboard as a reminder (page 20).

People – They will always be my priority for they are this organization's greatest strength. Readiness – Leaders, at all levels, must empower others to deliver the program. Partnerships – The best partnering practices are critical to achieving our vision. We can't do it alone. Revolutionize – We must expand, deepen and accelerate our efforts to deliver more efficiently. You will see that we have even organized this issue in that manner.

Speaking of delivering for our community, please see our stories on awarding Charleston Harbor Post 45 Deepening Project's final contracts (page 4), Semmes Dam construction (page 10), the Dorchester Reach Water Supply project (page 8) and the issuance of the Carolina Crossroads Permit (page 6). All of these improve the quality of life and safety of our citizens.

We are honored to welcome a new member to our team! Our first honorary commander though Joint Base Charleston's Honorary Commander Program. Please read all about Charleston Southern University's Cady Nell Keener (page 14). We look forward to getting



to know her over the coming year. Congratulations to Jonathan Swartz on his aide to our students through his desk contributions (page 16). His selfless service is an example to all of us.

As we start this holiday season, please keep in mind those civilian and military members of our team deployed overseas or stateside to support our emergency response mission. They are serving in harsh conditions a long way from home and family. We are thankful for their sacrifices and their sense of duty. Also, this holiday season, consider how your holiday plans can be modified to reduce the spread of COVID-19 to keep your friends, families, and communities healthy and safe.

I wish each of you a blessed and safe holiday season.

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

Rachel Honderd, PMP  
Lt. Col., U.S. Army  
Commander and District Engineer  
Rachel.A.Honderd@usace.army.mil

# Final pieces installed in Semmes Dam before water returns to basin

Article and photos by Jackie Pennoyer

After months of planning and coordination, a team of specialized construction personnel slid the final pieces of heavy concrete into place early November, finalizing the structural foundation of a new, modern dam at Semmes Lake on Fort Jackson.

Led by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District, the Semmes Lake Dam project was authorized for reconstruction in 2018. The new structure will comply with all modern dam safety standards and, built using the latest innovations in engineering technology, is designed to withstand severe storms and flooding events.

An ongoing and collaborative effort with Fort Jackson, the three-year, \$17 million project is on schedule to complete early next year.

Technical crews were repositioned on-site early morning as a dozen 30-ton, 66-foot-long precast concrete arches arrived one-by-one from a manufacturing plant in Spartanburg. To prevent damage, the arch culverts — support beams for a future bridge — were then turned upward using a two-winch setup and then slowly lifted into the air. The crew used a special 400-ton capacity crane for the maneuver.

“This is a pretty unique process,” said Eric Jones, resident office project engineer, who has overseen military construction projects,



including airfields and multifamily residential housing, at more than 15 installations. “I’ve been doing this a long time, and I’ve learned so much from this project.”

Once the project is complete and water has returned to the lake basin, the structure will support a small bridge and pedestrian path on the reconstructed Semmes Road.

Safety and environmental sustainability were the project’s most fundamental driving considerations.

“Designing and building a structure that is not only environmentally responsible but also integrates modern techniques and provides safe, resilient and long-term support to the greater Fort Jackson community has been at the forefront of every aspect of this military construction project,” said Charles Grainger, Semmes Lake Dam project manager.

The new dam utilizes a labyrinth weir to control water flow, diverting water into intended channels and preventing overtopping during storms or flooding events. Configured in a zig-zag or accordion-shape, the weir also requires minimal maintenance and can efficiently and autonomously adapt to fluctuations in water levels.

“One of the greatest benefits of the labyrinth weir is that, while proper maintenance and inspections are required, it has no operational requirement on a day-to-day basis or during storms,” Grainger said. “The structure is largely self-operational.”

The next step of the project involves redirecting Wild Cat Creek into its new permanent stream channel, through the new concrete spillway, and completing the earthen embankment, said Jones. The dam will stretch 970 feet long and rise 29 feet above the foundation.

Prior to the placement of the culverts, district leaders gave Brig. Gen. Milford Beagle, Jr. and Command Sgt. Maj. Philson Taverrier, commanding general and command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Training Center and Fort Jackson, a tour of the standing structure in the lake basin.

“Installation of the arch culverts is a major milestone for this project,” said Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd, district commander, Charleston District. “This is the final construction stage before water can safely return to the embankment and Semmes Lake can once again serve as a benefit for the Fort Jackson community. The continued success of this project is a testament to the professionalism of our team and our strong partnership with Fort Jackson.”

The Charleston District oversees several military construction projects on Fort Jackson, including the design, construction and renovation of schools, barracks, dining facilities and other structures. Fort Jackson is the largest Army training base for initial recruits, readying roughly 50 percent of all incoming Soldiers for future careers in the U.S. Army.



Left: A worker installs the arch culvert in place.  
Right: The arch culvert is installed at Semmes Dam.

# Corps approves permit for top SC corridor improvement project

By Jackie Penoyer

After a swift federal review process, a comprehensive upgrade to one the South Carolina's most traveled interchanges is now set to move forward with construction next year.

Headed by the South Carolina Department of Transportation, Carolina Crossroads is an extensive infrastructure improvement project that reimagines and reconstructs roughly 14 miles of roadway and overpasses near Columbia along the I-20, 26 and 126 corridor. Designed to accommodate recent growth in the region and improve safety, the project involves updates to roadways, additional lanes and safer interchanges.

Carolina Crossroads is also identified as one of the state's top interstate priorities in its 10-year infrastructure plan.

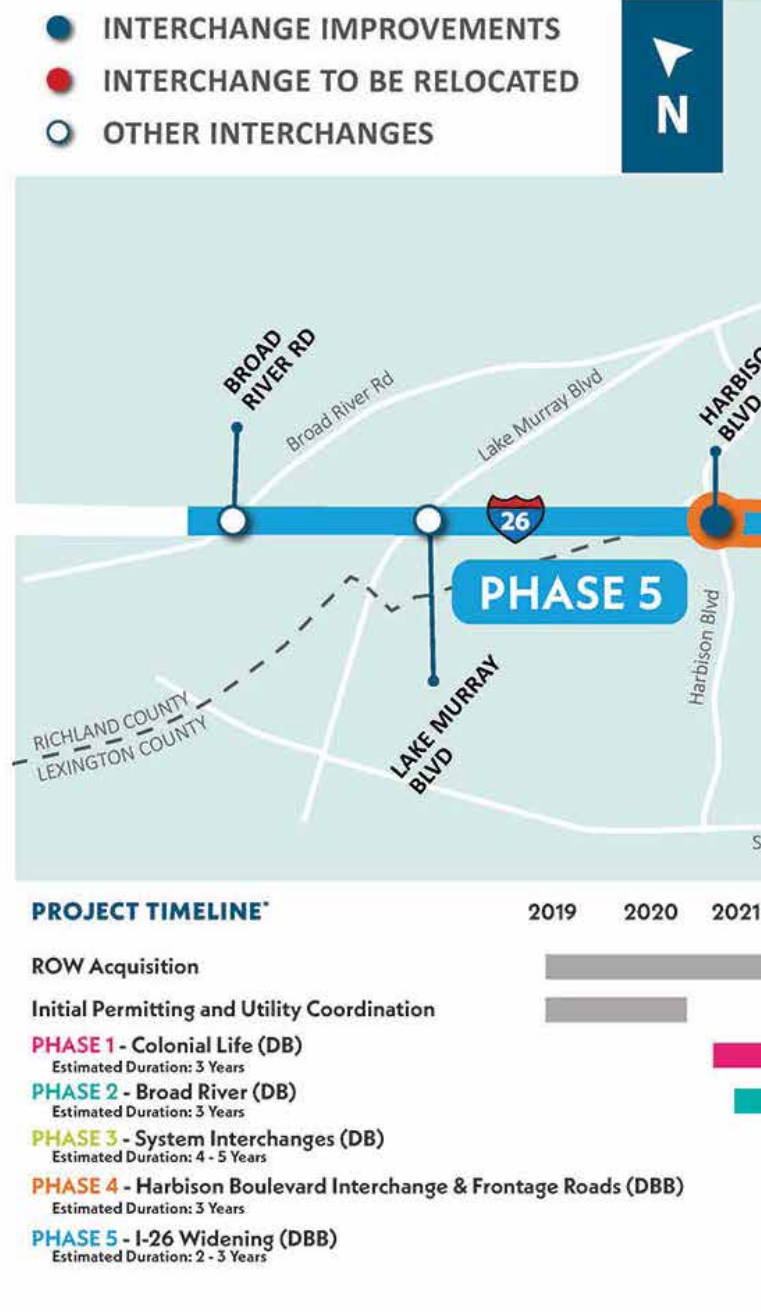
Late last year, SCDOT submitted a permit application to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District as part of a mandatory federal review process. Reviews of complex permit requests like Carolina Crossroads require extensive review and interagency coordination.

After close coordination with the lead agency, the Federal Highway Administration, on preparing an Environmental Impact Statement in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA that was published in May 2019, the Charleston District was able to complete its permit application review within nine months.

In a virtual signing ceremony between the Charleston District and the SCDOT on Sept. 21, Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd, commander, Charleston District, officially signed the Department of the Army permit, granting a 15-year construction timeline.

"Carolina Crossroads is a major project for the state of South Carolina," Honderd said. "Our team has worked closely with South Carolina Department of Transportation, as well as the Federal Highway Administration, and many other state and local agencies, at every step to ensure this project is nothing short of a success. I couldn't be prouder of our Regulatory Division for their diligence and dedication."

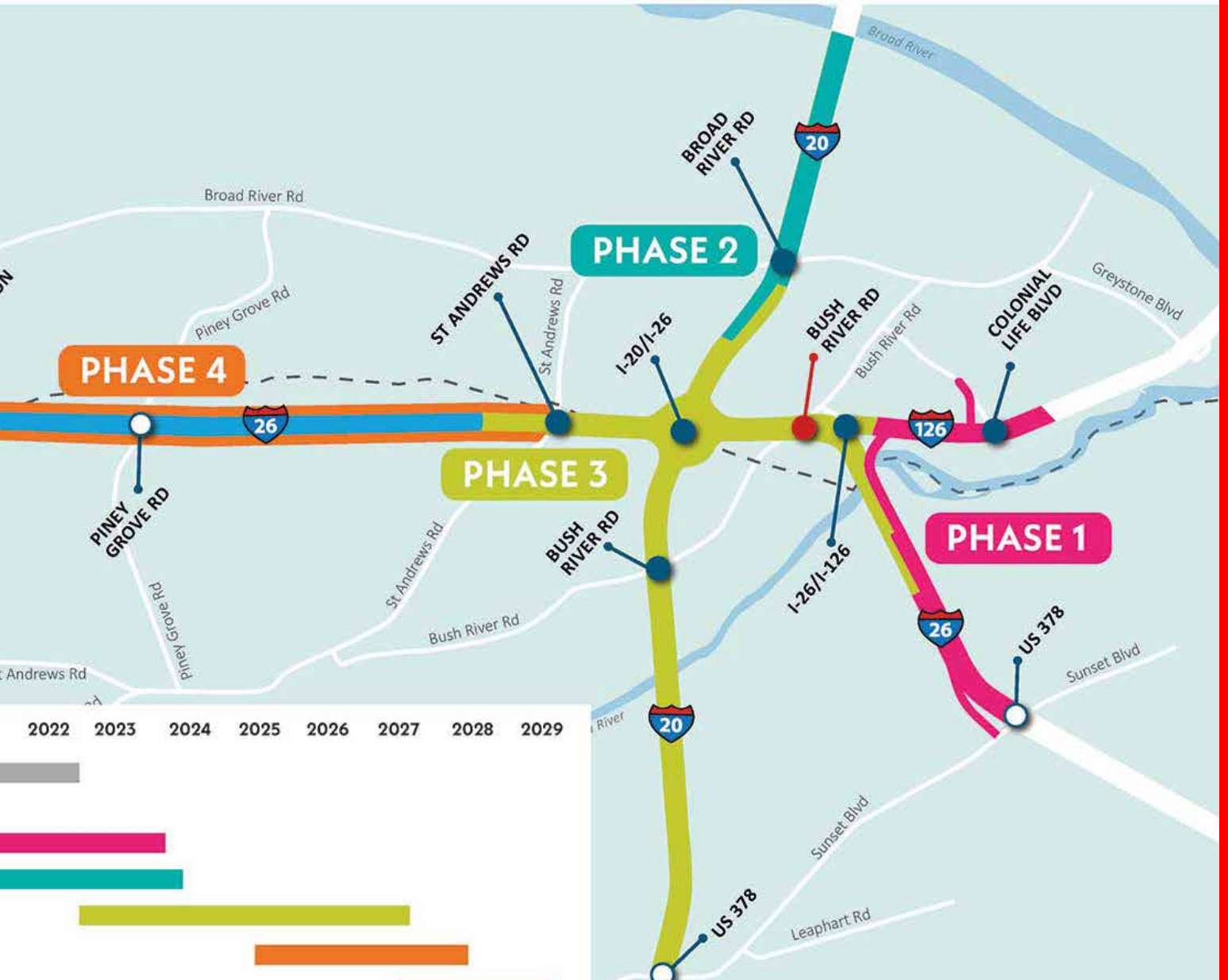
Christy Hall, secretary of the SCDOT, as well as members of the project team, were also present for the permit's virtual signing ceremony.



"We appreciate the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' thorough and expert work on this project and its commitment to working with all stakeholders involved to significantly improve the mobility and safety of our state's citizens," Hall said. "Our ability to obtain the permit in just nine months is a testament to the Corps' dedicated staff members and the strong working relationship we have with them."

Estimated at \$1.6 billion, Carolina Crossroads is broken up into five phases of construction. The first two phases are scheduled to begin in 2021, and the entire project is projected to complete 2029. To learn more about the project, visit [www.scdotcarolinacrossroads.com](http://www.scdotcarolinacrossroads.com).

Top: The phases of the Carolina Crossroads project. Right: Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd signs the permit for the Carolina Crossroads project with Travis Hughes, chief of regulatory.



= Design Bid Bu

# Transmitting water where it needs to be

By Sean McBride

Twelve years ago, what was previously a pipe dream became a reality- clean drinking water for residents and businesses of the rural area near Lake Marion, SC.

In 2008, the Lake Marion Water Treatment Plant was completed, which has led to subsequent projects that have supplied water to the towns of Santee, Elloree, Holly Hill, Harleyville and more.

The Lake Marion Regional Water System connects a large area of Orangeburg, Dorchester and Berkeley counties to a water distribution system. To date, the Charleston District has completed nine water supply projects with the Lake Marion Regional Water Agency and Santee Cooper.

Earlier this year, the Dorchester Reach was completed for a total cost of \$12.6 million. The Dorchester Reach



Above: A worker guides a water transmission pipe into place.  
Right: The water transmission line is tested in Santee.



is approximately 60,000 linear feet, or 11 miles, of water piping and stretches from Harleyville to Ridgville. This reach will carry up to two million gallons per day and supply approximately 25,000 people. This brings the total to 45 miles of water pipe that have been constructed, tested, flushed and disinfected to bring clean drinking water to thousands of residents and hundreds of businesses in the area.

“Much of the economic growth seen in the central South Carolina region can be attributed to the availability of a reliable, clean water supply,” said Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd, Charleston District commander, during a virtual ceremony. “We’re proud to partner with the Lake Marion Regional Water Agency and Santee Cooper to provide a reliable source of clean drinking water to the area.”

In addition to providing clean water to residents, this phase of the project enabled large companies, such as

Volvo and, soon, Walmart, to locate large production and distribution centers in the region, which also brings hundreds of jobs to those in need.

With the implementation of the Water Resources Development Act of 1992, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides up to 75 percent of implementation costs and oversees project management, environmental compliance, contract procurement and contract quality assurance for all the Lake Marion Regional Water Agency projects. The intent of this program is to assist underserved communities and serve as an economic catalyst for both municipal and industrial users.

“The partnership is already working on the next phase of the project,” said Honderd. “Winding Woods Reach and an elevated tank have a projected award for next year.”

The Charleston District continues to expedite these projects to ensure that everyone has the access to clean drinking water that they deserve.





# Final harbor deepening contracts awarded

By Jackie Penoyer

This September, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District awarded the final two dredging contracts on its harbor deepening project, which will make Charleston's harbor the deepest on the East Coast.

Charleston Harbor is located midway along South Carolina's Atlantic coastline and supports a vital mission in the defense of our nation as one of the nation's 17 strategic ports for national defense.

The contract awards also coincided with the arrival Sept. 20 of the CMA CGM Brazil, a 15,072-TEU container ship stretching 1,200 feet long — the largest container ship to ever call on the East Coast and Charleston harbor. Charleston harbor was the last call on its East Coast itinerary because the depth allowed it be fully loaded before heading back to its home port in Shenzhen, China.

Valued at \$597 million, the Charleston Harbor Deepening Project, known as Post 45, takes Charleston's federal en-

trance channel to 54 feet, the lower harbor to 52 feet, and the upper harbor to 48 feet.

"The primary purpose of this project is to address transportation inefficiencies resulting from tide restrictions," said Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd, district commander, at the SCPA's press conference welcoming the large container ship. "It's to enable new Neo-Panamax vessels like the CMA CGM Brazil into the Charleston harbor."

Post 45, which began as a feasibility study in 2010, kicked-off the project's construction phase in early 2018. The four-year, five-contract deepening operation is projected to complete all dredging construction in 2022.

"Taking 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 Army Corps of Engineers," Honderd said.



The short and long-term economic impacts of this project both locally and for the nation are far-reaching.

“The project has a benefit-to-cost ratio of 6.4,” said Honderd. “In other words, the project gives \$6.40 to the state and national economies for every \$1 invested.”

Officially awarded Sept. 9, contract 4 deepens the portion of lower harbor connecting the Cooper River from the confluence with the Wando River to the South Carolina Port Authority’s new Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr. Terminal on the Cooper River to 52 feet. Contract 4 was awarded for approximately \$53 million to Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Construction of Oak Brook, Ill.

Eight days later on Sept. 17, Charleston District awarded the fifth and final deepening contract, for an estimated \$32 million, to Marinex Construction, Inc. of Charleston. Contract 5 deepens the stretch of upper harbor from the new Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr. Terminal to the North Charleston Terminal to 48 feet.

Combined, these two contracts remove nearly 10 million cubic yards of material from the harbor floor.

Beyond the project’s projected completion in 2022, the project team will continue to focus on environmental monitoring and mitigation, accounting for and properly mitigating impacts to wetlands, historical resources and hardbottom habitat, said Jeremy Johnson, project manager, Post 45.

The Army Corps has maintained Charleston’s harbor for more than 140 years, dredging it every year since, to ensure the channel is at the required federal project depth.

“As we ring in our district’s 150th anniversary in South Carolina next year, we hope to continue the important work of maintaining Charleston’s harbor for the next 150 years,” Honderd said.

Above: The CMA Brazil calls on the Port of Charleston. It was the largest ship to ever visit the east coast.

# CHARLESTON DISTRICT FY20 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**31**

potential COVID-19 alternative care facilities inspected

**171,560**  
TELEWORK HOURS

completed by our employees from March to September due to COVID-19

**\$10K**

of safety equipment purchased for employees in field

**572**

PPE safety kits created for employees

**16**

new employees

**500**

COMMENTS received on the Charleston Peninsula Study draft report

**3**

webinars held on holding effective webinars

**\$85**

MILLION value of final two Post 45 contracts

**7,000,000**

cubic yards of material removed from Charleston Harbor

**8,500**

tons of boulders used to stabilize the Charleston Harbor South Jetty

# ACT MENTS

In a calendar year that has been unlike any we have ever seen, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District worked hard to wrap up their fiscal year on September 30th. This year was a completely new way of doing business, with almost our entire team switching to full-time telework with one day's notice. This infographic will show you that the work didn't stop just because our team was working from home. We still accomplished all of our goals in a tremendous display of flexibility.

1,507  
jurisdictional  
determinations  
completed

1  
site permitted for  
the Carolina  
Panthers

3  
creek  
restorations  
in three  
municipalities

686  
CONTRACT ACTIONS  
\$326  
MILLION

1,621  
regulatory  
permits  
issued

1  
employee chosen  
as the USACE  
Regulator of the  
Year

9,330  
SOCIAL NETWORK  
reach across Facebook,  
Twitter, Instagram and  
YouTube

10,668  
SERVICE CALLS  
completed at Fort  
Jackson

1+1+1  
new deputy  
commander, division  
commander and Chief  
of Engineers

58%  
of all contract  
actions to  
small biz

325  
students with a  
new school at  
Fort Jackson

# Partnering with Charleston Southern for a new commander

Article and photos by Jackie Pennoyer

In an induction ceremony at Joint Base Charleston Sept. 17, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District officially welcomed its first honorary civilian commander to the team.

The honorary commander program — organized and led by Joint Base Charleston — brings distinguished civilians and military leaders in the Charleston area together to encourage the exchange of ideas and give civic-military counterparts an increased understanding of organizations' missions.

This year, the program selected Cady Nell Keener, assistant vice president for development and special gifts at Charleston Southern University, to serve as honorary commander for Charleston District.

Keener, who previously worked as CSU's executive director of external relations and special gifts, has extensive leadership experience in the Charleston area. In addition to her role as vice president of Ellevate, a local women's leadership networking organization, Keener also serves on both the JBC Advisory Council and the North Council for the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce. In 2019, Keener was also recognized as one of the Charleston Regional Business Journal's 40 Under 40.

"We are so thrilled to have Cady Nell Keener join our team," said Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd, commander, Charleston District. "Ms. Keener brings a wealth of experience and unique skills to the district, and we look forward to working

together to help build stronger partnerships across the region and generate greater awareness about our programs."

The district welcomed Keener to its headquarters in downtown Charleston recently for a tour of the building and to meet some members of the team. Honderd and district leaders also gave Keener an overview of the Army Corps and in-depth breakdown of the district's state-wide missions.

Honderd has identified university outreach as one of the district's top initiatives for fiscal year 2021 and believes partnerships like the honorary commander program are key to making it a success

"The Army Corps has such an important and diverse mission set that truly depends on the best and brightest," Honderd said. "Over the next year, partnerships like this one will help us streamline our internships and career opportunities and may create opportunities to collaborate on emerging technology and local engineering studies."

According to JBC, appointed members of the Honorary Commander Program represent a vast cross-section of the local community and hold a variety of positions. Terms run for a duration of two to three years.

"The Joint Base Charleston Honorary Commanders Program was developed to encourage an exchange of ideas, experiences and friendship between key members of the local civilian community and the Charleston military community," said Neysa Williams, 628th Air Base Wing Public Affairs Office community engagement chief.





# New division commander meets South Carolina leadership

Article and photos by Jackie Pennoyer

In his first few weeks since taking command of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operations in the American southeast, Col. Jason Kelly paid a visit Aug. 18-19 to meet with federal, state, local and military leaders across South Carolina.

Col. Kelly, commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, South Atlantic Division, officially took command of the regional organization in July. Under his leadership, the South Atlantic Division oversees majors engineering projects, large-scale studies and emergency response operations in five states from North Carolina to Alabama.

During his visit, Col. Kelly and the Charleston District executive team met with Fort Jackson leadership, including Brig. Gen. Milford Beagle, Jr, commanding general for the U.S. Army Training Center; Col. John Hankins, Fort Jackson garrison commander; and Col. Victor Green, director of installation support and regional engineer for the 81st Readiness Division.

The leaders discussed key infrastructure projects on Fort Jackson and ways the organizations can work together to enhance the Army's training enterprise and overall readiness. The group toured several Fort Jackson projects, including Semmes Lake and the base's most newly-renovated reception battalion barracks.

The group also traveled to Columbia to engage state leaders on the agencies' ongoing efforts to curb the threat of the coronavirus, as well as joint emergency response measures in the event of a devastating hurricane this season. Army Corps leaders met with Maj. Gen. Van McCarty, the 29th SC Adjutant General and head of the SC Military Department; Kim Stenson, head of SC Emergency Management Division; Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Bob Caslen, president of the University of South Carolina; and several other federal and state partners.

On Aug. 18, Col. Kelly and Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd, commander, Charleston District attended a joint press conference organized by the SC State Ports Authority to provide an update on the Charleston District's harbor deepening project, known as Post 45. Senator Lindsey Graham, Congressman Joe Cunningham, Jim Newsome, SCSPA CEO, and Barbara Melvin, SCSPA COO, praised the project's speed and highlighted its importance to the state and national economy.

Col. Kelly also traveled to the Charleston Battery, one of the city's most recognizable historic sites, to talk one-on-one with Mayor Tecklenburg and other city leaders about the Army Corps' progress on the Charleston Peninsula Coastal Flood Risk Management Study. The Charleston Peninsula Study is a 3x3x3 federal feasibility study that investigates coastal storm risks on the peninsula. The study team will publish a final report next year.

Command Sgt. Maj. Chad Blansett, who assumed responsibility as South Atlantic Division command sergeant major in July, also briefly visited Charleston District, using the trip as an opportunity to meet with Army Corps staff at the Construction and Survey Annex in North Charleston and the St. Stephen Powerhouse.

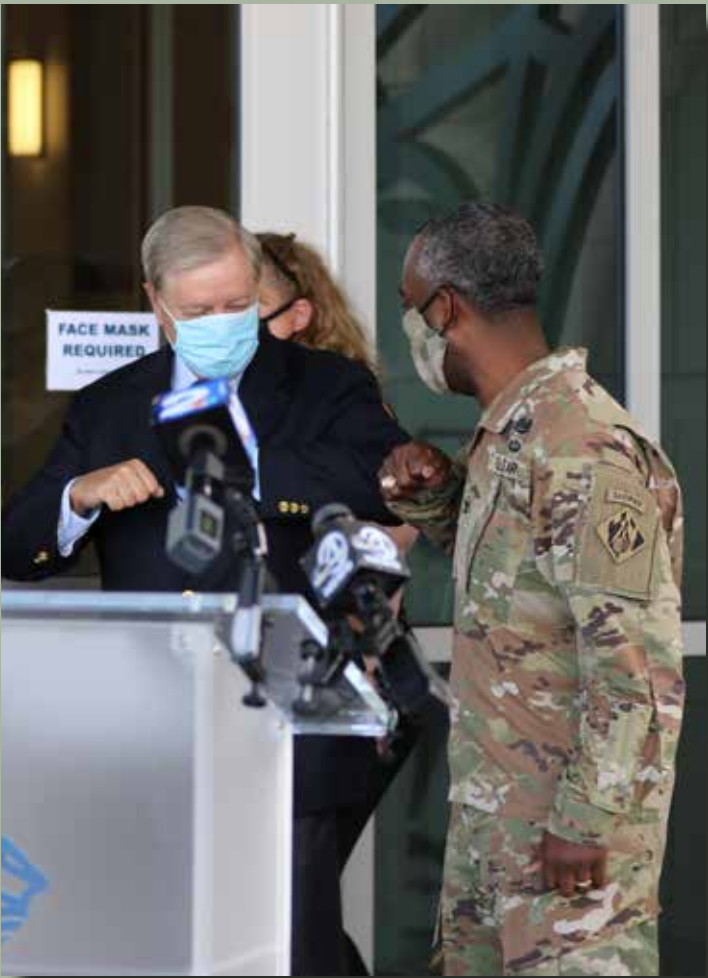
"So many of our projects and studies — everything from the construction of alternate care facilities for the coronavirus to emergency hurricane response measures — depend on great partnerships with leaders at all levels across the state," Lt. Col. Honderd said. "Our district is thrilled to welcome Col. Kelly, and I look forward to working with him and our state partners on serving the communities of South Carolina."

Top Right: Col. Kelly speaks with the media at an event at the new Ports Authority headquarters.

Far Right: Col. Kelly discusses the Charleston Peninsula Study with Mayor John Tecklenburg at the Battery.

Near Right: Col. Kelly shares an elbow bump greeting with Sen. Lindsey Graham.





# COLA Desk Dudes

By Sean McBride



The year 2020 will go down in history as one of the most difficult in the history of the United States. In a time of tremendous pressure and massive changes to “normal life,” some people are stepping up to help those around them.

Jonathan Swartz, a regulatory specialist in the Charleston District’s Columbia Field Office, decided to use a skillset of his to help those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Swartz, a hobbyist woodworker, paired with his friend, Eric Salem, to put out an offer to their community to build desks for students who would be doing virtual school this year. When they put out the offer on Facebook, they expected to get 10-15 responses. Within 24 hours, they had 160 requests.

“I didn’t think it would be a big enough deal that I would even need to talk to my wife about it,” said Swartz. “Now, it is consuming my life, in a good way.”

With more than 200 requests to date, Swartz and Salem, knew that they wouldn’t be able to fulfill the orders without help from others. But when their story went viral in the local news, major brands and local places stepped in to help them.

The local Home Depot is donating \$5,000 worth of wood for the desks, GRK has donated all the screws, individuals are donating to their Go Fund Me page, and Swartz’ church is providing a space for storage and working. This is extremely beneficial since Swartz and Salem are providing the desks at no charge to those who request them.

“Our goal is to donate them to people who can’t afford them,” said Swartz. “You can buy a desk for under \$100, but not everyone can do that. We aren’t asking for justification from people, just trust they need it.”

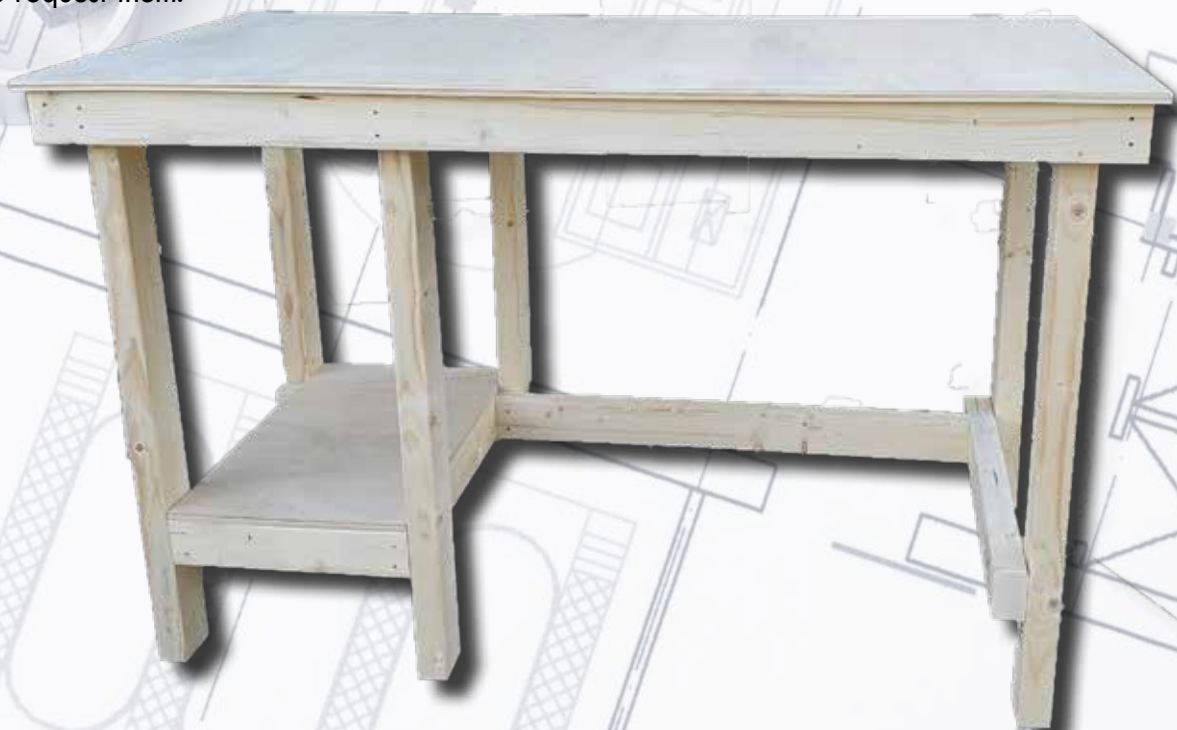
Swartz and Salem are building about 15-20 desks a week, working around their work schedules. Now down to a science, each desk takes about 30 minutes to construct. However, more volunteers have stepped up to help with the final steps.

Cadets from the University of South Carolina Air Force ROTC program have volunteered to sand down and deliver all the desks, which saves tremendous amounts of time.

Swartz and Salem have received requests from other areas of the state for plans for his desk so that they can do something similar in their area. Their goal was to make the plans as simple as possible so that the average person could build a desk for themselves with just a saw and a drill.

“It’s a crappy time with a lot of crazy stuff going on, so we’re just trying to find a way to use our gifts to support our community,” said Swartz.

Swartz and Salem expect that the length of the pandemic and availability of donated materials will dictate how long they keep doing this and how many desks they’ll make, but for now, the community is grateful.



# Warriors and veterans on the hunt

By Jesse Helton, Charleston District natural resource specialist  
Photo by Dennis Franklin



This Saturday, Sept. 12, 26 local wounded warriors and veterans gathered at the Cooper River Rediversion Project and Canal Wildlife Management Area for a day of camaraderie and dove hunting.

The event, known as the Warriors and Veterans Dove Hunt, has been co-hosted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District, and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources for six years since its inaugural event November 2015.

Over the years, dozens of veterans from across the state have traveled to the Corps' CRRP at the St. Stephens Powerhouse to take part in the festivities and reconnect with fellow servicemembers. The event is hosted here every year due to the exceptionally high-quality dove fields that SCDNR maintains on the property.

"Ultimately, this event is about giving back," said Lt. Col. Rachel Honderd, commander, Charleston District, who participated alongside the group. "It is such an honor to take time to connect with our local veteran community and do so alongside the team at the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources."

Unlike previous iterations, this year's hunt involved compliance with health protocols to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Masks and hand sanitizer were provided by the Charleston District and SCDNR, and all participants followed six feet of physical distancing.

Upon arrival, guests were given an informal greeting by Honderd and Jason Deavers, canal wildlife management

area lead and natural resources technician. Instead of having the participants gather in a group for a pre-hunt information briefing, Deavers gave each hunter a card with safety information and hunting regulations on it. Afterward, the veterans were allowed to enter the field to find their favorite hunting spot.

Then, silence.

At the sound of a whistle, the hunt began. Hunters gazed upwards looking for doves flying above the fields. As the birds flew near, the participants – all trained marksmen from their military service – began to shoot. Most of the hunters found success, and several dozen doves were harvested.

According to SCDNR dove hunting regulations, hunters are permitted up to 15 doves per day on specified wildlife management areas. Under a long-term agreement, roughly 95 percent of Charleston District's CRRP property at St. Stephen's Powerhouse is managed as a state wildlife management area. The area also has more than 90 acres of dove fields.

The Charleston District's CRRP at St. Stephens Powerhouse is a rediversion infrastructure project that reduces sedimentation flow in the Charleston harbor, saving taxpayers \$36 million in dredging costs. The project also provides electricity to more than 40,000 homes across rural South Carolina. To learn more about the project, visit [www.sac.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Cooper-River-Rediversion-Project](http://www.sac.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Cooper-River-Rediversion-Project).



# Meet

## Maurice Williams

### Power Project Manager



#### **Explain your job in three sentences.**

As the Power (Operations) Project Manager, I'm responsible for maintenance and operation of the Cooper River Rediversion Project, three hydropower generating units and the fish-lift. The plant staff and I work collaboratively with Santee Cooper and South Carolina Department of Natural Resources to generate electricity for approximately 40,000 residents and provide fish passage for about 700,000 anadromous fish during a typical fish passing season.

#### **What is the most unique thing you bring to the District?**

Previous experience as a hydropower plant engineer, specialized electrical testing background for power generation equipment, construction background in electrical project management and strong professional relationships with fellow regional hydropower facilities.

#### **What is the most rewarding part of your job?**

Working with power plant professionals that exemplify Army Corps of Engineers values. We all share the common goal to make St. Stephen the best hydropower project in the South Atlantic Division.

#### **Highlight a notable milestone or memory in your career.**

The most notable milestone in my career was becoming a licensed electrical engineer in 2014.

#### **What goals do you have for your career at the Charleston District?**

Continued and improved success for the Cooper River Rediversion Project for power reliability through rehabilitation projects.

#### **What is something that most people don't know about you?**

While growing up in the 50<sup>th</sup> state of Hawaii, I became an avid bodyboarder; I'm amazed by North Shore's natural wave power and popular shore break beaches on the southwest side on the Island of Oahu.

# Our:

**Explain your job in three sentences.**

I lead a team of dedicated project managers who primarily cover the lower southeast portion of the state of South Carolina. My team is responsible for evaluating and processing permit applications and jurisdictional determination requests ranging from projects such as docks and marinas, large scale developments, dredging operations, and beach nourishment activities. My job as the branch chief is to help my project managers make permit decisions that allow for the protection of the nation's aquatic resources while allowing for reasonable development.

**What is the most unique thing you bring to the District?**

I have experience working in Corps regulatory districts across the country- Charleston, Savannah, and Los Angeles. The knowledge and experience I gained from each of those districts is invaluable and will continue to be a benefit.

**What is the most rewarding part of your job?**

I find it very rewarding to help an applicant through the regulatory process as seamlessly as possible. As a new chief, I will be able to continue to provide quality customer service as I am now accountable to the public AND to my team! Training and mentoring, providing support and guidance, and helping to deliver the program as quickly and transparently as possible, are all parts of my new role!

**Highlight a notable milestone or memory in your career.**

Six years ago, I was able to return to Charleston District where I started my career in the Conway Field Office. I never saw myself becoming a supervisor then. However, being able to do so in a District that means so much to me and my family has truly been the highlight of my career so far!

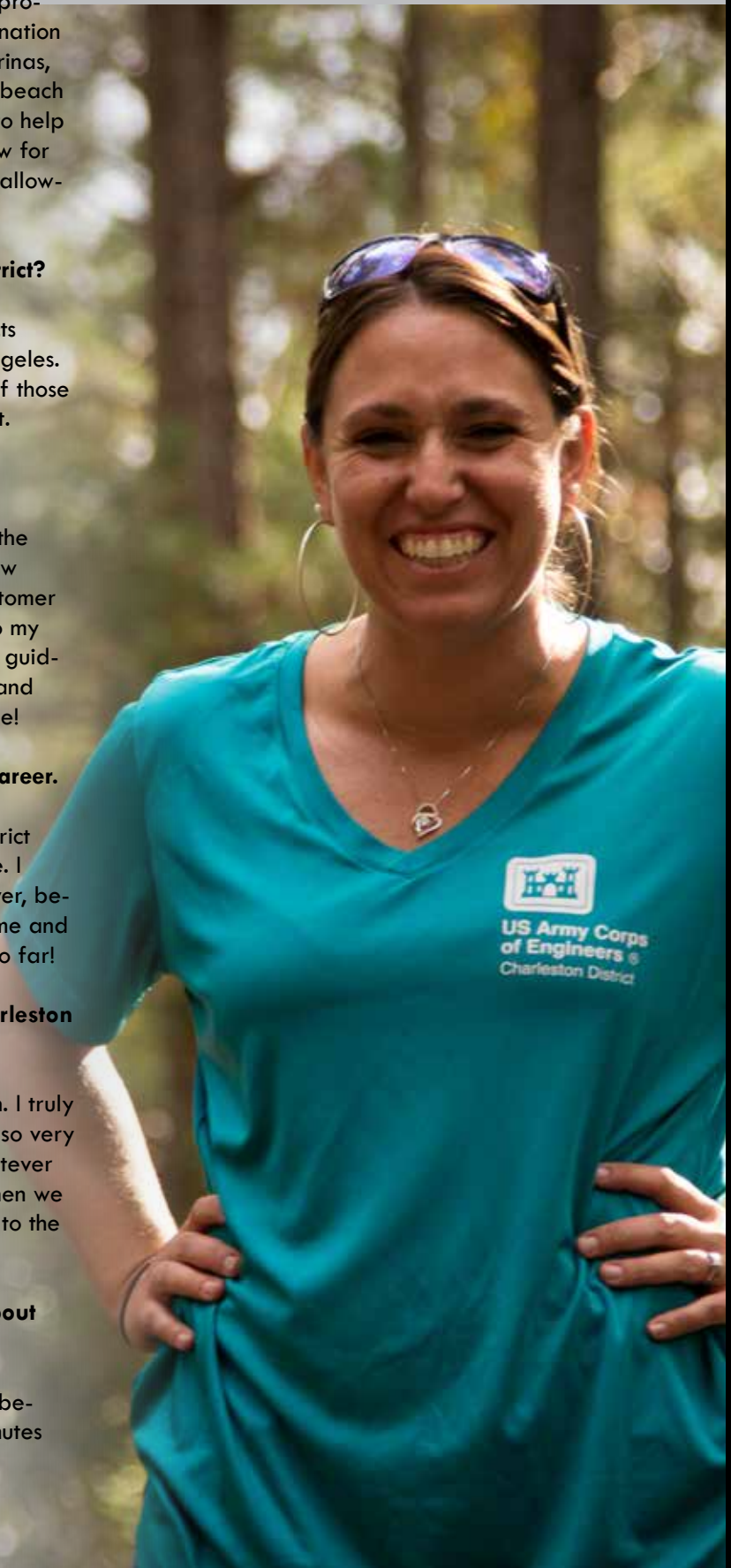
**What goals do you have for your career at the Charleston District?**

As a new chief, I strive to be the "rock" for my Branch. I truly believe that our people in the Charleston District are so very special and I want to continue to support them in whatever they need. If our people are happy and successful, then we as a District are successful at delivering our program to the people.

**What is something that most people don't know about you?**

Most people know pretty much everything about me because I'm an open book! Just talk to me for a few minutes and you'll find out!

## Courtney Stevens Chief, Regulatory South Branch





## Welcome Lt. Gen. Scott Spellmon!

By Sean McBride

Amidst a global pandemic affecting every walk of life, Lt. Gen. Scott Spellmon assumed command of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on September 10<sup>th</sup>.

Spellmon is the 55<sup>th</sup> Chief of Engineers, taking over from Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite, after his most recent duty serving as the USACE deputy commanding general for civil and emergency operations.

In his last role, Spellmon visited the Charleston District area of operations in 2018 after Hurricane Florence caused significant erosion and flooding issues to South Carolina. At the time, the District was in the middle of a beach nourishment project at Myrtle Beach and Spellmon took time to oversee how operations were getting back underway. He also spent time with the District personnel and South Carolina National Guard who were responding to historic flooding along a vital road, trying to keep the road passable for emergency vehicles.

With numerous major storms impacting the United States during his time in his previous role, Spellmon brings a wealth of experience to the Chief of Engineers position.

Spellmon has defined his priorities as Chief of Engineers in four focus areas: people, readiness, partnerships and revolutionize. You will notice these four areas highlighted throughout the Palmetto Castle in this issue

Thanks again to Lt. Gen. Semonite for all of his years of service as the 54<sup>th</sup> Chief of Engineers and as the former commander of our South Atlantic Division, and welcome, Lt. Gen. Spellmon!

