



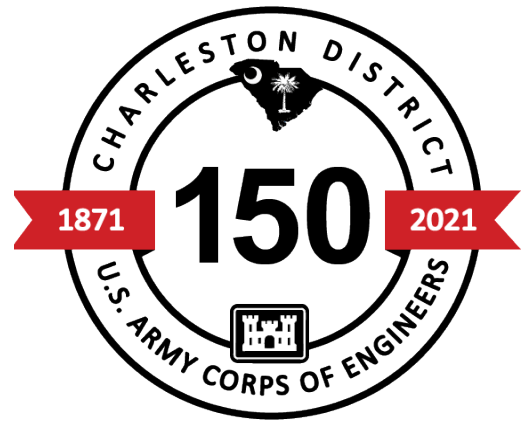
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, CHARLESTON DISTRICT

PALMETTO CASTLE



CGM





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Partners and stakeholders,

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District is a team of experts, developing world-class solutions for the state and nation's toughest challenges. The impacts of our projects and programs are felt in local communities here in South Carolina and across the southeast region and have a direct impact on the success of military operations across the globe. I've seen this expertise in action over my first six months as commander, and I could not be prouder of the team.

In this edition, we dive into some of the exceptional work the District team has championed over the last few months. From modernizing facilities on Fort Jackson (page 19) to restoring vital ecosystems, this work is often complex, requires strategic execution, and is never accomplished without the support of our valued partners.

The issue opens with the completed restoration of the Crab Bank Seabird Sanctuary, a small isle in Charleston Harbor that now offers pristine nesting habitat for native shorebirds (page 7). The project has been a collaboration with the S.C. Department of Natural Resources since the start and has emerged as a true whole-of-community effort. Dredging crews used compatible material from the District's harbor deepening to make the project a reality. The restored ecosystem serves as a landmark legacy of the \$550 million harbor deepening project taking place underwater. Construction on the Post 45 deepening continues and we're happy to report that all dredging on Contract #2 has been completed and we expect Contract #4 to finish up in the next few days.

On the coastal resiliency front, Brig. Gen. Jason Kelly, commanding general of the South Atlantic Division, paid a visit to Charleston to provide city council leaders his thoughts about the federal study, design and construction process (page 11). In his remarks, he applauded the City's current flood management initiatives and emphasized the importance of teamwork in developing an effective, comprehensive plan for the Charleston peninsula. He also spent some time with some of our favorite elementary students who participate in a life-changing program, Boys With A Purpose (page 27). These young men and their leader, Kenny Joyner, will inspire you.

Charleston District has a uniquely talented team, and we have highlighted a few of our team members in this edition. Lisa, the District's senior civilian, recently graced the November cover of *Charleston Women Magazine* with other top female military leaders (page 13) in honor of Veteran's Day.

Erica Fritz, one of the District's newest regulatory project managers, takes us through some of her day-to-day projects (page 23) as she works tirelessly to balance economic development with environmental protection. Dive into the details about the important role the survey team plays in maintaining federal waterways (page 21). Lastly, you will enjoy reading about how some of employees help to solve the state and nations' toughest challenges (page 25).

As we close out our year-long celebration of 150 years of service to South Carolina, I am excited to share with you a snapshot of work we executed this year (page 17). The District completed 760 contract actions, obligated more than \$320 million and awarded over 60 percent of all contract dollars to small businesses.

I want to take a moment to thank our team, partners and stakeholders for your continued support and leadership. Charleston District has played a critical role in the growth and prosperity of South Carolina and its communities over the last 150 years, but we could not have done it with your help. Partnerships are key to everything we do.

Our year of celebration ended with a huge bang! The District was recently awarded the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce's Community Impact Award (page 29). We are honored to receive this prestigious award and look forward to continuing the District's legacy of service and unwavering commitment into the next 150 years.

Stay World Class!



Andrew Johannes, PMP PE PhD
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HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM USACE CHARLESTON DISTRICT

The Charleston District was proud to once again participate in the annual City of Charleston holiday parade. The parade was cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic. Lt. Col. Johannes was joined by Bobber the Water Safety Dog and other employees who helped spread our safety message: always wear your life jacket when on or near the water.





CRAB BANK SEABIRD SANCTUARY: A LANDMARK LEGACY

By Glenn Jeffries

A dredge, appropriately named Dredge Charleston, a daily crew of 53 workers, and heavy earthmoving equipment worked 24 hours a day for seven weeks constructing a landmark legacy of the Charleston Harbor Post 45 Deepening project: the restoration of Crab Bank. Crab Bank is a bird sanctuary located in the Charleston Harbor near the shoreline of the Old Village in Mount Pleasant.

The project is a landmark legacy of Post 45 because the rest of the \$550M deepening project is underwater and that massive investment is not visible to the public. In the case of Crab Bank, it has now become a feature of the Charleston Harbor that can easily be seen and noticed from as far as the Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge. Beneficially using material from the deepened channel restored 32 acres of prime nesting grounds, giving shorebirds and seabirds much-needed habitat for increasing their populations this spring and those to follow.

Because placing the dredged material on Crab Bank was not the least-cost placement method, a non-federal sponsor was needed to make the concept a reality. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) stepped up to fill that role and share in the costs of the project. If not for their commitment and our partnership together, this sandy material would have wound up sequestered in the ocean placement site and this seabird sanctuary lost for good.

Although the actual construction only took a few weeks, the idea came about years ago when the Post 45 project delivery team was trying to identify potential projects to maximize the beneficial use of the available sandy dredged material from the harbor deepening. Crab Bank rose to the top.

"Nine years ago, Crab Bank was just a concept, three years ago SCDNR stepped up to make it a reality, and this spring it becomes vital habitat and nesting grounds for shorebirds. It is rare in an engineer's career to see a project from concept to completion. Seeing this to completion is very rewarding," said Brian Williams, one of the project managers.

Approximately 660,000 cubic yards, or 66,00 dump truck loads (one dump truck carries about 10 cubic yards), of material created the crescent-shaped footprint, which can be seen from the Ravenel Bridge, Alhambra Hall, or other waterfront spots on the harbor side of Mount Pleasant.

"The work is fascinating to see", said Jeff Livasy, project manager. "The hydraulic cutterhead suction dredge sucks up the material from the channel floor, similar to a vacuum cleaner, and it is pumped onto the island through various types of pipe. Once the material is on the island, bulldozers begin shaping the material."





PHOTOS (pages 8,9): Dredged material from the Charleston harbor deepening project is added to Crab Bank.

"This is a little different than a beach renourishment project," said Chip Forbes, the field engineer for Norfolk Dredging Company, the contractor working for the District. "We usually have our guys smooth out the sand perfectly, so it is flat and even terrain, but in this case, the birds do not want that. Different birds like different terrain so this has been fun creating something with lumps, bumps and some flat surfaces."

The natural isolation of the island keeps the birds and nests safe from predators. Over fifteen different species of bird have been spotted nesting on the island in previous years. The number of shorebirds and seabirds' nests are declining each year," said Janet Thibault, a wildlife biologist for SCDNR. "Having places for them to have refuge is really important. Around March or April, the birds will come back, find mates and build nests. So, I'm just really excited to see this project happening."

This one-time placement of material could have as much as a 50-year life span, but in such a dynamic environment we know the footprint will be reduced

and change each year. Mother Nature will play a large role in the life of Crab bank. SCDNR will monitor the island each season with special cameras. This live webcam will also allow the public to view the island's inhabitants in real-time.

Visitors are not allowed on the island during the official nesting season which runs from March 15 - Oct. 15 each year. During the remaining months, the island is only open below the high tide line, and pets are prohibited.

With most of the island inaccessible, exploring the island by kayak or motorized boat is a fun way to see the activity. We do ask that visitors avoid generating boat wakes because that aids with erosion and we want to protect the island as much as we can.

USACE is proud to have partnered with the SCDNR on the restoration of this vital habitat and we will be excited to "Welcome Back the Birds" with a public event this April. Stay tuned to the social media channels of both agencies this spring for more information.



REGIONAL COMMANDER DESCRIBES WHAT'S NEXT FOR CHARLESTON PENINSULA STUDY

By Jackie Pennoyer

The top U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officer in the southeast recently paid a visit to the City of Charleston to address the City Council about the agency's ongoing study into coastal storm risk on the peninsula and provide city leaders with a clear path through the federal study, design and construction process.

The visit occurred weeks after the Charleston Peninsula Coastal Storm Risk Management Study wrapped up a 45-day public comment period on its draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement, which detailed the study's analysis since it kicked off in 2018.

Led by Charleston District, the four-year federal feasibility study recommends three integrated measures to reduce storm surge risk on the peninsula: a perimeter storm surge wall, living shorelines and nonstructural measures.

If implemented, the proposed plan — estimated at \$1.1 billion — would be cost-shared with the City of Charleston, the nonfederal sponsor, and yield a benefit-cost ratio of 11-to-1. In other words, the project expects to save \$10 in prevented coastal storm damages for every federal dollar invested.

During the brief visit, Brig. Gen. Jason Kelly, commanding general, South Atlantic Division, highlighted the agency's emphasis on continued

transparency and its role as a neutral federal entity.

"As the study approaches the final stretch, I want to discuss where we go, what's next, and what are we going to do when the study phase concludes. We are an impartial party, but I also want to make sure that we share our experience and perspective on what can lead to project success, should this project be authorized and appropriated."

Kelly, who oversees USACE operations across North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, the Caribbean and portions of Central and South America also underscored the importance of comprehensive problem-solving and resilient partnerships as the area faces more frequent, destructive storms.

"On the coastal storm risk front, USACE is united with the City in our quest to deal with powerful storms, increasing costs, costs that are outpacing budgets, sea-level rise, and a very interested and rightfully vocal public."

Across the region, Kelly's division leads more than 20 studies and construction efforts designed to examine or enhance coastal resiliency for at-risk communities. The studies and efforts make up an unprecedented workload of \$4.4 billion, all funded by federal supplemental disaster relief bills passed in 2018 and 2019.

Recently, the largest of these efforts, the South Atlantic Coastal Study, ranked the Charleston Peninsula Study as the top regional design and construction priority for the southeast. Spread across 60,000 miles of coastline from North Carolina to Mississippi, the SACS uses comprehensive, collaborative analysis to identify actionable and sustainable efforts that promote coastal resiliency across the region.

"This is a big deal," Kelly said. "There's a financial measure that indicates this project is not just effective in terms of engineering numbers, and that's the project's benefit-cost-ratio of 11-to-1. This project isn't just an investment for Charleston, it's an investment in the nation."

Currently, the Charleston Peninsula study team is reviewing public and agency comments from the most recent comment period. The team is scheduled to submit the study's final report to the USACE Chief of Engineers in late spring of 2022. To progress to the Pre-Engineering and Design (PED) phase, USACE and the city would need to execute a design agreement and the study would need congressional authorization, as well as the phase's non-federal sponsor coast-share requirements.

Kelly, who previously commanded a district that oversaw the study and design of a similar coastal storm risk management project in Norfolk, Va., described the overall PED process and what the city can expect, should the study move forward.

"PED is project-specific. It will allow the entire project team to more closely examine details such as alignment," Kelly said. "We are going to have boundaries, there will be guardrails, but I'm confident

there's sufficient space for us to find common ground and push the project forward."

It is important to strike a balance between designs that both fit the fabric of the city and are backed by strong engineering, said Kelly.

"The technical performance of the recommended plan is this project's holy grail. It is of the utmost importance. I'm an engineer, so I'm interested in making sure what we offer is the necessary solution. It can be pretty, but it's also got to be good. That's what our engineers are going to offer."

If ultimately constructed, the study's proposed plan would represent just one component of the City's overall flood management plan. The project would primarily address coastal storm surge and would work in conjunction with other flood mitigation efforts.

"The City of Charleston is doing the work," said Kelly. "It has an existing comprehensive flood mitigation plan. What we offer is complementary. The scope of the study reduces the risk of coastal storm surge inundation, but it can, and should, be integrated with what's already underway."

Perhaps most important, Kelly said, is the teamwork and heavy community involvement that serve as cornerstones for all phases of federal projects.

"We have to remain arm-in-arm, shoulder-to-shoulder. We've got to do this together."

Learn more about the study at:
www.sac.usace.army.mil/CharlestonPeninsulaStudy.

A DAY ON THE USS YORKTOWN TO SHOWCASE CHARLESTON'S FEMALE COMMANDERS

By Dylan Burnell

It was a beautiful crisp fall morning for a photoshoot aboard the USS Yorktown in Charleston. The focus of the shoot? The upcoming Veterans Day issue of *Charleston Women Magazine* highlighting our very own senior civilian, Lisa Metheney.

Alongside Metheney, stood three female commanders from the Charleston area: U.S. Air Force Col. Rebecca Elliot, agency head, 628th Medical Group; U.S. Navy Chief Warrant Officer Summer Levert, port operations officer, Joint Base Charleston; and U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Commander Cara Lowry, logistics department head, commanding officer of enlisted personnel, and budget officer for the U.S. Coast Guard Sector Charleston.

The four were honored because they all have something in common: female leaders representing four of the five military services. And for the Veterans Day issue of *Charleston Women Magazine*, there was no better group to put on the cover.

In the article, Metheney spoke about her journey and how each piece of it led her to where she is today.

"I was finishing up my first year of graduate school," Metheney explained, "and the tuition waiver I had for the university didn't cover summer school, so I needed a summer job. One of my economics professors told me that they were looking for economist interns at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and told me to go down and apply. I

applied, and lo and behold, they hired me!"

Metheney has always had a passion for public service and serving the nation. Her family includes a long line of public servants and she wanted to carry on that tradition. By working for USACE, she is doing just that.

"My entire family is very big on public service. While I fell into this particular job, I always knew I'd be doing something in the public service realm," said Metheney.

Metheney serves the nation as a federal civilian. She does not serve in the Army as an active military member does. She does, however, take the same oath of office that military service members take.

Her role is to oversee the roughly 250 civilians that make up the Charleston District and ensure they have all the tools they need to successfully execute the mission.

"We have about 250 people in the district, and on average — some years it's more, some years it's less — we execute about \$350 million of work per year," said Metheney. "That's everything from dredging in the harbor, to planning studies, to the construction of facilities at Fort Jackson. The part of my job that I take most seriously is making sure that all our people are taken care of, that we provide them the resources they need to do their jobs and help them grow professionally."





When Metheney began her career for USACE, it was a much different environment than it is today. She was one of few women in her position as an economist and often one of the only women in the room.

"Early on in my career, oftentimes I was, the only female economist in a meeting and certainly one of the youngest females working on a project," Metheney said.

Being the only female made no difference to her though. Metheney knew she was just as qualified to do what her male counterparts did, and she was going to excel at any project given to her. Thanks to many wonderful mentors, she was able to rise through the ranks and break barriers in a traditionally male-dominated field.

"My experience as a woman in USACE has been very positive," Metheney said. "Now, I would be remiss if I did not point out that there were women that came before me that made the path easier. I was not the first female to work in the Charleston District, but I am, however, the first female senior civilian. I'm not the only female deputy civilian across USACE, but I'm one of a small group."

There are roughly eleven female senior civilians serving USACE across the country.

While Metheney was the first female in this leadership role for Charleston District, she knows she will certainly not be the last. As a new generation of female leaders are rising through the ranks, Lisa cannot help but be excited. The diversity that women bring to the workplace is incredibly valuable, and she says that future female leaders should leverage that.

"My advice to future female leaders is to make full use of all of your skills, including the 'soft skills' like facilitation and communication," Metheney said. "And if you are 'the only one' or 'one of only a few' women in your field or office, own that. You are bringing diversity to the fight and it's been proven diversity leads to better teams and better solutions."

Metheney looks forward to continuing her work at the district and was incredibly happy to share her story with those at *Charleston Women Magazine*.

Standing at the end of the USS Yorktown's flight deck, looking over the city she loves, Metheney was surrounded by strong female leaders like herself. She could not help but think about her journey to this moment, but more importantly, how excited she was for the next generation of female commanders.

Note: You can see the issue at online at chswomeninbusiness.com.

◀ FISCAL YEAR AT A GLANCE

2021

BIG PICTURE



760
CONTRACT
ACTIONS

\$320M
TOTAL OBLIGATED



61%
OF CONTRACT \$
AWARDED TO
SMALL BIZ



\$300M
IN TOTAL
COMPLETED
("PLACED")
CONSTRUCTION

REGULATORY



1230
PERMITS
REVIEWED

1,785

JURISDICTIONAL
DETERMINATIONS
COMPLETED



1k+

OTHER ACTIONS,
INCLUDING
PRE-APPLICATION
MEETINGS.

INTERAGENCY & INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT



92
SITE VISITS
CONDUCTED IN
9 COUNTRIES



2 NEW VETERAN
AFFAIRS
CONSTRUCTION
PROJECTS
AWARDED

STUDYING STORM SURGE

8,000+

HOURS STUDYING COASTAL
STORM SURGE RISKS ON
CHARLESTON PENINSULA



WATER DISTRIBUTION



42k

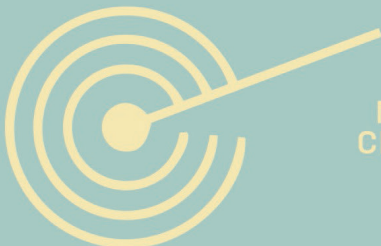
LINEAR FEET OF WATER
PIPING CONSTRUCTED
ACROSS RURAL SC



500k

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

NAVIGATION



467

MILES OF FEDERAL
CHANNEL SURVEYED
FOR PROJECT
CONDITIONS

CHARLESTON HARBOR



16.3M
CUBIC YARDS

EXCAVATED
FROM
CHARLESTON
HARBOR

CRAB BANK SEABIRD SANCTUARY ISLAND

BEGAN RESTORATION USING
MATERIAL DREDGED FROM
CHARLESTON HARBOR
DEEPENING PROJECT



MILITARY CONSTRUCTION

319 ACTIONS
(PROJECT, TASK ORDERS,
MODIFICATIONS)



27,740
SERVICE CALLS AT FORT
JACKSON AND 81st
READINESS DIVISION

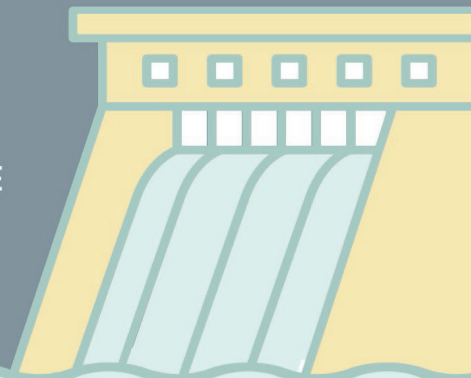
\$153M

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

COOPER RIVER REDIVERSION PROJECT

99%

GENERATION
AVAILABILITY RATE
(TARGET RATE IS
93%)



USACE CHARLESTON DISTRICT HELPS MANAGE FORT JACKSON FACILITIES

By Russell Toof

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Charleston District not only builds facilities at Fort Jackson, but helps the Department of Public Works in maintaining those facilities. This partnership helps support the 45,000 soldiers who train there each year.

USACE currently has a preventative maintenance contract for Fort Jackson where it manages about 5.5 million square feet of facilities as part of its basic training mission.

"I manage a team of 13 people who take care of 69 buildings consisting of child development centers, dining facilities, swimming pools, classrooms, underground storage tanks and barracks," said Jason Hinton, a resident engineer and administrative contracting officer. "My job is making sure the projects we manage move effectively, move forward and the work is done on time and with high quality."

According to Hinton, the Fort Jackson Resident Office can staff-up or staff-down as needed.

"We can expand our resources when our mission requires us to," said Hinton. "DPW called us and we were able to be in place pretty quickly."

Every system in the managed buildings is under the preventative maintenance contract.

"Essentially, from five feet outside the building to the inside is ours," said Hinton. "We've worked on everything from someone clogging a toilet to

repairing a sprinkler head broken off by 'barracks football'. We've even replaced an entire air-conditioning system for a child development center. Also, a benefit for us is that we built or renovated most of the buildings that we are managing and that gives us a chance to learn how we can improve construction in the future."

Hinton added that the work does not go unnoticed.

"We recently were replacing an HVAC system, insulation and ceiling tiles at a dining facility used for basic training Soldiers," he said. "Fort Jackson leadership was coming out for status updates on a regular basis to see how things were going. I was spending four to six hours every day on-site, seven days a week until it was done. We finished the project and everybody was pleased with the outcome. It was a very rewarding, fast-paced, high importance project."

While USACE supports DPW and the basic training mission at Fort Jackson, it also serves those who are no longer wearing the uniform. Our veterans and the Department of Veteran Affairs.

"In my particular role, we also work with the VA here in Columbia," said Hinton. "We're building a parking garage at their facility. A lot of people that we work with at the VA engineering office used to be with USACE so that lends itself to having a very strong relationship with each other."

Hinton has been with USACE for about 12 years, all with the Charleston District. He started with USACE as a project engineer, was promoted to deputy resident engineer and is now a resident engineer.

"The best part of this job is that I like the instant feedback," he said. "Nine times out of 10, when a problem occurs, we can fix it that same day. I like working directly with the customers and solving their problems."



Fort Jackson serves as one of the basic training installations for entry level U.S. Army recruits. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Mark Morrow)

USACE CHARLESTON DISTRICT SURVEY TEAM HELPS MAINTAIN SOUTH CAROLINA WATERWAYS

By Russell Toof

The Charleston District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for 15 navigation projects along the South Carolina coast, stretching from Little River Inlet near the North Carolina border to Port Royal Harbor on South Carolina's southern coast.

Providing safe and navigable waterways is a priority for the District. To keep the waterways open, the navigation program is responsible for the operation and maintenance of approximately 300 miles of navigation channels, which includes Charleston Harbor, several coastal inlets (Folly River, Jeremy Creek and Murrells Inlet), and the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway in South Carolina.

To ensure that these channels are maintained to their authorized depth, the District has two state-of-the-art survey vessels, the S/V Heiselman and the S/V Evans.

"Annually we come out and check the depth of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway," said Sonja Zindars, a geographer and survey technician with Charleston District. "Since it's a federal channel, we are responsible for keeping the depth to 12 feet. We note any problem areas so that way in our next fiscal cycle, we can dredge that area to keep watercraft moving along safely."

The S/V Heiselman is a 26-foot-long boat named for Eugene Heiselman. Heiselman passed away in April 2015. The boat was dedicated in his memory during a ceremony in March 2016, with Heiselman's son christening the boat with a bottle of champagne.

Heiselman spent 30 years with the District, captaining three other vessels over that time. Heiselman was instrumental in the procurement of the S/V Evans.

The S/V Heiselman serves as the District's main vessel for conducting surveys of smaller projects, such as the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway.

"We can do single-beam and multi-beam sonar," said Zindars. "Today we were using single-beam sonar. Sound travels through the water and pings back up once it hits the bottom. By judging the time difference, we can tell how deep the water is. That's recorded in software and analyzed and that's how we make the nautical maps that USACE is responsible for providing to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration."

At 41-feet long, the S/V Evans is the larger of the two vessels. It performs hydrographic surveys for all deep draft navigation projects in Charleston District, such as the Charleston Harbor Post 45 deepening project.

By design, the S/V Evans is equipped with the same survey equipment as the S/V Heiselman. In the case of an equipment failure on either of the vessels, the redundancy allows for things to be quickly swapped out to not delay the crew's important work.

"The Evans is more robust and can handle worsening weather conditions," said Zindars. "When it comes to which boat to use, it's all dependent on the survey location and weather conditions."

Additionally, the District has two smaller vessels that are used in performing work in shallow water or when they need to pull the boat up onto a beach.

To operate all these vessels, the survey team is made up of seven employees, including two boat captains.

"Getting to be on our beautiful waterways, enjoying our gorgeous landscape and seeing the marine life all while performing such an impactful mission to our state and nation makes this the best job ever," said Zindars.



Sonja Zindars prepares to drop a Castaway CTD into the water. The device measures conductivity, temperature and depth to determine a speed of sound change throughout the water column.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A USACE REGULATORY PROJECT MANAGER

By Dylan Burnell

It's 9 a.m. and Erica Fritz just sat down at her desk. She not only carries her morning cup-of-joe, but also a pair of tall boots. Fritz is a project manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District Regulatory Division, and her day is just beginning.

Why the boots? Because for her, the day could end up one of two ways. Either at her desk reviewing permit applications and regulations, or out in the field taking data points and determining what truly is a wetland.

Years of congressional legislation and executive orders have given the USACE permitting authority over Waters of the United States, or WOTUS. Fritz's job, among other things, is to determine what is and is not WOTUS and to evaluate potential impacts to those areas.

The role of the USACE Regulatory Division is to balance reasonable economic development with environmental protection, and Erica Fritz is the front-line of that mission. She routinely reviews and processes permit requests from developers looking to build on or around wetlands and other waters. The first step of the process is to try and avoid any possible impact to wetlands. If avoidance is not feasible, then the goal is to minimize and mitigate the impact development may have. These steps can be done through a variety of ways, but always have the same end goal, a balance of reasonable development with environmental protection.

What leads someone to a job like this? A background with a vast combination of years of public service

and private sector experience, during which she has become quite knowledgeable in her field. Fritz studied biology in college and then went to graduate school where she continued to study wetland and forest ecology. Whether it was in college, at the U.S. Forest Service, or working for private sector companies, the environmental has always been at the forefront of her career.

"I am passionate about the environment," Fritz said. "But my other strong passion in life is people and being able to help them. In this role, I get to kind of marry those two together. I enjoy when members of the public call and have questions, because one of the highlights of my day is helping them navigate the process and understand why we do what we do."

Having a background in the private sector has proven very beneficial. Her knowledge of both sides of the permitting process has made working with applicants a whole lot easier.

"I am happy that I have that private experience because when I work with people from the private sector, I can tell them I truly understand their questions. I can say, 'hey I have sat in your chair before, I get it, and here's what's going on,' and I really enjoy that."

Fritz prefers to come into the office, even in this virtual world we are working in today. At the office, she can be around her coworkers, ask questions and learn more.

The first thing to do in the morning is to fire up the computer and check her email.

She looks to see if there are any new projects assigned to her and if there are, looks them over and adds them to a tracking sheet.

The regulatory division has an incredibly high workload with South Carolina

being so low-lying and saturated compared to other states. In recent years, the state has also grown more popular and attracted more development, further adding to the intensity and workload.

"Everyone in Regulatory has their own way of tracking their workload," Fritz said. "I start by looking at my projects on my tracking sheet and their time requirements. I learned we have some projects that can take 30 minutes to an hour to complete, so I try to get those done and out the door when I have time. It's go go go all day and there's not a moment there is not something to do, and I love that."

When it comes to what life is like working day-to-day in Regulatory, Fritz said it is a very collaborative and fast-paced atmosphere. With ever-changing rules and regulations, USACE Regulatory project managers must adapt and remain flexible. This leads to many seasoned project managers helping those who are



newer, like Fritz.

"I really enjoy that when we are all working hard and someone has a question, we all cluster up together. Even the more seasoned project managers get to help out, and we all get to listen in and learn together. It's a collaborative approach and everyone is busy."

When she's not working, Fritz likes to spend her time enjoying the land she works so closely with. Whether its kayaking, running or just taking a nice hike, she loves all-things outdoors.

While moving from the private to the public sector was certainly an adjustment for her, she could not be happier with the decision.

"It was a significant change to leave the private industry to come back to the public sector, but it was a great decision. I am a public servant at heart, and I truly love what I do."

It may be hard work, but at the end of the day, when Erica Fritz leaves the office, she can't help but look at the beautiful landscapes she works with every day. And as she does, it never fails to bring a smile to her face.

USACE PEOPLE: HOW WE HELP SOLVE THE NATION'S TOUGHEST CHALLENGES

For 150 years, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Charleston District has been serving Charleston, South Carolina and the nation. All the projects USACE has been responsible for wouldn't have been possible without its greatest asset: its people.



Addison Layfield

WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT WORKING FOR USACE?

"There are a number of things that I would say are the best parts, but the top ones are the people we have the opportunity to work with each day and the missions we work on to accomplish. Both large and small, they contribute so much to our military and our nation."

HOW DO YOU SOLVE THE NATION'S TOUGHEST CHALLENGES?

"As a team. We work as a team, both within contracting and with other divisions in order to make the best decisions for the situations we are in. We could never accomplish all that we do without working as a single team. "

Jarrett Cellini

WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT WORKING FOR USACE?

"The culture of people first. There is a difference between stating you care about people, compared to actions that show you care about your people."

HOW DO YOU SOLVE THE NATION'S TOUGHEST CHALLENGES?

"The mission of USACE'S Regulatory Program is to protect the nation's aquatic resources and navigable capacity while allowing economic development through fair and balanced decisions. Regulatory is always being pulled between protecting the environment and allowing development to occur. Finding this balance is an incredibly tough challenge in a world that is constantly changing."





Charlenne Figgins

WHY DID YOU JOIN USACE?

"My mother was a civil engineering tech for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and I grew up knowing about USACE. My mom loved talking about what she did on a daily basis and anytime we drove over the bridge in Wilmington and there was a dredge in the harbor, she would point it out, tell me what they were doing and what her role was in that. Her passion for her work with USACE made me want to work here as well. When I decided I wanted to start working, the first thing I did was send in an application to be a student worker."

HOW DO YOU SOLVE THE NATION'S TOUGHEST CHALLENGES?

"My role is solving the nation's toughest challenges is primarily to ensure that we have the appropriate levels of staffing here in contracting to execute the mission. Not only ensuring that we have the appropriate levels of staffing, but ensuring they are properly trained."

Kristin Andrade

WHAT IS THE BEST PART ABOUT WORKING FOR USACE?

"I really enjoy the people I work with and that there are so many opportunities. USACE does some pretty cool things and it's awesome to learn about all we do."

HOW DO YOU SOLVE THE NATION'S TOUGHEST CHALLENGES?

"I work in the Greenville Field Office which covers the fast growing upstate. I review delineations submitted so property owners know where waters of the U.S. are located on their property. I also review permit applications when there are impacts to waters of the U.S. Through the review, I coordinate the project with other agencies if required and help to work through concerns or challenges."



BOYS WITH A PURPOSE: HELPING YOUNG MEN BE THE BEST THEY CAN BE

By Glenn Jeffries

One Army general, 20 young boys and Vince Lombardi recently spent an afternoon together at the College of Charleston at one of Meminger Elementary's after-school programs. Brig. Gen. Jason Kelly, the South Atlantic Division commander, met with the students of Boys With A Purpose, a non-profit organization that helps young men learn how to become the best versions of themselves by teaching them life skills. Lombardi was there in spirit as the group watched the famous football coach's What it takes to be Number One video.

With the boys being very interested in football, Kelly's former life as a West Point football player and

Lombardi's reputation for success, the afternoon was enjoyed by all, and the students were left with key thoughts on how to prepare for a better tomorrow, a top-line initiative Kelly instills in all USACE projects and programs.

The students' eyes widened as Kelly, a Black general — one of only 43 in the U.S. Army — delivered some unexpected words. Kelly first told the boys that there was nothing special about him and that rising to the position of general boils down to hard work and dedication and that they could do anything he could do with the same drive.





As the afternoon went on, the students began to believe Kelly's words and that they were capable of accomplishing whatever their dream was if they followed some basic, but very important life values.

These values consisted of commitment, truth, passion, results, excellence, habits, mental toughness and discipline. These eight values, along with Kelly's words of wisdom, left them with guiding principles for a life well-lived.

"Staying true to these principles, along with always doing what you say you are going to do, will help you achieve good results while reaching your dreams," said Kelly.

The boys, ages 6 to 13, quickly understood that people are shaped by their everyday choices. The day after Kelly's visit, Boys With A Purpose posted a Facebook video of the students recalling the principals the general left them with, showing us once again why these students continue to inspire us. We look forward to continuing to engage with these students in the future as they give it their all to make sure their tomorrow is better. Lombardi would be proud!

You can see the thought-provoking video on the Boys With A Purpose Facebook page.

Charleston District is the recipient of this year's
Charleston Metro Chamber of
Commerce "Community Impact award."

This award recognizes an organization, known for long-standing excellence, that has demonstrated business success for 20-plus years and showcases a deep dedication for advancing the business community and Charleston region.





Photos by Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
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CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
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CHARLESTON, S.C. 29403



**As we wind down our celebration of 150 years
of services to South Carolina and the nation, we
want to say thank you to all of our partners. We
couldn't do it without you.**

