



US Army Corps
of Engineers

St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

Vol. 8

No. 9

September 1985

GREAT Study Guides Maintenance Activities

In the early 1970s, concern for the Mississippi River mounted as conditions along the river deteriorated and fish and wildlife populations declined or vanished altogether.

A decade later, the river's future looks brighter, says Dan Krumholz, river resource coordinator at the St. Paul District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

According to Krumholz, conditions on the river have improved since the Corps of Engineers and other federal and state agencies joined forces to protect this great resource.

Responding to the river's plight in 1974, the Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the principal federal management agencies on the river, organized an interagency team to improve conditions on the river.

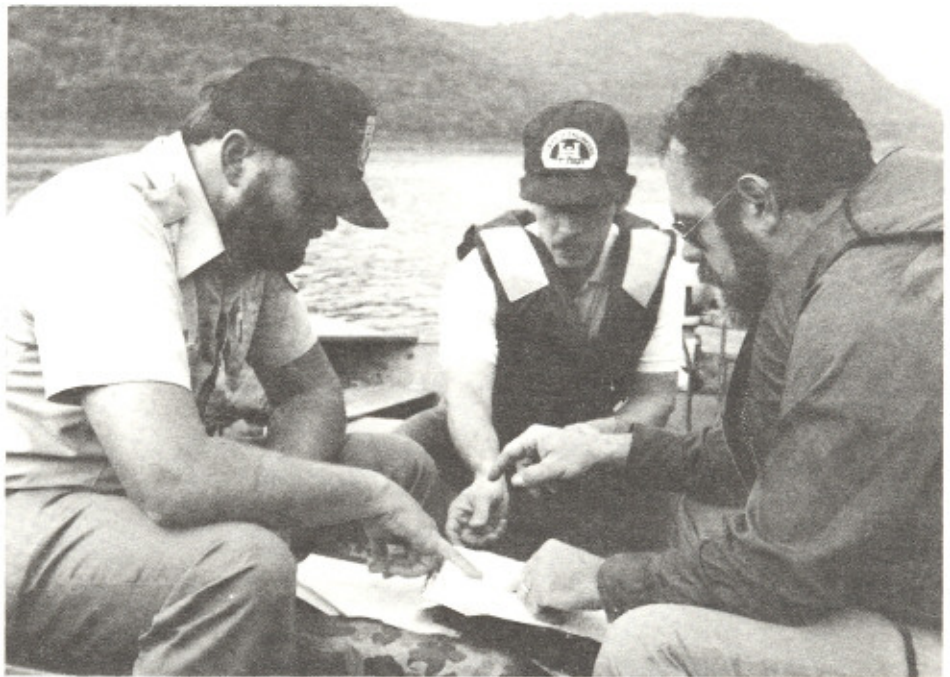
The Great River Environmental Action Team (GREAT), made up of people representing federal and state agencies and the public, tackled the major issues and problems confronting our use of the Mississippi River.

It will be five years in September since the team completed its first study—GREAT I—covering the river from the head of navigation in Minneapolis-St. Paul to Guttenberg, Iowa, the section of river under St. Paul District jurisdiction.

As Krumholz describes it today, "The GREAT study was really the catalyst to working things out on the river."

Out of the study grew a list of objectives and recommendations guiding present and future management of the river.

Among these recommendations is a detailed plan for maintenance of the nine-foot navigation channel operated by the Corps, that includes specific sites for placement of all material to be dredged between now and 2025. Under authorization of the River and Harbor Act of 1930, the Corps of Engineers operates the series



Dan Krumholz (center), river resource coordinator, explains the Weaver Bottoms project with officials from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Photo by Ken Gardner

of locks and dams on the Mississippi River from St. Anthony Falls in Minneapolis, to St. Louis, Mo. The locks and dams create a series of pools that provide a navigation channel at least 9-foot deep for river traffic.

To maintain the channel, the St. Paul District presently dredges close to 800,000 cubic yards of sand from the river each year. In the past, nearly 1.5 million cubic yards was dredged annually and placement of this material was confined primarily to lands and waters near the dredge site—a practice that often damaged sensitive river habitat.

To protect the environment and comply with state and federal regulations, the Corps made changes to its channel maintenance procedures that follow the GREAT study

recommendations. According to Harold Tagatz, chief of the Channel Maintenance Branch, the Corps has requested approximately \$3 million per year to implement those recommendations.

One of the Corps' primary and most successful objectives involves maximizing productive use of dredge material. Rather than depositing the material in areas where it can't be used, the Corps tries to place the material at sites where it is accessible to cities, counties, states, private contractors or landowners.

The material has wide application as landfill in the construction of commercial

Continued on page 6

New Counselor Named in District



Joann Meier

Photo by Pam Banks

Joann Meier, Office of Administrative Services, was selected as an equal employment counselor for the St. Paul District.

Joann along with the district's other two counselors—Glen Duren, Lock and Dam No. 2 and Ken Harrell, Regulatory Functions Branch—deal with the EEO complaints of employees.

A counselor is a middle person who listens to the complaint and then investigates the situation. According to Marianne Price, equal employment opportunity

officer, a counselor has full-authority of the law to look at personnel records, performance appraisals and any other information that will assist to resolve the issue. "The counseling process is totally confidential including the name of the person who has a complaint," Marianne said.

Joann has been employed by the government for a little more than four years. The last two of these years have been with the Corps. Before she was employed by the government, Joann spent almost 20-years doing volunteer work for various organizations. During which time, she dealt with a variety of problems on a one-to-one basis with individuals.

As a counselor, Joann will be trained in the procedures of personnel management and in the laws of the Equal Employment Opportunity Program.

Common sense is the main key to being a counselor, according to Joann. "I'm sure the training will be continuous as rules and regulations in personnel and laws change," Joann said. "I have one advantage as counselor, my husband is a lawyer and I can always ask him a question if I'm not sure of a certain situation."

Crosscurrents Survey Results

"I really do enjoy reading Crosscurrents. I have read every issue and have saved them since they came out. I browse through them occasionally and they bring back lots of memories," one reader commented.

Five hundred and forty six readership surveys for Crosscurrents were sent to randomly selected district, field and retired employees in the St. Paul District in June. Out of the surveys mailed, 318 were completed, making the response rate almost 60 percent.

The results of the survey showed that 253 of these employees read every issue of Crosscurrents, with 163 reading almost every article.

Other results of the survey showed that the majority of the readers would like more articles on field activities and district people. The survey also indicated that Crosscurrents' readers would like less coverage of special emphasis programs and planning studies.

The overall appearance and contents of Crosscurrents was rated good by readers.

There were also many comments during the survey. One comment suggested that more articles should be written by district personnel other than Public Affairs. Writing planning articles followed by construction articles on the same project was another suggestion. This would let employees who have worked on one project see it finally become a reality.

Although many good suggestions were made during the survey, there was one specific complaint from the readers—it arrives late. The staff of Crosscurrents is currently working to correct this problem.

The results of the readership survey will be taken into consideration for future issues of Crosscurrents.

Corps' Exhibit Appreciated

The following letter was written to Owen Wanek, lockmaster at Lock and Dam No. 4, for his effort in arranging for the Corps' traveling trailer to be at Alma, Wis.

Dear Mr. Owen:

This letter of Appreciation is tardy because I was not aware of the interest shown in the exhibit at the Lock and Dam. With dozens of other commitments, I did not have a chance to view the exhibits which were termed OUTSTANDING by many local residents.

At their last meeting, members of the Alma Historical Society voted to "commend Owen Wanek—and the Corps of Engineers—for the outstanding exhibit of local historical materials pertaining to the building of the lock and dam here in Alma.

Your effort, Owen, in obtaining the exhibit trailer is appreciated by everyone, but especially by the local historians.

A Sincere Thank You,

Blanche L. Schneider
Secretary, Alma Historical Society

Crosscurrents is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-81. It is published monthly by offset for the St. Paul District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Corps of Engineers or the Department of the Army. Deadline for submitting articles is the 10th of each month preceding publication.

Address: Editor, Crosscurrents, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1135 U.S. Post Office & Custom House, St. Paul, Minn. 55101-1479.

*District Engineer Col. Joseph Briggs
Chief, Public Affairs Ken Gardner
Editor Pam Banks*

Corps' Exhibit at State Fair Attracts Thousands of Viewers

Thousands of people visited the St. Paul District's exhibit at the 1985 Minnesota State Fair held on August 22 through September 2. Along with the crowds of people came many questions regarding Corps activities. The theme of the exhibit was "The Corps and the Mississippi River: More Than a Century of Service."

The background for the exhibit, created by Anne Bradford, illustrator, shows a map of the upper Mississippi River from its beginning at Lake Itasca southward to Lock & Dam No. 10 at Guttenburg, Iowa.

Twenty photos depicting Corps activities along the Mississippi since 1866 were included in the exhibit.

A video tape of the Mississippi River highlighted the exhibit. The tape, originally produced for the Corps' exhibit at the 1984 Louisiana World's Exposition in New Orleans, showed the entire length of the Mississippi from an airplane.



Roger Worth, Lock and Dam No. 1, speaks to a group of people at the Corps' exhibit during the Minnesota State Fair. A highlight of the exhibit was a nine-minute video tape titled "Mississippi River."

Photo by Ken Gardner



Anne Bradford, illustrator, concentrates on putting the final touches to the exhibit for the Minnesota State Fair.

Photo by Ken Gardner



Terry Schneider (left) and Don Schroder from St. Anthony Falls unload a video cabinet that was used at the State Fair.

Photo by Ken Gardner

Office Management Branch Undergoes Cost Comparison Study

Currently, the Office Management Branch is one of 29 Corps offices undergoing a Cost Comparison Study. The intent of the study, mandated by the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76, is to prepare a comparative cost to perform the functions of that office. The most cost effective method of operation will be determined from comparing the inhouse cost to a bid received from a private contractor. The following article, written by Associated Editor Eric Yoder for the Federal Times in Washington, D.C., takes a look at the controversial A-76 Program.

The Defense Department is pushing its contracting out program in a new direction—toward keeping jobs inhouse.

Defense has set a goal of winning 75 percent of its future cost competitions, compared to the roughly half now won by contractors. To reach that end, the Pentagon is starting to give base managers pep talks and tips on making their operations more efficient.

Like other agencies, the Defense Depart-

ment—which has most of the government's contractable jobs—traditionally has emphasized Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76 solely as an efficiency tool. It professed little regard for whether its own employees or contractors won the cost studies.

But Douglas Farbrother, DoD principal director for installations, said the agency now wants to reach employees who are "fretting and stewing" about the future as their jobs are put up for bid.

"The major problem with A-76 is with the human spirit—it's a real downer. If you back away from the details, the concept of competition, what we're doing is taking 10,000 of our employees a year and threatening the hell out of them," he said.

"These things can drag on for years. There's a tremendous problem with morale, people leaving for other jobs. We don't take that into consideration on the balance sheet, but it's something we want to minimize. This is a first step in that direction."

The effort was announced in March, when installations Chief Robert Stone's annual report urged managers to win more com-

petitions. He invited facilities to ask for copies of "How Winners Win," a study published last year of 14 recent DoD cost comparisons.

"In my opinion, the perfect A-76 study is a tough, honest contest that our in-house people win," Stone told the facilities.

Farbrother, a deputy to Stone, said many have asked for a report by the Logistics Management Institute, a federally funded research center specializing in defense. A handbook based on the study should be ready for distribution soon.

"We're getting very favorable comments on the idea of winning competitions," Farbrother said. "What I haven't seen any real sign of is the services springing into action. If we don't see that soon, we're going to do something ourselves."

He said the Pentagon might send a management team to advise an installation preparing for a major cost study. "I would like to see the services do that, but they've got to get the idea first that we care whether they win or not," Farbrother said.

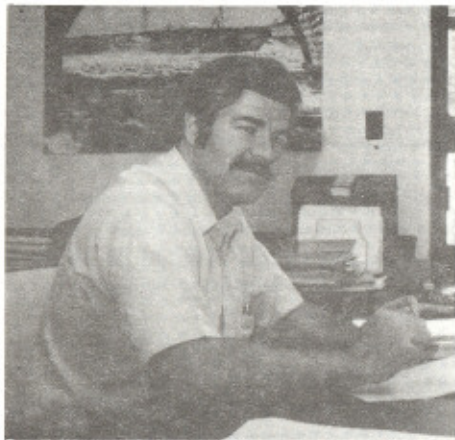
While on tour of the upper Mississippi River, (left to right) Burt Morris, lockmaster at Lock and Dam No. 7, Col. Joseph Briggs, commander, Lee Steneron, lower area lockmaster, and Bill Goetz, chief of the Construction-Operations Division, stop to visit with two handicapped fishermen on the loading dock at Lock and Dam No. 7.

Although the loading dock is still used for loading and unloading materials, it has been modified to provide handicapped individuals with a place to fish. Hand railings were lowered around the dock for convenience and a paved ramp was constructed from the parking lot to the dock for easy access.

Photo by Rosemarie Bruatz



People Behind the Corps



Rick Rothbauer

Photo by Pam Banks

In the past 14 years, Rick Rothbauer has played an active role in keeping the nation's rivers, lakes and streams free of pollution.

Since 1980, Rick has served as grants management coordinator for the Treatment Works Section in the Construction-Operations Division.

The Treatment Works Section has lent its expertise to over 350 Environmental Protection Agency and State-funded projects in Wisconsin and Minnesota since the Corps and the EPA signed their joint agreement seven years ago. The projects have ranged from the construction of wastewater settling ponds to the upgrading of large metropolitan sewer systems.

Working with the Environmental Protection Agency and state agencies in Minnesota and Wisconsin, Rick coordinates the grant-related activities of the section to ensure the treatment works projects are brought to a timely and successful completion. Rick said the rewarding part of his work is "the satisfaction I get when a project is completed, knowing that the project is doing its part to help clean up our lakes and rivers."

Prior to his work in the Corps, Rick was employed by the EPA in Chicago, where he worked in a similar capacity. However, he was involved in a broader spectrum of treatment works projects, ranging from the initial planning through construction completion and final grant audit.

Originally from Bloomer, Wis., Rick attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he received a bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1971.

Rick and his wife Lynn along with their son Jeff, live in White Bear Lake. In his leisure time, Rick enjoys bowling, water skiing, Twins and Cubs baseball and Packer football.

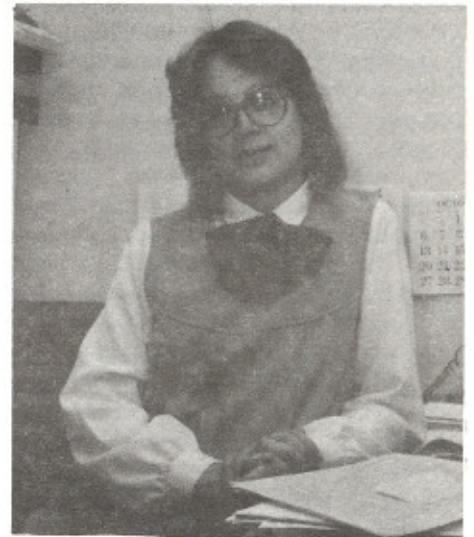
Listening to district employees and informing them of their rights and opportunities are the duties of Barbara Lemire-Higley, who has worked as an assistant in the Equal Employment Opportunities Office for the past two months.

Barbara also manages the Federal Women's Program, which seeks to provide more employment and advancement opportunities for women in the district. The program addresses career issues such as advancement, career counseling and sexual harassment. In addition, the program offers guidance on personal issues such as stress management and child care.

Barbara said the program, which is open to male employees, also works with the EEO to serve federal employees with continuing education, veteran assistance and minority hiring.

"Some people have been here 15 years and feel they are not able to advance," she said. "Also, many people don't know anything about EEO and are hesitant to talk about it. I want people to feel comfortable in coming in here, to the 15th floor office."

A native of Aitkin, Minn., Barbara served in the Navy for four years after high school graduation. She then completed two years at Normandale Community College before joining the Corps as a radio operator in 1983. Stationed at the Communication Center in Hastings, Minn., she monitored



Barbara Lemire-Higley

Photo by Pam Banks

traffic up and down the Mississippi River during the summer of 1983.

Barbara then worked as a secretary to the chief of finance and accounting from late 1983 to June of this year, when she advanced to her present position.

An outdoorsperson, Barbara enjoys canoeing in the Boundary Waters as well as fishing and cross-country skiing. She and her husband Phil live in South Minneapolis and are expecting their first child in December.

Sharing a Full-Time Job Can Be Rewarding

Although Jan Dean and Kristi Synstebj are both attorneys in the Office of Counsel, they very rarely see one another. "We work part-time by sharing one FTE," Kristi said. "One week I work three days and Jan works the other two days and vice versa the next week. It's a marvelous opportunity for me. I can still practice law and have time to spend with my family."

The St. Paul District's Office of Counsel has become the first legal office in the Corps to try the Job Sharing Program. "Jan and Kristi began working part-time at the end of July. It may take up to six-months to fine tune the program to best fit the needs of the individuals and the supervisor. However, so far it seems to be working," Lee Toedter, chief of the Office of Counsel said.

"This is a wonderful program to accommodate the needs of the individual who may not want to work full-time. It provides that individual with the opportunity to continue to practice law," Lee said.

The idea of job sharing is also being practiced at various law offices in Hennepin County where attorneys work part-time but still share the workload. Attorneys are also working part-time in Anoka County. According to Kristi, job sharing could become very popular with families who are now working two full-time jobs and want to cut back.

"So far, I don't foresee that there may be any problems with Job Sharing. As supervisor, I try to keep on top of all the cases in the office. So if a problem should arise, I can take care of it without Kristi or Jan being in the office," Lee said.

GREAT

and residential buildings, development of parks and the replenishment of beach areas.

"About 75 percent of all dredged material is now being used productively or placed in areas where it can be. Before the GREAT study, maybe 15 percent was put to beneficial use," Krumholz said.

The Corps plans to use dredged material for the rehabilitation of Weaver Bottoms on the Mississippi River in Pool 5—a major project that is scheduled to begin in 1986.

The habitat at Weaver Bottoms has deteriorated over the years, Krumholz said. A strong flow of water from the main channel of the Mississippi River enters the Bottoms through a number of side channels, depositing sand and sediment that is slowly killing the aquatic vegetation that fish and wildlife depend on for habitat.

Strong southwest winds at the lower end of the Bottoms create turbulent water, also preventing vegetation growth.

The Corps plans to use dredged material to close the side channels to reduce sediment deposition, and plans to build islands, which it hopes will serve as a wind break.

Constructing the islands should allow the vegetation to reestablish itself and should improve the waterfowl habitat in the Bottoms, Krumholz said.

Other changes the Corps has adopted include:

—Increased channel condition monitoring. Rather than dredging immediately at the onset of shoaling, the Corps now watches a site to see whether the situation will improve on its own.

—Increased surveying capability. The Corps has more than doubled its ability to monitor problem areas where sand builds up in the channel.

—Increased use of physical and mathematical models. The Corps is studying the use of mathematical models and three-dimensional physical scale models to better predict the movement of sediment in isolated portions of the river.

—Increased use of wing dams and closing dams. The Corps has increased its efforts to modify, repair or redo channel control structures to cut down on required dredging. Six new wing dams were constructed last year near Lansing, Iowa. The wing dams

were designed to reduce or eliminate shoaling and force the current into the center of the navigation channel. Surveys conducted this summer indicate the project is "very successful so far, but continued monitoring is necessary," Krumholz said.

—Reducing dredging depths. In 1975, the Corps began reducing dredging depths at certain locations from 13 feet to 11 or 12 feet to reduce the amount of dredged material that would have to be placed at a disposal site.

These and other changes in the Corps' channel maintenance program demonstrate the success of the GREAT study, says Krumholz.

Although many of these changes would have occurred sooner or later anyway, the GREAT study "accelerated many steps necessary for better river management," he said.

"Now, we try to make these things part of the way we regularly do business, and ideally, the spirit of the recommendations will become a permanent part of our program."

Myths and the Equal Employment Opportunity Program

by Marianne Price, Equal Opportunity Officer

How many myths about the Equal Employment Opportunity Program do you believe in? According to one myth the program is only for minorities and females. Other myths are based on common misconceptions including that the affirmative action programs give unfair advantages to minorities at the expense of the rest of the workforce; that there is a quota system; or that the program causes reverse discrimination.

These myths frustrate the efforts in obtaining equality in employment for all individuals. When in fact, the program ensures that equal consideration is given to all employees and applicants in all areas of employment.

The Affirmative Action Program is one critical area in the total Equal Employment

Opportunity Program. Affirmative Action is a positive, aggressive action taken to eliminate discriminatory employment practices. It also opens doors which have previously been closed to some and ensures that job opportunities are made available to groups which have been historically neglected.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, and subsequent acts, prohibit discrimination because of color, sex, race, national origin, religion, age, or handicap in federal employment or federally assisted programs. So, irrespective of your race, sex, etc., if you have been discriminated against, your grievances can be voiced in the EEO arena.

Announcement

The Employees Benefit Fund is once again sponsoring an Arts and Crafts Holiday Boutique on November 4, 5 and 6. To obtain more information, call Therese at 725-7522.

“A doctor can bury his mistakes but an architect can only advise his client to plant vines.”

— Frank Lloyd Wright