



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

Vol. 20, No. 5

May 1997

FLOODS! Emergency operations face 14 floods of record, support flood fights in 40 communities



Photo by Ken Gardner

Minnesota River

At left, Tom Eidson (in hard hat), Construction-Operations (CO), and Doug Crum, Engineering and Planning (PE), met with an unidentified contractor on April 6 on Minnesota Ave. in Granite Falls, Minn. Behind them is a temporary emergency levee topped with flash boards. Water has seeped through the levee to cover the low spots around them. Granite Falls was one of 40 communities in Minnesota and North Dakota where the district supported a flood fight.

Red River of the North

At right, record flood crests on the Red River of the North attracted nationwide media attention. Melting snow pack, compounded by a late-winter blizzard and sleet, created the record crests. Tim Bertschi (center), Western Area Flood Control Office in Fargo, N.D., coordinated the district's advance measures and emergency operations efforts on the river, which marks the Minnesota-North Dakota boundary. The district invoked advance measures authority on March 8 and emergency operations authority on March 31.



Photo by Denise Tyler

The Minnesota River

Flood of record rolls through Granite Falls



Photo by Ken Gardner

Stu Dobberpuhl of Engineering and Planning Division sets a new reference point on the Hwy. 212 bridge over the Minnesota River at Granite Falls, Minn. Dobberpuhl established the measuring point when high water overtopped the existing gauge on a pedestrian bridge, right. The weekend of April 5-6 started with high winds, followed by a driving rain, a blizzard, ice jams and flooding.



Photo by Ken Gardner

Dave Haumersen checks the level of the Minnesota River against a sandbag levee in Granite Falls, Minn., in early April. The district provided technical assistance, 160,000 sandbags, three pumps and contracts to add clay and rock to the existing advance measures emergency levee. In the background, a snowblower throws water back into the river channel. Haumersen is chief of Construction-Operations Division.



Photo by Curtis Hall

This pedestrian bridge in Granite Falls held a staff gauge before high water submerged it, which made the measurement of an official crest difficult to establish. The photo was taken in February.

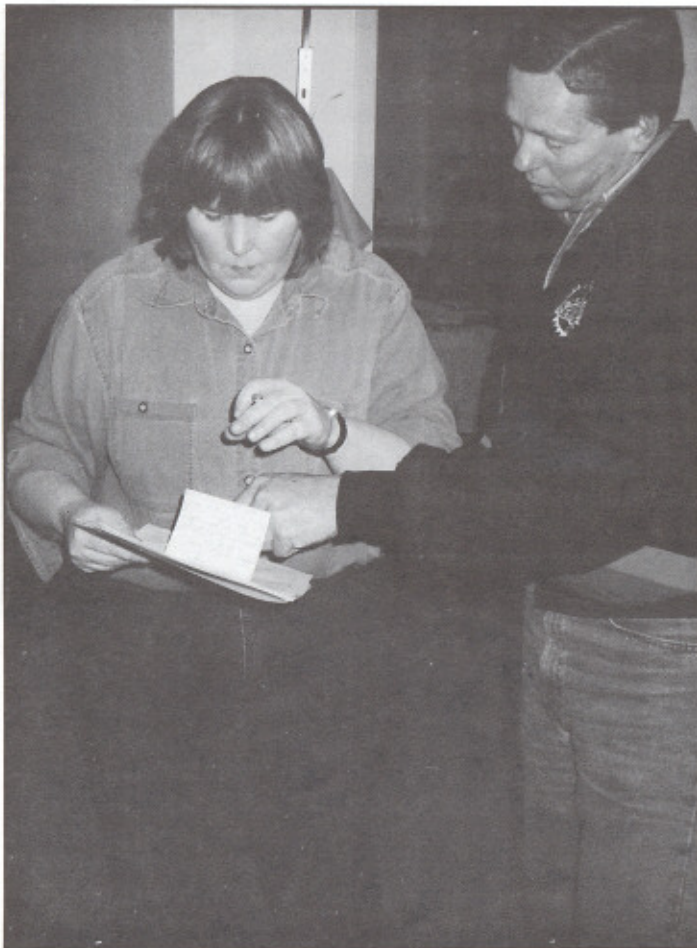


Photo by Ken Gardner

The Minnesota River at Montevideo

Bonnie Greenleaf, a technical manager in Engineering and Planning Division, meets with a contractor in Montevideo, Minn. A private engineering firm rented space for a temporary Emergency Operations Center (EOC) there. The district issued about \$125,000 in contracts out of the temporary EOC, most of which was directed for work in Montevideo. The Minnesota River crested there early on April 7, 1997 at a provisional height of 24.48 feet. The previous record was April 12, 1969 at 21.7 feet.

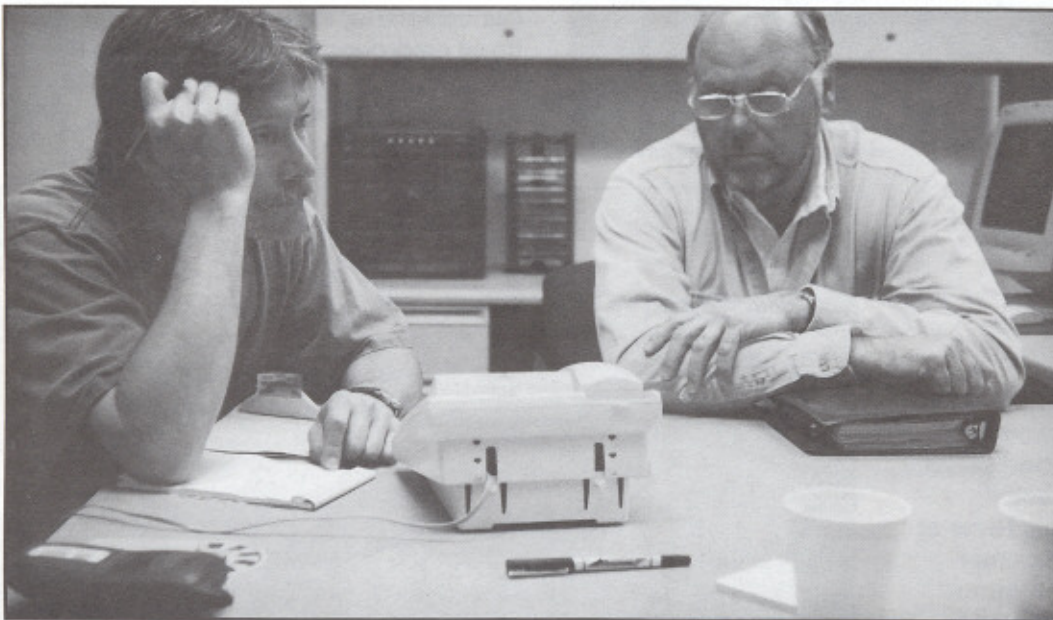
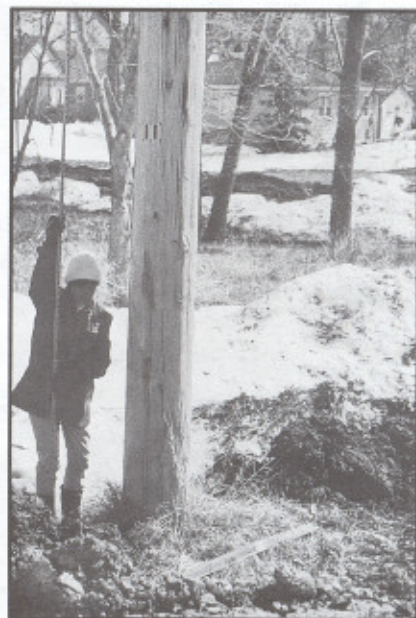
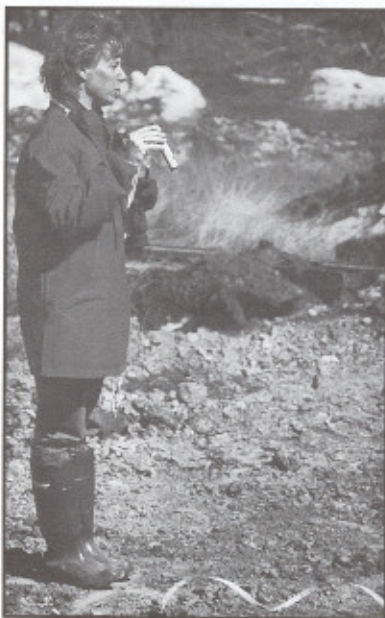


Photo by Ken Gardner

Joel Rogers, left, and Dave Haumersen participate in the daily morning conference call with the district office. Rogers coordinated field activities in the Minnesota River Basin. Haumersen is chief of Construction-Operations. Rogers and all personnel in the field endured long fatigue-filled days and nights during the flood fight.

Red River of the North at Breckenridge

The river communities Wahpeton, N.D. and Breckenridge, Minn., mark the beginning of the Red River of the North. The river crested there at a record 19.21 feet on April 6 and again on April 17 at 19.1. Flood stage is 10 feet. The previous record was 17.95 feet on April 5, 1989. Karen Cassidy, right, and Lori Taylor, far right, surveyed in Breckenridge on April 3 to establish rough elevations for emergency levees during the advance measures. Cassidy used a hand level.



Photos by Denise Tyler except where noted



Photo by Burch Communications

Denise Tyler, left, Rock Island District Public Affairs, assisted throughout the flood emergency. She is shown in Breckenridge, Minn., during a visit by Vice President Gore on April 11.

At right, Dave Nelson, Baldhill Dam Resident Office, oversees a contractor excavating clay from a borrow pit at Enderlin, N.D. The contractor trucked the clay to the Maple River at Enderlin where it became an emergency levee to protect the community. The resident office is in Valley City, N.D.





Photo by Denise Tyler



Photo by Denise Tyler

At Fargo and Grand Forks



Photo by Ken Gardner

In the photo at top left, Dick Sundberg gives instructions to a contractor during the construction of the Second Street emergency levee on April 15 at Fargo, N.D. The river at Fargo first crested at 37.6 feet on April 12 and at 39.5 feet on April 18. The crests broke the previous flood of record for Fargo at 37.3 feet on April 15, 1969. Flood stage is 17 feet. Sundberg works out of the Sheyenne River Resident Office, Fargo. Top right, Scott Jutila (left), Jim Murphy and Mike Leshner, all from Engineering and Planning (PE), were on a reconnaissance team based in Fargo that assessed flood conditions and snow melt. It's April 16, and Leshner was on the phone consulting with Water Control Section at the district office. At left, Grand Forks Mayor Pat Owens shakes hands with Major General Robert B. Flowers, Mississippi Valley Division Commander (MVD). St. Paul District Commander Colonel J.M. Wonsik is in the middle.



Photo by Ed McNally

A Corps of Engineers contractor constructed the emergency levee for Grand Forks, N.D. at left. The state highway bridge leads into the city's downtown. The Red River of the North overtopped this and other emergency levees in a record-breaking crest of 54.21 feet on April 22.



Photo by Peter Verstegen

The Mississippi

Flooding at Minneapolis and St. Paul rates third, after 1965 and 1969

From April 6 to April 16, 1997, the mighty Mississippi River thundered through the wide-open tainter gate at Upper Saint Anthony Falls lock (at left) at a rate of 69,640 cubic feet per second (cfs). For comparison, the record 1965 flood produced a flow through the lock chamber of about 91,000 cfs. The lock normally closes to river traffic at 40,000 cfs. The water at the lock and dam achieved a maximum elevation of 803.45 feet above mean sea level (msl) during this year's flood. The normal level is about 800 above msl. The U.S. Coast Guard closed the river for safety purposes on April 9 and reopened it on April 14. The district closed the lock at Upper Saint Anthony Falls from April 4 to 19.

At right, Bob Post, chief of Engineering and Planning Division, used a cell phone to talk with the CBS news control room in New York City. In downtown St. Paul, the river covered Harriet Island, in the background.



Photo by Ken Gardner



Photo by Peter Verstegen

The district's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in St. Paul was the nerve center for the flood fight in three river basins. The district activated the EOC on March 17. From left are Bud Johnson, Engineering and Planning Division (PE); Bob Engels-tad (PE), Denise McCarthy, Contracting Division; Ferris Chamberlin, PE, back to camera, and Dave DePoint, EOC manager.

Bits and Pieces

Dan Ford snaps Hale-Bopp comet



Photo by Daniel Ford

Daniel Ford, Engineering and Planning (PE), shot the above photo of the Hale-Bopp comet as it passed over head on March 31, "when the Hale-Bopp is closest to the sun," he reported. Ford took this photo 45 miles north of the Twin Cities, near Forest Lake. He used ASA 1600 Fuji film, a 90-second exposure, a 50 mm lens and set the camera f-stop at 5.5.

Deb Foley co-chairs technical program at ASCE convention

Deb Foley, Programs and Project Management Division, was a technical program co-chair at the 24th Annual Conference of the Water Resources Planning and Management Division, held as part of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Texas Section Spring Convention on April 6-9 in Houston, Tex. Foley moderated three technical sessions about urban drainage and stormwater detention, flood control and recreation, and water supply. She also gave a presentation about incorporating aesthetics into flood control projects.

"Designing for Aesthetics in Urban Water Resources Projects," authored by Foley, was included in proceedings of the 24th Annual Water Resources Planning and Management Conference.

MVD commander visits

Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) Commander Major General Robert B. Flowers (right) held an all-employee meeting April 3 in the Jerome Hill Auditorium as part of his get-acquainted visit with the St. Paul District.

Effective April 1, the St. Paul and Rock Island districts became part of the newly formed MVD as part of a Corps-wide restructuring. The two districts join the former Lower Mississippi Valley districts of St. Louis, Memphis, Vicksburg, and New Orleans.

The newly formed division offers coordinated management of the Corps districts along the Mississippi Valley from the headwaters to the Gulf of Mexico.



Photo by Peter Versteegen

Awards Picnic June 20 at Long Lake Regional Park

by Nathan Kathir
Engineering and Planning

The St. Paul District's Awards Ceremony and Picnic will be held Friday, June 20, at the Long Lake Regional Park, 1500 Old Highway 8, New Brighton. The park offers free admission and parking. Amenities include children's playground, hiking trails, ball field, volleyball court, covered picnic shelter and beach. There is a nominal fee for beach use. The park is accessible for physically challenged.

Planned activities include: golf, volleyball, hiking/biking and door prizes. The golf tournament will be at the Bridges of Moundsvew, 8290 Coral Sea St., Moundsvew, Minn. The course is about five miles from the Long Lake Regional Park.

Food will be catered by Tinucci's of Newport, Minn. The menu is:

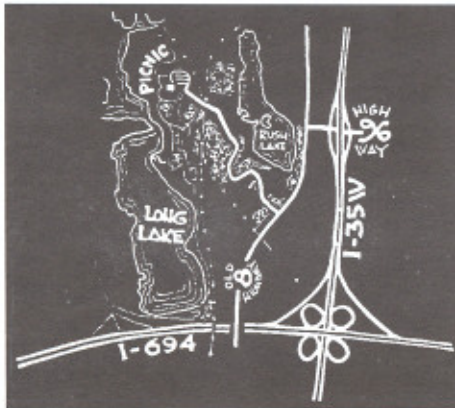
Adults: Baked chicken, potato salad, cole slaw, pasta salad, beans, assorted relishes, rolls and butter.

Children: Two hot dogs (instead of chicken) and the same side dishes as adults. Pop, popcorn and snow cones will be available.

Tickets:

Age 11 and older: with meal, \$7; without meal, \$2. Age 10 and under: with meal, \$3; without meal, no charge.

There will be ticket sellers at various offices in the district. Retirees, please contact Jan Graham at (612) 290-5305 to purchase your tickets.



Graphic by Carl Gray

For further information, contact event co-chairs Tom Sully (290-5573), Georgia Stanonik (290-5496), publicity chair Nathan Kathir (290-5569), golf coordinator Mike Dahlquist (290-5571) or volleyball coordinator Lisa Hedin (290-5431).

CEFMS blackout ends, assistance desk opens

The two-week CEFMS blackout, which began April 27, is over. The district issued its first checks under CEFMS the week of May 12. The long days and weekend work by many individuals paid off with "a smooth and efficient turnaround," said Jim Mosner of the CEFMS Planning Group. "The conversion from our old systems to CEFMS was virtually problem free," he added. (CEFMS is Corps of Engineers Financial Management System.)

The CEFMS Assistance Network is up and answering questions to continue the smooth transition.

The network offers three points of contact: one for in-house, a second for the Mississippi River and Eau Galle field sites, and a third for Mississippi Headwaters and the Western Flood Control sites.

Generally, the problem-solving process asks users first to check voice mail to see if there are messages about the system being down. Users should also check frequently asked questions on the CEFMS bulletin board on cc:Mail.

Denise Julson at Fountain City, Wis. is the point of contact for Mississippi River and Eau Galle field sites. (Phone 608-687-3011) Jan Pream is also available to answer questions at 290-5312. Personnel in the headwaters and Western Flood Control field sites may contact Steve Odegaard. (701-232-1894) or Jan Pream. The in-house assistance team is now available to answer questions during the introduction of CEFMS. The CEFMS team at the assistance desk began work May 12 and will provide support until late June. The in-house CEFMS help desk is located in Training Room 4-2. Their phone number is 290-5780.



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of Engineers**
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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 are not necessarily those of the Corps of Engineers, nor of the Department of the Army.

Crosscurrents

Address all inquiries to:

Editor, *Crosscurrents*
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Army Corps of Engineers Centre
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

District Engineer COL J.M. Wonsik
Public Affairs Officer Kennon Gardner
Editor Peter Verstegen
e-mail: peter.e.verstegen@usace.army.mil