



The Los Angeles District completed a landmark report Sept. 13, which details ecosystem restoration alternatives for an 11-mile stretch of the Los Angeles River. (Photo by Kristen Skopeck)

USACE finalizes draft L.A. River study

Kristen Skopeck

LOS ANGELES — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers finalized preparation of a draft report for the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study and posted the report to the Los Angeles District website Sept. 13.

The report will appear in the Federal Register Sept. 20, which will trigger a public comment period that will help inform a final report and result in the Corps' recommendation to Congress.

The study recommends improvements that would restore ecological value and habitat to the Los Angeles River corridor, from Griffith Park to downtown Los Angeles.

The public comment period will officially run from Sept. 20 to Nov. 18. Individuals can submit comments to: comments.lariverstudy@usace.army.mil.

The report can be found online at: <http://www.spl.usace.army.mil>, but a paper copy of the complete report can also be found at local repositories, to include Arroyo Seco Regional Branch Library, Los Angeles Central Library, Cypress Park Branch Library, Atwater Village Branch Library, Lincoln Heights Branch Library, Chinatown Branch Library, Little Tokyo Branch Library, and Benjamin Franklin Branch Library.

The draft report details four action alternatives named 10, 13, 16 and 20, in addition to a no-action alternative, and identifies alternative 13 as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers tentatively selected plan, or TSP.

"We are asking for comments on all four alternatives, and the Corps will consider every comment before a final rec-

ommendation is made," said Col. Kim Colloton, commander of the Los Angeles District. "That is why the selection of an alternative, at this point in the process, is 'tentative'. Transparency and community involvement are vitally important to this effort."

Colloton said the Corps, City of Los Angeles and stakeholders collaborated to put forward alternatives that would improve the L.A. River ecosystem in a constrained funding environment.

"The number one priority of the study is to restore the river's ecosystem while preserving the flood protection that is provided by the existing channel system," Colloton said. "Alternative 13 does this, while restoring 588 acres of valley foothill riparian wildlife habitat and aquatic habitat at a cost of around \$453 million."

The Corps evaluated the four alternatives for costs, benefits and impacts.

"Hundreds of ideas were explored, and the best of these were combined to come up with the final array of alternatives in the draft report," she said. "After evaluating each alternative, number 13 was selected as the National Ecosystem Restoration Plan that most reasonably maximizes net restoration benefits."

The 11-mile stretch of river that is the focus of the study exits in the nation's second largest urban region, and improvements have the ability to positively impact millions of people, as well as the flora and fauna.

Colloton said, "We and our partners have put tremendous effort into developing the alternatives, and we appreciate any and all comments."



Brig. Gen. David Turner, commander, South Pacific Division, and Los Angeles District leadership toured flood-damaged areas of Fort Irwin Sept. 19. (Photo by Brooks O. Hubbard IV)

SPD commander tours Fort Irwin flood damage

Brooks O. Hubbard IV

FORT IRWIN, Calif.—Brig. Gen. David Turner, commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Pacific Division, and Los Angeles District leadership toured flood-damaged areas of Fort Irwin Sept. 19.

The Los Angeles District sent a team of more than 70 engineering and technical support professionals to the fort to assess damage and provide recovery operations after flooding from a monsoon-like storm covered the post with mud and debris Aug. 25.

The storm's strong winds and rainfall caused an estimated \$43 million in damage, to include disintegrating roads and sidewalks and flooding a school, barracks and offices, which displaced Soldiers.

"We got up to three inches of rain in about 80 minutes, you can imagine with that amount of rain coming down and the force of it just caused a lot of damage here," said Fort Irwin Garrison Commander Col. Jonathan Braga. "It was honestly too much for our team to

handle and one phone call to the Corps of Engineers got their response team up here within a day. It wasn't just any day, it was right before Labor Day weekend."

"The Corps has supported Fort Irwin and the National Training Center for more than 60 years, building a world class training facility for our nation's warriors and their families," said Los Angeles District Commander Col. Kim Colloton. "Because our District has years of experience doing civil engineering projects, we had skill sets that were needed to support warfighters and the NTC and assist in getting them back on line and ready to continue training."

After the tour, Turner visited with post and garrison officials and personally thanked Corps responders and Fort Irwin Department of Public Works staff for their efforts.

"It gives me great pleasure to recognize the efforts of this joint team of professionals," Turner said. "I know your hard work will help bring this post back on line and ready for the upcoming rotation."

Turner presented several team

members with Commander's Coins of Excellence for their efforts.

The team assessed more than 166 buildings, training facilities and ranges for flood damage and life safety. Teams also inspected civil structures like bridges and roadways.

"We've been working between 12 and 14 hour days, 7 days straight to inspect these buildings," said Stephen Boyce, a Corps construction representative who is deployed to the fort to assess the damages.

Boyce was inspecting a three-story barracks in which the basement was completely flooded destroying the building's heating and electrical systems.

The soldiers who live in the building are temporarily displaced until the damages are repaired.

Because of the Corps' experience in disaster recovery, the teams were able to use the assessments to rapidly generate statements of work and independent government estimates that will ultimately result in contract awards for the clean-up and repair of facilities.

District teammates:

As we closed fiscal year 2013, it was incredible to see firsthand how we in the Los Angeles District and across the Corps of Engineers support the warfighter. This fiscal year we did our fair share to ensure the Corps' success in fulfilling this important mission: We broke ground and awarded numerous military construction projects at March Air Reserve Base, Luke Air Force Base, Nellis Air Force Base, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Yuma Proving Grounds, Edwards Air Force Base, the Tucson National Guard, and Fort Irwin. A shining example is our partnership with the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, which really illustrates our commitment to supporting warfighters.

Earlier this year, we broke ground on a water treatment plant project that would upgrade the post's water filtration and distribution capabilities. We also began work on a new hospital there. These projects were greatly compromised in August, when the post sustained millions of dollars worth of damage due to flash floods. The post's Department of Public Works requested the District's expertise in assessing the flood's effects. Within 24 hours, the District deployed a team of civil, structural, and design cost engineers to conduct a damage assessment to ongoing projects and existing buildings and infrastructure at Fort Irwin. At the end of the year, the District awarded \$45 million in contracts and \$2 million in project orders work for much needed repairs to buildings and flood protection structures, so that the National Training Center can continue doing what they do best—prepare our Soldiers for combat operations.

This is far from the District's first effort to support Fort

Irwin. In fact, the Los Angeles District's history with Fort Irwin goes back to its initial development. The Los Angeles District and its former commander, Lt. Col. Edwin C. Kelton, worked under the direction of Gen. George S. Patton Jr. to procure the land and build the Desert Training Center, as it was then called, in 1942. The training center was urgently needed to train troops headed to North Africa in the wake of the United States' involvement in World War II. Patton told Kelton that he would return to California with 60,000 soldiers 40 days after the two met. True to his word, Patton's troops began to arrive on April 11, 1942 to find the facility fully-annexed and prepared for training. The original Desert Training Center spanned 350 miles from Pomona, Calif., to the Arizona Desert, and 250 miles from Yuma, Ariz., to Boulder City, Nev. Today, despite its dramatically decreased size from its original area of 87,500 square miles to its present 996 square miles, a little less than the size of Rhode Island, the National Training Center at Fort Irwin is regarded as the



nation's premier training center.

More than 70 years after the district's involvement in building the first iteration of the National Training Center, our partnership with the facility is as strong as ever. Our symbiotic relationship and long history help truly define the Corps' role in supporting the warfighter. We must always keep the customer's needs at the forefront of everything we do. In the case of our military construction program, it's the warfighter who is our customer and we must never forget it. SUPPORT THE WARFIGHTER! BUILD STRONG! ESSAYONS!

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The NewsCastle is published monthly under the provisions of AR 360-1 for the employees and extended Engineer Family of the Los Angeles District, USACE.

Views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the District or of the Department of Defense.

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Corps projects continue during government shutdown

Los Angeles District Public Affairs

LOS ANGELES -- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District projects continue to operate temporarily despite the government shutdown.

The Corps is unique among federal agencies in that it is funded mostly through individual projects that carry over from year to year. Many Los Angeles District projects have enough remaining funding from past appropriations for work to continue beyond Oct. 1. The District will evaluate its remaining funds weekly to determine which projects can continue and for how long.

"These are important projects for our communities, in

terms of the economy, the environment and risk reduction, and we're going to keep working on them as long as we possibly can with remaining funds," said Los Angeles District Commander Col. Kim Colloton. "We're doing everything we can to minimize any impacts of a funding lapse to our work and our workforce."

If funding runs out, only staff essential to public safety, like dam operators and emergency responders, will work.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District provides planning, engineering, project management, environmental restoration and construction services to military and civilian customers in parts of four western states, including Arizona, California, Nevada and Utah.

Corps, public discuss Whittier Narrows Dam modifications

Greg Fuderer

PICO RIVERA, Calif. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District held a public scoping meeting to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act here Sept. 11 to describe potential structural modifications to Whittier Narrows Dam and to seek comments from the public on issues and concerns they wish to have considered during the preparation of its supporting Environmental Impact Statement.

Of particular interest were the impacts on environmental resources that might be significant without the implementation of mitigation measures. These resources include water quality, noise and vibration, air quality, socioeconomics and environmental justice, land use, recreation, visual and aesthetic resources, traffic and transportation, historical and cultural resources, vegetation and wildlife, and special status species.

The study and the EIS will identify and evaluate an array of remediation alternatives that include modifications to the downstream toe of the dam, raising the crest elevation of the dam, replacing a section of the embankment, modifying or replacing the spillway, and increasing the upstream storage capacity.

Following a presentation by project manager Kathy Anderson, project



The District held a public meeting to discuss modifications to Whittier Narrows Dam Sept. 11. Local citizens were able to provide feedback on their concerns surrounding the dam. (Photo by David A. Salazar)

engineer Doug Chitwood and project environmental coordinator Debbie Lamb, attendees expressed interest in ensuring the Corps investigated potential impacts of higher water levels on the Whittier Narrows Nature Center, upstream residents, nearby industrial assets and local infrastructure. They also asked the Corps to consider how any proposed work would impact recreational facilities and whether environmental restrictions would adversely impact the schedule.

The Corps completed construction of Whittier Narrows Dam in 1957. It is an integral component of the Los Angeles County Drainage Area system of dams and channelized rivers, autho-

rized by Congress in the Flood Control Act of 1936.

Whittier Narrows Dam is one of nearly 700 dams throughout the nation that are managed by the Corps.

All were evaluated during a risk assessment program that began in 2005. Due to potential for overtopping and seepage-related failure modes, the Corps determined the dam could expose the downstream communities to unacceptable levels of risk in an extreme storm event. Corps officials stressed, however, that the level of concern is based primarily on the density of the population downstream there, and that there is no immediate danger of the dam breaching.

Corps holds public meetings on proposed mine changes

Daniel J. Calderón

PHOENIX – Members of the Regulatory Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District's Arizona-Nevada Area Office held public scoping meetings on Sept. 24 and 25 in Kearney and Apache Junction, Ariz., to discuss a proposal for a new tailing facility for the Ray Mine in Pinal County.

"For this particular project, we determined that an Environmental Impact Statement is required before we can even consider issuing a 404 permit," said Mike Langley, senior project manager with the Regulatory Division. "We're pretty early on in the process, though."

The purpose of the meetings was to provide information to the public in areas that could be affected by the proposal by ASARCO and to provide members of the public a forum in which they could receive information from ASARCO and from the District

regarding the process. Langley and his team also provided a means by which the public could give feedback to the District regarding their thoughts on the proposed tailing facility.

More than three dozen members of the Kearney community attended the meeting on the 24th and nearly two dozen attended in Apache Junction the following night. The assembled community members learned the history of the Ray Mine and the steps in the Corps of Engineers' EIS process.

The mine began operations in the 1940s, beginning as an underground mining operation, and has evolved since then. The current storage for the mine's tailings is projected to run out in less than 10 years. ASARCO has identified a potential location for the new facility which will be able to hold the tailings for the remaining projected life of the mine; however, it does affect waters of the United States along the Gila River.

Because of this, the Corps of Engineers is the lead agency on the EIS.

"The Gila River is a perennial water source just south of this facility if it is built," explained Langley. "In Arizona, we're concerned primarily with areas of fresh water."

Langley said the plan is to have a draft EIS published in September 2014 and to have it available for public comment at that time. That October, the District plans to have public meetings on the draft so members of the public can comment on it and any changes can be made. Following the comment period and after any changes have been made, Langley said the District plans to issue the final EIS in September 2015 and issue the Record of Decision of whether the District will issue or deny ASARCO's permit request in October 2015.

The current comment period on the scoping meetings will end on Oct. 28.



Mike Langley, a senior project manager in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District Arizona-Nevada Area Office's Regulatory Division, discusses options during a public meeting held Sept. 24 for the proposed new tailings facility for Asarco's Ray Mine. (Photo by Daniel J. Calderon)



Robert Klein, the District's Veterans Affairs program manager, (second from left) briefs Brig. Gen. David Turner, commander of the South Pacific Division, during his tour of District projects in late August. Klein was named the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Program Manager of the Year for 2013. (Photo by David A. Salazar)

Award-winning program manager is customer of his customer

Kristin Skopec

LOS ANGELES — He's not the type of person who says one thing but does another. He isn't someone who does just enough to get by. In fact, Los Angeles District Program Manager Robert Klein's impressive dedication was recognized by headquarters when they selected him as the Corps' Program Manager of the Year for 2013 in July.

Klein oversees six project managers, each of whom manage numerous projects at five Veterans Affairs hospital facilities in Southern California. Since the VA program inception, there has been more than 250 VA projects with District involvement at a combined cost of about \$500 million. He said the work often involves renovation, like moving walls, expanding rooms and putting in specialized equipment, but working in a hospital environment presents several challenges.

"As examples, our construction sites are always occupied, they often have infectious control needs, negative air flow requirements, and there are patient privacy issues," Klein said. "Additionally, we are the Army and they are another federal agency, so there are terminology and other differences in how we each legally do work."

A veteran himself, Klein served in three wars and accumu-

lated more than 44 years of military service. He was enlisted for nearly 10 years and then transitioned to the officer ranks for more than 34 years, retiring as a colonel. While an officer, he commanded an engineer company, a signal battalion, an engineer brigade, an infantry brigade, and a tactical counter-drug task force.

He has been a long-standing customer, as a patient, of the VA, so he is able to personally experience some of the improvements made via the projects that he and his team help complete.

About two years ago, Klein retired from the military, but he wanted to keep working for the Corps on VA program management, so he applied to continue doing the same work as a civilian.

Klein said the secret to ensuring the VA projects stay on track and within budget is having a thorough understanding of the customer's desire, which often means doing homework.

"I have to understand the customer's intent and what it is that they really want," Klein said. "When I'm working with any level of customer, I like to figure out what is pressuring them and see how I can help. My whole job is to service the VA, and I try to read about what is going on in their organi-

zation and relate that information to our projects. They are sometimes too busy to see trends going on outside their hospital."

Klein doesn't shy away from challenges in his personal life either. He decided to run for congress in 1997 in the Torrance and Redondo Beach areas of California, which required him to temporarily retire from active duty.

"You can't be in the Army and run for Congress, so I had to get out for 90 days to run," he said. "It's hard to do, but it isn't impossible. I wasn't elected, but I got to meet a whole lot of people."

This drive Klein has for being involved in change or social movements actually caused him to retire from the Army several times. After the short retirement to run for congress, he formally retired in 2004, but he asked to go back on active duty to participate in the war in Iraq, and then he retired again but asked to return for the war in Afghanistan. Before he ran for congress, he participated in the combat operations in Panama. He retired for good in 2011, but he obviously hasn't stopped working.

What Klein said he has learned throughout his career is that it is very important to lead by example.

"There is a lot of mandatory training we have to do in the Corps, so whenever a new one comes out I do it personally to see what it is all about before I ask my team to do it," he said.

When asked about what he still wants to accomplish in the future, he said he wants to continue working for the Corps on VA program management, but eventually write a book or two. He'd also like to continue doing some "extra" work in the movies and writing movie scripts. He said, all in all, he is pretty content.

"I just happen to be the manager of a great program with excellent project managers who make me look good," he said. "Matt Shun, Jenn Rivo, Captain Daniel Feldpausch, Captain Jonathan Parot, Monica Eichler, and Brian Childers, are the project managers, and Mark Harvey is a budget analyst. I'm proud of the effort this team continually puts forth."

Klein noted that, besides the VA, the District assists many non-DoD federal, state, local and tribal governments by providing engineering and construction expertise. Known as Interagency and International Services customers, these entities can hire the Corps to undertake programming, engineering, construction, real estate acquisition, contracting, and construction management functions.



Klein

Compton Creek: thinking globally, acting locally

Greg Fuderer

COMPTON, Calif. — Compton Creek, a concrete-lined channel feeding into the Los Angeles County Drainage System, is beset by conditions prevalent in many of our nation's waterways: debris, maintenance issues, and a lack of plants, wildlife and recreation, to name a few. If students at Compton High School have anything to say, that may change some day.

Their plans to make a difference were presented as part of a Social Media Week event held Sept. 26 at the school. Actor Richard Gant hosted the proceedings that were broadcast over the internet.

Ed Murphy, of Heal the Bay, discussed Creek 101, a joint project with Compton High students to teach how science can address issues of importance to the community.

"Science can help people recognize what they see," Murphy said. "How does trash get into the creek? How does that pollution affect the environment around the creek? They can see where trash ends up, and it's really sad."

Creek 101 offered students the opportunity to conduct a trash inventory and to run water analysis tests for pH, metals and other chemicals that influence whether plants or wildlife can survive.

Tomas Beauchamp-Hernandez, chief of the district's Operations Branch, discussed the Corps' efforts to maintain Compton Creek.

"We typically remove 600 tons of trash from Compton Creek annually," he said. "It's important to maintain community involvement and support, and an important part of that is raising the level of understanding regarding the issues and the possibilities associated with the creek."

"We have great coordination with national, state and local agencies, all the way down to the community level," he said.

Speaking of the Creek 101 project, he said, "You have to dream big. How would you move people? Increase awareness? We need to think outside the box, because the past won't work in the future. We learn from the opportunities that are available by reaching out, by getting the students to help with solutions."

Sonya Trammell-Jones, an Equal Employment Opportunity specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, told the students that activities like Social Media Week often offer opportunities that may not be readily evident.

"This is how I got my spark," she said. "My interest in working for the federal government came from a program like this."

Trammell-Jones told about a presentation about science and music that a NASA astronaut gave at her school.

"I was still trying to figure my path," she said. "And his presentation sparked an interest in me. Eventually, I ended up working as an executive assistant for him in Japan."

Trammell-Jones said the important thing to consider is to take advantage of the opportunities, like Creek 101, that become available.

"Instead of telling them," she said, "you show them the path."

Murphy said Creek 101 was an opportunity to allow the students to see the creek as something more than it is now and to use their imagination to think about what can be done to get it there.

"We can all sit back and dream," Beauchamp-Hernandez said. "That creates innovation."

Harvard students help Corps inspect portion of Los Angeles River

Kristen Skopec

LOS ANGELES — Ironically, the proverbial expression “killing two birds with one stone” applies to a kayaking inspection undertaken by Los Angeles District personnel and 14 graduate students from Harvard University in a two-mile section of the Los Angeles River Sept. 25.

Neither party was interested in “harming birds,” but both saw the opportunity to collaborate to accomplish compatible goals.

The District is bound by the Code of Federal Regulations which requires pre- and post-flood season visual inspections of flood control channels built and operated or maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Harvard graduate students are part of a landscape architecture and urban planning and design class that is exploring the Los Angeles River as a mechanism of change that can positively impact the future of Los Angeles and revolutionize the way people improve urban watersheds. Both parties needed to get a close-up view of the river and worked to formalize an agreement whereby the students volunteered to assist the District.

“The students were able to help our maintenance personnel identify native and non-native plant species, as well as damage or undercutting that had developed in the channel,” said Steve Dwyer, chief of Navigation Branch, Project Management Division. “The timing of the students’ visit was perfect, since there is so much interest in the river because of the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study.”

Kayaks and protective gear were donated by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, who also provided park rangers to lead and assist the group. Everyone in the inspection party also donned an orange construction safety vest.

The inspection began near Marsh Park in the Elysian Valley neighborhood of Los Angeles, which is adjacent to a nine-mile section of the river that has a natural, soft bottom instead of concrete. The trip ended by Steelhead Park, not far from the confluence of the 5 and 110 freeways.

“The students gained an understanding of the Corps responsibilities associated with maintenance of the river and of the opportunities that are possible in realizing the river’s potential,” said Harvard’s Visiting Design Critic in Landscape Architecture Gerdo Aquino.

Aquino said the class, through a series of field trips, workshops and lectures, will explore new open space typologies that could include river specific recreation venues, bridges, parks, development opportunities, flood control design and alternative transit strategies.

Prior to going to the river, each student talked about his or her intended project during an introductory session held at the District office and heard from the Corps about its involvement in the Los Angeles River.



The District conducts pre- and post-flood season visual inspections of flood control channels built and operated or maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. On Sept. 25, District personnel, along with graduate student volunteers from Harvard University identified native and non-native plants and observed damage, like undercutting, in a portion of the channel. (Photo by Kristen Skopec)

“The study focuses on an 11-mile stretch of the river that aims to restore ecological value and habitat, and the section we will be inspecting falls within the study area,” Dwyer told the students. “You will be able to see the constraints and considerations in the area, like the existence of levees, utilities, rail, land availability, cultural and historic sites, and other large-scale infrastructure. Keep in mind that the number one priority of the study is to restore habitat while preserving the flood protection that is provided by the existing channel system.”

Aquino invited Dwyer and other Corps leaders to participate in the panel that will review the students’ projects.

“As a leader in the community of Los Angeles, and as a supporter of seeing the Los Angeles River become a more integral part of the city, your vision and thoughts for the future of the river are extremely important,” Aquino said. “We hope you can provide the students with your unique point of view and formally participate.”

The students’ projects are due to the Harvard panel the week of Dec. 11.



Watering activities that are part of habitat maintenance in Oceanside, Calif., will take place Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. until 3 p.m., until Dec. 6, alternating between the San Luis Rey River’s north and south banks. Crews operating along the south bank will use the levee maintenance road during the weeks of Sept. 23, Oct. 7 and 21, Nov. 4 and 18, and Dec. 2. Bike trail access will be blocked atop the maintenance road during maintenance periods. (Photo by Greg Fuderer)

Corps resumes work on San Luis Rey River habitat maintenance project

Greg Fuderer

OCEANSIDE, Calif. – Habitat maintenance along the San Luis Rey River resumed here Sept. 9 when RECON Environmental, Inc., once again deployed water trucks to help establish recently planted native vegetation in the riverbed.

Watering activities will continue Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. until 3 p.m., until Dec. 6, alternating between the river’s north and south banks.

Crews operating along the south bank will use the levee maintenance road during the weeks of Sept. 23, Oct. 7 and 21, Nov. 4 and 18, and Dec. 2, restricting access to the bike trail atop the maintenance road during those periods

due to safety precautions.

The habitat restoration resumed after a suspension of work to comply with environmental restrictions based primarily on the nesting season for the least Bell’s vireo, a federally protected species.

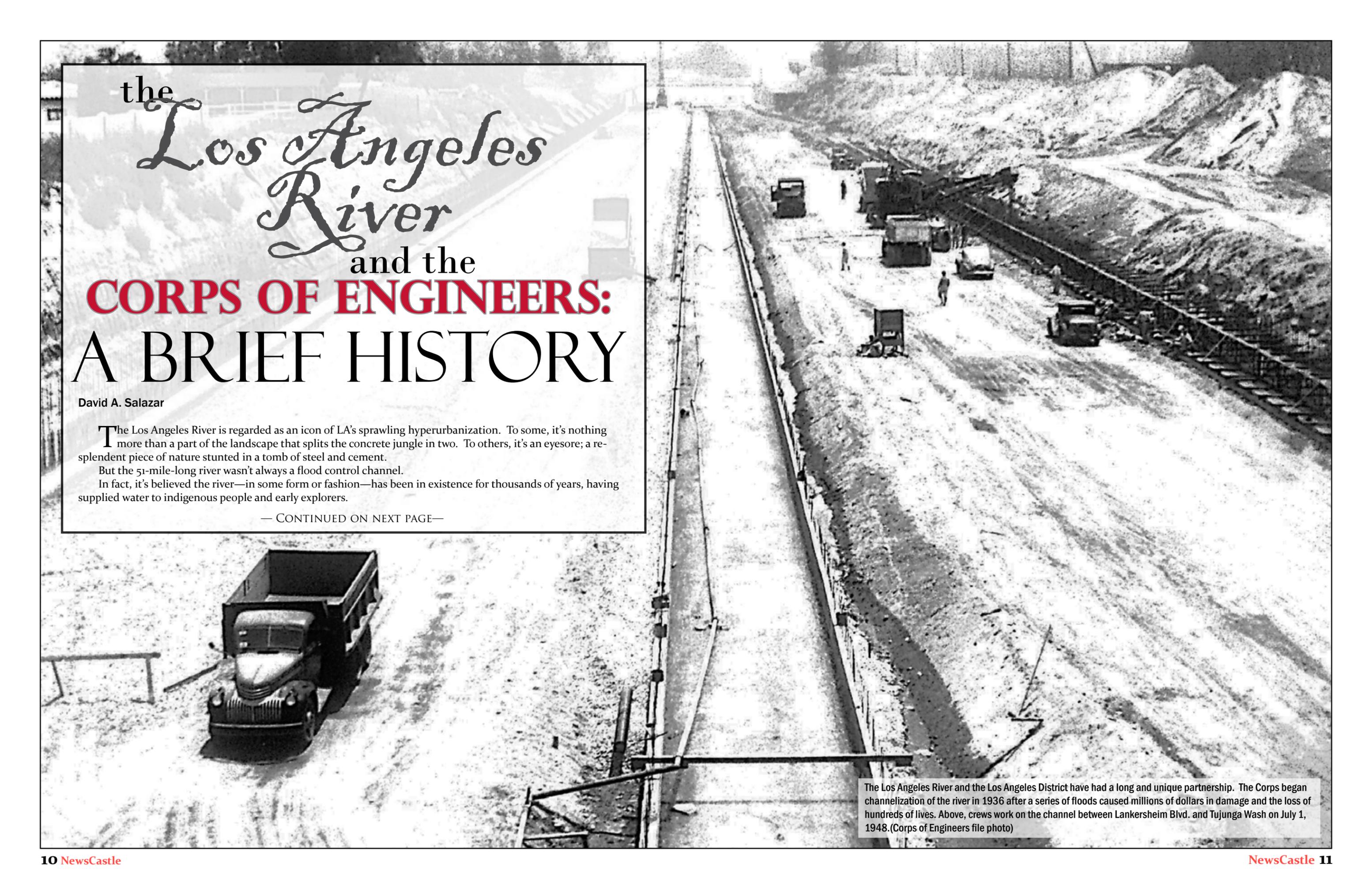
Tom Keeney, a biologist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District, said the work is part of carefully planned management efforts along the final 7.2 miles of the river to re-establish a more representative natural environment and still maintain the river’s ability to reduce the risk of damage from flooding.

“We need to maintain a balance between providing flood risk management (along the San Luis Rey River)

and maintaining a viable vireo habitat,” Keeney said.

Habitat loss caused by the growth of non-native vegetation in the riverbed has been a main factor for a reported decrease in the number of nesting vireo pairs along the river, a factor that contributed to the vireo’s protected status.

Keeney said that the planting of nearly 58,000 black willow, sandbar willow and arroyo willow, Fremont cottonwood, mulefat and native herbaceous plants (annual plants that re-grow each year and never become woody), will help re-establish natural vegetation along the river, helping not only sensitive species like the least Bell’s vireo, but every other native species in area.



the
*Los Angeles
River*
and the
CORPS OF ENGINEERS:
A BRIEF HISTORY

David A. Salazar

The Los Angeles River is regarded as an icon of LA's sprawling hyperurbanization. To some, it's nothing more than a part of the landscape that splits the concrete jungle in two. To others, it's an eyesore; a resplendent piece of nature stunted in a tomb of steel and cement.

But the 51-mile-long river wasn't always a flood control channel.

In fact, it's believed the river—in some form or fashion—has been in existence for thousands of years, having supplied water to indigenous people and early explorers.

— CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE—

The Los Angeles River and the Los Angeles District have had a long and unique partnership. The Corps began channelization of the river in 1936 after a series of floods caused millions of dollars in damage and the loss of hundreds of lives. Above, crews work on the channel between Lankersheim Blvd. and Tujunga Wash on July 1, 1948. (Corps of Engineers file photo)

— HISTORY, from Page 10 —

Historical references indicate that the river changed courses on numerous occasions, due to heavy floods, across the large alluvial plain, which makes up present-day Los Angeles and Orange counties. Although Los Angeles is typically a dry area, receiving an average of rainfall of 15 inches per year, the surrounding mountain ranges receive upwards of 40 inches of rain per year. Gravity then takes over and the millions of gallons of water fall from headwater elevations of nearly 1,000 feet to zero feet above sea level in just 50 miles. This creates the perfect recipe for flash floods during the winter months when precipitation in the area is most common.

The nature of these dramatic inflows led to damage to property and infrastructure and loss of life very early in the history of Los Angeles. Historical records indicate that a total of 17 floods occurred between 1815 and 1938, calling for the river to be tamed, especially in light of an influx of population to the area.

James G. Jobes, a senior engineer for the Los Angeles District, led initial studies on the impact of the floods in the area in 1939 and noted “the Los

Angeles area—from the standpoint of value of damage experienced or potential, per square mile of flooded area—is the most outstanding of any area in the United States and possibly the world.”

The Los Angeles County Flood Control District requested federal aid from the Works Progress Administration, which, during the Great Depression, served as a funding source for many infrastructure projects during that time. Funding for dam and channel construction was approved, with the stipulation that 90 percent of laborers be hired from the agency’s relief rolls and that the Corps of Engineers lead the efforts. In one year’s time, the District grew in size from 15 people to 17,000—95 percent of which were hired from federal unemployment rolls.

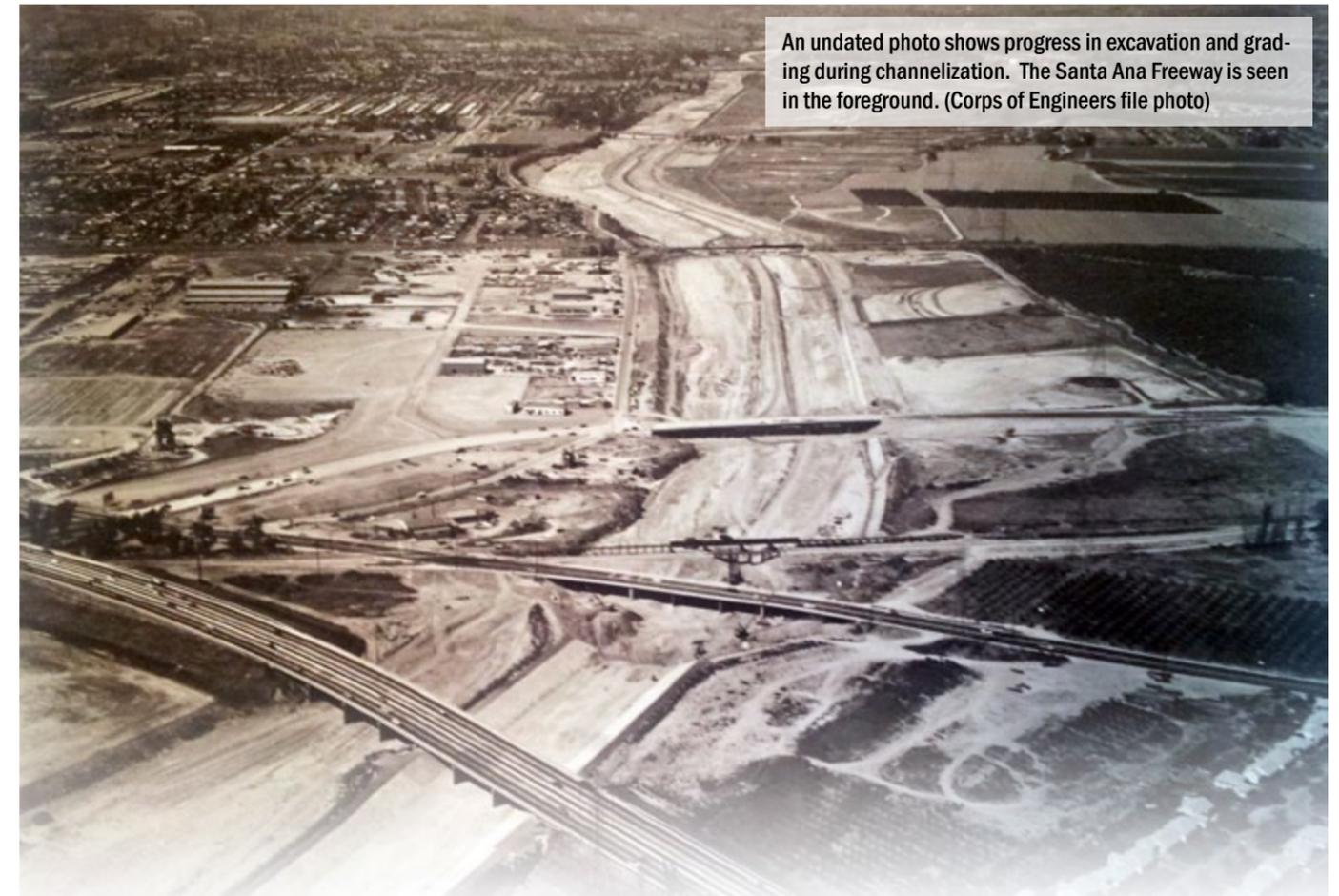
Construction on various flood control projects for the Los Angeles, Rio Hondo, and San Gabriel Rivers began after the projects were funded under the Flood Control Act of 1936. The District hired 14 contractors in 31 separate contracts and moved more than 20,000,000 cubic yards of earth, poured more than 2,000,000 cubic yards of concrete, placed nearly 150,000,000 pounds of reinforced steel, and set 460,000 tons of grouted stone slope protection. This feat of ingenuity was remarkable for a number of reasons, most notably the

fact that technology was limited and almost all work was done by hand in the initial stages of the project. Contractors completed an average of 200 linear feet of slope paving per day.

During construction of these projects in 1938, a heavy flood caused \$795 million (in 1990 dollars) in damages and killed 49 people. The Los Angeles County Flood Control District immediately appealed to Congress to secure support services from the Los Angeles District. Congress passed the Flood Control Act of 1938, appropriating additional funding for what would eventually become known as the Los Angeles County Drainage Area.

By 1939, the district and various partners and contractors had completed 14 dams. As the Great Depression continued to make funding more difficult to obtain, especially with World War II underway in Europe and the Far East, it became apparent that a new funding strategy was necessary. The commander of the South Pacific Division, Col. Warren T. Hannum, impressed upon the National Resources Committee on March 1, 1941, that completion of the project would not just protect life and property, but would ensure that progress continued for national defense as well.

“The necessity of solving these



An undated photo shows progress in excavation and grading during channelization. The Santa Ana Freeway is seen in the foreground. (Corps of Engineers file photo)

problems in addition to protecting lives and property increases very appreciably the justification of flood control in the areas where national defense industries are located,” Hannum said. The Southern California area had seen a boom in defense industry contractors—primarily aircraft manufacturers—that called the area home, including the Lockheed Corporation, Douglas Aircraft Company, the Glen L. Martin Company, and many others. This led to Congressional approval of the LACDA plan, authorizing \$240 million for continued construction.

The LACDA project included the construction of Hansen, Sepulveda, Santa Fe, Whittier Narrows, and Lopez flood control basins, debris basins in 31 tributary canyons, construction of 93 miles of main channel and 147 miles of tributary channels, including 316 bridges on the Los Angeles, Rio Hondo, and San Gabriel rivers. Construction of the project took 20 years to complete as the population in Los Angeles rose to more than six million residents.

After a flood in 1980 tested the

capacity of the lower Los Angeles River channel, Los Angeles County officials requested support from the district to study the channel’s capacity to protect against larger floods. In 1987, the district completed the study and found that the lower Los Angeles and Rio Hondo rivers provided no more than a 40-year level of protection, which was far less than the standard level of protection against 100-year floods. This finding affected 82 square miles of densely populated areas, including half a million people and more than 175,000 structures. As a result of the findings, the Federal Emergency Management Agency required that residents and business owners purchase flood insurance, since the likelihood of flooding in the area was greater than previously believed.

Funding for improvements to the LA and Rio Hondo rivers was approved in 1995 and additional funding was granted in 1999. The project, which consisted of raising the height of 21 miles of existing levees by building up earthen embankments or constructing

walls on top of the levees and completing required modifications to railroad, traffic, and pedestrian bridges, was expected to cost \$364 million and take 10 years to complete and would prevent \$2.3 billion in flood damages in the event of a 100-year flood. These improvements also resulted in the revocation of the flood insurance mandate imposed by FEMA.

The District completed its most recent report on the river Sept. 13. The Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study details viable alternatives for restoring an 11-mile segment of the river. Each of these alternatives requires that channel walls remain intact or be modified, but not removed, while eliminating the channel’s concrete bottom to allow for healthy vegetation growth. If Congress decides to approve and then fund a restoration project for the Los Angeles River, the Corps hopes to see restored habitat connections and ecological functions, while preserving the flood protection that is provided by the existing channel system.



An undated photo shows crews placing rock on the river’s sides prior to channelization. (Corps of Engineers file photo)



Trick-or-treating seems like a happy, harmless activity. It's still important to be vigilant while out in halloween costumes at night. (File photo)

Autumn brings new, interesting safety risks

Steve McCombs

Now that summer is officially over us safety folk do tend to shift our focus a bit. Heat stress certainly becomes less of an issue. Vacation travel slows down. Water accident rates tend to drop (unless, of course, you live below the equator, mate!). Of course, with the new fiscal year the whole District tends to take a big sigh of relief after the last quarter's race to the finish line. But fall brings with it a slew of other hazards, so I thought I would simply list some questions and answers to keep in your CCSF (Cerebral Cortex Safety Folder). Yes, I just made that up (it's a gift.) Perhaps I should have returned it.

- Will your workplace hazards decrease with the change in season? Nope! Some will shift, such as heat stress changing over to cold stress, dry roads to wet roads, etc. Construction sites are inherently dangerous no matter what time of year it is and your office hazards are still office hazards in spite of the calendar. So stay on your game and recognize what risks you have around you.

- How good is your safety posture at home? It's time to change out the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms. What? You don't have a CO alarm? My wife and my eldest son and I are all alive today because I have

a CO alarm. Best 50 bucks I ever spent. If you don't have one, get one! Here's a useful link to the National Safety Council you can use for more than just fire safety: http://www.nsc.org/safety_home/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Pages/Fire.aspx

- Is your vehicle in good repair? It's always a huge inconvenience to have a breakdown, but lack of proper vehicle maintenance often leads to serious and even fatal accidents. Your tires must be in good condition and properly inflated. All of your vehicle's lights must be in proper working order. Windshield wipers should be fresh and ready for rain. Your braking and suspension systems are also critical to safe driving. And of course your engine and transmission require regular maintenance. So if you've not had your vehicle checked out recently, it's time to do so now!

- Are you thinking about the holiday season? In looking at the calendar, all of the federal holidays for 2013 involve a three-day weekend except for Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. If you're of the mind to have some mini-vacations then you also need to be sure and include the necessary safety components in your planning. Do you have an RV or toy-hauler? Off-road recreational vehicles? They need the same care and maintenance as your car, right?

Right. And you do have emergency equipment and supplies, of course?

- And speaking of the season, Halloween is on the horizon. It's on a Thursday this year, so the afternoon commute will likely be a madhouse. Daylight Savings Time was changed in 2007 to "fall back" after Halloween (thus more daylight time for the kiddos), but this really hasn't made much difference in the fatalities. Children's pedestrian deaths are four times higher on Halloween than on any other night of the year. Please be extra cautious driving on Halloween. Adult supervision is the best protection for trick-or-treaters (next to a good, heavy rain!). In our neighborhood we have a block party of sorts, and all the adults keep a sharp eye out. Makes for a more family-friendly and safer evening. This year's theme is "Star Wars" and yours truly is growing out his beard for an Obi Wan Kenobi character. You remember the old Obi Wan from the first movie in 1977? Ewan McGregor I am not, so I suppose I have to get whacked towards the end of the evening by Darth Vader. I was wondering why my wife chose that costume!

As always, drive safe, drive sober and buckle up, and, "may the force be with you!"

Safety Steve

Misconceptions about flu season, flu shots

Cecy Ordonez

As cold and flu season arrive, it is important to know what strategies and beliefs are helpful at preventing or getting rid of these bugs.

One way to prevent getting the flu is to be vaccinated.

Many think that the flu vaccine causes the flu, however, the viruses contained in the flu shot are not active, which means they cannot cause an infection. The manufactures of the vaccines complete multiple tests of their product to make sure they are safe for the public. In random blind studies, it has been found that the symptoms after a flu shot versus salt water shots had no difference in body aches, fever, cough, runny nose or sore throat. The only difference was increased soreness in the arm and redness where the flu shot was given. If you opt out of getting the vaccine, the Center for Disease Control warns that complications from the flu can be deadly. An average of 36,000 people die each year from the flu and more than 200,000 are hospitalized (Find out more on the CDC's website at www.cdc.gov).

Getting the flu vaccine is the best preventative measure against the flu.

It is believed that if you are not properly dressed or go outside with your hair wet on a cold day then you will "catch a cold". This is untrue. Beginning in late August or early September, the rate of colds increases slowly and remains high until March or April. This seasonal change is believed to be caused by the reopening of schools and the cold weather which prompts people to stay indoors more. Being indoors, in close proximity with other people, touching hands, and/or coming in contact with coughs and sneezes increases that chances that viruses will spread.

If you do catch a cold, you are most contagious for the first two or three days while a flu can be contagious one day prior to showing symptoms and five days after that. Avoid direct contact with visibly sick people whenever possible. When you are sick yourself, do others the courtesy of staying home. Getting over a cold is similar to what



Flu season is largely associated with cooler weather, but information from the Centers for Disease Control indicates that flu season begins in mid to late summer and often lingers until early spring. There are numerous ways to prevent infection and the spreading of the influenza virus. (File Photo)

you do to prevent from getting a cold; lots of rest is key along with staying well hydrated and avoiding any alcohol and caffeine. Eating a balanced diet, including eating breakfast, and taking in your supplements such as vitamin C can

help boost your immune system.

Your single best defense is to wash your hands with soap and water regularly throughout the day. Building wellness begins with you. Make your health your priority.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month: Not sure what do or say? Ask!

Debbie Lamb
Special Emphasis Program Manager for
Individuals with Disabilities

The National Organization on Disability estimates there are 54 million Americans with a disability. You don't have to feel awkward when dealing with a person who has a disability. Disability Etiquette is a growing field as more and more people are identified as having a disability, visible or unseen. Too often we find ourselves in an awkward situation, to help or not to help. "How do I help?" you think to yourself. "Maybe it would be best if I don't do anything 'cause I don't know what to do," you then think to yourself. Well, get over it! If you are not sure what to say or do, ASK!

The times, they are a 'changing. Terminology is changing too. "Handicapped" is so outdated! Today the term is "person with a disability" or "people with disabilities" rather than "the disabled" and "crippled", or "retarded" is definitely out! Be aware that many people with disabilities dislike jargon, euphemistic terms. Say "person who uses a wheelchair" rather than "confined to a wheelchair" or "wheelchair bound." The wheelchair is what enables the person to get around and participate in society; it's liberating, not confining! With any disability, avoid negative, disempowering words, like



The theme for this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month observation is "Because we are equal to the task." (File photo)

"victim" or "sufferer."

Falls are a big problem for people who have limited mobility. Physical therapy for most people includes learning how to get up on our own. So don't feel awkward, ask if I need help, but respect my answer when say thank you, I can do it.

People who use canes or crutches need their arms to balance themselves, so never grab them. Avoid patting a person on the head or touching his wheelchair, scooter or cane. People with disabilities consider their equipment part of their personal space. People who have limited mobility may lean on a door for support as they open it. Pushing the door open from behind or unexpectedly opening the door may cause them to fall. Even pulling out

or pushing in a chair may present a problem.

Always speak directly to the person with a disability, just talk to him as you would with anyone else. Respect his privacy. If you ask about his disability, he may feel like you are treating him as a disability, not as a human being. However, many people with disabilities are comfortable with questions about their disability after getting to know someone.

People with disabilities are the best judge of what they can or cannot do. Don't make decisions for them about participating in any activity. Depending on the situation, it could be a violation of the ADA to exclude people because of a presumption about their limitations.

HUMAN RESOURCES

2014 open season for FEHB begins Nov. 11

Liza Rosa

The 2013 Federal Benefits Open Season (for the 2014 plan year) runs from Nov. 11, through Dec. 9.

Below are important reminders regarding your current Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program plan selections.

First, Plan Ahead—Visit www.BENEFEDS.com/prepare

- Find out everything you need to know about your FEDVIP enrollment before Open Season begins, including reviewing the Enrollment Terms & Conditions

- We encourage you to login or retrieve your BENEFEDS User ID and password before Open Season to view your FEDVIP enrollment.

Second, Review Your Plan Rates—Visit www.BENEFEDS.com/rates.

- Your premiums may change for 2014.

Third, Make Your Changes—Login to www.BENEFEDS.com

- BENEFEDS.com is the fastest and easiest way to view and make changes to your FEDVIP enrollment during Open Season.

Remember: You don't need to do anything if you'd like to keep your current enrollment as it was for 2012. Your enrollment will automatically continue into the 2013 plan year, even if you retire.

Avoid the rush and make changes to your FEDVIP enrollment early in Open Season—don't delay!

Fear's a funny little thing that can trap us – if we let it

Daniel J. Calderón

It's October and Halloween is coming up. Little ghouls and goblins will be taking to the streets to scare up treats with the threats of tricks. Haunted houses, both professional and amateur, will spring up all over with the promise of thrills and chills. Spooky movies will abound on television and spine-tin-gling tales will be told of Bloody Mary, La Llorona (it's a Hispanic thing) and other similar specters.



But, what scares you? What keeps you up at night wondering if all is right with the world? What boogeyman or thoughts raise the hairs on your neck and the gooseflesh on your arms? One of my big fears is just how much we, as a society, have given in to fear. People have forgotten to enjoy the basics of life because they've allowed themselves to be caught up in this atmosphere of apprehension about such silly things; and, it seems to have pervaded every aspect of our lives.

We're, as a society, afraid of so many things that I'm really surprised we get much of anything done. We're afraid of our bodies and afraid of violence; but, we only censor one of those two things. We're afraid of losing any of our rights; but, only to the point of cherry picking which ones are vociferously defended. We're afraid of losing our status as a world power; but, we're afraid to stop spending money abroad and focusing our funding here to do a little "nation building" at home.

We're afraid of terrorists; but, we're also afraid of offending anyone, including the terrorists. We don't want to slight Muslims by depicting Mohammed in any shape or form; yet, we have no problem ripping Jesus, and pretty much any other religious figure, apart in every possible medium we have avail-

able. Why? Because there are Muslims who have threatened anyone who does "defame" or "offend" with death? Is that really the only thing that (probably limited in number) group has to defend itself? Or, is their faith so weak that it can't withstand any sort of mockery?

Maybe, and I'm totally just throwing out a random idea so I know I can be way off the mark here, the problem is that Mohammed was just a man so those of the Islamic faith feel some sort of need to defend "their boy" (in a more modern parlance), while Jesus, according to Christians, was the son of God and therefore not as in dire need of mortal defense. Still, to have death as the only option for anyone who speaks against you seems a pathetic way to defend anything. Christians, Krishnas, Wiccans and any number of other religious groups are on the receiving end of derision, mockery and near-endless debate about the merits of their beliefs. Yet, one group gets so... uhm... gets their feelings so hurt (gotta remember this is a family publication) that everyone else in the world is almost expected to acquiesce.

I'm not saying we need to go out and deride everyone just because they believe differently than we do about something. I'm not saying that any one religion is all right or all wrong. I'm saying that we, as a people, should not allow ourselves to be censored into silence by a group of fanatics. I'm sure no one likes to hear or see or know that their deity of choice is being mocked or questioned. But, most of those "of the faith" can bear that with either sad acceptance because they feel the person or people engaged in the "blasphemy" will either go to their particular version of hell or will be otherwise cast out of the eternal reward reserved for true believers; or, they can bear it with verbal retaliation to explain how wrong the person, or people, who are mischaracterizing them are and putting out their own information to counter it. Killing people who don't believe as you do doesn't change their minds. It simply hardens a lot more people around them against your particular point of view.

And different points of view are

what make us stronger as a people. The more we can open our minds to debate, the better we will be in the long run.

We don't have to agree on everything; but we can't be so afraid of offending someone else's sensibilities that we close ourselves off to discussion. That's not good for anyone. If I was of a different mind than someone and I was not allowed to speak what I was thinking, I would likely come to resent whoever it was stifling me. If that someone was relatively unimportant to me, I'd probably stop associating with him or her.

I am not afraid to be right. I am not afraid to be wrong; and, I am not afraid to be neither. I am not afraid to be in total disagreement with someone. I don't consider agreement on all things to be a necessary element of friendship. My son and I disagree on things as do my father and I; but, I still love them dearly. I have friends who like to have discussions with me to try and convince me of their point of view and in the end we come away with more of an understanding of the other's perspective but still holding on to the side we began with.

I think if we're too scared to broach topics because we are afraid of offending or being offended then we've lost something indescribably essential. Words are very powerful things and we do need to respect them; but, too often we are fearful of using them because they've become bludgeons. Instead of listening to the nuances and meanings, we become blinded by the words themselves and fail to understand that they are just words. They convey thoughts; but, they are not the thoughts themselves and I think we allow ourselves to get caught up in the semantics of dissecting the words. This keeps us from actually conversing with the person. It's almost like blaming a car for hitting your vehicle and ignoring the fact that there's a drunk driver (in this particular "for instance") responsible for the crash.

I think we're sometimes afraid to let go of the past. Wrongs done to "my people" 50, 100 or a thousand years ago and passed down from parent to child keep us mired in a cycle of anger

— see FINAL WORD Page 19 —

District marks Patriot Day with 'welcome home' event

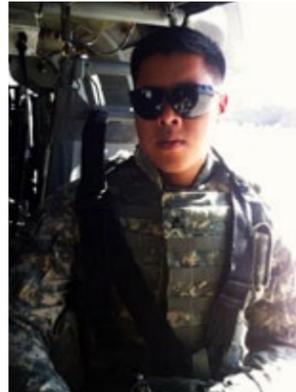
Jay Field

LOS ANGELES -- As the nation paused in remembrance of the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District honored a group of employees who had recently returned home from duty in Afghanistan in a ceremony at the headquarters Sept. 11. The District's Emergency Management office hosted the event attended by more than three dozen people, including co-workers and family members of the honorees.

"It is ironic, or maybe serendipitous, that this event was scheduled for Sept. 11," said Col. Kim Colloton, district commander. "I mean, it really does make us think about what we're doing out there to improve the lives of other people who share this planet with us because, I think, providing people with security, the ability to have a vision and a dream for a better life, is going to make, hopefully, a more peaceful and sustainable world."

The six returning employees served at various times since 2011 in a variety of contract administration and construction project engineer positions throughout Afghanistan. At any one time during the past six months, more than 400 Corps employees representing nearly every district served there, including about 30 from Los Angeles District.

"The thing that I really enjoyed, I think, was working with all the folks from all the different districts from across the nation," said Al Quintero, chief of the contract administration branch in the Los Angeles District. "I really enjoyed



Marvin Mai

that I made a lot of new friends."

"I was charged with contract closeout, boxing contracts and sending things back to Virginia," said Dennis Graham, an engineering technician in the District's Southern California Area Office. "I finished, I think, about 350 boxes of contracts that dated back to 2004. It was hot and dusty; it was a workout at the same time—guys would go to the gym and I would just go to work [to get my exercise]!"

"I managed 10 projects over \$90 million," said Shawn Murphy, a civil engineer. "A lot of it was very difficult to complete, because they [Afghan construction contractors] didn't know our ways; they didn't have any of our codes for building structures, so we were pretty much guiding them."



Al Quintero

One of the larger projects Corps employees worked on in Afghanistan is called the Southeast Power System, essentially two projects—one in the north, and one in the south—that will create one big electrical grid around Afghanistan.

"SEPS is about a \$100 million project that consumed about 80 percent of my time," said Shafak Pervez, an electrical engineer in the District's Las Vegas Resident Office.

"One thing that I miss the most from there was working

with the people; and the fast pace."

"I got to do a lot of good work on stuff outside of my specialty, so that was fun!" said Civil Engineer Marvin Mai. During his tour, Mai set a personal goal of shedding 50 pounds of weight, which he accomplished in the seventh month of his eight-month tour at Bagram Air Field with the 59th Forward Engineering Support Team.

The returning employees were asked to share some of their memorable and challenging experiences. One talked of the difficulties traveling to remote outposts where Corps work was being accomplished.

"We would come in on our plane, and there was this runway put down in between the village and the base and they had to shoo off the goats," said Savoth Hy, a hydraulic engineer with the District's Reservoir Regulation Section. "The Spanish military would line up along the runway and ensure that we didn't get attacked while we were landing."

As a token of appreciation, Colloton presented each of the employees with a Commander's Coin of Excellence. The event concluded with refreshments and an opportunity for the returning employees to mingle with their families and co-workers and to share stories of their Afghanistan tours.



Shawn Murphy, a civil engineer with the Los Angeles District, poses with colleagues during his most recent deployment to Afghanistan. (Photo courtesy of Shawn Murphy)

Around the District professional pride



Brig. Gen. David Turner, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' South Pacific Division, congratulates Maj. Bonitto Housen, a project engineer from the District's Fort Irwin Project Office, on his promotion during a visit Sept. 19. (Photo by Brooks O. Hubbard IV)



Brig. Gen. David Turner, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' South Pacific Division, presents the Meritorious Service Medal to Capt. Tiffany Maraccini, the resident engineer for the Fort Irwin Resident Office, during a visit to Fort Irwin Sept. 29. (Photo by Brooks O. Hubbard IV)

BUILDING STRONG® and Taking Care of People!

— FINAL WORD, from Page 17 —

and vengeance. It's like being angry at someone for going to the rival high school attended by your great grandfather. Only, it's a whole lot worse and a whole lot less productive. After a while, no one knows exactly what started the disagreement; but, you're so afraid of letting go of it or "blinking" in common parlance, that you hold on to it. People all around the world do it. It's not just a ridiculous phenomenon in our country. Instead of realizing that times have indeed changed and trying to fit in, enjoy the new era and work for an even better

one, people continue to look back and bemoan the way things were and thus fuel a rancor that should have been relegated to history and a sense of "well, I'm glad we got passed that mess."

I'm afraid that we won't be able to move on beyond all of this. I'm afraid that people are so used to angrily disagreeing and holding on to old hurts that we won't be able to move beyond any of it. I'm afraid that we will allow ourselves to be mired in our own fear that we will never realize our full potential. I'm afraid we will destroy ourselves with imagined slights and baseless anger. We don't fight over land any-

more. We fight over ideology and that's just plain silly. There's room enough in this world for all manner of thoughts and ideas if we're not too scared to step outside ourselves and just listen. We don't have to agree. Just listen.

Anyone can have an opinion. Anyone can have convictions. Anyone can have a belief system. Those pretty well govern how you live your life. It takes courage to truly listen to another's and acknowledge it. You don't have to believe what they say or change your way. Fear keeps the mind closed. The courage is in opening your eyes and seeing there are other ways. Just a thought...



In memoriam: Lt. Col. Pete Jordan

Daniel J. Calderón

PHOENIX – Lt. Col. Pete Jordan, who served as the executive officer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District’s Arizona-Nevada Area Office, passed away Sept. 7.

“It is with great sadness that I am informing you today of the recent passing of Lt. Col. Pete Jordan,” wrote Col. Kim Colloton, the LA District commander, in a message to each member of the District. “Pete was a veteran, a long time member of the Arizona National Guard, a part of the Los Angeles District Team since 2009 and a close friend and coworker to many of us.”

According to information provided to the District, Jordan was in a fatal, single-vehicle automobile accident and post-accident fire approximately 15 miles from his home. In a meeting held at the Area Office in Phoenix, many spoke about Jordan’s life and influence in the District.

“Pete was like family to us in construc-

tion,” said John Keever, chief of the construction division for the District. “He was positive and always looking for ways to assist the office. He will be missed dearly.”

Jordan came to the District in 2009 after an active duty tour at Fort Benning, Ga., as a mobilization support officer. Before his time with the LA District, he had deployed with the 153rd Field Artillery Brigade (Forward) in September 2005 and returned home in November 2006. In 2011, Jordan was injured in a motor vehicle accident that required multiple back surgeries. He was transitioned back into active duty status and remained with the District under the Wounded Warrior Program, returning to his duties in December 2012.

Jordan was laid to rest in the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona during a full military honors ceremony Sept. 20. The Department of the Army posthumously awarded Jordan the Legion of Merit for his 27 years of service and promoted him to the rank of colonel.

