



Asharoken Seawall Rehabilitation well under way...

**Spring storm
compromises
road into
Village of
Asharoken**

**By Kenneth Wells
Public Affairs**

Continued on Page 5

In March 2010, a powerful nor'easter swept across Long Island, battering the coastal regions with high winds and heavy rains. The Village of Asharoken wasn't spared the storm's fury and when a seawall responsible for securing its sole access road to the mainland was damaged, the Army Corps of Engineers, New York District was called in to address the problem.

The Village of Asharoken is located on the North Shore of Long Island in western Suffolk County N.Y. The seawall, which was originally constructed in 1996, provides emergency erosion protection to a critical section of Asharoken Avenue by absorbing the wave action and securing the roadway. Without it, access to the mainland would be extremely difficult particularly during storms. Recent storm activity weakened the

In This Month's Issue

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New York District

Afghan Engineer District-North Dedicates New Dining Facility

In August, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineers District-North, dedicated its new dining facility at the Qalaa House Compound, Kabul, Afghanistan, in memory of Col. John B. O'Dowd who guided the unit from July 2004 to July 2005 and passed away in January 2010. His Leadership set the course for thousands of personnel who followed and shared the mission. Prior to his position in Afghanistan, Col. O'Dowd was a former Commander, New York District Corps of Engineers. "It's fitting we should dedicate this building to a distinguished Army leader and former New York District Commander," said Col. John Boulé, Commander, New York District Corps of Engineers. "John O'Dowd earned this honor through a career of selfless service to our nation."



Col. John B. O'Dowd

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The New York District Times Welcomes Submissions:
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Colonel's Corner

Moving Forward!

September is traditionally the busiest month of the year, with year-end looming and a seemingly impossible load of work that needs done by the September 30 deadline, but year after year the team delivers. This year, a new year-end deadline was put on the team with funds from the President's stimulus bill, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, slated to expire September 30 if they weren't obligated.

This added an additional \$260 million to the District's already massive annual workload of about \$1.2 billion. Those are both some hefty figures, and a lot of work that needed to be done. The team delivered though, big time.

The team was able to award well over 90 percent of the ARRA funds by the deadline, which is especially impressive when you think about the fact that the same rules and restrictions applied as regular funds, like cost-sharing requirements. This meant that cost-sharing funds had to be secured from local sponsors, which is especially tough in this economic climate.

It's really not about figures and percentages though; it's about delivering projects to the people we serve in our region. It's about moving leaps and bounds forward on long running HTRW cleanup projects, performing capital and maintenance dredging on channels and inlets in New York and New Jersey that mariners need, providing upgrades at the Fort Drum facility designed for our Wounded Warriors, reinforcing one of the only roadways in and out of the North Fork of Long Island from storm damage, making major progress in the largest flood damage reduction project east of the Mississippi, the Green Brook project, funding a coastal flood risk reduction study on the South Shore of Staten Island, etc.

I could go on and on about the District's amazing accomplishments using the unique opportunity that came from the ARRA funds, but the point is I'm extremely proud of how well the team took this difficult task and turned it into a big win for the District and for the communities we serve, while creating hundreds of jobs as we awarded these projects.

So, congratulations are definitely in order for the ARRA success, but that doesn't mean it's time to relax. We've still got another massive, unique deadline approaching on the Military Construction side of the house with the BRAC 2005 deadline coming up. All of the Corps' BRAC 2005 projects need to be completed by September 15, 2011. In New York District, we have nine projects ongoing.

We're making excellent progress on the BRAC front, and even completed the Motor Pool Facility at West Point earlier this year, but we've still got a lot of work to do in the coming year. We've still got one left at West Point to finish, five left at Picatinny Arsenal (including three Navy facilities being managed by the District), two Army Reserve projects at Forts Hamilton and Totten, and our largest military construction project of all – the \$1.08 billion Washington Headquarters Services Complex in Arlington, Va. All of these projects are making solid progress, and I'm confident the New York District team will deliver. I look forward to celebrating a BRAC victory next September.



Col. John R. Boulé II
Commander

Essayons!



Survey Section Gets New Addition

By Chris Gardner, Public Affairs

Regulars in the New York and New Jersey Harbor may notice a new Corps of Engineers vessel working on the water since New York District's fleet just got a "little" bigger.

Survey section got its newest vessel this summer, affectionately referred to as "Little Giant," named for the original model of the boat as well as for its little size and giant capabilities. The boat has no official name yet, and oftentimes smaller vessels do not get official names.

The vessel can conduct four different kinds of surveys, including single beam, multibeam, and side scan sonar surveys, as well as a new capability for the District - sub-bottom surveys. Sub-bottom surveys allow the District's survey section to not only see how far it is to the bottom of a channel, but to see through the layers of sediment and help identify the layers and what may be below the sediment like rock.

"It can do work in the 6 foot channels of the Long Island Inter-Coastal Waterway to the rock deepening in the Kill Van Kull. It can also do search and recovery or environmental work. The boat is literally a 'Little Giant,'" said John Mraz, lead cartographic technician in the District's survey section."

Mraz also said the new sub-bottom capability will benefit the District in a variety of ways. It will help better identify underground features like tunnels and utility lines. It can also help avoid contractor claims of differing site conditions, where a contractor uncovers previously unknown objects or material while dredging and can in turn request more money or contract alterations.

"This can lead to not only unexpected additional costs, but delays in the schedule," Mraz said. "The ability to see under the surface may alleviate some of these issues."

It will also help better identify the different sediments at different depths, in conjunction with traditional boring. Since different kinds of sediments have to be disposed of in different ways, this can also help with more accurate estimates of each kind of material before dredging, meaning less potential for later contract modifications.

The vessel is much smaller than some of the District's other survey vessels and measures 24 feet 10 inches long, draws a 1.4 foot draft and weighs approximately five tons when fully loaded.

Mraz stressed that "Little Giant's" size doesn't mean it's less accurate or capable than the District's larger survey vessels and said the smaller vessel has its benefits. "The cost savings of using smaller vessels is significant," Mraz said. "This vessel will allow us to have many tools at our disposal with increased flexibility at lower costs to our partners and the taxpayer."

The boat arrived at the District's Caven Point Marine Terminal in July and has been fitted with its equipment.



Crews are working to test and calibrate the survey equipment, including running surveys alongside the District's other survey vessels and gathering enough documentation to determine when the vessel is ready to work on its own.

"New York District has a reputation of performing the highest quality surveys and the boat will not be fully operational until it meets the survey accuracy typical of this District, which far exceeds industry standards," Mraz said.



Cover Story Continued...

wall and put the road at risk.

“In November 2009, Tropical Depression Ida combined with a nor’easter storm and caused extraordinary high tides, severe wave conditions, flooding and gusty winds,” said Ronald Pinzon, project manager, New York District. “These conditions weakened the seawall’s integrity and were exacerbated by the March 2010 storm, which combined a slow moving track with level one hurricane gusts. This caused overtopping of the sheet pile seawall, resulting in a section of the wall being compromised and bowing of the concrete tie back wall.”

Pinzon also noted that another section of the 225-foot segment of seawall, which was repaired in 2007, did very well in the March 2010 storm event and sustained no major damages. The 2007 repair served as the basis for the Corps current project because portions of the wall, both east and west of the reinforced section were damaged during the March storm. Since the Corps already had a workable blueprint they were able to expedite the seawall rehabilitation.

This will include repairing/replacing the bowed section of the concrete tie back, repairing/replacing the damaged steel sheeting and placing armor stone weighing up to 7 tons in front of the seawall.

“The repair of the seawall will bring the project to the pre-storm conditions as per the 1996 project,” Pinzon said. “The design level for the 1996 project was for a 22-year level event. A project that is well maintained can last, relatively speaking, indefinitely as long as future storm events do not exceed the seawall’s level of design.”

In designing the repair, New York District faced some unique engineering challenges. The Long Island Sound is a very dynamic environment, meaning the coastal engineers had to design a structure capable of absorbing large amounts of high wind and wave energy. Once the design was completed and approved, New York District’s contractor was then faced with the prospect of working in a limited area, around the tide schedule, and all while handling seven ton stones.

New York District broke ground on the project on August 23, 2010, weeks ahead of its original September timeline. The district’s efficiency was heralded by the Village of Asharoken’s mayor, Patricia Irvin and Rep. Steve Israel. This type of project requires a great deal of cooperation and collaboration between New York District and its state and local partners.

“We’re working very closely with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS-DEC) as well as with the Village of Asharoken, to rehabilitate the seawall to pre-storm conditions.” Pinzon explained. “We’ve kept our partners informed every step of the way and move quickly to resolve issues that crop up, such as amending the NYSDEC’s existing 2007 Water Quality Certification.”

Pinzon said he’s very happy with the progress the Army Corps has made.

“The seawall rehabilitation at Asharoken is a shining example of how the Corps of Engineers works closely with our local sponsors and stakeholders to deliver quality projects in a timely and efficient manner.”

The Asharoken seawall repair is slated to cost \$2.7 million. The contractor is Cutting Edge Group from Lake George, N.Y. Cutting Edge is the same contractor that performed repair work on the seawall in 2007. It was that portion of the wall that performed well during the March storm event. The project is scheduled to be finished in December 2010.



As part of the rehabilitation project a Corps of Engineers contractor places 5 to 7 ton boulders as part of the breakwater. Photo Credit: Dan Desmet, Public Affairs



Army Divers Train at Caven Point

By Chris Gardner, New York District
Public Affairs

The Army's 74th Engineer Dive Team was at New York District's Caven Point Marine Terminal in Jersey City, N.J., in August conducting training exercises while helping the facility with important maintenance work at the same time.

The 74th, based out of Fort Eustis, Va., is one of only a handful of Army dive teams, which are made up of engineer divers and deploy around the country and the globe carrying out a wide range of missions in the water. Some of these include underwater demolition, underwater photography, recovery and salvage operations, security inspections of foreign port facilities prior to the arrival of U.S. ships, inspections and some repairs of civil works facilities (like Corps of Engineers Dams), and inspection, maintenance and repairs of piers like Caven Point.

In fact, a similar Army dive team deployed to Port-Au-Prince, Haiti after a massive earthquake rocked the area, working with Navy SeaBee divers to repair the port facilities to allow humanitarian and commercial traffic to flow in and out of the devastated country. Dive teams, including the 74th, have also regularly seen action in deployments supporting overseas contingency operations in Iraq.

The work at Caven Point was similar in theory to the work in Haiti, though obviously on a much smaller scale and on facilities in much better condition.

Project manager for the 74th's visit Ronald Rhea, a mechanical engineer at Caven Point, said the divers performed important maintenance work at Caven Point.

These included inspecting and in some cases performing maintenance repairs to pilings and boat berths, like replacing rubber fenders that keep the vessels from slamming into the docks and causing damage. The divers also replaced concrete on the quay wall (edge) of the facility facing the New York and New Jersey Harbor to help prevent erosion.



Pfc. Elijan Stephens, left and Pfc. Zachary Thaxton, divers from the Army's 74th engineer Dive Team. Photo Credit: Christopher Gardner, Public Affairs

Rhea said the divers also inspected the Corps' storage barges in the Harbor, where the District's fleet of drift collection vessels unloads potential hazards to navigation and other items they collect from the Harbor on a regular basis. Rhea said the divers provided a report of damages and areas of concern on the barges and repair recommendations.

Capt. Mike Hallman, commander of the 74th Engineer Dive Team, said the exercise not only benefited Caven Point, but provided the divers with a unique training opportunity, helping to better prepare them for future missions.

"These guys get hands on actual training and experience that I could not provide them otherwise at our location," Hallman said. "Caven Point is a pretty big facility and there's a lot of good engineering work that I can get my divers to do. I really can't put a price on the training we get for these guys by coming here."

Rhea added that the much-needed work performed by the Army divers at Caven Point was important to keeping up the facility, and noted that the collaboration with Army divers likely saved the taxpayers upwards of \$100,000.



Around the District

Welcoming Committee Seeks Volunteers

A new committee has been established in the New York District that will provide support and assistance to employees that are deploying in support of overseas contingency operations. The increased frequency of deployments continues to put greater demands on the breadth and accessibility of family support programs and services. The Welcoming Committee Program has been established to provide support to the New York District deployee and their family members before, during and after deployments.

You can become a vital part of this support group by volunteering to become a member. You can donate your time and talents to help ensure that our people and their families remain our most valuable resource and help identify areas where the needs of the employees can be addressed. There are many issues associated with deployments and the role of the committee will be to bring a multitude of talents to the table to ensure that the needs of the entire Corps family are met. Points of contact for this Committee is **Maj. Justin Pabis, X8331**.



Upcoming Climate Survey



Beginning September 2010 Mandatory Climate Surveys, also known as Sensing Sessions will be conducted for all non-Supervisory/Management staff in the New York District.

Why is the Climate Survey/Sensing Session important? Have you ever felt like you would like an opportunity for the Command to hear your thoughts about organization needs? It is important because the command values the input of each employee of the organization and the surveys can help address organization needs and important human readiness issues. The survey is the first step in the process; ASSESS-PLAN-IMPLEMENT-EVALUATE towards the strategy of organizational development.

What do I have to do during the Climate Survey/Sensing Session? BE HONEST. This is an opportunity for all non-supervisory/management to be heard. It is an anonymous survey so your confidentiality is ensured. Only the data collected from the surveys will be used. The survey consists of 25 questions and 4 discussion type questions at the end.

Who participates? It is mandatory for all non supervisory/management staff/

When does it start? September 2010. The EEO office will be contacting divisions and field offices individually to schedule dates and times for the Climate Survey/Sensing Session.

How do I participate? Just show up with pen in hand at the specified time, date and location of the Sessions. You will receive an email with details regarding the time and location of the Session.



Col. Boulé visits Caven Point, conducts Townhall



Col. John Boulé poses with New York District employees during recent townhall at Caven Point Facility. Right: Kevin Gaudreau accepts plaque from Col. Boulé for his father Richard, who was posthumously inducted in the New York District Hall of Fame. Photo Credit: Dan Desmet, Public Affairs



By Kenneth Wells, Public Affairs

On October 21, Col. Boulé paid a visit to New York District's Caven Point Facility to conduct a Townhall and posthumously induct Richard Gaudreau into New York District's hall of fame, making him the twelfth district employee to receive this prestigious honor. Gaudreau spent twenty-six years with New York District and thirty-eight years working for the federal government. He began his career as a lieutenant with the United States Coast Guard before joining the Army Corps of Engineers.

By 1980 he was the first Master of the Drift Collection Vessel GELBERMAN. Gaudreau played a key role in some of the district's most prominent emergency response operations including the recovery operations for TWA Flight 800 and American Airlines Flight 587. He was also on hand during the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center. Gaudreau is best remembered for helping develop current and future groups of professional leaders for New York District. His son Kevin was on hand to accept the honor in his name.

Boulé also recognized some of the district's employees for their outstanding service and achievement. He opened his speech by thanking district personnel for being 'Shovel worthy and Shovel ready' to get work done and emphasized the district's continuing commitment to safety, citing the VPP Safety Program and work environment improvement. He then discussed some of the successes achieved during fiscal year 2010.

Ten members of the district received Commander's Awards from Wilmington District's commander, Col. Jefferson Ryscavage. Michael Pretty, Brian Aballo, James Branigan III, Edward Gaskill Jr., Eric Gundersen, Jerome Hawkins, Theodore Walter, Thomas Scott, Timothy Lafontaine and Anthony Lauria were formally recognized for their outstanding work in conducting emergency repairs on the Army Corps of Engineers dredge Currituck in September 2010. Their efforts ensured the Currituck only lost 3 days of work time during the critical Shrewsbury River maintenance dredging project.

John McNamara also received the Global War on Terrorism Award for serving a combined four terms in Iraq (May'07-Oct'07; Oct'08-Apr'09) and Afghanistan (Jan'05-Jun'05; May'06-Nov'06).



Federal Employee News in Brief

THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN: As early as January 2012 the Thrift Savings Plan will launch a new Roth investment option. It will let participants make taxable contributions to federal retirement accounts and then make tax free withdrawals in retirement. The Roth option is expected to benefit uniformed service members and select groups of federal civilian employees.

2011 COLA: Unless there is a spike in inflation as measured by the federal government, there will be no COLA increase due to the highly unstable economic environment. The general consensus is that an increase would be highly unlikely.

TRANSIT BENEFITS: Section 1151 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 which increased the monthly tax exclusion for transit benefits from \$120 To \$230 will end on 1 January 2011. The Department of the Army interprets this to mean that the tax exclusion amount will revert back to \$120 a month beginning 1 Jan 2011. The quarterly distribution will be \$230 for November and December of 2010 while January will only be \$120. Congressional action is required to extend the \$230 limit.

USA JOBS WEBSITE: The Office of Personnel Management plans to launch a new addition to USAJOBS website by Nov. 1 that will aim to make it easier for recruiters and managers to collaborate with one another and learn about new recruitment strategies. Agencies will be able to search for applicants who attended a specific school, an applicant who has a specialized skill or even applicants from schools that offer majors in that particular skill. This will improve diversity and open things up.

PLAIN LANGUAGE: The Senate recently passed legislation requiring the federal government to use clear language in documents and eliminate confusing jargon. Sponsored by Sens. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii and George Voinovich, R-Ohio, the 2010 Plain Writing Act would give federal agencies one year to implement the use of clear language in all public documents.

UNPAID LEAVE? A new bill HR 6134 has been introduced in the house by Mike Coffman (R-CO) that will provide for a 10 percent reduction in pay for Members of "Congress and make Federal civilian employees subject to a period of mandatory unpaid leave and reduce appropriations for salaries and expenses for offices of the legislative branch, during fiscal year 2011. For numerous reasons this bill is unlikely to advance out of the House committee.

HEALTH INSURANCE: The average health insurance premium for federal employees will rise 7.2 percent in 2011, according to OPM.

US SAVINGS BONDS: Recently the U.S. Department of the Treasury announced an end to the sale of paper savings bonds through employer-sponsored savings programs. However employees interested in bonds can register for electronic savings bonds with TreasuryDirect. With TreasuryDirect, a free online system you can buy, manage and redeem electronic EE and I savings bonds and other Treasury securities anywhere and anytime. To learn more go to www.treasurydirect.gov



Corps of Engineers breaks ground on Orchard Beach Project

By Kenneth Wells, Public Affairs



Great Lakes Bulldozer works to position sand as part of the Orchard Beach Shoreline Protection Project. Photo Credits: Ken Wells, Public Affairs

On Oct. 29, 2010, representatives from the Army Corps of Engineers joined Rep. José Serrano, Rep. Joseph Crowley, New York City Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe, Deputy Bronx Borough President Aurelia Greene, District Manager Kenneth Kearns, Bronx Borough Commissioner, Hector M. Aponte, and Community Board 10 Chair Virginia Gallagher in a groundbreaking ceremony for the Orchard Beach Shoreline Protection Project.

Originally constructed by the City of New York in the 1930's, Orchard Beach serves as a major draw for residents of the Bronx and its surrounding communities. Last year more than 1.4 million or close to 14,000 residents per day visited the beach. The beach's last renourishment occurred in 1964.

Over the years the beach has lost a tremendous amount of sand due to tides, winds, waves and storms. The Corps project will help combat erosion at the beach by replacing lost sand, re-grading the south end of the shoreline, and repairing and extending the south jetty 350 feet to help inhibit erosion. It will also make the beach safer by relieving overcrowding and eliminating drop-off zones which

represent potential drowning hazards.

"This project represents an outstanding investment of public dollars to provide the great people of the Bronx with a first-class recreational beach in these tough economic times," said Col. John R. Boulé, commander, New York District. "We're excited to be partnering with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation to restore Orchard Beach."

Boulé also pointed out that this project is the culmination of more than a decade's worth of work and made it a point to thank the project delivery team including, Anthony Ciorra, Frank Verga, David Yang, Diane Rahoy, Robert Smith, Peter Womack and Ellen Simon. "I can't say enough about the tireless work done by district personnel on this project," he said. "Truly a big win for New York District."

More than 250,000 cubic yards of sand will be used to restore the popular crescent-shaped beach.

"The people of the Bronx will soon have a restored, functional and expansive Orchard Beach, as it was envisioned by its creators decades ago, when



it was called the Riviera of the Bronx,” said Serrano. “Working with NYC Parks, and the Corps of Engineers, we can now be sure that Orchard Beach will be restored to its former glory.”

Construction will have minimal impact on the environment because the construction window has been shaped so it occurs during the offseason, conforms to air emissions standards and doesn’t have a negative environmental impact on the winter flounder spawning season.

The plan is to dredge sand from Ambrose Channel, an area where the sand composition is similar to the original 1934 mixture brought in from the Rockaways and Sandy Hook, NJ. The material will be transported into Long Island Sound by a hopper-dredge vessel and delivered to the beach through 3,500 feet of underwater hose. The hose will connect to piping on the beach and be slurried into place.

Although portions of the beach will be closed during the construction process, visitors will be able to view the sand replenishment work from the promenade, giving them a visual of precisely how their tax dollars are being used to produce quality work that will be beneficial to the community for years to come. Continued participation by the federal government and the City of New York, includes 50 years of periodic nourishment.

“Parks is pleased to partner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to replenish sand and restore the



From l-r Kenneth Kearns, Virginia Gallagher, Adrian Benepe, Col. John Boulé, Rep. Jose E. Serrano, Rep. Joseph Crowley, Aurelia Greene and Hector M. Aponte participate in groundbreaking ceremony at Orchard Beach

shoreline at Orchard Beach, known as the Riviera of the Bronx,” said Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe. “This WPA-era, man-made beach was last nourished with sand in 1964. We are grateful to the U.S. Army Corps, Congressman José E. Serrano and Congressman Crowley for their support.

We applaud their commitment to join us in preserving and protecting Orchard Beach, and helping ensure that this treasured gem can continue to be enjoyed by future generations of New Yorkers.”

“This project represents an exciting first step to expand and replenish Orchard Beach’s shores – opening access to this popular beach and preserving it for generations to come,” said Crowley. “After years of severe erosion, Orchard Beach is in dire need of restoration to transform it back to the treasure it once was. Together, with NYC Parks and the Corps of Engineers, we will ensure Bronx residents have a beautiful beach right in their backyard that can be enjoyed for years to come.”

The Orchard Beach Shoreline Protection Project is scheduled to cost \$13 million. It’s a cost-sharing partnership, with \$7 million in funding provided by the Army Corps and \$6 million provided the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. The contractor for this project is Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company of Oak Brook, IL. The project is scheduled to be completed before the beginning of the 2011 summer beach season.



From l-r Joseph Seebode, Adrian Benepe, Virginia Gallagher, Col. John Boulé, Rep. Joseph Crowley, Rep. Jose E. Serrano, Anthony Ciorra, Frank Verga, Ellen Simon and Robert Smith participate in groundbreaking ceremony at Orchard Beach



Top Ten List

"Why You Don't Want To Make An Unauthorized Commitment"

-Reprinted with the permission of Sandra Gaffney

Are you a warranted contracting officer? Are you a Government VISA/credit cardholder? Have you purchased anything at the behest of your office chief? Have you ordered any service, (on your own)? Depending on your answer, you may have perpetrated an unauthorized commitment.

Here are the Top 10 reasons why you do not want to do this:

10. You may violate the Anti-Deficiency Act.
9. You will violate federal acquisition regulations.
8. The unauthorized commitment must be reviewed under the AFARS to see if it can be ratified.
7. You may be subject to disciplinary action.
6. The contracting division staff will put the rest of your actions on the bottom of the pile forever because they must expend much time and effort conducting an investigation of your unauthorized commitment.
5. Your vendor will probably never want to deal with you again because he can't get paid unless or until your action is ratified.
4. The District Commander will be very unhappy because he must personally approve the ratification of your unauthorized commitment or explain to higher authority why you did what you did.
3. You may end up personally paying for an item that you thought you bought for the government.
2. Your office chief will be mad at you because she/he will have to do a whole lot of paperwork to explain what you did and sign his/her name to it.
1. YOU have to do more paperwork than you ever imagined to ratify your action – and YOU will have to keep doing it until it meets all of the AFARS requirements and passes Contracting and Office of Counsel reviews.



An unauthorized commitment is a lose/lose situation and is a very serious matter. At worst, you may have violated the Anti- Deficiency Act which may subject you to criminal liability. You may have to pay for what you purchased and you may be subject to disciplinary action. At best, you have violated acquisition regulations and must go through the ratification process which requires the personal approval of the District Commander if your purchase was under \$2,500 or the Principal Assistant for Contracting if it was between \$10,000 and \$100,000. Headquarters must approve anything over \$100,000.

Remember, only a warranted contracting officer or appointed ordering officer (including VISA cardholders) can obligate the government and make a purchase on its behalf. Anyone else who tells someone to provide services (“fix the safe,” “do the report,” “do this additional design”) or furnish goods (“send a case of toner”) without a contractual document in place at the time, has made an unauthorized commitment. **If you have any questions or doubts concerning an action, STOP, THINK and ASK. Counsel and Contracting are always available to assist you.**



Army Corps Solar Project Empowers the Nation

By JoAnne Castagna, Ed.D.

With a simple click of a computer mouse, Sea Girt, New Jersey residents can instantly view online how they are benefiting from a solar power project the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed for the New Jersey National Guard's National Training Facility Headquarters in their city.

On Sunviewer.net, an educational research tool, the Guard is showcasing this project so the public can see how it is conserving energy, reducing harmful emissions, and saving the Guard and other taxpayers considerable money. The project can be viewed at -- <http://www.sunviewer.net/portals/SeaGirt/>

"In addition, we wanted to empower the public about the many benefits of solar power and encourage congress to fund more renewable energy projects," said John Hastings, energy program manager at the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

The project, which was officially completed in October 2009, is an open panel photovoltaic carport solar power project that was built by the Army Corps' New York District over an existing parking lot and then installed area lighting, inverters, transformers, switchgears and electrical metering equipment. The energy generated is now powering a building less than 200 feet away from the parking lot. The Corps then restored the parking lot pavements, by re-striping and sealing cracks.

The steel carport structure stands 16 feet above the parking lot pavement and is supported by web steel joists and joist girders. On top of this structure, the solar photovoltaic power panel arrays were installed.

The panels are composed of modules made up of several solar cells or photovoltaic cells that absorb sunlight that produce electricity. The larger the panel, the more electricity is produced.

Electricity in the form of direct current is produced by the panels, which is not directly usable energy for a building.

Most buildings require alternating current at a higher voltage. To make usable building power, the solar panel's direct current is fed into an inverter that transforms it into alternating current at a higher voltage.

This alternating current power is then sent to the building's main transformers where it can be used by the buildings for their energy needs.

The New Jersey National Guard's solar power system is tied into the public's power grid and excess power is shared with the community.

The completed structure including the panels is roughly the size of a football field that's expected to generate approximately 250,000 kilowatt -hours annually.

The project was also designed in a way that will save the National Guard considerable energy savings during the high energy demand for air conditioning during warm weather months. "We are hoping it produces 1,000 kilowatts a day during the summer months," said Hastings.

The panels were placed at a 15-degree angle to allow for optimum performance. This will provide the building 80 percent of its energy needs. Placing the panels on an angle also facilitates runoff of water.

Since the project's completion, the Guard and other taxpayers have been saving considerable money.

Under the State of New Jersey's Solar Renewable Energy Certificate Program, (SREC) solar system owners that generate over 1,000 kilowatts of electricity per year that's connected to the public power grid, receive certificates. These certificates are then publicly sold and traded to New Jersey businesses and individuals, enabling them to receive solar power benefits without building a solar power system themselves. The revenue is returned to the solar system owners.



The New Jersey National Guard is saving considerable money from electric bill savings and the state's SREC Program. "In just eight months, the project has generated approximately \$138,884 savings in kilowatt-hours. If we multiply this by 18 cents, which is typically what utility companies charge per kilowatt-hour, this equals \$25,000 we don't have to pay the utility companies," said Hastings.

"If we divide this \$138,884 kilowatt-hours by 1,000, this gives us 138 solar energy renewable credits, which comes to almost \$90,000 earned. Under the SREC Program, every 1,000 kilowatt-hour produced by solar energy/power is equivalent to one credit. This project is giving us a cost avoidance and an income and saving a considerable amount of money." he continued.

"We are reinvesting all of our earned solar energy renewable credits into other energy projects including such things as cost-effective auditing and outreach efforts with universities."

Hastings uses the University of Rowan to conduct energy audits in their facilities. The university brings in their electrical engineering and mechanical engineering classes and the students audit all phases of the building from electrical consumption to water consumption. The students study their data and make recommendations for them to become more energy efficient.

Hastings also plans on inviting students to their renewable energy projects to give them tours and show them the Sunviewer kiosks that can be used to touch, feel and learn about the projects. These kiosks are what collect the project data that gets posted on Sunviewer.net.

Accessing the project on the website Sunviewer.net is also useful to the Department of Defense which wants to see the beneficial results of the renewable energy projects they fund. "Now they can view it for themselves live," said Hastings. "Some high-ranking DoD officials have been so impressed with this that they've made the Sunviewer website a requirement for all renewable projects. This solar power project is setting the standard for the nation," said Hastings.

The Army Corps will be performing additional renewable energy projects for the New Jersey National Guard in the near future. This summer, the Corps will be completing a similar carport project at the Guard's Joint Forces Headquarters at Fort Dix and recently, the Guard hired the Corps to perform two additional solar power projects. In addition, the Army Corps will be completing a wind turbine project at Fort Dix in 2011.

"Our partnership with the Army Corps has been very strong. They are a valuable resource that we would like to see become a center of expertise and assist the National Guard throughout the country with their renewable energy needs."

We're getting phone calls every day from around the country from people wanting to know how we do things. The Army Corps is helping us to empower the people that can't get it done and show them and other agencies that it can be done."



In October 2009, the National Guard Training Facility Headquarters in Sea Girt, NJ began using this Carport Solar Power structure constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District. Photo Credit: National Guard



Army Corps partners with other agencies to build experimental oyster reefs in New York Harbor

By Christopher Gardner, Public Affairs

Up through the 19th century, New York Harbor was home to hundreds of millions of oysters, which were then a staple of everyday life in the city. Over time however, a combination of overharvesting and environmental degradation devastated the city's oysters with the city's last oyster beds closing in 1927.

Oysters are more than a tasty shellfish to an ecosystem though; they are also "ecosystem engineers" and naturally provide three major ecosystem services: 1) habitat for other species, 2) augmented fish production, and 3) water quality improvements.

That's why a consortium of partners in the New York and New Jersey Harbor community, including the Corps of Engineers, New York District, is looking into where and how sustainable oyster populations can be reintroduced in the Harbor and the lower Hudson River.

In fall 2010, this meant creating six new experimental artificial oyster reefs in Harbor estuary, including reefs off the South Shore of Staten Island, in Jamaica Bay in Queens, in Bay Ridge Flats in Brooklyn, off Governors Island in the Upper Harbor, in Soundview Park in the Bronx and in Hastings-on-Hudson in Westchester County.



The major role of the Corps is the actual creation of the artificial reefs. Corps crews made one of the six reefs October 6 off Governors Island. Early that morning, the Corps' Patrol Boat Hudson pushed a barge loaded with a crane truck into the shallow waters off the northeast corner of Governors Island where the artificial reef was created.

The reef was created out of mollusk shell and rock that was also loaded onto the barge. Corps crews first used the crane to set the rock material into the water to create the base of the artificial reef.

Then it was used to empty large bags of mollusk shells, grown and provided by the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School, into the water to settle on top of the rocks creating an artificial reef.

The reefs, which are approximately 15 feet by 30 feet, were designed to mimic natural reefs as



Construction of a Oyster Reef...

The base of this Oyster Reef consists of medium-sized stone put down on the river bed, a layer of mollusk shells and a layer of oyster spat.

Photo Credit: Dan Desmet, Public Affairs



much as possible.

The Hudson River Foundation developed a research plan to determine whether it is possible to have healthy populations of oysters once again in the harbor.

During the next two years scientists will use the reefs as research platforms to characterize oyster reef development survival and growth of the oysters themselves as well as ecosystem services provided by the reefs.

The project will provide critical new information from which larger scale restoration decisions can be made.

“Upon review of the data collected as part of this effort, we will be able to assess the feasibility of restoring oyster reefs at the targeted scales of 500 acres by

2015 and 5,000 acres by 2050,” said New York District Commander Col. John R. Boulé. “If deemed feasible, we will have gained essential and practical experience to initiate full-scale restoration efforts.”

The Corps is working in collaboration with several partners on the oyster reefs, including the Hudson River Foundation for Science and Environmental Research, Inc., NY/NJ Harbor Estuary Program, NY/NJ Baykeeper, Urban Assembly New York Harbor School, The Port Authority of New York/New Jersey,

The Harbor Foundation, The Trust for Governors Island, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, New York City Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation – Hudson River Program, Bay Ridge Flats Oyster Project, NOAA Restoration Center, Rocking the Boat and the Bronx River Alliance.



Army Corps of Engineers personnel release mollusk shells as part of New York District’s efforts to restore oyster reefs in New York Harbor. Photo Credit: Dan Desmet



Dredging to improve Port of Albany



New York District awarded a \$3.3 million contract to Great Lakes Dock & Dredge Company of Oak Brook, Ill., to perform maintenance dredging of the Hudson River Federal Navigation Channel to improve access for ships going in and out of the Port of Albany.

Approximately 60,000 cubic yards of material will be removed from Albany Turning Basin and placed upland at the federally owned Houghtaling Island Placement Site.

Work required to prepare the placement site to accept the dredged material began in mid-September.

The \$3.3 million includes \$575,000 from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, better known as the President's "Stimulus" package. The stimulus money is specifically designated for work at the Houghtaling Island Placement Site to increase its capacity.

The Port of Albany is located approximately 125 miles north of New York and New Jersey Harbor, up the Hudson river and can accommodate ships with up to a 32' draft.

