



**US Army Corps of Engineers**

**New York District**

**Building Strong<sup>®</sup>**

March Edition 2012

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District

# **Army Corps renourishes Monmouth Beach**



**...and protecting endangered turtles  
is a priority for this important job**



# The New York District Times

is a publication of the  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
New York District



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## On the Cover...

Photos highlighting beach renourishment work on Monmouth Beach in New Jersey. For more information on the project, check out page 4.

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**Authorization:** The New York District Times is an authorized unofficial newsletter of the New York District. It is published in accordance with Army Regulation 360-1.

**Circulation:** 1500 copies per issue in print and available on internet at: [www.nan.usace.army.mil](http://www.nan.usace.army.mil)

**Contents:** Views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or this command. All photos, unless otherwise credited, are official U.S. Army photos.

**Submissions:** The Public Affairs Office welcomes comments and opinions about the information published in the New York District Times. News, tips, ideas, suggestions and articles may be sent to: [kenneth.wells@usace.army.mil](mailto:kenneth.wells@usace.army.mil)





# Colonel's Corner

## **Innovation and Grit: Keys to a Bright Future**

As we charge forward in 2012, it's obvious that we're headed into what will be exciting times for the District. Federal dollars are getting harder and harder to come by as politicians try to find ways to trim the budget, while at the same time water resource challenges continue to grow. We're likely going to be feeling some of the effects of changing work requirements in a time of fiscal austerity with reduced funding for Civil Works projects and fewer new major military construction projects after a period of BRAC and transformation of our armed forces.

Of course, we are still going to be expected to deliver on our projects and continue to serve the public, while we will have to learn how to do better with less. To create a bright future in the District, we're going to have to rely on both the innovation and the grit of everybody here.



**Col. John R. Boulé II**  
**Commander**

Innovation is about adopting new ideas, business processes and delivery methods like the Jamaica Bay Multi-Project Initiative, which combines numerous missions, projects, contracts and legal authorities to save taxpayer dollars and deliver multiple projects simultaneously. These include maintenance dredging, deepening the New York and New Jersey Harbor, coastal storm risk reduction in Brooklyn and ecosystem restoration in Jamaica Bay. Implementing this kind of innovative project delivery is what we're going to need to see more and more of as we move forward in the coming years

Anyone who has worked on the JBMPI, or new initiatives like it, can tell you that trying to combine these missions and projects and getting things done in an "outside the box" way is extremely difficult. It takes grit and determination to see these changes through to the end. That same grit, that dedication to the mission no matter how difficult or frustrating progress may be, is what we're going to need in the future as we continue to be asked to do better with less.

The Corps as a whole is facing similar challenges, and that's why the Civil Works Transformation that is going on throughout our agency is so important. It is about streamlining our processes and speeding up deliverables like our studies while still ensuring the best project delivery. We need to make sure New York District's ideas and best practices are incorporated into the Corps' transformation strategies. We have to work hard to convince our higher headquarters to incorporate our developing initiatives into their transformation strategies. Also, as you know the Corps has been implementing the Quality Management System, or QMS, to help Districts develop the best work processes and document them for others to see. QMS enables a sharing of ideas and incorporating improved processes to help the District and the Corps of Engineers succeed in an uncertain future.

Regardless of what goes on at other Districts or at Headquarters though, in order for us to succeed here in New York District we're going to need to rely on our innovation and our grit to continue accomplishing our goals. Luckily, we've got lots of creative minds and no shortage of the character that's needed to see our projects and ideas through to the end. I'm confident that we've got the right stuff in New York to continue to achieve great things no matter what the future holds.

## ***Essayons!***





# Army Corps doesn't play shell games with turtle protection

By JoAnne Castagna, public affairs

Several years ago, Howard Ruben and a team of other biologists with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, were performing environmental work along a New Jersey beach that had been newly restored by the Army Corps.

"An onlooker approached us and said he had seen a baby sea turtle in the water," said Ruben. "Because this is an endangered species and you never see baby sea turtles on the shore in the northeast, we got very excited and began looking for it in the shallows where we had been working.

"We didn't find anything and went back to our work. Just before we left for the day, I saw something in the seaweed along the shore. When I parted the weeds and looked down I saw a plastic baby turtle, but one of those that's very realistic. I laughed out loud."

This may seem funny, but the Army Corps takes the protection of endangered sea turtles and all marine life seriously, especially when performing beach replenishment projects. In the waters in the northeast there is a small risk that sea turtles can be injured or killed during these projects, including the most common endangered species in this region - The Loggerhead Sea Turtle and the Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle.

Every time the Corps begins a beach replenishment project, it takes measures to protect Sea Turtles that comply with environmental policies established by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Recently these measures were activated for the Monmouth Beach Replenishment Project, in Monmouth County, New Jersey.

This past fall, the Corps began the Monmouth Beach Replenishment Project in partnership with the New Jersey State Department of Environmental Protection and dredging contractor, Weeks Marine of Cranford, New Jersey.

"This area of the New Jersey shoreline is in serious need of sand replenishment," said Roy Messaros, a Coastal and Hydraulic Engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District. "There hasn't been a beach here in several years, just a seawall."

Messaros continued, "Without a beach, waves break

## *Army Corps takes special care to prevent damage to endangered turtles during beach renourishment*

directly on the seawall and eventually you will have a problem with the seawall. Building a beach provides protection to the shoreline that is vulnerable to storms and protects infrastructures and homes. A beach will also draw visitors to area stores and restaurants, which can stimulate the local economy.

"Building a beach is also good for the environment. Beaches are essential for sea turtles to reproduce, which are an integral part of our ecosystem."

To replenish sand on Monmouth Beach, the Corps is dredging 800,000 cubic yards of sand from an area of the ocean 2 miles off of the shore. The dredges are then taking the sand to the beach where it's being pumped onto the shore through a steel pipe and graded to create a beach.

To dredge the sand, they are using hopper dredges.

"These dredges are like under water vacuum cleaners," said Ruben. "They suck up sand from the bottom of the ocean. Unfortunately, they can also take marine life with it."



Sea turtle observers performing routine operations onboard a dredge, much like the one used for Monmouth Beach, looking for signs of the dredge impacting marine life. (File photo courtesy of the Engineering Research and Development Center)

***TURTLES cont'd on BACK...***





## Monmouth Beach renourishment work photos

### Sand (and water) is pumped onto Monmouth Beach in New Jersey



Photos by Chris Gardner  
New York District public affairs

Army Corps personnel look for any unusual objects in a filter after sand is pumped onto the beach



A local news crew interviews Coastal Engineer Donald Cresitello about the work at Monmouth Beach



Resident Engineer Paul Jalowski looks on as bulldozers move freshly pumped sand into place

More photos of this District missions and activities at [www.flickr.com/photos/newyorkdistrict-usace/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/newyorkdistrict-usace/)





# District PRT supports recovery in Prattsville, NY

**By Chris Gardner, public affairs**

Members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District's Temporary Housing Planning and Response Team have deployed to Prattsville, N.Y., to support the Federal Emergency Management Agency's temporary housing efforts there following devastating flooding caused by Tropical Storm Irene in 2011.

Tropical Storm Irene caused the Schoharie Creek and one of its tributaries to overflow, destroying or severely damaging several dozen homes and much of the downtown of the town of approximately seven hundred.

While FEMA will often call the Army Corps in quickly to manage temporary housing missions where several hundred or several thousand temporary housing units will likely be needed, FEMA opted to manage the installation of temporary housing units itself in the case of Prattsville. This primarily included the installation of individual temporary housing units on the property of homeowners for them to live in while they rebuild their homes.

FEMA called upon the Corps of Engineers when it became apparent that a temporary housing group site, essentially like a neighborhood of temporary housing units, would be needed in addition to the individual temporary housing units already being installed.

Once officially assigned the temporary housing group site mission by FEMA, New York District's PRT

got to work on coordinating with local officials and stakeholders, site selection and designing the group site that could accommodate up to 20 temporary housing units in one site.

"A group site like this in such a small community helps so the people who did have their homes destroyed from the flooding are close enough to rebuild," said Mission Manager Lucia Gamba, who noted that many residents had to relocate significant distances after the flooding. "This temporary site will allow the residents to support rebuilding the town as well."

A temporary housing group site is very similar to a neighborhood, so when the team designs a site it needs to plan for everything

a neighborhood might have like roads, sewer lines, power connections, water, etc. This infrastructure must be planned out, put in place and, most importantly, connected to the existing local infrastructure.

Once trenches have been dug and underground sewer, power and water lines have been placed, tested and have hookups above ground, each housing plot in the group site must be graveled and graded to prepare for the placement of a temporary housing unit. The identification of tenants for the group site and the installation of the individual homes will be managed by FEMA once the site is complete.

While the teammates deployed to Prattsville said the weather could have been colder in Prattsville for



**FEMA Technical Monitor Randy Still and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Engineer Don Braun take a look at work being done to install sewer lines at a temporary housing group site being constructed in Prattsville, N.Y., under the supervision of the Army Corps on Jan 10, 2012. (Photo by Chris Gardner, public affairs)**







**Mission Manager Lucia Gamba inspects a newly installed manhole at a temporary housing group site under construction in Prattsville, N.Y., on Jan. 10, 2012. New York District's Temporary Housing Planning and Support Team is supporting FEMA's temporary housing efforts there by managing the design and construction of the group site. (Photo by Chris Gardner, public affairs)**

them, they still had to regularly contend with below freezing conditions and a layer of frost about 20 inches thick during trench work.

The team generally has four members deployed to Prattsville at a time, with some spending time working in FEMA's Joint Field Office in Albany – about an hour away. The Corps team manages the overall mission, coordinates with FEMA and stakeholders and oversees the work being done on the site by the contractor. The team also gets both engineering and contracting reachback support from the District office in Manhattan.

Engineers at the District office



**FEMA Technical Monitor Randy Still, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mission Specialist Walter Grauling, USACE Resident Engineer Don Braun and Antonio Abrantes from contractor Cutting Edge Group look over specifications for a temporary housing group site being constructed in Prattsville, N.Y., after devastating flooding caused by Tropical Storm Irene. (Photo by Chris Gardner, public affairs)**

design plans and specifications and develop cost estimates. They also respond to requests for information from the field as they come up said Steve Weinberg, a team leader in the Engineering Division that helped manage the development of the designs and specifications for the Prattsville mission.

He said the reachback team will regularly get questions from the team in Prattsville that come from the contractor that can range from needing to know what types of insulation are acceptable because they can't find what the contract calls for to redesigning most of the power to be underground for the site because of local concerns over power poles and space limitations.

Contracting specialists at the District office are also in daily contact with the teammates deployed forward said Scott Helmer, of the District's Contracting Division. He noted that contracting managed the award of the contract for the group site work in Prattsville to Cutting

Edge Group, a Small Business Administration certified 8(a) small business based in upstate New York in Lake George. The work was awarded in two contracts totaling approximately \$2.26 million. The site is slated to be complete and turned over to FEMA by the end of January.

New York District's Temporary Housing PRT's last major deployment was to Joplin, Mo., after a massive tornado devastated that city in summer 2011. The team took on a unique, non-housing mission there and managed the design and construction of temporary critical public facilities, including fire stations and schools, in support of FEMA.

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***Editor's Note: The physical site work was completed by the end of January while this publication was being put together and FEMA began moving their temporary housing units to the site before the end of January as well.***



# District hosts Professional Society Day

By JoAnne Castagna, public affairs



**Terry Doss representing the Society of Wetland Scientists speaks to New York District employees at Professional Society Day Jan 6, 2012. The event was held to encourage District employees to learn more about the variety of professional societies out there and their potential benefits. (Photo by Dan Desmet, New York District public affairs)**

Recently, the New York District held its first Professional Society Day Ceremony, which is expected to become annual. New York District Commander Col. John Boulé opened the event with a few words. "I wouldn't be standing here today in front of you all if it wasn't for the education, experience and network of contacts I've acquired over the years as a Soldier and while in active duty service. This was due in part to my membership in professional societies."

Professional Society Day is an opportunity for employees to learn about various professional societies they can join, whether they're engineers, environmentalists or administrative assistants. Societies can provide a wide range of benefits including training and networking opportunities.

Several societies were on hand to talk with employees and provide information. Also present were several

## *Event meant to inform employees about various professional societies*

District employees that have been active in societies for years and who also made themselves available to share their experiences with other colleagues.

One of these employees was Michael (Xiaoming) Chen, a Structural Team Leader and a Regional Technical Specialist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District.

Chen has been a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) for 21 years. He said that there are great resources to be obtained by joining a society. "I organize ASCE Webinars for the Engineering Division and it is surely one of the efficient ways for our engineers and scientists to learn the best practice and the trends in the engineering world and to keep their knowledge up to date."

Networking opportunities is one reason why Kara Borzillo, a Geotechnical Engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District joined the ASCE.

As a relatively new employee with the Corps and new in her field, she finds her membership with societies valuable to her job growth.

"I'm a student member of the ASCE and I've attended many social events through the society's North Jersey Branch's Younger Member Group. These events have all been great for meeting new people in the area."

The society has also become a part of Borzillo's life. She is actively involved in her branch's annual Future City Competition.

"This is a year-long project where middle school students work closely with local engineer mentors to create a city using computer programs and scale models. Their completed projects are presented in an annual competition.

Last year I had the opportunity to be a judge for the show and I would love to stay involved in this program and eventually become a mentor at one of the local middle schools."

***SOCIETIES cont'd on 11...***





# Sustainability at the ‘Crossroads of the World’

By Vince Elias, public affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, completed renovations on the U.S. armed forces recruiting station at Times Square, New York City.

Renovations began in October 2011 at the popular recruiting station which sits on a traffic island on 43rd Street between Broadway and 7th Ave. in midtown Manhattan.

The project included upgrades and the replacement and installation of illuminated energy efficient light emitting diodes American flags on both sides of the station to continue to synchronize with the backdrop of Times Square and heighten security and visibility while also increasing the energy efficiency of the facility, which is on display at the crossroads of the world.

The project is an illustration of a collaboration that created employment for veterans and people with disabilities as well as honoring the nation’s armed forces.

## *Times Square Recruiting Station Work Improves Aesthetics and Energy Efficiency While Supporting Small Business*

Upgrades were completed by Persaud Companies Inc., and the LED lights by the prime contractor Intercontinental Development Corporation, both 8(a) small businesses, in collaboration with Herkimer Industries, an Ability One Producing not-for-profit agency in New York State employing people with significant disabilities, military veterans, disabled veterans, and Fiberdyne Labs, Inc. a New York State small business. An 8(a) small business is named for a section of the Small Business Act and created to assist small disadvantaged businesses compete in the American economy and access the federal procurement market.

The cost was approximately \$300,000 and funded under a special initiative set aside by the four armed services of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Marine Corps.

Formerly referred to as “the booth”, the popular walk-in station was replaced after 50 years before the turn of the 21st century in 1998 at a time when the Times Square Business Improvement District wanted it relocated because it no longer fit in with the glitzy backdrop which prompted the Army Corps to expedite renovation plans. The existing station was rededicated in 1999 complete with neon lights and illuminated display screens. In 2008, the station was the target of a small bomb detonation which damaged the station.

The 520-square-foot station is the single most successful walk in station in the country and plays an important role in the recruiting effort in New York. Putting recruits into the military through advertising is one successful method used by the Armed Forces. The station serves as an office for recruiters from each military service and is used to interview and test applicants who volunteer to serve in uniform.

“Small Business is the nucleus of the economy and a vital part of the Corps’ acquisition policy. The awarding of this contract to a small business is great news,” said Col. John R. Boulé II, the Army Corps’ New York District Commander. “The station is the most famous recruiting center in the United States. Inside, all branches of the service have dedicated recruiters providing thousands of eligible citizens with important information on various career opportunities to serve in uniform.”



The newly installed LED American flags at the Times Square Armed Forces Recruiting Station are even more energy efficient than the previous lighted flags they replaced. (Photo by Dan Desmet, New York District public affairs)



# NY District employee receives top DoD honor

**By JoAnne Castagna, public affairs**

The future of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is looking bright because we have young students setting their sights on pursuing careers in engineering and science.

Nathanael Wales, a civil engineer/planner with the Army Corps' New York District is helping them reach their goals. In his free time, he mentors blind high school and college students who have a strong interest in science, engineering, technology and mathematics.

Wales who has been blind his entire life, wants them to know that a career in the sciences is reachable, even if you are blind.

Wales said proudly, "One student I mentored at a summer camp changed his college plans to study chemistry (something he had thought was unattainable); he is now studying to get his Ph.D. in chemistry and now runs chemistry camps for blind high school students!"

It is this dedication and care that helped Wales earn the "2011 Outstanding Department of Defense Employee or Service Member with a Disability Award" and be the only U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employee to receive this award in decades. The award is given annually to 19 recipients by the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

"I was surprised that I was selected. There are a number of employees throughout the entire Army Corps with all kinds of disabilities, some visible some not. To be selected among the Corps but also among the entire DoD is amazing. The competition was significant," said Wales.

The Army Corps hires disabled individuals to fill various positions. In the past two years, the New York District hired 14 disabled individuals and under the Disability Program, hired individuals for its Summer Program.

"Our district is also fortunate to have managers who are willing and interested in hiring under the Disability Program, said Estelle Capowski, Chief, Equal Employ-



(L to R) Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy John R. Campbell, New York District Civil Engineer Nate Wales; Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Thomas Lamont and New York District Commander John R. Boulé are pictured at a ceremony in Bethesda, Md., where Wales was awarded the 2011 Outstanding Department of Defense Employee or Service Member with a Disability Award. (Photo courtesy of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense)



ment Opportunity, New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "In Nathanael's case, his staff has always assisted him in every way to make him successful."

Wales has been an employee of the New York District's Plan Formulation Branch for five years and finds his work rewarding. He has worked on several important coastal erosion protection projects to improve navigation and to reduce flooding, erosion, and damage caused by hurricanes and nor'easters. Some of these projects have included the Hashamomuck Cove Reconnaissance Study, Orient Harbor Seawall Extension, and the Lake Montauk Harbor Feasibility Study.

He says that his coworkers have always been very supportive of his disability and have been open and approachable and that he has never had a problem asking questions.

He adds that some of those without disabilities may not be aware of a few things about disabled people and in particular those with a sensory disability like him.

Those with a disability must learn how to accomplish the same

tasks using an alternative technique. Wales said, "For example, instead of reading print notes, I'll read them in Braille or instead of reading off my computer monitor I will use a text to speech program.

"The process of finding these alternative techniques, I feel adds to my job. At the Army Corps we're suppose to think of innovative solutions to various problems. Thinking creatively and outside of the box is a skill many disabled people have and it's an asset to an organization."

Wales also said that it shouldn't be assumed that a person with a disability has a particular limitation until they are asked because more than likely the assumption is wrong.

"Some people may think that going out and doing field investigations is something I'm not able to do or shouldn't do," Wales said. "I can do this, but I just have to perform it a little differently. For example, if I'm out visiting a beach erosion project, I may have to interact more with the people who are showing me around and ask more questions to understand the situation. Just like with any other engineer, it's still very valuable for me to go out and see a site. It adds to

my understanding of a project and it helps me to be a better Planner."

Recently Wales attended a ceremony in Bethesda, Maryland to receive the award. He was accompanied by the New York District Commander John Boule and other New York District Leadership.

Wales said, "It was an honor to be among a group of distinguished recipients, such as service members who have sacrificed tremendously. It also gave me an opportunity to contribute who I am to the Army Corps and DoD process and raise awareness of the capabilities of persons with disabilities."

He said that the eighteen other award recipients all had different skills sets and backgrounds. "In fact one of the recipients manages contracts totaling 10 billion dollars. This is twice the budget of the whole Corps of Engineers!" said Wales.

Wales added, "Most of all the ceremony provided an opportunity for my supervisors, the District and Corps of Engineers to be honored for the work they've done to help build the bench by hiring persons with disabilities."

## ***SOCIETIES cont'd from 8***

Getting involved with societies can create longevity in one's career. Michael Scarano, who is deployed in Afghanistan and serving as Deputy District Engineer for District South has been a Corp employee for 30 years and he attributes his success to his 25 years of active involvement in societies.

"My involvement in societies has enriched me both professionally and personally," said Scarano. "I've held several positions with the Corps that have involved the need to build strategic relationships. My active membership in societies has provided me the knowledge

and opportunities to develop relationships with key players in my field and educate myself on business practices and technical initiatives in the field of engineering. This has added tremendous value to my ability to do my Corps job."

He continued, "I've also forged many professional contacts and new friendships as a direct result of my involvement with professional societies."

Scarano added, "If one thinks of the analogy of one's career to a bus driver, then involvement in professional societies is akin to 'knowing the bus route' before driving the bus. If you drive without having gotten to know the route, you will not do as good a job!"





## Around the District

### BRAC 133 certified LEED Gold



Recently, the BRAC 133 Office Complex project was officially certified as LEED Gold by the U.S. Green Building Council, making it one of the largest federal buildings to earn the honor. New York District managed the construction of the \$1.03 billion dollar project in Alexandria, Va. (Photo by Marc Barnes, Belvoir Integration Office public affairs)

The U.S. Green Building Council has certified the \$1.03 billion Washington Headquarters Office Complex at the Mark Center in Alexandria, Va., as LEED Gold following the vetting of the completed project's sustainability features -- making it one of the federal government's largest projects to reach the coveted certification.

The Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, managed the construction of the facility, which was designed to consolidate more than 6,400 DoD employees working out of commercially leased office spaces in and around Washington D.C.

The project included building two office towers, one 15 stories and one 17 stories, two parking structures with room for more than 3,700 cars, a visitor center, an area for shuttles and buses, a remote inspection facility and a remote delivery facility.

### Prepping the Times Square Recruiting Station for New Year's Eve



Army Corps personnel placed protective metal panels over lower portions of the recently renovated (*see page 9*) Times Square Armed Forces Recruiting Station December 22, 2011 in preparation for the annual New Year's Eve ball drop in Times Square. The panels are put up each year for the celebration and were removed soon after New Year's Eve. (Photo by Chris Gardner, New York District public affairs)





## Around the District

### @ Our Corps profiles District teammates

New York District public affairs has launched an initiative to showcase the wide variety of specialties and positions throughout the District with its new monthly @ Our Corps video profile segments. These range from deckhands to archaeologists to engineers and more because “At the core of our mission are our people.”

The videos, usually about one or two minutes long, highlight how each teammate uses his or her position to further the Corps’ missions and talks about past experiences on the job.

Those interested in checking out past @ Our Corps profiles and other videos about New York District and its missions can visit the District’s YouTube channel at:

[www.youtube.com/user/USACENewYorkDistrict](http://www.youtube.com/user/USACENewYorkDistrict)



This screengrab is from the February 2012 @ Our Corps profile of Carissa Scarpa, an archaeologist in Planning Division. The monthly segment can be found on the District’s YouTube channel.

## Two Superfund Teams Earn National Awards

Two different Superfund teams were honored with national awards recently at the 2012 Superfund Remediation Conference, a joint event with representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that was held in San Diego, Calif.

The Project Delivery Team for the Ellenville Superfund Site in Ellenville, N.Y., was awarded the “Innovation Award” in recognition of an innovative management approach that demonstrated the cost and schedule efficiencies of the USEPA Superfund Integrated Cleanup Initiative. The PDT that was recognized included USACE members from New York District and Kansas City District, the EPA, the New York State Department of Health and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

The Project Delivery Team for the Imperial Oil Superfund Site in Monmouth County, N.J., was awarded the “Management Award” in recognition of outstanding achievement in overcoming highly complex technical and management challenges. The PDT that was recognized included members from the EPA and both New York District and Kansas City District.

USACE supports the EPA’s Superfund program and upon EPA request, the Corps will manage design and construction contracts and provide technical assistance to EPA in support of remedial response cleanup of hazardous waste sites throughout the country.





# Army Corps: Supporting Soldier fitness at Fort Hamilton

By JoAnne Castagna, public affairs

You may have seen them wearing fatigues and patrolling around Penn Station or John F. Kennedy International Airport or even out on the waters of the New York Harbor – they’re the Joint Task Force Empire Shield. The JTFES is a staff of highly trained service members who are ready to detect, deter, and prevent potential terrorists operations in the New York City metropolitan area.

“Members of the JTFES need to stay in shape in order to be effective in their mission,” said Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Edwin Mondez, Jr., talking about his staff.

To stay in shape, many of them are frequent users of the Fort Hamilton Sports and Fitness Center at the U.S. Army Garrison at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, N.Y., where the JTFES is headquartered.

This fitness center was recently renovated into a first-class fitness facility by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District. The Corps expanded the size of the center by making use of extra space in the basement and filled this area with modern fitness equipment.

“I’m happy to see the expansion of this modern fitness facility come to fruition,” said New York District Commander Col. John R. Boulé. “The project, financed by American Reinvestment Recovery Act stimulus funds, not only made good use of wasted space, but also will go a long way to boost the morale and welfare of service members and their families residing at Fort Hamilton and other parts of New York City.”

The 3,300 square-foot space will allow 75 additional individuals to use the gym, preventing overcrowding during the gym’s peak hours.

The new space includes an aerobics and boxing room, a stationary bicycle spinning area, 35 machines for cardiovascular and strengthening workouts, such as treadmills and elliptical, which are all in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and a large stock of free weights. The space is surrounded by mirrored walls and flat screen TVs.

“A fully equipped gym is important to maintain readiness,” said Army Staff Sgt. Clayton Craig, a personnel non-commissioned officer with JTFES who uses the gym three times a week and uses all of the equipment.

## *Fort Hamilton Fitness Center renovation help improve Soldier fitness, readiness*



From left to right, Wallace Grant and Sarah Johnson of Family, Welfare, Morale and Recreation, Col. Michael Gould, Fort Hamilton U.S. Army Garrison commander, Michael Ingram, Sports and Fitness Center director and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Michael Clancy cut the yellow ribbon marking the grand opening of the newly renovated portion in the basement of the Fort Hamilton Sports and Fitness Center Jan. 17. (Photo courtesy of Fort Hamilton public affairs)

Members of the JTFES agree that the additional workout space is welcomed. Craig said, “The best part of the renovation is the additional space there is now, especially to stretch.”

Army Sgt. 1st Class Raymond Esquilin, non-commissioned officer-in-charge for logistics for JTFES, whose uses the gym up to five times a week, agreed, “There’s so much space to move, no waiting so I can get in and out.”

He added, “Having this facility is important because some soldiers can’t afford an outside gym and having one available on post provides more motivation to improve physical fitness.”



Because of this, the NMFS develops policies that govern the activities that might impact species under its protection and the New York District has been very successful in following them.

These regulations require that the Army Corps perform its dredging during the winter, from December through April, when sea turtles are not expected to be in the northeast. If dredging has to occur during the warmer months, May through November, the Corps must take measures to prevent harm to sea turtles. These precautions include having a NMFS certified Sea Turtle Observer onboard the dredges around the clock.

The Sea Turtle Observer is a trained and certified independent contractor who goes out on the hopper dredges with the crew to observe and document the dredging procedures that includes documenting if any marine life is harmed, such as sea turtles, whales, dolphins and seals.

The observers do this by monitoring the dredging operations inside and outside of the dredge. If they spot a marine animal swimming near the boat, they inform the crew so that the dredge can avoid it. If an observer sees a marine animal get injured they halt the dredging operation, document the incident and contact the proper authorities, including the District, NMFS and a wildlife rehabilitation facility.

The Sea Turtle Observers submit their daily reports to

the District and this information is eventually entered into the Army Corps' national sea turtle data base.

"The NMFS sets strict limits for how many Sea Turtles can be "taken" during dredging procedures each year and if this limit is reached we must cease our dredging operations," said Ruben.

He continued, "For the past twenty years, the District has been very successful when it comes to Sea Turtle protection. We have documentation of only one possible sea turtle mortality," said Ruben.

According to Ruben, the need for Sea Turtle protection is increasing. The Army Corps has worked tirelessly with the NMFS to develop dredging methods and equipment that minimizes the harm to sea turtles. An increase in the awareness of the plight of endangered sea turtles has also led to the creation of commercial fishing gear that is more "turtle friendly." Because of all of these protective measures sea turtle populations are showing signs of recovery and we may see more turtles in our waters.

Ruben added, "Even though the District's knowledge, and past experience has shown us that impacts to these turtles in the northeast are very unlikely, we still go out of our way to protect them by continuously expanding our knowledge and improving our methods."



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