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Ten years ago Portland District emergency teams faced a flood that threatened the greater Northwest in February 1996. The lessons learned from that emergency are helping to shape the District's future preparedness training.



As the holidays approach, we begin to look forward to a new year of possibilities. There will be a lot of new faces joining our organization, replacing good friends who have made the decision to retire from the Corps.

While we will miss their experience and their personalities, the Portland District is developing new leaders who are ready to carry on the tradition of excellence. There are some very talented individuals ready to move into these positions.

Developing leaders isn't something that begins at the GS-12 level. The U.S. Army is very proactive when it comes to training its soldiers to be leaders, because in its business not knowing how to effectively lead can cost lives. Because of that there is an extensive program for all levels of leadership training.

Although as a civil works organization we don't face that same level of intensity, it's still critical to our projects that we gain, train and retain the best in our field. We do that by offering paths to career growth within the District and the Corps.

One strategy is to begin developing leaders when employees join the District. It's even better if we can get them interested when they're still students. One of the best programs we have is the federal Student Career Employment Program. The bottom line is we gain new boots on the ground with the enthusiasm and drive of young adults who have a college degree in their field of study; they have a chance to see what it means to be a professional in their field by gaining hands-on experience in a federal work environment.

It's not just the young employees we're focusing on, either. Programs like the Leadership Development Program, PA-510, as well as a multi-agency, cross-cultural class, and a system of developmental assignments that fosters growth and broadens experience.

A developmental assignment can be either a short-term promotion with new job duties, or a deployment that puts employees in positions that require greater autonomy and decision-making.



Col. Thomas O'Donovan

An employee who accepts one of these assignments – or is thrust into one – gains experience in managing new situations and confidence in themselves and their ability to make tough decisions.

The Portland District has an outstanding workforce, and those who have decided to retire will be missed. We will miss their experience, their wisdom and their friendship. Luckily for us, we have well qualified people who will stretch their wings and settle into a new job. They will bring with them a new perspective; new experiences and new momentum to

the Portland District. As we say good-bye, we will also be saying hello.

Finally, Denise and I extend our very best wishes for a safe and happy holiday. December can also bring bad weather, so please be safe as you spend time with friends and family.

Essayons!



Happy Holidays

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US Army Corps of Engineers - Portland District

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How **WRDA-86** Fundamentally Changed the Way the Corps Planned and Financed Water Resources Projects



President Ronald Reagan, surrounded by Congressional sponsors and Robert K. Dawson, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) (fourth from the right), signing WRDA-86

The Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (WRDA-86) provided congressional authorization for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects across the nation and signified a major and enduring shift in the nation's attitude toward water resource planning. Signed on Nov. 17, 1986, by President Ronald Reagan, the bipartisan legislation reflected a growing consensus that local stakeholders should bear more of the financial and management burdens of waterway projects and that environmental considerations were intrinsic to water resources planning

The centerpiece of this legislation was a set of cost-sharing provisions that promoted a more efficient use of tax dollars. Additional provisions included the imposition of *ad valorem* cargo taxes to maintain harbors, increases in fuel barge taxes to support inland lock and dam projects, and various other fiscal reforms designed to educe greater participation by ports, communities, waterway interests, and states in the financing of water projects. To balance requirements for greater non-federal financial shares in the costs of studies and projects, WRDA-86 gave sponsors a key role in project planning and design.

After 16 years without any major authorization for new civil works water resources construction projects, WRDA-86 also ushered in a torrent of new projects. It authorized \$16 billion in spending for more than 377 water projects, including 43 port projects, 7 inland waterway projects, 115 flood

control projects, 24 shoreline protection projects, and 61 water resources conservation and development projects. Some of the more notable of these were the Environmental Management Program for the Upper Mississippi River system; a new large lock at Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan; significant navigation improvements along the Lower Mississippi River; and the Seven Oaks Dam in San Bernardino County, California.

The law included reforms to make the Corps' civil works program more environmentally friendly as well. It established requirements and guidelines for addressing mitigation measures for fish and wildlife adversely affected by water resource projects and enabled the Corps to modify the structures and operations of its projects for the purpose of improving the quality of the environment.

"WRDA-86 brought out the best in the Corps," said Robert K. Dawson, former Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), in 1986, who helped shepherd the bill from negotiation to enactment. "It was a time of great change, and the Corps as an institution showed its capacity to change and deal with reality. There were people who didn't want to change, but the Corps to its great credit saw the need for change and went to battle stations." After twenty years, WRDA-86 has lived up to its initial billing as "landmark legislation" in the development of the Nation's water resource policy.



Anadromous Fish Evaluation Program Conference

A year's worth of research in four days

By Jennifer Sowell, Public Affairs Office

Portland District hosted a four-day Anadromous Fish Evaluation Program Conference Nov. 13 to Nov. 16, in downtown Portland. The annual event combines the fish passage research programs from both Walla Walla and Portland districts for the past year, focusing on anadromous fish and related issues such as turbine and transportation, predation and in-river survival studies.

Anadromous fish spend their adult lives in the ocean and return to fresh water to spawn. The best-known anadromous fish are salmonids, which hatch in small freshwater streams.

This year the conference drew more than 400 participants from state, federal, and tribal governments, consulting firms, researchers, students and retired fisheries experts. More than 60 presentations over the four days allowed attendees to share information representing \$60 million worth of research, funded by the Columbia River Fish Mitigation Program.

AFEP conducts evaluation and monitoring studies at the Corps hydropower projects along the lower Snake and Columbia rivers. The studies provide biological information and insights related to fish passage improvements and survival.

"This conference is a great forum for experts to get together and share what worked and what didn't work in 2006," said Dennis Schwartz, fisheries biologist with Portland District.

"The AFEP conference allows me to ensure our program is running smoothly and that we are doing the work that is needed and hitting the mark for management decisions," said Rock Peters, Northwestern Division fish program manager.

Conference presentations included results from system-wide studies dealing with what has been taking place in the full river system, including how fish pass and how they return to the basin. Additional presentations dealt with specific details at particular projects or with specific species, including evaluation of various tagging technologies, adult fish passage at the dams and the effects of predation on salmon populations.

"The research presented at these conferences builds upon itself each year," said Schwartz. "This year's results will be used by the regional fisheries managers to scope and shape future research that will be undertaken by the Corps in 2007 and beyond."

The Northwestern Division has sponsored biological studies continuously since 1952, which are managed under the Anadromous Fish Evaluation



Shown here is a yearling Chinook salmon that has been collected at one of the many collector projects on the Columbia and Snake rivers.

New equipment in the Bonneville fish ladder detects PIT (Passive Integrated Transponder) tags in fish swimming up the ladder. Researchers use this information to improve fish passage in the Columbia River Basin.



Program. AFEP is coordinated with federal, state and tribal fish agencies that provide technical and policy-level input on study objectives, experimental design and methodologies. Most of the passage facilities and operations on the river have been developed and refined based on results of these studies, which are presented at the annual AFEP conference, Schwartz said.

AFEP's main purpose is to assist the Corps in making engineering, design and operations decisions for the Columbia and Snake river projects that provide fish with safe, efficient passage through the migration corridor.

Dennis Dauble, a research manager with Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, has been attending the AFEP conference for ten years or more. He enjoys the opportunity to learn about what other research organizations are doing, and at the same time to critique PNNL's research as a manager.

"This is a great forum to get a look at comparative technologies in the field," said Dauble. "There are always new and innovative research ideas that come out of this conference, as well as new questions to be answered." 



Steelhead, coho, sockeye, yearling and subyearling Chinook smolts during migration.





Portland District plans for *Cascade Readiness*



By Matt Rabe, Public Affairs Office

CASCADE READINESS

Following a major disaster, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers knows it will be called on to support local efforts to dig out from under the rubble and get things back to normal.

At the end of October, the Portland District held *Cascade Readiness*, a disaster exercise, at Bonneville Lock and Dam to test its response capability. The exercise was held one day after the District conducted a 100 percent employee accountability exercise, which proved to be a major factor in how *Cascade Readiness* played out.

During the accountability exercise, all Portland District employees were instructed to call in and report their status following a mock disaster. What participants at Bonneville Dam found out the next day was that those employees who did not call in, or District Crisis Management Team members who were not at Bonneville, were to be considered “unavailable” for the purposes of the exercise. About 80 percent of the District workforce reported in during the exercise. As exercise participants quickly surmised, several key employees were no longer District assets.

“Following a real event, people will be asked to take on new roles,” Portland District Commander Col. Thomas O’Donovan told the CMT during the previous night’s radio communications exercise. “You may be asked to perform work above your

current pay grade. Are you prepared to do that?”

Despite the artificial nature and setting of the exercise, participants struggled with problems and shortages they might face following a real world disaster. Where do we get our information? How are we going to communicate? Computer files were destroyed in the disaster and there are no backups. Do we have enough coffee?

“Our number 1 priority is to account for and take care of our people,” said O’Donovan at Bonneville. “Next, we need to check out and take care of our projects. Finally, we need to be ready to support FEMA and fulfill our responsibilities to the public.”

A key question O’Donovan asked the CMT and supporting cadre was, “how can we prepare our District and ourselves to be part of the solution, and not part of the problem?”

O’Donovan challenged each of the participants to get ready for the next disaster, because it is just a



matter of time before it occurs. "The Army has an uncanny sense of timing its exercises. They always seem to take place right before a real world event happens."

The commander's prophecy held true. Less than three weeks after the exercise, the Portland District tested some of its response capabilities during a significant storm effecting northwestern Oregon and western Washington. While the storm mostly impacted Seattle District, the Portland staff was able to assess how it would have responded had the event tracked differently.

District Readiness

To address the need to be ready for the next disaster, the District has taken several steps to prepare.

Under the 2006-2008 OPLAN, a new PDT was established to evaluate and prepare the

District's readiness plan. Capt. Brian Szydluk is the project manager for that effort and his team planned and executed the *Cascade Readiness* exercise.

Szydluk said the goals for the exercise were to expose the District to capability-based planning and to assess and validate the existing response processes.

"Following an event, we need to be able to quickly reestablish our ability to perform our essential missions: navigation, flood damage reduction and hydropower production," he said. From there, the District would prioritize the rest of its missions, as well as any FEMA tasking that the District may be asked to handle.

The Readiness PDT is looking to institutionalize capability-based planning within the District, according to Szydluk. The group also is looking at consolidating the District's various scenario-based plans under a single all-hazards plan.

"Capability-based planning provides more flexibility than trying to train for multiple and scenarios," Szydluk said. "This allows us to train for one process flexible enough to cover any contingency."

Szydluk said the new approach focuses on three primary functions: individual, functional/departmental and District readiness. "First you ensure your personal safety and wellness, that allows you to focus on functional or departmental needs,

which, in turn, allows for the District's missions to be accomplished."

Based on his observations of *Cascade Readiness*, he will be working with the District offices to help them identify ways to better respond to any event, Szydluk said. "The Corps' mission requires us to be ready," he said.

Szydluk expects the District's all-hazards plan will be completed early in 2007.

Accountability

Employees will notice another key action: the District's Employee Information Line, now a toll-free phone number, was expanded to allow for two-way communication between employees and emergency managers. Redundancies were created in the system to allow for its continued operation, even if the telecommunications system within the Robert Duncan Plaza is taken out of service.

Following an event, the EIL will be updated with specific instructions for employees to follow. Initially, employees may be told to stay in place and to take care of their personal needs. Eventually, the instructions will change to include reporting personal status and possibly where to report for duty.

"We are trying to provide employees with relevant information that will help us assess the condition of the workforce, and allow us to take actions to help our people, if necessary," said Jeff Hepler, disaster response planner. "Our bottom line goal is to ensure we can continue our missions, but we need to be able to take care of our employees' personal needs first."

During a major disaster, the Corps will need everyone to assist the region in recovery. Exercises such as *Cascade Readiness* and the EIL will help the Portland District account for its employees and determine how and where it can assist the state, the counties and cities in an emergency. 



Col. O'Donovan (center) receives a status update.



**EMPLOYEE
ACCOUNTABILITY
C I S E**

On WEDNESDAY,
OCTOBER 25, 2006,
between 0600-1800, the
Emergency Operations center will
All-Employee Accountability
purpose of this exercise is to
ability to account for District
wing a catastrophic event.
employees must call the
NE, (877) 808-4999,
). Off-duty employees
and report their status.

Employee Information
this phone number:
877-205-4999
these websites:
http://casce.army.mil
http://pdrdci.net

US Army
District of Columbia



Celilo Village revitalization project

By Diana Fredlund, Public Affairs Office

It was the kind of day dreams are made of: a golden sun in an impossibly blue sky hanging over golden hills. On the Earth below, Celilo Village residents began to believe a dream might be finally coming true: after decades of striving to convince the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to make needed improvements to their village, they could see some progress. Phase One of the Celilo Village revitalization began as excavation equipment started constructing a new water system that will bring sewer lines and running water to the homes of all village residents.

Celilo Village is the remnant of a community that has lived for centuries near Celilo Falls on the Columbia River. Historically, the area supported fishing activities for some 5,000 Native Americans and was the economic, cultural, and spiritual center for Northwest tribes. Many tribal members lived year-round at the falls; about 50 of their descendants still call Celilo Village home.

When the Corps completed The Dalles Dam in 1957, the original village was inundated. The new village was moved to its current location, about 7 miles east of the dam and a quarter mile back from the river's banks. Since that time, the infrastructure at Celilo Village has significantly deteriorated, with water and sanitary conditions that violate state and federal statutes and endanger public health and safety.

The village residents have struggled in the past to get federal

support to create a safe and viable community, said George Miller, Portland District project manager. "The tribal governments of the Umatilla, Warm Springs, Yakama and Nez Perce tribes have been able to come together and effect positive change in this process," Miller said. "They convinced the U.S. Congress and the administration that this action needed to happen." *Continued on page 10*



Celilo Village today

FROM THE FIELD





NSPS: Spread The Word

Help employees learn about new focus on performance

During a time when national security demands a competitive and highly responsive work force, the National Security Personnel System shapes a new human resources management system for Defense Department civilians. The April implementation of Spiral 1.1, which begins to put the system in place, has begun producing a work force that is more accountable, more flexible, more willing to assume new responsibilities, and more steadily focused on the department's organizational goals and critical mission.

With positive performance and strong manager-employee communications at the forefront of all operations, the NSPS work force is building a department of cohesion, collaboration and confidence. Organizational leaders play a vital role in this significant transformation by cascading organizational goals and objectives at the employee level; helping employees understand job expectations; providing constructive feedback for improved performance; and appropriately recognizing employee performance during appraisals. As managers and supervisors work to fairly and effectively measure talent, reward contributions, and promote excellence in the workplace, NSPS provides a range of new flexibilities and powerful tools to support their leadership.

NSPS compensation is designed to help DoD organizations attract and retain results-driven employees who contribute to mission accomplishment. NSPS pay bands cover wide salary ranges, with minimum and maximum rates set based on national labor market factors and conditions. The open pay ranges allow managers the flexibility to pay employees at more competitive levels. Compensation and rewards are directly linked to performance, providing greater opportunities to reward employees for satisfactory work. For example, managers have the flexibility to move employees within a pay band or recommend that they be promoted to a higher pay band. Upon promotion, an employee's pay increases by a minimum of 6 percent, and with management approval, may increase up to 20 percent. Positive performance under NSPS yields great rewards.

NSPS performance management requires leaders to align pay and performance with mission accomplishment. Managers and supervisors are responsible for developing employee performance plans, which outline job objectives and contributing factors associated with positive performance. Studies show that employees' understanding of their performance objectives and how their objectives fit within the organization's overall mission are two

Nearly 100 Portland District managers and supervisors will convert to NSPS in January '07

NSPS classification assigns every employee — including those on a temporary promotion, reassignment or detail — to a career group, pay schedule and pay band based on permanent position of record. This simple, flexible and streamlined classification system provides the flexibility to move employees across positions more freely to better meet the organization's goals and the department's mission. Preparing detailed position descriptions is no longer necessary under NSPS. Managers and supervisors can focus on leading a motivated team of workers that openly communicates about performance, seeks out areas for improvement, and steadily works to achieve positive results.

critical aspects of high-performing organizations. NSPS supports these elements. Plans account for work complexity, overall contribution to the mission, organizational success, fiscal soundness and other criteria consistent with merit system principles. At the end of the rating cycle, leaders play a key role in rating the employee's objectives and contributing factors, calculating and recommending the rating of record, and presenting recommendations to a pay pool panel. The pay pool preserves the integrity of the NSPS performance management system by ensuring that a higher-level review takes place and that discussions regarding performance are made within the context of mission and organization.

Continued on page 12

EMPLOYEE FOCUS



The Corps started constructing a new water system that will bring sewer lines and running water to the homes of all village residents.

Celilo Village continued from page 8

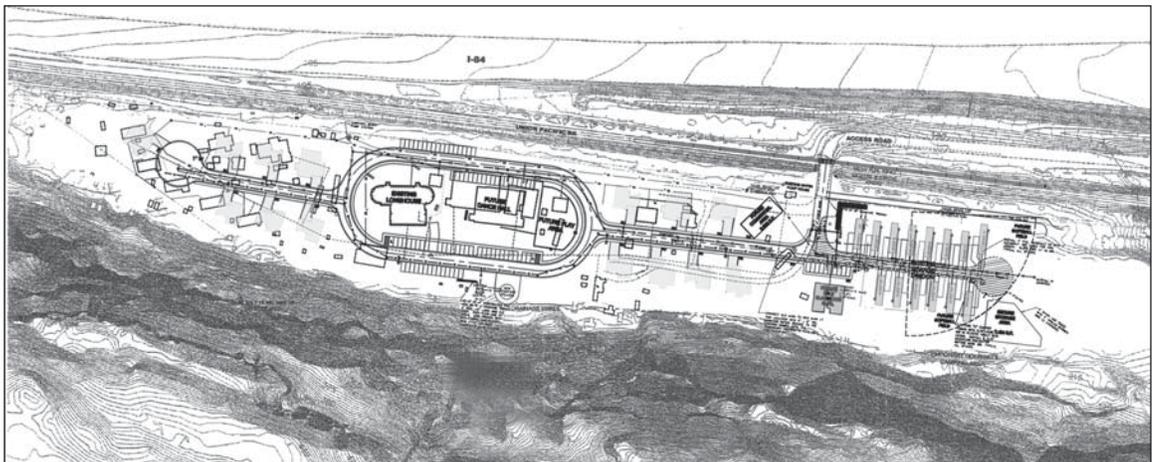
Reconstruction will occur in stages: the water and sewer system and temporary housing will be completed in Fiscal Year 07; residents will be relocated into temporary housing in FY 08 while the village's infrastructure is redeveloped. The project's goal is to move residents into their new homes during FY 08.

Portland District staff and Cooper Zeitz, the contracted architect engineering firm, coordinated with tribal governments, the BIA and village residents to develop plans and designs for redeveloping the village. All new homes will meet Housing and Urban Development standards and will include wood stoves, chimneys, composition shingle roofs and a durable siding that can stand up to Gorge winds, said Cooper Zeitz architect Chuck Archer. Floor plans and exterior styles were selected by the BIA and the current residents.

It has taken many years to get to this point, Miller said. Now that work has begun, he is concerned

about the Continuing Resolution under which the Corps and other federal agencies must operate until the final budget is passed by Congress. "Based on the current funding status, it is possible that the work schedule will be delayed," Miller said. "The schedule may have to slip, but that doesn't change the U.S. Government's commitment to completing a project so important to the Indian people."

One of the challenges for everyone involved in this project has been assigning new housing units to the more than 50 residents. Housing will only be provided to those who had established residency at Celilo Village at the time of the project's authorization, Miller said. The challenge was confirming who is authorized, based on administrative records of occupancy and inheritance. "The fact that each agency and tribal government kept its own records, and that residents through the years informally allocated residency to relatives, meant reviewing a lot of records to understand who inherited from the original residents."



Celilo Village site plan has been approved by the residents and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

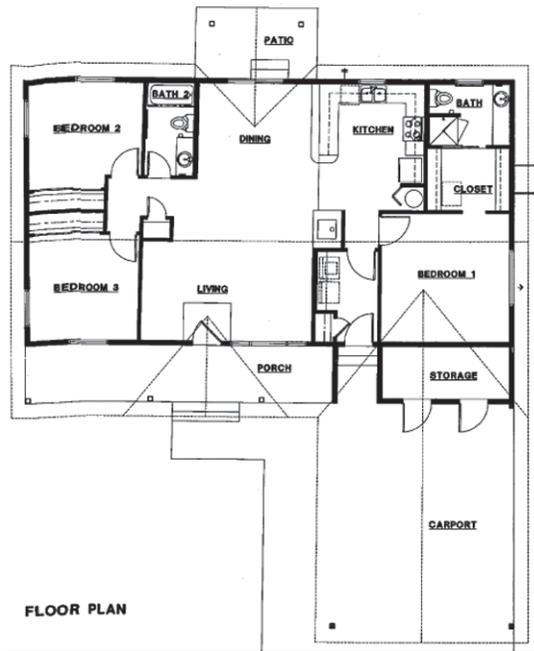
The two federal agencies an inter-tribal working group outlined the eligibility of each person currently living at the village, including children. “Based on the research by all parties, we agreed on the allocations of all housing units except one” Miller said. “There are still a couple of questions to be answered, but the hard work is done.”



The task of reviewing the Corps’ records fell to John Breiling, Portland District Office of Counsel. “John sifted through a mountain of dusty old records and created a history that we could match up with the other agencies,” Miller said. “Without John’s knowledge of our agency and the history of our Columbia River projects and his attention to detail, we would probably still be trying to make sense of the records.”

With assistance from the Seattle District’s Real Estate Office, residents will receive relocation assistance in planning and executing the move to temporary housing and then back into their new homes in 2009. “We actually have had a relocation plan in place since 2003,” Miller said. “It was waiting for the project to reach the execution stage. It is very satisfying to actually see construction underway.”

There will be many days before the last piece of construction equipment pulls out of Celilo Village for the last time, leaving a modern, well-built residential community. The dream of seeing their village made whole again hasn’t yet been realized, but residents can see and hear the progress being made under a blue sky near a river they have called home for centuries. 



One of the new proposed house plans and floor plan. All new homes will meet Housing and Urban Development standards and will include wood stoves, chimneys, composition shingle roofs and a durable siding that can stand up to Gorge winds.



FROM THE FIELD

OPEN SEASON

*for Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB),
the new Dental and Vision plan (FEDVIP) and
Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)*

WILL END MONDAY, DEC. 11, 2006

for more information visit: www.opm.gov/insure



In Memoriam

Lloyd Edwin Staats died Oct. 25, 2006. He was 77. Staats graduated from Oregon State College and was a civil engineer for the Army Corps of Engineers for 31 years. He is a member of the Portland District Gallery of Distinguished Civilian Employees. Prior to his retirement in 1989, he was the resident engineer at the Mount St. Helens Residence Office. Staats is survived by his wife, Audrey; sons, Michael and Steven; and two grandchildren.

Claude Richardson, age 90, died Oct. 30, 2006. After becoming an electrical engineer after World War II, Richardson began working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, where he drew designs for the Columbia River Dams. After the Alaskan Earthquake of 1964, he oversaw restoration of utilities in the Anchorage area. His wife Mildred died in 1988; he is survived by a daughter and two sons.

Charles V. Ruzek Jr. died Oct. 30, 2006. He was 90. Ruzek graduated from Oregon State University in 1937 with a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering. He obtained a Master of Science in civil engineering from University of California, Berkeley, in 1941. He was a 30-year veteran of the Corps of Engineers and received the U.S. Army Legion of Merit Award. He is survived by his wife Maurine, a son and three daughters.

Frances McLain, 80, died Nov. 13, 2006. She and her husband, Paul, moved to Sweet Home in 1953. She worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; she retired in January 1988. Survivors include her husband, son, daughter, grandchildren, brother, sisters and many nieces and nephews.

William Pedersen died Nov. 16, 2006. He was 90. During World War II, he served in the Army. He lived in Portland for more than 60 years and was an engineer for the Army Corps of Engineers. His wife, Dorothy Vande Brake, died in 2003. He is survived by his sister, two daughters and two grandchildren.

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Training and resources designed to address issues that are important to managers and supervisors are available on the NSPS Web site, www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps. Important resources include several printed brochures: HR Elements for Managers, Supervisors and Employees; Communicating with Your Staff; and Pay Pool Process at a Glance.

By sharing information about NSPS, addressing questions and facilitating conversations with employees at every level, managers affect how employees understand new authorities, trust the process, and work cohesively to build an environment where everyone can excel. 

*Shirley Scott is the director of human resources for the program executive office of the National Security Personnel System in the Defense Department.
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