



Portland District Commander Col. Thomas O'Donovan and Deputy Regional Forester Liz Agpaoa cut the ceremonial ribbon during the opening of a new snack and break room at Robert Duncan Plaza. Building management specialist Bill Pennebaker worked with eight federal and state agencies before the area was approved and opened for business.



I am always gratified to see how members of the public support the Soldiers and Civilians who dedicate themselves to helping their fellow Americans. Whether it is the Global War or Terror or hurricane recovery, Corps of Engineers personnel are always first to say, "Let me try."

The Army acknowledged that dedication to service when the Corps of Engineers as a unit received the Army Superior Unit Award, in recognition of the service we undertook during the hurricane recovery efforts after Wilma, Katrina and Rita. If you were a Corps employee between the dates of June 1, 2004 and April 15, 2006, you are authorized to wear the lapel pin at any time, regardless of whether you are still employed with the Corps. If you joined the Corps after that date, you can wear the lapel pin as long as you are a Corps employee.

Many of you have prior military service and understand the importance of military awards; for those of you who haven't had any other experience with a military organization, the medals and awards worn by Soldiers and Civilians are a tremendous source of pride. They are symbols of a nation's gratitude for service to our country, and the Superior Unit Award is one way the Army can say thank you to its Civilians. I hope you also will wear it proudly.

And public service is something to be proud of. Sometimes while listening to the news, some people might think that public service has lost its luster, but I say the caliber of public servants is still worthy of praise. There may be a few who have lost their moral compasses and grab the headlines, but they don't represent the civil servants who proudly serve the American public. Whether as a Soldier or a Civilian, our role as stewards of a public trust requires us to be vigilant about possible failure by others.

Any time someone abuses that trust, our job becomes that much harder. The American public is, unfortunately, becoming used to stories of kickbacks or embezzling schemes; reports of wrongdoing are often met with resignation rather than outrage.



Col. Thomas O'Donovan

To stay out of that media focus, or more importantly, out of jail, the bottom line is: if it doesn't seem right, it rarely is. One thing that can help is to hear about poor decisions others have made and discuss the ethical implications. In the next few months you'll see a new periodic feature that will identify ethical issues other federal employees are facing from the wrong side of the fence. I think publishing this information is important so people can realize how widespread and varied ethical situations are, and you might recognize an issue you have been

faced with yourself.

Ethical and fiscal responsibility comes naturally to most of us. That desire to serve our country sets us apart.

Finally, it was very heartwarming to see how welcoming you all were to Mr. Louie Pitt, Jr., our guest speaker at the January Town Hall. He too is a public servant, serving his people as a tribal official. Mr. Pitt was the first in a series of guest speakers I plan to invite to our town halls. It is important that we understand how our actions can affect others; it is part being good stewards. I was very pleased that Mr. Pitt invited us to a meeting of the Warm Springs. A good relationship is founded on mutual understanding, and I intend to do all I can during my tenure as Portland District Commander to expand and deepen the relationships we have with our neighbors.

Essayons!

CORPS'PONDENT is an unofficial offset



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Portland District

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Corps of Engineers receives Army Superior Unit Award



This is the Army Superior Service Award in the form of a military ribbon for wear on the Class A uniform. The lapel pin for civilian wear is smaller and made of metal. (U.S. Army Photo)

The Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army has approved the Army Superior Unit Award (ASUA) for the entire U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The award is given for the Corps' response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma between June 1, 2004, and April 15, 2006.

An award ribbon or lapel pin is authorized for wear by all Soldiers and Civilians who were assigned during those dates to Headquarters, divisions, districts, centers, labs, and the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power).

Soldiers assigned to the Corps during that time may wear the award permanently. Soldiers assigned or attached to the Corps after the approved period are only authorized to wear the award temporarily until they depart the Corps.

Soldiers will receive their award ribbon through military channels.

The ASUA lapel pin is authorized for issue and wear by Civilians employed by the Corps. Those employed by the Corps during the cited period may wear the lapel pin permanently. Those employed by the Corps after the cited period may wear the lapel pin temporarily as long as they remain with the Corps.

The ASUA lapel pin is also authorized for optional purchase and wear on civilian clothing by qualified Soldiers.

According to Richard Apple, Staff Action Control Officer in Headquarters, Corps Headquarters and division headquarters ordered stocks of the lapel pins during the week of Dec. 25. The pins will be provided to individual offices for presentation to their workers.

A unit certificate, citation, and streamer will be issued to Corps Headquarters, and Headquarters will host a streamer ceremony and post the ASUA streamer on the Corps' flag during the 2007 Castle Ball on Feb. 10.

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Thank you note

Dear {Public Affairs} staff,

Thank you so much for sending the informative reports and brochures. My grandson, who wants to go to Purdue for an engineering degree, will be ecstatic! And I am sure the [Purdue University] faculty and students will appreciate having such an informed Pacific Northwest native when they are studying up on the dams in the United States.

With many thanks and good wishes, *Rita Glazebrook*, Portland, Oregon





Corps and Nature Conservancy

Willamette River

Sustainable Rivers Project agreement focuses on Middle and Coast Forks

By Mike McAleer, Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Nature Conservancy are working together to manage the water resources of the Willamette Basin.

Portland District entered into a Memorandum of Agreement in 2006 that is an extension of the national Sustainable Rivers Project agreement formed by the Corps and The Nature Conservancy in 2000.

Portland District Commander Col. Thomas E. O'Donovan said, "Our agreement focuses on realistic yet effective ways to protect the ecological health of our rivers and wetlands while still accomplishing our missions in hydropower generation and flood damage reduction."

The Willamette Flow Management Project, part of the SRP, held a kick-off meeting in Salem, Ore., on Feb. 27, 2006. The orientation meeting was attended by 90 representatives of federal and state agencies, universities, conservation groups and other stakeholders with an interest in establishing ecological flows in the Willamette River basin.

In August 2006, the Nature Conservancy's Oregon chapter awarded a contract to Oregon State University to undertake a Literature Review. The Literature Review Summary Report is completed in draft and is being reviewed by workshop participants.

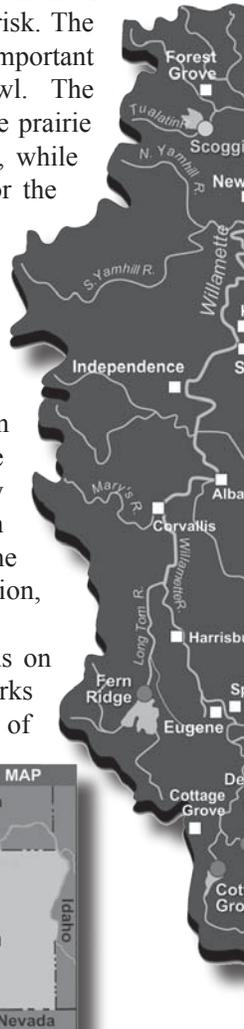
Because the Willamette Basin has been the focus of extensive analysis and data collection, it is anticipated there will be a significant amount of information already generated on flow requirements for important species and communities.

Restoration of the Willamette River is the focus of numerous federal, state and local agencies and entities. The Willamette River and its tributaries support threatened runs of anadromous and resident fish under the Endangered Species Act, including

chinook, chum and steelhead salmon and bull trout. Other non-threatened fish in the Willamette and its tributaries are coho, rainbow and cutthroat trout and lamprey. The floodplain and historic backwater areas of the Willamette River and its tributaries provided important habitat for these and other aquatic species. Numerous amphibians are found throughout the river valley, a number of which are considered at risk. The Willamette Valley's location makes it an important area for migrating and wintering waterfowl. The valley's few remaining fragments of native prairie support many special status plant species, while the remaining wetlands provide habitat for the Oregon Chub, the western pond turtle and many sensitive plant species.

Matt Rea, Corps project manager said, "The Willamette River Sustainable Rivers Project will build upon the floodplain restoration study the Corps initiated in 2004." The Willamette Floodplain Restoration Feasibility Study under the General Investigations program is to identify opportunities to restore natural floodplain function in the Willamette River basin in the combined interests of ecosystem restoration, natural flood storage and other benefits.

The Willamette SRP will initially focus on two tributaries, the Coast and Middle forks of the Willamette River. Fifty-six percent of the drainage area of the Coast Fork drains into two Corps reservoirs: Dorena and Cottage Grove. Eighty-seven percent of the drainage area of the Middle Fork drains into four Corps reservoirs: Fall Creek, Lookout Point, Hills Creek and Dexter.



WILLAMETTE

FEATURE

Conservancy partner on



FEATURE



WILLAMETTE VALLEY

“Focusing on the Coast and Middle forks of the Willamette River and the mainstem river immediately downstream of these tributaries will serve as a pilot study that can be replicated in the rest of the Willamette system,” Rea said. General effects of the reservoirs include reduced peak flows, lower spring flows, increased summer low flows, and infrequent bankfull and out-of-bank flows.

The next step in the SRP process was the initial Environmental Flows Workshop for the Willamette River Basin. More than 50 participants attended. “This is a larger number of participants than TNC and the Corps had originally intended, but reflects the high degree of interest and complex nature of the project,” Rea said.

Scientists and experts representing the fields of fish and wildlife biology, ecology, hydrogeomorphology, hydrology, hydraulic engineering and water quality were invited to attend.

The project partners will begin implementing environmental flow recommendations that were discussed during the Environmental Flows Workshop. Portland District, working in collaboration with an Interagency Flow Management Workgroup, actually began implementing changes in Willamette system operations in 1999, following listings of Chinook salmon and winter steelhead as endangered under Endangered Species Act. The



Lookout Point Dam and Reservoir, one of the reservoirs where flows will be monitored during the Willamette Flow Management Project pilot study.

project partners expect the Willamette Sustainable Rivers Project, particularly the literature review and flow workshops, to greatly expand the state of knowledge regarding the relationships between reservoir operations and downstream ecological needs, especially as they relate to the initial target tributaries, the Coast and Middle forks.

“The Nature Conservancy will bring their knowledge and experience to our review of the Willamette River dams,” O’Donovan said. “We want them to help us determine whether we should revise our operations to better meet the ecological needs of the rivers and streams affected by the dams.”



Kat Beal, Willamette Valley Projects, presents information to attendees at the Environmental Flows Workshop for the Willamette River Basin, held in Salem, Ore.



Pay for performance is here...

National Security Personnel System becomes a reality for Portland District managers

EMPLOYEE FOCUS

Portland District, along with the rest of the Corps, Army and Department of Defense is moving towards a new personnel system, and each took a major step forward last month.

The National Security Personnel System became a reality for about 70 Portland District managers and supervisors on Jan. 21. NSPS is a significant change from the General Schedule system and is designed to streamline many personnel practices, transfer numerous authorities from the Office of Personnel Management to DoD, replace the current GS structure with broad pay bands, align employee pay and pay adjustments with performance (using a new performance management process), and much, much more.

In short, it is changing a great deal of what federal employees have come to accept as normal in the personnel world. Some things will not change under NSPS. Veterans will still receive veteran preference in the hiring process and leave benefits will not change. Health and life insurance, TSP, CSRS and FERS retirement, credit hours, telework and flex-schedule opportunities will remain unchanged.

Last summer the District kicked off its transition to NSPS, along with much of the rest of the Corps, the Army and DoD. Portland District formed a transition team, drafted a communications strategy and milestone schedule and held NSPS classroom training for current supervisors and managers. Because Portland District supervisors and managers became the first group, known as spiral 1.2, to convert to the NSPS

system training has focused on these employees. In summer 2007, there will be a series of 8-hour training sessions for hundreds of general schedule, non-supervisory employees. Each employee will be required to participate in this transition training and encouraged to complete the "NSPS 101" on-line training (available at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/>) prior to the classroom training. This group, aka "spiral 2.0", is scheduled to convert to NSPS in October 2007. Wage grade employees will convert to NSPS at a future date. In the interim, the workforce will be covered under two separate personnel systems, the current, or "Legacy" system as it's now being called, and NSPS. Power trades employees are not projected to transition to NSPS.

There are a variety of players involved in the District transition to NSPS. The Commander and members of the Corporate Team has been providing overall leadership and policy direction. The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center plays a key role in educating and training the workforce and helping managers understand their new roles and responsibilities. The majority of the day-to-day conversion guidance comes from the Transition Team, comprised of representatives from many of the major District offices: Rene Baron, Deputy for Small Business; Mike Doane, Internal Review; Matt Rabe, Public Affairs Office; Linda McBane, CPAC; Bob Turner, Office of Counsel; Teri Galloway, Hydroelectric Design Center; Dean Criscola, Resource Management Office; and Dennis McCann, Information Management Office. The team is led by Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Phil Kaufmann, the transition manager for NSPS, and Bill Nielsen,





Executive Assistant, deputy NSPS transition manager. The team is preparing for the next transition, including selecting several managers to help CPAC deliver the NSPS training to spiral 2.0 employees.

Key to the performance management system under NSPS will be developing new performance objectives that are aligned to the organization's mission. A pay pool is a group of approximately 50-150 employees; those included in a pay pool will be determined by factors such as organizational structure, similar lines of occupations, geographical location, organizational mission, or pay bands. For example, the majority of supervisors and managers in Portland District will be in one "supervisory pay pool," meaning their performance evaluations will be conducted at the District level for pay band 1 and 2 supervisors; performance evaluations for pay band 3 supervisors will be completed at the Northwestern Division level.

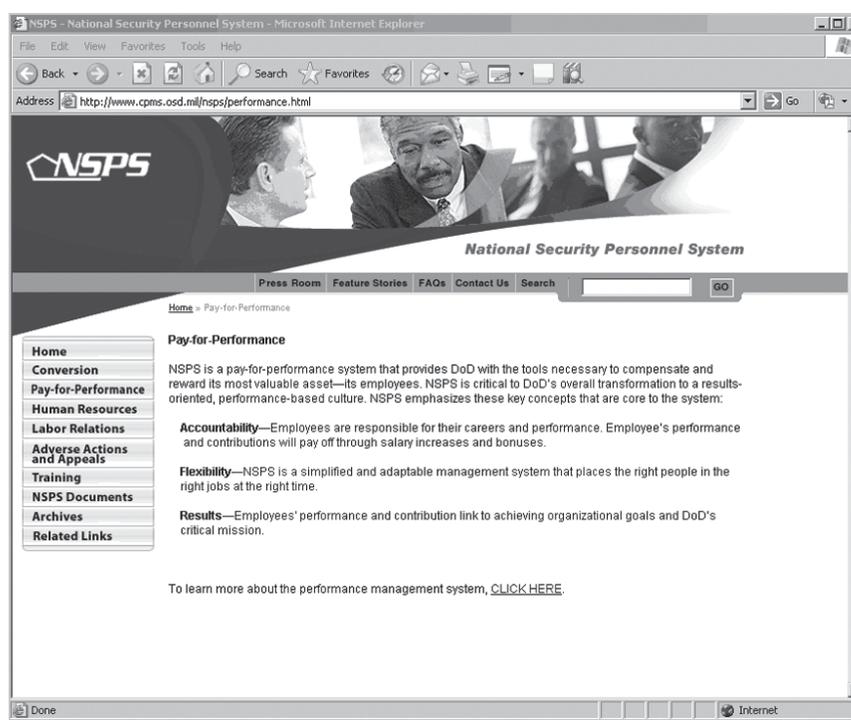
Many of these performance objectives are being developed by individual Communities of Practice. For instance, Engineering, Operations, Planning, Office of Counsel, Environmental Resources, Contracting and Regulatory, to name a few, are all working on developing representative performance objectives that will allow for performance comparison across functional lines and, where applicable, on a regional or national level.

The new performance management system will place a greater emphasis on individual employee performance, more rigorous accountability for interim employee performance reviews with supervisors and monitoring progress towards achieving performance objectives. Interim reviews and evaluations will be documented in a central, on-line automated information system which will be located in MyBiz. The new evaluation process is somewhat more complex and includes not only performance objectives, similar to TAPES, but also measures multiple contributing factors including; technical proficiency, critical thinking, cooperation/teamwork, communication, customer focus, resource

management, and leadership, which can adjust a performance rating up or down. Furthermore, each objective will be weighted, or given a certain percentage value, by the supervisor depending on the importance of a particular objective to the job's performance. The system is designed to measure an employee's performance more comprehensively and more accurately.

Due in large part to the implementation of NSPS and the expected increase in supervisory responsibilities (particularly those associated with performance management), some new supervisory positions have been created and more may be needed as responsibilities are finalized.

There is a lot of information available on-line about the new system: the DoD NSPS web site is a



good place to start. There is also the Army site which can be found at <http://www.cpol.army.mil>. Both sites are frequently updated, and at the Army site individuals can sign up for email bulletin updates.

Moreover, the Portland CPAC, NSPS transition team and supervisors who have already undergone NSPS conversion, are also available to answer any questions. These are all resources employees have available to address questions and concerns about their own eventual conversion to NSPS.

Mark Ziminske, Seattle District, contributed to this article.



In Memoriam

Lelia "Lee" Jenkins died Dec. 18, 2006, after a fall. She was 75. Jenkins graduated from Vancouver High School and worked as an administrative secretary for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for more than 20 years. She worked at Portland District headquarters with Human Resources and moved to Bonneville Lock and Dam, from which she retired as Bonneville Dam's Administrative Officer Jan. 2, 1993. She is survived by her husband, stepdaughters and stepsons, 12 grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren. Her son, Michael, died in 1972.

Melvin Harbert, 94, died Dec. 23, 2006. Harbert attended a one-room school at Stony Point, S.D., riding in a horse-drawn cart to and from school. After moving to Oregon during the Depression, Harbert began a 40-year career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1941. Early duty was in Seaside, Fort Stevens, and Astoria. In 1952 the family moved to Portland where Mel continued working for the Portland District office as an estimator. He was preceded in death by his wife of 70 years, Rubie, and by their son, David. He is survived by his daughter, sons, sister, 12 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Save the date!
***The annual retiree event is coming
to the Portland District April 17***

***Don't miss your chance to
catch up with old friends,
hear what's happening
in the District and learn
more about issues
affecting the Corps
from our keynote
speaker!***

***Watch for more
information in March!***

