



SPN SURVEYOR

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District restores popular SF beach



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COMMANDER'S CORNER

District, partners celebrate project milestones in 2021

By Lt. Col. Kevin P. Arnett
San Francisco District Commander

Last year the San Francisco District stepped up once again to deliver on a variety of critical projects despite the ongoing global pandemic. From the Bay Area to parts of Northern California, this district was laser focused on executing a Civil Works mission that topped more than \$100 million. In FY21, we managed to fiscally close 13 projects and return nearly \$300,000 to our non-federal partners in the process. That's nearly double the number of project closeouts from FY20. To that effort, I say, "well done SPN!"

As District commander, I had the tremendous honor of celebrating many of these project milestones at various public events with city and congressional leaders. This issue of SPN Surveyor captures those moments, plus tells the stories of employees who answered the call to deploy either in response to disasters or overseas military operations. We are thankful for their service and safe return to our district family.

In this ever-changing COVID-19



landscape, we continue to adjust how we do business in an effort to continue delivering projects on time and on budget without sacrificing quality or safety. This couldn't be truer than the work we accomplished in September at Ocean Beach in San Francisco. In just over a month, our team of project managers, construction

reps and contractors delivered more than 375,000 cubic yards of beneficial dredged material to an area of beach depleted by tidal action. What stands now is a 3,000-foot sand berm installed to protect critical city wastewater infrastructure using the dredge spoils from the San Francisco Main Ship Channel. I give special thanks to the USACE Portland District for making sure the seamless movement from dredge to beach was done without incident. Kudos to those who had the vision of using dredged material to engineer a solution to a problem exacerbated by climate change.

A few miles north of Ocean Beach at the San Francisco VA Medical Center, our Construction Branch is overseeing the renovation of the ground floor of Building 203B and the second floor of Building 22 on campus. Building 203B is just over 24,000 square feet, and contractors are currently installing the electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems. This \$13 million renovation project converts these two floors into swing space for personnel needing to vacate Building 8, a mental health clinic built in 1932, as that building is slated for

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SPN hosts first STEM Frenzy tour

By Tammy Reed
District Public Affairs

A tour bus from San Francisco pulled up and 26 children from 5 to 9 years old with their parents and chaperones streamed out toward the Bay Model Visitor Center in Sausalito, Calif., the morning of Nov. 20, 2021.

They were a part of a STEM Frenzy tour that focused on water and what the Bay Model, and later the Coho Salmon Brood Stock building at Lake Sonoma, could teach them about it.

One of STEM Frenzy's missions is to expose K-12 children from around San Francisco to high-quality STEM programs. SPN Chief of Operations Nick Malasavage worked with Derek Toliver, a STEM Frenzy partner, to coordinate their tour of the two District facilities.



Bay Model Park Ranger Linda Holm describes a mural depicting California's water management history to young children attending SPN's first STEM field trip Nov. 20.

"Derek told me his goals with STEM Frenzy is to get kids from urban areas out to have science and engineering experi-

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Regulatory field notes



By Brandon Beach
District Public Affairs

SPN Senior Regulatory Project Manager Dr. Sarah Firestone led a field workshop Dec. 7 on the Corps' wetland delineation process at a property in Sonoma County.

Several recently hired staff members from the SPN Regulatory Division, as well as District Commander Lt. Col. Kevin Arnett, took part in the half-day training in which they learned how to analyze plants and soils, identify hydrology indicators and map a wetland boundary at a tricky site with alkaline soils during a moderate drought.



On the cover



In FY21, SPN completed construction of the Ocean Beach Nourishment Project, a beneficial-use initiative providing protection to important San Francisco wastewater infrastructure, while also offering a wider beach for safer access. The project aimed to build a 3,000-foot sand berm using sand dredged from the SF Main Ship Channel. (Photos by Larry Quintana)

District News

Deputy commander promoted in ceremony



San Francisco District Commander Lt. Col. Kevin Arnett, right, administers the oath of office to newly promoted Lt. Col. Andrew Boggs Jan. 10.

By Brandon Beach
District Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers San Francisco District officially honored Deputy District Commander Lt. Col. Andrew Boggs on his promotion to lieutenant colonel during a ceremony Jan. 10 onboard the USACE Drift Collector John A. B. Dillard Jr.

"Andrew has a tremendous background -- P.E. [Professional Engineer], Project Management Professional, prior experience in Sacramento [District]," said Arnett. "Those are marks of someone who's really capable and really confident."

The ceremony was broadcast virtually on Facebook Live to friends, family and former colleagues. His brother, Michael, a video game designer, traveled from Raleigh, N.C., to join in person and mark the special career milestone.

Boggs is a graduate of Virginia Tech and previously served as the senior project engineer for construction at the USACE Sacramento District, where he was assigned to the Monterey Project Office.

"I was once told some pretty sage advice: The rank doesn't belong to you; it belongs to the organization," said Boggs. "To that end, I won't let you down. Thank you for the confidence you have already shown me."

Popular SF beach gets facelift

Dredge material used to combat bluff erosion



Story & photos by Brandon Beach
District Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers San Francisco District and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, along with other partner agencies, celebrated the Ocean Beach Nourishment Project with a "golden shovel" event Sept. 9 at the project site along the Great Highway.

The \$7 million project kicked off Aug. 11 with the goal of building a 3,000-foot-long, 30-foot-tall sand berm using beneficial dredge material scooped up from the ocean floor near the San Francisco Main Ship Channel. Construction took just over a month, during which time the beach was closed to the public. The project was managed by USACE at the request of the City and County of San Francisco, in partnership with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, with costs being shared by the USACE and the City.

Construction crews worked 24 hours a day, seven days a week utilizing a hopper dredge. A 24-foot pipe was connected to the dredge, and material was pumped through the pipe onto the beach. Once on the beach, the material was spread and shaped by bulldozers and other equipment

into the bluff profile. The one-time placement of nearly 380,000 cubic yards of clean sand took place along a section of beach between Sloat Avenue and Fort Funston. The last load was pumped onto the beach Sept. 18.

SPN Commander Lt. Col. Kevin Arnett was at the golden shovel event, along with Portland District Commander Col. Michael Helton and Congresswoman Jackie Speier, to provide remarks and recognize the many people involved.

"What a great opportunity we have here to beneficially use dredge material and tackle a serious shoreline problem that is only going to get worse over time" said Arnett. "I want to give special thanks to Col. Helton and his team from the Portland District for providing around-the-clock oversight of all construction activities and ensuring a safe working environment throughout. I also want to thank the collective team, from our partners at SFPUC and the National Park Service to all the project managers and environmental specialists involved, for helping us deliver this project safely, on time and on budget."

For more information on the project, including photos, timelines and construction reports, visit www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-and-Programs/Ocean-Beach-Beach-Nourishment/



DISASTER RESPONSE

District assists state-led wildfire debris mission

Story & photos by Tammy Reed
District Public Affairs Office

Deastinating wildfires in 2019 ravaged California and led to two Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster declarations that became missions for South Pacific Division's San Francisco and Los Angeles districts.

On Oct. 20, 2020, SPD received FEMA's mission assignment for Technical Monitoring of California state-led Wildfire Debris Removal operations for FEMA-4558DR. SPN was assigned lead district shortly thereafter to provide technical monitoring and mission management support comprised of teams of a group lead with a number of technical monitors. In early December, those teams spread out across 16 California counties, from Trinity in the North to Monterey County in the South, to monitor Cal OES-led debris removal activities on almost 7,000 sites so far as the mission continues.

"The Corps of Engineers supported FEMA in their effort to assist the State of California with debris removal from properties affected by the 2020 wildfires," said Holly Costa, SPN Emergency Management Branch chief.

Holly Costa, SPN Emergency Management Branch chief. "As technical monitors for FEMA, USACE observes the state-led process to help ensure maximum reimbursement for debris removal and protection of taxpayer dollars. SPN has provided 20 TMs so far."

SPN's Inland Branch Group Lead Greg Hammond, chief engineer for the Drift Collector John A. B. Dillard Jr., started as a technical monitor during his original 30-day volunteer deployment. As a TM he performed pre-surveys in three counties - Napa, Sonoma and Solano. He also monitored construction crews actively working sites, reporting his observations via an ArcGIS app that provided real-time mapping of data collected for FEMA to view.

After 30 days, Hammond extended his deployment and took over the group lead position for his team when the lead finished their tasker.

"As a group lead, I trained TMs on safety, equipment use, and using the App," Hammond said. "I also did timesheet approvals to forward to their respective time-keeper."

Other activities included coordinating the site addresses from the daily runway



Costa



Pamela Bowie, a seasonal park ranger from Abiquiu Lake, New Mexico, monitors state contractors Jan. 13, 2021, as they remove wildfire debris from a home destroyed by the Hennessey Fire, which swept through Berryessa Highlands in rural Napa County in September 2020.

As technical monitors for FEMA, USACE observes the state-led process to help ensure maximum reimbursement for debris removal and protection of taxpayer dollars.

Holly Costa
SPN Emergency Management Chief

provided by Cal OES from the previous night and sending them to the TMs in the morning.

"With the new information, I updated the site spreadsheet, visited sites and TMs in the field, provided safety reminders and any additional or new training and reported daily activities up the chain of command and back down," he added.

As the numbers increased daily, with

each site in one of three stages of completion, the total sites targeted for debris removal changed as well, pending right of entry permissions received from the homeowner.

"My experience with homeowners was great, they were glad to see the Corps on site. They shared their stories and thanked us for helping," Hammond said. "This made me feel good knowing that I gave back to the community as well as the environment, ensuring that the correct procedures were followed and that all harmful by-products of the fire were removed."

Costa said that in addition to monitoring State debris removal Operations, "USACE was also assigned by FEMA to observe the assessment and removal process of fire-damaged trees that were eligible for the State removal program."

Hammond had supported the FEMA mission for almost 4 months, when, as the Group Lead for a team of TMs in the Solano County area he participated in a "train-the-trainer" program for the mission with those fire-damaged trees.

He became one of SPN's first team

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Wildfire debris continued

members to work the confirmations. At one of the earlier sites along Steele Canyon Road in Napa County, Hammond photographed a fire-damaged tree that a state-contracted arborist stated would die within five years and posed a hazard to the public right of way. He confirmed the arborist's measurements and geotagged the tree, posting the information to the Corps' database via the App. This information, along with data collected on Private Property Debris Removal, helped provide fidelity for FEMA and the State on tree and debris removal operations, adding a critical layer of protection and oversight for taxpayer funded debris removal operations.

While Hammond and other SPN district teams worked disaster declaration 4558, the Los Angeles District concurrently worked disaster 4569, for fires that started later in the year.

Costa pointed out that there was plenty of work for the 100 volunteers who deployed to both disaster areas.

"I advised supervisors that if that time wasn't a good time for your employee to volunteer to deploy, this mission was going to continue for some time and they could volunteer later," she said.



SPN's Inland Branch Group Lead Greg Hammond, chief of engineers for the Drift Collector John A. B. Dillard Jr., confirms an arborist's measurements and geotags a fire-damaged tree March 21 posting the information to the Corps' database via an ArcGIS app that provided real-time mapping of data collected for FEMA to view.

If you are interested in a chance to deploy, the SPN Wildfire Technical Monitor Mission stills need Corps volunteers for 30+ days at a time. Please coordinate approval

through your supervisor, then contact the San Francisco District Emergency Operations Center at the following: 415-289-3080 or CESPN-EOC@usace.army.mil.

Column continued

seismic retrofitting in 2022. I'm proud of the work this district is doing to improve the medical services for our veterans.

In December, we kicked-off construction of the South San Francisco Phase I Shoreline Project. This is a multi-agency project between SPN, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Valley Water and the State Coastal Conservancy with the goal of constructing four miles of levees to reduce the risk of tidal flooding to the north San Jose area. The project will also restore and enhance 2,900 acres of tidal marsh and related habitat lost due to salt production activities. With the site finally dried out, crews have begun to clear and grub the project area and install barriers. Like our non-federal partners, I am thrilled

to see shovels in the ground.

I would be remiss not to mention that this staggering amount of work was made possible by our small business community. In FY21, our contracting officers and onsite construction reps executed 237 total actions for \$209 million with 131 actions awarded to small businesses for \$178 million. This support to small businesses did not go unnoticed as our Contracting Team took home five first place awards at the 2021 SAME Small Business Conference, including the \$100M Club (over \$100 million in SB dollars obligated).

I joined this team six months ago, and I am so proud to work alongside a tremendous team of professionals. Thank you for your service this past year and let's get after it again in 2022. Essayons! Engineers at the Golden Gate!

STEM continued

ences," he said. "Specifically he had worked with teenagers who had never been outside of San Francisco."

"Quite frankly I think our facilities, like a lot of public works projects, provide an opportunity for many people to experience science and engineering in action."

Malasavage said he thought it would be a long day for the children to go from Sausalito to Lake Sonoma, but added to Derek's credit that's the point. "You have the diversity of experience - to go way up, see something different at the cost of being tired at the end of the day."

Someone who didn't look tired at the moment was young Amede Thierry. Throughout the tour of both buildings he had question after question. He even used his finger to play the Golden Gate Bridge in one of the Bay Model displays as Park Ranger Linda Holm talked about watersheds and rivers and how fresh water met salt water.

"My favorite part was learning different things and seeing the models and other displays at the Bay Model. And I liked seeing the dam and learning about it, too," he said.

Delia Fitzpatrick, STEM Frenzy founder, said she even learned things. "I visited Mt. Shasta earlier this year, and today I learned how it's so pivotal to the ecosystem and water. That's concrete to me."



YEAR IN PHOTOS

A brief look back at SPN events, milestones in 2021

JANUARY

From Jan. 26-27, a severe winter storm brings high winds and rain showers to the San Francisco Bay Area. Approximately 13 derelict vessels were recovered and tagged for removal at the district's Sausalito Base Yard.



MARCH

San Francisco District fish biologists release 10,000 juvenile salmon into Mark West Creek running through a Santa Rosa subdivision March 5. The release was part of the Russian River Coho Salmon Broodstock Program at Lake Sonoma.



APRIL

D/C Dillard crewmembers work with a San Francisco-based U.S. Coast Guard unit on air and surface boarding training April 12. The training involved lowering crew members and bomb-detecting dogs onto the Dillard from a USCG helicopter.



MAY

SPN Commander Lt. Col. John Cunningham travels to Watsonville, Calif., to sign a design agreement for the Pajaro River Flood Management Project May 24. The \$7.1 million agreement covers USACE and the project partners cost share for pre-construction engineering and design for the initial phase of the project.



JULY

Leadership of the San Francisco District changes hands July 15 when Lt. Col. Kevin Arnett is sworn in as the district's 57th commander. At a military ceremony at the Bay Model Visitor Center in Sausalito, Calif., Lt. Col. John Cunningham relinquished command of the district he had led since 2019. South Pacific Division Commander Col. Antoinette Gant presided over the outdoor ceremony.

○



AUGUST

SPN awards a major contract for the South San Francisco Shoreline Phase 1 Project for \$129,801,500. The contract for Reaches 1-3 consists of constructing approximately 1.6 miles of flood risk management levees in the north San Jose area and roughly 600,000 cubic yards of fill.

○



SEPTEMBER

USACE San Francisco and Portland districts, along with local leaders from the City and County of San Francisco, celebrate the Ocean Beach Nourishment Project at a public ceremony Sept. 9. The beneficial-use project aims to provide protection to important city wastewater infrastructure by constructing 3,000-foot sand berm extending seaward from the Great Highway.

○



DECEMBER

SPN employees ring in the new year at the Bay Model Visitor Center during the district's annual Holiday Luncheon Dec. 9.