

2008 Mid-Year Report

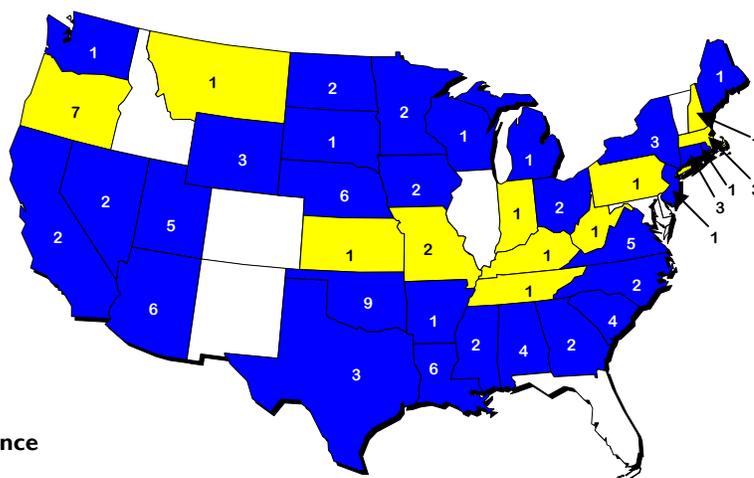
Issue 2

March 2008

From the Director



These have been busy times for the NDCSMC, as well as for many states. One quick glimpse at this map will show how much work is going on in the states, and how much is yet to be done! It makes for exciting times ahead, as the NDCSMC strives to complete your requests for assistance.



FY-08 NDCSMC Assistance

- Requests completed and/or scheduled.
- Requests in progress or scheduled.

We're on the web!!

www.ndcsmc.nrcs.usda.gov



Earth Day

April 22, 2008

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Looking for an ASTM standard? We can help!!

American Society of Testing Materials International (ASTM) standards are widely referenced nationwide in NRCS design, construction, and soil mechanics work. Three members of the NDCSMC staff actively participate in the development and maintenance of these standards. Wade Anderson, Tom Brown, and Dennis Clute serve on one or more ASTM Committees including: D18 – Soil and Rock, D35 – Geosynthetics, and C09 – Concrete and Concrete Aggregates.



The development and maintenance of ASTM standards requires significant time and effort from these employees, but the NRCS is rewarded by cutting edge technology transfer, networking, and the ability to ensure that ASTM standards meet specific NRCS needs. Anderson is chair of subcommittee D18.17 – Rock for

Erosion Control and Vice-chair of subcommittee D18.25.04 – Concrete Block Revetments. Clute is the chair of subcommittee C09.45 - Roller Compacted Concrete.

NDCSMC has an ASTM Enterprise account which gives NRCS the ability to download a limited number of standards. Transmitting electronic copies of a standard is prohibited, but NRCS employees may contact Earth Team Volunteer Mario Milani (mar2gin@comcast.net) to request a standard. Please provide Mario with a mailing address, other than a post office box, and he will overnight the standard so that delivery is generally made the next business day after receiving the request. NRCS employees may also request standards from Dennis Clute (dennis.clute@ftw.usda.gov), NDCSMC Construction Engineer. Please provide a fax number to which the standard may be sent.



NRCS Provides Customized Web-Based Training Support for its CAD Users



NRCS recently purchased a new generation of computer-aided drafting and design (CAD) software called Auto-CAD® Civil 3D® 2008. This new generation of design software is quite different in functionality compared to previous versions of design software that NRCS has used. To assist NRCS users with the transition to this software, a team of NRCS employees developed a plan to provide Civil 3D training and on-line support tools specifically for NRCS CAD users. NRCS contracted for the development of classroom training, web-based training, and on-line CAD support tools. This training will be customized for NRCS applications using NRCS custom templates.

Sixteen NRCS employees representing each Region, along with employees from Multi-State Design Teams and Centers participated in a classroom training session held in Fort Worth, February 11-15, 2008. These individuals will form a cadre of leaders who will provide tech-

nical support within their Region, Design Team, and Center.

Additional training will be available for NRCS CAD users in the form of an on-line seminar/virtual classroom. There will be on-line CAD support available for all users and telephone support available for designated State CAD contacts. There will also be a discussion forum developed specifically for NRCS CAD users to facilitate communication and peer-to-peer support. A custom website (www.nrcknowledge.com) has been developed to house all of these on-line training and support tools and will be available to NRCS CAD users in April 2008.

Your national point of contact is Kathy Miller at NDCSMC in Fort Worth. You can reach Kathy at kathy.j.miller@ftw.usda.gov or (817) 509-3767.

Farewell to Wade Anderson and Jane Kahanek

Design Engineer Wade Anderson has accepted a position with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District. Wade and his family are looking forward to being close to family again. "My experiences at the NDCSMC have been challenging, professionally and personally rewarding, but most of all greatly enjoyable." Wade has been with the NDCSMC staff since its inception seven years ago. He added, "As I move on from the NDCSMC to the Tulsa District, Corps of Engineers, I wish to thank all of the engineers, geologists, landscape architects, technicians, and others I have had the privilege of working with over the past 7+ years. I wish all of you well and hope our paths may cross again. SO LONG!" Good Luck, Wade!

Another valuable staff member, Jane Kahanek, has taken a secretarial position with the National Centers Servicing Unit, also at the Fort Worth Federal Center. Jane is working for Karen Garner, the Center's new Administrative Officer. In Jane's new position, she will have the opportunity to provide assistance to all the Centers, not just the NDCSMC. We miss you, Jane, and are relieved you are just a few steps away.



Farewell



Welcome to Karl Visser, P.E., Hydraulic Engineer

Karl joined the NDCSMC staff in October 2007. After graduating from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas, he served as NRCS Area Engineer in four Kansas locations from 1982-1990.

Karl moved to Champaign, Illinois, and served as Illinois NRCS State Hydraulic Engineer from 1990-2006. While in Illinois he planned watershed projects and taught courses on NRCS hydrology and hydraulic software. In 2006, Karl left NRCS and began modeling stormwater for municipal clients with the Champaign engineering firm of Clark Dietz Engineers.

Now back with NRCS, Karl looks forward to planning and designing varied projects around the United States. His most interesting projects in the first six months with NDCSMC have ranged from hydrologic modeling of a reservoir in the Wyoming Big Horn Mountains at elevations above 8,000 ft MSL to assisting with the design of a Rhode Island tidal wetland at sea level.

Welcome to the NDCSMC, Karl!

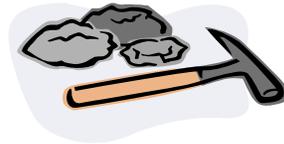


Jon Fripp, NDCSMC, (right) demonstrates the components of an irrigation device to assist with reforestation efforts in Afghanistan.

AEG Celebrates 50th Anniversary

The Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists held its 50th Anniversary Annual meeting in Los Angeles in September 2007. With over 700 geologists in attendance, Marie Garsjo from the NDCSMC and other NRCS geologists met and networked with geologists from around the world.

A series of courses and field trips were offered. A one-day course entitled "Estimation of Soil Properties for Foundation Design" focused on field investigation methods. Field trips included Santa Catalina Island, a tectoni-



cally complex and controversial area. Another destination was St. Francis Dam, which failed in 1928 and killed approximately 432 people. This tragic event gave birth to professional registration for engineers, and inception of state agencies that assess dam and reservoir safety. The final field trip was to La Conchita. This coastal city experienced a landslide in 1995. The

area is within a much larger slide complex that had lain dormant and had not been identified. Luckily, no one was hurt but many houses were destroyed. Ten years later, another landslide occurred in this same area. This time ten people were victims of this catastrophic event.

The field trips vividly demonstrated that "civilization exists by geologic consent." The 2008 meeting will be held September 15-20 in New Orleans. This is a professional development opportunity that all NRCS geologists should consider attending.

Global Efforts in Reforestation

Jon Fripp, NDCSMC Stream Mechanics Engineer, recently returned from Afghanistan where he assisted with conducting a "Forestry Partners Workshop" on behalf of USAID, Afghanistan's Alternative Development and Agriculture Office (ADAG), in Kabul. This effort supported the Participating Agency Service Agreement, "Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management."

Workshop participants were from a

variety of NGOs, USG employees, as well as many representatives from several Afghan governmental institutions.

The purpose of the workshop was to share information on forestry, discuss the status of forests and woodlands in Afghanistan, and to develop a public-private framework for reforestation in the country.

The workshop program consisted of

technical presentations and break-out work group discussions. The work groups addressed many complex issues related to reforestation in Afghanistan which were later presented to the entire group.

Overall, the workshop was very well received by the participants with several providing public and private personnel testimonials expressing their appreciation for the opportunities afforded by the workshop.

Designing with Nature: The Art of Balance



NDCSMC Landscape Architects, Gary Wells and Rosanna Brown, attended the

American Society of Landscape Architects' Annual Meeting held in San Francisco, CA, October 2007. The theme for the conference was "Designing with Nature: The Art of Balance."

Achieving sustainability in the built environment remains a challenge. Educational sessions included a broad

range of topics - digital technology, mitigation, disaster preparedness, green roofs – and how these and many other concepts contribute to sustainable design. Most notably, today's critical urban issues include water management, public transportation, smart growth, parks, and preserving open space.

One of the General Session speakers was Dr. Charles Thornton, a professional engineer and founder of the Architecture, Construction and Engineering (ACE) Mentor Program of America. He projected that over the next twenty years there will be a

great demand for engineers, architects and landscape architects, but graduates of these programs will not keep up with the demand. Dr. Thornton started the ACE mentoring program to enlighten and increase the awareness of high school students, especially minorities, to career opportunities in the design and construction industry. The program relies on professionals in these fields to become mentors. Since its inception in 1995, ACE has worked with over 30,000 students and is in over 80 cities nationwide.



National Design, Construction
and Soil Mechanics Center

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VISION: Excellence in application of conservation engineering technology.

MISSION: To provide interdisciplinary technical support for design, construction, operation, and rehabilitation of complex engineering projects essential to resource conservation, environmental enhancement, and agricultural productivity.

PRODUCTS: Products are service based and include engineering technology development, technology transfer (e.g., workshops and formal training), independent reviews, and site specific soil mechanics testing and/or production design work in support of Field and State Office operations. Products also include expert consultation to NRCS Headquarters, Centers, State Offices, Field Offices, and Design Teams.

National Design, Construction, and Soil Mechanics Center - Design & Construction Staff

Director: Johnny Green, PE
Secretary: Vacant

Construction Engineer

Dennis Clute, PE

Design Engineers

Tom Brown, PE

Mike Garsjo, PE

Morris Lobrecht, PE

Ken Worster, PE

Geotechnical Engineers

Ben Doerge, PE, GE

Danny McCook, PE

Hydraulic Engineer

Karl Visser, PE

Stream Mechanics Engineer

Jon Fripp, PE

Structural Engineers

Lawrence F. Fragomeli, PE, SE

William Wallace, PE

Geologists

Marie M. Garsjo, PG

Craig Savela, PG

Landscape Architects

Rosanna Brown, RLA

Gary Wells, RLA

Civil Engineering Technicians

Kathy Miller

Juan Renteria

Gregg Tompkins

Upcoming Workshops

NDSCMC is scheduled to provide assistance at the following workshops. More information and updates on the workshops can be obtained from the States in which the workshops are scheduled.

- April 28-May 2: Stream Soil Bioengineering, La Grande, OR
- May 7: Construction Safety Workshop, Salt Lake City, UT
- June 24-27: HEC-RAS Workshop, Spokane, WA
- October 6-10: Streambank Soil Bioengineering, Elko, NV



NATIONAL
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE
MONTH

*April 2008 is
National Landscape
Architecture Month*

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