



CONSTELLATION

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Soil sampling to expand in Spring Valley

by Doug Garman

At a community meeting last month, the Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency and the D.C. Department of Health unveiled a comprehensive soil sampling proposal that calls for the testing of every property within the Spring Valley formerly used defense site area. This proposal involves collecting samples from approximately 1,200 properties and testing the soil for levels of arsenic.

"During a community

meeting in February, we received a number of questions and concerns from residents about the Corps' current sampling efforts in the neighborhood," said Maj. Brian Plaisted, Spring Valley project manager. "Following the meeting, we discussed with EPA and D.C. Health officials possible ways to expand the Corps' ongoing soil sampling to address these concerns."

Before this sampling effort can begin, the proposal will be presented to the Spring Valley Scientific Advisory Panel—a recently

appointed group of health experts established by D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams—to review all scientific data related to the Spring Valley site. After receiving the panel's input and feedback from the community during a public comment period that extends to April 16, a final sampling plan will be written.

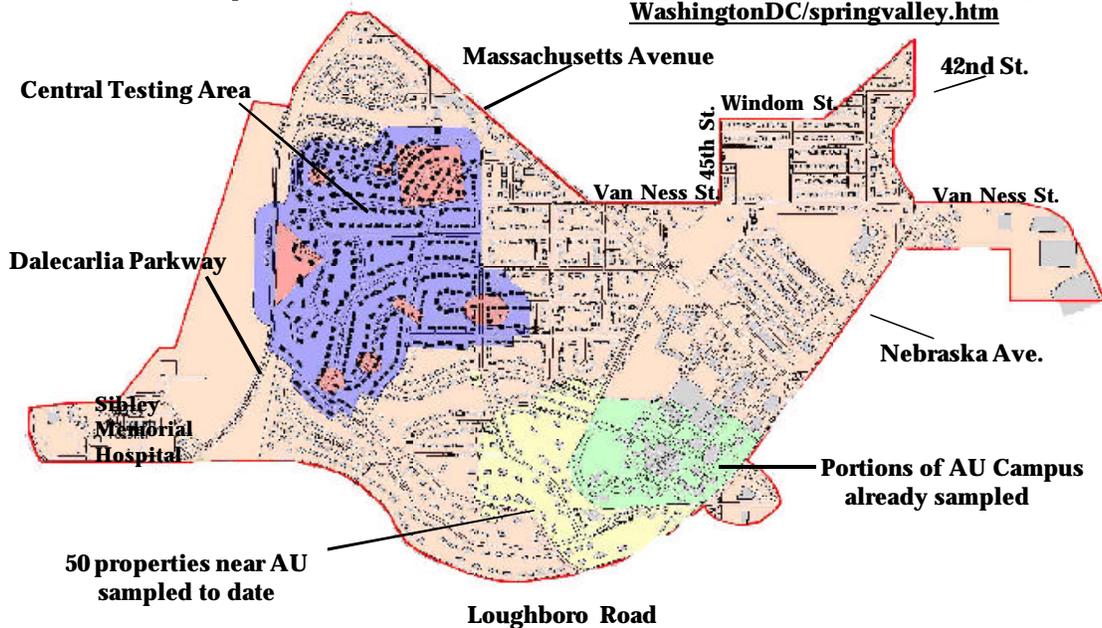
"Soil sampling will begin in those areas where World War I field-testing is believed to have occurred according to aerial and ground photo-

(Continued on p. 4 & 5)

Spring Valley Project Comprehensive Sampling Area

Shaded area to be sampled

A larger version of this map is
available on the Spring Valley web site,
[http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/
WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm](http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm)





U.S. Army Corps
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Baltimore District

[http://
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Commander's Comment

Army Transformation

by Col. Charles J. Fiala, Jr.
Commander & District Engineer

Whether you subscribe to the "Be All You Can Be" or the "Army of One" school of thought, a fact that everyone can agree on is that the Army is about soldiers. It's not about aircraft or ships or equipment. It's about boots on the ground. It's about fighting and winning our nation's wars.

The Corps of Engineers is part of the Army. At the same time, the Army is our first customer. It is important for us, therefore, to recognize and react to the changes that our customer will undergo over the next decade or so. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki is enacting sweeping changes. He calls them "Army Transformation."

The pressure driving the need for Transformation is that the world has altered and the Army must adapt. The Army's heavy divisions are too heavy, Gen. Shinseki said, and the light ones are not sustainable in war. The current Army, or *legacy force*, as he calls it, was designed for the Cold War in Europe.

As the Army moves toward a lighter, quicker, more responsive armed force, deployable around the world in a matter of days, sustainable and dominant—the *objective force*—the *interim force* must remain viable. It must remain strong and capable of winning.

"Army Transformation represents the strategic transition we will have to undergo to shed our Cold War designs in order to prepare ourselves now for the crises and wars of the 21st century," the general said.

He defines the objective force as a combat capable brigade anywhere in the world in 96 hours; a division on the ground in 120 hours; five divisions on the ground in theater in 30 days.

To paraphrase, it won't be your father's Army.

How does this affect the Corps of Engineers in general and the Baltimore District in particular? We don't yet know the full answer to that question.

We know, at minimum, that Transformation will bring equipment changes, and that will drive personnel conversions and career variations. Advances in technology are inevitable.

In turn, those changes will demand new training requirements. Facilities will have to be developed to accommodate all.

Although certain brigades are already undergoing Transformation, and Corps of Engineers headquarters began a study in February to look at contingency facilities in the future battlespace, it is too soon to know specifically how the Corps will be asked to support the interim and objective forces.

Perhaps, at this time, it's not important to understand exactly how Transformation will affect the work that the Corps of Engineers does for the Army. For now, we simply need to understand that our major customer is undergoing a long-term process that will ultimately alter it dramatically.

Transformation will change what the Army needs from its engineers. As the nation's premier engineering agency, we will step up and respond. As we do, let's keep in mind that the Army is not about equipment or facilities or technology. It's about soldiers, and the Corps of Engineers is about meeting the needs of soldiers.

Essayons.

Utility privatization: Legal protest by BGE defeated

by Mary Beth Thompson

A federal judge ruled in favor of the Baltimore District March 12 in a lawsuit that sets national precedent. In the case brought by Baltimore Gas and Electric Co. concerning privatization of utilities at Fort Meade, Md., the court held that the state cannot exercise veto power over the selection of federal contractors.

The ruling by Judge Andre Davis, U.S. District Court of Maryland, allows the Department of Defense to select a contractor other than the one that has franchise rights or approvals from

the state government.

Davis further ruled that Fort Meade is a federal enclave as defined in the U.S. Constitution and that Maryland has no authority to regulate contractors working on a federal enclave. The court also held that Congress had expressly overruled state regulations when it passed the law that directs the Defense Department to seek competition for the privatization of utilities.

"There is similar litigation in other parts of the country," said Doug Kornreich, the assistant district counsel who handled the case. He explained that every U.S. installation must privatize

its utilities by October 2003. "Judge Davis' ruling sets the precedent that competition is required."

Baltimore District had issued a solicitation in March 2000 to privatize the utility distribution infrastructure at five Military District of Washington installations. At Fort Meade, the solicitation offered the natural gas and electric systems.

BGE filed a protest with the General Accounting Office in April 2000, arguing that the Fort Meade privatization winner should be required to submit to regulation by the State of Maryland. When the GAO ruled in favor of the Baltimore

District in August 2000, BGE sued in the District Court of Maryland.

"We've received the proposals, and we're evaluating them now," Kornreich said. "Dispensing with the litigation will put us closer to an award."

After the decision is made, the recommendation goes to the Department of the Army for analysis. Congress will have an opportunity to intervene.

BGE will continue to provide electricity and gas to Fort Meade. The purchase of commodities is unaffected by the privatization of the distribution systems.

Pacing through life, courtesy smooths the way

by Mary Beth Thompson

To observe Ruby L. Courtney striding down a hallway is to witness what having a bounce in your step really means. Courtney walks like it's the best activity there is. Her movements display something close to purposeful joy.

"People say there's a breeze when I walk by," said Courtney, a legal clerk in the Office of Counsel. She was selected as the District's Courteous Employee for April.

She's earned a reputation for brisk support to other

people, too. Terri A. Davis, deputy district counsel, who nominated her for the honor, said that when the office is short-staffed, Courtney willingly covers the work of others.

"No matter how tight the deadline, Ruby, with a smile and cooperative spirit, always gets the job done," Davis said.

Courtesy makes the busy days better, according to Courtney.

"Always put yourself on the receiving end and think how you want to be treated," she said.

"Treat the other person that way, and you'll always come out on top."



Photo by Tex Jobe
Ruby L. Courtney

Courtney explained that deaths and other unpleasant events that have occurred in her family have taught her to keep everything in perspective. If someone's rude to her, she keeps in mind that that behavior, relatively speaking, is a small thing.

Courtney's family plays a central role in her life. She spends two afternoons a week at the Police Athletic League after-school program that her 12-year-old son attends. She has two older sons, also, and two grandchildren, both boys.

"No girls anywhere," Courtney said, describing her family.

Her philosophy of life is to live it to the fullest.

"I've done a lot of things," she said with a big smile, "but there are more I'd like to do."

Maybe that explains the way she walks.

Spring Valley soil sampling expands

Continued from page 1

graphs, testing reports and other historical documents and then proceed to other areas of the neighborhood,” said Plaisted.

Sampling proposal

The mechanics of this proposal are that every property or lot within the project site will have two six-part composite samples taken for the surface soil. The depth of these samples will be from 0 to 6 inches. Each lot will be divided in half, and soil will be taken from six randomly selected spots in each half. These places can be adjusted based on input from the property owners. The soil taken from each half will be composited, and those two samples will be analyzed for arsenic.

In addition, 15 percent of the properties or lots will be randomly selected for subsurface sampling. This sampling will consist of one boring to a depth of 6-10 feet, depending on the cut or fill in the area, with samples taken every foot and analyzed for arsenic.

Central testing area

For those areas where past research may have occurred, additional soil sampling is proposed. These areas have been summarized into one large area and referred to in this sampling proposal as the Central Testing Area.

Every property or lot in this area will have two additional six-part composite surface samples taken, for a total of four. Also, every property or lot will have subsurface samples taken and analyzed for arsenic.

Other chemicals

The Army, EPA and D.C. Health are reviewing historical documentation, aerial and ground photographs of the neighborhood and the list of chemicals used by the Army at the Spring Valley site during World War I to determine if any other potential contaminants need to be sampled.

Following this review, if sampling is recommended, it would focus on those locations identified in the historical documentation and involve a select group of chemicals likely to have been used at this former chemical warfare materials research and testing station. This sampling would be conducted in conjunction with the arsenic sampling.

“Allowing time for access agreements and other administrative matters, soil sampling could begin in mid-May and take approximately eight months to complete,” said Plaisted.

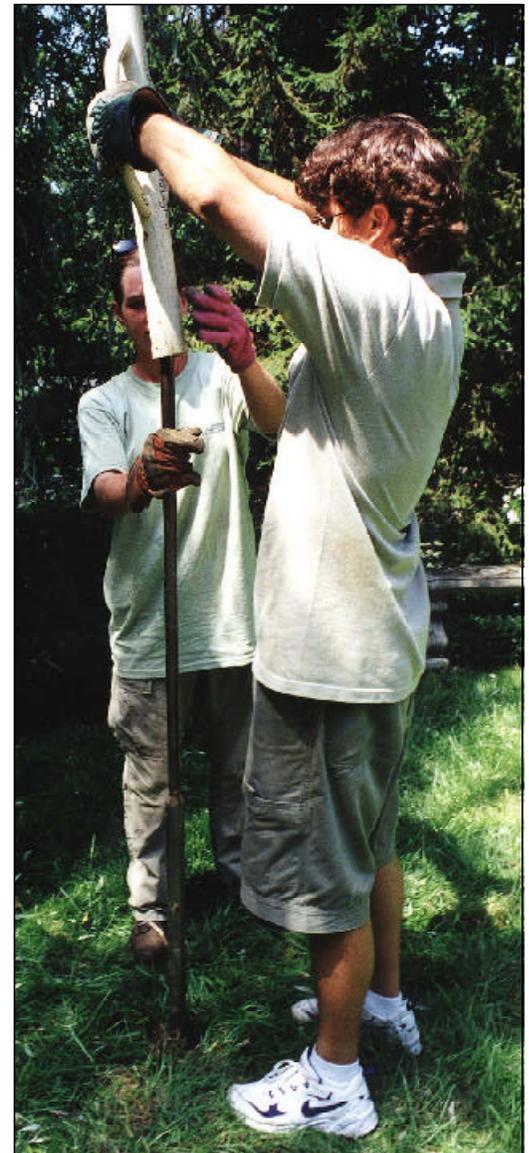
“Several teams of experts will move from area to area collecting samples. There will be some flexibility in scheduling to adjust for special circumstances.”

Corps officials point out that at those properties or lots that have any composite sample result above 13 parts per million, additional samples will be taken over the entire property. If subsurface arsenic results are elevated, additional subsurface samples will also be taken in that area. The same



In a Spring Valley yard, workers break up soil as they prepare to collect samples during earlier testing.

Photos courtesy of Parsons Engineering



Workers collect soil samples at Spring Valley during last year's sampling.



A worker removes soil from a handheld auger as part of sampling efforts during 2000.

is true for other contaminants. If elevated levels are found, more samples would be taken.

For the past two years, the Corps' investigation has been primarily focused on two properties on Glenbrook Road and an adjacent portion of the American University campus. At the

Glenbrook Road site two burial pits were excavated and several World War I ordnance-related items and other debris were removed last year.

Past sampling

During this work, soil samples were gathered from these areas. Test results indicated elevated levels of arsenic in the surface soil on the two properties. Following a risk assessment, a removal action was recommended. The top two feet of soil has been removed from the properties and replaced with new soil.

Because arsenic was found at the Glenbrook site, Corps officials recommended that adjacent properties and portions of American University also be sampled. This work was completed earlier this year. The results of this sampling indicate that elevated levels of arsenic were also present at several select areas on the campus, including the area around the campus child development center.

University officials moved the center to another location on campus until this issue is resolved. The Corps and University officials have begun coordinating an appropriate cleanup action. As a precautionary measure, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, at the request of D.C. Health, conducted an exposure study on the children who attend the center. The results of this study concluded that arsenic levels of all of the participants were within the normal range.

Project background

Between 1917 and 1919, the War Department used portions of this site to conduct small-scale testing and research of World War I chemical warfare materials. Although arsenic itself is not a chemical warfare material, records indicate that arsenic was experimented with at this former defense site, which was named the American University Experiment Station.

Community inclusion: Working toward a better future at Spring Valley

by Ted Henry

The combination of unique, historical military activities, eight subsequent decades of urban sprawl, and all the sources of contamination that come with it, makes it a challenge to conduct a site characterization and cleanup of Spring Valley, according to Maj. Brian Plaisted, Spring Valley project manager. Yet, one thing is certain in this process—community input is a critical component.

From the emergency removal of munitions in 1993, through the subsequent geophysical assessments of hundreds of properties, to the excavation of

munitions in two burial pits at the Korean ambassador's residence completed last year, the Baltimore District's outreach to the community came in many forms. There have been, and still are, community meetings, numerous editions of *The Heirs' Response* and *The Corps'pondent*, the Spring Valley project newsletters from 1993 and the present, weekly updates on the District's website, and calls to a cross section of residents to identify concerns and further project understanding.

To meet the significantly increased interest and concern, the District is adding to the available avenues for community participation in the project. Steps

taken to ensure no community concerns are lost include identifying and implementing an enhanced method to track incoming concerns and requests, and starting the process for establishing a Restoration Advisory Board.

The Baltimore District team understands the important role the residents will have in the months ahead as the Corps and its partners work together to address community concerns.

"The final product from a cleanup effort must be scientific, logical and inclusive of all stakeholders, if the end result is to be the best it can be," said Plaisted.

Federal-state team plans to restore Blackwater marsh

The Baltimore District is leading a team of scientists in studying ways to restore up to 5,000 acres of marshlands in the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Dorchester County, Md. Officials from the Corps, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service met Feb. 28 to begin the study.

Blackwater has lost about 7,000 acres of marshland out of its more than 17,000 acres of wetlands, woodlands and croplands over the last several decades.

"That ranks as one of the most significant examples of wetland loss in the Chesapeake Bay watershed," said Steven Kopecky, a Corps geographer who is managing the project.

The team will seek solutions to

problems in the refuge that have led to wetland losses averaging over 100 acres a year. Those problems include saltwater intrusion, altered marsh hydrology, sea-level rise and damage from invasive nutria, a rodent.

"We plan to start with small demonstration-type projects and evaluate how effective they are," Kopecky said. "If successful, we will attempt restoration on a larger scale. Ultimately, there is the opportunity to restore up to 7,000 acres of marshland habitats, making Blackwater potentially one of the largest marsh restoration projects on the East Coast."

Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Blackwater is important to the Eastern Shore and plays a key part in the overall ecology of the bay. The

refuge provides critical habitat for a number of bird and animal species, and spawning habitat for aquatic life.

"This project represents a critical initiative in preserving and managing the fragile wetlands of the Chesapeake Bay," Kopecky said.

The team will work closely with the academic community the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, Ducks Unlimited and other government agencies and non-profit organizations.

The feasibility study, which is expected to take two years, will follow three parallel tracks: a quick hydrological fix, a long-term hydraulic study and a marsh restoration demonstration project.

Phone system change requires longer dialing for a short time

District employees who work in the City Crescent Building may have to temporarily dial 10-digit phone numbers in order to reach other employees in the building during the upcoming transition to a new phone system. The General Services Administration will begin a conversion of the telephone system used by Corps offices in Baltimore April 27.

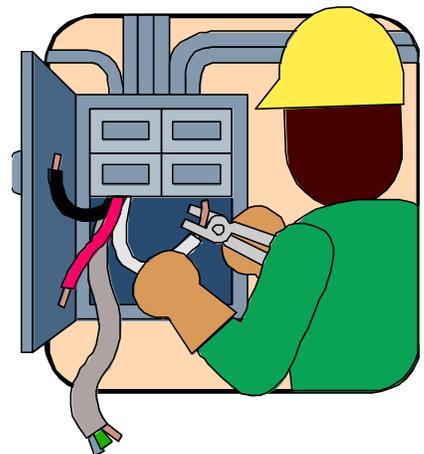
"If you dial the usual 5 digits and it doesn't go through, you'll need to hang up and re-dial using all 10 numbers," said Rudolf Walter, chief of Information Management. "When people in the old system try to reach people in the new system, or vice versa, they'll have to dial

the full number.

"When all phones have been converted, that won't be necessary," Walter said.

Other than the interim dialing effect, use of the new system should be transparent to employees with one change. With the current system, CCB employees dial "9" to make some outside calls and "8" for others. Under the new system, they will dial "9" for all outside calls.

The changeover will be accomplished in phases during evening hours. The first group, to be converted April 27, includes Information Management, Resource Management and Programs and Project



Management. Real Estate and Planning will follow on May 2 and 3. Operations and Contracting will convert on May 9 and 11. Engineering is scheduled for May 16 and 18. All the remaining offices will follow on May 23 and 25.

Defense automates, connects personnel systems

A new, automated personnel system was deployed in Baltimore District in March. The modern Defense Civilian Personnel Data System, a defense-wide initiative known as the "modern system," will eventually link all military branches under the same personnel system.

"The change shouldn't be visible to the average employee," said Wayne Richardson, chief of the Human Resources Office. "It primarily affects administrative points of contact who input personnel data."

The new system automates

personnel actions and interfaces them with the payroll system, he said.

The District's human resources staff and administrative personnel from divisions and offices received training during the week of March 12.

The modern system uses new technology to simplify processing personnel actions, accessing civilian work force information and standardizing the way personnel services are managed, according to officials at the Civilian Personnel Operations Center Management Agency at Aberdeen

Proving Ground, Md. It uses drop-down menus, point-and-click maneuvering and cut-copy-paste capability to ease the automated tasks.

Defense officials said the database is designed to support about 800,000 employees. It allows managers, supervisors, resource managers and human resources personnel direct access to up-to-date information, so that data will flow quickly and efficiently.

The Defense Department tested the system at three sites starting in 1999. It plans to standardize personnel services throughout the world using the modern system.

Corps releases Smith Island study

The Baltimore District released for public review a feasibility report on projects that could help restore and create submerged aquatic vegetation and salt marsh habitat at Smith Island March 15.

The report contains conclusions and recommendations from a 2 ½-year study called the Smith Island, Md., Environmental Restoration and Protection Study. The 30-day public review and comment period extends through April 15.

The study examines numerous Smith Island water resources problems with erosion as a common factor. The report recommends restoration of Back Cove and Fog Point Cove using stone breakwaters and backfill. It also proposes using breakwaters and backfill to protect the western shoreline of the Martin Wildlife Refuge from the northern jetty near Ewell to Fog Point. All three projects will protect or

create marsh habitat that will promote SAV growth.

Smith Island is the last continuously inhabited remote island in the Maryland waters of the Chesapeake Bay. It is home to a unique culture of watermen, descendants of the original inhabitants who settled there 350 years ago.

The swiftly eroding shorelines of the island endanger the populated areas, cause shoaling in the navigation channels, decrease protection from wave energy and degrade SAV beds. The island is located 12 miles west of Crisfield, Md., and 95 miles south of Baltimore.

The study originally included erosion protection at Tylerton and navigation at Rhodes Point. During the course of the study, these two elements were removed and are being carried forward separately.

News you can use

Volunteers wanted for Habitat for Humanity

Real Estate Division is heading a District effort to recruit about 60 people for two Habitat for Humanity projects June 2-3 in Baltimore. Employees and family members are welcome. Skills are not required. Tools will be provided. To volunteer or ask for information, contact Carol Shutt, 410-854-7038.

Where did they go?

The Resource Management Office will rearrange its offices during April and May. The advent of CEFMS and the consolidation of services at Millington, Tenn., over the past couple years have resulted in excess space in RMO on the 6th floor of the CCB. Remaining RM personnel will be moved closer together. Internal Review will join them in Room 6600.



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Official Business

REMEMBER



EARTH DAY

Mark your calendars

The Districts' **Organization Day** picnic is being planned for **June 15** at **Blob's Park**. The committee will distribute more detailed information.

The annual District **golftournament** will be held **June 1** at **Fort Meade**. Contact Dave Hand (8154), Jay Hershey (2996) or Nancy Jedziniak (2926) for information.