



November 2000

# The Army's Chesapeake Review



Jeannie Skillman

LTC Crystal Briscoe of the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute, Chemical Defense at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., joins daughter Jada, 2, at the National Public Lands Day celebration sponsored by the installation and the U.S. Army Environmental Center.

## Army Celebrates National Public Lands Day

by Brian Feeney

Soldiers and civilians worked side by side planting native vegetation, erecting bird boxes and building low impact hiking trails at Army installations across three states in the Chesapeake Bay watershed Sept. 23. Their activities were part of a U.S.-wide celebration of National Public Lands Day that included 270 public land sites and over 50,000 volunteers.

At Aberdeen Proving Ground, located on the Bush River in northeast Md., 75 volunteers including the staff of the U.S. Army Environmental Center, soldiers and Boy Scouts planted a BayScapes demonstration garden. The garden uses native vegetation to filter pollution, provide wildlife habitat and improve water quality. At Fort Lee, next to Bailey Creek, a tributary of the James River near Petersburg, Va., 25 volunteers began a 4.5-acre BayScapes and low impact development demonstration site at the installation's main gate.

Another Army post to join the celebration was Fort Belvoir, located in northern Va. on the Potomac River. Volunteers teamed with the Fairfax County Audubon Society to realign a trail in the Fairfax family home site so that it would no longer disturb a wetlands area. The 24 participants, including students from Fort Belvoir Elementary School, also planted trees and shrubs, added benches and placed interpretive signs explaining the site's history.

At Carlisle Barracks, near Harrisburg, Pa., 75 volunteers including Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, Cub Scouts and U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets from nearby Dickinson College installed bluebird boxes, butterfly boxes, and planted 10 additional trees in the post's Heritage Park.

Sixty volunteers at the U.S. Naval Academy, located at the mouth

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## Army Partners with Fish & Wildlife Service to Teach Conservation Landscapes

by Alison Cooley

The U.S. Army and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with support from the Chesapeake Bay Program presented a conservation landscaping seminar for federal facilities on Sept. 11-15 at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Shepherdstown, W. Va. Approximately 90 people attended the workshop. The goal of the seminar was to teach federal employees how to implement conservation landscapes at their facilities. The training started on Tuesday, Sept. 12, with Britt Slattery of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, who explained conservation landscaping—"landscaping management that works with nature to reduce pollution

and enhance wildlife habitat." Bonnie Harper-Lore of the Federal Highway Administration and Helene Merkel of HORNE ENGINEERING, representing the Department of Defense, spoke on federal policies and why they require conservation landscapes. Next, Zolna Russell of Zolna Environmental Design explained the typical challenges and expectations that occur when planting landscapes. Case studies were presented by representatives from the Department of Defense, the Federal Highway Administration, the U.S. Postal Service, and the Department of the Interior on plantings they were involved with at their facilities.

*"I found the most beneficial sessions to be wetlands and formal landscapes because they provided simple and economic solutions to issues, such as storm water management, erosion control, sedimentation, bio-loading, and a host of other environmental conditions. I will be looking to apply what I learned at 77th RSC facilities."*

*- Ravi Ajodah, U.S. Army  
77th Regional Support Command*

The seminar continued with concurrent sessions, which described types of landscaping or land management. These sessions included, shoreline/streambank stabilization, managing "no mow" areas, formal landscapes (e.g., landscaping around buildings), meadow creation, bioretention, wetlands, and roadside vegetation/

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## Nat'l Public Lands Day

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of the Severn River in Annapolis, Md., planted 80 native trees and 50 native shrubs to create a buffer area between a Navy family housing area and the river.

All of the National Public Lands Day projects were made possible by grants from the National Environmental Education & Training Foundation, a national non-profit organization. Since 1993, National Public Lands Day has grown from 200 volunteers in three states to an estimated 30,000 volunteers and a work-force value of \$8 million for year-2000 activities.

Speaking of National Public Lands Day, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen said, "Even as we prepare for conflict and peacekeeping, we remain vigilant in safeguarding the Earth and our citizens. These responsibilities are indivisibly linked – to be a steward of one is to be a protector of the other."

The U.S. Army operates 19 military installations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. These facilities cover 215,000 acres of land, most of it undeveloped.

*Top photo: Liz Scholl of the Fort Lee Environmental Management Office observes LTC James E. Alty, Jr., Director of the Fort Lee Department of Public Works, and Neil Weinstein of the Low Impact Development Center, using an auger to help break through solid soil before planting during National Public Lands Day.*

*Bottom photo: Boy, Cub, and Girl Scouts help plant 10 additional trees in Heritage Park at Carlisle Barracks.*



Adriane Miller



Jim McNally



This newsletter is produced by HORNE ENGINEERING SERVICES, INC. under Contract No. DACA31-97-D-0051 for the U.S. Army Environmental Center (USAEC). Please contact Janmichael Graine, USAEC by e-mail, <Janmichael.Graine@aec.apgea.army.mil> or by telephone, (410) 436-7113, DSN 584-7113 with any questions, comments, or installation success stories.

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The newsletter is distributed via U.S. Mail and e-mail. It can also be viewed on the Army Chesapeake Bay Program home page. The home page address is <www.hqda.army.mil/acsimweb/env/cbi/index.htm>. If you want to be on the distribution list, contact Alison Cooley, HORNE ENGINEERING SERVICES, INC., at <acooley@horne.com>, or call (703) 641-1100.

## **FAC Highlights Important FACts**

The following items were presented at meetings of the Federal Agencies Committee (FAC) over the past several months. The FAC meets every six weeks at the Chesapeake Bay Program office in Annapolis, Md.

### **A New Designation for the Bay**

The Chesapeake Bay's unique ecological characteristics may soon be recognized in the larger context of other ecological regions of the United States. The National Park Service may designate the Chesapeake Bay watershed as one of its Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESUs). The Park Service CESU program is designed to create and maintain partnerships between federal agencies and universities to improve research, technical assistance, and education. The eight CESUs currently established are: North Atlantic Coast, Southern Appalachian Mountains, South Fla. Caribbean, Great Plains, Rocky Mountains, Colorado Plateau, Desert Southwest, and Pacific Northwest. Federal agencies in the Bay watershed can benefit from participation in the CESU program by essentially expanding their staff to include faculty, students, and others within the university community who participate in either the Chesapeake CESU or in any other CESU in the national network. Current agencies that participate in the CESU program include the Bureau of Land Management, the Department of Energy, the National Park Service, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey. These agencies are partnering with over 20 universities and 13 states. Up to three new CESUs, including the Chesapeake Watershed CESU, will be selected sometime in FY 01. Additional information on the program can be found at <[www.cesu.org/cesu](http://www.cesu.org/cesu)>.

### **Innovative Readiness Training and the Bay**

COL George Schlossnagle, U.S. Air Force, recently spoke to the FAC about Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) and how it can benefit Chesapeake Bay restoration and protection efforts. COL Schlossnagle is the military liaison to Coastal America, a partnership comprised of those federal agencies with statutory responsibilities for coastal resources or whose operational activities affect the coastal environment. The purpose of Coastal America is to protect and restore coastal ecosystems, collaborate in the stewardship of coastal living resources, and provide a framework for action that focuses expertise and resources on jointly identified problems so that model results may be achieved. The Army, Navy, and Air Force joined the program in 1992 by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with several other federal agencies. In a subsequent partnership agreement in 1999, the Department of Defense agreed to support the program by coordinating IRT activity with Coastal America projects. IRT is "hands-on" training conducted off-base within the civilian community that also addresses a community need. Since IRT can be conducted anywhere (not just in coastal areas), projects such as dam removal, submerged aquatic vegetation plantings, and wetlands creation can be coordinated with existing Chesapeake Bay protection and restoration efforts. Additional information on IRT and the military's involvement with the Coastal America partnership program can be found at <[www.coastalamerica.gov/text/irt.html](http://www.coastalamerica.gov/text/irt.html)>.

### **Support for Others from the Corps**

The Army Corps of Engineers, as part of a larger effort to improve communications with other agencies, has developed its Support for Others Program. The program is designed to build and

sustain partnerships in the face of a Corps that is constantly expanding in technical and professional areas. As part of this new program, the Corps can share technical "lessons learned," and assist with funding and implementation of certain water-related projects, including watershed restoration and planning, combined sewer overflows, dam removals, and wetlands restoration. Agencies can participate in the Support for Others Program by signing a new specific Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), or by working within an existing national MOA. More information on the Program can be obtained by contacting Robyn Colosimo of the Corps at 410-962-4995.

### **GSA's Sustainable Buildings**

The General Services Administration (GSA), in response to Executive Order 13123: Greening the Government through Efficient Energy Management, developed the Sustainable Building Program. This program, part of GSA's Build Green initiative, protects the environment by promoting efficient use of energy, water, and materials. The program also encourages better site design, indoor environmental quality, and building operation and maintenance. Improvement in each of these areas holds potential benefits for the Chesapeake Bay. For example, better site design can reduce erosion, minimize loss of open space, and preserve habitat. The efficient use of materials can reduce waste that enters the land and water as pollutants. By conserving water use, problems from storm water flow are reduced. GSA contributed to the creation of the Whole Building Design Guide, which incorporates these and other principles for environmental protection. Information on the Guide can be found at <[www.wbdg.org](http://www.wbdg.org)>.

## **IC Highlights**

# **Meeting Announcements**

The Implementation Committee (IC) met Sept. 21 at the Chesapeake Bay Program Office in Annapolis, Md. The following items were discussed at the meeting:

■ For several weeks during the summer, representatives from water treatment facilities, environmental groups, citizen groups, regulators, scientists and other stakeholders reviewed the “Chesapeake Bay Watershed Strategy for Chemical Contaminant Reduction, Prevention and Assessment,” also known as the Toxics 2000 Strategy. This important document eventually will help states and localities reduce pollution to tributaries and the Bay. At the Sept. IC meeting, Bob Summers of the Md. Department of the Environment discussed stakeholders’ comments. Among them:

- ◆ Point-source reductions could be more aggressive. The environmental community and one industry representative said proposed reductions were too modest to make much progress toward a zero-release objective.
- ◆ The environmental community also called for a zero-release goal for non-point source pollution. Some stakeholders said this is unrealistic and not achievable.
- ◆ Stakeholders also said the Toxics 2000 Strategy should focus on reducing the amounts of chemicals that present the biggest risks to living resources and human health in specific areas.

Summers said stakeholder comments to the Toxics Strategy have helped shape a better-defined overarching goal: *Reduce point-source pollution from chemicals of concern by 20 percent by 2010 in regions of concern.* Chemicals of concern include arsenic, DDT, lead, malathion, and mercury. Regions of concern are the Baltimore Harbor, the Anacostia River and the Elizabeth River. “We’re not forgetting

other areas,” Summers said, “but these are areas where there are the biggest problems.” The IC is now preparing a final Toxics 2000 Strategy for policy review and approval.

■ Maintaining quality with limited funds is an issue of concern among the Chesapeake Bay Program leaders. “The water quality monitoring program costs \$1 million,” noted Bill Matuszeski, chair of the Implementation Committee, at its Sept. meeting. “How will it remain a million-dollar program with regard to the other needs we have?” He and others hope the Chesapeake Bay Program Monitoring Strategy will provide an answer. The purpose of the monitoring strategy is to identify monitoring activities needed to meet Chesapeake 2000 Agreement commitments, then decide how to pay for those activities using funds from the Bay program and its partners. The final strategy will help the Chesapeake Bay Program set its budget for fiscal year 2002.

Among the activities included in the fiscal year 2001 monitoring budget are nontidal nutrient and sediment loadings, near shore habitat, toxic characterizations and a monitoring method for oyster biomass.

■ The committee briefly discussed nutrient trading in the Chesapeake Bay. Nutrient trading allows pollution dischargers to transfer or receive nutrient reduction “credits” to or from other dischargers. Trading allows them the flexibility to purchase credits at lower cost than installing controls, as long as the total amount of nutrient discharge in the Bay is reduced. Program committee leaders have prepared a guidance document containing eight fundamental principles they view as essential to a successful and environmentally sound trading program. The document went through an intense public review with public workshops in Va., Md. and Pa. Bay program leaders plan to deliver it to the states for consideration in Jan. 2001. Matuszeski was highly supportive of the nutrient trading document and the process used to create it. “Work

on this is an example of the program at its best,” he said.

■ The next IC meeting is Nov. 2, 2000 at the Chesapeake Bay Program Office in Annapolis.

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## **Conservation Landscapes**

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entrances/parking lots.

Following the concurrent sessions, Russell spoke on maintenance, management, and costs of landscaping projects. Then, participants congregated in meeting rooms based on their federal agency and discussed problems and solutions of implementing conservation landscapes throughout their agency/department.

On Wednesday evening, Slattery gave a presentation on native plants of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which informed attendees of the benefits of using locally native plants in their landscapes.

The next day, Ecologist Michael Hollins of the Ecosystem Recovery Institute spoke on planning and installing a conservation landscaping project. That afternoon, participants split into groups: some people went to Fort Detrick while others stayed at the training center. Both groups designed their own conservation landscape. A separate roundtable session was also held simultaneously for decision-makers. At this session, participants discussed ways to implement conservation landscapes on federal sites.

The seminar concluded as participants shared their designs and implementation solutions. Workshop participants left with more knowledge about planting conservation landscapes, a notebook with speaker presentations, background information, and a copy of the *Draft Conservation Landscaping Guide for Federal Facilities*. To receive a copy of the guide, call U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at 410-573-4593. The final guide is expected to be available by the end of the year.

For more information about using conservation landscaping at your facility, view the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Web site at <[www.fws.gov/r5cbfo/](http://www.fws.gov/r5cbfo/)> and click on BayScapes.