

MAY 2020

# STREAMLINE

MONTHLY

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BUILDING NEW **HABITATS**

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The MSA family remains strong and dedicated.



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



After spending approximately two months in the essential mission-critical operations posture, the Hanford Site and MSA have begun our slow, phased and carefully planned remobilization efforts. We will continue to communicate information regarding remobilization in a variety of ways – through sitewide messaging, all MSA-employee messages, calls from managers and directors and more. We want to make sure our workforce is well informed on the process and the safety precautions we are taking.

During these last two months, we've had anywhere from 400 – 600 of our colleagues who have reported to work on site as our essential personnel. Some reported to work as they typically would and some were called in for specific assignments. These members of the MSA family deserve a huge thank you! From emergency response to janitorial to environmental monitoring to site utilities to security – and so much more – these employees have been ensuring the Hanford Site remains operational and safe – and for that dedication, we are grateful! When possible, be sure to share your appreciation with these essential personnel – it hasn't been easy.

In addition, we've had nearly half of our workforce teleworking. We know this has presented a myriad of challenges as well, including trying to set-up work stations, dealing with barking dogs and yelling kids while on a call and trying to remember to take regular stretch breaks. Thank you to those who have adjusted to this and remained productive in support of the One Hanford mission.

For those who have been unable to report to work or telework during this time, know that we look forward to seeing you and working alongside you once again, albeit from 6 feet away. We know you've had your struggles as well and we appreciate your patience and willingness to communicate.

The MSA family remains strong and dedicated – thank you and continue to stay safe and healthy.

*Bob*

Bob Wilkinson  
President



## FOCUS ON SAFETY AND SECURITY

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A customer adheres to a safe distance while visiting the Central Badging Office.

### Badging Office Barriers in Place

*Contributor: Robin Wojtanik*

Central Badging Office (CBO) managers were determined to make an immediate improvement to protect workers and customers from any potential COVID-19 exposure as the safety risk grew sharply in mid-March and conditions were changing daily. “We’d been brainstorming ways to protect our workers and our customers,” said Gary Heid, senior safeguard and security specialist. The team discussed improvising with clear shower curtains or using inexpensive plastic shields purchased from a hardware store. A call to the Carpentry team resulted in a new plan. “We already had one-quarter inch plastic at the shop and we were able to custom fit shields for each work station,” said Dave Mohn, a manager with Site Services and Interface Management.

The Carpentry team fielded the badging office’s request on a Friday and had the project finished the next day and ready for use on Monday morning. Carpenters fabricated and installed four free standing barriers, providing workers with the ability to adjust the height or remove for easy sanitization. The badging office staff praised the “great response” from the Carpentry team to quickly add this layer of protection for workers and customers.

Staff in the badging office serve a high volume of customers, issuing credentials for new, essential workers, while also supporting those using Logical Access Control System (LACS) cards. “We are asking our folks to sit out there on the front lines,” said Heid. “We have to keep people working.” The office has served more than 7,000 customers in the past 12 months. This is in addition to issuing and supporting the 8,500 LACS cards currently issued.

Additional safety measures are also in place at the CBO, including limited access through the building’s doors, a locked door at the office itself, with floor markers and limited seating inside to promote social distancing. Customers are asked to call ahead and wait in their cars when they arrive to help regulate the number of people inside. Badge renewals may be done remotely, or even curbside. Those with questions about the process should call (509) 376-3000 before visiting the CBO.



## RECOGNITION

### Casey de Groof – From Hanford Patrol to Joint Task Force

*Contributors: Melissa Ver Steeg, Casey de Groof*

Casey de Groof has pledged to serve and protect our workforce, community and country through her role as Chief of Hanford Patrol and a member of the Washington Army National Guard. With this pledge comes many responsibilities, but also many opportunities. These include Casey's call from the National Guard to support the Special Operations Joint Task Force - Operation Inherent Resolve, a unique mission to ensure the enduring and remaining defeat of ISIS in Iraq. An initial 90-day deployment in July 2019 continued into March 2020.

As the Information Operations Director, one of Casey's roles was to brief command staff leadership and publish daily reports on the information environment. Reports contained highlights from various sources, including news and popular social media channels that provide a pulse on international, regional and local focuses, since perceptions can contrast greatly with operations. Casey's data helped determine how to protect operations' information,

inform decision makers and the public, and affect the adversaries' decision-making cycles. Managing information in real-time brought new, daily challenges, but also showed Casey the importance of understanding perceptions, promptly communicating facts and truths, and having a dedicated team that understands the mission.

In Iraq's fast-paced and changing environment where protests, indirect fire, and operations in contested areas are part of daily life, Casey found trust and teamwork crucial. She brings that perspective to her work at Hanford, which helps promote communication, good leadership and trust to strengthen Hanford Patrol as a highly effective team, focused on their critical mission.

Whether serving with a joint task force, comprised of military personnel from multiple countries, or working alongside the many MSA and Hanford workers with military experience, Casey has an appreciation for the diverse individuals who commit to protect and serve others. Her story is just one from the many reservists, guardsmen, and veterans we are fortunate to have on Hanford Patrol and in the ranks at the Hanford Site. Recently

two other Patrol Officers returned from overseas deployments, and another is currently deployed to support Washington State food banks during the current COVID-19 crisis. The spirit of volunteerism and service to others is just one part of what makes the MSA team a success and what truly embodies the MSA family.



Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Casey de Groof in Iraq as part of the Special Operations Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve.





A construction subcontractor collects geotechnical soil samples next to an existing water tank, for the foundation of a new tank.



The inside of the 282WC pump house, set to be demolished and repurposed for the new sanitary water distribution system.

## ONE HANFORD MISSION

### New Sanitary Water Tank on the Way

*Contributors: Tyler Oates, Brad Pratt*

A new potable water tank will replace the existing one located in 200 West. MSA recently received approval from the Washington State Department of Health to begin construction of a new tank to replace the existing 1.1 million gallon tank that has reached the end of its design life. The new water tank will hold, at a minimum, approximately 1.5 million gallons of water. The water is used for fire suppression, disinfection treatment, and potable water distribution. This new tank will serve a critical role in future water system upgrades to support the forecasted demand for sanitary water on the Hanford Site, and will serve as the dedicated storage tank for the future Central Plateau Water Treatment Facility.

The tank replacement project has required cooperation between a multitude of MSA organizations, including Engineering, Projects, Water & Sewer Utilities Operations, Construction, Procurement,

Information Management, Environmental, Safety, Quality & Health, and the Hanford Fire Marshal's Office (HFMO). "What makes this project unique is that we're designing and building a completely new tank and water distribution pumping system to fill multiple needs," said MSA project manager Brad Pratt. "The engineering design had to incorporate stakeholder needs and code requirements, including fire suppression supply volumes required by the [HFMO] to meet fire protection requirements, while also meeting strict sanitation and disinfection standards of a potable water system."

The current pump house will have the interior demolished and replaced with a new sanitary water distribution system that can be operated and monitored remotely. Once completed, the new water tank and pump house are expected to last 50 years.



An empty nest previously located on equipment was removed to prevent a fire hazard.



Cranes are positioned with booms raised in the crane and rigging yard to help deter birds from nesting on the equipment.

## ONE HANFORD MISSION

### Out of Use But On the Move

*Contributor: Robin Wojtanik*

Mobile cranes are a yearly magnet for nesting birds, and the essential mission-critical operations posture made dormant cranes a potential “nesting dream for birds on the site,” said Sean McFadden, acting director for Crane & Rigging Services. If a migratory bird was to successfully build a nest on a crane, it would be out of service for up to two months until the eggs hatched and the nest was no longer in use.

To avoid this, Crane & Rigging works closely with Biological Controls in an effort to deter birds from choosing the gear as their new home. While not in use, equipment in the Site Services & Interface Management Crane Yard in the 600 Area is moved twice weekly and sprayed with a sweet-smelling bird deterrent every other week. This helps avoid having the birds nest on the rigs.

Cranes are examined during pre-use and monthly inspections to assure there is no bird activity or nesting material present before being started. Even without bird activity, an empty nest in a crane can pose a fire hazard due to its close proximity to the engine.

## ONE HANFORD MISSION

### Streamlined Processes Bring Faster Facility Updates

*Contributor: Robin Wojtanik*

Knowing the location of facilities that are, or once were, on the site is important for worker safety in the event of an emergency, and for background knowledge of land prior to new construction. Now, much of this information can be updated on the same day, instead of a multi-step process that only happened quarterly.

Real Estate Services (RES) took part in process improvements initiated by the Geospatial Information Technology Services (GITS) team, to update the Hanford Enterprise Geospatial Information System (GIS). This new process allows RES to manage data updates themselves, as quickly as they are able, as a process improvement. "Their vision dovetailed with our vision," said Byron Gessel, member of the GITS team. "This moves the update process closer to the people who own the data, without various handoffs."

With the new process, RES identified more than 350 facilities or structures that previously hadn't been mapped.



RES' Adam Saucedo played a key role researching and mapping missing facilities.

Some additions include mobile trailers moved frequently around the site that serve as a home base for workers. In an emergency, the trailer's location is critical for a quick response by first responders. "We don't have an addressing system, so numbers don't mean much if looking for a location," said Elizabeth Allard, caretaker II administrator for RES. In addition, Hanford's interactive maps (HMAPS) don't always include the historical data on structures that have been leveled.

This is helpful to know what might have stood on a concrete slab that remains today. "We want to know what was out there and what's left in the ground," said Benjamin Cowin, stewardship information system administrator for RES.

The project to research and map missing facilities was led by RES team members Adriana Zarate and Adam Saucedo. So far, the team mapped more than 100 missing facilities that are now available in HMAPS. Jason Altman, program manager for the GITS team, said not only is there "more efficiency in the workflow," there is "higher confidence" in the accuracy of the data and those using it are now empowered to make their own updates.

"We didn't have the technology to do this even 5-10 years ago," said Allard. Previously, the process primarily included facilities deemed most important. Frequent updates to HMAPS and the Hanford Enterprise GIS benefit the entire Site.

The GITS team is looking to use the model established with the RES group to bring other geospatial data owners and users to the Hanford Enterprise GIS.

If you have data relating to a location, the GITS team would like to help you realize the full potential of this information.

Contact Jason Altman at (509) 376-4044 or [Jason\\_m\\_altman@rl.gov](mailto:Jason_m_altman@rl.gov) for the next steps.



# ONE HANFORD MISSION

## The Event Must Go On

*Contributors: Patrick Conrad, Coleen Drinkard, Dana Gribble*

Thanks to the support and effort by MSA's public involvement team, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) successfully planned and executed an online public meeting as part of a 90-day comment period on the Stabilization of Disposal Structures at Risk of Failure and Time Critical Removal Action. The virtual public meeting was designed to share information and answer questions about DOE's decision to fill three underground liquid waste disposal structures with engineered grout to prevent their collapse and the potential to spread contamination.

An in-person public meeting, originally scheduled for March, was postponed due to COVID-19 concerns. As a part of our continued support of DOE's public involvement activities, MSA planned an online event to allow this key meeting to happen. MSA tested several technologies, collaborated with the Tri-Party Agreement agencies and Hanford Advisory Board members, and established the virtual meeting option for May 7.

To prepare, the team conducted a dry run, by setting up computers to meet six-foot guidelines for social distancing, and testing the webinar and phone systems.

"This meeting was very important, and we had a larger number of interested

participants than we normally do for public meetings," said Al Farabee, DOE federal project director. "We'd never held a dry run and virtual meeting quite like this, but we were able to rise to the occasion and deliver the information people needed to participate during the comment period timeframe."

Recognizing an opportunity for improvement at the conclusion of the meeting, the team worked with the Information Management organization to address concerns with participants not muting their phones while on the call. For future public meetings conducted virtually, the IM team has established a specialized number that gives administrators more control over muting features.

Roughly 70 people participated in the online event.



DOE's Al Farabee provides a presentation during the dry run on May 5.



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MSA biologist Justin Wilde safely removes a young burrowing owl from one of the new artificial burrows.



A group of burrowing owl chicks, pictured inside one of the new habitats.

## ONE HANFORD MISSION

### Building New Habitats for Burrowing Owls

*Contributors: Tyler Oates, Justin Wilde*

Dozens of new habitats are in place for burrowing owls found on the Hanford Site. Since the start of 2018, MSA biologists have installed or replaced 53 artificial nesting habitats, in an effort to stop the decline of the burrowing owl population due to loss of habitat, and natural burrows.

“Despite what their name suggests, burrowing owls don’t usually dig their own burrows,” MSA biologist Justin Wilde explained. Historically, burrowing owls nest in holes dug by other animals, such as badgers, coyotes and ground squirrels. With the population of ground squirrels on site also in decline, the owls have a short supply of places to make a home. “The burrows we’re installing provide the owls with new, reliable places to nest, and allow us to monitor and track the population more easily.”

The efforts of Wilde and his team appear to be paying off. They’ve observed owls relocating from older, artificial habitats into the newly installed burrows. The team expects the owl population to increase as birds hatched on site return to new burrows to breed.

“The next steps for the project are continuing to replace older artificial habitats, as well as monitoring and tracking the owls’ population and recovery,” said Wilde. Future monitoring and maintenance of burrows will focus on keeping them clear of debris and suitable for nesting.

MSA biologists are also collaborating with the Global Owl Project, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife to band the owls to track the population both on and off the Hanford Site.

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Water & Sewer Utilities crews inspect tanks at 200 East and 200 West in April 2020. Crews inspect the tanks twice a year, looking for deterioration and debris.



## ONE HANFORD MISSION

### Tank Inspections Complete

*Contributors: Robin Wojtanik, Mike Winkel*

A springtime check-up of the Central Plateau's sanitary water tanks took just one day when crews from Water & Sewer Utilities safely completed their semi-annual inspection, looking for any sign of cracked seals or gaskets. Parts may need replacing because of sun, wind, or other natural elements deteriorating the barriers at tank openings.

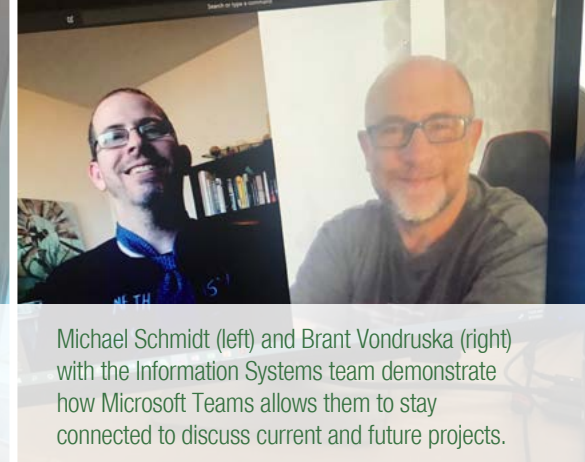
Additionally, treated water is "more corrosive to metal than untreated water, so the storage tanks' access hatches, handholds, and vent openings must be scanned twice per year to ensure bats, insects, birds, and debris are kept out of the tanks," said Mike Winkel, program support manager for Water & Sewer Utilities.

Each water tank in the Central Plateau holds a little over a million gallons of drinking water that is primarily used to meet fire protection standards, in the event of an emergency.

Inspection crews used an aerial lift to access the top of the tanks, raising two boilermakers and one stationary operating engineer about five stories to the top of the tanks in 200 East and 200 West.



While working from home, Taylor Petty and the rest of the Mission Service Desk team continue to provide high-quality service to the Hanford Site.



Michael Schmidt (left) and Brant Vondruska (right) with the Information Systems team demonstrate how Microsoft Teams allows them to stay connected to discuss current and future projects.

## ONE HANFORD MISSION

### IM Team Keeping Hanford Site Connected

*Contributor: Patrick Conrad*

Since March, the Hanford Site has been in uncharted waters as nearly 60% of the workforce began teleworking. Over this time, the Information Management (IM) organization has worked tirelessly to make sure staff can continue supporting the cleanup mission.

From providing cyber security tips to information system updates to equipment upgrades, IM has been integral in keeping nearly 4,500 workers connected. The team hired additional support staff for the Mission Service Desk, reconfigured more than 1,000 laptops, updated the

Hanford mobile app and Hanford.gov page to provide quick and easy access to information, and ensured the system was secure.

“I’m really proud of the effort all of our teams have put in to keep workers connected and informed during these challenging times,” said Todd Eckman, vice president of IM. “Not only have they been faced with faster turnaround times, increased demands, and unique requests, they have met or exceeded every challenge.”

These challenges included creating new attendance codes due to COVID-19 for use by all Hanford prime contractors using the Time Information System (TIS). Additionally, the team developed a process to automatically populate timecards for

those who cannot telework. Using this, over 1,000 timecards may be processed in minutes versus hours.

To meet social distancing standards, the Network Operation Center and Mission Service Desk teams revamped methodologies to have fewer members in the facility at a given time, while most staff members simultaneously support users remotely.

The critical task of processing records into the Integrated Document Management System continues in support of customers across the site. Additionally, various other IM teams have played critical roles in computer moves to support remobilization and social distancing, data center upgrades and maintenance of radio and fire alarm systems.





Photo of a continuous air-sampling station in Franklin County with soil erosion concerns.



Don Johnsen installs concrete blocks under the air-sampling station legs to provide increased stability.



Ed Haeberlin adds the final touches to smooth the ground around the newly stabilized air-sampling station.

## ONE HANFORD MISSION

### Stable Ground Provides Safe Air Monitoring

*Contributors: Melissa Ver Steeg, Brian Bergum, Craig Perkins*

A critical component in protecting Hanford workers and the community, nearly 100 continuous air-sampling stations are positioned throughout the Hanford Site and surrounding area. Used for long-term trending, sampling station filters are collected bi-weekly and analyzed.

During a recent routine sample collection in Franklin County, an MSA field technician discovered soil erosion beneath the sampling station, creating an unstable and unsafe condition.

The concern was reported to the Environmental Surveillance team who created a service request to have the ground stabilized for safety.

Following a walk-down with heavy equipment operations, work management, and environmental surveillance, and through an agreement with the landowner, the team worked to stabilize the air sampling station and restructure the immediate terrain.

Heavy equipment operator James Davis Jr., and teamsters Don Johnsen and Ed Haeberlin leveled the ground, installed concrete blocks under the station, and added compacted gravel to return the area to a safe condition for field sampling.



EU lineman Brian Nutter trims a tree that fell onto electrical distribution equipment during a recent wind storm.



## ONE HANFORD MISSION

### Maintaining Reliable Power During Essential Mission-Critical Operations

*Contributor: Matt Parkhill*

During essential mission-critical operations, Electrical Utilities (EU) adapted to ensure safe and reliable operation of the Hanford Site Electrical Transmission and Distribution systems.

In addition to routine work, such as monitoring various systems for proper operation, EU has maintained an “as-needed” presence on site to perform essential activities and support various customer needs. These may include rubber glove testing, job walk-downs, and outage support, all completed with attention to the new safety hazards and controls.

Work is evaluated weekly, balancing reduced crew sizes that respect social distancing, while meeting minimum safe numbers for each task. Workdays are strategically planned to reduce the number of crews needed at any one time.

Plans change when nature gets its say, however. During the last two months, EU has responded to various events ranging from bird strikes to fallen trees and equipment failure. At each occurrence, the responsible groups within the organization have provided safe and timely responses. From the craftsmen performing the work, to the support staff generating work packages, to the engineers who provide consultation, everyone has a part to play.

No matter what, EU will remain vigilant, responding to whatever may occur.

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*\*Several photos in this issue of Streamline were taken prior to COVID-19 social distancing guidelines and face covering requirements.*

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The Information Systems team participated in a workshop in early March that included a session on processing change.



## ONE HANFORD MISSION

### Processing Change

*Contributors: Robin Wojtanik, Dan Seitz*

Information Systems (IS) held an off-site team building and information workshop, prior to COVID-19, to focus on organizational initiatives pioneered by MSA to safely meet Hanford mission objectives.

The all-day session included a brand new workshop called Change Management, which was presented by the Human Resources Staffing, Diversity, and Development organization. It was tailored to help participants assist others who might be adjusting emotionally in response to major changes. Examples of major changes that could result in emotional transition include adapting to the current posture, upcoming contract transition, changing conditions with one's job, system upgrades, process changes, shifting economic conditions or organizational restructure.

At the start of the presentation, attendees took part in an exercise that challenged them to experience ongoing change while attempting to complete a team activity.

"The workshop teaches participants methodologies utilized in response to expected or unexpected changes in the workplace. Learners are introduced to the emotional transition curve that individuals may experience when trying to digest major change, emotionally," said Dan Seitz.

Questions about the Change Management workshop can be directed to Dan Seitz with HR.



## ONE HANFORD MISSION

### Taming the Tumbleweeds

*Contributor: Robin Wojtanik*

Tumbleweeds can be a general nuisance to drivers and homeowners, but on the Hanford Site, they can be a threat to the safety of nuclear facilities. This includes tank farms, ventilation equipment and areas commonly known as “burial grounds.” The rolling plants may also clump together quickly to choke entrances to fenced areas or roadways. The Biological Controls team remained on site during the essential mission-critical operations posture to round up, compact, and dispose of the tumbleweeds.



Biological Controls team members prepare tumbleweeds for safe burning by the Hanford Fire Department.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### HAAP Scholarships Awarded Virtually

*Contributor: Renée Brooks*

MSA is a long-time supporter of the Hispanic Academic Achievers Program and once again sponsored a \$5,000 scholarship for a local student. This year's recipient of the MSA scholarship is Rosa Marianna Martinez. The Southridge High School senior will graduate with a 4.0 GPA. She plans to attend Columbia University and pursue a degree in neuroscience.

HAAP had to adapt quickly to move this year's ceremony and recognition celebration online. Gabe Suarez with Information Management has been involved with HAAP for 25 years and shared, "It was hard not to be able to see and congratulate the students in person this year, but I'm glad we were able to still recognize these hard working young people. I'm proud to work for a company that supports the next generation in this way."



Congratulations to the 20 students who received HAAP scholarships, including Rosa Marianna Martinez who received the \$5,000 Mission Support Alliance scholarship.

In total, 7,400 students of all ages were honored for maintaining a 3.0 or higher GPA and 20 graduating seniors were awarded more than \$85,000 in scholarships.



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## COMMUNITY OUTREACH



While in-person volunteer events with MSA Cares are temporarily on hold, many members of the MSA family and their loved ones have continued to find ways to be of service to our community. Employees have been involved in a variety of volunteer efforts, including sewing masks for healthcare workers, cleaning up trash in local parks, delivering meals to essential workers, sorting food at Second Harvest and more.

Thank you to everyone who has continued to share their talents in this time of need! If you've been involved in similar efforts, send a photo and description to [MSAco@rl.gov](mailto:MSAco@rl.gov).





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### CONTRIBUTE!

Readers are invited to share news events, including volunteer activities, individual achievements and program accomplishments.

Have a story idea for Streamline? Send an email to [MSAcos@rl.gov](mailto:MSAcos@rl.gov) or contact [Reneé Brooks](#) with MSA Communications at (509) 373-0857.

**STREAMLINE** is published by Mission Support Alliance Communications and highlights company business and employee contributions.

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Right solution.  
Right time.  
Right value.

**At MSA, we are committed to providing innovative solutions that fit the needs of our customers. We work closely with the DOE and Hanford contractors to determine timing and value, ensuring that Hanford cleanup continues to progress.**