

12th SISTER RIVERS PARTNERSHIP EXCHANGE

— 8-12 December 2024 —



US Army Corps
of Engineers®



Event Booklet

Photo: Upper Mississippi River Flood Plain – The Nature Conservancy



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS	1
AGENDA IN BRIEF.....	10
DETAILED AGENDA	14
Exchange Talks	15
General Jackson River Tour	16
Visit with the City of Nashville.....	17
Site Visit to Kentucky Lock and TVA Powerhouse.....	18
Caven Point Marine Terminal Site Visit and New York Harbor Inspection	19
New York Harbor Inspection.....	20
MEKONG RIVER COMMISSION DELEGATION BIOGRAPHIES.....	21
H.E. Mme Bounkham Vorachit	22
Dr. Surasri Kidtimonton.....	23
Dr. Anoulak Kittikhoun	23
Mr. Phonepaseuth Phouliphanh	25
Mrs. Nguyen Thi Thu Linh.....	26
Mr. Oudomsack Philavong	27
Mr. Hak Socheat.....	28
Mr. Ou Sophanna	29
Dr. Winai Wangpimool.....	30
Ms. Le Thi Huong	31
Mr. Santi Baran	32
Dr. Nittana Southiseng.....	33
Mr. Ketsana Xaiyasarn	34

U.S. DELEGATION BIOGRAPHIES.....35

RDML Ben Evans37

HON/Dr. Robert Miller 38

HON/Mr. Riley James 39

HON/Mr. James A. Reeder40

Mr. Charles A. Camillo..... 41

Mr. Jeff Varisco.....42

Mr. Jonathan Andrew Ashley43

LTC Garrett Dean.....44

BG. Joseph “Clete” Goetz 45

Mr. Craig Pierce.....47

Mr. Evan Ting48

Mr. Trey Maddox..... 49

Mr. Josh Biggers 50

Ms. Nahaku Mcfadden 51

Mr. Todd Hannah52

Mr. Aaron Brownell..... 53

BG John Lloyd 54

Mr. Matthew Cosby 55

COL Alexander Young.....56

Mr. Joseph Seebode..... 57

ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

The 2024 Sister Rivers Partnership Exchange will be held in Nashville (and surrounding areas) and New York from 08-12 December 2024. Below is basic information to help you prepare for your trip.

1. EVENT VENUE:

The 2024 Sister Rivers Partnership Exchange Talks will be conveniently held at the lodging location, Cambria Hotel Nashville Downtown. Cambria Hotel contact information is as follows. Site visits, project tours and additional meetings will be held at various locations throughout Nashville and New York. The agenda and other relevant details can be found in the online event booklet.

2. LODGING/HOTEL: Hotel reservations for Mekong delegates have been made. U.S. can make hotel reservations at the following contacts:

07-11 Dec 2024

Cambria Hotel Nashville Downtown

118 8th Ave S

Nashville, TN 37203

www.cambrianashville.com

(629) 910-7893

For reservations use the following

link:

<https://www.choicehotels.com/reservations/groups/LM18P1>



11-13 Dec 2024

Crowne Plaza Times Square

1605 Broadway

New York, NY 10019

[Hotels in Manhattan | Crowne Plaza Times Square Manhattan](#)

(212) 977-4000

For reservations contact:

Janet Riascos (212-315-6013,

Janet.Riascos@cptsnyc.com) or Bill

Spencer (bspencer@cptsnyc.com)

(O) 212-315-6126



3. TRANSPORTATION

USACE will provide transportation for all Mekong delegates between airports and hotels. Upon arrival, please be prepared to meet the USACE team at your baggage claim area. Event planners and staff will provide welcome packets and additional information upon arrival, as well as assistance in checking into hotels.

During the exchange, USACE will provide additional transportation via bus, van, and boat for all scheduled events in Nashville and New York.

Individuals are responsible to book airfare to Nashville (7 or 8 Dec), from Nashville to New York (11 Dec), and return travel home (13 Dec). The Mekong River Commission Secretariat will book air travel for Mekong delegates. For transportation inquiries, please contact a USACE team member.

4. DRESS CODE (See Agenda In Brief)

5. MAPS

Please find maps of the Nashville and New York areas at the following links.

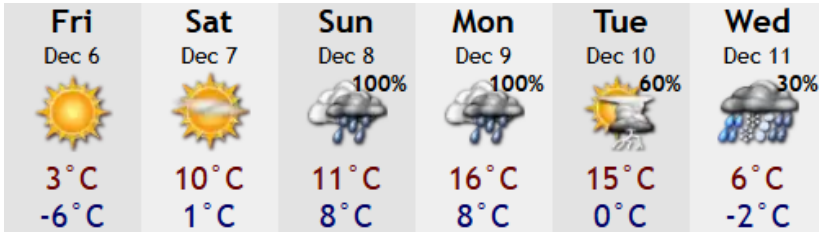
<https://www.visitmusiccity.com/plan-a-trip-to-nashville/getting-around/maps>

<https://downtownny.com/explore/plan-your-trip/getting-around/maps-guides/>

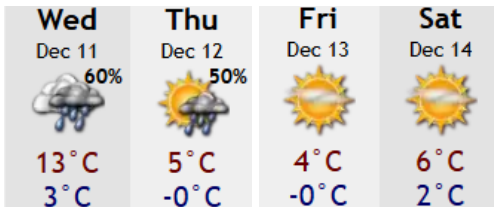
6. CLIMATE / WEATHER

In December, Nashville typically experiences cool to mild weather. Average temperatures range from 30-55 degrees

Fahrenheit (-1 – 10 degrees Celsius). There is a chance of rain, and occasional winter storms can bring snow or ice, but significant accumulations are rare. Overall, it's a mix of chilly days and occasional warmer spells, with overcast skies common.



New York typically experiences cold weather, with average temperatures ranging from 35 – 42 degrees Fahrenheit (1 – 5 degrees Celsius). There is a mix of sunny and overcast days, and occasional rain or snow can occur. Wind can make it feel colder, so layering is advisable. Please bring cold weather clothing.



7. SETTLING ACCOUNTS

All bills, including in-room telephone calls, mini-bar, laundry and room service, are the participant's responsibility and must be settled prior to departure. The hotels accept all major credit cards. Lodging will be covered for the Mekong delegates except for room service and/or any other additional costs.

8. DIET:

Event planners have worked to provide multiple dietary options during events. Prior to attending, please denote any dietary requirements you may have to Ms. Vaguez. Vegetarian options will be available upon requests.

9. SPECIAL NEEDS:

Please advise the organizing staff of any special needs or disabilities. Smoking is allowed in designated areas.

10. MEDICAL SUPPORT:

In case of an emergency, transportation and basic medical support will be available. The nearest hospitals with 24-hour Emergency rooms are as follows:

07-11 Dec 24 – Nashville General Hospital, 1818 Albion St,
(615) 341-4000

11-13 Dec 24 – New York Presbyterian Medical Center, 525
East 68th Street, (212) 746-5454

AGENDA IN BRIEF

8-12 Dec 2024

Nashville – New York U.S.A.

NASHVILLE

SATURDAY, 07 DEC 2024 (Attire: Casual)

TBD Arrival in Nashville, TN/Greeting by USACE Pacific Ocean Division at baggage claim
Hotel check in (Cambria Hotel) and executive time

SUNDAY, 08 DEC 2024 (Attire: Casual)

8:00 Breakfast at Cambria (Mekong River Commission)

9:00 Cultural activities (Departure point from main lobby)

14:00 Mississippi River Commission arrives Nashville

1600 Executive time

1800 USG Hosted Icebreaker Social / Welcome Event at Cambria Hotel/True Music Room and Bar (**Attire: Business Casual**)

MONDAY, 09 DEC 2024 (Attire: Business/AGSU (military))

7:30 Breakfast at Cambria (Mekong River Commission)

8:30 Mekong-Mississippi River Commission and Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Exchange Talks (Cambria Rickenbacker Room)

11:00 Travel to Cumberland River

- 11:20** Cumberland River Site Tour/Lunch
- 14:30** Travel to Nashville City Office
- 15:00** Visit with the Nashville City Office
- 16:30** Travel to Hotel
- 17:45** Dinner departure
- 18:00** Mississippi River Commission Hosted Dinner at Butchertown
(Attire: Business Casual)

TUESDAY, 10 DEC 2024 (Attire: Business Casual/AGSU (military))

- 7:00** Breakfast at Cambria (Mekong River Commission)
- 8:00** Travel to project sites
- 10:00** Project site tour of Kentucky Lock
- 11:00** Project site tour of TVA Powerhouse
- 12:00** Travel to lunch
- 12:15** Lunch
- 14:00** Travel to Hotel / Executive Time
- 17:45** Dinner Departure
- 18:00** Mekong River Commission Hosted Dinner at Hibachi Grill
and Supreme Buffet **(Attire: Business Casual)**

WEDNESDAY, 11 DEC 2024 (Attire: Casual)

7:00 Breakfast at Cambria (Mekong River Commission)

8:00 Check out/Travel to Nashville Airport

10:43 Flight UA334 from Nashville to Newark

NEW YORK

14:30 Travel to hotel (Greeted by New York District)

15:30 Executive Time and dinner on own (**Attire: Casual**)

THURSDAY, 12 DEC 2024 (Attire: Business Casual/OCP (military))

8:00 Breakfast on own

9:00 Travel from Hotel to North Cove Marina

9:20 Travel to Caven Point (via North Cove Marina onboard USACE Vessel)

10:15 Project site tour of Caven Point Marine Terminal, Survey Branch and Drone Lab

12:15 Lunch (Catered at Caven Point Marine Terminal)

13:00 **Presentations** - Navigation projects, Hudson Rarton Estuary restoration, urban flood risk management, and Harbor & Tributaries Focus Area Feasibility Study (HATS)

14:30 New York Harbor inspection

15:00 Arrive North Cove Marina / Travel to hotel

15:30 Executive time

17:00 Dinner departure (meet in hotel lobby)

18:00 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Pacific Ocean Division Hosted Farewell Dinner at L'Adresse Nomad (**Attire: Business Casual**)

FRIDAY, 13 DEC 2024 (Attire: Casual)

Various Depart New York

DETAILED AGENDA

Exchange Talks

Time: 0830-1100, Monday, 09 Dec 2024

Location: Nashville, Tennessee

Objective: Exchange of the two Commissions and TVA on managing population water resource needs, canals/locks, hydropower, environmental planning, flood risk management, and natural based solutions.

- 08:30 Opening Remarks and Intro of Delegates** by MG Peeples (President, MiRC) and Dr. Anoulak (CEO, MeRC) (15 mins)
- 08:45 ‘Growing challenges/opportunities with hydropower’ and ‘Growing environmental challenges/opportunities in the Delta** presented by Mr. Santi Baran (Chief Strategy & Partnership Officer, MeRC). Q&A to follow (35 mins)
- 09:20 Flood plains / nature-based solutions / Tennessee-Tom Bigbee Canal** presented by Mr. Andy Ashley (Director, MiRC). Q&A to follow (35 mins)
- 09:55 Break** (10 mins)
- 10:05 TVA approach, planning and management** presented by TBD. Q&A to follow (35 mins)
- 10:40 Recap of presentations** by Josh Biggers (5 mins)
- 10:45 Closing remarks by MG Peeples and Dr. Surasri on behalf of MeRC Member Countries** (10 mins)
- 10:55 Group Photos** (5 mins)
 - Photo 1:** MiRC Commissioners, US Seniors, MeRC CEO, Joint Committee members/HODs
 - Photo 2:** All

General Jackson River Tour

Time: 1120-1430, Monday, 09 Dec 2024

Location: Nashville, Tennessee

Objective: Discuss the history of the Cumberland River and the ways navigation and water resources were managed.

Brief discussion on the history of the Cumberland River by tour staff and Nashville District (10 mins)

Discuss topics of interest related to the Cumberland Tour facilitated by Nashville District (50 mins)

Photo (10 mins)

Lunch (1 hrs)

Informal discussions and reflection of topics discussed during the Exchange Talks (1 hrs)



Visit with the City of Nashville

Time: 1500-1630, Monday, 09 Dec 2024

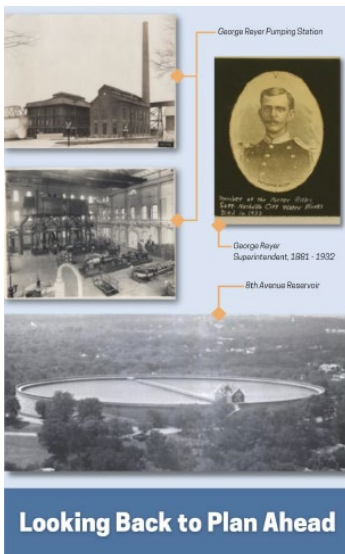
Location: Nashville, Tennessee

Objective: Gain City of Nashville perspective on water resource management in an urban environment, preservation of flood plains for flood mitigation, and visit to the Omohundro Water Treatment Plant.

Brief introductions by Nashville City Mayor's office (Mr. Bob Mendes), Mr. Oudomsack on behalf of MeRC, and Mississippi HOD (15 mins)

Brief on water resource management in an urban environment by Nashville City staff. Lead-off remarks by Mr. Phonepaseuth Phouliphanh on behalf of the MeRC, with Q&A to follow (35 mins)

Photo (10 mins)



Site Visit to Kentucky Lock and TVA Powerhouse

Time: 0800-1600, Tuesday, 10 December 2024

Location: Grand Rivers, Kentucky

Objective: Discuss the planning and design, construction, operation and maintenance, and mitigation impacts of lock infrastructure. Management of megaproject, flows and power generation.

Travel to Kentucky Lock (2 hrs)

Welcome for all to Kentucky Lock and safety briefing by LRN and TVA (10 mins)

Tour of Kentucky Lock led by LRN and TVA (50 mins)

Tour of TVA Powerhouse led by TVA (50 mins)

Reflection on the visit (in the meeting room if available?). Lead-off remark by Mr. Hak Socheat on behalf of the MRC, with Q&A to follow.

Group photo and MeRC–TVA gift exchange (10 mins)

Travel to lunch Between the Lakes Tapouse (15 mins)

Lunch (1 hr 45 mins)

Travel Back to Hotel (2 hrs)



Caven Point Marine Terminal Site Visit and New York Harbor Inspection

Time: 0900-1530, Thursday, 12 December 2024

Location: New York, New York

Objective: Site visit to the Caven Point Marine Terminal facility and the Drone Lab. Overview on New York District water management responsibilities. Conduct an inspection of New York Harbor and receive informational briefs on Hudson Rarton Estuary Restoration (HRE) and Harbor and Tributaries Focus Area Feasibility Study (HATS).

Travel to North Cove Marina (20 mins)

Travel to Caven Point Marine Terminal (55 mins)

Welcome to New York from the North Atlantic Division & US delegation by BG Lloyd, Commander, North Atlantic Division (5 mins)

Photo (10 mins)

Division Resiliency Presentation by New York District (25 mins)

Break (5 min)

Project and Drone Lab Tour facilitate by New York District. Lead-off remarks by Mrs. Nguyen Thi Thu Linh on behalf of the MeRC, with Q&A to follow (1 hr 15 mins)

Lunch (45 mins)

Presentation/Harbor Inspection facilitated by New York Dist. (2 hrs)

Travel to Hotel (30 mins)



**MEKONG RIVER COMMISSION
DELEGATION BIOGRAPHIES**



Minister of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Lao PDR Chairperson of the MRC Council for 2024

Mme. Bounkham Vorachit currently serves as the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment and Chairperson of the Lao National Mekong Committee, roles she has held since 2021. In these capacities, she plays a key role in shaping national environmental policies and advancing regional cooperation within the Mekong River Basin. She is also a Member of the Mekong River Commission's

Council for Lao PDR and is the Chairperson of the MRC Council for 2024.

Her career in environmental governance has been marked by a steady rise through leadership positions. Starting as a technical officer in 1996, Mme. Bounkham joined the Environment Division in 2000 as Deputy Director, later advancing to Deputy Director General and Director General of the Environment Department. In 2014, she was appointed Vice Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, further solidifying her leadership in the sector.

Mme. Bounkham holds a Master's Degree in Agriculture Resources and Environmental Management from Thailand and a Doctorate in Business Administration from National Economics University in Hanoi, Viet Nam. Her academic and professional background reflects a deep commitment to natural resource management and sustainable development.



Secretary-General of the Office of the National Water Resources
Secretary-General of the Thai National Mekong Committee Secretariat (TNMCS)
Member of the MRC Joint Committee for Thailand
Chairperson of the MRC Joint Committee for 2024

Dr. Surasri Kidtimonton is the Secretary-General of the Office of the National Water Resources of Thailand, under the Office of the Prime Minister, and the Secretary-General of the Thai National Mekong Committee. He also represents Thailand on the Mekong River Commission Joint Committee and serves as the Chair of the MRC Joint Committee for 2024.

His career is defined by a strong commitment to sustainable water management and addressing both national and regional water challenges. As Director-General of the Department of Royal Rainmaking and Agricultural Aviation, he led initiatives to mitigate smog, prevent hailstorms, and manage drought and flood crises while ensuring adequate water supplies in reservoirs.

Earlier, Dr. Surasri held key roles within the Royal Irrigation Department, including Director of the Trang Regional Irrigation Office and Director of the Budget Planning Division. He played a key role in national flood and drought management planning and in expanding irrigation areas to support agricultural development.

Dr. Surasri holds a Doctorate in Science for Engineering and Agricultural Technology from Okayama University, Japan.





**Chief Executive Officer
Mekong River Commission (MRC)
Secretariat**

Dr. Anoulak Kittikhoun is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Mekong River Commission (MRC) Secretariat, the first from Lao PDR, the 3rd riparian, and the 8th overall CEO to hold this role. He oversees the MRC Secretariat in Vientiane and the Regional Flood and Drought Management Centre in Phnom Penh. His leadership focuses on advancing the Mekong Basin Development Strategy 2021–2030 and the MRC Strategic Plan 2021–2025, with a strong emphasis on enhancing regional cooperation and technological innovations and elevating the MRC’s global standing.

With over a decade of experience at the MRC, Dr. Anoulak has led efforts in basin planning, international cooperation, stakeholder engagement, and strategic implementation. His career also includes positions at the United Nations Secretariat HQ and the Ralph Bunche Institute in New York City.

Dr. Anoulak holds a Bachelor’s degree from the Australian National University and a Master’s and PhD in political science from the City University of New York. Recognised as a “Lee Kuan Yew Senior Fellow in Public Service” by the LKY School of Public Policy and honoured with several other international distinctions, he is the co-author of two influential books and a frequent speaker at global forums.



**Secretary-General of Lao National Mekong Committee Secretariat (LNMCS)
Member of MRC Joint Committee for Lao PDR**

Mr. Phonepaseuth Phouliphanh currently serves as the Secretary-General of the Lao National Mekong Committee Secretariat. With over 24 years of professional experience, he has expertise in macro-economic development planning, environmental impact assessment for sustainable hydropower development, investment promotion strategy, project economic analysis, logical framework analysis, biodiversity and water ecosystem evaluation, capacity development for rural poverty reduction, organizational development and management capacity building, watershed management, integrated water resources management, water resources planning and management, flood damage assessment, and flood risk management.

Mr. Phouliphanh holds degrees in Agronomy and General Forestry, and has participated in numerous training courses and seminars domestically and internationally. His academic background and extensive work experience demonstrate a strong commitment to natural resources management and sustainable development.



**Director General
Viet Nam National Mekong Committee
Secretariat (VNMCS) Member of the MRC
Joint Committee for Viet Nam**

Ms Nguyen Thi Thu Linh is the Director General of the Viet Nam National Mekong Committee and Viet Nam's representative on the Mekong River Commission Joint Committee. Having served the Viet Nam National Mekong Committee in various capacities since 2002, with over 20 years of experience in Mekong cooperation and water resources management, Ms Linh has made notable contributions to promoting sustainable water management and regional collaboration in the Mekong Basin. From 2018 to 2021, she served as Deputy Director General of the Department of Water Resources Management at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam.

Ms Linh holds a Bachelor of Science in Forestry from the Forestry University of Viet Nam and a Master of Science in Geography from Oregon State University, USA.



Director General of Water Resource Management Department Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental of Lao PDR Alternate Member of the MRC Joint Committee for Lao PDR

Mr Oudomsack Philavong is the Director General of the Department of Water Resources of Lao PDR. Previously, he served as Deputy Secretary General of the Lao National Mekong Committee (LNMC), overseeing the technical management of both national and transboundary water resources. Prior to that, he was the Coordinator of the Mekong River Commission's (MRC) Flood Management and Mitigation Programme.

With over two decades of experience, Mr Oudomsack specialises in river basin planning, water resource modelling, data management, hydropower development, and flood and drought management. His expertise includes the application of GIS and simulation models to assess the impacts of upstream development, climate change, and floodplain activities on downstream areas.

Mr Oudomsack holds a strong engineering background, complemented by extensive water-related training, making him a key figure in the sustainable management of Lao PDR's water resources.



Deputy Secretary General Cambodia National Mekong Committee Secretariat (CNMCS)

Mr. Hak Socheat is the Deputy Secretary General of the Cambodia National Mekong Committee Secretariat (CNMCS). With over 28 years of experience in river basin institutions, he has significantly contributed to developing Basin Development Strategies, Sectoral Plans, Master/Strategic Plans, Annual Plans, Technical Guidelines, Studies,

and various Technical Reports.

Throughout his career at CNMC, Mr. Socheat has held several key positions, including Director of Planning and International Cooperation, Deputy Director of the Project Department, and Chief of the Environment Office. He also served as the National Coordinator for the Flood Management and Mitigation Programme (FMMP) of the MRC, where he coordinated and supervised FMMP-related activities, acting as a liaison between the Line Ministries and the MRC Secretariat. Additionally, he has held various roles in government agencies, such as the Ministry of Environment, and has supported implementing several projects funded by international organizations.

Mr. Socheat's educational background includes a Master of Engineering in Environmental Science from UNESCO-IHE in the Netherlands (2004) and a Bachelor of Agronomy from the Royal University of Agriculture in Cambodia (1992).



Director of Administration and Finance Department Cambodia National Mekong Committee Secretariat (CNMCS)

Mr. Ou Sophanna is the Administration and Finance Department Director at the Cambodia National Mekong Committee Secretariat (CNMCS). With 25 years of experience at the River Basin Institute, he has played a crucial role in developing strategic and annual work plans and coordinating the

implementation of organizational administration, finance, communication, and governance meetings.

Before his current role, Mr. Sophanna served as an officer in the Agricultural Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries from 1994 to 1999. He then joined the CNMCS in 1999 and later, in 2021, became the Deputy Director of the Administration and Finance Department. Currently, he acts as National Coordinator for the MRCS Administration Division, overseeing national-level activities related to human resources management, finance, procurement, and governance meetings. He also coordinates the work of the MRCS Office of the CEO, focusing on partnerships with Dialogue Partners, Development Partners, and other MRC partners.

Mr. Sophanna holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration (MBA) from the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Thailand (2004-2005) and a Bachelor of Science in Agronomy from the Royal University of Agriculture in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.



**Director of Foreign Affairs Division
The Office of the National Water
Resources (ONWR)
The Thai National Mekong Committee
Secretariat (TNMCS)**

Dr. Winai Wangpimool currently serves as the Director of the Foreign Affairs Division at the Office of the National Water Resources (ONWR). He has over 20 years of experience in transboundary water resources management. Previously, he was the Director of the Technical Support Division at the Mekong River Commission Secretariat (MRCS) and the Regional Flood and Drought Management Center in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. He oversaw technical work such as river monitoring, databases, information systems, decision support systems, modeling tools, flood and drought forecasting, early warning systems, joint studies/research and assessment, support operation and planning, and implementation of MRC's procedures.

Dr. Wangpimool has held various positions in the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the Department of Energy Development and Promotion (DEDP). He used to serve as an associate councilor of the World Association of Soil and Water Conservation (WASWAC), a sub-water committee member at the Engineering Institute of Thailand under H.M. The King's Patronage (EIT), and a member of the Thailand Council of Engineers.

Dr. Wangpimool holds a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the Rajamangkala Institute of Technology. He has a Master's and Doctorate in Water Resources Engineering from Kasetsart University, Thailand.



**Head of Division of Management and Cooperation for the Mekong River Basin
Viet Nam National Mekong Committee
Secretariat (VNMCS)**

Ms. Le Thi Huong is the Head of the Division of Management and Cooperation for the Mekong River Basin, Viet Nam National Mekong Committee. Ms. Huong joined the Viet Nam National Mekong Committee in 1997. Ms. Huong has more than 25 years of working experience in Mekong Cooperation and general affairs as a focal point of Viet Nam

National Mekong Committee for Mekong River Commission and other Mekong Cooperation frameworks related to water resources such as Mekong-Lancang Cooperation, Mekong-US Partnership, Mekong-Korea, Mekong-Australia.

Ms. Le Thi Huong holds a Bachelor of Law from the Ha Noi Law University, Viet Nam, in 1997 and a Master of Business Administration from the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, Thailand, in 2002.



Chief Strategy and Partnership Officer
Office of the Chief Executive Officer
(OCEO), MRC Secretariat

Mr. Santi Baran is the Chief Strategy and Partnership Officer at the Mekong River Commission (MRC) Secretariat, overseeing strategic planning,

monitoring and evaluation (M&E), communications, stakeholder engagement, and partnership development.

With over 10 years with the MRC, Mr. Baran has previously served as a Planning and M&E Programme Officer and an M&E Specialist. He played a key role in developing the Results Chain and Indicator Framework for the MRC's Strategic Plans (2011–2015, 2016–2020, and 2021–2025), and is responsible for preparing the MRC's Annual and Multiyear Work Plans. His extensive experience includes strategy development for international organizations and the private sector. Notably, he led preparations for both the 1st and 2nd ASEAN-MRC Water Security Dialogue and directs significant initiatives such as the MRC River Monitoring Competition and the MRC Mobile App.

Mr Baran holds a Master of Management in Organizational Development from Assumption University in Thailand.



**Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist
Office of the Chief Executive Officer
(OCEO), MRC Secretariat**

Dr. Nittana Southiseng is a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist at the Mekong River Commission Secretariat. She has more than 17 years of experience working with regional and international organizations in the region. She has diversified expertise in project management, organizational development, business administration and management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), research and studies, and transboundary water cooperation in the Lower Mekong Basin. She also has strong expertise in the development of Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) and private sector development in the region

She has solid professional experience managing and implementing regional and international development projects funded by multi-donors such as NZAID, ADB, JAIF, TICA, SDC, the Yunnan Government, DFAT, and BMZ-German Development Cooperation implemented by GIZ.

Dr. Southiseng earned her Doctoral Degree in Management Science from Thailand and two Master's Degrees - one in International Public Management from Thailand and another in Business Administration from Laos. She got a Bachelor of Arts in English from the National University of Lao

Mr. Ketsana Xaiyasarn



Director of Division cum Secretary to the Minister

Mr. Ketsana XAIYASARN graduated with a Master of Environmental Engineering and Management from the National University of Laos and a Master of International Development from Flinders University in Australia.

Mr. Ketsana has a substantial career dedicated to water resources management and the complexities of the Mekong River.

His professional journey is characterized by a progressive ascent within the realm of water management and regional cooperation. He began as a Technical Officer at the Department of Water Resources in 2009. In 2012, he moved to the Governance team at the Lao National Mekong Committee Secretariat, indicating a growing interest in regional cooperation and Mekong-related issues. He got promoted to Deputy Director of the Governance and Cooperation Division in 2017.

Mr. Ketsana became Director of Division at the Permanent Secretary Office and has served as Secretary to the Minister since 2021, placing him in a pivotal role in advising and supporting the Minister's decisions.

U.S. DELEGATION BIOGRAPHIES



MG. Kimberly A. Peeples

Maj. Gen. Kimberly A. Peeples serves as the 44th President of the Mississippi River Commission and the Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi Valley Division, which includes the Mississippi River from its headwaters to Gulf of Mexico. Peeples became Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division and was designated as

President of the Mississippi River Commission on July 12, 2023. President Joe Biden confirmed her appointment to the Commission on November 27, 2023.

Prior to serving as president of the Commission, Peeples served on the Commission as the Commander of the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, which includes a watershed covering 335,000 square miles and the entire Ohio River Basin. The management of the Ohio River plays a critical role in managing the lower Mississippi River, as 60 percent of the Mississippi's flow comes from the Ohio River.

Peeples' military education includes the Engineer Officer Basic Course, the Air Defense Artillery Advanced Course, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the U.S. Army War College. She holds a master's degree in Construction Management from the University of Washington in Seattle and a master's degree from the U.S. Army War College in Strategic Studies.



RDML Ben Evans

Rear Adm. Benjamin Evans is the Director of NOAA's Office of Coast Survey and U.S. National Hydrographer. He is responsible for overseeing NOAA's hydrographic services, including the mapping and charting of all U.S. coastal waters, as well as representing the U.S. in international hydrographic efforts. RDML Evans is the 32nd leader of the office since the first

superintendent, Ferdinand R. Hassler, was appointed in 1833.

Immediately prior to selection for flag rank, RDML Evans served as the acting chief of staff of the National Ocean Service (NOS). Significant past assignments in Coast Survey include chief of the Pacific Hydrographic Branch with responsibility for quality assurance of NOAA's West Coast hydrographic data, and chief of the Data Acquisition and Control Branch where he managed NOAA's hydrographic survey contracting program. He also served at NOAA headquarters on the staff of the NOAA administrator.

RDML Evans is a native of Williamson, New York, a small town on the shore of Lake Ontario. He earned a bachelor's degree in physics from Williams College, completing the Williams-Mystic Maritime Studies Program as part of his undergraduate work. RDML Evans went on to graduate studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology / Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Joint Program, where his research concentrated on acoustic navigation systems for autonomous underwater vehicles. He holds a Certificate in Maritime Management from the Pacific Lutheran University, and completed the Executive Fellows Program at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. He is an American Conference on Surveying and Mapping / Hydrographic Society of America Certified Hydrographer.



HON/Dr. Robert Miller

Dr. Robert Miller serves as one of three civilian members on the Mississippi River Commission. President Joseph Biden appointed Dr. Miller to a nine-year term on the Commission on September 27, 2022. In addition to his role on the Commission, Dr. Miller is a professor of civil and environmental engineering and assistant director of the Watershed Flood Center at the University of Louisiana at

Lafayette.

Dr. Miller's research interests include hydraulics and hydrology and applied research in water resources engineering and mathematical biology. His research uses math to quantify key variables in water-related challenges such as sea level rise, saltwater intrusion and water quality.

Prior to his academic career, Miller worked in private industry on a variety of projects to include coastal restoration and design, drainage and hydraulic impact studies, hydraulic design for energy exploration and production and watershed drainage master plans.

Miller earned his bachelor's degree and Ph.D. in civil engineering from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.



HON/Mr. Riley James

Mr. Albert Riley James, Chief Executive Officer and Manager of A.C. Riley Cotton Company in New Madrid, Missouri, was appointed by President Donald A. Trump to the Mississippi River Commission, March 24, 2020.

James succeeds Mr. Sam Angel, the MRC's longest standing member who was appointed by President Jimmy Carter, September 25, 1979.

James has long been affiliated with the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association, which represents flood control interests along the seven states of the lower Mississippi River. Through his affiliation with the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association, he has served on the Executive Committee and as state Vice- President from Missouri.

In 2014, James served as President of the Southern Cotton Ginners Association, which represents cotton gins from Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Missouri. He also served as Missouri's Alternate Member to The Cotton Board, a delegate to National Cotton Council, and as Secretary-Treasurer for Missouri Cotton Growers. In 2016, he was recognized with the Missouri Department of Agriculture "Missouri Agriculture Legacy Award."

James earned a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Economics from Mississippi State University in 1995, and a Master of Business Administration from Washington University in 2005. He has lived his entire life in the Mississippi River Valley and spent his life's work and civic service in efforts to promote economic prosperity in the region.



HON/Mr. James A. Reeder

Mr. James A. “Jim” Reeder serves as one of three civilian members of the Mississippi River Commission. President Donald Trump appointed Mr. Reeder to the Commission on May 17, 2018. Prior to joining the Commission, Mr. Reeder worked as a civil engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for 38 years. During this time, he served as deputy director of Programs Directorate and chief of

Civil Works Integration for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi Valley Division, which was responsible for programming and executing all features of the \$1.1 billion programming/budgeting mission for the division. During his more than 30 years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Memphis District, Mr. Reeder oversaw work on numerous project features of the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project within the district.

Mr. Reeder has also served in U.S. Army Corps of Engineers districts overseas, including a tour in Baghdad, Iraq, with the Corps’ Procurement Contracting Office, serving as deputy to the director of the Reconstruction Program, assisting in managing and leading more than 300 civilians, contractors and military service officers in the execution of the \$1.4 billion Iraq Reconstruction Relief Program.

Mr. Reeder earned a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from Christian Brothers University in Memphis and a master’s degree in civil engineering from the University of Memphis. He is a registered professional engineer in the state of Tennessee.



Mr. Charles A. Camillo

Mr. Charles A. Camillo is the Executive Director of the Mississippi River Commission and has served in that position since 2015. Mr. Camillo also serves as the Executive Assistant to the President of the Mississippi River Commission and Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi Valley Division.

Mr. Camillo began his career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1993 and came to work for the Mississippi River Commission/Mississippi Valley Division in 2001. Prior to becoming the Director of the Mississippi River Commission, Camillo authored *Divine Providence: The 2011 Flood in the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project*, published in 2012; and co-authored *Upon Their Shoulders: A History of the Mississippi River Commission*, published in 2004. Camillo also served as the Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works in 2020.

Mr. Camillo holds a bachelor's degree in history from Millikin University and a master's degree in history from Illinois State University.



Mr. Jeff Varisco

Jeff Varisco serves as the Strategic Engagements and Communications Officer for the Mississippi River Commission (MRC) and for the Mississippi Valley Division (MVD).

Mr. Varisco is a native of New Orleans, Louisiana, and has lived his entire life within the Mississippi Valley. He graduated

from the University of New Orleans in 2005 with a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a master's degree in 2009 in Urban/Technical Geography with a minor in Urban Planning. He began his professional career at the Corps of Engineers in June of 2009 at the New Orleans District as a project manager and served as senior project manager on a number of nationally recognizable projects such as the Mississippi River Levees construction program (over \$500M in awarded contracts), lead manager for the unprecedented Section 10/404 and 408 regulatory permit for the State of Louisiana's \$2.7B Mid Barataria Sediment Diversion on the Lower Mississippi River, the \$3.7B West Shore Lake Pontchartrain flood risk reduction system. He began working for the MRC and MVD in 2022, and the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Lock Complex project valued at over \$2B.

Mr. Varisco is married and has a 5-year-old daughter; he is an avid runner and loves his local sports teams (New Orleans Saints and Pelicans) even though they bring him agony and displeasure on an annual basis. He also adopted Liverpool as his soccer team in the early 2000s, which has enjoyed greater success and achievements than the Saints and Pelicans combined.



Mr. Jonathan Andrew Ashley

Andy Ashley serves as Director of the Mississippi River Science & Technology Office for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Mississippi Valley Division (MVD), and the Mississippi River Commission.

As part of this role, Mr. Ashley administers the Mississippi River Geomorphology and Potamology (MRG&P) Program which aims to

improve our understanding of the evolving geomorphology of the Mississippi River from the confluence of the Missouri River to the Gulf of Mexico. Mr. Ashley previously served for nine years as Deputy Chief of Watershed Division for MVD which oversees the Hydrology and Hydraulics regional function for the six USACE districts within MVD. He holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Mississippi State University, a Master of Engineering from the University of Florida, and a Master of Theological Studies from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a registered professional engineer in the State of Alabama.

The MRG&P Program publishes a series of technical reports that are available to the public for all to learn more about how the Mississippi River has and is changing.



LTC Garrett Dean

Lieutenant Colonel Garrett A. Dean became the Deputy Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division in August 2024.

Lt. Col. Dean graduated from the United States Military Academy with a degree in civil engineering. Upon receiving his commission as an engineer officer, he proceeded to serve in the active-duty component for eight years in various leadership and staff roles beginning with the 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas, and then the 19th Engineer Battalion at Fort Knox, Kentucky. He deployed on three separate tours to Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Iraq in support of the Global War on Terror.

Lt. Col. Dean is a graduate of the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced courses, the Army Command and General Staff College, and holds a master's degree in engineering management from Missouri University of Science and Technology. He is a certified Project Management Professional and a licensed Professional Engineer.



BG. Joseph “Clete” Goetz

Brigadier General Joseph Goetz serves as the 35th Commander and Division Engineer of the Pacific Ocean Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. As the Division Engineer, he is responsible for a mission that includes engineering design, construction and real estate management throughout Hawaii and the Indo-Pacific.

He has served as the 100th Commandant of the U.S. Army Engineer School at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, where he oversaw the professional military education and functional training courses for the U.S. Army combat engineers and oversaw the development of doctrine for combat engineer operations.

BG Goetz is a graduate of the Army War College and has earned degrees in Civil Engineering from the United States Military Academy, University of Missouri at Rolla, and the University of Texas at Austin. He is a registered Professional Engineer.



LT Grayson Olep

First Lieutenant Greyson Olep is currently serving as the Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General, Pacific Ocean Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. His previous assignments include Platoon Leader and Company Executive Officer in the 70th Brigade Engineer Battalion, Fort Wainwright, Alaska. First Lieutenant Olep commissioned as an

Engineer Officer in 2021 and graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York with a Bachelor of Science in Systems Engineering. He is a native of San Diego, California.



Mr. Craig Pierce

Craig Pierce serves as the Deputy for Programs and Project Management and Chief, Programs and Project Management Division for the Little Rock District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). He began this assignment in May 2018. In this position, Craig is responsible for staff leadership and oversight of the District's Civil Works, Military, and Interagency and International Support programs.

Mr. Pierce's previous assignments within the Little Rock District include Chief, Engineering and Construction Division; Chief, Medical Support Division; Chief, Programs and Project Management Division (PPMD); Chief, Military Programs Branch in PPMD; Project Manager; and Study Manager. He also served as the Deputy District Engineer for Programs and Project Management for the Transatlantic Afghanistan District from May 2015 to May 2016. Craig has served as an instructor for the Project Management-Military Programs

Mr. Pierce holds a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the U.S. Air Force Academy and a Master of Science degree in Environmental Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology. He is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Squadron Officer's School, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College. He has also completed the Harvard Kennedy School Senior Executive Fellows program. He is a registered Professional Engineer in Arkansas and Texas and is a certified Project Management Professional. He is also a member of the Society of American Military Engineers and the American Society of Civil Engineers.



Mr. Evan Ting

Mr. Evan Ting serves as the Chief of Program Support Division & International Cooperation for the Pacific Ocean Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In this role, he provides oversight on international cooperation activities in the Indo-Pacific region.

Ting is a Civil Engineer with experience in leadership, programs

and project management, civil design, water resources management, and construction. His portfolio includes working on commercial, national, military, and international infrastructure projects.

Ting has extensive experience in international cooperation, working closely with foreign partners and the U.S. Interagency in areas of building partner capacity, strategic partnerships, humanitarian assistance, disaster response and risk mitigation, and infrastructure development. He has supported disaster response efforts both domestically and abroad, to include deploying to Pakistan during the 2010 monsoon floods. Other assignments include Chief Engineer for the Regional Support Command, NATO Training Mission Afghanistan. He has been involved with the Sister Rivers Partnership since 2013.

Ting holds B.S. and M.S. Degrees in Civil Engineering, and a M.S. in Strategic Studies.



Mr. Trey Maddox

Trey Maddox is currently the Senior Program Manager for Interagency and International Services within Pacific Ocean Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He manages security cooperation activities in the INDOPACIFIC theater.

Trey Maddox entered as a Department of Army Civilian in 2006 as an intern with United States Army Garrison Hawaii (USAG-HI). He completed his internship in 2008 and since then has held positions at USARPAC and HQMC. At USAG-HI, he served as a Utilities System Manager at the Directorate of Public Works. There he served as COR for 2 each 50-year (\$500M and \$320M respectively) Utilities Privatization contracts. At USARPAC he managed numerous security cooperation operations, activities, and investments and provided engineer support to the development of OPLANS within the INDOPACOM theater. Finally, at MCICOM he managed the MILCON program (\$8B) required to facilitate the relocation of Marines from Okinawa to a brand-new base in Guam.

2006 Bachelor of Science, Industrial Engineering, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

Trey Maddox is married to Rhea. they have 4 children: Minor (son), Maverick (son), Nova (daughter), and Bo (daughter).



Mr. Josh Biggers

Josh Biggers is a District Support Team Lead and Senior Program Manager, supporting all lines of business across the Pacific, including over \$36B in USACE programs for Civil Works, Military, Host Nation, Environmental, Real Estate, Emergency, and International Support. Mr. Biggers serves as a District advocate and focal point in coordinating with

HQ USACE, HQ POD, and districts to facilitate mission execution. As a Senior Program Manager, Mr. Biggers supports regular district evaluations and engagements, including Program Management Reviews, Design and Construction Evaluations, and Command Assistance Visits.

Mr. Biggers has a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Loyola Marymount University (Cum Laude) and a Master of Business Administration degree from Regis University. He has also graduated from several military training courses, including Air Command and Staff College, Air War College, and the Army Civilian Education System Advanced Course. Mr. Biggers is an active volunteer for the Society of American Military Engineers, and is presently the Regional Vice President for the Pacific, supporting five posts and two field chapters.



Ms. Nahaku Mcfadden

Nahaku McFadden is the Regional Director of Public Affairs, USACE Pacific Ocean Division responsible for external communications for a complex and diverse missions that includes engineering design, construction and real estate management for the Army in Hawaii, Army and Air Force in Alaska, and for

all Department of Defense Services and Agencies in Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands. Pacific Ocean Division administers the Corps' federal water resource development program and waters and wetlands regulatory programs in Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A retired U.S. Air Force Colonel, she has over 30 years of experience in public affairs, media relations, military operations, crisis communications, strategic communications, and social media marketing.



Mr. Todd Hannah

Todd Hannah is the Deputy Director of the Bangkok Regional Environmental Office, focusing on transboundary issues to enhance regional cooperation across 17 countries in East and Southeast Asia. Previously, he spent five years in Mission China, addressing bilateral climate issues within the Environment, Science and Technology, Health (ESTH) Section at Embassy Beijing. His diplomatic career also includes roles at Embassy Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Consulate General Shanghai. A retired U.S. Coast Guard veteran, Todd has also worked for the Department of the Navy. He holds a bachelor's degree from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and master's degrees from the Naval Postgraduate School and the National Intelligence University. Outside of work, Todd enjoys surfing, scuba diving, running, and spending time with his three daughters.



Mr. Aaron Brownell

Aaron Brownell joined USAID in January of 2005 and served in Washington DC, Madagascar, Senegal, Southern Africa Regional and Vietnam. He currently serves as the Director of the Regional Environment Office of the U.S. Agency for International Development/Regional

Development Mission for Asia based in Bangkok, Thailand. He leads a 23-person team and an active portfolio valued at \$248 million to address the most pressing transnational development challenges in Southeast Asia through regional partnerships and private sector engagement.

His office improves natural resource management, accelerating energy sector transformation and reducing deforestation and emissions from the land use sector. USAID uses a market-based approach to strengthen sustainable fisheries management and combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. The office also supports the application of environmental and social safeguards to protect valuable natural resources, sustain economic growth, and improve governance.



BG John Lloyd

Brig. Gen. John P. Lloyd joined the North Atlantic Division as its commander and division engineer June 24, 2022.

The North Atlantic Division is one of nine regions providing engineering and construction services to the nation. It is the USACE headquarters for the Northeastern United States, Europe, and Africa, with offices in Concord, Mass., New

York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Norfolk, Va., and Wiesbaden, Germany. As division commander, Lloyd oversees a regional team of more than 3,600 professionals and an annual program of more than \$6 billion to plan, design and construct projects that support the military, protect America's water resources, mitigate risk from disasters, and restore and enhance the environment. He is responsible for a mission set that includes a \$1.1 billion Civil Works program, the largest Military Construction and International, Interagency and Environmental programs executed within USACE in Fiscal Year 2023, and world-class support teams including Contracting, Small Business, Real Estate, and other essential enablers.

A native of Lockport, New York, Lloyd earned his commission May 1995 through the Reserve Officer Training Corps at Cameron University, Lawton, Oklahoma. Along with his undergraduate degree, he has earned a master's in Joint Campaign and Strategic Planning from the National Defense University and graduated from the Canadian Forces College where he studied National Security Policy.



Mr. Matthew Cosby

Matthew Cosby has worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the past 15 years, beginning in 2009 with the St. Louis District after working in the private sector as a biologist for a St. Louis-based engineering firm. In his first role at the district, he served as a regulatory specialist in the Regulatory Branch of the Operations Division. In 2012, after developmental assignments in planning and project management, he accepted a position as a project manager in the Project Development Branch. While there, he found an opportunity during his time on one of the district's projects to transition as a dual-funded employee with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as an urban waters ambassador. This interagency position advanced the Civil Works missions of the district, EPA's Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) mission, and the urban waters mission for the EPA and the St. Louis region.

In November 2015, Cosby accepted a position as a Civil Works project manager at the USACE New York District where he worked on flood risk management and ecosystem restoration projects, as well as coordinated the Silver Jackets programs for Vermont and New York states. In November 2019, Cosby accepted the position of chief of staff for the New York District, where he was responsible for all aspects of administrative and operational synchronization of the district's staff. In January 2024, he began as the chief of staff for the North Atlantic Division (NAD), where he develops strategic relationships, integrates program staff, and serves as a strategic advisor for the NAD command team..



COL Alexander Young

Colonel Alexander Young assumed command of USACE, New York District, on July 14, 2023. He is responsible for the Corps' water resource development, navigation, and regulatory activities in northeastern New Jersey, eastern and south-central New York State, including the New York and New

Jersey Harbor and Long Island, as well as areas of Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. Colonel Young oversees the design and construction at U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force installations in New Jersey, New York, and Greenland. Colonel Young holds the title of Supervisor of the New York and New Jersey Harbor.

Colonel Young holds a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, P.A. He also holds a Master of Military Arts and science degree from the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, K.S., and a Master of Science in strategic studies degree from the United States Army War College in Carlisle, P.A.

He is a licensed Project Management Professional. Colonel Young's military education includes the Army Engineer Basic and Advanced Courses, the Command and General Staff College, School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), and the Army War College where he graduated from the Advanced Strategic Art Program.



Mr. Joseph Seebode

Mr. Joseph J. Seebode is an Environmental Engineer with more than 35 years of experience in engineering program management, water resource engineering, environmental restoration and remediation, solid waste management, natural resource protection, watershed planning, emergency preparedness and response, and federal and state regulatory

programs.

Mr. Seebode serves as the Deputy District Engineer and Chief of Programs and Project Management for the New York District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers where he manages a diverse team of engineers and scientists in administering programs investing in military construction, civil works, and regional infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Seebode oversees major Civil Works and Military Construction programs in New York, New Jersey and Greenland. He also oversees the New York District's International, Interagency, and Environmental Services Program, which is performing work for various partners including the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the City of New York. He recently took on additional Program Management responsibilities and oversight of \$3.2 billion to repair, restore and increase coastal resilience after the devastating impacts of Hurricane Sandy.

