

Demand for water rises with BRAC

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As 2010 draws to a close and the relocation of the Armor School kicks into high gear, Fort Benning officials and planners are making sure the installation is ready for the demands that growth brings. Not least among these is the need for water.

“Between 2005 when BRAC was announced and 2015, we expect about 28,000 (increase in) supported population ... in the area,” said Col. Frederick Wolf, deputy garrison commander-transformation. “We immediately started looking at the infrastructure we’d need to support this growth and a big part of it was water.”

A collaboration between the Directorate of Public Works, the Army Corps of Engineers and Columbus Water Works to address water supply began shortly after the start of Base Realignment and Closure, said Rick Clapp, DPW engineering division chief.

“Columbus Water Works did a study of the projected increase, of where new personnel was going to reside, of where water would be delivered,” Clapp said. “The planning has been done and the construction is done or (started).”

“Columbus Water Works is under way with three projects, which will ensure reliable drinking water availability for all our Soldiers and all personnel on Fort Benning in support of the mission to train troops,” said Tom Horn, manager of engineering with Columbus Water Works.

The projects are a raw water intake structure, a raw water transmission main and a water plant.

The intake structure, located on the Chattahoochee River, south of Upatoi Creek, “will withdraw up to 8.3 million gallons of river water per day and pump it to the plant as needed for treatment and distribution,” Horn said.

The transmission main, featuring 9,500 feet of 24-inch diameter piping, will transport water from the intake structure at the river to the plant on Marne Road. The plant is a refurbished version of the original treatment plant designed by the Army’s Office of the Quartermaster General in 1938, Horn said.

“The new plant will have the capacity to provide 8 million gallons per day and can be expanded in the future if need be,” he said.

The finished plant will include efficient treatment processes, such as membrane filtration technology and pretreatment measures, Horn said, and it will be able to serve any part of Fort Benning’s water system with the Columbus system providing a limited amount of additional water.

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“Total BRAC expenditure on water and wastewater infrastructure upgrades done by Columbus Water Works will be \$63.5 million,” he said.

“Construction actually began summer of 2008 and will conclude first of 2012.”

Columbus Water Works was in charge of 13 projects, Horn said, but the Corps of Engineers completed several as well, including about six wastewater stations on Harmony Church.

As far as water supply goes, Wolf said, “we’re on schedule and on track in order to support the growth from BRAC.”

That includes the Armor School, U.S. Army Reserve Command units, DoD civilians, contractors and family members who will live and work in the area, he said.