



US Army Corps of Engineers Norfolk District



Colonel Andrew W. Backus, P.E.

Norfolk District Commander

Colonel Andrew W. Backus assumed Command of the Norfolk District, US Army Corps of Engineers on June 12, 2009. As District Commander, he manages the Corps' water resources development and navigable waterways operations for five river basins in the Commonwealth of Virginia. These include the Rappahannock, York, James and Chowan rivers and the Chesapeake Bay coastal basin. He is also responsible for the Corps' military design and construction projects for Army, Army Reserve and Air Force military installations throughout Virginia. He manages the Corps' regulatory, environmental restoration, flood damage reduction (including hurricane and storm damage reduction) and disaster response activities, and also provides engineering support to our nation's Overseas Contingency Operations.

Colonel Backus recently completed his Senior Service College year as the Army's Leadership and Management National Security Fellow at Harvard University. Prior to attending Harvard, he served as a Human Resources Manager in the Senior Leader Development Office on the Army Staff at the Pentagon.

Colonel Backus was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts and raised in Wilton, Maine. He graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1988 and earned a Master of Science degree in Engineering from the University of Washington in 1999. His military education includes the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses and the Command and General Staff College. Colonel Backus is a registered Professional Engineer.

Colonel Backus' key military assignments include three tours of duty, including command, of the 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power)—the Army's only prime power engineer unit. His unit conducted continuous operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan to support electrical power for coalition base camps. It also responded to numerous disaster events in the United States, such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the US Gulf Coast as part of the Army Corps of Engineers' role in the nation's emergency response plan.

Colonel Backus' other assignments include command of an engineer unit with 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; service on a joint task force to restore electrical power to Baghdad following the Iraq invasion in 2003, and duty as executive officer to the US Army Corps of Engineers Deputy Commanding General in Washington DC. He commanded companies in the 249th Engineer Battalion and the 14th Engineer Battalion at Ft. Lewis, Washington, where he deployed to fight forest fires in the Pacific Northwest. Colonel Backus began his military career with the 6th Engineer Battalion in Alaska as platoon leader and company executive officer, with deployments to Japan, the Joint Readiness Training Center, and the National Training Center.

His military decorations feature the Bronze Star Medal (with oak leaf cluster), Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (with five oak leaf clusters), Army Commendation Medal (with oak leaf cluster), Army Achievement Medal (with two oak leaf clusters), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal (three awards), the Ranger tab, the Sapper tab and the Parachutist Badge.