

2023 Secretary of Defense Environmental Award Request Nomination Narrative
 Natural Resources Conservation - Team
 Defense Supply Center Columbus (DSCC) Environmental Management Division

Introduction:

DSCC in Columbus, Ohio is the Land and Maritime Supply Chain headquarters for the Defense Logistics Agency. DSCC manages 2.1 million items and supports more than 145,000 customers throughout the military services, civil agencies, and other Department of Defense organizations. DSCC awards over 707,000 contracts annually, supports nearly 1,400 weapon systems, handles over 6.7 million orders on a yearly basis, with annual sales topping \$3.5 billion. It is a unique installation that capitalizes on the synergy of state, federal and defense organizations such as the Ohio National Guard and Reserves, a new Veterans Administration Clinic, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, and Defense Information Systems Agency, which are collocated on or near the site.

The DSCC Environmental Management Division team’s members support this important mission by ensuring that DSCC maintains compliance with all environmental laws and regulations and sustainably manages its natural resources. The team has created a model small installation natural resources conservation program that goes well beyond compliance by implementing innovative initiatives that create a more pleasing and sustainable natural environment for employees and visitors to the installation. The team’s natural resources outreach efforts are also a model for how a small installation can go beyond what is required for regulatory compliance, while effectively supporting mission goals. The following narrative provides details on their exemplary outreach through collaboration with federal and state regulators and public interest groups. In addition, the DSCC Environmental Management Division team has developed unique ways to raise natural resources awareness including nine articles, clean water posters, and stormwater 101 virtual training. The children and parents of the Child Development Center (CDC) learn hands on through the sensory experience.

Background:

Name	Title	Organization	Projects
Nicole Goicochea	(Formerly) Chief, Environmental Management Division	Environmental Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2* Bioswale Upgrades* CDC Garden* Legacy Project* Monarchs in the Rough* Native Prairie* One Water Council* USA Tree City* US Fish and Wildlife* Partnership

Matthew Foreman	(Formerly) Lead General Engineer	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2 Bioswale Upgrades* Legacy Project* Native Prairie One Water Council* USA Tree City*
Samuel Zentkovich	Environmental Protection Specialist	Environmental Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2 CDC Garden USA Tree City
Robert Scalamera	Environmental Protection Specialist	Environmental Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	One Water Council
Anthony Cea	Facility Engineer	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2 One Water Council USA Tree City CDC Garden
Julie Seymour	(Formerly) Deputy Facility Engineer	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2 One Water Council USA Tree City CDC Garden
Shawn Burkhart	Maintenance Mechanic Supervisor	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2 Bioswale Upgrades Native Prairie
James Abbott	Mason	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2 Bioswale Upgrades
David White	Administrative	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2 Native Prairie
William Laughery	Maintenance Supervisor	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2 Bioswale Upgrades Native Prairie
Zachary Lower	Maintenance Worker	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2

James Faught	Maintenance Worker	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 &2
Patrick Davies	Maintenance Worker	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 1 & 2
Jack Bishop	Maintenance Worker	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Arbor Day 2
Richard Bendure	Pest Applicator	Installation Management Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Native Prairie*
Stefanie Houck	Public Affairs Specialist	Land and Maritime (Defense Logistics Agency)	Arbor Day 1 & 2 CDC Garden Legacy Project Monarchs in the Rough Native Prairie USA Tree City
Jeffery Bills	Golf Course Manager	Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Monarchs in the Rough
William Jackson	Recreation Aide	Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Division, Installation Management (Defense Logistics Agency) at DSCC	Monarchs in the Rough
*Denotes principal member or major contributor			

Position Description:

The Environmental Management Division portion of the team is responsible for maintaining environmental compliance at the Defense Supply Center Columbus. This includes implementing the following programs: Air Quality, Water Quality, Asbestos/Lead, Fuel Storage Tanks, Hazardous Waste/ Material, NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act), Pesticide Management, Pollution Prevention, Sustainability, Installation Restoration, Potable Water, Solid Waste (Recycling/ composting), Cultural/ Natural Resources Management, and Environmental Management Systems. The Installation Management Division portion of the team is responsible for all projects and activities on the installation to include carpentry, masonry, mechanic and shop functions, project design, and contract oversight. The Security and Emergency Services

portion of the team is responsible for overseeing the police and fire forces on the installation, as well as physical security and antiterrorism. The MWR portion of the team is responsible for all MWR functions on the installation to include managing the golf course, CDC, outdoor recreation, and ticket sales. The projects below have brought several divisions together to accomplish. This opportunity helped each division to learn more about the goals of the others. Natural resource conservation awareness was one such goal that was radiated from environmental out to sister divisions.

Relevant Awards:

Ohio Department of Natural Resources certification of DSCC as a USA Tree City, January 2018 - 2023

Summary of Accomplishments (Oct 2021 – Sep 2023):

Environmental Enhancement and Forest Management:

DSCC has been certified as a USA Tree City annually since 2018 by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Arbor Day Foundation. Tree City USA is a nationwide program that provides the framework necessary for communities to manage and expand their urban forest. DSCC has achieved Tree City USA status by meeting four core standards of sound urban forestry management: maintaining a tree board, having a tree ordinance, spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry and celebrating Arbor Day. The Environmental Management Division has prevented future planting of invasive species by implementation a Tree Permit system. The USA Tree City initiative is an example of a strong partnership with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

As part of an ongoing effort to further develop Defense Supply Center Columbus' urban forest under the Tree City USA program, 37 larger caliper native trees were planted at the DSCC MWR Sports Park May 10, 2022 by Installation Management personnel. The trees were planted to shade the walkway and track and to beautify the park. The trees were selected by the team in partnership with an Urban Forester of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry. The selected tree species will provide maximum diversity benefiting the ecology around the sports park. Species planted include several native oak varieties, arborvitae, tulip tree, elm, buckeye, hackberry, Kentucky coffee tree, catalpa, serviceberry, witch hazel and choke cherry. The trees were celebrated during the annual DSCC Arbor Day Celebration at the MWR Sports Park on May 20, 2022 with a reading of the 2022 Arbor Day Proclamation by Defense Logistics Agency Installation Management – Columbus Site Director Kristine Freels and a brief discussion on the importance of the Tree City USA program. Commander Fabry thanked everyone for their efforts and coined several individuals responsible for the successful planting of the trees from Installation Management and the Environmental Management Division.



Part of the team poses with Commander Fabry during the 2022 Arbor Day Celebration.

During the following year, Defense Supply Center celebrated the planting of several additional native trees and shrubs at the DLA Police and Fire Memorial during an Arbor Day ceremony on May 23, 2023. The trees were celebrated with a reading of the 2023 Arbor Day Proclamation by Defense Logistics Agency Installation Management – Columbus Site Director Kristine Freels and delivered remarks that underscored how the Tree City USA program preserves natural resources among the built infrastructure of the installation and while enhancing species and employee resilience alike. Three southern magnolia, two eastern redbuds, 16 eastern arborvitae and several white panicle hydrangea shrubs were planted around the memorial and grounds near the DSCC police station at Building 58. Toward the front of the memorial, white vinca, a dense flowering annual was installed to further beautify the space. The trees and other native plantings were selected by the installation in partnership with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry. The planting at the memorial adds an ecological corridor, connecting two other nearby spaces. Behind the police station are two rows of serviceberry, northern catalpa and chinkapin oak which were installed a few years ago. A bioswale of river birch, willows and wet understory plants hug the east side of the station.



Part of the team poses with Site Director Kristine Freels in front of the Arbor Day plantings in 2023.

Conservation Education:

The CDC Garden has been planted every year since 2014. FY2022 and FY2023 were no exception. The CDC Garden is a sensory garden planted with vegetables and flowers. Each plant is selected for ease of growing and sensory experience (sight, touch, smell, taste) and has been vetted by our Industrial Hygienist to ensure that all plants are 100% edible. (E.g., the tomato plant has toxic leaves, so it is not allowed in the CDC Garden.) Each year, the Environmental Management Division provides opening remarks and spends time assisting the children during the planting event. Every Kindergarten Prep student plants at least one seedling under the care of the team and CDC staff. The program also includes preschool and toddler classrooms in care of the garden. The CDC teachers discuss the importance of growing plants that help our pollinators while the children water and weed the garden throughout the growing season. The children bring their harvest to the Chef, who prepares and serves the fresh vegetables and herbs. There are even pumpkins for Halloween! Two rain barrels are kept in the garden area to ensure water is readily available for the children to use and to spark discussions about stormwater runoff and water conservation. There is no better way to learn about nature than experiencing it. With luck, the garden will remind the children of the importance of natural resources when they are adults.



Pictures of the CDC Garden planting from right: CDC Garden after planting is complete, Nicole Goicochea plants cilantro with two preschool students, Nicole Goicochea helps a preschooler fill a watering can from the rain barrel.

Land Use Management (Stream Erosion control and Stormwater Runoff Improvements, Invasive Species Removal):

In August of 2023 DSCC was awarded Legacy funding for a nature-based solution design project. The project is titled Dry Detention Adaptation to Constructed Wetlands – Design. The project was awarded to the US Army Corps. of Engineers in September of 2023. DSCC analyzed climate risks through the Defense Climate Assessment Tool. Drought and flooding were the top two risks with heat island and temperature increases not far behind. Erosion of the creeks on the installation is also a concern. To tackle these vulnerabilities, we have evaluated the storm water system. Four dry detention basins are currently serving a major storm water element of the system. These basins were designed with 1990s era guidance and could be greatly improved by implementing a nature-based upgrade. Adapting the dry basins to wet extended detention (constructed wetland) will alleviate flooding, particularly along Mason Run, which has also experienced erosion. The dry basins are currently mowed grass. Terrestrial and aquatic native landscaping will be installed as part of the conversion. Plants will be chosen that benefit the endangered or threatened species in Franklin County to include bats and pollinators. Adding trees and shrubs near to large parking lots will also decrease the heat island effect. The water quality entering Mason Run will be greatly improved due to the extended detention constructed wetland's numerous pollutant removal mechanisms including uptake by vegetation and algae; filtering; sedimentation; chemical and biological decomposition; sorption; and volatilization, as well as its use of vegetation to stabilize captured sediment and provide shade for thermal moderation within the pools. Extreme weather patterns often disproportionately impact underserved communities threatening soil, air, and water quality. The City of Whitehall is community with environmental justice concerns that would receive the downstream improved water quality and decreased risk of flooding and erosion. A Department of Defense (DoD) Design Guide for Legacy Detention Basin Adaptation to Constructed Wetland will be written which will be posted on DENIX and shared with partners interested in also converting dry detention basins to wet extended detention with native landscaping.

Other Natural Resources Conservation:

Pollinators are on the decline throughout the U.S. The main reason for the decline in populations is habitat loss and pesticide use. The team decided to establish a project to provide a natural pollinator habitat on DSCC. A native prairie refers to land in its original or natural state and is an important part of the ecosystem. The team worked to plant a three-acre native prairie in December 2017. The prairie consists of all native Ohio grasses, perennials, and annuals. The mix was formulated for pollinators and contains blooms for spring, summer, and fall. Simultaneously, the team worked with MWR to plant the same seed mix at the Golf Course in the rough areas. The combined effort results in substantial pollinator habit and a reduced cost to DSCC. The prairie areas are only mowed once a year reducing manpower previously utilized to mow regularly throughout the growing season. In the spring of 2023, the prairie was overseeded with native flowering perennials. It was noted during the previous two years that grasses were becoming more dominant in the prairie. Although native grasses are a very important part of the prairie, adding blooming plants keeps the balance and provides a higher quality habitat for pollinators. In the spring of 2023, a path was created through the prairie which allows visitors a much better view of the diverse plants. On any given day in the summer and early fall, hundreds

of bees, butterflies, bumblebees, and other pollinators can be seen nectaring. The team hosted a butterfly count September 13, 2023 to establish a baseline of how many species the prairie habitat is supporting. Volunteers stopped by during the two-hour count period to take stock of how many butterflies were present in the prairie while on their lunch break. Species seen included monarch, eastern tiger swallowtail, cloudless sulphur, orange sulphur, black swallowtail and cabbage white, plus hundreds of bees, bumblebees, beetles, pollinating flies, dragonflies, damselflies and more. The count also served to raise awareness about the prairie so that more associates can take advantage of it. Walking the path during lunchtime or a break immerses one in nature and can really relieve the stress of the workday.

In August of 2022, Defense Supply Center Columbus Eagle Eye Golf Course was designated as a Monarchs in the Rough official habitat site for the monarch butterfly by Audubon International. The designation is a result of a partnership between Defense Logistics Agency Installation Management – Columbus’ Environmental Management Division and DSCC’s Morale Welfare and Recreation and is part of an ongoing effort to create pollinator habitat on the installation. Audubon International and the Environmental Defense Fund administers the Monarchs in the Rough program partnering with golf courses nationwide to create pollinator habitat in out-of-play or rough areas. According to the United States Golf Association, golf courses represent some of the last remaining green space in many communities. The program raises awareness about the decline of monarch butterflies and provides much needed breeding habitat. It aims to boost populations by gaining participation from courses along the migration route from Canada to Mexico. The program was created to help bolster monarch butterfly populations which have been in a steep decline in recent years and are a threatened species due to habitat loss, migratory route disruptions and other environmental factors. An important part of the Monarchs in the Rough program is the distribution of milkweed seed to participating courses. The milkweed provided by Audubon was planted in the spring of 2023 as part of the certification process. The Monarchs in the Rough designation is marked with a sign located along the tall rough area along the fifth hole. Bluebird boxes are also placed on the course to support native birds. The rough areas are not just for golfers. The course is located right across from Sports Park. There is access to a nice, paved trail through a large section of the rough area. Anyone with base access can walk out and enjoy all the species present. The Eagle Eye Golf Course is a 9-hole course and offers memberships to all who have base access. Starting this season civilians not associated with the installation can get a one-year membership after passing a background check and obtaining a base pass. Non-golfing associates who wish to see the habitat for themselves can park in the adjacent Sports Park parking lot and walk through the various sections of habitat on the course at any time.



Native Prairie on the north border of the installation.





Monarchs In the Rough certified rough areas on Eagle Eye Golf Course.

Invasive Species Control and Pest Management:

A project was awarded in fiscal year 2023 to clean up several bio swales which had become impacted by invasive pear trees. All pear trees were cut and the stumps removed. The bioswales were then tilled to remove any remaining vegetation. The swales were planted with native flower seed including swamp milkweed, common milkweed, wild bergamot, black eyed Susan, purple coneflower, northern blue flag and more. Additionally, 22 native trees were added to one large bio-swale including choke cherry, black willow, and river birch. These native trees will assist the bio swale in intercepting rainwater and reduce the impact on the two installation streams (Mason Run and Turkey Run) during hard rains. These trees were selected for the large number of Lepidoptera they host. The total re-vegetated area is 0.2 acres.

During the 2022 and 2023 growing seasons, four large detention basins which had large amounts of ornamental pear trees removed previously, were kept mowed short to stop the invasive pear trees from returning. The team continued to enforce a Tree Ordinance which prevents plantings of all cultivars of ornamental pear trees, and all other invasive species throughout the award period.



Bank of one detention pond.

Community Outreach:

The team frequently produces stories placed on the environmental webpage (<https://www.dla.mil/Land-and-Maritime/About/Locations/Columbus/Installation-Management/Environmental-Division/>) about the projects listed throughout this document. Trainings such as stormwater awareness have also been available during the award period.

The CDC Garden which has been previously described, serves as an opportunity to discuss the importance of plants, the ecosystem, and the water cycle with the children. As the children work with the team to plant, an environmental representative discusses why plants are important to people and animals. When the plants are watered, environmental specialists discuss the water cycle and why clean water is important.

Overall Natural Resources Conservation Management

Endangered Species Act (ESA) Compliance: The team began a collaboration with the USFWS to obtain USFWS assistance with resource management planning. Recent additions to Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings include the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, Little Brown Bat, Indiana Bat, and Northern Long-Eared Bat. During the award period, the team sought consultation with USFWS anytime tree removals were proposed. All removals took place during the bat's hibernation period to assure there would be no adverse effect on the species. The Ohio Department of Natural Resource Forester also made several visits to the site to provide opinions on failing trees to determine if they are hazards or can be treated.

Mission Enhancement:

One Water Council was created in July 2018 to create a more concerted effort to ensure clean drinking water, and sufficient storm and sewer system maintenance. The Council includes members from Environmental, Installation Management, and Safety Divisions. The Council has met bimonthly since its creation to discuss projects to include improvements to the drinking, sanitary, and stormwater systems. Drinking water safety projects include updating building plumbing and running a new main water line.