

City and Corps sign agreement for drainage study

By Randy Bell

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will spend two years partnering with Clinton to examine the City's four major waterways to identify possible solutions for local drainage issues. The project will focus on Lindsey Creek, Bogue Chitto Creek, Straight Fence Creek and French Creek.

"This isn't shoveling dirt. This is a study," Vicksburg District Commander Col. Christopher Klein said after a ceremony to sign the agreement at the Olde Towne Depot. "What a study will do is give us the right data to inform the investments that need to be made in the future."

Klein said hydraulic studies will be critical.

"That's where we determine where the water starts and where that water goes," said Klein. "The team will be running models to show how this is going to change drainage in the future, so that we can best do the investments."

The Corps will use computers to simulate the water flow.

"In simple terms, they're going to take elevation data, how the creek beds lay. We know water moves downhill, and we know flat ground holds water," Klein continued. "They'll digitally map the contours of the drainage areas and the full watershed. They then put



Photo courtesy U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Col. Christopher Klein, Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Vicksburg District, and Mayor Phil Fisher sign an agreement for a drainage study in Clinton.

that into the computers, add the water and run the models [to see] what they'll look like at various stages and various rain levels."

Klein said the next step could focus on specific solutions.

"We can start looking at projects in order to alleviate where water sits. What

the projects look like could come in multiple forms, whether it's just a simple deepening [of a creek], or whether it's putting a control structure in [or] putting in a hydraulic conveyance system to pump [the water] out."

While most of the work is done on computers, sometimes the Corps uses

scale replica modeling in conjunction with the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center in Vicksburg.

"We work with them on multiple projects," Klein said. "We can model and get a little bit more real time, real effect data — better resolution than you can get with a computer."

The study will begin in the next few weeks. The Planning Assistance to States agreement is authorized under Section 22 of the Water Resources Development Act.

Mayor Phil Fisher joined in the signing ceremony committing the City to a \$196,000 in-kind contribution to the project's cost.

"Our engineers and Public Works Department will do work in lieu of writing a check," Fisher said. While the study itself won't solve any of Clinton's drainage problems, "this will tell us what we need to do, how we need to do it - and it may even give us an order to go in to have the best results," the Mayor said. "The big concern is that you don't do something here that causes a problem back there. The trick to it is to know what to do versus diving in."

Fisher said the completed study will point the City in the right direction.

"That gives us something to go with. Then we can start getting the money together and start taking care of this in phases."

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