

For, ultimately, the Tulsa District is more than just a collection of projects, no matter how significant each project may be individually.

Taken altogether, the Tulsa District constitutes a total program, centered around water resources development and management, founded on the firm rock of military preparedness. That total program is more than the sum of its parts. Its effectiveness is best measured in human terms, resting squarely on its peoples' shoulders.

The success of that program, which included other parts, has much to do with what Tulsa District employees describe as "the Corps family."

The secret lies

IN HAVING MORE THAN ONE PURPOSE.

A formula for success by the Tulsa District — and the Corps of Engineers as a whole — has been that its projects and programs achieve multiple benefits. They generally serve more than one purpose. Any given lake may be used for flood control, power, navigation, recreation, fish and wildlife management, water quality enhancement, irrigation, and water supply.

In institutional terms, providing for multiple uses of water has strengthened the Corps over the years by establishing a diverse constituency and client base.

The practice has also allowed many more projects to be justified economically and, therefore, built. But the larger benefit of multi-purpose projects is synergism: the whole of the system exceeding the sum of its parts. Doing a number of things with the same resources expands the benefits exponentially, as each benefit enhances the others.

In addition to navigation, which was described in the previous section, the Tulsa District program has included several of these benefits:

FLOOD CONTROL. In the Tulsa District's first 50 years, one theme has been more pressing than all others: flood control. It is the major function of most of the Tulsa District projects.

AFTER THE FLOOD

*The broken dike, the levee washed away,
The good fields flooded and the cattle drowned,
Estranged and treacherous all the faithful ground,
And nothing left but floating disarray
Of tree and home uprooted — was this the day
Man dropped upon his shadow without a sound
And died, having labored well and having found
His burden heavier than a quilt of clay?
No, no, I saw him when the sun had set
In water, leaning on his single oar
Above his garden faintly glimmering yet —
There bulked the plow, here washed the updrifted weeds —
And scull across his roof and make for shore,
With twisted face and pocket full of seeds.*

— Edna St. Vincent Millay

