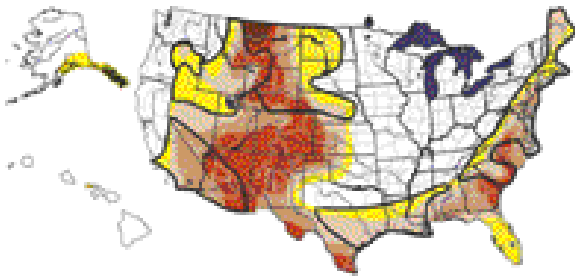


Nationwide Drought Extending Nation's Construction Season



- Abnormally Dry
- Drought-Moderate
- Drought-Severe
- Drought-Extreme
- Drought-Exceptional

This past winter was the driest on record for Maryland, New Jersey, South Dakota, and nearly 30 other states, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Worsening soil moisture conditions, dropping reservoir

levels, and the increasing threat of fire danger have forced several governors in the West to declare drought emergencies. Along with farmers, city residents, and others, some engineering and construction companies are also feeling the effects. The difference is that

engineers may be benefiting from the persisting dryness.

"There are quite a few water restrictions on the East Coast, and that would impact being able to get the water you need for a job," says Mark Svoboda, a climatologist with the National Drought Mitigation Center in Lincoln, Neb. "But there aren't those kind of restrictions everywhere."

As a result, Svoboda says the drought may not necessarily be a bad thing for engineering and construction projects around the country. On the one hand, there may be restrictions associated with using water to prep sites for construction, such as when laying concrete. On the other hand, the sunny skies aren't costing anyone time on the job.

"Any outdoor industry is going to benefit from a lack of

rainfall," Svoboda says. "For one, you're going to have an extended construction season."

Brad Schwie, an engineer with Geomatrix Consultants, an ACEC-member environmental engineering firm, says he could see drought-related problems for city water supply engineers scrambling to find enough water or agricultural engineers pressed to find ways to irrigate crops and satisfy soil moisture conditions. But Schwie is quick to agree that the majority of outdoor construction projects should actually benefit from drought-like conditions across America.

"The lack of rain has actually been a blessing for the construction industry," Schwie says, "because these guys don't have to worry about having to cancel work every day."

Pentagon Reconstruction Ahead of Schedule

Construction crews are ahead of schedule in their goal to rebuild and reoccupy the portion of the Department of Defense headquarters damaged on Sept. 11. Crews are working 20 hours a day, seven days a week. Allyn Kilsheimer of KCE Structural Engineers, P.C., which is working with a number of companies on the project, guarantees on-time completion.

"There are 3,000 men and

women committed to doing this," says Kilsheimer. "The completion date is the most important thing in these people's lives."

Before Sept. 11, the Pentagon had recently undergone renovation. Although the attack put construction crews back to square one, concrete work on the Pentagon's three concentric "rings" was topped off in March, 2002—two months ahead of schedule.

The crew's highest priority was



Lee Evey, DoD's program manager for Pentagon renovation, provides an update during the earliest stage of the reconstruction effort, which is now ahead of schedule.

rebuilding the exterior. While Kilsheimer admits that building from the outside in is not the most effective way to sequence the project, he feels that it is important for national pride that the outside be finished first.

"We chose to do it that way because it was important to me and everyone else working on this to show that you can knock us down, but just look what we'll

come back with," says Kilsheimer.

Time is a pressing matter for the crews. There are three clocks on the construction site that count down the days until the one-year anniversary of the attack. But given the perseverance of everyone involved, Kilsheimer has no doubt that they will be successful. "There is no question we'll be in the building at 9:38 a.m. on September 11," he says.

ACEC-MEMBER FIRMS INVOLVED WITH PENTAGON RECONSTRUCTION

- Engineering Design Group, Inc.
- Law Engineering & Environmental Services, Inc.
- Hayes, Seay, Mattern & Mattern
- Syska & Hennessy
- KCE Structural Engineers
- Weidlinger & Associates, Inc.

Source: Pentagon Renovation Program

Public Transportation In Fast Lane Thanks to TEA-21

Public transportation made history in 2001 when ridership levels climbed to record highs for the sixth consecutive year. According to data from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the number of trips taken on public transportation has grown by 23 percent since 1996—faster than highway use, domestic air travel, and even the U.S. population.

Robert Close, chairman of ACEC's Transportation Committee, says the report underscores the growing business opportunities for engineers in transit programs: "Public demand is driving transit growth, and that translates into more work for the design community."

The public transportation boom has affected cities all over

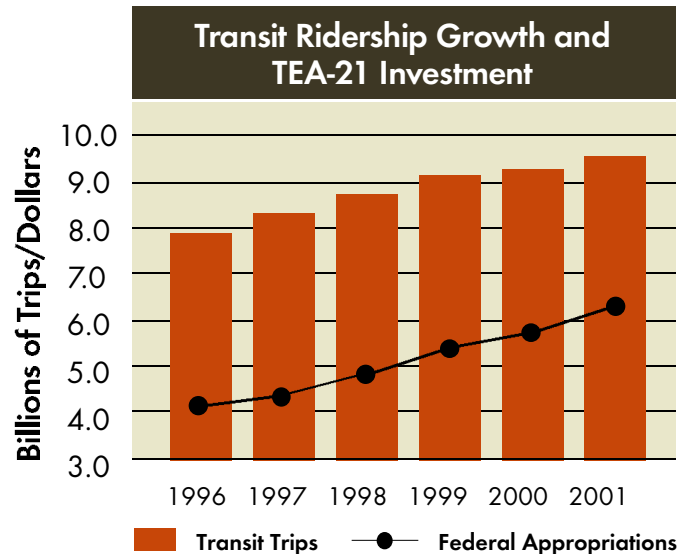
the nation. Some of the cities with full funding grant agreements to build large-scale public transportation systems include Minneapolis, Atlanta, Boston, Baltimore and San Diego. New Orleans has a project pending a full funding grant agreement.

While the surge of transportation programs will mean more projects for engineers, Close cautions that growth is dependent on continued federal investment. The beginning of the public transportation expansion coincided with the passage of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), a bill that authorized a significant increase in funds for transit construction. TEA-21 is a six-year bill, and it expires in 2003.

Congress was just beginning to hold hearings on next year's legislation in May, and Close explains that "lawmakers need to hear from the design community, transportation

groups, construction groups, and transit riders on the need for continued investment."

Provided funding stays at comparable levels, the increase is expected to continue.



Big Turnout, Records Set in Las Vegas

Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman welcomed the nearly 900 attendees at ACEC's 2002 Annual Convention, saying that Las Vegas is the fastest-growing city in the United States—the perfect location for an organization “going places.”

There were many highlights. ACEC's Political Action Committee raised \$60,000—a new record. The board of directors approved a new strategic plan (see below for details), a strong policy statement on outsourcing, and several other key initiatives.

And attendees were entertained by a Jay Leno look-alike, who presided over the awards luncheon, and learned of new business opportunities during the first-ever Private Sector Markets Conference.

Claude Paul Boivin, president of the Association of Consulting Engineers of Canada, said, “I was impressed with the professionalism with which the program and events were organized, along with the good humor, camaraderie, and the sense of moving forward.”



Noel Laughlin of Las Vegas-based GC Wallace Inc. chats with emcee “Jay Leno” about ACEC's Senior Executives Institute during the awards luncheon.



(Left photo, clockwise from top) **Andrea Mennenga**, DPIC Companies; **Harry Hughes**, SEH Inc.; **Patricia Powers** and **Michael Powers**, Symmes, Maini & McKee Associates at the awards luncheon. (Middle photo) “Minuteman” **Roger Jordan** and outgoing ACEC Chairman **Steve Goddard**. (Right photo) “Elvis” greets California national director **Mike Flynn** and **Barbara Flynn**.

Don Trim,
ACEC Planning
Cabinet chairman



ACEC's Six Strategic Goals:

The ACEC board of directors unanimously approved a new strategic plan at the Annual Convention in Las Vegas. The plan, drafted by ACEC's Planning Cabinet, features six strategic goals:

1. Become recognized by all engineering companies in the United States as their legislative advocate for the promotion and protection of their business interests.
2. Become recognized by all engineering companies in the United States as their primary resource on business practices.
3. Become recognized by all stakeholders in the built environment as the national voice of the engineering industry.
4. Grow ACEC/PAC to a \$1 million-per-year PAC by 2006, while “capturing” the influence of our most politically active individual members.
5. Grow the Minuteman Fund to \$1 million by 2006.
6. Double overall membership and recruit 90 percent of *ENR's* top 500 design firms as ACEC members by 2010.