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(Cover photo) NUCA member L.G. Roloff Construction Co. of Omaha, Neb. installing 84-in. reinforced concrete storm sewer pipe as part of the Phase 3B Nicholas Street sewer separation project in Omaha, July 2022.

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by Doug Carlson, *NUCA CEO*

On the road this summer visiting NUCA Chapters has been rewarding in unexpected ways. Our Chapters are the backbone of NUCA.

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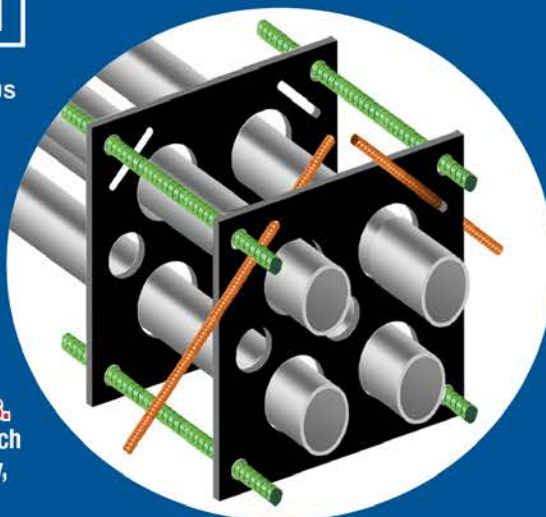
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CEO CORNER



My visits and experiences reminded me why we're blessed with so many enthusiastic members promoting our industry.

OUR CHAPTERS ARE THE HEART OF NUCA

Our 35 Chapters are the core of our NUCA membership. It is an honor and a privilege to visit with our chapters and members and to hear the amazing work they are doing for our industry. I've been visiting many of them this summer, and the airport delays and travel hassles are worth it. A special thanks to the generosity of these Chapter leaders is in order.

My message continues to be: Our organization is only as strong as our chapters. We are the one industry building and delivering the essential infrastructure for our communities to thrive.

My visits and experiences reminded me why we're blessed with so many enthusiastic members promoting our industry through their NUCA Chapter. It was a pleasure to meet each one and listen to their enthusiasm about being a NUCA member and what membership means to them.

Chapters deliver a wealth of personal and professional benefits to each NUCA member. They help you network with fellow construction executives and senior company leaders. They help you find out about upcoming projects and bids, and who is seeking to subcontract.

Chapters also help you stay on top of your state and local governmental actions. With the help of others in the industry, they help you together address challenges faced by burdensome governmental or regulatory actions. With your Chapter, you don't have to face these hurdles alone.

A NUCA Chapter also gives you opportunities to socialize with others who work in the trenches. Many of my visits were family events, showing our next generation the joys of a successful business and the importance of family ownership.

Most importantly, our chapters and members are committed to safety! We cannot preach and teach safety enough to make sure our NUCA family goes home each night to their loved ones.

This fall, as you think about your business operations, contact your own Chapter and find out what they've planned for the months ahead. You will find out they have something on their calendar that will benefit your business. You'll also find out that they could use your wisdom, help, and expertise, too.

We've got a strong year ahead for the industry, and NUCA will be there for you in 2023.

Onward and Upward,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug", written on a white background.

Doug Carlson
NUCA Chief Executive Officer



KNOW THE FLOW

Addressing Flow-Down Provisions in Wastewater Treatment Plan Contracts

by Shawn R. Farrell and Joseph L. Sine

It is important to make sure the prime agreement is both executed and made available to the subcontractor prior to the execution of the subcontract.



In November 15, 2021, President Biden signed a \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill that dedicates approximately \$82.5 billion for water projects, including the construction and renovation of a large number of wastewater treatment facilities across the country. With so much funding available and legislative time constraints on using these monies, we can expect projects to get awarded at a furious pace.

In that type of environment, it is often tempting to ignore our best practices, by drafting a specifically negotiated contract for the particular project at hand. Instead, many general contractors will simply seek to protect themselves with a blanket contract term incorporating their prime contract into their subcontracts. Likewise, many subcontractors will simply sign the subcontract without even asking for a copy of the prime contract, which has been incorporated into their contract.

Are They Enforceable?

Knowing that this type of practice is common in the industry, let's explore if such "incorporation" or "flow-down" clauses are enforceable.

Our offices recently had a case concerning a water treatment project in New Jersey, where the New Jersey Water Supply Authority issued specifications that identified three potential suppliers to furnish and install a proprietary water treatment system.

One of the suppliers listed in the specifications sent a letter proposal to all contractors bidding the work, inviting the bidders to contact the company for pricing. The letter proposal, in a footnote, incorporated by reference the supplier's standard terms and conditions into any future purchase order. After the successful bidder was awarded the contract, the contractor issued a purchase order to the supplier that had sent the above letter proposal.

A dispute between the owner, contractor and supplier arose as to the timely completion of the work and the imposition of liquidated damages. The supplier relied upon the letter proposal, and the flow down clause incorporating its standard terms and conditions as a defense to any liquidated damages.

To that end, the standard terms and conditions contained a limitation of liability clause, whereby the supplier only had the obligation to repair work, with no liability for delay or liquidated damages. The terms also provided the supplier with the right to collect attorneys' fees if successful at trial.

The most astounding fact of this case: the supplier never provided the standard terms and conditions to the contractor prior to the dispute.

A motion for summary judgment was filed to legally bar the supplier's defenses, arguing: the letter proposal was not solely sent only to the contractor, but was merely a letter of introduction; no terms or conditions were mentioned in the purchase order; and the terms were not provided to the contractor; therefore, these terms could not legally bind the contractor to the terms.

Despite these facts, a New Jersey trial judge determined that the letter proposal raised a question of fact for a jury to decide if the letter proposal incorporated the terms and conditions into the purchase order.

This decision all but guaranteed a trial. A trial took place and ultimately it was found that the letter proposal was not enforceable. That case represents the best example of why understanding a "flow down" clause is important. Let's explore what lessons can be learned from this decision; to avoid trials and what might be unintended consequences of accepting blanket incorporation clauses.

Enforcement of Flow-Down Clauses Vary By Language and State

The most important lesson to learn is the enforcement of a flow down clause varies drastically based on the precise language used and what state law is involved. For example, in some jurisdictions, such as New York, general flow-down clauses only bind the subcontractor to the prime contract provisions if those prime contract provisions relate to the scope of the subcontractor's work. General provisions of the prime contract do not flow down unless they are specifically referenced in the subcontract.

Yet other jurisdictions, including Ohio and Georgia, construe general flow-down clauses more broadly than New York, holding both substantive and procedural terms from the prime contract are incorporated into the subcontract.

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Even when there are clear and unequivocal incorporation of the prime contract, with the prime contract provided to the subcontractor, this does not end the analysis. Often there are conflicting terms between the prime contract and subcontract. In many jurisdictions, including Pennsylvania, New Mexico, and Alabama, if a specific provision in the subcontract conflicts with the term of a prime contract incorporated by reference, courts have found the terms of the subcontract control.

One way to ensure the terms you want to control is to include an "order of precedence" provision that expressly identifies which contract document controls in the event of a conflict. Further complicating matters, several courts have held that a subcontract cannot incorporate by reference a document that is not yet in existence or not made available to the subcontractor at the time of the execution of the subcontract. Thus, it is important to make sure the prime agreement is both executed and made available to the subcontractor prior to the execution of the subcontract.

Conclusion

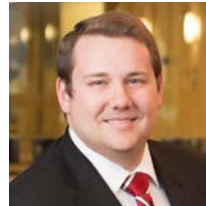
Flow-down or incorporation by reference provisions can greatly affect a party's right to a specific claim, or defenses. Such clauses can also affect the method and location of dispute resolution, such as whether mediation, arbitration, or litigation in a specific jurisdiction is required.

So now that you know the risk, here are some final points on how to negotiate your contract:

- Do not generally incorporate all terms of the prime contract, but be specific as to what responsibilities from the prime contract flow down to the subcontractor.
- Get a copy of any terms and conditions to be referenced in the contract—even from suppliers.
- If you don't agree to the incorporation, strike it from the contract or, in situations like the New Jersey case, put in the purchase order to the supplier that no incorporation by reference to other terms is permitted.
- Ask your attorney about the enforceability of such clauses in the state your company is performing the work. ■



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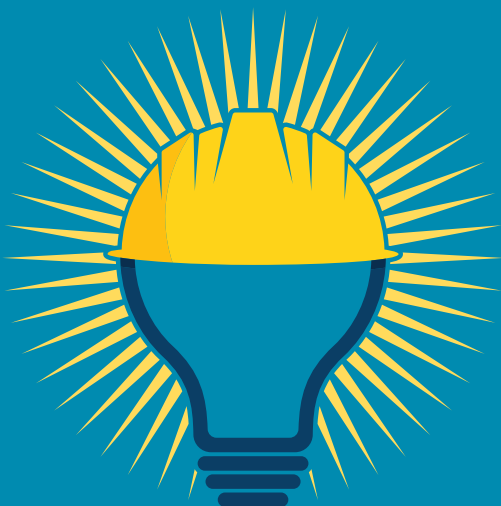
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IMPROVING YOUR LEADERSHIP STARTS WITH BEING SELF-AWARE

by Emily Hemming and Mark Hooley

Developing internal self-awareness is primarily about working on your own leadership skills and capabilities.



vinyl windows used to have a two-week lead time. According to Stan Miller, who runs a commercial We often think of self-awareness as understanding our strengths and weaknesses.

While being introspective is important to understanding ourselves, it's only part of the picture. True self-awareness requires both external and internal perspectives on your skills and abilities.

FMI has spent decades developing models and means for helping leaders gain perspectives from those around them. We've then turned our research into action by showing people how to transition self-awareness to leadership behaviors.

We often conduct these 360-degree reviews and discover critical insights. An accurate assessment of your own level of self-awareness takes effort and vulnerability, but the commitment will yield positive results.

It's hard to know where to start, but we recommend these questions can help you:

- Are you part of the 80% of leaders who think they are self-aware but do not demonstrate self-aware behaviors?
- How would you know if you were not self-aware?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Where are you best positioned to do your best work?
- What is your personal mission?
- What legacy do you want to leave for your family, colleagues and community?

- Have you aligned your behaviors around your personal mission?
- Who has the ability and willingness to give you accurate and candid feedback?

Once you've thought about these questions, you can start building your self-awareness by:

- Making a list of your personal strengths and weaknesses
- Getting feedback from trusted advisors and those closest to you on your list of strengths and weaknesses
- Developing a personal mission statement
- Going through a leadership 360 assessment
- Reviewing or completing a personality assessment
- Attending the FMI Leadership Institute
- Developing feedback skills
- Receiving feedback from other industry leaders

Developing Internal Self-Awareness

Developing internal self-awareness is primarily about working on your own leadership skills and capabilities. Building a deeper understanding of self takes time, effort and practice. The goal is to discover how to lead in the most effective manner possible.

Here are two steps you can take right now to start deepening your internal self-awareness:

Understand your strengths and weaknesses. Analyze what you are good at, where you are best positioned to succeed and what you enjoy doing the most. Write down your strengths and weaknesses. How do they affect your current role? Do you need to shore up any weaknesses? Do you need to bring additional strengths into your role? Be candid with others about your assessment and be open to their perspectives and feedback.

Assess your personal mission. Why do you work? What legacy do you want to leave for your family, your job and your community? Align your activities and behaviors around those objectives. How do you want to be evaluated on your progress and growth? Are you behaving in a way that others would believe in your personal mission? Continually assess your progress and make the necessary changes.

Building External Self-Awareness

Develop an environment where people feel comfortable giving you candid feedback—an exercise that's particularly vital at the senior leadership level. As leaders move up in an organization, it becomes riskier for others to give them honest feedback.

Use these steps to start building more external perspectives and encouraging others to provide feedback:

Start early to create an environment of feedback across the organization. Recognize that you may have blind spots and listen for the clues that others might see them. In a situation where even the newest team member can challenge the most tenured individual, the senior leader's blind spots will come to light more quickly. Ask those closest to you to evaluate your progress.

Take a few minutes to evaluate the people you work with and their ability and willingness to provide honest and open feedback. A key component of your external feedback environment is the trusted leaders around you who are willing and courageous enough to be honest. Who disagreed with you recently about a decision you were 100% committed to

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making? Who changed your mind unexpectedly about something? Who shared feedback with you that got your attention or surprised you?

Self-Aware Leaders Get Results

There is a clear link between companies with stronger financial rates of return and leaders with higher levels of self-awareness. There is a palpable energy that drives these self-aware teams and organizations forward, and it manifests itself with growth and development, challenge and acceptance. Focus on developing your self-awareness and watch how it challenges and raises all the leaders around you.

Reprinted with permission. The original article appeared in the FMI Quarterly, March 2022 issue. It can be found online at fmicorp.com/insights/fmi-quarterly. ■



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THE BEST LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN THE AGE OF PROFESSIONALISM

by Michael J. Provitera and Mostafa Sayyadi

We all matter and each one of us are our own company with a budget and a mission—and a vision.

We all have to start somewhere: John Fitzgerald Kennedy posed as a police officer at age eight. What were your dreams? Have you pushed back on the desires and career goals that you once sought after as a child? Have you transformed into a well-developed adult that is happy with your career? These questions are rhetorical in nature but are worth reflecting upon.

The professional culture can be an employment perk, on one hand, but it can be demanding and difficult on the other. Yet, competition is good because it draws upon our strengths. Here are some of the factors that lead a person to a career:

- Being surrounded by successful colleagues helps push us to excel in our careers—Creating culturally distinct programs
- Embeds the caliber of our peers makes us stronger through structured experiences
- Connects a solid sense of self and emotionally supportive co-workers through a standardized set of analytical and anecdotal exercises applied to structured experiences
- Creates an authentic context that requires finding peace in a culture that can be intense yet reflects in ways that ensures future decisions that we make create both sustainable competitive advantage and sustainability for society at large

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In a wedding day photograph of Abraham and Mary Lincoln, taken November 4, 1842, in Springfield, Illinois, after three years of a stormy courtship and a broken engagement, it is apparent their love had endured their strife. Sustainability is based not only on reviews but also on the Publish-or-Perish idea that is the leader's nemesis. However, if Abe and Mary can make it happen, you certainly can too!

The key to our success is to realize that the competitive professional culture revolves around three centers of gravity: CONTENT, CONTEXT. and CONSEQUENCE.

This comes from the cornerstone of knowing yourself. For example, an authentic leader knows his or herself well enough to build upon authentic leadership development, which is strongly tied to four key psychological attributes: confidence, optimism, hope, and resilience.

Leaders must find an inspirational dream. Martin Luther King didn't say "I have business plan," right? Or a goal, or a vision. Nor did Microsoft. Gates dreamed of a PC on every desk. A dream is at the heart of great endeavours.

End to End (E2E) Competition can energize and focus our efforts, pushing us to refine our skills because it links business consequences to leadership actions.

- Breed intensity into what you do as your profession
- Create balance
- Spice up your research
- Change it up
- Use courage, compassion, and empathy
- Remember that your career does define you
- Accomplishment matters
- Find the core of who you are because that belongs to you and makes you unique

The competitive nature is real and sometimes may cause stress as professionals balance both work and personal life. Thus, maintaining your professional reputation can be an ongoing source of stress.

Being an authentic leader helps you know you are and develop your strengths while contemplating their weaknesses. What you like, what you are good at, how you see yourself, and how other people see you—that is the root of who you are.

The core of who you are:

- Provides a theoretical framework for understanding and a physical context for experiencing the civilization, historical and cultural aspects of our region, and the global aspect of our work because of our authentic connections with each other.
- Considers being our healthy, creative, and productive selves. Peers are assets not threats. Their talent makes you stronger—we should praise each other and help each other with ideas. Building a think-tank for support and collaboration.
- Develops a robust understanding of complex challenges associated with professional life, which can be competitive, weathering it in a community helps, and it is thrilling to be on a great team.

In 1911, Bobby Leach survived a plunge over Niagara Falls in a steel barrel. Fourteen years later, in New Zealand, he slipped on an orange peel and died. Together we succeed while—sometimes as individuals—we fail!

Hopefully, you know what you want and need professionally. Do not wait around for encouragement, however—pursue internal developmental opportunities that you want. Find a mentor. Be a mentor. Culture provides a theoretical framework for understanding and a physical context for experiencing and positioning you for success.

Secure the support that you need to thrive—it is worth the effort and the risks. Experimentation develops a robust understanding of complex challenges associated with a professional life that leads to innovation and creativity and helps us produce better ideas that are more expansive. Loving what you do provides a theoretical framework for understanding and a physical context for experiencing your corporate world.

Apply a stretch-your-skills philosophy and a new set of analytical tools to identify opportunities to innovate. There are many avenues to achieve this goal. Explain how your ideas can cause contagion and inspire people to present opportunities and challenges for addressing

the problems both locally and globally. Reflect on how to forge community with your team across regions to present opportunities and challenges for the successfully leading of a 21st century corporation. Reflect on how you can become fully and authentically yourself at work to influence and impact effectiveness and efficiency. Finally, find a fit that builds you up and does not burn you out! ■

Michael J. Provitera is an associate professor, and an author of the book titled “Mastering Self-Motivation” published by BusinessExpertPress. He is quoted frequently in the national media.

Mostafa Sayyadi works with senior business leaders to effectively develop innovation in companies, and helps companies—from start-ups to the Fortune 100—succeed by improving the effectiveness of their leaders. He is a business book author and a long-time contributor to business publications and his work has been featured in top-flight business publications. His website is mostafasayyadi.weebly.com.



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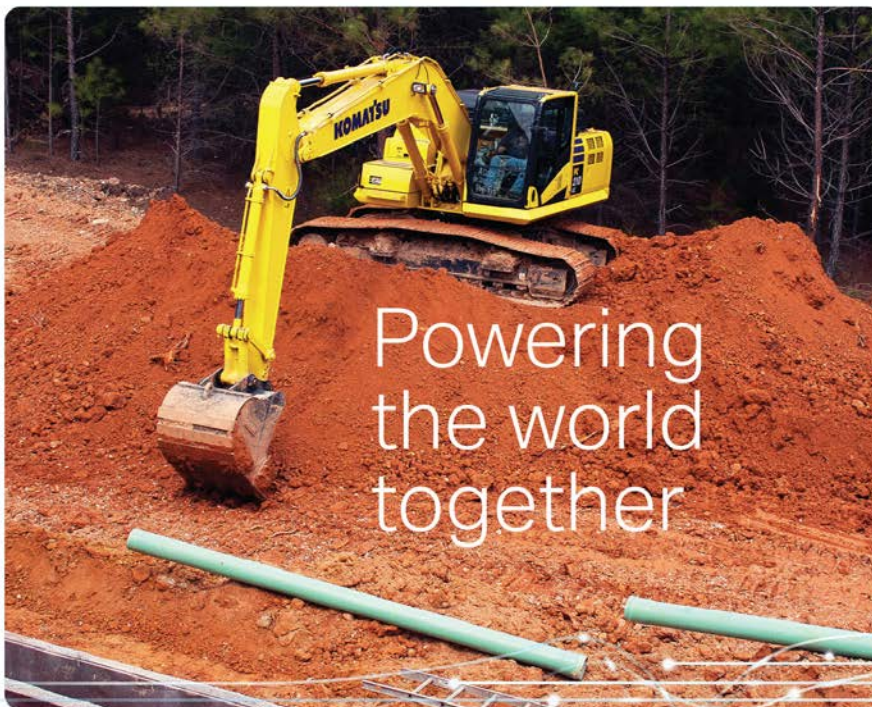
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Neuse River Raw Water Intake Screens

by Robert Baylor, NUCA Communication Director

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his was not going to be an easy project. The Neuse River Water and Sewer Authority (NRWASA), located in LaGrange, North Carolina, has endured damage to its Neuse River water intake screens for years.

While periodic dredging was required to prevent sediment from entering the intake, recurring flooding after severe storm events moved the sediment bar significantly closer to the existing intake. The intake screens were constantly buried in silt and unable to perform efficiently due to the river's increasingly high flow rate, and rising and falling river elevation.

NRWASA's \$4.8 million project bid was won by NUCA member T.A. Loving Company (TALCO), a long-time member of the NUCA of the Carolinas chapter. TALCO had worked with the Lenoir County's water authority before on several projects, winning high accolades from the county's engineers for their professional and safe work.

For this project, the solution devised by TALCO required the installation of new intake screens in a different location, downriver in deeper water and with better alignment with the river.

The project presented special management challenges, as it would be undertaken within an active river basin. The TALCO engineering team designed and installed two cofferdams to safely allow employees and subcontractors to complete the project. Careful schedule management and planning were used to minimize the impact of any potential river flooding on the work.

The environment itself provided several challenges to the work and its phase schedule, including state river moratoriums prohibiting in-water work during certain months to allow for the seasonal migration of spawning

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fish. Mother Nature also added her own challenges, delivering higher-than-average rainfall amounts in the Neuse River basin that produced historic levels of river flooding.

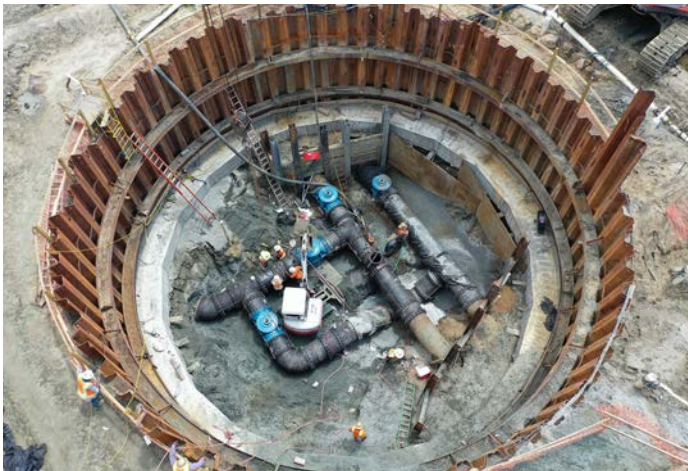
The first cofferdam was installed in the river, creating a drier environment to complete the work. The company installed a 25x50-ft. sheet pile cofferdam designed to exclude 25 feet of floodwaters. The company constructed a temporary 50-foot work bridge to provide work crews and the company equipment better access to this worksite.

Because employees would be working in an active river basin which produced strong water currents and possible rising water levels, and with the expected deep excavations, TALCO's safety and project teams met extensively to plan and provide safety training to all people working on the jobsite.



The second cofferdam was 60 feet in diameter, and 30 feet deep. This cofferdam was installed to complete the tie-in work needed to connect the new screen piping to the existing pipe infrastructure. Several well points and pumps were installed around the cofferdam perimeter to dewater the excavation and maintain a safe and dry working area. Through careful pre-planning and the prefabrication of pipe, fittings, and valve assemblies, the company's employees were able to complete the tie-in work in two days.

The two screens eventually installed were 55-inches in diameter, and approximately 14 feet long connected to a T-shaped manifold. They pulled water from the Neuse River at a depth of 30 feet. The massive screens were supported by eight 18-inch steel pipes filled with concrete, driven to a depth of 40 feet. Twelve 18-inch steel pipe piles were installed around the perimeter of the screens as protective bollards against river debris.



Finally, a shoring design to install the 36-in. pipe was built using a combination of sheet piles and trench boxes.

To prevent silt accumulation, two 6" HDPE air burst lines were installed at the intake screens. Operator controls, control panels and air burst tanks were installed in the existing pump station.

The final phase of the project included site work such as grading the riverbank, placing 4,000 tons of rip rap rock on the riverbank for erosion control, and 2,000 cubic yards of river dredging.

This was a very complex project, and these design solutions were critical in addressing the project's infrastructure requirements. A challenging and intricate undertaking such as this infrastructure construction required the company to maintain an effective and proactive approach to project delivery.

Lessons Learned

TALCO was able to perform the work within the proposed schedule. The lessons learned by the project team were:

- The team's success on this project was due to the prioritization of our goal to "plan the work and work the plan."
- The team was reminded also of the power of weather. The team analyzed past years' rainfall and flood stages to determine the design's means and methods for the site.
- Higher-than-normal rainfall challenged the progress forward, but the team found ways to combat the waters and keep the project on track. ■



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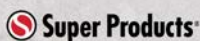

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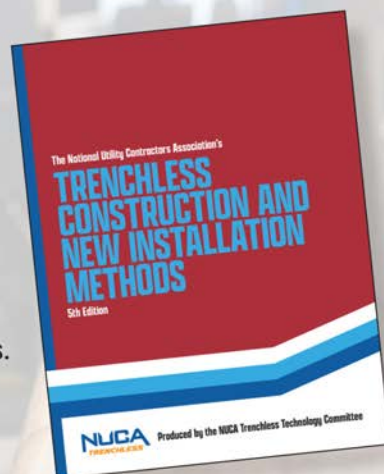
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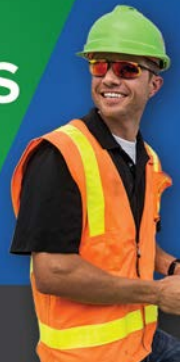
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