



For Immediate Release
 April 5, 2007
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

After years of infrastructure neglect
Erbil-Ifrac Water Plant Provides Safe Drinking Water

by LuAnne Fantasia
 Gulf Region North



Water from the Great Zab River makes its way through six clarifying tanks at the Erbil-Ifrac water project that currently provides over 4,000 cubic meters of safe drinking water per hour to 300,000 citizens in the Erbil area. (USACE photo by LuAnne Fantasia)

ERBIL PROVINCE, Iraq - The life of the water begins with melting snow in the Taurus Mountains of southeastern Turkey, zigzagging down into the Great Zab River.

At the end of a long journey through man-made machines with such names as intake pumps, sand filter cells, clarifying tanks, filtration, disinfection and booster stations; there are 300,000 people waiting for a 59-inch transmission pipe to bring them 4,000 cubic meters of potable water every hour.

During an onsite event March 22 to recognize the Coalition's effort and to officially celebrate the success of the Erbil-Ifrac water plant, Nawzad Raof, project engineer for the \$200 million reconstruction project, said that capacity will in-



Ribbon cutting ceremony, March 22, 2007 at the Erbil-Ifrac Water Plant (USACE photo by LuAnne Fantasia)



With Kurdistan and American flags standing together, Kurdish dancers and their live band performed for guests at last week's coalition recognition event at the Erbil-Ifrac water project. Designed for future expansions, the water plant currently provides 300,000 residents in the Erbil area with over 4,000 cubic meters of safe drinking water per hour. (USACE photo by LuAnne Fantasia)



The switch is flipped to activate the new water treatment equipment at the Erbil-Ifray Water Plant (USACE photo by LuAnne Fantasia)



Keynote speakers former U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalizhad and Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani (USACE photo by LuAnne Fantasia)

crease another 2,000 cubic meters within the next couple of months.

“The plant currently operates on two of its three pumps; each producing 2,000 cubic meters of water hourly,” he explained. “[Contingent on electricity issues] a third pump starts running in April or May, at which point the plant will produce 6,000 cubic meters per hour, for more than half-million people in the Erbil area.”

Raof said the plant was designed for two future expansions that will possibly be funded this year. “The transmission line can accommodate an additional 4,000 cubic meters per hour, for a total of 10,000 cubic meters per hours. That would bring the plant’s capacity to 100 percent,” he added.

Years of a neglected infrastructure, violence, and sabotage created a shortage of potable water in Iraq – a country of some 30 million citizens. But, since the time of

sovereignty in 2004, the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund has effected improvements that bring 449,200 cubic meters of treated water per day to an estimated 2.4 million Iraqi citizens.

Estimates show that some 8.4 million Iraqis will benefit from 1,136,000 cubic meters of treated water daily when all of the original planned water projects are completed.

As keynote speakers at the event two weeks ago, former U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalizhad and Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani expressed appreciation to the United States and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; to Fluor AMEC, the joint venture prime contractor; and to the Kurdish subcontractors for the united effort necessary to making this project a reality.

“This water supply project is America’s largest contribution to the development of Iraq,” Barzani said.



The Erbil-Ifrac water project currently provides over 4,000 cubic of meters of safe drinking water per hour to 300,000 citizens in the Erbil area. (USACE photo by LuAnne Fantasia)



Kurdish dancers and their live band performed for guests at last week's coalition recognition event at the Erbil-Ifrac water project. (USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia)

Gary York is project engineer at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Erbil resident office, which provided quality assurance oversight for the project. York returned to Iraq in March 2005 when the Erbil-Ifrac water project was a bare landscape.

"This community needs the next phase and I wish them the best to accomplish that. It will take \$40 to \$60 million to take the plant to its full capacity. The city is working on the water network. Waterlines are deteriorated but a lot of that leakage problem has been addressed now," York said.

Erbil's water system was last upgraded around 1982, with its people receiving less and less water for over 25 years, he added. "When the Erbil-Ifrac water plant first started providing water last year, there were block parties and celebrations all over the city, because the city's water system had been out of service a long time.

"This plant is a big step anywhere. We take potable water for granted, so you don't understand what it's like without water until you don't have it."



The United States and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; to Fluor AMEC, the joint venture prime contractor; and the Kurdish subcontractors united to make this project a reality. (USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia)

Note: LuAnne Fantasia is the Public Affairs Officer for the Gulf Region North District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, contact her at (540)542-1437 or email requests to CEGRD.PAO@tac01.usace.army.mil. For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, visit www.grd.usace.army.mil.