

39 COMBAT ENGINEER REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi all, there is a great article about Ex Fireweed and the successful completion of the BMQ course coordinated by 44 Engr Sqn & 39 CER. The newsletter ends off with an interesting story about Op Granite.

Chimo,

Bill Wenman
President

HONOURS AND AWARDS

Promotions

Lt Kim promoted to Capt on May 8/2025.



Maj Kwok congratulating Capt Kim

On 15 May 2025 Cpl Lokay was promoted to MCpl



MCpl Lokay flanked by OC 6 ES, Maj Kwok and SSM 6 ES MWO Park

Spr Ong promoted to Cpl 22 May 25



Cpl Ong flanked by OC 6 ES, Maj Kwok and SSM 6 ES MWO Park

Medals

Sgt Boechler was presented the King's Coronation Medal during Ex Fireweed Sapper



RSM, CWO Batch and CO, LCol Spiers flanking Sgt Boechler

On 15 May 2025 Cpl Crossan was presented with his CD2



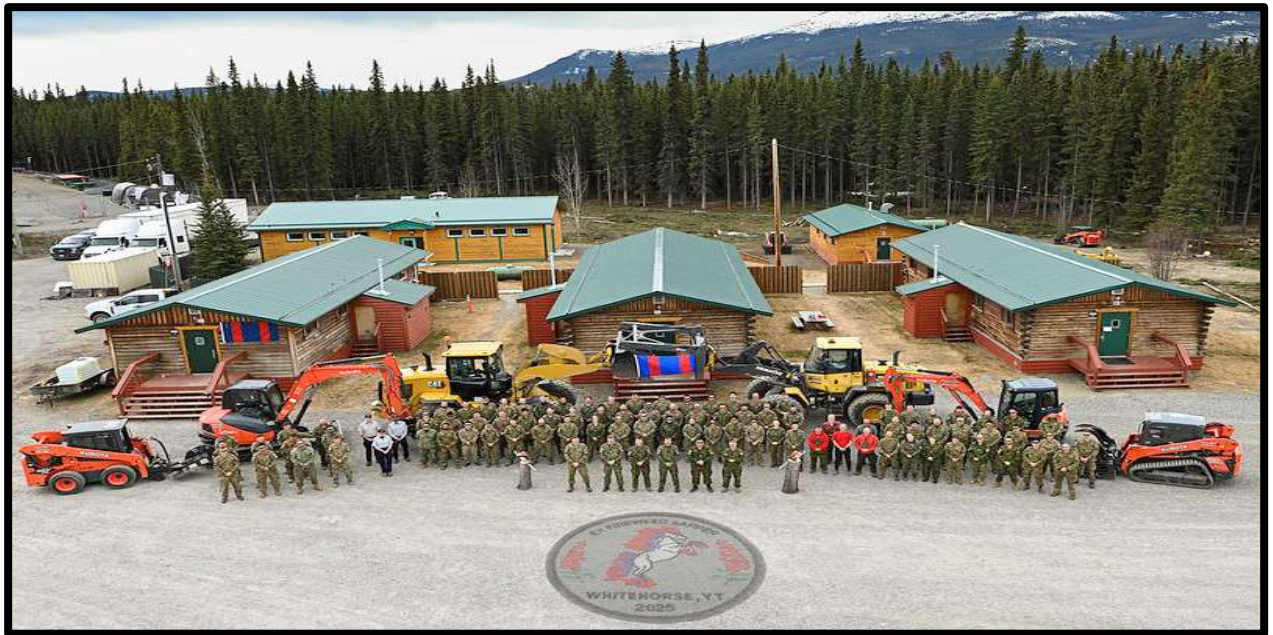
Cpl Crossman flanked OC 6 ES, Maj Kwok and SSM 6 ES MWO Park

EXERCISES

Ex Fireweed Sapper 25 April – 04 May 2025

Maj Gower, DCO 39 CER

Hi all. A belated thanks to everything who wished me a happy birthday. I spent it doing something I really love - soldiering. Me and around 93 other regular and reserve members (39 CER – 40, 1 CER – 11, 39 Svc Bn – 7, SHoC – 7, 1 CRPG – 6, R West R – 6, 15 Fd Regt – 5, 6 Int Coy – 3, 39 CBG HQ – 2, 12 Fd Amb – 2, 35 RGC (QC) – 2, 41 CER – 1, 39 Sigs Regt 1, 1 MP Regt – 1, BCR – 1, CFSME – 1), mostly from BC but also from across Canada, were in Whitehorse, Yukon on Ex Fireweed Sapper last week. We went to the Whitehorse cadet camp, and completed some significant fire smarting tasks, mostly by felling and removing the trees within 30 m of the buildings on camp. And the camp isn't just used by the cadets! Tomorrow, a group from Yukon Wildfire will be there for a week. After that a Navy Reserve ex is using the camp. If there was an emergency response that needed Canadian Armed Forces to deploy, the camp would be used. It's truly a community and national asset. I had the privilege of being the deployed field Squadron Officer Commanding. I led 72 all ranks including sappers from my unit, a heavy equipment section (3x FELs, 5x Escavators, 2x 1 Ton / Dump Trailer) from 1 CER, and soldiers from across the Brigade in BC and two sappers all the way from Quebec! The team came together and rocked it! I'll let some pictures tell the rest of the story.





This is a before map of the camp taken by Milan Lapres from Yukon Wildfire.



This is the after. The black line that trees are cleared to represents 30 m from the camp buildings.



The log pile. This is about half of what we stockpiled. We estimate the team cut, bucked and cleared 2500 trees in 5 days!



Here's the typical operation. The mini hoe on the right moves the trees out to where the skid steer can grab them. A Sapper limbs the tree and the log is set aside for a front end loader to pick up. More soldiers and sappers put the branches through the chipper.



One of the other field sections. There were 5 field sections total in the squadron spread across the 2 troops.



Ranger Jeff Boyd, also a Wildland Firefighter with Yukon First Nations Wildfire, was critical for mission success. He provided expert tree felling advice / training and removed danger trees. Pictured here receiving Comd 39 CBG Coin from LCol Brown, 39 CBG COS and CWO Harris, 39 CBG BSM,



6 Canadian Rangers (1 CRPG) attended Ex FWS providing expert advice and training on subjects ranging from bear awareness to chainsaw maintenance.



Elder Chuck Hume, Canadian Ranger and the Assembly of First Nations' Yukon Knowledge Keeper, provided an insightful and sobering speech on the relationship between First Nations' and Military (CAN & US) in the North

BASIC MILITARY QUALIFICATION COURSE 1539 - 44 ES

44 ES Conducted a Basic Military Qualification Course in Trail. The course started 9 January 2025 with 9 candidates. On 17 January 2025 our numbers increased to 11 as we had 2 newly enrolled recruits. Throughout the course, the students learned the fundamentals of being a soldier in the Army from military ethos, military writing, field craft, parading with and without arms and tactical range shooting qualifications. With a four and half day pushed we successfully graduated 8 students on 7 April 2025.

44 ES welcomes the following members:

OCdt Robert Popelka (Top Candidate)
 Pte Tyler Meester (Esprit de Corps)
 Pte Elizabeth McLeod (Warrior)
 Pte Logan Doll

Pte Rene Kowalchuk
Pte Jeffery Thompson
Pte Kirk Wagg
2Lt Ayodeji Williams



Flanked by SSM 44 ES Course WO - MWO Gagnon and Acting OC 44 ES Capt Helmer-Smith, OCdt Robert Popelka received his Top Candidate certificate from Maj Debiasio CO 531 Air Cadets Squadron. The award is based on academic scores.



Flanked by SSM 44 ES Course WO - MWO Gagnon and Acting OC 44 ES Capt Helmer-Smith, Pte Tyler Meester received his Esprit de Corps certificate from Maj Debiasio CO 531 Air Cadets Squadron. The award is based on staff selection of the candidate for their motivation and positive influence with their fellow students



Flanked by SSM 44 ES Course WO - MWO Gagnon and Acting OC 44 ES Capt Helmer-Smith, Pte Elizabeth McLeod received her Warrior certificate from Maj Debiasio CO 531 Air Cadets Squadron. The award is based on her fellow candidates selection of the individual who shows the most positive attributes of a Warrior



Capt Helmer-Smith leading the March Past with Maj Debiasio as the Reviewing Officer

OPp GRANITE II 23 May 2025

<https://operation-granite-ii.info/>



Operation GRANITE II, planned for July 2026 in Chilliwack, is a commemorative event being organized by the CMEA, the Retired Sappers Association, and the Royal Canadian Legion. It will mark the 80th Anniversary of the All Sappers Cenotaph in Chilliwack, BC, that is the principal CME and central to our history and heritage.

The event is scheduled for the weekend of July 17-19, 2026. It is intended to be a major reunion and celebration, likely the last significant gathering in what was the "Home of the Engineers" from 1942 to 1998. The format includes:

- Registration and a Meet & Greet on Friday
- A Rededication and a Service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph on Saturday, followed by a Gala Dinner
- Optional church and group memorial services on Sunday morning, concluding with a farewell brunch
- Historical displays, kit sales, and a videographer capturing personal interviews and stories throughout the event

The organizing committee aims to reconnect thousands of people who served in Chilliwack, honour their history, and pay homage to those who have passed. The event has received financial support from the CMEA to help launch the event.

Operation GRANITE II is a significant military heritage reunion and commemorative event centred on the Canadian Military Engineers' legacy in Chilliwack, planned for mid-July 2026.

VETERAN AFFAIRS

Our Board member David Blake-Knox Maj (Ret'd) (blake_knoxd@hotmail.com) has offered his services to assist individuals in submitting claims to Veterans Affairs. David has had success in navigating the bureaucracy in submitting his own claims and those of others.

MEMBERSHIP

For those wishing to become members of 39 CER Association, a membership form can be acquired from: membership@39cer.ca

39 CER ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

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The 39 CER Museum website can be accessed at: <http://www.39cer-museum.net/>

Recent editions of the 39 CER Newsletter can be accessed at: [39 CER Association \(39cer-museum.net\)](http://www.39cer-museum.net/). Earlier editions can be obtained from the Secretary or Editor.

For more Engineer news please visit the Canadian Military Engineer Association website at: <https://cmea-agmc.ca>