



THE recreation RETREAT

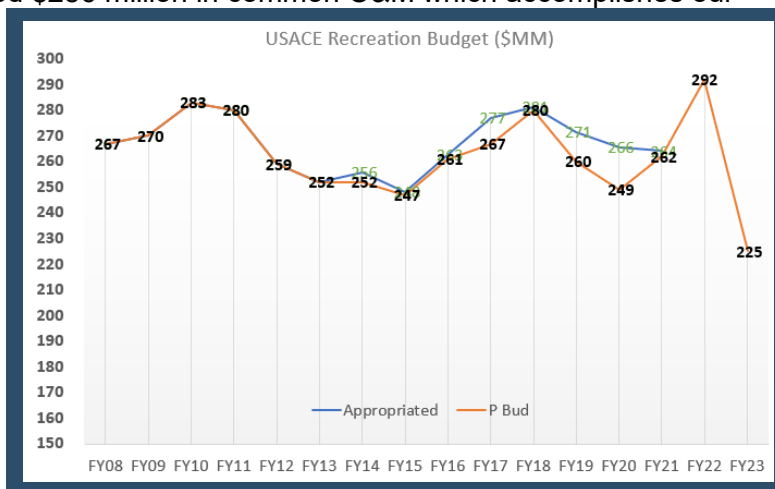
USACE Recreation Budget

POC: Ryan Hartwig, Recreation Program and Business Line Manager

To many (myself included), the highs and lows of the USACE Recreation budget may seem like a crazy roller coaster ride, and it can seem hard to hang on when the high point and low point of the ride come so close together. FY22 represented one of the highest appropriations the Recreation program over the past 10 years at \$292 million dollars. This reflects approximately \$36 million dollars in specific work not commonly performed (SWNCP) for things like water line replacements, sewage treatment facilities and general facility improvements. It also included \$256 million in common O&M which accomplishes our day-to-day routine operations. Additionally, the Recreation Program will see many improvements as a result of \$101 million dollars received from the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) along with Disaster Relief Supplemental (DRSAA) bills.

But alas, as on every rollercoaster, what goes up...must

come down. Eyeing the fourth quarter, at the very top of the lift hill, we can look ahead at the next fiscal year. The [FY23](#) program level will be challenging for the Recreation Program as we feel the potential impacts of one of the lowest levels at \$225 million. Overall, at \$225 million, this represents a change in approximately \$31 million of Common O&M funding from the FY22 recreation budget and \$18M below the F23 budget. FY22 Workplan funds have been directed toward the Recreation Program to address critical shortfalls in FY23 and continuing discussions are identifying opportunities for FY23 workplan.



US Army Corps
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YOUR Thoughts

We are looking for contributors and ideas!

*If you have a topic, success story, lesson learned, or helpful suggestion—let us know.

Send to: Tara.J.Whitsel@usace.army.mil

The Recreation Retreat is an unofficial publication of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

This online publication is produced quarterly with the purpose of providing its readers information about the USACE Recreation Program. Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Mention of specific vendors does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Army or any element thereof. Managing Editor: Tara Whitsel. Tara.J.Whitsel@usace.army.mil

Campaign Hat Photo Credit:
Cynthia Mitchell, USACE

This Issue:



LRD Park Ranger CoP
Use of AtB Funds

Recreation Budget Continued

USACE Junior Ranger Book Available

The USACE Junior Ranger Book and patch/plastic badge artwork that the USACE National Water Safety Program created is available on the NRM Gateway in the water safety section under Junior Ranger Program.

<https://corpslakes.erd.c.dren.mil/employees/watersafety/water.cfm>

Click for link!

This is an outstanding resource that contains not only water safety activities but many other activities regarding USACE, bicycle safety, trees, bald eagles, fish, invasive species, and more. The book is only being made available electronically so you can print and use it as is or local information and activities can be added to it before using it.

HQUSACE staff has worked together with the support of many offices to develop numerous alternatives to mitigate the effects of the decreased funding level.

The good news is we have friends on this ride that understand and appreciate the value this program delivers. Recently, USACE's recreation program has witnessed strong advocacy support from entities such as the Corps Foundation, the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), Outdoor Recreation Roundtable (ORR) and several others. These partners and stakeholders have been reaching out and helping us tell the benefits of our program.

Through all of this, we must remember we are all on the ride together. Leadership at all levels understands the difficulty of navigating this rollercoaster. In FY23 and outyears, we must advance programmatic efficiencies such as S3 within the Recreation Program and strategically focus on new and existing funding opportunities such as the R1S "virtual" donation box, revenues from the American the Beautiful Federal Lands Pass Program, and Federal Highway Programs such as Emergency Repairs for Federally Operated Roads (ERFO) and Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP). The future will provide us with the opportunity to work together and further refine efficiencies and define the Recreation Program we are delivering across the nation. Enjoy the ride!

Blow Up Your Life Jacket!

POC: Pam Doty, National Water Safety Program Manager

As a USACE employees you can wear an automatic-inflatable life jacket that is U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) approved for commercial use if it, and you, meet the requirements in our safety manual, ER 385-1-1 Section 05.J.

Here is part of what the section includes:

- > In-water testing is required for all first-time users so that wearers become familiar with the feel and performance of the life jacket.
- > The USCG-approval for auto-inflatable life jacket's is contingent upon the life jacket being worn, not stowed. All auto-inflatable life jackets must be worn at all times a drowning hazard exists.
- > Life jackets must be inspected, maintained, stowed, and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- > Personnel shall be trained in the use, maintenance, restrictions, care, storage, inspection, and post-deployment procedures per manufacturer's instructions.

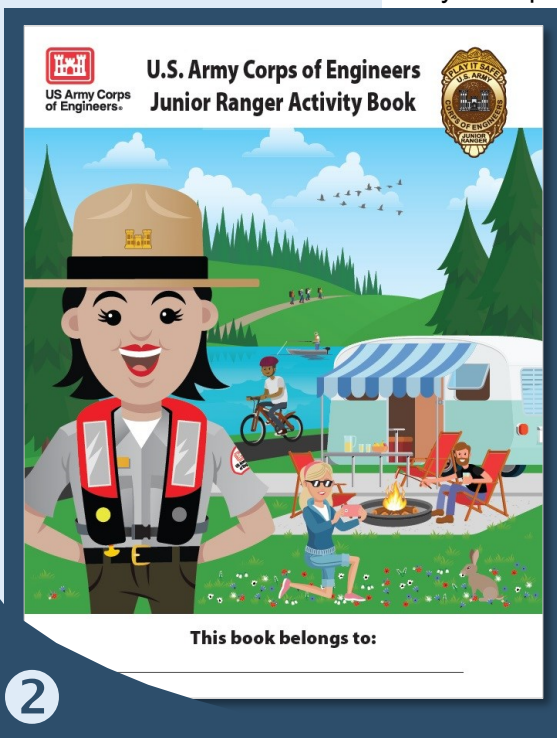
Inflatable life jackets are comfortable to wear and require regular maintenance to ensure they work properly. Some type of inspection is needed before every use, every two to six months, and annually. For maintenance requirements refer to the owner's manual for your life jacket.

Leak Test: a.) Remove the CO2 cylinder. b.) Inflate the life jacket using the oral inflation tube. c.) Allow the inflated life jacket to sit of at least 16 hours. The buoyancy chamber should remain firm and filled with air to be in operational condition. If the chamber deflates, discard the life jacket and replace it with a new one. d.) Deflate, reinstall CO2 cylinder, inspect to ensure the life jacket is properly armed and follow the repacking instructions for the life jacket.

Oral Valve Test: a.) Remove the protective cap from the top of the oral inflation tube. b.) Orally inflate the life jacket by blowing into the tube. c.) Test the valve by depressing the valve core using the tab provided on the cap. The valve core should depress easily. d.) Release the valve core and it should automatically return to the closed sealed position. Follow the repacking instructions.

Inspecting the Cover and Webbing: a.) Examine the outer shell fabric, webbing attachments, buckles, and slides for signs of damage. b.) Examine the outer shell for signs of fading. Fabric fading can indicate loss of strength. c.) Check for fabric strength by pulling on seams and attachments snugly. If signs of damage are found, replace the life jacket.

Inspecting the CO2 Cylinder: The CO2 cylinder contains the gas charge that will inflate your life jacket when the inflation mechanism is fired. You must verify that the CO2 cylinder is of the correct size and has not been previously fired.



Life Jacket Continued

A nine-minute video, "Inflatable Life Jackets: Everything You Need to Know", produced by the Corps of Engineers Natural Resources Education Foundation (The Corps Foundation) in cooperation with the USACE National Water Safety Program is a great video to use during personnel training. It is available on YouTube at this link, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5eniRI0mXM>.



Click here for link!

In case You Missed It— VolunteerMatch

VolunteerMatch and Idealist+ now integrate with Volunteer.gov volunteer opportunities, with no extra work required for USACE volunteer coordinators. This new initiative will help thousands of new volunteers learn about USACE volunteer opportunities.

<https://www.volunteermatch.org/>

<https://www.idealist.org/en>

About these sites:

- VolunteerMatch.org: Volunteer recruitment website with 1.3 million monthly visitors. Has more volunteers and volunteer opportunities than any other volunteer recruiting service.
- Idealist.org: Best known for social impact job postings. Has also connected hundreds of thousands of volunteers and interns to new opportunities through Idealist+, their volunteer recruitment platform.

What this means: When you post a volunteer opportunity on Volunteer.gov, that volunteer opportunity will show on both VolunteerMatch and Idealist within one business day, with no additional work required from you. When interested volunteers click to learn more or sign up, they are redirected back to the original Volunteer.gov posting to apply. This means that when you post on Volunteer.gov, your volunteer opportunity is now discoverable by thousands of new volunteers, and those volunteers applications will appear in your Volunteer.gov queue.

Action required: No action is required; all Volunteer.gov volunteer opportunities will now cross post to these additional sites.

**Blow Up Your
Life Jacket Every
2-6 months!**
**Inflate, Inspect for
Leaks, Repack,
and Wear It.**



Iowa Man Uninjured After Boat Capsizes on Saylorville Lake

Strong wind and cold weather caused a sailboat on Saylorville Lake to capsize. Water rescue teams were called to the Lakeview boat ramp, just north of the dam, around 1 p.m. on April 16, 2022. Someone noticed the small boat had capsized with a person sitting on top. The boater stated that the rescue crews were fast to respond, and he was wearing the equipment needed to keep him safe. He was not injured when the boat capsized and said wearing his life jacket and dry suit kept him safe.



#RecreateResponsibly Launches USACE Water Safety Messages

We are excited to share the launch of water safety messages in partnership with #RecreateResponsibly. Please utilize the English and Spanish graphics and messaging to participate in the launch of the Water Safety Edition of #RecreateResponsibly. Participation is simple! Throughout May just utilize the graphics and messaging on social media, for your listservs/newsletters, or in your internal communications.

Recreate Responsibly Coalition allows USACE to make the graphics and messaging. You will notice that the *Know Before You Go* and *Plan and Prepare* graphics attached have U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the top of them. The National Water Safety Program revised these graphics to coincide with USACE water safety messaging.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Water Safety Edition




Know Before You Go



Learn to swim and float well. Swimming in open water (lakes, rivers, etc.) is different from swimming in a pool.

#RecreateResponsibly

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Water Safety Edition



Know Before You Go

Check the weather forecast and water conditions before you go. Cold water can be dangerous, even on warm days. Learn to swim and float well. Swimming in open water (lakes, rivers, etc.) is different from swimming in a pool, due to currents, depth, weather, etc.

#RecreateResponsibly

Using Funds Received from the America the Beautiful Pass Program

POC: Ryan Hartwig, Recreation Business Line Program Manager

As a participant in the American the Beautiful Federal Lands Pass Program, we want to share examples of projects across the country that have been funded by FLREA program revenue. These projects address backlog maintenance, improve visitor services, and enhance visitor experiences. Please continue sharing these completed projects with us by sending them to Ryan.D.Hartwig@usace.army.mil. Projects completed by all agencies can be found at <https://doi.sciencebase.gov/flrea/program-examples-5>.

1 North Atlantic Division—Buffumville Lake



In November of 2021, USACE Park Rangers purchased and installed 18 replacement baskets for the disc golf course at Buffumville Lake. The cost of the baskets totaled \$6400 of which the America the Beautiful pass program funded over \$2500. The new, highly visible baskets were well received from the players as a great improvement to the disc golf course. Future improvements will include a complete tee box sign replacement and the purchase of lost and found disc return boxes.



In May of 2020, the Interagency pass program completely funded the purchase of a replacement EZ-Go golf cart at a cost of \$5,000. The purpose of the golf cart is to facilitate recreation operations at Buffumville Lake Park. The cart is used by park attendants, volunteers and staff to aid them in performing contract duties, light trail maintenance, disc golf course upkeep, daily opening and closing of Buffumville Lake Park, and to respond to emergencies as needed. The cart is also used to move materials and tools to project sites during the National Public Lands Day event, held annually in September.

2 Great Lakes & Ohio River Division—Cheatham Lake & Old Hickory



To better serve the visiting public, provide employee safety, and protect staff during the COVID-19 Pandemic, Cheatham Lake installed a ticket window to safely interact with visitors and keep the office open to the public.



To provide direct benefit to the user, Old Hickory Lake utilized Interagency AtB and Special Use funds on replacement facility amenities such as picnic table, grills, trash can holders, bulletin boards for shelter reservations.

3 Mississippi Valley Division—Coralville Lake

The Coralville Lake Visitor Center sees approximately 10,000 visitors per year. The facility is used for school programs, special events, and a multitude of meetings to facilitate operations and inform the public on USACE missions. The previous visitor center included randomly placed items of taxidermy that lacked a storyline or theme information.

The new layout has visitors enter and begin their exploration with a station focused on the Devonian time-period. Coralville Lake has a Devonian period fossil bed located within the spillway and the famous “Dudley” the Dunkleosteus. The upper plate of the animal was found in the spillway in 2008 during a flood event and is a feature of the new layout. As you progress in a clockwise pattern through the visitor center, station subject matter moves through time showing land use and changes related to the time periods. The final displays showcase the USACE missions at Coralville and our Veteran’s Memorial wall, which ties to the Veteran’s trail just below the visitor center.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Water Safety Edition



Plan and Prepare



Life jackets save lives! Please wear a properly-fitted life jacket when in, on, or near open water (lakes, rivers, etc.).

#RecreateResponsibly

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Water Safety Edition



Plan and Prepare

Life jackets save lives! Please wear a properly-fitted life jacket when in, on, or near open water (lakes, rivers, etc.). Before going out on the water give your float plan to a responsible person and learn more by taking a boater safety course.

#RecreateResponsibly

Water Safety Edition



Build a Safe and Inclusive Outdoors



People have different comfort levels with water. Designate a water watcher.

#RecreateResponsibly

Recreation Leadership Advisory Team

The Recreation Leadership Advisory Team along with the Stewardship Advisory Team met at the Philadelphia District Office April 26-28, 2022. Discussion and meeting topics for the recreation and joint day portions of the meeting focused on a variety of topics including: the S3 effort for recreation, recreation operation condition assessments (OCA's), budget strategies and user fees. Additionally, the teams engaged on sustainability and climate change related programs and national initiatives, national standardization for GIS, and national focus on FEM and Asset Management for NRM.

RLAT Members

NAD: Mike Vissichelli (NAD) and Tia Mercer (NAE)

SAD: Amy Cobb (SAD) and Allen Earhart (SAM)

LRD: Jeff Defosse (LRD) and Lori Brewster (LRL)

MVD: Lynn Neher (MVD) and Ashley Kiley (MVP)

NWD: Jonathan Carlisle (NWD) and Chris Alford (NWW—RLAT Chair)

SWD: David White (SWD) and Amanda Palmer (SWT)

SPD: Phil Smith (SPD) and Alicia Kohl (SPK)

POD: Gayle Rich (POD) and Jill Davis Belanger (POH)

LRD Park Ranger Community of Practice

POC: *Trey Church, Jeffery.T.Church@usace.army.mil*

Members of the LRD Park Ranger Communities of Practice (CoP) met in October 2021 at Caesar Creek Lake near Dayton, Ohio. Due to Covid-19, the group once again postponed the popular LRD CoP biannual workshop/meeting. However, with a large conference room and proper social distancing measures, the board members were able to meet safely and tackle several work items for the entire LRD park ranger community.

Their first objective was developing a guide for uniform purchasing and planning for new rangers in a variety of positions and climates. Previously, with no clear guidance, many rangers were unsure what park rangers are required to purchase, and what items they need based on their particular duties. Working with representatives from every district, the team drafted a guide clarifying required items new rangers should buy and recommends additional items based on the climate in which they work. This guide identifies the unique needs for seasonal and full-time/permanent park rangers. The guide will help new hires and project managers understand how best to use their uniform allowance and have the gear they need for the work they will do, whether in the bush or on the lake, in blistering heat or artic-like temperatures. The approved "LRD Uniform Guide" was sent to the Division park ranger community in early January.

Updating the LRD Boat Patrol Manual was the team's second task, including drafting a paddlecraft patrol section. Kayaks allow rangers to maintain a water safety presence in heavily used but hard to reach areas on their lakes, but LRD had no uniform guidance for paddlecraft patrols. To address this, the CoP incorporated best practices from projects throughout the division, clarifying training and identification requirements, and identifying necessary safety gear to perform patrols from a paddlecraft. The group also created an Activity Hazard Analysis for paddlecraft to serve as a template for all projects to ensure ranger safety. The addition of the paddlecraft guide will help projects currently conducting kayak patrols as well as those considering adopting the practice to better fulfill their water safety mission ensuring visitor and ranger safety.

Together, the LRD CoP works extremely hard to represent the rangers within the region. The group prides itself on listening to rangers in the field and developing solutions to problems they face, as well as promoting safe work practices. Through projects like the LRD Uniform Guide, Boat Patrol Manual and biannual training workshops they are committed to supporting a well-trained, professional park ranger community throughout the division.



Lakes and Rivers Division Uniform Guide

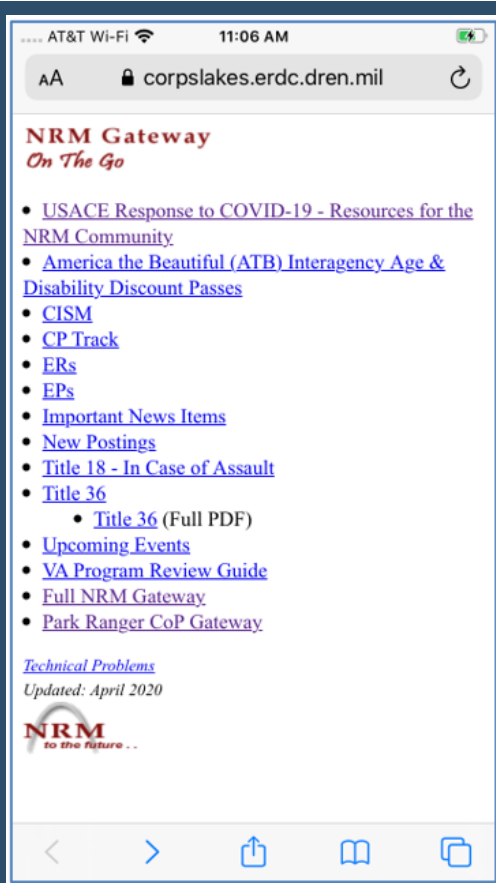


October 2021

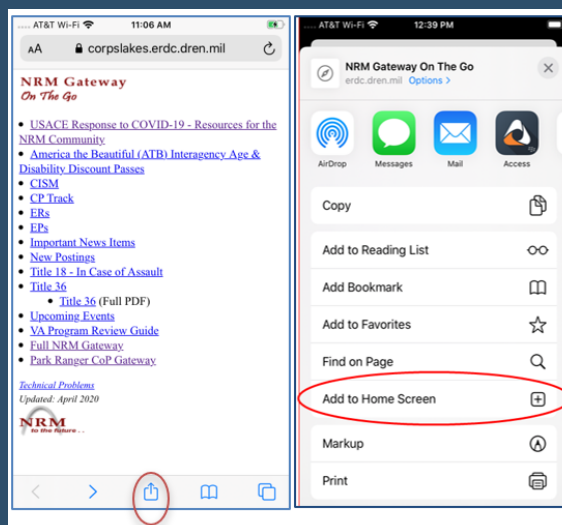
Gateway on the Go!

Did you realize that a streamlined view of the NRM Gateway can be easily accessed on your mobile phone?

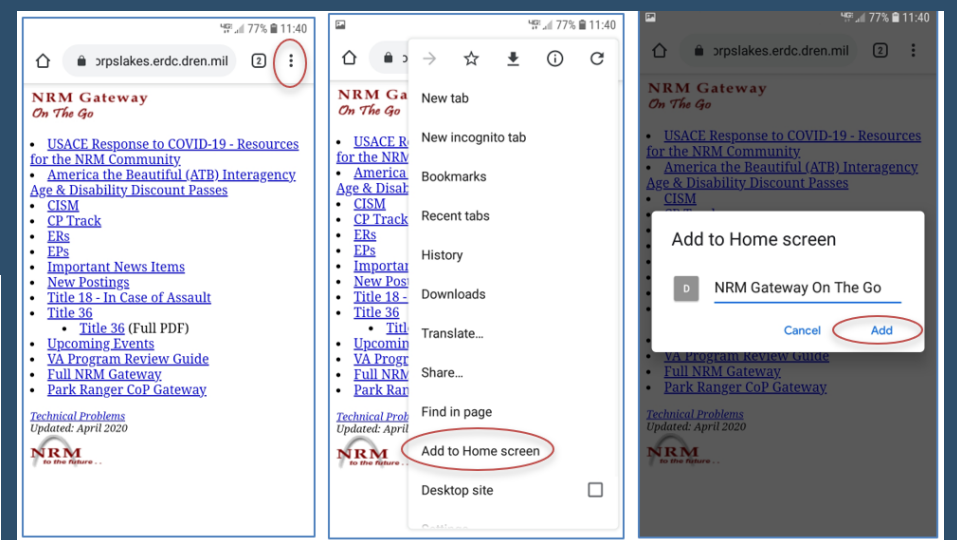
Simply add an icon on your phone screen for ready access to the mobile version!



This is the default view of the NRM Gateway On the Go on a cell phone. The links -- those links that Rangers need at their fingertips -- were recently reviewed and revised by the Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board.



iPhone - open the Gateway On The Go screen, click on bookmark at the bottom of screen, then select "Add to Home Screen".



Samsung – open the Gateway On The Go screen; touch the three dots in upper right corner; select Add to Home Screen, select Add.

What if I open the Gateway on my phone and it doesn't show the mobile version?

When you open the Gateway on a phone, the Gateway mobile version looks for a phone operating system (OS). If your device doesn't automatically go to the On The Go screen from the link <https://corpslakes.ercd.dren.mil/nrm.cfm> please email Virginia.L.Dickerson@usace.army.mil with information on device brand and operating system so the OS list can be further updated.

Can Rangers input VERS (traffic meter) info from their phone out in the field?

This is NOT possible from mobile phones because VERS is CAC protected. Even if you have a CAC reader on your phone, input could only be done if the phone was on a Corps network, that is, in the office. However, if you have an ACE-IT procured tablet with a CAC reader, uploads are possible by using your mobile phone as a hotspot for the tablet.

Help Us—Help You!

Have you recently updated a Master Plan or Shoreline Management Plan? These are popular NRM Gateway references. To see the plans currently posted, visit the "Project Master Plans and OMPs" and the "Shoreline Management Program pages. Please submit any additional approved plans for posting by emailing them to Ginny Dickerson (Dickerson, Virginia in Outlook).

Link to Project Master Plans and OMPs page:

<https://corpslakes.ercd.dren.mil/employees/masterplans/masterplans.cfm>

Link to Shoreline Management Plans link on this page:

<https://corpslakes.ercd.dren.mil/employees/shoreline/shoreline.cfm>

Upcoming NAISMA (North American Invasive Species Management Association) Monthly Webinars

June 15, 2022 @ 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm CDT: Spotted Lanternfly Ecology and Biocontrol Efforts. <https://naisma.org/event/webinar-spotted-lanternfly-ecology-and-biocontrol-efforts/>

NRM Happenings in SWD

1 District – Ranger Awards and Refresher Training. The 2022 Park Ranger Awards and Refresher Training took Place at Canyon Lake April 5-7, 2022. Due to COVID restrictions many NRM employees attended virtually through a live WebEx stream.



2 Water Safety Dam— Mannford Public Schools. Keystone Lake Park Rangers Lauren Enloe, Alex Bilinski and Hutch Todd coordinated a Water Safety Day with Mannford Public Schools. Over 550 students (ages 5-13) were instructed on the importance of wearing a life jacket, the proper wear of a life-jacket and the Reach-Throw-Row-Never Go rescue methods. The skills that they learned were put to the test with a fun relay race at the end of every session! Bobber (Alex) was even in attendance!



3 True Legends Fishing Event. The Oologah Lake staff coordinated with a non-profit organization “True Legends Foundation” to hold a children’s fishing event at the Oologah Lake Office pond. Wind and rain kept the attendance lower than expected, but there were still approximately 50 people present for the event.



4 Trinity Regional Project– EarthX 2022 Event. Park Rangers from across the Trinity Regional Project participated in the 9th Annual EarthX event held at the Kay Bailey Hutchinson Center in Dallas, TX. "EarthX2022 is the largest green gathering on the planet held around Earth Day in April to celebrate progress, impact and innovation. EarthX2022 creates a fun and engaging atmosphere for thought, exploration and experiential learning." Park Rangers educated the visiting public on the USACE environmental and recreation missions with a focus on overall water safety while recreating in our green spaces. Participating USACE staff included Jennifer Lawson, Ami Watkins, Angel Pride, Chris Brewer, Dax Hall, David Walker, Anthony Sanders, Billy Jasper and Andy Jasper. USACE Park Rangers successfully delivered over 5,000 water safety contacts during this three- day event. The Trinity Regional Project has provided representation at DFW area Earth Day events since 1992.



Thanks for sharing SWD!!