

NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

2020
ANNUAL REPORT



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

MESSAGE FROM THE NRM CHIEF

2020 Annual Report

As I pondered how to summarize this past year, two words kept resonating with me: AMAZED and PROUD. I am amazed at the creativity, resourcefulness, and unwavering commitment of our Natural Resources Management workforce. From park rangers, biologists, administrative personnel, and maintenance staff to our volunteers, and partners, we "dug deep" and "reached-out" to ensure the safety our of co-workers and the millions of people who visited our lands and waters during 2020.

The pandemic forced us to rethink how we deliver the recreation mission for USACE and drew attention to the importance and significance of what our program really means to Americans. We continued to maintain our focus and excel in the stewardship of natural resources, despite the many challenges and obstacles in our path.

I am PROUD to serve as your Chief of Natural Resources Management. I look forward to a successful 2021 and beyond, knowing that millions of people will continue to seek the facilities we provide and the environment we conserve as a source of normalcy, relaxation, enjoyment, and connectedness.



JEFF KRAUSE

Chief, Natural Resources Management



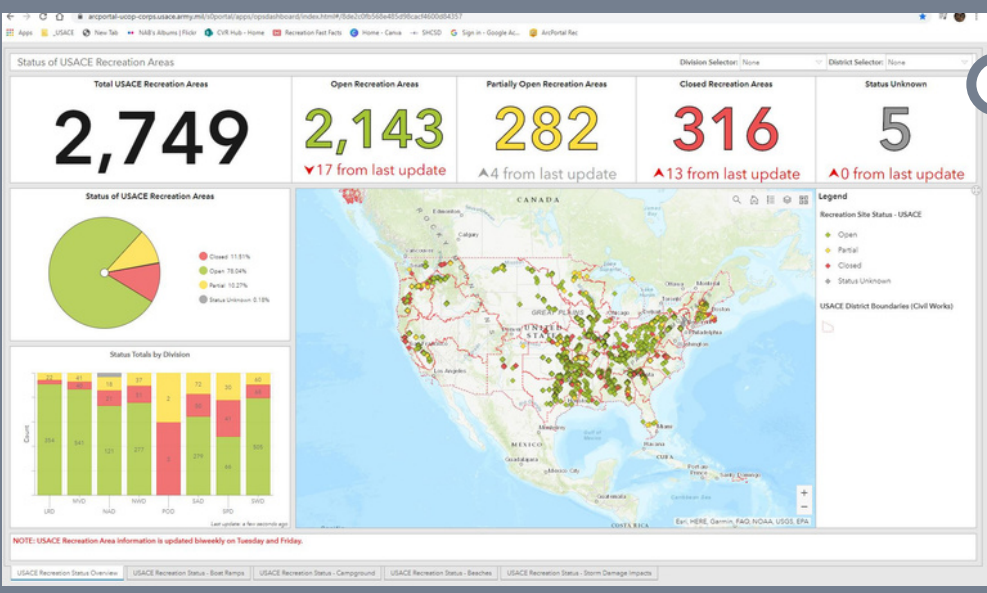
MISSION

The Natural Resources Management Program delivers safe public access to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' lands and waters in a manner that protects all project purposes and mission areas through responsible outdoor recreation, environmental conservation and land use management while partnering with communities to serve the American people.



2 Across the NRM Nation

DASHBOARD TECHNOLOGY



RECREATION CLOSURES AND OPENINGS. With the onset of the worldwide pandemic, many recreation facilities such as campgrounds, beaches, and visitor centers were closed until conditions were appropriate and protocols were outlined to ensure safe re-openings for both the USACE workforce and visitors. The USACE Common Operating Picture, built with ArcGIS Dashboard technology, provided leadership with the capability to monitor open and closed recreation facilities across the nation.



CARES ACT FUNDING

In March 2020, the \$2.2 trillion relief package known as the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law. Of that, USACE received \$70 million in funding to prepare for and respond to the coronavirus pandemic. The Recreation Program was able to utilize a portion of that funding to address CDC guidelines, provide touchless systems, and aid in visitor influx management. Over the past year, 300 automated fee machines have been ordered and/or installed which tripled the inventory at USACE recreation areas. Along with a multitude of other benefits, these machines reduced exposure to COVID 19 and other pathogens while increasing user compliance and annual pass sales.



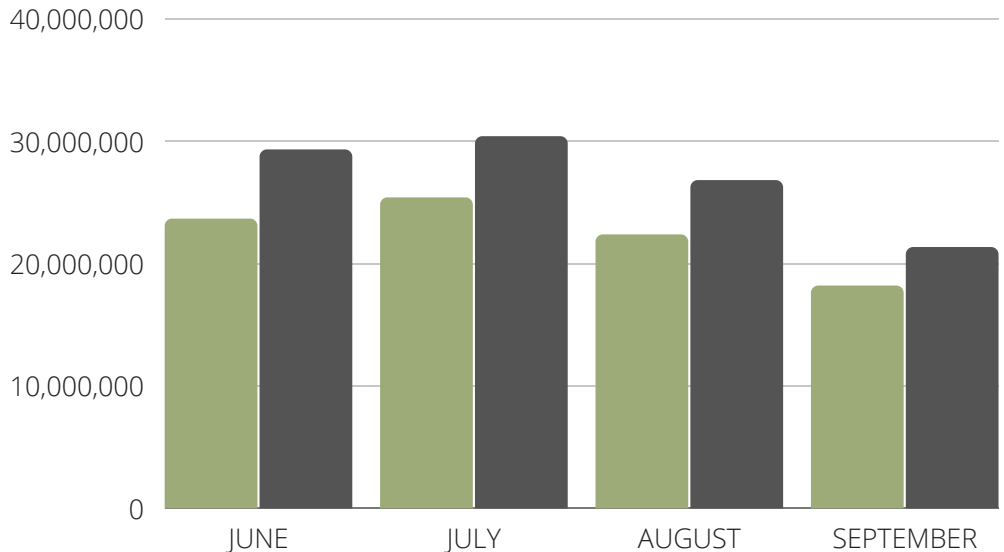
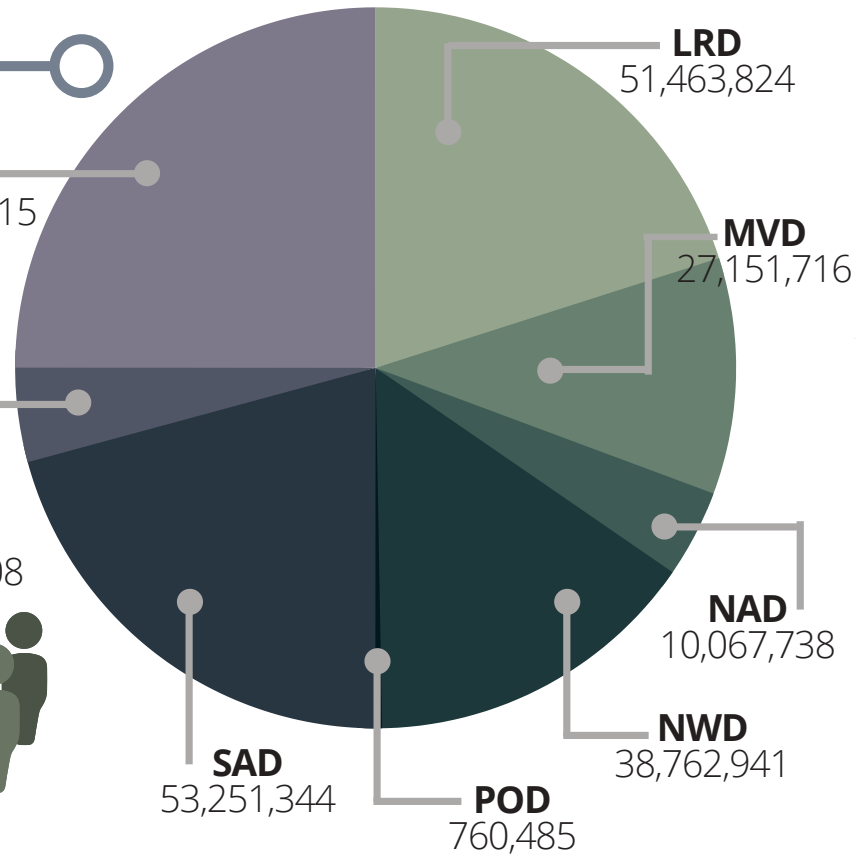
2 Across the NRM Nation

CHANGING VISITATION

As anticipated, visitation during FY20 was different when compared to previous years. Due to facility closures during March, April and early May, the total yearly visitation was lower with **256 million visits** recorded. However, in the months of June, July, August, and September visitation to USACE recreation areas surged. Compared to FY19, there were **18 million** more visits for the same time period.

256,346,671

FY20
TOTAL
VISITATION



89.5 Million
June - September 2019

VS.
18.3 M



107.8 Million
June - September 2020

2 Across the NRM Nation

FACILITY IMPACTS AND CREATIVITY

Extreme visitation numbers were fueled by a lack of "normal" activities in addition to local, state, and national leaders advocating the use of the nation's public lands to embrace the outdoors. The Outdoor Recreation Roundtable member survey indicated that **81%** of Americans spent time outdoors during the pandemic and that consumers viewed camping as the safest option for overnight stays.

Trend INCREASES

121% Leisure bike riding

90% Motorhome sales

59% Boat sales

41% Personal Watercraft Sales

37% New or renewed interest in fishing



Our Natural Resources Management workforce, at all levels, drew upon our creative resources to safely manage the crowds and impacts to USACE facilities and the environment. We found ways to continue to engage with members of the public virtually with initiatives such as #USACEeducates, utilized new technology such as automated fee machines, and strengthened existing partnerships to successfully deliver both our recreation and environmental stewardship missions. As the demand is projected to continue we have the opportunity to act and gain support related to budgeting, staffing strategies, and aging infrastructure needs.



2 Across the NRM Nation

Corps Lakes - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
October 16 · 🌐

#USACEeducates
Where do you think you would find fossilized coral in the U.S?
How about in IOWA! During the Floods of 1993, a unique archaeological area was exposed at Coralville Lake located in Coralville, Iowa. This area is known as the Devonian Fossil Gorge and contains fossils estimated at 365 million years old! Specimens of corals, brachiopods and crinoids are commonly found here. ... See More

**CORALVILLE LAKE
DEVONIAN FOSSIL GORGE**

MEET DUDLEY!
Dudley is a Dunkleosteus. Back in the day (375 million years ago!) when Iowa was covered in a tropical ocean I used to be known as the Terrible Fish because I was the biggest fish around and liked eating anyone smaller than me. Nowadays I call Coralville Lake my home and go on weekly adventures with Park Rangers and write about them for Facebook (@coralvillelake)!

Devonian Fossil Gorge

Devonian Fossil Gorge

#USACEeducates

When visitors were unable to come to us, we went to them - virtually! The Interpretive Services Outreach Program developed #USACEeducates to provide NRM staff with over 6 months of weekly themed social media posts and activities. This effort connected visitors with USACE staff and encouraged online and at home exploration of our natural resources and Army history. #USACEeducates was shared via the CorpsLakes' Facebook site as well as many individual projects' social media pages.

245th
HAPPY BIRTHDAY
to our nation's builders

NEW TOOLS

While some efforts may have been delayed by the impacts of COVID-19, the first phases of the National Initiatives Viewer were completed and made available for use. The National Initiatives Viewer is an enterprise-level website co-developed by USACE's Institute of Water Resources (IWR) and the Spatial Data Branch of the Mobile District's Operations Division. The viewer presents information on the spatial relationships between USACE projects and three specific conservation components - the National Fish Habitat Partnership,

National Initiatives

Click here to access information about natural resource management and conservation initiatives developed for USACE Environmental Stewardship program staff.

Photo credit: USACE SWF

the whooping crane migration corridor, and monarch butterfly habitat along the I-35 migration range. By using the powerful features of the Qlik Sense data analytics platform, users are able to explore and create visualization based on data from multiple sources in a dashboard style format. The goal of this product is to facilitate better understanding of how stewardship at USACE projects impacts landscape-scale conservation issues without requiring specialized knowledge of GIS and spatial analytical methods. The viewer is available on the NRM Gateway.

2 Across the NRM Nation

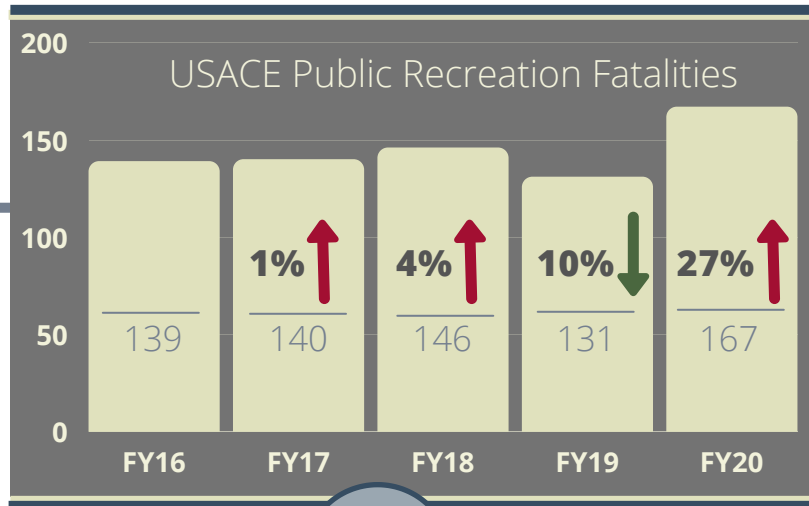
COVID-19 IMPACTS



While it is important to recognize the exceptional creativity and resourcefulness that occurred during the past year, it is equally important to acknowledge the challenges and negative impacts that members of our workforce faced. Like many on the front line, park rangers worked and managed millions of visitors while still navigating the stress of the pandemic at home. Staff were required to change operational modes frequently and assist visitors with increasingly erratic behavior as a result of pandemic worries and social unrest.

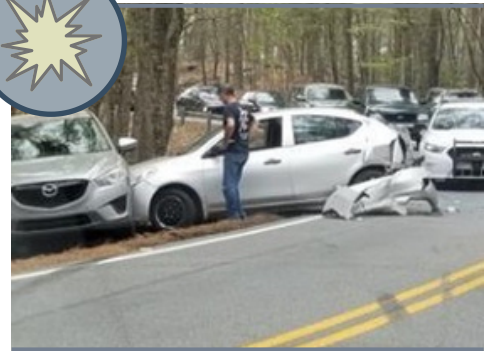
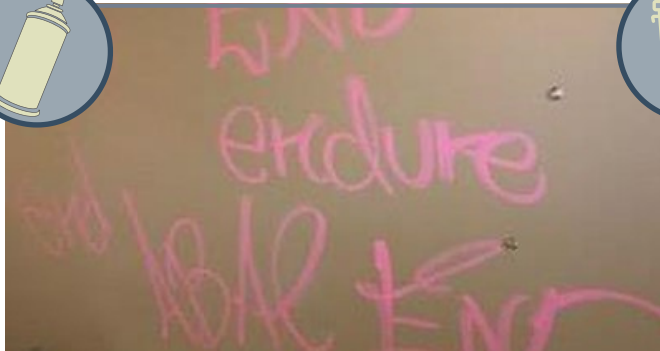
PUBLIC FATALITIES

Annually over the past five years (FY16-20) an average of 145 public recreation fatalities occurred at USACE waterways. A 27% increase occurred in FY20 primarily due to the high visitation associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the water related fatalities were identified as males who were over the age of 18 and were not wearing a life jacket.



FACILITY CROWDING

As a result of the increased visitation, many parks reached or exceeded their designed capacity in the morning hours of **every** weekend. With crowds still arriving throughout the day, park ranger efforts had to be focused on traffic management to maintain order. This resulted in infrequent patrols to interior park facilities. Often, when all recreation sites had filled, visitors created their own opportunities, accessing areas that were closed, restricted, or not designed for that type of use. Many parks were forced to deal with an increase in vandalism, property damage, illegal access, forced entry, mounds of trash, and traffic accidents.



2 Across the NRM Nation

VETERANS CURATION PROGRAM

An innovative, nationally recognized program, the Veterans Curation Program (VCP) provides employment, vocational training, and technological skill to veterans while rehabilitating at risk USACE archaeological collections.

USACE is responsible for the stewardship of a variety of archaeological collections, many of which were excavated during the construction of the country's reservoirs and water control systems. Many of these collections require rehabilitation in order to meet federal standards to ensure their long-term preservation and accessibility by the public and scientific research and education.

To ensure safety over the past year, the number of veterans in the program was reduced to maintain social distancing and obey local and state ordinances on closures.



674

VETERANS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE PROGRAM

21

USACE DISTRICTS THAT HAVE COLLECTIONS BEING PROCESSED

REGIONALIZATION EFFORT

USACE collections total nearly **52,000 cubic feet** of artifacts and associated records, currently stored at **159 repositories**. Most of these repositories do not meet federal standards. USACE's National Regional Effort commenced in 2017 with a memorandum from the Director of Civil Works, following a successful pilot program in the Mississippi Valley Division (MVD). Coordination, consultation, and data gathering processes are occurring in the remaining divisions to coalesce collections into a fewer number of repositories while maintaining collections near their geographical or cultural area of origin.



WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2021

2021 - WHAT TO EXPECT

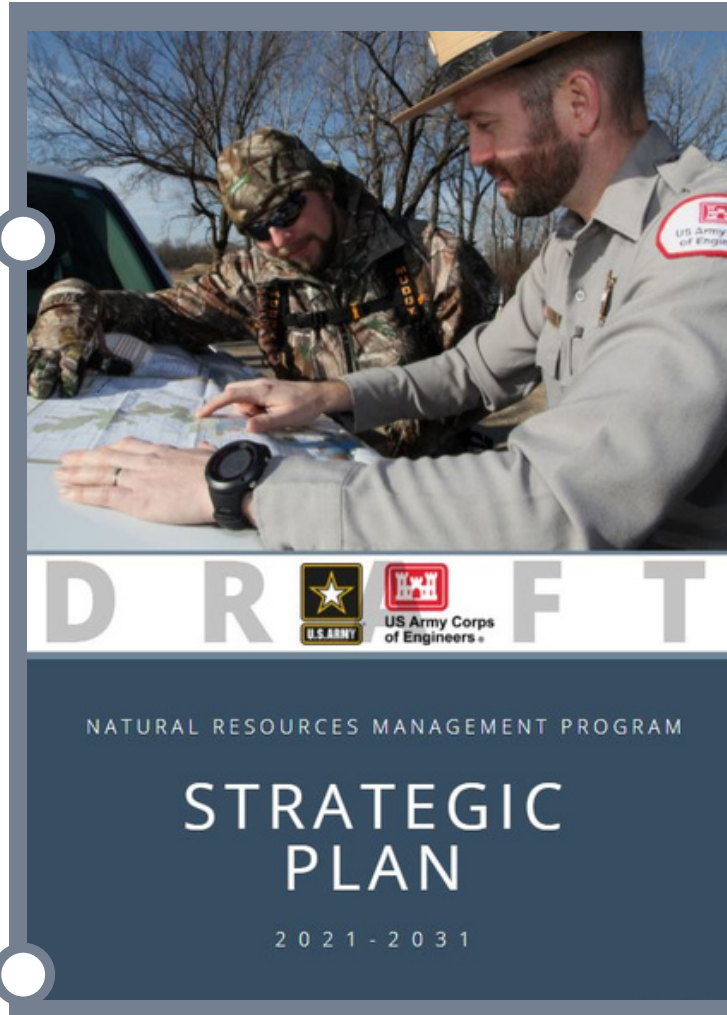
Though it is still early in 2021 and it is difficult to foresee what this year will bring, the following efforts are top priorities for the NRM Program.

NRM STRATEGIC PLAN

Over the past year and a half a dedicated team from across the NRM community has been working to develop a 10-year strategic plan for both the recreation and environmental stewardship programs. Serving as a foundational framework, this plan recognizes an already strong NRM program and emphasizes the need for a focused vision to make smart, well-informed, and consistent decisions. Four adaptable and responsive goal areas were identified to prioritize the workforce, communication, resourcing, and delivery of the NRM Program. The strategic plan introduces a revised mission and new vision statement for the NRM Program that reaffirms our commitment to ensuring the protection of all project missions while carefully balancing environmental and recreation needs.

LOOKING AHEAD TO S3

Similar Costs for Similar Activities at Similar Projects. While this is still a work in progress, the S3 initiative has been underway for nearly a year in the recreation business line. More recently, the environmental stewardship business line has begun to



This will be a multi-year effort with support from the Recreation Leadership Advisory Team, Stewardship Advisory

Team, Division and District Business Line Managers, and many others. For the Recreation Business Line, the goal is to have a process defined and

ready to be implemented for the FY24 budget build. The Environmental Stewardship Business Line is projected to follow a similar timeline.

O&M 20/20

SIMILAR COSTS FOR SIMILAR ACTIVITIES AT SIMILAR PROJECTS

ADAPTABLE

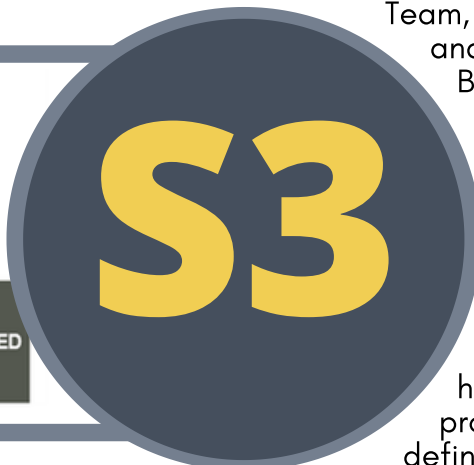
DEFENSIBLE

TRANSPARENT

CONSISTENT

RISK-INFORMED

identify similar activities, and therefore costs, at projects with similar characteristics. While each business line will develop their own approach to identifying these activities, costs, and projects, products from previous efforts will support this process.



WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2021

INNOVATIONS

Since its beginning in Tulsa in 2016, the USACE Multi-District Innovations Team has grown to over 40 team members representing 17 districts and 7 divisions. The team's purpose is to plan and develop technology for park rangers and enhance the recreational experience for the visiting public. Each Innovation Season, which runs from September 1st to May 1st, team members apply time and resources to create a prototype invention from field generated ideas. With only eight months to get innovations into a working prototype, the team navigates many hurdles including policy, research and development, IT and equipment needs, in addition to cross checking with other agencies and the private sector for similar applications.



BUILDING ON THE PROGRESS OF 2020



Innovations
Multi-District Team

With the development of a team charter well underway in 2021, the Innovations Team targeted a May 1, 2021 pilot launch date for several new apps and technologies for the public and internal use.



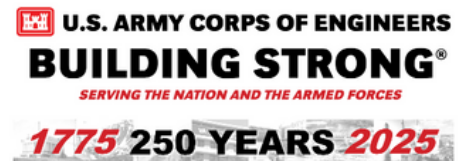
The USACE Jr. Ranger Adventure App allows our young visitors to virtually explore 10 lakes across USACE, go on unique adventures at those lakes, and earn badges.



For members of the public who visit our lands and waters for hunting, the USACE Hunting Maps App provides interactive GIS maps containing resources such as hunting surveys and boundaries, access points, rules and regulations, and more.



The public will have a new experience in USACE parks with the Innovations Team's AR/VR App. This 360 virtual experience will take the public on ranger walks, boat rides, and Visitor Center tours of their choice all in a 360 experience.



Just a few, short horizons away in 2025, USACE will celebrate 250 years of serving the Nation and Armed Forces. To commemorate this occasion, the Innovations Team is working with USACE headquarters proponents and partners, such as the Corps Foundation, to plan celebrations at select locations, develop a commemorative badge, lapel pin, and an AR/VR Traveling Trunk.



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP MISSION



OUR PROGRAM

The Environmental Stewardship Program protects, preserves, and restores significant ecological and cultural resources at Civil Works projects nationwide while balancing land use activities. These efforts contribute to the quality of American life by managing and conserving natural resources consistent with ecosystem management principles and provide a sustainable environment for future generations.

BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT. USACE is responsible for protecting over **38,000 miles** of boundary line - that's 6 times the length of the Mexico and Canada borders combined. The implementation of policy issued in 2019 demonstrates program commitment to ensuring the integrity of USACE boundaries and protecting the full capability of all project missions. The development of Operational Condition Assessments (OCA) for the boundary program are well underway and will result in the development of a condition-consequence index framework.

MASTER PLANS. The revision of master plans continues to be a priority for the Environmental Stewardship Program. At the end of FY20, nearly **39%** of master plans were in compliance with current standards, an increase of 4% from the previous year. With an estimated 40 plans currently in the revision process, our compliance is projected to increase again at the end of FY21.

SHORELINE MANAGEMENT. The Environmental Stewardship Program has the responsibility for the oversight of nearly **75,000 shoreline permits**. The 2021-2031 NRM Strategic Plan emphasizes the need to advance our efforts in support of changes to the administration and fee structure of the shoreline management program.



12 MILLION
ACRES OF PUBLIC
LAND AND WATERS
MANAGED



14%
U.S.
FRESHWATER
FISHING



1 MILLION
ACRES
OF
GRASSLANDS



7 OF THE TOP 10
MIGRATORY BIRD
FLYWAYS CROSS
OVER USACE WATERS

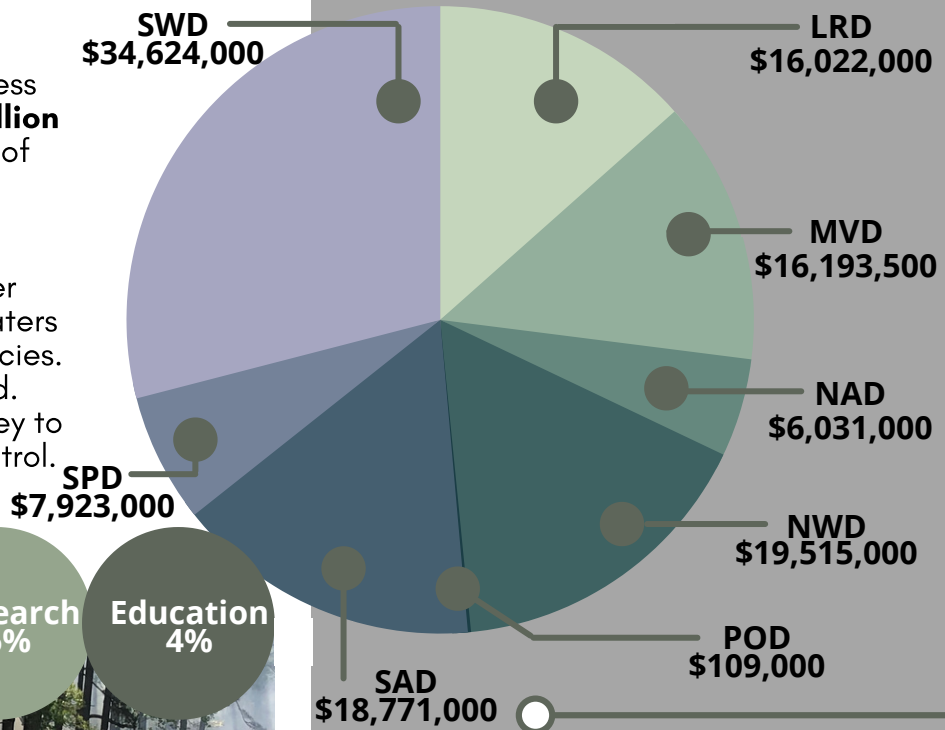
CHALLENGES

INVASIVE SPECIES. The presence and establishment of invasive species on project lands and waters continues to challenge all aspects of the program, with over **\$8.9 million** spent in the Stewardship Mission alone. Across all USACE Civil Works business lines it was estimated that nearly **\$165 million** was utilized on invasive species with **40%** of those funds focused on control measures.

During FY20 annual reporting, the NRM Community of Practice estimated that over **3.3 million acres** of USACE lands and waters are impacted by one or more invasive species. Of that, over **250,000 acres** were treated. Innovation and collaboration have been key to successful education, prevention, and control.



\$125,200,000 FY20 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP FUNDING



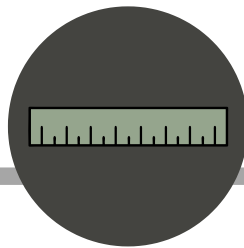
FY20 ENS BUDGET. In FY20 a total budget request of **\$198.9 million** was submitted for the Environmental Stewardship Program with **\$125.2 million** appropriated by Congress.

Additionally, **\$35.8 million** was requested by other business lines such as navigation, hydropower, and flood risk management for work associated with biological opinions and mitigation requirements.

In FY21 we are set to execute a budget nearing **\$120.7 million** with an additional **\$47 million** requested for work associated with other business lines.



45,700
CULTURAL
RESOURCE
SITES



38,000
MILES
OF
BOUNDARY



RECREATION MISSION

OUR PROGRAM

USACE is one of the leading federal providers of outdoor recreation in the nation. Over 400 lake and river projects in 43 states provide a diverse range of recreational opportunities. By providing controlled access and management on USACE lands and water, recreation program managers play a role in the successful execution of all project missions.

PARK RANGER COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (CoP) Advisory Board. The Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board was established in 2007 with a purpose providing a unified and on-going support platform for the USACE Park Ranger. Advisory board members work with subject matter experts and project delivery teams to address issues facing the Ranger community by providing advice and assisting in research. Over the past several years they have created, implemented, and utilized tools such as the National Park Ranger Safety Survey to engage the NRM community and to learn how to best support all USACE Park Rangers.



256 Million

VISITS THIS YEAR



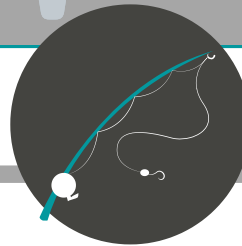
91,583

CAMPSITES



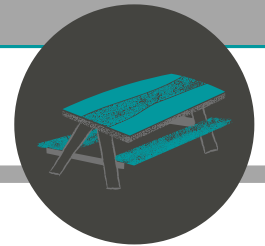
7,684

MILES OF TRAILS



2,000

FISHING TOURNAMENTS



31,804

PICNIC SITES

CHALLENGES

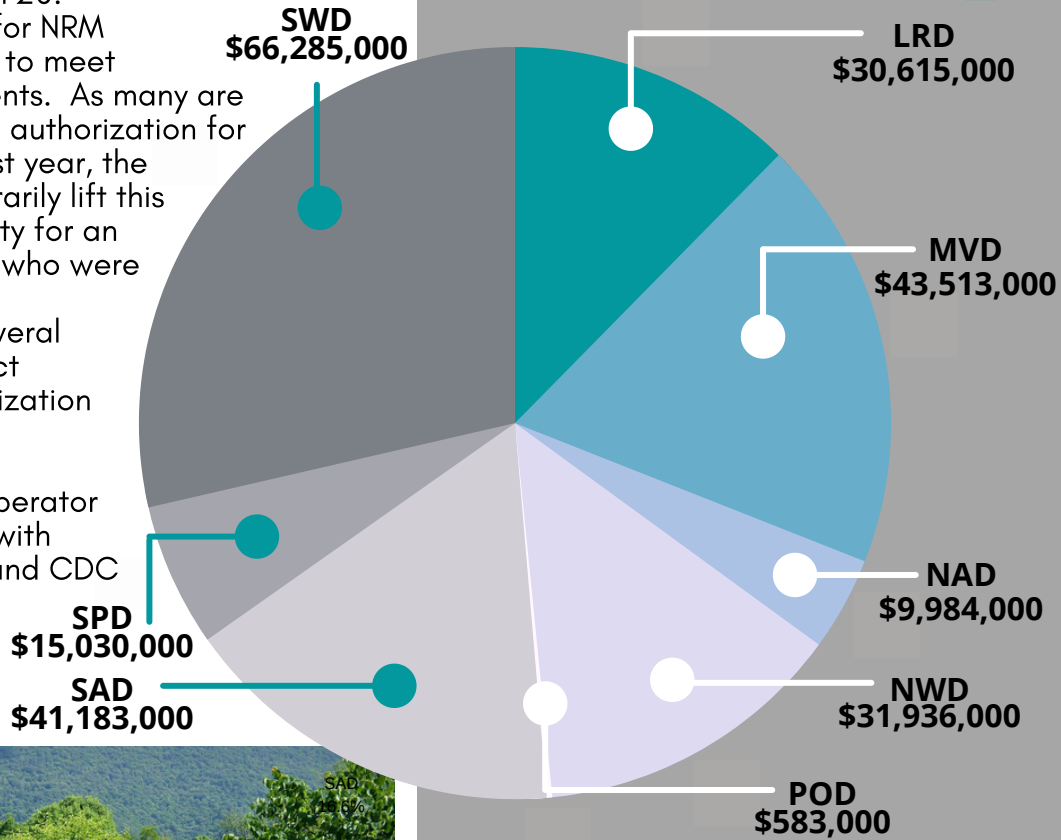
Visitor Assistance and Boat Operator FY21 Training Programs.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many training courses were cancelled in FY20. Early in 2021, the Visitor Assistance for NRM PROSPECT Course #147 was revised to meet current COVID-19 training requirements. As many are aware, this training provides citation authorization for a maximum of three years. In the last year, the HQ NRM team has worked to temporarily lift this policy requirement to extend authority for an additional year for those employees who were unable to take the required course. Additionally during the past year, several USACE districts were able to conduct regional trainings for citation authorization through special approval.

Going forward in FY21, small boat operator training is permitted in accordance with ER 385-1-91, Executive Order 13991, and CDC guidance.

\$269,000,000

FY20 RECREATION FUNDING



RECREATION BUDGET. The FY20 Chief's Recommendation submitted to the ASA(CW) was nearly **\$375 million** for the Recreation Program with \$269 million appropriated which includes HQ, IWR, and Joint cost funding. In FY21, the Recreation Program is set to execute a budget of **\$252 million**.



12.7 Billion

SPENT BY VISITORS TO USACE RECREATION SITES



210,000

JOBS SUPPORTED ANNUALLY

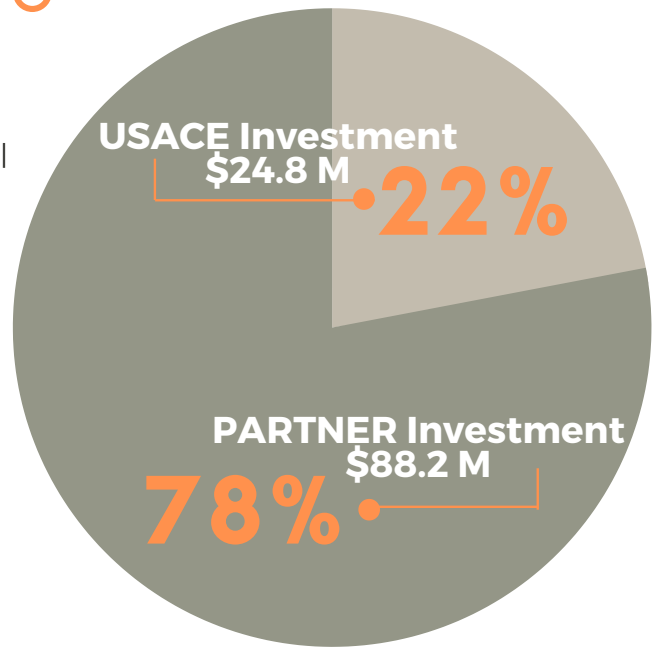


PARTNERSHIPS



At the start of FY20, USACE and our partners could never have predicted what was on the horizon halfway through the year with the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the unique challenges that were presented, in typical fashion our partners and volunteers rose to the occasion and persevered through the difficult times to continue to provide vital services to the public and their communities. It is a true testament to the relationships and trust built over the years that USACE and our partnering agencies and organizations tackled the situation head on. Together, we collaborated in unprecedented ways to develop shared messaging, procedures, and innovations to meet the increased public demand and access needed as record numbers of returning and new visitors sought to improve their mental and physical health on their public lands and waters.

OUR PROGRAM



\$113,077,957



2,528

TOTAL PARTNERS
(6% INCREASE FROM FY19)



254

USACE PROJECTS WITH PARTNERSHIPS
(63% OF USACE PROJECTS)



390

NEW PARTNERSHIPS



636 / 502

RECREATION & ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PARTNERSHIPS

WORKING TOGETHER

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH MOUs. 117 USACE projects partnered with 32 organizations that have a national MOU in place. These partnerships provide educational programs, health and safety, environmental and recreation improvements.

We strive to match our partners' and volunteers' talents and interests with work to be done, in order to achieve a shared vision. While partners and volunteers are not a substitute for USACE management of federal resources, they help accomplish programs and activities for which funding is not available and therefore would not normally be performed.

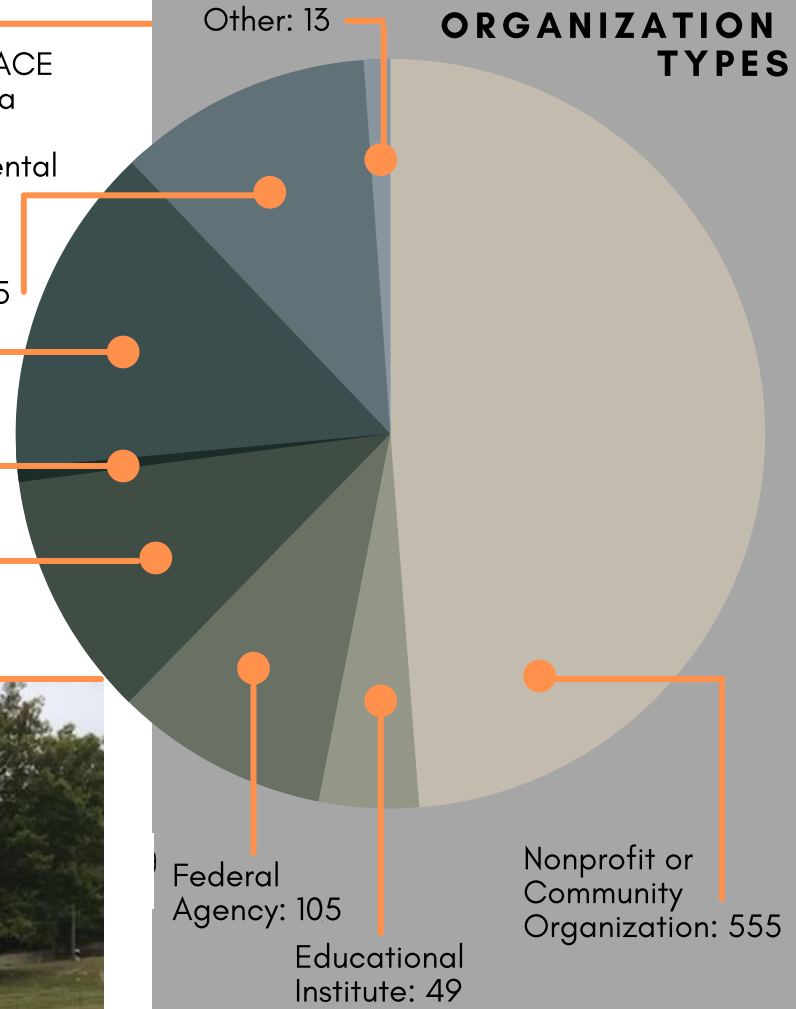
State Agency: 125

Business: 163

Military: 7

Local Government Agency: 121

PARTNER ORGANIZATION TYPES



62
COOPERATING
ASSOCIATIONS
SUPPORTING USACE
LAKE & RIVER PROJECTS





VOLUNTEERS



Volunteers play a valuable role in helping care for the environment and providing high quality recreation opportunities. Each year, people generously give their time, expertise, and resources to serve millions of visitors who enjoy USACE managed lands and waters.

HOW OUR VOLUNTEERS HELP

RECREATION. Within the Recreation Program volunteers have assisted in the construction and maintenance of trails, served as campground and visitor center hosts, conducted socially distanced interpretive programs, developed and built displays, assisted in the maintenance of facilities, and collected fees.

ADMINISTRATION. Volunteers assisted in various administrative roles including writing and editing materials for publications, completing computer and database entry, and assisting in capturing our workforce and visitors in action through photography.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP. Within the Environmental Stewardship Program volunteers have performed a variety of duties assisting staff in managing our natural and cultural resources such as removing invasive species, planting native species, building and installing artificial nesting structures, and monitoring wildlife species.



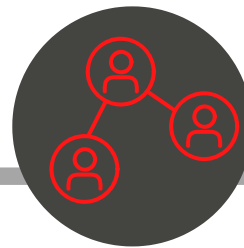
1,069,519

TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS SERVED
(EQUIVALENT TO 593 FTE)



\$21.9 M

TOTAL VALUE OF VOLUNTEER HOURS



71%

USACE PROJECTS USING VOLUNTEERS
(301 OF 403 PROJECTS)



20,437

TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

CONQUERING A CHALLENGE. On September 26th, the National Environmental Education Foundation hosted National Public Lands Day (NPLD). While the global pandemic limited in-person events, the creativity and ingenuity of USACE could not be diminished. In some locations, small, socially distanced in-person events were still possible while others joined this nationwide effort to support public land virtually.



\$225,986

VALUE OF NPLD VOLUNTEER WORK



23
PARTICIPATING
USACE LAKES

2,435
VOLUNTEERS
ENGAGED BY
USACE

60
USACE SITES

8,308
VOLUNTEER
HOURS
PROVIDED TO
USACE

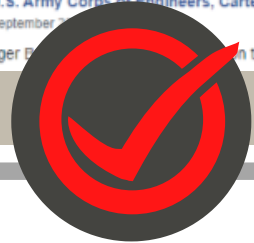


Oak Ridge Trail Virtual NPLD Hike
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Carters Lake
September 26, 2020
Join Ranger [Name] on the Oak Ridge Trail to kick off National Public Lands Day at Carters Lake!

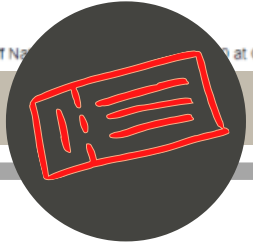
RECOGNITION. Beginning in 2016, volunteers who served 250 hours with USACE or other participating Federal land management agencies became eligible to receive an America the Beautiful (ATB) Interagency Volunteer Pass. In FY20, 156 America the Beautiful Volunteer passes were issued to USACE volunteers for their service. In addition to the ATB pass, 1,365 USACE volunteers who served 100 hours received a USACE annual day use pass.



Volunteers who perform exceptional service are also eligible to receive a Corps Foundation Volunteer Excellence coin, and can be nominated for the Corps Foundation sponsored National Volunteer of the Year Award or the Enduring Service Award. In FY20, 11 Volunteer Excellence coins were awarded for exceptional volunteer service.



1,365
USACE ANNUAL
PASSES ISSUED
(FOR 100 HOURS OF
VOLUNTEER SERVICE)



156
ATB VOLUNTEER
PASSES ISSUED
(FOR 250 HOURS OF
VOLUNTEER SERVICE)

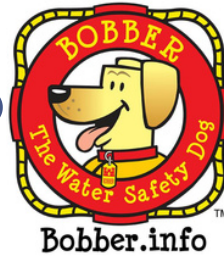


WATER SAFETY

The popularity of USACE waterways, which attracted **256 million** visits this year, requires effective interpretive programs and campaigns. Utilizing national campaigns can encourage the public to be safe and responsible when enjoying our nation's waterways.

OUR PROGRAM

YOUTH CAMPAIGN. Bobber the Water Safety Dog Campaign is the USACE National Youth Campaign



ADULT CAMPAIGN. Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns is the USACE National Adult Campaign.



Facilities inspected and/or maintained



1,786

USACE BOAT RAMP
(1,942 OUTGRANTED)



496

USACE BEACHES
(329 OUTGRANTED)



533

MARINAS LEASED TO CONCESSIONS



672

USACE LIFE JACKET LOANER STATIONS
(173 OUTGRANTED)

IN-DEPTH

THE CORPS FOUNDATION. The USACE National Water Safety Program works in cooperation with the Corps of Engineers Natural Resources Education Foundation (The Corps Foundation) to enhance and promote the Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns Campaign.

CAMPAIGN PROMOTION. In 2020, The Corps Foundation received a \$195,000 Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund grant, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) that was used to enhance and promote the campaign.

SOCIAL MEDIA. The "Please Wear It" Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages are the official social media pages of the Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns Campaign and the USACE National Water Safety Program. These social media pages are managed with The Corps Foundation utilizing the USCG grant funds.



3,293,429

PLEASE WEAR IT
FACEBOOK
TOTAL REACH



13,776

PAGE
LIKES



14,147

PAGE
FOLLOWERS



OFFICIAL NONPROFIT OF
AMERICA'S LAKES AND WATERWAYS

Direct Interpretive Contacts



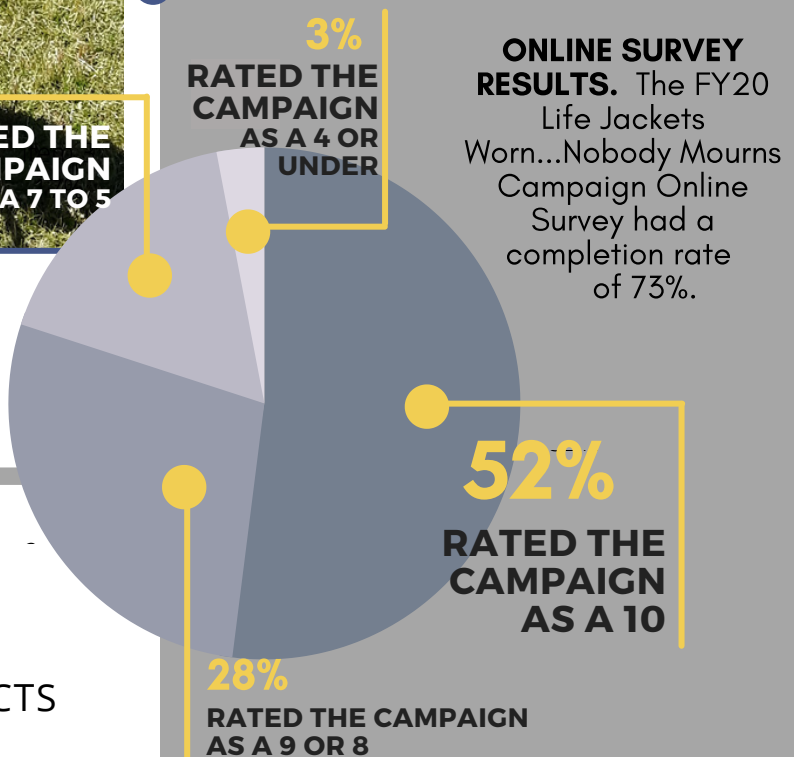
703,133

WATER SAFETY
ON-SITE CONTACTS



286,166

WATER SAFETY
OFF-SITE CONTACTS





COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

HIRAM M. CHITTENDEN AWARD

The Natural Resources Management Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence acknowledges an individual who has done exceptional work in the interpretive services profession.

The 2020 recipient of this award is Natural Resource Specialist Amanda Kruse of the St. Louis District. Amanda's passion and dedication to interpretive services is evident in her commitment to creating unique and diverse ways of communicate the USACE missions. Her infectious enthusiasm and positive attitude inspires visitors to learn more about the St. Louis District and USACE. In 2019 alone, she coordinated more than 245 interpretive and outreach programs reaching more than 11,000 participants. Ms. Kruse led the Carlyle Lake Water Safety Program which provided over 140 programs, with more than 15,000 direct interpretive contacts.



NRM EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

The NRM Employee of the Year Award is awarded to an individual who has exhibited exceptional leadership and selfless service to the NRM Program.

The 2020 recipient of this award is Natural Resources Project Manager Matthew Palmer, Clarence J Brown Dam and Reservoir, Louisville District. Matthew leads a dynamic and comprehensive recreation and environmental stewardship program not only at his project, but at other projects in the Miami River Basin. His effort and personal commitment of time and energy to plan have resulted in the successful implementation of a variety of natural resource management projects including wetland restoration and development, prairie management, and invasive species control. Additionally, Matthew provides leadership and mentorship to a new generation of nature resource professionals.



2020 EXCELLENCE IN PARTNERSHIP AWARD

The Excellence in Partnership Award is co-sponsored by The Corps Foundation in recognition of exceptional contributions to the natural resources management programs at USACE projects.

The Sesser-Valier Outdoorsmen Club (SVOC), a partner at Rend Lake of the St. Louis District, was selected as the 2020 Excellence in Partnerships Award recipient for their commitment to protecting natural resources and their dedication to ensuring recreational experiences for all individuals. The SVOC has made the Rend Lake Deer Hunt for Individuals with Disabilities a success for over 40 years, serving more than 1,100 disabled hunters. The SVOC's love for the outdoors and commitment to service and helping others also includes organizing paralyzed veteran and youth fishing/shooting events, leading the annual Christmas tree drop, and hosting an annual banquet where they engage with community partners to donate money, materials and supplies for their events.



2020 NATIONAL VOLUNTEER AWARD



The National Volunteer Award is co-sponsored by The Corps Foundation in recognition of the extraordinary service provided by volunteers. This award distinguishes individuals, couples, and families who give their skills, talents, and time beyond the normal call of duty and whose credible service to USACE has resulted in the significant enhancement to one or more of the USACE business lines.

This year's USACE National Volunteer of the Year Award recipient is James Zueger from the Youghiogheny River Lake in Pittsburgh District. James has spent the past two years removing more than 20,000 gallons of trash, 12,000 cubic feet of Styrofoam, and 7,000 cubic feet of woody debris from the lake using an innovative self-designed trash removal stem on his personal kayak. His efforts have inspired other lake users to do their part to clean the lake.



2020 NATIONAL WATER SAFETY EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARD

Juanita Souther, a park ranger at John H. Kerr Lake in the Wilmington District was selected as the 2020 National Water Safety Employee of the Year. She is described by her peers as one of the most effective and impactful water safety interpreters in the country. In 2019, she made more than 7,000 direct water safety interpretive contacts and indirectly influenced thousands of others at John H. Kerr Lake and the surrounding community. Juanita has a very unique ability to connect with people from all walks of life to really drive home water safety messages. Through her efforts to build and strengthen partnerships in the community, her day to day park patrols, and presentation of programs in schools and libraries, Juanita is truly making a huge difference in the lives of many people.



National Water Safety Award Winners. The National Water Safety Awards are done in cooperation with the National Boating Federation to recognize a USACE employee and team that have contributed to boating and water safety and through their efforts have made a difference in saving lives on our nation's waterways.

2020 NATIONAL WATER SAFETY TEAM OF THE YEAR AWARD

This year's National Water Safety Team of the Year is the Huntington District Water Safety Team. Team members include: Michael McCoy, Sylvia Chelf, Kara Wagner, Lisa Hess, Glenda Robinson, Erik Gore, Travis Daugherty, Brian Maka, and Josh Bennett. This water safety team was created to identify new innovative ideas to reduce water-related fatalities within the District's 44 projects. The team utilized a multifaceted media approach to advertise and promote the "Life Jacket Worn...Nobody Mourns" campaign. Public service announcement videos played in local theaters, partnerships with radio stations relayed the message, water safety events were held, additional life jacket loaner stations were installed, and increased vessel safety inspections occurred.





**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

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Cover photo provided by Emily Jones, John H. Kerr Lake, Wilmington District

Please note that photos depicting persons not wearing a face covering or in a group setting were taken prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.