



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

SEP 17 2008

CECW-CO-N

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND DISTRICT COMMANDS; CHIEFS, OPERATIONS DIVISIONS, NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BRANCHES AND OPERATIONS PROJECT MANAGERS

SUBJECT: "Get Outdoors – It's Yours" Campaign

1. I'm pleased to announce that LTG Van Antwerp has signed the enclosed interagency Pledge of Cooperation with other Federal land management agencies to help promote the new "*Get Outdoors – It's Yours*" national campaign (Enclosure 1). This initiative is designed to raise awareness of the opportunities for America's youth to reengage with nature and to encourage children and their families to spend more time participating in outdoor education, recreation and stewardship activities.
2. The official roll out of this initiative will occur in conjunction with National Public Lands Day (NPLD) on 27 September 2008. Steven Stockton, Director of Civil Works, will attend and participate in the NPLD signature event at Prince William Forest Park in Virginia. During the roll out, the new www.getoutdoorsitsyours.gov web site will be unveiled and public service announcements, featuring the Jonas Brothers, will be presented in 13,000 theaters. When available, additional copies of the public service announcement will be distributed to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects for use during the next six months.
3. As part of the national roll out, I'm encouraging our project managers to incorporate the *Get Outdoors* theme and campaign at each of our 103 NPLD sites. To assist in this effort, I've enclosed a news release and talking points that can be used at the manager's discretion (Enclosures 2 and 3).
4. The Corps is in a unique position relative to the other agencies because many of our projects are located close to large urban areas. As we go forward in managing our projects with limited resources and staffing, it's even more critical that we engage our visitors in regards to the value of a healthy environment and to a healthy youth population. This action will help lead to a more knowledgeable and supportive public as we continue to be challenged in providing for outdoor recreation opportunities into the future.
5. This initiative not only recognizes the outstanding work of our park rangers and other natural resource professionals in working with our nation's youth and conducting environmental education programs over the past 30 years, but also recognizes that by working together and with other partners, we can more effectively expand and promote outdoor opportunities, conservation education, and volunteerism throughout the nation. As we go forward with this national

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6. Thank you for your support of this national effort to help re-connect our youth to the environment.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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JAMES R. HANNON, JR., P.E.

Acting Chief, Operations
Directorate of Civil Works



Get Outdoors, It's Yours! A Pledge of Cooperation

The way children understand and experience their natural world has changed radically over the past several decades. As children spend more time inside on the computer, playing video games, or watching television, they are spending less time outdoors. Their physical contact and intimacy with the natural outdoors has diminished greatly. Their inability to connect with nature is now recognized as a national issue of concern that is impacting their sense of stewardship for the earth and their psychological and physical health.

As the stewards of much of America's public outdoor spaces, our agencies are in a unique position to help address this issue of national concern. We recognize that our individual agencies have long histories and expertise in working to engage our children and families with the natural world. We also recognize that by working together, and with other partners, we can more effectively expand and promote public outdoor opportunities such as recreation, conservation education, and volunteerism, by providing the landscape for children to discover and witness the wonder of nature. In so doing, we can help reconnect our youth and families with the land in such a way as to create a new generation of stewards with a public service ethic; improve the mental and physical health of our nation; reduce the cost of health care; increase awareness of the important role nature and science play in our lives; strengthen America's workforce; and ensure the perpetuation of the resources entrusted to our care. Therefore, we pledge to work together under applicable legal authorities and within available appropriations to ensure that our agencies are individually and collectively:

Communicating, cooperating, and collaborating to deliver a world class public education campaign targeted towards our Nation's children and their families to better inform them about our collective efforts to help them learn, grow, and become healthier while recreating, enjoying leisure activities, and working as volunteer stewards on the Nation's public lands and waters;

Promoting and expanding opportunities for America's children and families to engage in natural and cultural history and environmental education; outdoor recreation such as boating, biking, hunting, fishing, hiking, and wildlife observation; and stewardship activities on public lands and waters;

Joining with State and local government agencies to expand and create new partnerships for increasing the public's appreciation and use of their public outdoor spaces;

Expanding our network of partnerships within the government and with non-governmental organizations, such as corporate, non-profit, and educational groups to assist in creating a sustainable long term initiative to connect children and families with the outdoors; and

Sharing information on, knowledge of and best practices associated with the development and provision of programs that link children and their families with their natural environment.

Signed:

Mary A. Domar 8/12/08
Director, Date
National Park Service

Mark K. Kubeck 8/21/08
Chief, Date
U.S. Forest Service

Jim Hornell 8/12/08
Director, Date
Bureau of Land Management

R. W. R. R. R. 8/25/08
Chief of Engineers, Date
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

A. Dale Hall 8/15/08
Director, Date
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Robert W. Johnson 8/21/08
Commissioner, Date
Bureau of Reclamation

Jerry Sidner 8/8/08
Director, Date
Bureau of Indian Affairs

M. J. K. 8-19-08
Director, Date
U.S. Geological Survey



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

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News Release: www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/newsrel.htm

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Supports National Public Lands Day, Sept. 27

WASHINGTON – Thousands of local volunteers at more than 100 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project sites will participate in this year's 15th annual National Public Lands Day Sept. 27, the largest annual volunteer hands-on restoration activity of its kind. Activities include the clean up, repairs, refurbishments and other volunteer events in parks, forests, rivers, lakes, wetlands, cultural and historic sites and other public lands and waters and involve more than 120,000 volunteers at 1,500 sites nationwide.

Volunteers at Corps of Engineers' sites will take part in tree planting, erosion control, bank stabilization, building trails, restoring recreation areas, trash pickup, removing invasive species, removing non-native plants, improvements to wildlife habitats, harvesting prairie plant seeds and rehabilitating playgrounds. In addition, the Corps of Engineers' Director of Civil Works, Steve Stockton will participate in the National Public Lands Day signature event at Prince William Forest Park in Triangle, Va.

National Public Lands Day volunteers at federal sites receive free admission Sept. 27 and a coupon to return for "fee-free" day use activity any time in the next year at any project site managed by the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management. Many state sites are also offering free admission for the day.

As part of this year's National Public Lands Day, participants will commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Famous for planting more than three billion trees in the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps played a leading role in restoring America's deteriorating forests.

In addition, this year's National Public Lands Day kicks-off an interagency pledge of cooperation among the eight federal land management agencies to promote the new "Get Outdoors-It's Yours" national campaign. This national initiative will raise awareness of the opportunities for America's youth to reengage with nature and to encourage children and their families to spend more time participating in outdoor education, recreation and stewardship activities.

Last year, National Public Lands Day involved 110,000 volunteers at 1,300 sites. Volunteers removed more than 500,000 pounds of trash, built and maintained 720 miles of trails, and planted 55,000 trees among many other tasks. National Public Lands Day partners include federal agencies, National Environmental Education Foundation and other nonprofit groups, 125 state, county and city agencies, and several corporate sponsors.

The Corps has been involved with National Public Lands Day since its inception in 1994 and has consistently been one of the largest providers of sites and volunteers participating in the event. The Corps of Engineers is the number one federal provider of outdoor recreation, managing more than 12 million acres of land and water for natural resources and public recreation benefits. The Corps' 2,476 recreation sites at 423 projects offer a wide range of opportunities and facilities for outdoor recreation.

**Talking Points for
National Public Lands Day
&
Children-In-Nature Initiative
Get Outdoors, It's Yours!
(17 September 2008)**

National Public Lands Day:

- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the number one federal provider of outdoor recreation, managing more than 12 million acres of land and water for natural resources and public recreation benefits.
- The Corps has been involved with National Public Lands Day since its inception in 1994. The Corps has consistently been one of the largest supporters of sites and volunteers.
- In 2007, more than 23,000 local volunteers at 113 Corps project sites participated in National Public Lands Day.
- This year, volunteers at Corps sites will take part in tree planting, erosion control, bank stabilization, building trails, restoring recreation areas, trash pickup, removing invasive species, removing non-native plants, improvements to wildlife habitats, harvesting prairie plant seeds and rehabilitating playgrounds.
- The Corps of Engineers' Director of Civil Works, Steve Stockton will participate in the National Public Lands Day signature event at Prince William Forest Park in Triangle, Virginia.
- This year's National Public Lands Day will commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps. The CCC is credited with planting more than three billion trees in the 1930s and played a leading role in restoring America's deteriorating forests.

"Get Outdoors, It's Yours!" National Campaign

- Get Outdoors, It's Yours! is a new national campaign that is focused on raising awareness of the opportunities for America's youth to reengage with nature and to encourage children and their families to spend more time participating in outdoor education, recreation and stewardship activities.
- The Get Outdoors, It's Yours! campaign will be launched nationwide on National Public Lands Day, September 27th.

- This national kick-off involves a new Web Site – www.getoutdoorsitsyours.gov, which will link to existing web pages at the various federal agencies; the airing of a video Public Service Announcement in more than 10,000 movie theaters across the country; issuing of national and local press releases; and the support at local National Public Lands Day sites to publicize the campaign.
- The Corps of Engineers joined seven other federal agencies in signing a pledge of cooperation on August 25th agreeing to support the national campaign.
- For the past 30 years, the Corps of Engineers' park rangers and other natural resources professionals have been educating and encouraging America youth's through many programs to get outdoors and explore the many recreational opportunities that await them.
- The Get Outdoors, It's Yours! campaign will help strengthen existing education, conservation and stewardship programs and lead to a greater public understanding of the value and importance of outdoor recreation and the many opportunities provided by the eight federal land management agencies.
- The Corps of Engineers is committed to providing quality outdoor public recreation experiences. The Corps 2,476 recreation sites at 423 projects offer a wide range of opportunities for all ages.
- Whether a person likes to walk, jog, bike, hunt, fish, swim, boat, or camp, a Corps of Engineers' site is not far away. More than 70 percent of the U.S. population lives within 50 miles of a Corps of Engineers lake.