

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Fiscal Year 2013
Handshake Program Application**

Please review instructions before completing application!

Corps Lake/Project Name: **Waco Lake**

Handshake Proposal Title: **Waco Lake Eagle Nest Project**

Corps POC Name: **Elizabeth Anderson**

Telephone: **(254) 756 - 5359** ext.

E-Mail: **elizabeth.anderson@usace.army.mil**

A. Eligibility checklist:

1. Is the seed money going to be spent at Corps facilities and resources that are being maintained by the Corps at 100% expense? * **Yes** **No**

2. Is the agreement with a non-federal public or private entity(ies)? * **Yes** **No**

3. Is the proposed activity within current authorities and contained in the annual or 5-year work plan in the approved OMP? ** **Yes** **No**

4. If no, when will the OMP be updated and approved? (example: Sept 10) Jan 13

**If "No" to either question 1 or 2 the proposal cannot be authorized under the Corps' challenge partnership authority.*

*** If "No" to question 3 and the date provided in answer to question 4 would come after the commencement of your proposed challenge partnership your activity can not be authorized.*

B. Handshake Funding Program Request (maximum \$30,000): \$30,000

C. Cooperating Association Bonus: Challenge Partnerships that include a Cooperating Association with which your project/district has entered into a Cooperative Agreement are eligible to compete for an additional \$5000. You must include a copy of the signed agreement with your proposal. (Reference Chapter 9 of ER and EP 1130-2-500 for information on cooperating associations).

D. Incentive Points Category: Check the box if your Lake/Project qualifies to receive bonus points on the evaluation score for submitting partnership success stories/GETS. Also include an explanation of the GETS submittal and the date of submission below the check box.

Partnership Success Stories/Good Enough to Share Submittals: Facilities that provided at least one partnership success story from previous activities may qualify for bonus points. Please check box if you have submitted a GETS or Partnership Success Story in Fiscal Year 2012

E. Describe your partnership and the proposed project:

Your project will be evaluated on the following categories: Sustainability, Partnership Value, Recreation Benefit, Environmental Stewardship Benefit, Communication and Education Value, and Innovativeness. Please address each in your description.

Description:

The purpose of this project is to construct and erect an artificial bald eagle nesting platform at Waco Lake, Texas, and the agreement is with the City of Waco, Cameron Park Zoo. The platform will include solar-powered video cameras to provide internet users real-time footage of the nest.

A young, breeding pair of bald eagles reside at Waco Lake, and they have nested yearly since 2009. However, they were unsuccessful at fledging eaglets in 2010, and lost a pair of eaglets in 2011 because the nesting tree broke in high winds. The majority of suitable nesting trees have been inundated with water since a 7-foot pool rise in 2003, and are now rotted to the point they are not sturdy enough to support the weight of a nest. In 2012, the eagles successfully fledged an eaglet, but the trunk of the tree in which they nested is nearly rotted through, and will not likely sustain future nesting attempts.

The proposed nesting platform is a design created and tested by Mr. Steve Sherrod, executive director of the Sutton Research Center in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. Mr. Sherrod is a leader in avian research and has conducted intensive, conservation-oriented, ecological field research, and developed and applied techniques for the reintroduction and monitoring of bald eagles across the United States for over 25 years. A similar platform was constructed by Mr. Sherrod and his team at a lake in Oklahoma, where the eagles quickly adopted it, and the internet video feed has reportedly become an online sensation.

The location chosen to place the platform is within one (1) mile of all nesting sites previously chosen by the eagles. Lacy Point Natural Resource Area is a USACE-owned, undeveloped area, with well-established and moderate-use equestrian and bicycle trails. It is located on the west bank of Waco Lake, and is within the city limits of Waco.

To prevent disturbance of the nest, it will be necessary to build a fence (smooth wire, 5-strand) to provide a 300-foot barrier, and to reroute an existing multi-use trail. It will also be necessary to place "Boats Keep Out" buoys 300 feet out from the platform for the same reason. Educational graphics will be placed on fencing or on a kiosk in the area. To allow access for maintenance, two gates will be placed in the fence on the existing roadway.

Sustainability:

Mr. Sherrod is a subject matter expert and designed the platform. The structure on which the platform sits will be designed and installed by professionals, once the design has been approved by a Professional Engineer. The design is such that no guide wires will be necessary to support the structure, and there are no foreseeable issues with the structure. Cameron Park Zoo (CPZ) will be providing all maintenance and upkeep, and it is expected that the platform will provide a stable eagle nesting place for 20+ years.

Partnership Value:

This partnership is officially between the Corps of Engineers and the City of Waco - Cameron Park Zoo. The Corps of Engineers has successfully worked and partnered with the City of Waco in the past on major projects, such as a 7-foot pool raise in 2003, and the construction of the Lake Waco Wetlands in 2003. All partnerships with the City have been positive, and have provided great benefit to the Corps and to the citizens of McLennan County and the central Texas area.

Environmental Stewardship Value:

When the nest fell in 2011 and the two eaglets drowned, it was the front page story on the Waco Tribune, and was extensively reported by the local media, and in major markets including the DFW and Houston areas. As previously stated, the existing trees appropriate for nesting have been inundated with water since 2003 and are rotted and weak. If a viable nesting solution is not found, the eagles will continue to nest unsuccessfully or will relocate from Waco Lake.

Recreational Benefit:

The nesting eagles have drawn a lot of positive attention to the lake. This project is consistent with the America Great Outdoors program initiatives, and the USACE's National Recreation Strategy. Many photographers and bird watchers already come to the lake to see and photograph the birds, and viewing the eagles has proven popular with recreational boaters. This nesting platform will provide an even greater draw to the public, and will encourage hikers and bikers to utilize the existing trails. The project includes building two viewing blinds and providing educational graphics at those locations.

Daniel Duke, President/CEO of Coyote Moon Security Company, has contacted the partners offering to donate, install and maintain a solar-powered camera to mount on the platform. CPZ will create and maintain a website with real-time footage of the nest during breeding and nesting season. This concept has been utilized by numerous research organizations, including the Sutton Research Center and the Raptor Resource Project (Decorah Eagles), and has proven to be a very popular education tool for the public, including school-age children. It is estimated that over 4 million people have viewed the Decorah eagles via their live-feed nest camera.

Communication and Educational Value:

This project provides an invaluable education and outreach tool. It will provide a great “first-hand” educational opportunity to the public about the importance of protecting and preserving wildlife. With the live-feed camera, the potential exists to reach thousands of people, and to promote the Corps of Engineers as a leader in natural resource management.

Innovativeness:

Clearly the need exists for a suitable nesting site for these eagles, and this will be the first nesting platform of its kind in Central Texas. To our knowledge, this is the first such partnership with the Corps of Engineers to erect a nesting platform and web-based camera system. Waco Lake USACE has partnered with the City of Waco on several projects, but this one has the potential to reach the largest audience with a very important and educational message about preserving and protecting wildlife.

The Corps will:

- Provide the land to place the nesting platform.
- Provide materials for fencing, gates, roadway around perimeter, buoys
- Provide materials for viewing blinds and education signage
- Assist with cost of installation of nesting platform and tower

The Partner(s) will:

- Provide materials for platform, tower and nest
- Assist with cost of installation of nesting platform and tower
- Provide materials and installation of camera equipment
- Provide all future operation and maintenance cost for the site

Challenge Partnership Financial Work Sheet

Corps Project Name: Waco Lake Office
 Work Project Title: Waco Lake Eagle Nest Project
 POC Name: Elizabeth Anderson, Natural Resource Specialist
 Address: 3801 Zoo Park Road City: Waco State: TX Zip Code: 76633
 Telephone: 2547565359
 Location on Project: Lacey Point Natural Resource Area

Partner Organization 1: Cameron Park Zoo, City of Waco
 POC Name: Johnny Binder, General Curator
 Address: 1701 North 4th City: Waco State: TX Zip Code: 76707
 Telephone: 2547508428

Partner Organization 2:
 POC Name:
 Address: City: State: Zip Code:
 Telephone:

Partner Organization 3:
 POC Name:
 Address: City: State: Zip Code:
 Telephone:

Proposed start date of work: October 2012

Simple description of work to be accomplished through the partnership: A nesting pair of Bald Eagles will be provided with a permanent, safe nesting platform. Nest will be viewable by the general public in real time through website.

Double click on spreadsheet to access data entry fields:

	Local Corps Office	Handshake Funds	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Total
Salaries	\$1,000	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
Travel	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials and Supplies	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$60,000
Equipment Use	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Funds Contributed	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personal Property	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Volunteer	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
In-Kind Services	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other (explain below)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$61,000
Share of Total Cost	1.6%	49.2%	49.2%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

Explanations: This project will require numerous volunteer hours. The amount of volunteer labor is unknown at this time. The partner will track volunteer labor hours and their value will be included in the final accounting report.