

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Fiscal Year 2011
Handshake Program Application**

Please review instructions before completing application!

Corps Lake/Project Name:**Francis E. Walter Dam**

Handshake Proposal Title:**Borrow Area Resoration**

Corps POC Name:**David Williams**

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A. Eligibility checklist:

1. Is the funding going to be spent at Corps facilities and resources that are being maintained at 100% federal 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)

**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 \$25,000): \$25,000.00

C. Cooperating Association Agreement Bonus: Challenge Partnerships that include an organization (cooperating associations, friends groups) with which your project/district has recently (after January 1, 2009) entered into a Cooperating Association 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).

Date of Cooperating Association Agreement: (must be after January 1, 2009 to be eligible).

D. Incentive Points Categories: Check the box for each category that applies to your Challenge Partnership Agreement and include an explanation in the project description (Section E.). Qualifying applications will receive bonus points on their evaluation score.

Utilizes an existing National Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) - National Partner MOU's are posted on the NRM Gateway <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/partners/list.html>). Local and regional chapters of national partner organizations are eligible. Groups must be an intended signatory to the agreement in order to qualify for the bonus points.

Includes a veterans and/or military family organization. Groups must be an intended signatory to the agreement in order to qualify for the bonus points.

Presidents Challenge - Active Lifestyle Program: Project provides specific opportunities for children and their families to get outdoors and participate in activities in order to receive a Presidents Active Lifestyle Award. http://www.presidentschallenge.org/the_challenge/active_lifestyle.aspx

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. Also address incentive point categories you have identified in Section D.

Description:

The construction of the US Army Corps of Engineers flood control project, Francis E. Walter Dam, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, began in 1957 and was completed in 1961. Its construction required a vast amount of topsoil to be excavated from approximately 250 acres of Army Corps property which comprises the current project site, open to public access for recreation and hunting opportunities. This area that was stripped of topsoil remains fallow with little to no herbaceous growth and is referred to as a borrow area. The borrow area has reduced land which was once farm fields, pastures, and woodland meadows to a moonscape of barren, rocky, hardpan subsoil. This land was no longer suitable for the support of native plants and wildlife.

Nearly fifty years later, little has changed. The areas stripped of topsoil remained essentially barren, except for the encroachment of invasive plant species, scrub pine, scrub birch, and weeds. Few of the native plants capable of providing any habitat or food value for wildlife exist in these borrow areas.

About three years ago, the Army Corps of Engineers at Francis Walter and Pheasants Forever*, Chapter 803, started working together with shared goals. The goals were to restore native plant life to barren areas, to create viable habitat and food sources for all animal life, and to provide a quality experience for those who enjoy the forests, fields and wildlife on the Army Corps of Engineers project site. The following wildlife habitat restoration and management plan was developed.

*Please Note: Pheasants Forever is a non-profit conservation organization with chapters in many states, dedicated to the creation and management of habitat for pheasants, quail and all other wildlife. Northeast Pennsylvania chapter 803 was established in 2006 and is presently 88 members strong.

Restoration Management Plan:

A. Identify areas of the greatest need for reclamation. In addition to seven reclamation areas on which work has already begun, other potential areas will be evaluated over the next two years. (See map)

B. Clear these areas of low value scrub vegetation, weeds, and invasive plant species.

C. Plant native warm season grass mixtures formulated for use in the climate of Northeast Pennsylvania. These grasses are the cornerstone of the Army Corps habitat project because they thrive in poor soil conditions. Once planted, they will continue to grow for decades with minimal maintenance. They provide erosion control and secure nesting and winter habitat for wildlife. Included in the mix are Big and Little Bluestem, Switch Grass, Indian Grass, and other varieties. Known as “bunch grasses” because they grow thick on top, but have open gaps at ground level, provide easy passage for pheasants, wild turkeys, rabbits, and other species while supplying an overhead canopy of protection from avian predators. New seeding of warm season grasses in fields one through six and any newly cleared areas will be scheduled for May 2011 and May 2012.

D. Include wildflower varieties in planting mix. In addition to their aesthetic value, wildflowers are essential to the attraction of bees and other pollinating insects. These insects enhance the growth of native plants and also

provide a valuable high protein food source for many bird species. Insects provide 90% the diet for young pheasants, turkeys, and other game birds.

E. Identification and preservation of valuable native plants, trees, and shrubs in proximity to borrow areas. In doing so, clear invasive plant species such as multi flora rose, autumn olive, and sweet fern which are overtaking high value plants such as high and low bush blue berries, cranberries, wild grapes, and crabapple trees.

F.Planting of native shrubs and trees. Species such as dogwood, arrow wood, honeysuckle, crabapple, and hawthorn will be planted to provide food and nesting opportunities for a variety of birds and other wildlife. Approximate species and locations for planting will be determined with input from Pheasants Forever regional biologist. Plantings are scheduled for spring and fall 2011 and spring and fall 2012. Area school students and scouting organizations will be invited to participate in tree and shrub planting.

G.Creation of food plots which requires the addition of topsoil, lime, and fertilizer to existing soil and the planting of food plot mixes which may include sorghum, corn, millet, sunflower, clover, and other varieties. The essentials of wildlife survival are water, food, and secure cover. Food plots serve to supplement natural wildlife food sources and reduce the chances of winter starvation. Topsoil will be trucked in, lime and fertilizer applied, and food plot seed mixes planted on two acre food plots in field areas two and seven, scheduled for spring 2011, and feed areas one and six scheduled for spring 2012. Overall goal is for 10% of reclaimed land to be planted in food plots. The Army Corps of Engineers personnel at the Francis E. Walter Dam has already successfully created a large food plot on field area four, and will continue to take the lead in food plot planting. (See map)

H.Creation of brush piles, border cuts, and thicket areas to promote secure nesting for wildlife and to minimize avian predation. Area school students and scout troops members will be recruited to build brush piles, construct wood duck and blue bird houses from kits, and participate in placement with input from PA Game Commission and Pheasants Forever biologists. Work is planned for spring and fall 2011 and spring and fall 2012.

Evaluation Criteria:

Below dictates a blueprint of the factors considered in assessing the overall effectiveness of the management plan and the aesthetic added value. Please take note of the following:

a.
Sustainability: The lifespan of the product can be sustained indefinitely. Perennial grasses, shrubs and trees grow and multiply with very minimal maintenance. They can provide wildlife food and habitat, build soil, control erosion, and inhibit invasive plant species from growing rampant for many decades.

b.
Partnership value: Partnership value has been established through past Pheasant Forever 803 habitat workdays at the Army Corps of Engineers borrowed areas. The workdays have averaged fifteen chapter members and as many as twenty school students. In addition, Pheasants Forever hosts an annual youth pheasant hunt at this location where various youth hunters (16 and under) are encouraged to come out and enjoy a day of pheasant hunting. Dogs, dog handlers, a safety course, trap shooting, ammunition, food, and drinks are all provided by the Chapter. This has been an annual event for the past three years and will continue to be a success and a more enjoyable experience as the habitat improves. There were approximately forty student participants last year.

c.
Resources: Pheasants Forever has and will continue to provide hundreds of man hours of volunteered labor. Specialized equipment (no till planter made for warm season grass planting, commercial trailer sprayer, wood chipper etc.), as well as chain saws, ATV's, four wheel drive vehicles, trailers, and hand tools will be continue to be provided. Consultations by biologists, habitat experts, and seed specialists will also be available when applicable to ensure proper wildlife habitat management practices are being followed to increase success rates of the project.

d.

Environmental Stewardship: Pheasants Forever would like to invite the general public to view the dramatic transformation of barren land to lush grass land that has already been achieved. They would also like to extend an invitation to the public on workdays to participate if they desire to do so. Pheasants Forever goals are in line with natural resource practices followed by the state of Pennsylvania's various agencies. Again their overall goal is to provide grasses, shrubs, and trees that provide food and shelter for all wildlife, control erosion, improve soil quality, and limit the encroachment of invasive plant species.

e.

Recreational Benefit: Improved habitat will increase numbers and varieties of wildlife. Interesting native plant species will be added to and or preserved in the project areas. Nature lovers, hikers, bird watchers, mountain bikers, hunters, fisherman, and family picnickers will all benefit from the enhanced habitat and opportunity it provides.

f.

Communication and Education Value: Local outdoor newspaper columnists have already showcased the environmental results of the partnership between Pheasants Forever and the Army Corps of Engineers. "PA Outdoor Life" television series has expressed an interest in doing a segment on the project. Many local school students interested in improving the environment have participated in workdays.

g.

Innovativeness: In time, the restored Army Corps of Engineers borrowed areas can prove to be a field trip site for an environmental biology class of higher education. It may also provide helpful insight and knowledge for smaller reclamation procedures with limited funding and the benefits it can provide. This project may stimulate other agencies and groups to work together in habitat restoration and improvement, and can pave the way for awareness and the need of habitat restoration statewide.

Current State:

The cooperative efforts of the Army Corps of Engineers and Pheasants Forever have already led to a dramatic change in nearly eighty acres of the reclaimed land. Hard pan borrow areas cleared and planted three years ago are now covered with a one to two foot high carpet of native grasses and wildflowers. Last years' plantings are well established and this springs' grass fields are ankle high and growing at a rate well ahead of schedule. The cost of seed, topsoil, fertilizer, herbicide, rental equipment, fuel, and equipment maintenance has stretched our budgets thin. But the success of our joint venture has energized Pheasants Forever and the Army Corps of Engineers to continue and expand our work. Hand Shake Grant Funds would be a tremendous help in the achievement of our shared goals for the creation and management of wildlife habitat on Corps of Engineers property. Please consider this project in enrolling into such a program so additional funding would be available. Thank you for your time and consideration in the matter.

The Corps will:

The Corps staff at Francis E. Walter Dam will provide overall project guidance and provide supervision to the Pheasants Forever Chapter 803 (PF 803) members and volunteers reclaiming the borrow area. Under DOD agreements for PF 803 members, the Corps will complete the required work for contract administration. The Corps will procure all equipment and supplies through micro-purchases and other contracting services to accomplish work tasks and oversee execution of the work.

The Partner(s) will:

PF 803 will provide in-kind services providing technical expertise from biologists in their organization for the reclamation of the borrow area. To date the PF 803 has provided over 2700 volunteer hours at Francis E. Walter Dam and the advancement of this project will further develop the volunteer base. This volunteer effort has been

consistent for over 3 years and is expected to endure well into the future. PF 803 will also provide equipment use in the form of no-till planter and commercial sprayer along with volunteer labor for the clearing, grubbing and planting process in conjunction with spot spraying any remaining invasive species.

Challenge Partnership Financial Work Sheet

Corps Project Name: Francis E. Walter Dam

Work Project Title: Borrow Area Restoration

POC Name: David Williams

Address: 2488 Dam Road, Francis E Walter Dam
18661

City: White Haven State: PA Zip Code:

Telephone: 5704437187

Location on Project: Two Miles West Of The Francis E. Walter Dam, Adjacent To State Games Lands 119

Partner Organization 1: Pheasants Forever Chapter 803

POC Name: Ross Piazza

Address: 1451 Shoemaker Ave

City: West Wyoming

State: PA Zip Code: 18644

Telephone: 5702882881

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: Mar-11

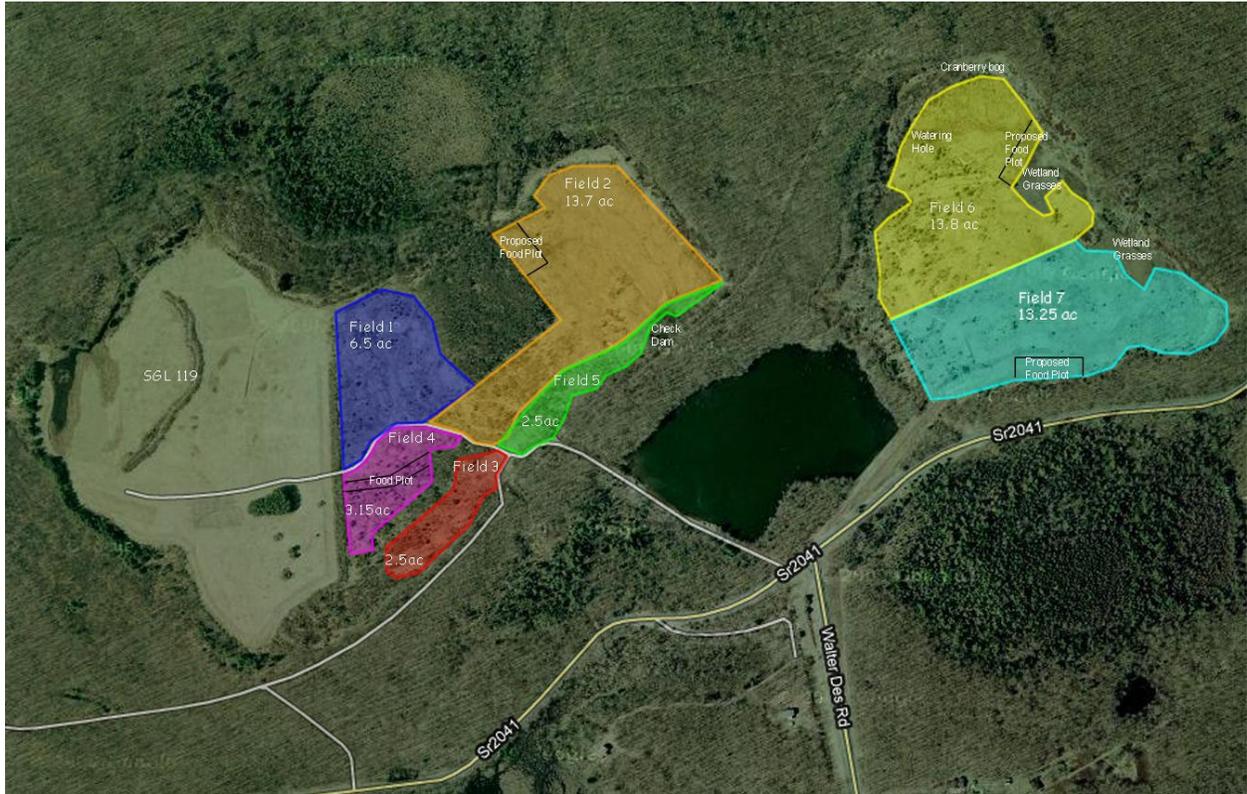
Simple description of work to be accomplished through the partnership: Develop a long-term restoration of borrow area with native species or shrubs and grasses.

Double click on spreadsheet to access data entry fields:

	Local Corps Office	Handshake Funds	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Total
Salaries	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials and Supplies	\$0	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25,000
Equipment Use	\$5,000	\$0	\$1,773	\$0	\$0	\$6,773
Funds Contributed	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personal Property	N/A	N/A	\$2,400	\$0	\$0	\$2,400
Volunteer	N/A	N/A	\$38,750	\$0	\$0	\$38,750
In-Kind Services	N/A	N/A	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,000
Other (explain below)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$5,000	\$25,000	\$43,923	\$0	\$0	\$73,923
Share of Total Cost	6.8%	33.8%	59.4%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

Explanations:

Reclamation Area Mapping



Clearing and Grubbing



Clearing and grubbing



Clearing and Grubbing



Creating Brush Piles



Creating Brush Piles



Warm Season Grasses First Planting

