

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Fiscal Year 2024
Handshake Program Application**

Please review instructions before completing application!

Corps Lake/River Project Name: **Tioga-Hammond Lakes**

District / Division: **North Atlantic Division**

Handshake Proposal Title: **Pennsylvania Native Pollinator Field and Nature Trail with Habitat Restoration and Wildlife Enhancement Services in Support of Threatened & Endangered Pollinator, Bird, and Bat Species**

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A. Checklist:

1. Will the Handshake funds be spent on Corps facilities and resources that are being fully maintained by the Corps? (not in outgranted parks) **Yes** **No**
 2. Will the Challenge Partnership agreement be 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 lake project OMP? **Yes** **No**
 4. Have all of the NEPA requirements been considered for this project? **Yes** **No**
 5. I am aware the Challenge Partnership Agreement must be reviewed and approved by District Office of Counsel before sending to HQUSACE. **Yes** **No**
 6. If the full funding amount requested is not available, could a portion of this Handshake Project be completed with partial funding? **Yes** **No**
 7. I am aware that all government funds must be spent in accordance with FAR, DFAR and AFAR contracting laws and regulations, and that Handshake funds cannot be provided to the partner(s). **Yes** **No**
 8. Did you participate in a Handshake webinar in 2023 or review a 2023 Handshake webinar on the Gateway? **Yes** **No**
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B. Handshake Funding Request (maximum \$25,000): \$25,000

C. Corps Foundation Bonus Request: (maximum \$5,000): \$5,000

Separate bonus funding provided by the Corps Foundation for a selected Handshake Project. Please do not include bonus funds on your overall financial spreadsheet below. Provide an explanation of how the funds will be used in the Corps Foundation Bonus section.

D. Incentive Points Category: Check the appropriate box if your application qualifies to receive bonus points on the evaluation score.

This lake/river project has never received Handshake funding. (100pts)

This lake/river project has not received Handshake funding in the past 5 years (FY 19-23 funding years). (50 pts)

This partnership project will either result in overall O&M cost savings or no net long-term O&M gain. It reduces program liabilities, consolidates or eliminates redundant/inefficient recreation assets or facilities (Up to 200 pts)

E. Describe your partnership and the proposed Handshake Partnership Project:

Project applications will be evaluated on the categories below. Please complete each section as appropriate.

Summary Statement:

This Handshake Partnership Project will support the development of five unmanaged acres into three different components: a 3.5-acre native perennial pollinator field, handicap-accessible interpretive nature trail with parking, and an enhancement of wildlife habitats. This partnership will be made possible with direct support from five partners: The Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC), Seneca Resources, Wellsboro Electric, The Tiadaghton Audubon Society (TAS), and The Friends of Tioga-Hammond & Cowanesque Lakes (FTHC). The PGC will restore and establish the native perennial pollinator field while Seneca Resources, Wellsboro Electric, TAS, and FTHC will incorporate the interpretive nature trail, parking lot, and wildlife habitat structures for threatened and endangered (T&E) species.

Handshake Funding Cost Break Down:

- o Wildlife Habitat
 - Materials – lumber, posts, barrier wrap, hardware - \$2000.00
- o Pollinator Field
 - Pollinator native seed mix, fertilizer, lime - \$2,500.00
- o Herbicide Application
 - Professional application services - \$1,500.00
- o Nature Trail & Parking Lot
 - Materials – rock, landscape fabric, curb stops, rebar, hardware - \$12,500.00
- o Interpretive Wayside
 - Panel design, fabrication, framing, and shipping (4 total) - \$6,500.00

Total: \$25,000.00

O&M Impacts:

The partnership project location is identified in Tioga-Hammond's Master Plan for environmental stewardship and recreational objectives that strive to restore ecosystems and educate visitors through project activities relating to the conservation and protection of T&E species. The perennial pollinator field is expected to thrive in perpetuity, as up to 80% of native Pennsylvania-specific pollinator seed mixes can return each year and require little to no maintenance. The pollinator field will be supplemented on a rotation with warm season grasses and cover crops to sustain soil quality and reduce invasive vegetation growth, which will guarantee quick resprouting. This partnership will provide everything required to fully restore and maintain this field including initial pollinator field establishment, continual cover crop maintenance, and exploration of prescribed burning that will transform the existing unmanaged field into a valuable, high-quality habitat that will support pollinators, bats, and migratory birds. The partners and project's volunteers will continue to provide the manpower and equipment needed to maintain the pollinator field, nature trail, parking lots, and habitat structures, including exploration of a three-year rotational burn plan. This partnership will reduce the need for herbicide application and mechanical mowing to manage invasive plant species, which in turn decreases O&M costs by nearly \$5-8k per year. After project completion, the O&M costs to maintain the area will be minimal with no recurring cost to the project.

Partnership Value:

Since the early 1980s, Tioga-Hammond and Cowanesque (THC) has worked with the PGC on stewardship endeavors, such as wildlife food and pollinator plots, Woodcock/Warbler habitat improvements, re-establishment of Osprey, and much more. The PGC will supply manpower, equipment, and expertise to transform the

unmanaged field into a pollinator field that benefits numerous insects and wildlife species. They will also contribute most of the wildlife habitat structures/boxes including those for kestrel, bluebird, bat, bee, barred owl, barn owl, and wood duck. The Handshake funding will provide the upfront costs for supplies/materials & services as follows: herbicide application for invasive species control, pollinator native seed mix, lime, fertilizer, rock, interpretive way-side panels landscape fabric, lumber, and hardware. The Wellsboro Electric Company will supply and install three utility poles for use in wildlife habitats, primarily for bird and bat species. TAS & FTHC will provide labor for the preparation and installation of the nature trail, parking lot, bluebird boxes, and wildlife habitat structures. The TAS and PGC will monitor the wildlife habitats for data collection and routine maintenance purposes. Lastly, Seneca Resources will be providing lumber, rock, and labor to develop the parking lot, nature trail, and installation of wildlife habitat structures and interpretive way-side panels. Partnership value, including volunteer labor (\$6,000), in-kind services (\$7,100), equipment (\$7,000), and materials and supplies (\$10,300), will total an estimated amount of \$30,400, not including Handshake funding. Completion of the project will create more attractions for guests to partake in, renewing local interest in THC and drawing more attention to the area for travelers.

Recreational Value:

The proposed partnership project is inside the Ives Run recreation area, which receives over 140,000 visitors of all age groups per year. Nearly half of those visitors will utilize the nature trail due to the opportunities it offers, such as exercise, wildlife viewing, and education on conservation. This new partnership project is near the Ives Run Campground which is perennially in the top 5 gross revenue-generating campgrounds in the area and is expected to continue to attract visitors. The partnership project area would be nestled below the Ives Run Visitor Center and along the Ives Run Railroad Grade (RRG) trail, providing a perfect gateway to attract recreation users. The Visitor Center draws in hundreds of visitors per day, and the RRG trail is heavily used for both foot and vehicle traffic with a rating of 4.4 out of 5 according to various reputable trail resources, such as "All Trails". The foot trail within the pollinator field offers a user-friendly experience for recreation users to view the interpretive exhibit panels, observe the wildlife, engage in the outdoors, and exercise. The project runs in proximity to Crooked Creek, which is a tributary providing additional fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing opportunities for guests to engage in. THC's goal is to continue to produce recreational activities as our commitment to the public, which this partnership affords that opportunity with a 5-acre location and 1 mile loop nature trail.

Environmental Stewardship Value:

This partnership project primarily contributes to the Corp's environmental stewardship mission and immensely improves the unmanaged field that will produce a flourishing and beautiful landscape that can be seen from the park's main access road and visitor center. The project's environmental stewardship management plan encompasses 1,995 sustainable acres consisting of managed and unmanaged fields with wildlife habitat improvement goals. The pollinator field and wildlife restoration/enhancement partnership project support the Pennsylvania State Wildlife Action Plan for state and federally listed vulnerable, threatened, and endangered species, as well as species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, including the endangered migratory monarch butterfly, northern long-eared bat (NLEB), little brown bat, tricolored bat, eastern small-footed bat, osprey, and eagles. The establishment of a pollinator field diversifies the landscape for varying species, such as monarchs and bees, that depend on pollinator plants as a primary food source to continue the lifecycle and sustain a healthy ecosystem. The wildlife habitat structures/boxes provide habitat for the bat and bird species that are affected by habitat fragmentation to and from the unmanaged field. Management of the 5-acre field contributes to the project's invasive species management plan by reducing the spread of invasive vegetation, primarily the multiflora rose, Japanese honeysuckle, knotweed, autumn olive, poison hemlock, and mile-a-minute, which all have been identified and marked throughout the project at various locations, including the unmanaged field.

Communication & Education Value:

The Ives Run Project hosts and co-hosts, anywhere from 25-30 events and 20 amphitheater programs annually for general guests, various organizations, communities, agencies, local and non-local schools, and clubs on a variety of educational and recreational topics dedicated to spreading awareness of the Corps mission regarding sustainment of healthy ecosystems and biodiversity. THC will incorporate the projected pollinator field and wildlife habitat boxes into the educational programs/events pre-established at the park, such as the Junior Ranger Program (JRP) and the Every Kid in the Outdoors (EKO) annual event. The JRP is a strong-standing program

with over 620 sworn in members that teaches younger audiences the importance of recreation and environmental impact through a series of activities scattered throughout the park, while the EKO event invites fourth-grade students from a total of eight local schools to engage in educational topics in an outdoor setting over a period of two, 8-hour days. The pollinator field and interpretive nature trail would be ideal start locations for events and programs, as it is near the Ives Run Visitor Information Center. Park Rangers will benefit from this as the new establishments would allow for a more developed educational program and guided walk along the interpretive nature trail, which extends into the PGC-managed field, RRG Trail, bird viewing kiosk, wetland, and Crooked Creek, capturing the overall ecosystem of the park, and providing a platform to share the Corp's mission and partnership involvement across the board.

Supporting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access Goals:

This partnership supports all facets, as the partnership location is accessible by foot and vehicle traffic from the Ives Run Railroad Grade Trail and will have handicap accessible viewing kiosk points suiting the needs of all age groups. Adequate parking will be readily available for guests to stay for a long or short duration of time. Guests can quickly pull off and read way-side panels by foot, inside their vehicle, or with mobility devices to view the pollinators and wildlife habitat. The educational story can be understood at the entrance of the pollinator field with an interpretive panel and viewing point or by partaking in the interpretive nature trail quarter-mile loop and a half-mile loop, suiting various accessible needs and desires. The partnership provides environmental, educational, and recreational benefits that are free and available to all welcomed guests, serving a diverse population of both local and non-local communities, schools, and universities. This is especially true when hosting large-scale outdoor events, such as the annual EKO event or the popular butterfly and bird programs that the project offers. The project's vision is to utilize this partnership-developed pollinator field and interpretive nature trail to host more events and offer new programs that promote inclusivity and equity for all visitors of Tioga-Hammond and Cowanesque, so that everyone can learn about the importance of the ecosystem, biodiversity, and conservation indiscriminately.

Corps Foundation Bonus Cost Break Down:

Additional funding for interpretive and educational needs will better serve this partnership proposal. The handshake funding can only support minimal funding for trail signage and panels which are a necessity to fully accomplish the end goal. The nature trail's entry and exit points will require the design, fabrication, shipping, and installation of directional and informational signs, as well as interpretive exhibit wayside panels to capture the environmental education on the Corps mission of conservation of pollinators, birds, and bat species.

Corps Foundation Bonus Funding Cost Breakdown:

o Informational & Directional Trail Signs

- One trailhead entrance and one trail exit sign and posts, to include design, fabrication, and shipment - \$500.00

o Interpretive Wayside Trail Panels

- Two fiberglass embedment wayside panels with a curved top; double post frameless exhibit bases, to include design, fabrication, and shipment - \$3,000.00

o Kiosk Binocular Viewer

- Purchase 1 handicap-accessible galvanized binocular viewer - \$1,500.00

Conclusion:

Overall, this partnership provides significant value to support the Corps mission, which demonstrates the collaboration between the project, community, and our partners. Restoring the unmanaged field will be an everlasting benefit to the recreational, environmental, and educational story that THC will continue to instill in all visitors. T&E wildlife species will have a place to flourish, which in turn contributes to biodiversity and an overall healthy ecosystem for future generations.

NOTE: To show foresight, commitment, and planning, it is REQUIRED to include maps/pictures/plans/specs as part of your overall package. Failure to include supporting attachments will result in points deductions.

Double click on spreadsheet to access data entry fields and to enter Partner names.

You MUST enter partner names into the spreadsheet:

	Local Corps Office	Handshake Funds	PAGC	Tiadaghton Audubon Society	Seneca Resources	Wellsboro Electric
Salaries	\$1,500	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials and Supplies	\$1,000	\$23,500	\$3,500	\$0	\$5,000	\$1,800
Equipment Use	\$2,000	\$0	\$6,500	\$0	\$0	\$500
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	\$1,000	\$3,500	\$0
In-Kind Services	N/A	N/A	\$6,500	\$0	\$0	\$600
Other (explain below)	\$0	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$4,500	\$25,000	\$16,500	\$1,000	\$8,500	\$2,900
Share of Total Cost	7.5%	41.7%	27.5%	1.7%	14.2%	4.8%
	49.2%					
	Friends of THC	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8	Partner 9	Partner 10
Salaries	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials and Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Equipment Use	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Funds Contributed	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personal Property	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Volunteer	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
In-Kind Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other (explain below)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Share of Total Cost	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0
	Partner 11	Partner 12	Partner 13	Partner 14	Partner 15	Total
Salaries	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,500
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials and Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$34,800
Equipment Use	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,000
Funds Contributed	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personal Property	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Volunteer	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,000
In-Kind Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,100
Other (explain below)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,500
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$59,900
Share of Total Cost	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

Explanations: Handshake Funds “other” \$1,500.00 is for Herbicide Application Professional Services

Attachments



Pollinator Field and Nature Trail Partnership Project Map Overview



5 Acres Mechanical Mowing & Herbicide Spray Map Overview



Interpretive Nature Trail Panel Design-Curved Fiberglass-Double Frameless



Pollinator Field & Nature Trail Partnership Unmanaged Field



Ives Run Visitor Information Center, Exhibits, and Osprey Viewing Kiosk



Railroad Grade Trail Entrance, Osprey Viewing Point, and Wetland



Bluebird Box Demonstration Program 2022



Pollinator & Milkweed Stratification Program 2022



Every Kid in The Outdoors Event 2023



Successful Junior Ranger Program – Badge Swear In 2022 & 2023