

## Handshake Partnership Program Report - FY 2016 Recipients

**1. Name of Corps Project/Lake:** DeGray Lake

**2. District / Division of Corps Project/Lake:** Vicksburg District/MVD

**3. Handshake Project Name:** DeGray Lake Watchable Wildlife Interpretive Trail

**4. Amount of Handshake Funds remaining:** \$0

**5. What has been accomplished?** Please provide photographs; before, during, and after!:

The observation pier along the trail has been a great success. Many interpretive programs along the trail and pier are being performed for local schools and groups. The handicap accessible portion of the trail gets lots of use from local users as well as our lake visitors. Individuals are enjoying the views and local wildlife seen along the trail. This system ties beautifully into the mountain bike/hiking trail for an extended use trail system of over 20 miles for our visiting public. Volunteers such as the Human Development Center, JROTC and our Shoreline Cleanup volunteers have been very helpful in maintaining our trail in keeping litter and underbrush to a very minimum. We couldn't have done it without all of our parnters!

	<b>Total</b>
<b>Handshake Program Funding Amount</b>	\$35000
<b>Local Corps Office Funds</b> (total expended on labor, materials, contracts, etc.)?	\$26000
<b>Partner's Contributions</b> (total value of funds, goods, services, volunteer hours, etc.)	
<b>Partners Name</b>	<b>Total Value of Contributions</b>
1 Keeping DeGray Lake Beautiful	\$25000
2 Arkansas Game & Fish Commission	\$42535
3 Iron Mtn Lodge & Marina	\$14200
4 Arkadelphia Junior ROTC	\$12500
5 Asphalt Contractors, Inc	\$12000
6 Clark County Road Department	\$37370
7 Human Development Center	\$5000
8 DLT Events, Inc	\$5000

### 6. Handshake Program Recipient Feedback

Please take this opportunity to provide feedback on all aspects of the Handshake Program and the Challenge Partnership Agreement authority. Your productive comments are important to the ongoing improvement of the program. Make sure to let us know how the Handshake funds have benefited your efforts to initiate and/or strengthen your partnerships.

This is an outstanding program that allows funding for projects that might not otherwise be accomplished. We have been able to work with many partners during this project to gain a great visitor attraction. We have already gotten many compliments on this trail and most of those are from our physically challenged individuals. They are loving the paved trail!

### 7. Handshake Summary:

Please also include a separate newspaper type article describing the project and the benefit to the Corps of Engineers and to the public as a result of this partnership project. Examples can be found on the gateway under Handshake Success Stories.



# DeGray Lake Watchable Wildlife Interpretive Trail

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

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## **DeGray Lake Watchable Wildlife Interpretive Trail Handshake Partnership Agreement**

In 2016, the Corps entered a Handshake Partnership Agreement with Keeping DeGray Lake Beautiful to construct an accessible trail and natural surface trail for the Lower Lake Area at DeGray Lake, Arkansas.

### **Before**

Our Lower Lake Area has been receiving improvements such as a disc golf course, exercise course and under brushing. However the only accessible type areas are the pavilion and roadways themselves. The area itself, though very recreational, was not wheelchair or stroller friendly and did not offer a variety of scenic beauty.

### **During**

The Corps has worked with KDLB in providing materials, labor and equipment for preparing the trail. This project worked with many individuals and companies to accomplish the task. Clark County Road Department hauled in the trail bed materials and helped with the trail bed work specifically in trail compaction. Iron Mountain Lodge and Marina manager David Egleston graciously volunteered his time and equipment in helping prepare the trail and to spread the base material along the trail in preparation for the asphalt company to lay the asphalt base. KDLB worked on getting the accessible observation pier built and tied into the asphalt trail for easy access to the water area. DLT Events, Fred Phillips donated his time and expertise in natural trail building to help finish out the natural surface trail area. Areas throughout the trail have been planted with wildflowers for pollinators. Benches and swings are currently being placed throughout for the finishing touches on the trail.

### **After**

Thanks to the Handshake Partnership Program, together we are creating a universally accessible trail, allowing people of all abilities to enjoy the natural wildlife at DeGray Lake along with a continuation natural surface trail. Interpretive programs from all types of schools and community groups will now be able to easily access the area to view local wildlife and our natural scenic beauty. Because of this Handshake project, visitors with physical disabilities can experience the natural wonders of DeGray Lake. The Human Development Center currently utilizes the trail for their Walk-A-Thon and helps to keep the trail clean. Arkadelphia Junior ROTC also utilizes the trail for their training and helps to keep the trail maintained also.

