

Handshake Partnership Program Report - FY 2020 Recipients

1. Name of Corps Project/Lake: Rivers Project
2. District / Division of Corps Project/Lake: St. Louis District/MVD
3. Handshake Project Name: Riverlands Outdoor Classroom and Amphitheater
4. Amount of Handshake Funds remaining: \$45.76
5. What has been accomplished? Please provide photographs; before, during, and after!:

The project area was cleared of vegetation and brought to a suitable grade for accessibility. The amphitheater footprint was filled with crushed CA-6. Boulders were brought in to provide seating and arranged for best visibility. Native plants were planted by volunteers from Wild Ones St. Louis Chapter. Custom signs were purchased and installed. Although not an original partner for this project, we were able to partner with YouthBuild to design, build, and install a custom outdoor chalkboard. An Eagle Scout also added custom weaving structures. These will be utilized by future Rivervision students for collaborative activities.



Site cleared and graded; boulders delivered



Limestone screening added and boulders being arranged



Arranging boulders to allow for tiered seating



Completed footprint and boulder arrangement



Volunteers and organizers from Wild Ones St. Louis Chapter and the Audubon Society gathered to plant over 200 potted native plants



Custom signage from a local sign shop



Students and teachers from YouthBuild designed, built, and installed a custom outdoor blackboard



A local Scout designed, built, and installed these weaving structures to provide a natural wall for the side of the amphitheater. These structures will be used by students participating in the Rivervision Program to create collaborative art using natural materials from around the Sanctuary.

	Total
Handshake Program Funding Amount	\$25,000
Local Corps Office Funds (total expended on labor, materials, contracts, etc.)?	\$10,646
Partner's Contributions (total value of funds, goods, services, volunteer hours, etc.)	
Partners Name	Total Value of Contributions
1 Audubon Center at Riverlands	\$6,877
2 Wild Ones St. Louis Chapter	\$1,221
3	\$
4	\$
5	\$
6	\$
7	\$
8	\$
9	\$
10	\$

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.

The Handshake Program funds allowed us to strengthen our partnership with the Audubon Society immensely. Through the course of planning and constructing this project, we had several conversations about long-term planning of our programing and found many new ways our missions overlapped. The final steps of this project ended up being the first steps in a new collaborative effort to reach and teach even more students than before.

The Handshake Program also allowed us to bring in a completely new partner, Wild Ones. Through collaborating on the native planting for this project, we were able to bring in new volunteers to help upkeep not on the amphitheater but also some existing gardens. We also gained access to their existing volunteer bulletin and listserve to post future garden maintenance needs.

Pros

- 1) Creating new partnerships and strengthening existing partnerships. The program created the opportunity for us to collaborate with an existing partner in a new way. We have already experienced the benefits of this in the planning of expanded educational programming in the amphitheater and community events.
- 2) Requirements – The deadlines and requirements for the program were very reasonable. Compared to similar funding options, like grants, the deadlines and conditions for the Handshake Program are very easy to achieve without being a burden on staff.

Area for improvement

- 1) Communication - This was the Rivers Project first Handshake Program funding in at least a decade. Given our project's unfamiliarity with the program, we had a lot of questions to ensure we were utilizing the funds appropriately. Waiting for answers and trying to find the correct person to ask within our district, delayed certain steps significantly. Perhaps having a prepared document, like the existing "Handshake Program Fact Sheet" but written for an administrative audience (Program Analysts, etc.), would be helpful.

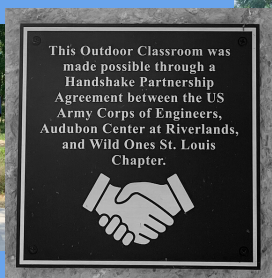
7. Handshake Summary:

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.

The Outdoor Classroom and Amphitheater

AT RIVERLANDS

MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE
HANDSHAKE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM



Through a partnership with The US Army Corps of Engineers, the Audubon Society, and Wild Ones St. Louis Chapter, an outdoor classroom and amphitheater was constructed at the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary near St. Louis, MO. The space will provide a much-needed meeting place for the sanctuary and the community. The completed project includes a custom outdoor blackboard, seating for 50+ people, and is surrounded by native plants to demonstrate their value to visitors and encourage use by pollinators and birds.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL
THE RIVERS PROJECT OFFICE AT 636-899-2600