

Handshake Partnership Program Report - FY 2016 Recipients

1. Name of Corps Project/Lake: West Point
2. District / Division of Corps Project/Lake: CESAM, SAD, West Point
3. Handshake Project Name: Water Willow and Fish Habitat Restoration
4. Amount of Handshake Funds remaining: \$0.00
5. What has been accomplished? Please provide photographs; before, during, and after!:

	Total
Handshake Program Funding Amount	\$6,000
Local Corps Office Funds (total expended on labor, materials, contracts, etc.)?	\$21,280
Partner's Contributions (total value of funds, goods, services, volunteer hours, etc.)	
Partners Name	Total Value of Contributions
1 Georgia Department of Natural Resources	\$4,780
2 Georgia BASS Nation	\$4,600
3 Troup County High School FFA Organization	\$4,650
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.

We had to delay the use of the handshake funds in order to execute another grant awarded to the Project which expired in FY17. Once we were able to execute the grant in FY18, we had a difficult time getting the funds transferred to the project from HQ. This caused a slight delay; however, once everything was in place we were able to easily execute the planned projects.

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.

Fish Habitat improvement at West Point Project has been a focus for the past 3 years. West Point Project personnel and volunteers have made these improvements using a combination of planting aquatic vegetation, installing fish attractors and designating those areas with new marker buoys.

The purpose of aquatic vegetation planting is to improve the shoreline habitat around the lake for fish cover and erosion control. Volunteers planted test sites with water willow in 2014 and 2015, and observations of these sites showed that the plants were able to survive the winter lake level draw down. The planted sites are now well established and most are increasing in size. In 2017, an additional 2,000 plants were planted in Wehadkee and Veasey Creeks.

In 2018, the planting program was expanded through a Handshake Grant that had been awarded to West Point Lake in 2016. This grant was awarded as part of the Corps of Engineers' Challenge Partnership agreement program, a competitive initiative where water resource projects throughout the region compete for additional funding in order to improve natural resources and/or recreational opportunities. As a result, 20 new planting locations identified along the main lake near the Maple Creek and Bird Creek hunting areas were planted with 1,500 water willows by the Corps of Engineers and our partners, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia BASS Nation, and the Troup County High School FFA Organization.

The Handshake Grant was also used to purchase materials for fish attractors, which were constructed by volunteers during the West Point Project's National Public Lands Day event. These structures have been placed in areas already designated around the lake, the locations for which can be found on West Point Project's website, <https://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Recreation/West-Point-Lake/Fishing/>. Additionally, fish attractor marker buoys were purchased and placed at these locations in order to aid anglers while on the water in a further effort to enhance the overall fishing experience at West Point Project.



Assembly of Fish Attractors



Water Willow Planting