

Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence
Christopher S. (Scott) Hannah
Natural Resource Management Specialist (Park Ranger), 0401 GS09
Pittsburgh District Stonewall Jackson Lake
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Executive Summary

Mr. Hannah has demonstrated a great worked ethic and ability to meet and deal with people within many different venues, both on and off site. His work within the community has most certainly enhanced the image and reputation of the Pittsburgh District, Stonewall Jackson Lake, and the Corps of Engineers. Mr. Hannah has attracted visitors and volunteers to Stonewall Jackson Lake. He has enhanced recreational opportunities to the region. Scott continues to communicate the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers vision and mission to the public and State and Federal partners.

Creativity and Originality

Mr. Hannah has found new creative ways to realize the mission and vision of the USACE while increasing value to the Stonewall Jackson Project.

Mr. Hannah has demonstrated great work ethic and the ability to meet and deal with people within many different venues, both on and off site.

Mr. Hannah has consistently achieved above and beyond what has been expected of him. Along with his normal duties and responsibilities, Scott volunteered and has been trained as a Verbal Defense and Influence (VDI) Instructor. He conducts several VDI training sessions for District Park Rangers and Area Student Rangers each year.

Scott serves as the lead for the projects security camera program. This particular security camera system was developed and implemented by Scott and approved by the District Security Office. All Corps buildings and some of the outflow areas near the dam site are covered by the security cameras. Footage captured by these cameras have provided evidence and enables resolution on a number of issues at Stonewall Jackson Lake. The presence of these cameras has reduced the amount of incidents in the Area. This effort was a creative way to enhance visitor safety.

Another improvement that Scott has implemented at Stonewall Jackson Lake is the installation of a cell phone booster in the Resource Managers Office. Scott installed the cell phone booster at the RMO building. Scott researched the proper type of equipment to purchase. Once it was purchased he installed and tuned it for maximum coverage. With the installation of this system visitors can now make emergency cellphone calls in the outflow area. Prior to the cell phone booster, cell service was nonexistent in the outflow area due to the low elevation of the area. Cell service is no longer a problem in or around the area of the Resource Managers Office. This improvement has further enhanced the visitor experience at Stonewall Jackson Lake.

In April 2016, Scott organized, planned, and executed two successful National Public Lands Day shoreline cleanup events with volunteers he recruited using social media. The group he recruited, established a partnership with the group, Fishing Report West Virginia. Thanks to Scott's efforts the group has continued work at several Corps Lakes in the region and has provided countless hours of service to the government.

Made a Positive Experience for visitors

Mr. Hannah works to ensure visitors to Stonewall Jackson Lake have a safe and enjoyable experience. As part of Mr. Hannah's regular duties he conducts routine patrols of the Lake by boat. He also conducts random vessel inspections at launch ramps around Stonewall Jackson Lake. Mr. Hannah serves as USACE ambassador to local communities for USACE's outreach mission/interpretive endeavors. Scott represents and oversees programming and promotes USACE Water Safety Initiatives, which include, but are not limited to local school outreach and community events. Mr. Hannah conducted water safety programming at the Lewis County Fair, the Mountain State Forest Festival, National Hunting & Fishing Day Celebration, Youth Environmental Day, and National Wild Turkey Federation's Youth Jake's Day, United Way of Lewis and Upshur County's annual events, and Junior Ranger Program at two local schools. In addition to on site Water Safety programming, he initiated additional off site speaking engagements and programming within the local communities. Through these engagements Scott has organized and provided Water Safety talks impacting 10,000 individuals.

He has a beneficial relationship with Stonewall Resort State Park to provide interpretive programming primarily focused on water safety to visitors utilizing the State Park and resort recreation areas.

Mr. Hannah has forged a relationship with a local birding, hiking and geocache club made up of members from the community at large. The groups not only come and use the facilities at Stonewall Jackson Lake but they all give volunteer hours back to the project. The local birding club worked to maintain and operate the projects nesting box program. Since their volunteer work began, there has been an increased success in the fledge numbers, benefiting both the club and the natural resources in the area. He also works with the club and the WV Department of Natural Resources to conduct mid-winter Bald Eagle surveys annually. The hiking club members have cleared and maintained existing trails and established new trails to increase enjoyment by hikers as well as protect the environment. The geocache club from the area also worked to establish several geocache sites at Stonewall Jackson Lake, to increase interest and visitation to the project and facilities. These efforts have decreased costs to the government and attracted old and new visitors to recreate. This would not have been possible without volunteer services coordinated by Mr. Hannah.

Enhancement of the Public's Understanding of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Site

His work within the community has most certainly enhanced the image and reputation of the Pittsburgh District, Stonewall Jackson Lake, and the Corps of Engineers. He has formed a working relationship with local colleges to create volunteer services and educational exchanges. He has strengthened relationship with State and Federal partners. He is responsible for the operation and upkeep of the Visitor Information Center at the Resource Managers Office. Scott works with Glenville State and Davis and Elkins

Colleges. He provides onsite lectures on water quality benefits associated with Stonewall Jackson Dam. He works with student groups from Colleges and local High Schools to have do volunteer work at Stonewall Jackson Lake. This work includes Lake cleanups, trail work, visitor center display updates, planting trees, installing benches and liter pickup.

For the past several years, Mr. Hannah has served as the Pittsburgh District's coordinator for the Annual Corps of Engineers and West Virginia DNR Conference. This year marked the 58th year of the coordinated efforts between the USACE and the WVDNR, Scott organized topic of discussion, speakers, and banquets for the one hundred attendees from around the Pittsburgh District, region and the State of West Virginia. Scott has regular dealings with the State Park and the Resort at Stonewall Jackson Lake to assure public awareness and continue to enhance the projects water safety emphasis. Scott provides regular programming to the Resort and State Park. Scott works with the Resort on the real estate requests for utility work as well as with the WV Department of Highways for gas line connections and temporary road right-a-ways. Scott works year round with the WVDNR Wildlife Manager to conduct boundary surveillance, encroachment resolution, improve GIS mapping, and coordinate the projects extensive gas well activities. He works extensively with the project Real Estate program by working through the Supervisor, to connect with Real Estate, Planning, Office of Counsel, Southern Area Office, and partners to work toward solutions to project Real Estate actions and concerns.

Finally, I believe that his actions reflect well upon himself and the Corps of Engineers. He has demonstrated a unique ability to work within the community to enhance the project and the image of the Corps.



Citation

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