

HANDSHAKE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Partnership Webinar
2024

Handshake Program Coordinator:
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US Army Corps
of Engineers®



Today's Webinar

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- History of the Handshake Program
- Program Accomplishments
- FY 25: Application Process



Summersville



Program History/Purpose

- Program originated in 2004
- HQUSACE dedicated pot of money set aside as an incentive for field sites to develop partnerships and use partnership authorities to maximum extent.
- Encourage community engagement
- Promote mutually beneficial activities
- Requires a formal Challenge Partnership Agreement to achieve a mutually beneficial project (not just two people informally shaking hands)
- This is NOT a grant or granting program, although it looks very similar. It is an internal partnership stimulator.



This Outdoor Classroom was made possible through a Handshake Partnership Agreement between the US Army Corps of Engineers, Audubon Center at Riverlands, and Wild Ones St. Louis Chapter.





Eligibility

- Handshake funds are administered through a challenge partnership agreement.
- The authority for the challenge partnership program provides opportunities for public and non-Federal groups and individuals to contribute to and participate in the operation and/or management of RECREATION FACILITIES and NATURAL RESOURCES at Corps water resource development projects.
- ER/EP 1130-2-500, Chapter 12



Barren River Lake



Basics



Corps facilities and resources maintained at 100% Corps expense

Agreement with a non-federal public or private entity

Within current spending authorities and in approved OMP

FY 25 funding amount = (FY25 will be \$125K)

\$25,000 maximum individual request

FY25 Incentive Points:

- This lake/river project has never received Handshake funding in the past. (100 pts)
- This lake/river project's Handshake application includes a NEW partner that the lake/river project has never worked with before. (50 pts)
- This lake/river project's Handshake application includes a Tribal partner. (200 pts)





Corps Foundation Bonus

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- The Corps Foundation is a non-profit, 501(c) (3) dedicated to supporting USACE Recreation and Natural Resources Management programs. As an added incentive, the Corps Foundation will provide a \$5,000 bonus to one selected Handshake Project.
- This bonus funding is in addition to and separate from Handshake funds provided by USACE Headquarters
- The Corps Foundation bonus will be provided to the selected Handshake Project through one of the following ways.
 - The Corps Foundation purchases items specified in the handshake project proposal that the \$5,000 bonus funds will be used for. The project will provide the vendor information, website, ordering form, etc. filled out and ready for the Foundation to pay with a credit card.
 - The Corps Foundation gives money to one of the partners identified in the Handshake project to purchase the items specified for the \$5,000 bonus.
 - The Corps Foundation provides a check/cash directly to the winning project. Donations will need to be processed through the Treasury and RM to set up an account to use the funds at the project. Coordination on the Corps Foundation Bonus funds will occur after the Handshake Projects are selected.





Investment (FY 04 – FY24)



Handshake Funds: \$ 3,696,640
(212 project recipients)

Corps Offices: \$ 3,420,336

Partners: \$ 10,296,763

Total : \$ 17,410,239

***59% was contributed by 747 total partners**





Most Handshake Awards



Raystown Lake

- Raystown – 9last won 2021
- Allatoona - 6last won 2021
- Mark Twain – 6last won 2021
- Shelbyville - 6last won 2023
- Rend – 6last won 2024
- Carlyle – 5.....last won 2020
- Philpott – 5last won 2021
- Mendocino – 4last won 2015
- W Kerr Scott - 4last won 2016
- Blue Marsh – 4last won 2020
- Waco – 4.....last won 2019



Mark Twain Lake



Allatoona Lake



*Why Partner?
Why Handshake?*



Handshake Partnership Program Timeline

Applications Period Begins	JUNE
Application Deadline	*30 SEP*
Recipients Announced	Nov/Dec
Agreement Deadline	31 JUL
Expend Funds	1 year from the receipt of HQ funds
–funds will be transmitted to District/Project via FAD	



How to Prepare a Winning Handshake Application



- Applications
- Evaluation Criteria
- Scoring
- Handshake Program





Handshake Partnership Program

Plan Ahead

- Partnerships take time
- September may seem like a way off, but it will come quickly.
- Determine your project
- Work with prospective partners
- Identify needs and each partner's contribution



Smithville Lake



Lake Okeechobee



A good application includes a thorough description about:

- The partners
- The project
- The overall benefit of the partnership

AND



Clearly addresses each evaluation criteria (6) in concise paragraph.

It must tell us why the proposed project is **valuable**. Don't assume we already know.

Must include maps, plans, photos, conceptual drawings of the proposed project.



Summary Statement



- Describe the partnership and the work to accomplish
- The summary is limited to 1,500 characters, the total description should be no longer than three pages.
- Include the basic who, what, when, where, how.
- Outline concisely:
 - Who will accomplish each task
 - Are there...
 - New facilities
 - Renovations to existing facilities
 - Research
 - Visitor Services
 - Educational or interpretive products created





Application Evaluation Criteria



Specifically address how the project will meet the six evaluation criteria

- **O&M Impacts**
- **Partnership Value**
- **Recreational Benefit**
- **Environmental Stewardship Value**
- **Communication and Education Value**
- **Supporting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access Goals**



Projects that can show benefits in multiple categories compete better.



Criteria #1: O&M Impacts



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.

- ❓ What is long term benefit of the project?
- ❓ How long do you estimate it will be around?
- ❓ What is long term cost?
- ❓ How will it improve efficiencies or be more sustainable?
- ❓ Will there be on-going maintenance required?
- ❓ By whom?
- ❓ Will the project be removed or closed if maintenance is required but not funded?
- ❓ **Longer term benefit and less O&M compete better**





Criteria #2: Partnership Value



What is the significance of the partner's contribution to the project (e.g. critical partner, matching dollars, materials, in-kind services, etc.)?

- ❑ This category evaluates both the value of the partner and the value of their contributions.
- ❑ More partners compete better because there is a stronger partnering benefit and more potential contribution.
- ❑ The higher proportionately the value of the partner is to USACE, the more attractive the application.
- ❑ Include what the partner will be committing to maintain long-term.
- ❑ Higher % of partner contribution competes better
- ❑ Significance of partner to the project competes better





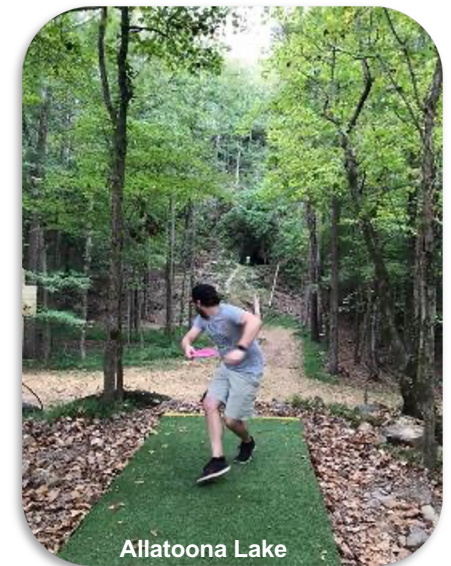
Criteria #3: Recreational Benefit

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Does the project improve the overall recreation experience for the project's users? Does it provide opportunities for various user types?

- ❑ What experiences are created?
 - ❑ Who benefits?
 - ❑ Are there multiple user groups?
- ❑ The more diverse and multi-functioning the recreation experience can be, the better the application will score.





Criteria #4: Environmental Stewardship Value

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How does the project contribute to the natural world, and the improvement of the Corp's natural and/or cultural resources?

Topics that usually score well in this category:

- ❑ Pollinator projects
- ❑ Invasive species control
- ❑ Aquatic & fisheries habitat improvements
- ❑ Wildlife habitat improvements
- ❑ Trails
- ❑ Research
- ❑ Improvements to the natural environment usually score better





Criteria #5: Communication and Education Value



Does the project increase public understanding of the Corps and its missions through interpretation, outreach, education and public information?

- ❑ It is important to show the effort in education
- ❑ It is important to show the impact of the efforts
- ❑ Is it interactive or is everything static?

- ❑ Explain how the benefits of the project are conveyed to the public and how the project improves the USACE image.





Criteria #6: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access

Describe how this project will support diversity, equity, inclusion, and/or access goals to provide quality recreation experiences which includes a safe and healthful environment for a diverse population where all are welcome and encouraged to participate.

- ❑ Does the project include a partner from the Together Outdoors directory of grassroots groups that have led the push for outdoor inclusion and work with under-represented communities?
- ❑ Please describe specifically how your project will include disadvantaged or traditionally marginalized/nature deprived community users.



Red Rock Lake



Application Guidelines



Application Suggestions:

- Project diversity is good, but not required.
- Follow the instructions on length:
 - Max of 1,500 characters on summary statement
 - Max of 3 pages of narrative and
 - Max of 4 pages of drawings/photos/maps/plans
- Provide the information in an easy to read, easy to find format.





Scoring



- Each application is evaluated and scored 1 -10 for each criteria, then weighted.
 - O&M Impacts (12.5%)
 - Partnership Value (20%)
 - Recreational Benefit (20%)
 - Environmental Stewardship Value (20%)
 - Communication and Education Value (15%)
 - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access Goals (12.5%)
- Maximum score for each application is 200 points per evaluator (usually 8 evaluators).





Scoring.. cont



- Each PAC member evaluates all applications and submits scores to coordinator.
- Scores are combined to get total score (1,600 maximum)
- Bonus points are added...
- Points are deducted (not meeting the guidelines outlined in the instructions).
- Projects are ranked in the order of total score
- Funds are disbursed according to ranking and amount requested
- It is possible that the lowest ranked funded project will not receive all of its requested funds.





Program Basics

- No required % matching contribution by partners
- Partner's contributions = cash, volunteer services/labor, materials, supplies
 - Reference ER & EP 1130-2-500 Ch 11
- Make sure to include all contributions made by partners on the application
- Proposals with higher % of partner contribution and participation usually compete better



Program Basics

- Handshake funds must be spent via the same processes as any other appropriated funds; in accordance with contracting laws, FAR, DFAR, and AFAR, and all other regulations.
- Projects must consider NEPA requirements that may be necessary prior to beginning work on the Handshake project
- Cannot “Give” Handshake Funds to partners
 - The Corps does not have granting authority
- Handshake funds cannot be spent to fund permanent Corps positions (labor) or travel



Managing Expectations



Realistic view of the opportunity

FY24: 8 applications (6 selected)

FY23: 11 applications (7 selected)

FY 22: 17 applications (6 selected)

FY 21: 22 applications (13 selected)

FY 20: 16 applications (9 selected)

FY 19: 11 applications (6 selected)

FY 18: 18 applications (7 selected)

FY 17: 15 applications (9 selected)

FY 16: 23 applications (16 selected)

FY 15: 33 applications (13 selected)



- Prior to applying, discuss with partners what you will do if project is not selected
 - ❓ Go ahead with project using more local office and/or partner funds
 - ❓ Agree on a scaled down version
 - ❓ Identify funding from other sources, ie Corps Foundation grants
 - ❓ Try a different project
 - ❓ Cancel project



Handshake Partnership Program



- Is the Handshake Program the right fit for this project or this year?
- If so, start NOW; hopefully your partners are already on board.
- Determine your project – it's not too late, but waiting longer makes the process much harder
- Work with prospective partners
- Identify needs and each partner's contribution



Submitting Application

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Application Deadline:

Close of Business **30 September 2024**

Application packages must be coordinated with District and Division offices prior to being submitted and must be sent from the Division coordinator via e-mail to Phil Manhart, Phil.J.Manhart@usace.army.mil. (217) 343-4662



REPORTING REQUIREMENTS



If you are selected as a Handshake funding recipient, please note that there are quarterly updates and final reporting requirements.

	A	B	C
1	Facility Name:	Mark Twain Lake	
2	Project Title:	Environmental Adventure Trail	
3	Funding Year:	FY2021	
4	Date Funding Received:	17-Jun-21	
5	Amount of Funding Received:	\$19,000.00	
6	Handshake Funds Spent:	\$0.00	
7			
8	Due date	Funds Remaining	Status description:
9	4/15/2021	\$19,000.00	Currently coordinating the development of the Challenged Partnership Agreement with partners. Anticipated completion and submission will be June 1, 2021
10	6/15/2021	\$19,000.00	Received program funds from HQ. Site survey on-going
11	9/15/2021		
12	1/15/2022		
13	4/15/2022		
14	6/15/2022		Environmental Compliance requirements completed November 2021.
15			Trees designated within corridor felled by March 1, 2022.
16			Stumps and tree debris removed (75% of total) by July 1, 2022.
17			Task Order for site grading and tread placement currently being prepared. Awaiting RFP from contractor. Will execute \$19,000 funding.
18			Coordinated with partners for site amenities and interpretive features. Reviewing plans.
19			Stockpiling materials for tread surface in August 2022.
20			Anticipate beginning of task order execution by September 1, 2022.
21			
22	9/15/2022		Site survey performed for placement of drainage structures completed.
23			Stockpiling of materials for tread surface on-going
24			Task Order issued for the site grading and tread placement. Anticipate execution in the Fall of 2022. \$19,000 obligated.

Handshake Partnership Program Final Project Close-Out Report

1. Fiscal Year Selected as Winning Project:
2. Name of Corps Project/Lake:
3. District / Division of Corps Project/Lake:
4. Handshake Project Name:
5. Amount of Handshake Funds remaining: \$
6. What has been accomplished? Please provide photographs; before, during, and after!

	Total
Handshake Program Funding Amount	\$ <input type="text"/>
Local Corps Office Funds (total expended on labor, materials, contracts, etc.)?	\$ <input type="text"/>
Partner's Contributions (total value of funds, goods, services, volunteer hours, etc.)	
Partners Name	Total Value of Contributions
1 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
2 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
3 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
4 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
5 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
6 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
7 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
8 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
9 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
10 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>

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.

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](#).



EXAMPLE CLOSEOUT SITREP



HANDSHAKE PARTNERSHIP SUCCESS STORY (PART 1 OF 3) LITTLE ROCK DISTRICT, SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION



WHO: USACE, Little Rock District, Operations Division; Pulaski County Public Works (PCPW); Quail Forever; and the University of Arkansas Corporative Extension Service

WHAT: Handshake Partnership Agreement

WHEN: March 2020 - Present

WHERE: David D Terry - Damsite 6 West Park

WHY:

- Installation of new restroom
- Restoration of pollinator habitat
- Improvement of wildlife habitat

WHAT'S NEXT: Later in the spring and summer, another survey will be done to see which plants regenerate and the team can determine the level of restoration that will be required to complete the pollinator portion of this partnership agreement.

NEW RESTROOM AT DAMSITE 6 PARK



INSTALLATION OF THE NEW RESTROOM AT DAMSITE 6 PARK



Summary:

On 15 February 2022, the installation of a \$53,000 restroom began at David D Terry - Damsite 6 West Park. The cost of the new restroom was a split between SWL and Pulaski County Public Works (PCPW) with PCPW funding \$27K. This is the result of a Handshake Partnership agreement between SWL, Pulaski County Public Works, Quail Forever and the University of Arkansas Corporative Extension Service. This mission was undertaken by Natural Resource Specialist, Brittany Seidel, who initiated the conversation with the partners and completed the partnership application during the application period in September 2019. She received notification that her application was funded for \$25,000 in March 2020 and work got off the ground. This partnership also includes restoration of pollinator habitat and improvement of wildlife habitat (continued on next slide).



Q/A From Previous Classes

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What happens if your project is selected, but your partner can't come up with their funding?

The handshake funds are returned and likely offered to the next highest scoring applicant

What if cost of project is less than expected?

The unused funds are returned. Handshake funding can only be used for the stated project.

How long do you have to expend your funding? **1 year**

Can the Corps contribution consist of just labor? **Yes**

Can you use a different partner if your original partner falls through? **Yes**

Where can the funds be spent?

Only on Corps lands and waters operated and maintained by the Corps

Can I give the Handshake funds to the partner to spend?

No, only the Corps can use the Handshake funds



Handshake Program Gateway Page



Handshake Program

[Headquarters Partnership POC](#)

The Handshake Program offers a source of seed money to Corps installations for worthwhile partnership projects. The intent of this program is to initiate new, or enhance existing recreation and natural resources management opportunities. The objective is to provide an incentive to Corps projects to utilize partnering initiatives to their fullest potential. In addition, this funding is intended to encourage local organizations to partner with the Corps to construct, operate, and/or maintain local partnering projects. The Handshake Program is a way for the Corps to demonstrate our recognition that partnerships flow in both directions (i.e. partnerships are a "handshake," not a handout). Corps leadership has demonstrated their commitment to a partnership culture by establishing this program.

PLEASE NOTE: At this time, USACE has no authority or mechanism to give a non-federal partner funds. Contact your district partnering POC or division Partnership PDT member if you have questions concerning this issue.

Questions about this program should be directed to [Philip Manhart](#), Handshake Program POC at 217-774-3951 x7010

2023 Application

- [Announcement Memo](#)
- [FY23 Handshake Application Webinar](#) - 15 June 1100 EDT, 12 July 1300 EDT, 25 August 1500 EDT
- [Instructions](#)
- [Application Form](#) *To save, select SAVE after clicking link*
- [Handshake Program Fact Sheet](#)
- [Challenge Partnership Agreement Template](#)
- [Handshake Fund Execution](#)

● [Final Report Form Template](#)

● [Applications and Agreements](#)

● [Success Stories](#)

● [News/Current Issues](#)

Handshake Program Recipients

● [Spreadsheet of Handshake Recipients 2004 - Current](#)

● [Recipient Memos 2004 - Current](#)

Handshake Program Applications and Agreements

Trails

2011:

- BWT [Application/Agreement](#) - Alabama birding trail development, brochure, website
 - Carlyle [Application/Agreement](#) - River walk 1.5 mile multi-use trail with accessible fishing pier
 - DeGray [Application/Agreement](#) - One-mile Interpretive geology trek and multi-use trail
 - Ouachita [Application/Agreement](#) - 16 mile extension of Vista Trail
- #### 2012:
- Hartwell Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Mountain bike trail facility improvements
 - Lost Creek Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Nature trail signs
 - Rathbun Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Trail rehabilitation
 - Stockton Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Multi-use trail (1.6 mile)/ parking lot construction

2013:

- Caesar Creek Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Fitness trail
- Mark Twain Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Campground/VC connector trail construction

Environmental Stewardship

2011:

- Allatoona [Application/Agreement](#) - American chestnut restoration
 - Shenango River [Application/Agreement](#) - American chestnut re-introduction
 - Francis E Walter [Application/Agreement](#) - Borrow area habitat restoration
- #### 2012
- Gull Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Invasive species wash station

2013:

- Fort Peck Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Aquatic invasive species prevention
 - Lake Red Rock [Application/Agreement](#) - Fish habitat improvement rearing pond construction
 - Raystown Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Wildlife and Bird Watering/Pond rehabilitation
 - Smithville Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Aquatic habitat enhancement/fish structures
- #### 2014
- New Hogan [Application/Agreement](#) - Recycling program development
 - Allatoona Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Osprey platform construction
 - Kaw Reservoir [Application/Agreement](#) - Archaeological research project
 - Carr Creek Lake [Application/Agreement](#)



Handshake Partnership Program

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GOOD LUCK!

If there are questions, contact us.

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