



THE recreation RETREAT

HQ Update: Data Quality & Data Management

POC: Ryan Hartwig, Recreation Program and Business Line Manager

As we rapidly race through the FY 26 budget building process, most of us are working with data that was entered into various platforms at the end of last year and some of us might be frustrated with what we see. Data used to populate the Civil Works Integrated Funding Database (CWIFD) is compiled from various data entry efforts and is ultimately used to help inform funding decisions. The ability to build, prioritize, and defend funding requests begins with you. **YOU are the one who understands what your project contributes, YOU know your projects priorities, and YOU are the source of complete and accurate data.** If you are new to data entry or the budget process, we encourage you to begin the learning process now. The NRM Gateway provides a ton of resources and training links so that you can be prepared to enter the best data possible. Please visit <https://corpslakes.ercd.dren.mil/employees/reccwifd/reccwifd.cfm> to begin your data adventure.



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

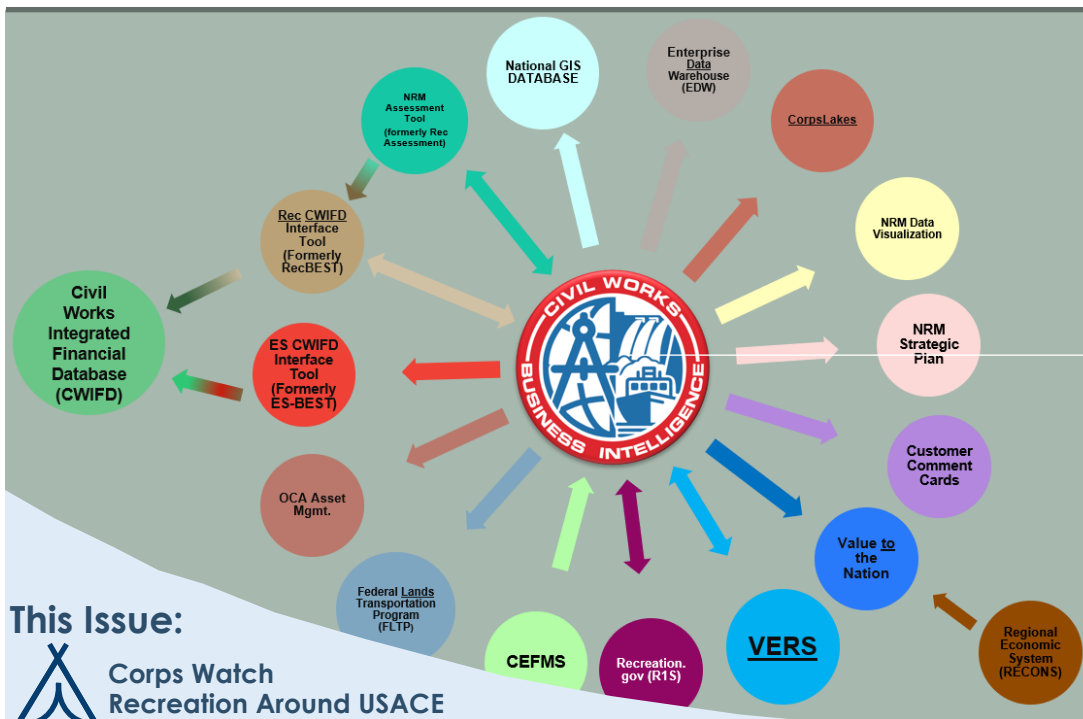
YOUR Thoughts

We are looking for contributors and ideas!
*If you have a topic, success story, lesson learned, or helpful suggestion—let us know.

Send to: Tara.J.Whitsel@usace.army.mil

The Recreation Retreat is an unofficial publication of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). This online publication is produced quarterly with the purpose of providing its readers information about the USACE Recreation Program. Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Mention of specific vendors does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Army or any element thereof. Managing Editor: Tara Whitsel. Tara.J.Whitsel@usace.army.mil

Campaign Hat Photo Credit:
Cynthia Mitchell, USACE



This Issue:



Corps Watch
Recreation Around USACE

Water Safety Target: Adult Males

POC: Pam Doty, National Water Safety Program Manager

When it comes to promoting water safety, USACE public recreation fatality statistics over the last several years indicates that our target audience has been and remains adult males 18 and older. A continued emphasis is needed when it comes to promoting water safety to adults, and that is where your help is needed!

The last ten-year (FY14-23) USACE public recreation fatality statistics show that of all the fatalities that occurred 88% were male, 86% were 18 and older, and 89% were not wearing a life jacket. 47% occurred in undesignated swimming areas, 21% were falls from boats, docks, and shore, and in 19% alcohol was involved or suspected.

Please take a few minutes to look at how your project is promoting water safety. What can you do, and what can we do, to increase the number of direct interpretive contacts made with adults and what are ways to increase life jacket wear? Whether your initiative is big or small, focus it on adults. Possibly include such things as giving water safety talks to local adult groups or businesses, at fishing tournaments, community events, boat shows, etc. Conducting roving interpretation at boat ramps, campgrounds, beaches, and marinas can be very effective at reaching our target audience. The sky is the limit, so think outside the box when it comes to finding creative or different ways to educate our visitors on water safety.

The *Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns* campaign is our water safety campaign for adults. Campaign resources have been developed by the National Water Safety Program with help from The Corps Foundation and are available for your use. They include a resource guide, video PSAs, audio PSAs in English and Spanish, logo, posters, publication ads, and artwork for banners, billboards, vehicle tailgate vinyl wraps, etc. All can be downloaded from the National Water Safety Program's webpage, https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Recreation/National-Water-Safety_Program/, which PleaseWearIt.com redirects to. The National Water Safety Program's "Please Wear It" page on Facebook and Instagram, managed in cooperation with The Corps Foundation, is a library of water safety social media posts that focus on the campaign. You can reshare these posts as they are or pull assets from them to create your own posts. The National Water Safety Program continues to work with The Corps Foundation to provide promotional products that can be used as part of the "I Got Caught" initiative. Those products will be available for you to request later this year, so keep an eye out for an email from your Division Representative on the National Water Safety Committee.

Other resources are available on the NRM Gateway in the water safety section including USACE Water Safety Resource Guide for Interpretive Services and Educational Outreach under good enough to share, Life Jacket Mandatory-Wear Policy Selective Expansion memo under policy and procedures, USACE public recreation fatality statistics under water safety program statistics, issues of "Ripples" water safety journal under water safety journals, and much more. If you can't find what you need, please contact your division representative on the National Water Safety Committee and/or Pam Doty, National Water Safety Program Manager.

Sometimes promoting water safety to adults is not easy, but don't give up. Start early and stay persistent because you can (and are!) making a difference and saving lives.



Water Safety: EM 385-1-1

The new Engineering Manual 385-1-1 (Safety and Occupational Health Requirements Manual) is signed and published, with an effective date of Mar. 15, 2024. This has been a significant effort over the last few years as this was not just an update but a complete rewrite of the manual. It has been 82 years since the first manual was published. <https://www.publications.usace.army.mil/Portals/76/EM%20385-1-1%20EFFECTIVE%2015%20March%202024.pdf>

There are a few important changes related to water safety in the manual revision.

Chapter 1. Personnel Required Qualification/Training.

(7) Employees and volunteers that work around water must be provided basic water safety training to include the following:

(a) The “Reach, Throw, Row, Don’t Go” method.

(a-1) Reach. Hold on to the dock or your boat and reach your hand, a boat oar, a fishing pole, or whatever you have nearby, to the person.

(a-2) Throw. If you cannot reach far enough, toss things that float for the person to grab.

(a-3) Row. If you are in a boat, use the oars to move the boat closer to the person in the water, or call out to a nearby boat for help. Do not operate the boat’s motor close to a person in the water, they could be injured by the propeller.

(a-4) Don’t Go. Do not go into the water unless you are trained. Call for help.

(b) Hazards associated with working around water (for example, temperature, depth, current)

(c) Hands-on training on how to use rescue equipment (for example, throw rings and bags) and personal protective equipment (PPE) (for example, personal flotation devices (PFD)) properly.

Chapter 19. Floating Plant and Marine Activities.

19-5.g All motorboat operators must inspect and use the vessel engine cutoff device (kill switch) and safety lanyard and attach the safety lanyard to their person (exclusive use of wireless kill-switch devices are not authorized).

To help with the requirements, the National Water Safety Program created some water safety information and presentations that can be used when training employees and volunteers.

A PDF version of this information can be found on the NRM Gateway in the Water Safety Section under Training and Conferences and in the Volunteer Section under Training.

<https://corpslakes.erc.dren.mil/employees/training.cfm?id=watersafety>

In Case You Missed It

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) have a great program which is run and funded through the VA to help homeless veterans. You can find more information at <https://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.html>.



Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program assists single Veterans and Veterans with Families who need assistance in obtaining or maintaining permanent housing. This program was developed as part of The Department of Veterans Affairs strategic plan to end Veteran homelessness. If you are a Veteran and are in a housing crisis, please contact us immediately.

SERVICES

- Housing counseling and case management
- Linkage to mainstream and Veterans
- Temporary financial assistance

Proper Rescue Techniques

Reach, Throw, Row, Go For Help



If the person is close, **Reach** out with a long object.



If you cannot reach the person, **Throw** them anything that floats.



If there is nothing to throw, **Row** a boat to the person in trouble.



Never place yourself in danger by going in for the person. Instead, **Go For Help!**

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Work In Action

1 Coralville Lake (MVR) - The Coralville Lake Project received funding for specific work packages through the IJA. Four prefabricated CXT restroom and shower buildings were procured utilizing this funding. The new restroom buildings meet the sustainability guidance and re-place old buildings that had reached the end of their lifecycle. The CXT buildings required minimal site preparation and were delivered ready to use including plumbing and electrical requirements.



2 New Melones Dam (SPK) - IJA work at the Stanislaus River Park at New Melones Dam consisted of placing approximately 6,300 tons of class II road base to cover 338,000 square feet of non-paved road access to the Horseshoe Road, Oakdale, Knights Ferry, and McHenry Ave recreation areas. Work also included paving a 0.46 mile section of roadway and approximately 65,000 sq-ft of public parking area at the Oakdale recreation area. The contract work included delivery of supplies, installation, mobilization/demobilization, pulverizing the existing pavement, excavation, disposal of excavated materials, subgrade preparation, placement of asphalt, shoulder repairs, and striping.

This project benefits the community by making road conditions safer by eliminating cracks and holes that can cause injuries, reducing the risk of skidding on slick surfaces, and providing recreators, project staff, and first responders better access to the recreation areas.



Workamper

Now is a great time of year to advertise paid or volunteer camp host positions through the Workamper website.

HQ USACE pays for an annual, nationwide contract that provides each USACE project with 10 help-wanted ads per year at no cost to the project. You also get unlimited searches in Workamper's *Awesome Applicants Online Resume Database*. Additionally, projects can create an Employer Tour or podcast on the website.

Last year, 168 USACE projects were signed up as members under the national contract, but only 55 projects posted an ad. Only 68 of a possible 1,200 ads were placed. This year between Aug-Dec, only 38 of a possible 500 ads were placed.

Submit your Hotline Ad online: Login to www.workamper.com and click on the "Submit an Ad" button! Or feel free to email to support@workamper.com

When using the online ad submission process, it will show an approximate ad cost. **BUT!** When you get to the payment section, you can select that you are a USACE project and you will not have to enter any payment info. **Your ad is free!**

www.workamper.com
support@workamper.com
800-446-5627

Corps Watch

The Corps Watch program is undergoing a new look and transitioning to local-based reporting. The national hotline is ending and will no longer be available. Visitors are encouraged to report issues locally. Since 2008 when Corps Watch was first established, the national hotline provided a standardized resource for public criminal activity reporting. As access to cellular telephones and smartphone technology increased, the usefulness of the centralized national hotline decreased. Visitors are still encouraged to report any suspicious activity or vandalism to local law enforcement and local USACE project office.

The USACE Innovations Team and the Park Ranger Advisory Board are working on potential updates to the Corps Watch program and integrating new technologies for public reporting. Any signs or posters displaying the national hotline phone number 1-866-413-7970 should be removed. New poster graphics are being made available and posted on the NRM Gateway.

CORPS WATCH REPORT CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Report any suspicious activity or property damage to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers facilities.



WHAT TO REPORT?

- If it is an emergency dial 911
- When did the suspicious activity occur?
- Where did activity occur?
- How many people involved?
- What type of activity?
- Describe what you saw?
- Provide any pictures.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Law Enforcement: _____

USACE: _____

USACE email: _____

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY DIAL 911



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Smartbook Update It is TIME!

Have you updated your Smart-Book information on the NRM Gateway lately? If not, please let this serve as a reminder to go in and ensure your information is accurate.

<https://gateway.erdc.dren.mil/nrm/smartbook/index.cfm>



Click here for link!

The SmartBook provides an electronic directory making it easy to connect with others in your respective CoPs. Revamped in April 2021, the SmartBook includes members of the NRM, Park Ranger, and OPM CoPs. The SmartBook enhances communication with program points of contacts, subject matter experts, and other individuals. The SmartBook offers connections and workforce context information far beyond what a DLL mailing list or an Outlook search can produce.

The SmartBook works best when everyone periodically reviews and updates their personal (and their teams) information regarding areas of expertise, PDT membership, location, and other organizational information. The SmartBook is only accessible from the army.mil network and requires CAC card for access.

Knowledge Management Portal for NRM

The Natural Resources Management Program has several pages on the Civil Work Knowledge management Portal.

Please visit: <https://usace.dps.mil/sites/KMP-CW/SitePages/Natural-Resource-Management.aspx> to access program priorities, metrics, newsletters, and more.

Recognizing Excellence

1 ...



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Headquarters

Tammy Frauenshuh, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District, receives the Chief of Engineers Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence during the 2023 USACE National Awards Ceremony, Nov. 29, in Washington, D.C. More than twenty awards were presented during the ceremony, recognizing excellence in various facets of the Corps' wide-ranging mission. (U.S. Army photo by Diane Rivera Estella)

2 Jason Hurley is the Kansas City District Hero of the Month. Jason, a natural resource management specialist, is commended for his exceptional support to field staff across the Kansas City District. His noteworthy contributions include coordinating the Annual Visitor Assistance Ranger Training, hosting participants from three additional districts, aiding in recruitment efforts at local colleges, representing the district on the National Innovations Team, delivering pre-holiday weekend park ranger safety messages and providing ongoing mentorship to ranger trainees. Jason's leadership of the Ranger Trainee Team was outstanding. Additionally, in our budget efforts, Jason proved critical in facilitating data entry requirements for our Recreation Civil Works Recreation Assessment. His efforts will impact budgets for years to come. Jason sets a high standard for the Natural Resources team and our Kansas City District employees. His commitment to excellence and professional demeanor positively contributes in many intangible ways.



Thank you for all your hard work and congratulations, Jason!

6

Park Ranger CoP: Recruitment Underway!

The National Park Ranger Community of Practice Advisory Board is currently recruiting for several representatives across the Nation! A position on the Advisory Board is not only beneficial to your growth as an employee, but also gives you, your project, District, and Division a voice at the highest level to advocate for ranger safety and other Park Ranger concerns, should they arise.

Requirements include regular attendance at monthly virtual meetings, an annual in-person meeting, as well as additional time commitment on subcommittees to mitigate issues for the park ranger community. A few of the subcommittee topics working right now are transient visitation, ORIs, GSA vehicles and EV Radio Installation but the advisory board will work to solve a variety of issues during your tenure. It is a privilege to sit on the advisory board and will require dedication, time commitment, perseverance and most importantly the ability to meet virtually and continue to be task-driven, as members of the board sit nationwide.

Open or soon-to-be-open positions include:

- MVD – 2 positions
- NAD – 1 position
- NWD – 2 positions
- SWD – 1 position

If you are interested in a position on the Park Ranger CoP, be on the lookout for recruitment announcements from your Division MSC or reach out to Gina Hill at gina.n.pate@usace.army.mil if you need any assistance getting into contact with your respective POC.

In Case You Missed It

1 Free Training. Our partners at Leave No Trace (LNT) have just launched a new, free online Leave No Trace 101 course. It takes about 45 minutes to complete and provides a good overview of the LNT principles. Check it out at: <https://learn.lnt.org/courses/101>

2 Our partners at the American Hiking Society will be hosting a free webinar on Mar. 7, 2024 from 1:00-2:00 EST on National Trails Day. They will be providing tips and ideas on how USACE can take advantage of National Trails Day and register your service events on their site.

Please register at:

<https://www.americantrails.org/training/giving-back-to-the-trail-and-building-community-during-national-trails-day>

NAD and SAD Host NRM Workshops

The North Atlantic Division and South Atlantic Division each hosted NRM Workshops over the past two months. The NAD NRM Workshop was held Dec. 5-7, 2023 at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, New York. The workshop emphasized collaboration, both internally and with partner agencies and organizations, cross training, and focused on building technical capacity for maintaining success. This, and past workshops, have been a key element in developing an adaptable, capable workforce that is prepared for both the opportunities and challenges in natural resources management.



Cape Cod Canal Park Ranger, Corina Danielson, is awarded the Golden Ranger Hat at the North Atlantic Division Natural Resource Management Workshop for her superior trivia knowledge.



In their commitment to fostering a professional workforce and strengthening the Natural Resources Management Community of Practice the South Atlantic Division held its ninth workshop in division history this past January in Gulf Shores, AL. The workshop provided the opportunity to build technical competencies, energize collaboration efforts, and discover innovative solutions in vital program areas.

This training workshop has proven to be a critical component over the years emphasizing the numerous contributions of park rangers and managers in accomplishing mission success. It is essential that we share and adopt best practices, streamline processes, and eliminate duplication of efforts. This training workshop helps to build a strong cadre of ready and resilient people and teams who protect and ensure the sustainability of the natural resources entrusted to USACE.



Fee-Free Days

The 2024 fee-free days for the USACE user fee program have been set. This initiative was first instituted on Veteran's Day 2006 with the intent to support and honor the men and women who have served the Nation in the armed services. Including the recurring Veterans Day and National Public Lands Day, USACE will recognize the following five days as the FY24 Day Use Fee Free dates.

Calendar Year 2024 Fee Free Dates:

- **Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday: Jan. 15, 2024**
- **The U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Birthday: Jun. 16, 2024**
- **Juneteenth National Independence Day: Jun. 19, 2024**
- **National Public Lands Day: Sep. 28, 2024**
- **Veteran's Day: 11 Nov. 11, 2024**

For questions, please contact Ryan Hartwig at Ryan.D.Hartwig@usace.army.mil or Jason Owen at Jason.W.Owen@usace.army.mil.

In Case You Missed It

NRM Community Team. If you haven't already received an invitation to this new site, open MS-TEAMS, click the Join a Team link, enter code fmc90v1 or utilize type "/join" in the search bar followed by the code.

JOIN NRM COMMUNITY TEAM

- If you have not received an invitation to join, use code:
- Code – fmc90v1

Enter code

Click here to Join a Team

Recreation Around USACE

1 Farm Creek Project (MVR) - To conclude their Eagle rank project, Scouts designed, built, and installed a preparation table and multiple benches at the Farm Creek Project. Assisted by Park Rangers, the Scouts removed cedar and walnut trees that were encroaching on project roads and trails, which were then sized and prepared for use in the project. Additionally, the Scouts removed invasive bush honeysuckle to promote native vegetative growth.



Photos above and right: Scouts working on their Eagle rank project at the Farm Creek Project in Rock Island District.

2 Lake Washington Ship Canal (NWS) - In recent years, NRM leadership has encouraged USACE projects to develop or expand the implementation of recreation use fees using existing authorities. Lake Washington Ship Canal will begin collecting Special Use fees during the FY24 season (May 1—Oct. 31, 2024). A minimum of two full time NRM staff are tasked with administering the Fee Program daily. Fees will be collected through R1S exclusively (no cash will be collected). Active messaging is occurring with the public to ensure awareness regarding the new fees in collaboration with Seattle Districts public affairs office. Additionally, a cost comparability report is planned to recommend changes, or no change, to the fees assessed.

Graphic below: Lake Washington Ship Canal efforts in implementing a new Special Use fee program.



Photo bottom: Ribbon cutting ceremony for a new snowmobile crossing at Hopkinton-Everett Lakes in New England District.

A screenshot of the RECREATION.gov website. The page title is "Lake Washington Ship Canal Special Event". It includes a search bar, navigation links, and a description of the event. A sidebar on the right shows a document titled "MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND DISTRICT COMMANDERS, AND CHIEFS, OPERATIONS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND DISTRICTS" dated JUL 19 2021. The subject is "U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Natural Resources Management Program Strategic Plan, 2021-2031".

3 Hopkinton-Everett Lakes (NAE) - A new snowmobile crossing was constructed near the South Weir at Hopkinton Everett Lakes. The crossing was constructed by Weare Winter Wanderers in coordination with the State of New Hampshire Bureau of Trails. Park Ranger Pascal Carter attended the ribbon cutting ceremony on Jan. 6, 2024. The Hopkinton-Everett multi-use trail system is maintained by the New Hampshire Bureau of Trails and the Merrimack Valley Trail Riders and were established through cooperative efforts with USACE. Hopkinton-Everett Lakes provides approximately 26 miles of designated OHRV trails and over 30 miles of designated snowmobile trails.



Recreation Across USACE

4 Libby Dam (NWS) - The Libby Dam Disc Golf Courses, visitor center, and campgrounds were host to the Montana State Disc Golf Tournament. Over 175 participants of all ages plus family and friends attended the event. Libby Dam has hosted disc golf tournaments annually since 2010 and has hosted the state tournament three times due to the complexity and challenging design of the course. This has been a popular event made possible by the support of active partners in outdoor recreation.



5 Wappapello Lake (MVS) - Wappapello Lake in partnership with the Wappapello Lake Area Association (WLAA), and River Radio hosted the 31st Annual Festival of Lights Auto Tour during the 2023 holiday season. For over 30 years, this free, family-oriented event has provided visitors a beautiful drive-thru light display to enjoy from the safety and comfort of their own vehicle. Local businesses, church groups, organizations, and families decorate campsites in the Redman Creek West Campground. Over 36,500 visitors attended the event. This annual event provides a major boost to the local economy and increased visitation to Wappapello Lake. Additionally, it serves as an opportunity to support and establish local partnership, promote community involvement, and utilize volunteers. USACE staff are able to highlight our missions and provide water safety education.



6 Saylorville Lake (MVR) - Saylorville Park Rangers

Benjamin and Phipps were dispatched in response to a 911 call to the Cherry Glen Boat Ramp for kayakers stuck near the breakwater. The occupants of the kayak were unable to get their vessels to shore due to wind gusts over 20 mph. Rangers were able to help both occupants and get their vessel to shore!

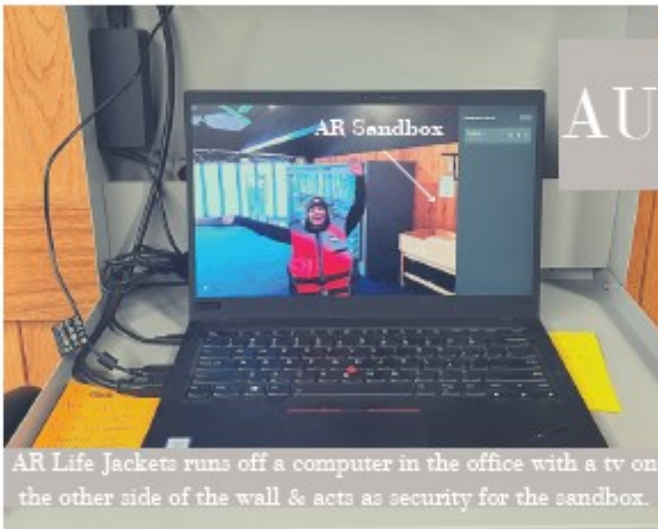




INNOVATIONS IN THE FIELD



National Innovations Team REC Newsletter



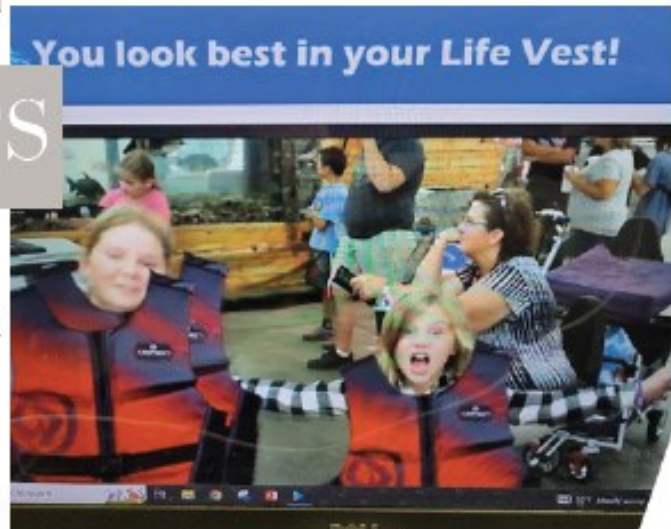
AUGMENTED REALITY

Two augmented reality innovations have been installed at Alum Creek Lake, the AR Sandbox and AR Life Jackets. Project staff set up the exhibits to aid in security for the technology while still teaching about water safety and topography.

AR Life Jackets runs off a computer in the office with a tv on the other side of the wall & acts as security for the sandbox.

AR LIFE JACKETS

The AR Life Jackets took on the Kansas State Fair! Creating an engaging water safety experience for fair goers. This travel friendly innovation is an unique way to spread the water safety message. It is already being taken to state fairs, local boat shows, and is set up in visitor centers!



SELF READING TRAFFIC COUNTERS

Tracking visitation is a constant challenge, Innovations has partnered with VERS CATT to test new devices that are currently operating in the field, including a self reporting system.