

Training Busy Staff to Succeed with Volunteers: Modules 1-3

- **Designing Volunteer Positions**
- **Recruiting Volunteers**
- **Interviewing Volunteers**

Monday, February 2, 11:00 am to 12:00 pm (Pacific)

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**Training Busy Staff
to Succeed with Volunteers:
The 55-Minute Training Series**

*Designing Positions
for Volunteers*

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Betty Stallings

Energize, Inc.

Learning Objectives

- ▶ Learn the importance of good volunteer position design
- ▶ Understand trends in volunteering and their impact on design of positions
- ▶ Understand the necessary components of written position descriptions

Key Concept 1

- ▶ Good volunteer position design is key to the ultimate success of a volunteer program.
- ▶ We are trying to 'sell' our volunteer opportunities.



Downfalls of Unclear Position Descriptions

- ▶ Unable to prioritize work
- ▶ Staff and other volunteers unsure of who is responsible for what
- ▶ Frustration 
- ▶ Unable to celebrate completion without a clear goal

Benefits of Written Position Descriptions

- ▶ Clear understanding of what is expected by volunteer and staff
- ▶ Marketing tool for recruitment
- ▶ Guide for screening
- ▶ Basis for supervision and evaluation
- ▶ Contract between volunteer and Corps

Key Concept 2

- ▶ Understanding volunteer trends should impact position design in our organization.



Trends in Volunteering

- ▶ Most volunteers are already employed
- ▶ Short-term volunteering options
- ▶ Desire for freedom, ability to act quickly
- ▶ Want challenging, interesting assignments
- ▶ Come from a broader cross-section of society
- ▶ Expect to be treated professionally.
- ▶ Need flexibility in hours

Trends in Volunteering

- ▶ Family and group volunteering are popular.
- ▶ Interest in working for causes vs. agencies
- ▶ Looking for job experience, training, re-entry to employment.
- ▶ Many people with professional skills available
- ▶ Multitude of motivations for volunteering
- ▶ More “voluntolds” (e.g., requirement for high school graduation)
- ▶ More seniors (over 70 years old)

Responses to Volunteer Trends

- ▶ Design episodic, short-term positions
- ▶ Offer position sharing
- ▶ Provide group volunteer opportunities
- ▶ Target recruitment to professionals, youth, retired people, ethnic groups, etc
- ▶ Offer flexible hours and locations
- ▶ Organize a substitute system of volunteers

Responses to Volunteer Trends

- ▶ Reimburse volunteer expenses 
- ▶ Broaden the ways volunteers are utilized
- ▶ Develop positions for evenings and weekends
- ▶ Develop positions that can be performed off-site
- ▶ Create opportunities for students

Key Concept 3

- ▶ Expanding the ways volunteers are utilized within the Corps will enable us to more effectively reach our mission.

Designing New Volunteer Positions

- ▶ List all the duties of your current position.
- ▶ Put an asterisk next to tasks which:
 - You feel unqualified to perform.
 - You would rather not be doing.
- ▶ List the things you would like to do but do not have the time to perform now (your “Dream List”).

Designing Positions

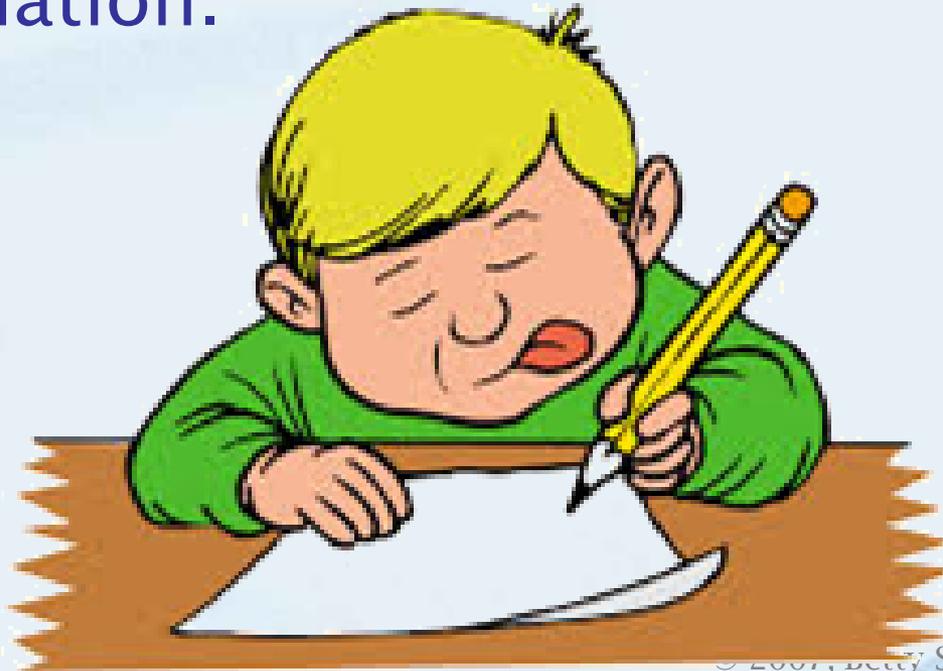
- ▶ Brainstorm programs or services you wish your organization could accomplish but cannot, due to limited resources.
- ▶ Study your list and begin to develop some new, interesting, creative potential volunteer positions from the tasks and the “Dream List.”
- ▶ Ask coworkers to help you refine these positions and develop new opportunities.

Volunteer Needs Assessment Worksheet

Unfunded Work That Needs To Be Done	Appropriate Work For Volunteers To Do	Skills Needed To Do The Work

Key Concept 4

- ▶ Position descriptions should be clearly written and include all essential information.



Elements in an Ideal Volunteer Position Description

- ▶ Position Title
- ▶ Supervisor
- ▶ Goal or purpose of position
- ▶ Major responsibilities
- ▶ Time commitment
- ▶ Qualifications (required, desired)
- ▶ Work location
- ▶ Benefits to volunteer

Example Position Descriptions on the NRM Gateway

- ▶ Saylorville Lake
- ▶ Lake Kaweah
- ▶ Lake Okeechobee
- ▶ Fort Worth
- ▶ Office of Surface Mining (Toolkit)

WORKSHEET

Volunteer Position Description 

Volunteer(s) needed for:

Event/task description and purpose:

Primary responsibilities:

Time commitment:

Location:

Reimbursement for relevant expenses? Other benefits?

Supervised by/reports to:

Qualification needed and possible recruits:

VOLUNTEER JOB OR PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT TITLE:

SUPERVISOR:

PHONE:

KEY CONTACT:

PHONE:

PROJECT LOCATION:

PURPOSE:

TIME FRAME:

Start Date:

End Date:

Minimum time required:

Days needed:

Hours:

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

SPECIFIC DUTIES

QUALIFICATIONS

TRAINING:

Job:

Safety:

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED:

Supplied by agency:

Supplied by volunteer

EVALUATION RESPONSIBILITY:

Date Received

Summary

- ▶ Good position design is the foundation of a solid volunteer program, but it should also retain the fluidity necessary to continually undergo change.



*Volunteer
Recruitment*

Learning Objectives

- ▶ Understand what recruitment is and the impact of doing it well
- ▶ Understand barriers to volunteering...and some strategies to overcome them
- ▶ Design an effective recruitment message
- ▶ Learn about characteristics of effective recruiters

Key Concept 1

- ▶ Until you identify and address people's possible resistance (personal time, child care needs, transportation, etc.) to volunteering, you will not reach your potential in volunteer recruitment.



Identifying Barriers

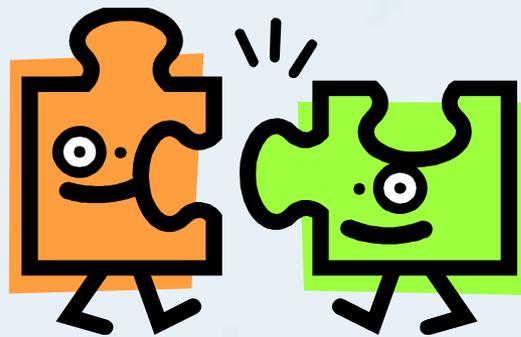
Barriers

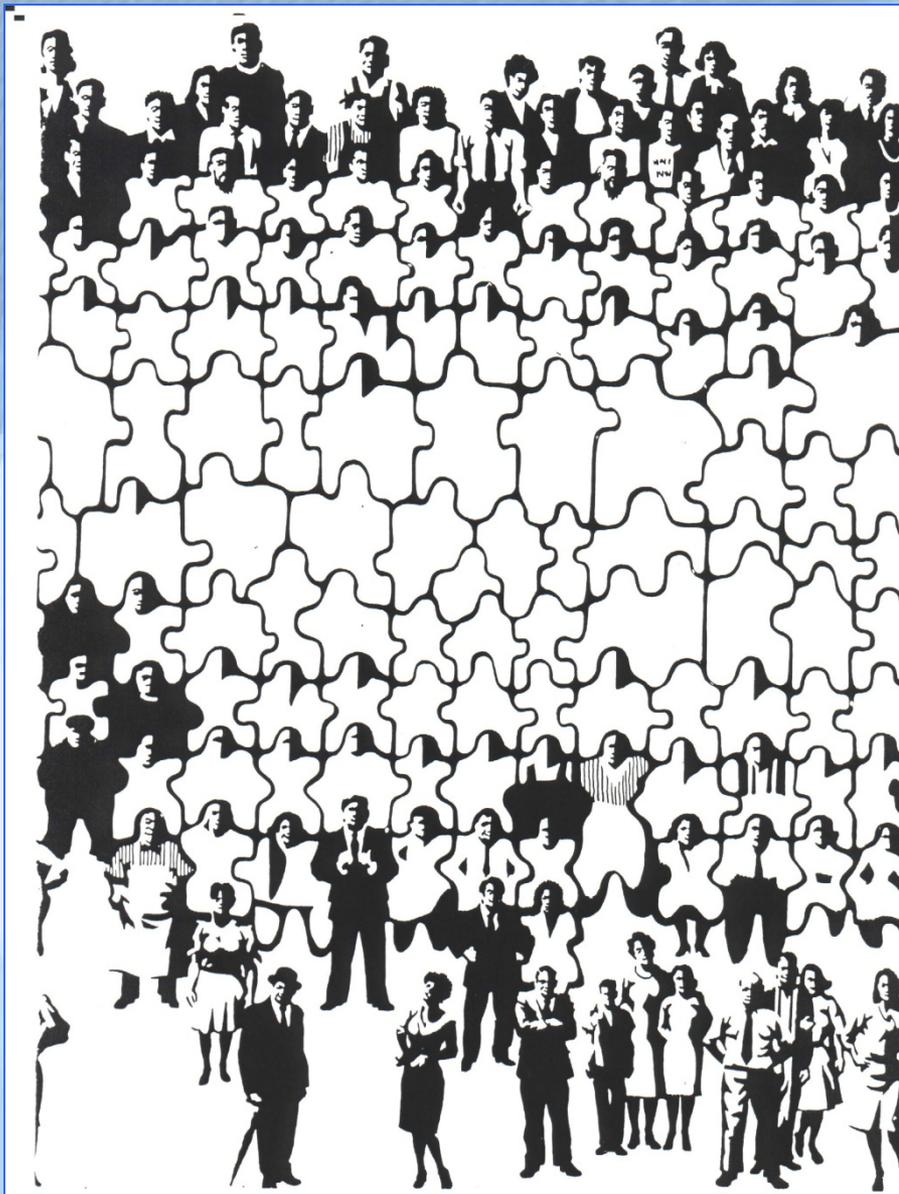
Solutions

People's limited time	Develop more short term, episodic positions
Costs related to volunteering	Offer to pay incidental expenses
Distant location of organization	Develop positions for people to do at their home/office
Need flexibility; regular commitment difficult	Design a back-up substitute system for volunteers
Type of visitor/customer that organization serves	Brainstorm types of people who care about your visitors and design targeted recruitment to reach them

Key Concept 2

- ▶ For volunteer recruitment to be successful, the needs of the Corps and the needs of the volunteer must be met simultaneously.





Too often we are tempted to fill positions without thinking whether the needs of the organization and the volunteer are met....

What happens to the agency when we try to push the wrong piece into the puzzle?

Motivations to Appeal to when Recruiting

- ▶ Help others
- ▶ Improve the community or resource
- ▶ Gain work experience/ learn new skills
- ▶ Stay active and involved
- ▶ Meet new people
- ▶ Being needed
- ▶ Make professional contacts
- ▶ Meet new challenges
- ▶ Share fun time with family and friends

Recruitment Marketing Strategy Worksheet

1. Volunteer Position description (summary):
2. Skills and qualities needed to perform this job:
3. What types of people are most apt to have these qualities?
(age, gender, educational level, experiences - what types of people have made the best volunteers in this position previously?)
4. What are the best sources for finding my needed volunteer(s)?
(service clubs, corporations, colleges, youth clubs, VolunteerMatch, Volunteer Centers, etc.)
5. What techniques or methods would be most appropriate to gain access to them?
(friend or colleague to personally ask, speak to local clubs, talk to classes at the local college, Public Service Announcement on teen radio station, etc.)
6. What benefits will these volunteers receive by doing this job?
(e.g. , what exchange are we offering them: work experience, networking opportunities, making a difference)
7. Who is the best person to do the recruitment and why?

*Found on page H-4 of Volunteer Recruitment chapter in the manual

Recruitment Techniques to Avoid

▶ Bait and switch

- (You will lose trust of the volunteers)



▶ “There’s nothing to it.”

- (Any dummy can do it! Devalues the work)

▶ “We’re desperate; anyone will do.”

- (How special does this make a person feel?)

Recruitment Techniques to Avoid

- ▶ Cast your net and see who swims in.
 - (Whoops, wrong fish!)
- ▶ “You’re a CPA. We could use one of you!”
 - (making assumptions)
- ▶ “We have lots of needs...HELP!”
 - (Not specific enough)
- ▶ “I’m tired of doing it. Anyone else want to?”
 - (This person should not be a recruiter)



Key Concept 3

- ▶ The recruitment invitation must, minimally, include 3 elements:
 - The statement of need (The need of *visitors/customers*, not just of the agency!)
 - How the volunteer can help
 - Benefits of the position to the volunteer

Invitation Example 1

▶ Statement of customer/visitor need

- *They have boots, hiking sticks, and cameras, but no leader. Seventy-five local elementary school boys and girls are waiting for a leader.*

▶ How to help

- *Don't make them stay inside. Join our team! Call 1-800-VOL-TEER (800-865-8337) today!*

▶ Benefits

- *You'll never feel more appreciated (and you'll get some exercise, too!).*

Invitation Example 2

- ▶ Statement of visitor/customer need
 - *Each year, thousands of pounds of trash float downriver and land on the shores of Jordan Lake.*

- ▶ How to help
 - *You can give three hours to ride in a boat and collect discarded tires, plastic soda bottles, and other debris with our park rangers and other great folks.*

- ▶ Benefits
 - *Knowing you've made a difference, enjoying a beautiful day on the lake, and meeting other like-minded people who care about the environment!*

Sample Recruitment Message

Dear Prospective Volunteer,

We have exciting opportunities awaiting your Volunteer.gov application! Here are just a few positions: Volunteer Wilderness Ranger in New Mexico, Campground Host in California, Trail Maintenance volunteer in Florida, and Data Entry volunteer in Puerto Rico.

Search **Agency** "Forest Service" using the "Find a Volunteer Opportunity" tool on the [Volunteer.gov home page](#) or use the direct link <http://www.volunteer.gov/results.cfm?Agency=FS>.

Why volunteer with the Forest Service?

- Participate in important projects that can guide you to job interests and future careers
- Earn college credits through a college-approved intern program
- Become familiar with activities and mission of the Forest Service
- Enjoy a nice change of pace, an opportunity to relax in a beautiful outdoor setting, and a chance to interact with others

There is something for almost everyone: kids and young adults, retirees, professionals, corporate teams, students, community service organizations, and individuals and groups in search of meaningful outdoor and stewardship projects. If you like people and care about our country's natural resources, the Forest Service welcomes your time and talents.

Some of our volunteers serve full-time for several months, while others donate a few hours a day each week, or contribute to a one-time service event like National Public Lands Day. Some of our opportunities provide housing, a uniform, a subsistence allowance, and/or work-related transportation.

We appreciate your willingness to donate your services to help care for your National Forests and hope you find just the right opportunity.

Sincerely,
The Volunteer Coordinators at the U.S. Forest Service



Sample Recruitment Message

Volunteers at Golden Gate National Recreation Area

You can make a difference

You can learn new skills, teach others and stay active and involved. Volunteers at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Muir Woods National Monument, and Fort Point National Historic Site help present the diverse resources of one of America's most popular National Parks to today's visitors, and help preserve these precious resource for future generations. Volunteers at Golden Gate play a vital role in almost all aspects of park operations:

- Collecting data on birds of prey at the premier hawk watching site on the west coast.
- Designing and conducting information programs for the general public and school children.
- Removing non-native plants, growing native plants, and working in one of the park's nurseries.
- Restoring historic structures such as a World War II barracks or a mess hall.
- Working with park scientists to protect endangered species like the mission blue butterfly and peregrine falcon.



Student volunteers cultivate native plant nurseries (Photo: NPS)

Volunteer opportunities at Golden Gate NRA are as diverse as the natural and cultural resources of the park. History buffs, amateur naturalists, artists, students, gardeners and many more people have found a place to share their skills at Golden Gate. Each volunteer's contribution makes a big difference!

A Great Place to Volunteer

There are many dream jobs for volunteers at GGNRA...

Golden Gate National Recreation Area is a gem of the Bay Area. The park includes an array of resources unparalleled in the National Park System. Stunning forests, creeks, ridges and beaches. Hundreds of miles of trails. Rare plant and animal species. One of the most important collections of historic buildings in the country. And world renowned destinations like Alcatraz and Muir Woods, as well as lesser known but equally remarkable places. It is a park like no other.

Do you see your dream job? Do you want to know more about a job at GGNRA? If you have special skills or want to learn some, give us a call. All volunteers receive orientation and training. Come and join us!

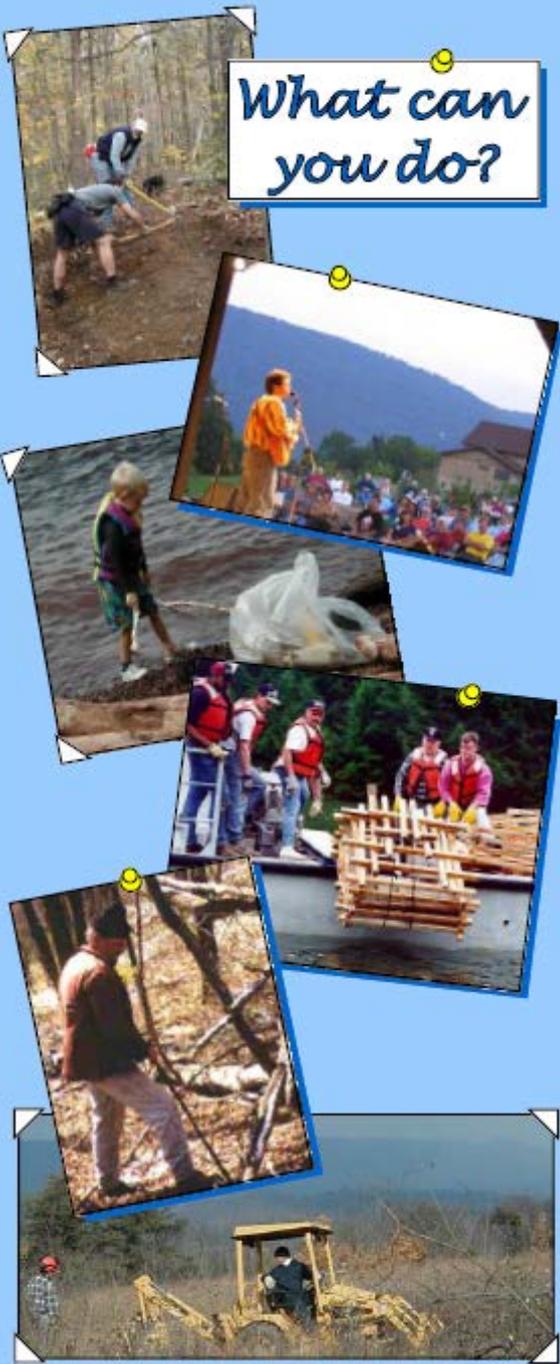
Join the Park Volunteer Team

Be a part of one of the largest and most diverse volunteer programs in the National Park System! The National Park Service is an equal opportunity employer.

Please contact:

Volunteer Coordinator
Fort Mason, Building 201
San Francisco, CA 94123

*What can
you do?*



Are you...

*looking for a new and
challenging way to experience
Raystown Lake?*

❖
*feeling the need to contribute
more to your community?*

❖
*wanting to pick up some new
knowledge, skills, and
experience?*

❖
needing an internship?

❖
building a resume?

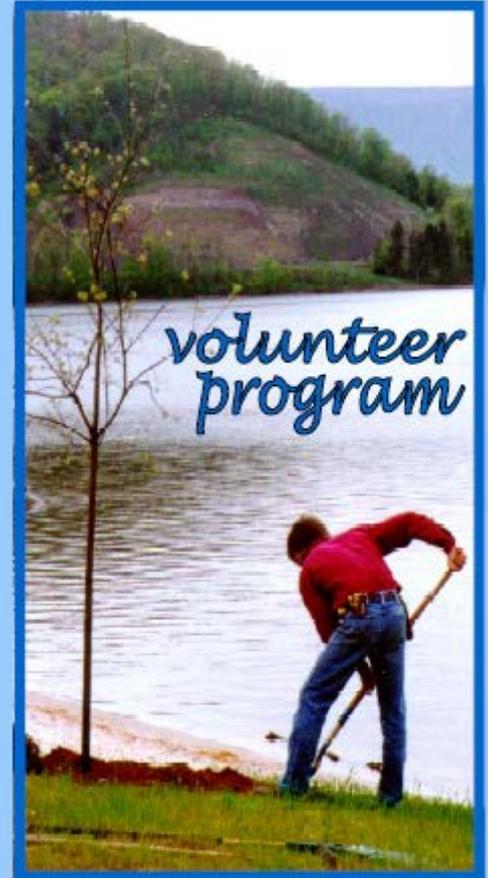
❖
needing a service project?

a volunteer?



**U.S. Army Corps of
Engineers
Raystown Lake
RD #1 Box 222
Hesston, PA 16647
814-658-3405**

**RAYSTOWN
LAKE**



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

growing together...

Our goal is to maintain and improve Raystown Lake and the activities it offers. We count on the help from our volunteers to do just that!

What can you do with:

8,300 surface acres of water



21,000 acres of forests, meadows, fields, and marshes



More than 125 miles of shoreline



3 campgrounds, 8 boat ramps, and 2 swimming beaches



271 campsites, 365 fire rings, 624 picnic tables, 295 trashcans



40+ buildings, 30+ miles of roads, 2115 parking spaces



1,000,000 annual visitors

That's a lot of work. The Corps of Engineers at Raystown Lake could use your help!

working together...

Every talent is valued.

Every place has a purpose.

Every place needs a talent.



Interpretive Services & Community Outreach

Are you a performer, designer, communicator, or trying to get a message out? We need information delivered in fun & interesting ways!

Natural Resource Management



Are you a hunter, forester, researcher, or interested in managing our resources? Find out why we manage forests, animals, lakes, & streams by getting involved!



Providing Recreational Opportunities

How can recreation be work? Planning, inspecting, managing, and studying all influence recreation and so can you!

Administrative Support



Are you organized, detailed oriented, or interested in building work experience? Working with a globally recognized agency that can help you excel!



Maintenance Support

Shovels to bulldozers, pipes to dams, golf carts to dump trucks— we do it all. And we could use your skills!

*Do you have an idea in mind?
Wondering where it fits in?
Contact us to find out!*

getting together...

Have we sparked your interest?

Ready to get involved?

Want to find out how?

For more information or to volunteer your talents contact:

US Army Corps of Engineers
Raystown Lake
(814) 658-3405

Raystown.WEB@nab02.usace.army.mil

- or -

Raystown Lake Volunteer Program
Attn: Ranger Herheim
RD #1 Box 222
Hesston, PA 16647

Friends of Raystown Lake

is a non-profit organization that promotes the responsible stewardship of the natural & recreational resources of the Raystown Lake Project through the support of members & constituents in sponsoring a developing program in education, resource protection & enhancement, & recreational improvement.

The Friends of Raystown Lake is an excellent way to support Raystown Lake and to get involved!

For more information, contact the coordinator at:

(814) 658-3405
ext. 2511



Who Can Volunteer?

You are eligible to volunteer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers if you are:

- A U.S. citizen or a legal alien (permanent resident), or foreign exchange student with J-1 or F-1 student visa
- 18 years or older
- Anyone under age 18 may participate with written consent from a parent or guardian.

Many volunteer positions do not require prior experience, but let us know if you have an area of expertise.



When Can You Volunteer?

Volunteer opportunities are available for a day, a weekend, or long-term. Positions range from office work to vigorous physical outdoor labor. You may work part time or full time, anytime of the year.



How to Volunteer

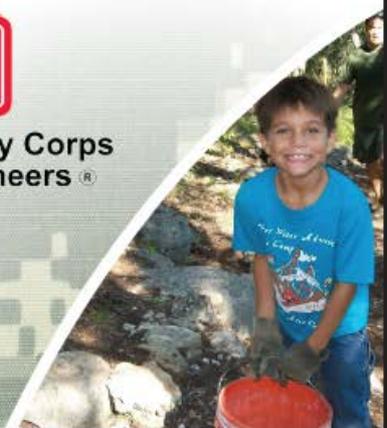
Contact a nearby Corps lake visitor center or office and talk to a park ranger to learn more. You can also call 1-800-VOL-TEER (1-800-865-8337) or visit the Corps Volunteer Clearinghouse website anytime at corpslakes.us/volunteer if you are interested in volunteering with the Corps.

The Clearinghouse serves as a nationwide link, pairing up skilled, enthusiastic volunteers with Corps employees who need your services. Callers should be ready to provide information about your interests, talents, dates available, and locations you may want to volunteer.

You can also find opportunities at www.volunteer.gov, where you can apply directly online for a position. To find out more about a particular location, visit www.corpslakes.us



US Army Corps
of Engineers®



BUILDING STRONG®

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Making a Difference



Volunteers play a valuable role in helping the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers care for the environment and provide high quality recreation opportunities. Each year, people like you give their time, expertise, and resources to serve millions of visitors who enjoy Corps-managed lands and waters



The Corps of Engineers is the nation's largest federal provider of outdoor recreation. with stewardship responsibilities over 12 million acres at 404 lakes and rivers projects located in 43 states. Our volunteers are people who want to give back to their communities and are interested in the work of the Corps' natural resources management program.

Why Volunteer?

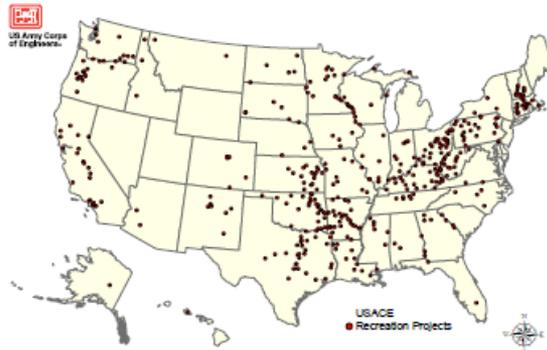
People volunteer for many reasons. Some like the flexibility volunteering allows, while others want to make a difference, or want to gain new skills/experience.

Volunteering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a great opportunity to:

- Meet people and form new friendships
- Explore and live in new places
- Work in beautiful outdoor settings
- Provide community service
- Increase your career options
- Earn college credits with internships
- Enjoy free camping while serving
- Have fun!

Where can you serve?

Corps lakes and river projects are located throughout the United States. Visit www.corpslakes.us to find a lake near you.



What Can You Do?

You will become part of a team of more than a half million volunteers who, in the last decade, have served more than 15 million hours worth \$300+ million.

How our volunteers help:

Recreation

- Build and maintain trails
- Serve as campground/visitor center hosts
- Conduct educational programs and tours
- Develop and build displays
- Maintain facilities
- Collect fees

Natural Resource Management

- Remove invasive species
- Plant native vegetation
- Build and install wildlife/fish habitat
- GIS/Mapping
- Remove trash and debris

Administration

- Write or edit materials for publication
- Photography
- Computer/database entry

.... And so much more!





Volunteer Resources

[Volunteer Clearinghouse](#)

[Volunteer Opportunities](#)

[Volunteers in Action](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Submit a Listing](#)

Volunteer Clearinghouse

Welcome to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Volunteer Clearinghouse. The Corps of Engineers, which is the steward of almost 12 million acres of land and water, offers many volunteer opportunities to care for recreation facilities and natural resources.

The Volunteer Clearinghouse serves the Corps of Engineers nationwide to link potential volunteers with Park Rangers at lakes and waterways that need them. The clearinghouse provides information about the volunteer program and directs people to the point of contact, usually a Park Ranger, at the lake or location of interest.

Callers should be ready to provide information about their interests, talents, dates available and locations they may want to volunteer.

Corps Park Rangers, serving as volunteer coordinators, can also use the Volunteer Clearinghouse to help find volunteers. Volunteer coordinators that need volunteers can send their volunteer vacancies to the Clearinghouse to be listed on the website.

Volunteer opportunities include:

- [Campground Host](#)

Useful Links

[Water Safety](#)

[Corps Lakes Gateway](#)

[USACE Natural Resources](#)

[Education Foundation](#)



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers- Youghiogheny River Lake, PA
Volunteers assist park rangers with wood duck box surveys

Featured Opportunities



Thomas Jefferson Memorial: The National Mall Each year, millions of people visit the National Mall and Memorial Parks to recreate, to commemorate presidential legacies, to honor our nation's veterans, to make their voices heard, and to celebrate our nation's commitment to freedom and equality....[view more](#)

Find a Volunteer Opportunity

Keywords

City State

Agency

Interests

Housing/Amenities

Recent Postings All

Key Concept 4

- ▶ It is important to have effective, trained people recruiting new volunteers.

Best Volunteer Recruiters

- ▶ Current or past volunteers who are:
 - Satisfied with their volunteer work
 - Enthusiastic
 - Articulate
 - Connected with the person or group being recruited



Summary

- ▶ Address possible barriers.
- ▶ There must be mutual benefits.
- ▶ Design an effective message.
- ▶ Select and train people to recruit.

The background features a white central area framed by blue geometric shapes, possibly representing a window or a stylized architectural element. The blue shapes are layered, creating a sense of depth and perspective.

Interviewing Volunteers

Learning Objectives

- ▶ Learn the importance/purpose of having interviews with prospective volunteers
- ▶ Review the four key steps in the interview process
- ▶ Design relevant interview questions and review the essential role of listening during the interview process
- ▶ Learn options for handling challenging situations that occur during interviews

Interview Lessons Learned

In past interviews you've had... what were the good skills/qualities of the interviewer?

- ▶ Well thought out questions
- ▶ Good listener
- ▶ Good eye contact
- ▶ Encouraging and supportive
- ▶ Clear about purpose
- ▶ No interruptions
- ▶ Private setting
- ▶ Gave time to reflect before answering



Key Concept 1

- ▶ The primary purposes of interviewing volunteers are **to determine a mutual fit** between the candidate and the Corps, and to screen for risks to the volunteer, the Corps, and the customers/visitors if the prospective volunteer is chosen.

Importance of Screening

- ▶ *Mutual* screening
- ▶ To protect customers/visitors
- ▶ To maintain paid staff and volunteer morale
- ▶ To guard the agency's reputation (impacts future program)

Key Concept 2

- ▶ There are 4 Key Steps in the interview process:
 - Preparation
 - Opening
 - Body
 - Closing

Preparation

- ▶ Review what you know about the applicant.
- ▶ Review pertinent information about the available volunteer position(s).
- ▶ Assemble material about the agency.
- ▶ Formulate questions.
- ▶ Schedule adequate time.
- ▶ Arrange for private, comfortable place.
- ▶ Cast aside all distractions.

Opening

- ▶ Greet and put applicant at ease, establish rapport.
- ▶ Clarify the purpose of the interview:
“...to determine if the Corps is a good match for you...”
- ▶ Establish timeframe for interview.

Body of Interview

- ▶ There are three basic sections of an interview:
 - You provide information on the agency, program, visitors served, etc.
 - Applicant shares information about him/herself through thoughtful questioning. (skills, interests, experience, time availability, leadership style, motivation)
 - You describe available volunteer positions or other options for involvement.

Closing

- ▶ Review and summarize what surfaced during the interview.
- ▶ Discuss next steps:
 - *If mutual acceptance*: explain how volunteer becomes active.
 - *If no match*: encourage honest sharing and refer elsewhere.
- ▶ Express appreciation for his/her time.

Key Steps in the Interview Process

Step 1: Preparation

Preparation for the interview includes:

- Reviewing all available information about the applicant. It often helps to have the applicant fill out an application ahead of time.
- Reviewing all pertinent information on the organization and volunteer positions.
- Formulating questions to bring out the desired information you need to screen for suitability for the position(s).
- Scheduling adequate time (generally one half hour) and a comfortable, private place for interviewing.
- Casting aside your other work and distractions, and asking for your calls to be held.

Step 2: Opening/Greeting

Opening the interview includes:

- Putting the applicant at ease (warm greeting, introductions, establishing rapport).
- Clarifying the purpose of the interview.
- Establishing timeframe for the interview.

Step 3: Body of the Interview

- If the interviewee is not familiar with your organization, you may wish to give some overview at the beginning of the interview. Otherwise, you may wish to begin the interview with questions that access information about the person's hobbies, interests, past jobs, motivators, dislikes, etc.

*Found on pages H-3 (a-c) of Interviewing Volunteers chapter in the manual

(continued)

Key Steps in the Interview Process, page 2

- If you have several applicants for the same position, be sure to ask each of them the core questions you have developed, so that you have comparative information with which to make your selection later.
- *After* getting a clear picture of the applicant (and assuming you wish to move forward), selectively share information about the possible volunteer positions for which he/she might be suitable. (If you conduct the interview in the reverse order, prospective volunteers may simply tell you what they think you want to hear in order to get an available position.)
- As you focus in on which position this applicant is likely to be suited for, give all the necessary information: position requirements, hours of service, place and conditions of work, training needed, purchase of uniform (if required), opportunities offered, supervision to be expected, etc.
- Be careful to explain the full requirements of the job; a common mistake is for interviewers to undersell the job or its requirements. You may want to offer an opportunity for the volunteer to observe the activity before committing to it.
- Take time to answer the applicant's questions.
- The prospective volunteer may offer an unexpected skill or talent, or have an idea for contributing time to the organization in a way that has not previously been considered. It is important to listen for what a volunteer might bring to the organization that might become formalized into a new volunteer position. Ultimately the proposed idea and the organization's need for that skill must be fully explored. It may involve having a second interview with the potential volunteer to fully determine mutual interests in developing a new volunteer position.

Step 4: The Closing

The closing should be concise and upbeat. First review and summarize where you have been in your interview, and then share what the next steps will be.

When the applicant is acceptable

This is easy. The important thing is to be certain that the final choice is wholeheartedly the applicant's. Have you gently urged the applicant to accept your own decision? If there is agreement, be sure the applicant knows when and where to go for discussion and determination of the specific assignment.

*Found on pages H-3 (a-c) of Interviewing Volunteers chapter in the manual

Key Steps in the Interview Process, page 3

When the applicant is unacceptable

- Rejection is not easy at any time, particularly when the would-be applicant is eager to be of help. When the interviewer has reached a decision that the applicant is unqualified for the position in question or for other service in the organization, the interview should be terminated as rapidly as possible, with graciousness and tact.
- If the applicant has skills or experience which may qualify him/her for volunteer positions with other agencies in the community, make the referral and, for courtesy sake, call the recommended agency to let them know. If you have a volunteer center serving your area, you may wish to refer the prospect there to learn about the range of available volunteer positions elsewhere. You may also want to refer the volunteer to online registries of volunteer opportunities such as VolunteerMatch (<http://www.volunteermatch.org/>).
- Often an inappropriate applicant will verbalize his/her disinterest in the position, in which case you can agree that it does not sound like a "match." But if the person seems to want the position, you must, in a carefully impersonalized discussion, show the applicant that this is unsuitable for both the individual and the organization. Subterfuges, such as invoking a waiting list or mentioning vague future dates for contact, disappoint, annoy, and can make enemies unnecessarily.

In either case...

Regardless of the outcome of the interview, in closing thank the person for his/her time and interest in your organization. It may be necessary to develop some interview termination techniques, since applicants sometimes do not know when it is time to leave. Standing up is usually an effective cue that the interview is over.

*Found on pages H-3 (a-c) of Interviewing Volunteers chapter in the manual

Ways to Say 'No' to an Applicant

"I wish we had something suitable, but we don't at this time."

"No."

"Our program does not demand the skills you wish to give."

"You're not suitable for us, but..."

"We'll get back to you."

"Have you ever heard of the Volunteer Center?"

"We'd rather not waste your time."

"Your time availability doesn't coincide with our need."

"The job you're best qualified for is already filled."

"Let me put you in contact with..."

"We'd rather have you on our Board of Directors."

"I don't think you'll get what you want out of volunteering with us."

Key Concept 3

- ▶ Two essential skills in interviewing are:
 - Designing and asking questions based on an analysis of the position and required qualifications
 - Reflective listening assuring that both individuals are hearing and understanding.

Handout 4

Critical Skills in Interviewing: QUESTIONS

Closed Questions

Closed questions can usually be answered by a simple “yes” or “no” and evoke little explanation. They are useful for obtaining specific answers, but they can prevent getting at needed information. Closed questions typically begin with such words as: is, do, has, can, will, or shall. Some examples:

Have you ever volunteered before?

Can you work in the evenings?

Will you be moving into your new house soon?

Do you type?

Do you enjoy children?

Are Wednesdays all right?

Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions usually require an explanation and therefore elicit much more information. They typically begin with such words as what, when, how, who, where, or which. Some examples:

Tell me more about... ?

How did you do... ?

What did you not like about... ?

What would you like to be different about... ?

When you design your interview questions, make certain that you have a number of open-ended questions such as:

Why are you interested in this position/organization?

What type of supervision do you like to receive?

How would you describe your ideal work setting?

How will this volunteer position fit into your life with other priorities?

*Found on page H-4 of Interviewing Volunteers chapter in the manual

Core Questions

- ▶ Open-ended questions are best.
- ▶ When several applicants interview for the same volunteer position, ask them all some core questions so you can compare their suitability.
- ▶ Situational questions determine how the person might react to specific experiences.

Inappropriate/Illegal Questions

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Citizenship
- ▶ National Origin
- ▶ Race/Color
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Sex
- ▶ Marital Status/Family
- ▶ Personal Plans
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Organizational Affiliation
- ▶ Police Record
- ▶ Work Schedule/Travel
- ▶ Military Discharge
- ▶ Economic Status

Inappropriate/Illegal Volunteer Interview Questions

Subject	Illegal	Legal If Job Related
AGE	Any question which tends to identify applicants between 40-64 years of age is illegal. EXAMPLE: "Do you remember the 1940 election?"	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject during an interview. However, there is a field on the OF 301 volunteer application and the OF 301a volunteer agreement that has been approved by OMB.
CITIZENSHIP	Any of the following questions cannot be asked: Are you a citizen of the United States? Are your parents/ spouse a US citizen? When did you acquire US citizenship? Are you/spouse/ parent native born or naturalized?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject during an interview. However, there is a field on the OF 301 volunteer application and the OF 301a volunteer agreement that has been approved by OMB. You may request documentation to verify citizenship/visa requirements, if the candidate indicates on either form.
NATIONAL ORIGIN	Any of the following questions cannot be asked: What is your national origin? What language is spoken in your home? What is your native language?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
RACE/COLOR	You may not ask any question that directly or indirectly relates to race or color.	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject. However, there is an optional question regarding ethnicity on the OMB approved OF 301a volunteer agreement.
RELIGION	The following questions cannot be asked: What church do you attend? What religious holidays do you observe?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
SEX	You may not ask any question which inquires as to one's gender. For example: What are your plans regarding having children in the near future? Do you mind having a male/ female supervisor? Can you work with a group of men/ women?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.

MARITAL STATUS/FAMILY	Any of the following questions cannot be asked: Are you married? Divorced? Widowed? With whom do you live? Do your children live with you? What ages are your children? Is your husband/ wife in the military?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
EDUCATION	You may not ask questions that specifically ask the nationality, racial, or religious affiliation of a school; the candidate's education level in general, if not related to the position being filled.	You may ask questions concerning a candidate's academic, vocation, or professional education as long as it pertains to requirements related to the position being filled.
ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATION	You may not ask the following question: To what organization, societies and clubs do you belong?	You may ask questions related to this subject if they are related to the volunteer position being filled and how the candidate's participation in the organization may fulfill the requirements.
POLICE RECORD	Do not ask: Have you ever been arrested?	If the job being filled has special requirements (i.e., bonding), you may ask a question such as: In order to fill this job, you must be bonded. Is there any problem that this presents?
WORK SCHEDULE/ TRAVEL	Do not ask any questions that relate to child care, ages of children or other non job-related areas.	If the position being filled has special requirements (i.e., travel, overtime, unusual hours, etc.) these conditions may be stated. For example: In this position you would have to travel 1 week in every month. Does this present a problem to you?
MILITARY DISCHARGE	The following question may not be asked: Were you honorably discharged from military service?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
ECONOMIC STATUS	The following questions may not be asked: Do you have a good credit rating? Do you have any trouble with bills/collection agencies?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
PERSONAL PLANS	The following question may not be asked: Do you have plans to live in this area long?	There is no legal question you can ask regarding this subject.
MISCELLANEOUS	You should not ask any question that is not position related or necessary for determining a candidate's possession of required skills.	You may notify the candidate that statements, misstatements or omissions of significant facts may be cause for non-selection.

Listening



- ▶ Listen to understand what is meant – not to get ready to reply, contradict, or refute.
- ▶ What is meant involves more than words (tone of voice, facial expression, overall behavior).
- ▶ Don't interpret too quickly. Look for clues and put yourself in the speaker's shoes.
- ▶ Put aside your own views and opinions for the time being.

Listening



- ▶ Control impatience – listening is faster than talking.
- ▶ Do not prepare to answer while listening.
- ▶ Show interest and alertness.
- ▶ Do not interrupt.
- ▶ Ask ?s to secure more information, not trap the speaker or force them into a corner.
- ▶ Use the technique of linking to build on what the interviewee has already said.

Key Concept 4

- ▶ It is important to prepare for special challenges that might present themselves during the interview.

Possible Interviewing Challenges

- ▶ The very shy
- ▶ The very talkative
- ▶ Unmotivated, possibly because service is a requirement
- ▶ Attitude problem, despite skills
- ▶ Wants position, but is not qualified
- ▶ Only available for short-term work
- ▶ Interviewing only on the telephone
- ▶ Online interviewing for virtual volunteering

Summary

- ▶ Nothing you do will impact the volunteer program more positively than effective interviewing and mutual screening.
- ▶ When the right people are in the right jobs, the role of volunteer supervisor is a pleasure!

Resources: NRM Gateway

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/volunteer/volunteer.cfm>

Volunteer Program

Headquarters POC

Corps projects offer many volunteer opportunities in recreation and natural resources management. Volunteers can serve as park and campground hosts, staff visitor centers, conduct programs, clean shorelines, restore fish and wildlife habitat, maintain park trails and facilities, and more. Corps personnel can recruit their own volunteers or get help from the [Volunteer Clearinghouse](#), www.corpslakes.us/volunteer, (1-800-VOL-TEER or 1-800-865-8337), a national information center for people interested in volunteering at Corps projects across the country. Corps offices that have upcoming projects or events that volunteers can assist with may use the Volunteer Clearinghouse to [submit their volunteer projects on-line](#).

- [Policy & Procedures](#)
- [Volunteer Forms](#)
- [Program History](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Volunteer Clearinghouse](#)
- [Related Sites](#)
- [Background Checks/Volunteer Computer Access](#)
- [Corps Photo Album for Volunteers](#)
- [National Volunteer Awards](#)
- [News / Current Issues](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Good Enough to Share](#)
- [Volunteer Clothing, Posters, and Brochures](#)
- [Volunteer Plans and Handbooks](#)
- [National Public Lands Day](#)
- [Division & District POCs](#) 
- [Inmate Labor Program](#)
- [Volunteer Pass Program](#)

Resources: NRMG Volunteer Program Training Page

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/training.cfm?Id=volunteer&View=Yes>

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Volunteer Program - Training

Upcoming Opportunities

- [February 2 - Webinar - Volunteer Management 1-3](#)
- [March 12 - Webinar - Volunteer Policy](#)
- [April 2 - Webinar - Volunteer Mgmt 4-7](#)

There is not a PROSPECT course available on the volunteer program. Districts are encouraged to hold their own workshops for volunteer coordinators.

Corps of Engineers Ongoing Available Training/Presentations

- [Volunteer Program Webinar - May 2013](#)
- [Volunteer Program Webinar- June 2013 \(with audio\)](#)
- [Volunteer Program Webinar- March 2014](#)

FITV Interagency Volunteer Training

- [55-Minute Training Series: Training Busy Staff to Succeed with Volunteers](#) 
- [US Fish and Wildlife Service](#)
 - [Volunteer Recruitment and Management](#): This is an excellent course with some US F&W Service orientation; Corps participants have provided very positive feedback. Topics include applications of a volunteer program, strategies for recruiting and maintaining volunteer staff, training and supervising volunteer staff, integrating volunteers with paid staff, and incentives and benefits for volunteers.

This class is usually held at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. Registration must be completed on-line.

Questions?