

Arlen (Dutch) and Sharon Steenhoven of Volin, South Dakota have been volunteering every summer in Corps parks for the past 17 years at Gavins Point Project. Over the years, Dutch and Sharon have demonstrated a strong desire to help visitors recreating at Gavins Point. Countless times over the years, they have not only done the routine duties associated with being a campground host, but they have gone out of their way to help our visitors; sometimes it may simply consist of loaning a tool or providing jumper cables to get a visitor on their way. A good example of their willingness to help happened in August, 2010. A powerful summer storm hit Cottonwood campground knocking down multiple large cottonwood trees. Nearly every camp vehicle in the park was damaged and the fee booth was completely destroyed by a tree that fell on it. Dutch and Sharon, whose RV and vehicles sustained as much damage as any, jumped in and started helping people. They worked alongside the rangers and first responders until everyone was safe.

Another example of their willingness to help was when Dutch and Sharon came to the aid of a contractor in a dangerous situation. One day the contract mowing crew was in Cottonwood campground doing their usual mowing. Dutch and Sharon heard a call on their scanner (they both were first responders in their community) that a mower had slid down a slope and was upside down in the lake. Dutch and Sharon took off for the shoreline and soon found the mower and a few visitors trying to help the man who was in the water, seat belted in the upside down mower. The operator of the mower was starting to panic for fear of drowning. Dutch, Sharon and the other visitors were able to move the mower over and get the man's head out of the water so he could breathe. Eventually they were able to cut the seatbelt and get the man to safety. He sustained no significant injuries.

Dutch and Sharon have many stories to tell from their years of working as volunteers at Gavins Point Project. The most important story is their willingness to spend the time to make sure our visitors are welcomed to the project and have the information they need. For nearly two decades, Dutch and Sharon have always been willing to spend all the time necessary to make sure that happens.



