

MEMORANDUM FOR O&M DISTRIBUTION #2
Number (POL-07-05)

SUBJECT: Fort Worth District Volunteer Management Handbook

1. References:

- a. ER 1130-2-500 Chapter 10, Corps of Engineers Volunteer Program, 26 Dec 96
- b. EP 1130-2-500 Chapter 10, Corps of Engineers Volunteer Program, 27 Dec 96
- c. EP 1130-2-429 Volunteer Coordinators Handbook, 30 Apr 93

2. This memo serves to set Fort Worth District Operations Division policy for the implementation of volunteer programs. The Volunteer Management Handbook contains policy items, best management practices to enhance your program, and a tool box of training materials and forms.

3. The guidance provided in this handbook will help you formalize the management of volunteers into effective work teams that will assist in the performance of our mission. A consistent training program for duties performed by volunteers will create a network of support that transcends lake boundaries and enables a volunteer to serve at multiple field offices.

4. A CD that contains this memo and the handbook will be sent to each field office and an electronic version of the handbook will be posted on the Operations website at <http://www.swf.usace.army.mil/pubdata/ops/recnres/index.asp>.

5. This policy should be implemented immediately. Points of contact for this program are Park Ranger Dorie Murphy, Bardwell Lake Volunteer Coordinator, 972-875-5711, and Chris Byrd, SWF Volunteer Program Coordinator, 817-886-1569.


THOMAS W. FLEGER
Chief, Operations Division

FORT WORTH DISTRICT VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

The Fort Worth District *Volunteer Handbook* is an essential tool available to all Fort Worth District Volunteer Coordinators. It has been designed to serve as a combination training guide and bookshelf reference.

Its purpose is to:

- Outline policy (designated by **Arial bold font**) and recommended procedures for management of Volunteer Programs at Fort Worth District Projects.
- Foster a strong volunteer program that utilizes industry best practices.
- Provide an outline that will assist in determining potential recruiting sources and uses for volunteers.
- Indicate the necessary criteria that will result in the selection of the best qualified team member for the volunteer coordinator role.
- Provide a detailed volunteer management plan that can be individually tailored for each lake resulting in the most viable program possible.
- Explain and provide electronic examples of the various forms and records necessary to properly administer the program in accordance with existing regulations.
- Provide a list of available references and resources and sample documents.

As you read through the handbook, keep an eye out for the ❖ symbol. It denotes tips for simple ways to enhance your volunteer program.

B. Volunteer Program Goals

Fort Worth District seeks to implement a volunteer program that will fully utilize the energy and enthusiasm of existing individuals and organizations currently supporting U.S. Army Corps of Engineers public lands while developing relationships with new sources of volunteers. A well-managed volunteer program will assist the project in the accomplishment of Operational Management Plan objectives through leveraging Operation and Maintenance funds.

C. The Accepting Official

The Operations Project Manager is the accepting official for volunteers at Fort Worth District projects. Their commitment and support of a volunteer program is vital to its

success. The Operations Project Manager has the authority to delegate the responsibilities and duties to a Volunteer Program Coordinator with oversight from the project Lake Manager.

D. The Volunteer Coordinator

Most projects cannot afford the luxury of dedicating a staff member entirely to the management of their volunteer program. The Volunteer Coordinator's position, in most cases, represents a collateral duty assignment. A viable and sustainable volunteer program involves *all* project staff.

The selection criteria for a volunteer coordinator shall have the following prerequisites (reference EP 1130-2-429):

- Working Knowledge of all Volunteer Regulations and Pamphlets. (i.e. ER 1130-2-500 Chapter 10, EP 1130-2-500 Chapter 10, EP 1130-2-429 and the Fort Worth District Volunteer Program Handbook)
- Have a thorough understanding of the Corp's volunteer mission, the regulations and guidance that direct this mission, and the ability to set the tasks required to accomplish the mission.
- Have a "volunteer mind-set". He/she *must* be an individual who is continually analyzing the worksite and workload to determine which specific jobs or tasks could, and potentially should, be accomplished by either volunteers or hosted program workers.
- Be a long-range planner, frequently analyzing needs to develop a comprehensive and adaptable plan to address them.
- He/she must be sympathetic to the needs of project staff, the general public, and existing and potential volunteers.
- He /she must also have the ability to coordinate and effectively manage available resources.
- Be firmly convinced that volunteerism is a good thing, not only for the agency and the country, but for each individual volunteer.
- Recognize the existing potential in each volunteer and how to tailor the tasks needed at the project to those volunteers.
- Be able to determine specialized training needed by individual volunteers and make adequate arrangements for its provision.

- Have knowledge of community resources available and develop a network of contacts for volunteer recruitment.
- Have the ability to organize schedules that will allow all associated responsibilities to be met.

Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities

- Serve as a liaison between the project staff and individuals or groups that will perform volunteer work at the project.
- Develop and implement a tracking system for the preparation and archiving of volunteer records that will include applications, interview forms, agreements, position hazard analysis (PHA)/activity hazard analysis (AHA) records, training, specific work performed, assessments and evaluations, and hours worked during the fiscal year.
- Assess and record actual benefits of volunteer work performed to the government for each project and enter this data into OMBIL and report to project management. (See Section VIII– Recordkeeping).
- Maintain a list of projects and project personnel who will supervise the work performed by the volunteers
- Obtain feedback on the volunteer program experience such as potential improvements to program and what is working from the projects perspective as well as the volunteer's on a regular basis.
- Lead team in setting yearly goals and preparing work, materials and equipment to reach those goals.

II. TEAM APPROACH TO NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The volunteer coordinator must understand that needs assessment is a *team* approach. Include the staff by conducting an employee orientation program that emphasizes the role of the paid staff in assessing the project's needs and priorities, as well as their role in managing volunteers. Every project has its own needs in terms of volunteer related work goals. This section is designed to help the volunteer coordinator and the project staff determine the project's needs, a process which starts with developing the project mission statement and progresses to the creation of volunteer tasks and priorities.

A. Employee Orientation

Employee support and "buy-in" is critical for a proper needs assessment. If your team members do not understand the importance of the volunteer program to the project mission, then your program cannot be successful. By familiarizing your team members with the volunteer program policies, procedures and benefits, team "buy-in" can be achieved.

A sample employee orientation program power point entitled "Working with Volunteers" is included in Appendix A

Available Hand Outs and Supplemental Materials

The volunteer coordinator should keep a supply of "*Techniques of Supervising*" (EP 1130-2-431) in stock for issue to new team members who may find themselves in this situation. This pamphlet may also be utilized as a guide for the conduct of short in-house training courses in the proper supervision of volunteers. *Considering the importance of volunteer/staff relations to the overall program, such training would be time well spent.*

B. Managing Volunteers:

- The Volunteer Coordinator will assist in recruiting, screening and matching appropriate volunteers for specific needs addressed in the needs assessment. Each subject matter expert is responsible for communicating their needs with the Volunteer Coordinator.
- The Volunteer Coordinator oversees the program as a whole and its associated record keeping. He/she is the project's subject matter expert on volunteer program management.
- In each program the subject matter expert is the supervisor for volunteers working in that program, giving direction, supervision, and support to all volunteers in his/her assigned area.
- It is imperative to the program's success that we approach volunteer supervision and assignments with enthusiasm and a positive perspective.

- It is important that paid staff respond to the questions and concerns of our volunteers promptly and with enthusiasm. If you do not know the answer to their questions be honest but positive and get an answer in a timely fashion.
- Frequently volunteers are doing tasks no one else will do (even paid). Remember, if a task is not important enough for us to support, then why should our volunteers do it with enthusiasm?

The Volunteer coordinator is responsible for overseeing the selection of volunteers and ensuring their assignments/jobs are appropriately matched for their experience and reasons they have volunteered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at your location. The Volunteer Coordinator may request assistance from other team members from time to time when reviewing applications and interviewing for volunteer positions that deal with specific programs that each team member has been assigned.

C. Project Mission

The Project Mission should be a statement that reflects exactly what the project office is hoping to accomplish through the volunteer program. Remember to keep it short enough to recite easily and broad enough to allow the program to grow.

Example:

The Canyon Lake Project will strive to create a community of dedicated, hard working, professional individuals paid and volunteer to encourage idea sharing, unity, and teamwork. Together, we will Make a Difference!

D. Volunteer Tasks and Priorities

Each project should develop a list of specific tasks necessary for accomplishment of project goals. Coordinators should meet with their managers and other project staff to establish needed tasks and the priority for each task. The projects Operational Management Plan should also be considered. Additionally, coordinators may want to consider a short listing of what skills and supplies are needed for each task. In this way, tasks can be identified and assigned quickly and easily. Coordinators should also meet with the volunteer team regularly checking the status of current tasks and reprioritize tasks as necessary.

Example Tasks with supplies and skills needed:

- Plant native grasses and shrubs in all Natural Resource Areas
 - Seed, rakes, shovels, atv, broadcaster, mulch, water hose, gloves, personal protective equipment
 - Gardening skills preferred, atv training

- Paint gatehouses, restroom facilities, and fences in all parks
 - Paint, Brushes, Ladder, Paint Sprayer, Power Washer, Rags, personal protective equipment
 - Painting experience, training for equipment used, physical ability for task
- Provide trail maintenance on the west trail head of Sunrise Trail
 - Hand tools, chainsaw, gloves, pole saw, bow saw, loppers, personal protective equipment
 - Trail maintenance and design experience, chainsaw operation training, hand tool training, additional safety training
- Provide supplemental cleaning of restroom facilities within the campgrounds
 - Mop, bucket, broom, disinfectant spray, water hose, squeegee, personal protection equipment
 - Additional safety training
- Assist staff with interpretive programs this summer in Happy Camper Park
 - Interpretive materials as needed, proper attire
 - Subject matter training, customer service training

III - RECRUITMENT

The basic goal to any volunteer program is simple: Have a need? Fill a need! The efficiency and effectiveness of the volunteer program can be enhanced by systematically encouraging recruitment. Develop a Recruitment Plan for your local Project Volunteer Program. By knowing what your needs are, who is responsible for recruiting, and where and when to recruit, you will more easily fill your volunteer positions with the best individuals possible.

A. What are your needs?

The Needs Assessment (see Section II) determines your priorities and needs. Based on these priorities, develop job descriptions that detail how to meet specific needs. ***Job Descriptions shall include several key items:***

- ***Job Title***
- ***Goals/Description of work***
- ***Timeframe***
- ***Location***
- ***Essential Functions including physical, mental visual and auditory requirements***
- ***Desired Skills***
- ***Volunteer Coordinator Contact Information***

Sample Job Descriptions and further information for developing more effective job descriptions can be found in Appendix B.

B. Who will do the recruiting?

- **Volunteer Coordinator** - Most of the time, the recruiting will be handled by the Volunteer Coordinator. He/she will be primarily responsible for ensuring Job Descriptions are created to meet the project's needs and are advertised in a timely and appropriate fashion. The Volunteer Coordinator is generally also the primary point of contact for interested volunteers. All team members should be informed about the importance and need of each new position to ensure that they are able to adequately answer questions from potential volunteers and have continued buy-in to the program.
- **Staff Members** - Everyone involved in the organization must know that recruiting is everyone's business. They also need to understand what their responsibilities are within the framework of the recruitment plan. The Volunteer Coordinator should ensure that every staff member understands the procedure for assisting interested volunteers. For example, if the Volunteer Coordinator would like every interested volunteer to fill out an application straight away, every staff member should know where to direct a person to

find that application. As with all members of the public, professionalism and courtesy are essential to making potential volunteers feel comfortable and welcome.

- **Volunteers** – Your current volunteers are usually your best recruiters. They will likely talk with park visitors first hand about their experience. Just as with the project staff, volunteers should be informed about how potential volunteers should contact the volunteer coordinator and about what positions are available.

C. Where do you advertise for recruits?

- **Network List** – Developing a network of sources for volunteers can greatly decrease recruitment time when a new project arises. Each project's local volunteer management plan should include a variety of organizations, ranging from local groups such as a fishing club to nationally recognized organizations such as the American Red Cross. The plan should also include a list of the groups or individuals in the area that would be interested in volunteering. Be sure to include a point of contact with complete address, website and telephone numbers. *Remember to update the list periodically.*
- **Recruiting Service** - Recruitment can be done through an agreed partnership such as the Volunteer Clearinghouse. The Volunteer Clearinghouse is a national listing location for Corps volunteer projects. The public can also post their applications on the Clearinghouse for recruiters to use. For more information on the Volunteer Clearinghouse visit their website at www.orn.usace.army.mil/volunteer or call 800-865-8337. There is a listing of other excellent recruiting organizations in Appendix B. Coordinators may want to identify 2-4 large-scale sources to regularly post job announcements.
- **Project website** – The project website is also an important tool for advertising your current job openings and providing easy access to the volunteer application. It can also be used to update current and potential volunteers on what's happening in the volunteer program. *Keep the site up-to-date* and engaging by providing a glimpse into the personal stories created by your volunteers.
- **Media** - Media coverage of volunteer activities can help achieve numerous program goals. Both written and video coverage not only serves as a very vivid recruiting tool but also as a form of recognition for current volunteers. National publications, such as *Workamper*, are a particularly valuable recruiting tool and should not be overlooked. A record of various media sources and their subscriber profiles specific to your lake(s) should be maintained. The list should include addresses, telephone numbers and contact persons at local print and electronic media sources. "*Media Contact List*" and "*Sample News Release*" are found in Appendix B

- **Word-of-Mouth** - One of the strong points of a recruiting campaign is the strength of the network within the community. Many times, recruits learn about volunteering in your program from seeing and talking with the volunteers in the parks or community. Discussing the program with park visitors is a great way to get the word circulating amongst the camping community. *Remember though, negative comments and experiences travel just as quickly through the neighborhood circle as do positive ones.*
- **Flyers and Brochures** – These channels of recruiting can be very time-consuming and expensive for project personnel to create and maintain. Printed material, however, can be a very appropriate addition to a Water Safety table or outdoor expo if the volunteer coordinator has the means to develop the material. Examples of *Recruiting flyers* are found in Appendix B.

D. When to recruit?

An ongoing assessment and schedule of programs and projects can help alleviate a last minute stress to find a suitable volunteer for a job. You may want to designate specific times of the year for recruiting and screening. For example, the month of January may be the time you do your interviews and selections for summer Park Hosts. Be sure you have planned your job announcements before January so you have a pool of the best applicants possible from which to choose.

If an unexpected project arises, the Network List discussed above can be invaluable for recruiting appropriate volunteers on short notice.

E. Why recruit?

Tailor your volunteers to the needs of your program, not your program to the volunteers. To most effectively accomplish the goals of your volunteer program you must find the people with the appropriate skills to reach those goals. **You do not have to accept every volunteer who walks through your door.** If your Needs Assessment tells you that you need someone with plumbing experience to help install the new toilets in the bath houses, the “walk-in” scout group looking for a project is not going to work. However, if your lake is coming out of flood stage, those scouts may be perfect for clearing debris from the shoreline.

F. How to Recruit

- Be careful not to “over-recruit” - Over recruiting can be just as harmful as under recruiting. If there is only enough work for 2 volunteers, why would you want to recruit a volunteer staff of 10 people? The volunteer program coordinator and the staff need to manage the program efficiently and only recruit the number of volunteers needed to complete the tasks.

- Be honest and up-front – Do not confuse being pleasant to potential volunteers with telling them what they want to hear. If you do not currently need new volunteers or do not think a person's skills will fit into your needs, politely say so. It will be far more harmful to your program if a person is led to believe they would be useful only to never hear from you again. Be up-front about your needs and most people will recognize for themselves if they are or are not going to fit the bill.

IV. MATCHING VOLUNTEERS TO THE JOB

A. Application

OF 301, Volunteer Application.

It is very important that the volunteer applicant complete this form accurately and thoroughly. ***All applicants must have this application form in their records.***

B. References

After the application is received, the person performing the interview ***must check every applicant's references*** (at least 3). It is very important to verify the information provided in the application. Past experience is essential when matching a potential volunteer to a position.

C. Interview

Just as you would not feel comfortable hiring an employee without first talking to him or her, ***you shall not place a volunteer without first conducting an interview.***

- A minimum of one-half hour of uninterrupted time is recommended to complete an interview.
- If supervised by other staff or volunteer personnel invite that person(s) or have him/her perform the interview.
- Before scheduling the interview, define your project's needs and review the ***Job Description***. (Job descriptions are covered in more detail in Section III – Recruitment and samples are provided in Appendix B). ***Develop interview questions to be used with every applicant.*** It is critical that interview questions for a position are identical for each candidate to ensure fair and equitable selections. (Sample questions available in Appendix C).
- The interview provides both parties an opportunity to ask questions and gather information before making any commitment.
- Ensure that the ***interview responses are recorded and placed in the candidate's file.*** You never know when you may have to refer to your notes in the future.

Usually, the most lasting impression is formed during the candidate's interview, both your impression of the candidate and his or her impression of you. To make the best impression you should:

1. Greet the candidate in a friendly manner. A welcoming smile, a firm handshake, and a friendly greeting are courteous and warm ways in which to greet a

candidate.

2. Introduce present staff members.
3. If the interview is via telephone be sure to call at the scheduled time.
4. Schedule interviews at times and in locations where you will not be interrupted during the interview.
5. Begin by clarifying the purpose of the meeting. Explain that you want to obtain general information, review the application and discuss interests so that the volunteer may be matched to the most appropriate position.
6. Any new information obtained during the interview must be added to the application.
7. Provide the applicant enough time to consider the questions and to answer them. Ask for clarification on any points you don't understand.
8. Use questions and positive listening skills to get the applicant to tell his or her own story. Ask questions to show interest. State questions clearly so that they are easily understood.
9. Keep in mind that the volunteer is also interested in learning about you, the agency and the program. The interaction will assist you in making the proper decisions about placement and suitability of the individual. *You will learn much more through open ended questions that cannot be answered with a short "yes" or "no" reply.* Areas to explore may include:
 - What the motivating factors might be
 - Enjoyment garnered through other previous volunteer work
 - Long range objectives – how long do they plan to stay with the project?
 - Personal and work-related goals that are important to the volunteer
 - Type of person; can your applicant be considered congenial, outgoing and self motivated?
 - The volunteer's contribution to the project or office
10. Avoid basing your evaluation solely on impressions formed during the interview.
 - Consider each fact about the applicant in relation to all other applicants.
 - Reflect on the applicant's skills, knowledge, ability, and interests.
 - Note their mental reaction time and organization of answers to questions.
 - Take into consideration the applicant's evaluation of themselves and what they feel are their best traits.
 - Appraise the quality of the self-prepared application form, handwriting, ability to follow instructions and clerical ability.

11. Take advantage of the interview to promote recruitment. Ask the volunteer to tell acquaintances about the program and to contact you if interested. Basic recruitment techniques stress the importance of the volunteer spreading the word; after all, our best volunteers make our best recruiters.
12. Be honest when talking about the position; discuss the positive and negative aspects of the position being considered. Assist the applicant in deciding what is most suitable by clarifying areas of concern.
 - Because the position is a voluntary one, the applicant will have the final decision on whether or not to accept the position.
 - If the volunteer is asked to perform tasks that are of little or no benefit to him or her or the project, the result will be an unsatisfying experience for all parties involved.
 - Disgruntled volunteers eventually resign from the program if their concerns or needs are not properly addressed.
 - Volunteers who leave because of negative feelings toward the program or staff can alienate other candidates with whom the volunteer is acquainted.

Remember! Volunteers are your best recruiters when they have positive experiences, but they will tell twice as many people if they have a negative experience, making recruiting and retaining other volunteers extremely difficult.

13. Anticipate other areas that may be of interest to the volunteer. He or she will want to know about work hours, flexibility of scheduling, clothing, uniforms, protective equipment, where to report and who will be their point of contact (supervisor).
 - Explain your project policy on the “banking” of work hours. For example: will you allow your volunteers to store their extra hours to be used at a later date?
 - Something as simple as knowing where to park will help make the volunteer comfortable with reporting to work.
 - Anticipate awkward situations or questions you would have if you were in the volunteer's shoes. Address those items so he or she feels less uncomfortable.
14. Conclude the interview by covering what you want to accomplish and by ascertaining that all questions and concerns have been addressed.
 - You want the person to leave feeling excited and enthused about the results of the interview.
 - a. If the result is that the applicant will be a volunteer in your program, schedule a convenient time for orientation.
 - b. If the applicant has decided to pursue another avenue, wish him or her well and offer your assistance.
 - c. Express your appreciation for the applicant's time.

15. The final stage of the formal interview is just as important as the first step.

- ***Take the time to make notes***
- ***Properly file the information that you have received***
- ***Even if the applicant is not entering your program at this time, you must retain the information collected in a personnel file. You may find their skills useful at a later date.***

Complete and accurate recordkeeping will help you maintain a file of potential volunteers as well as help you justify your decisions on who receives a position and who does not. A follow-up letter to the candidate summarizing the results of the interview would confirm decisions in writing. Section VIII – Recordkeeping has details on filing and maintaining personnel records.

Don't forget the volunteer

Take the time to follow up with the volunteers after they enter the program. Find out how they feel about the placement and if their needs are being met (it would be good to review interview notes before having this conversation; you will want to show personal interest by remembering what they said their needs and goals were). Ask if they have any suggestions to improve the program. (Assessment forms are available in Appendix C.) Determine if the recruiting process presented an accurate and fair view of the overall process and program. This will not only make the volunteer feel valued but it will also assist you in the ongoing improvement of your program and your interview techniques. Continue to encourage all volunteers to spread the word among their friends and relatives and thereby increase their individual contribution to the program. (See Section V – Volunteer Supervision and Motivation.)

D. Background Screening

Volunteers can have a profound impact on your facility and the community. It is important to screen them thoroughly to make their experience a positive impact on the facility, the agency, its visitors, the paid and volunteer staff and the potential volunteer. *Never feel compelled to accept someone just because they walk through your door.*

It is the policy of the US Army Corps of Engineers - Fort Worth District (CESWF) that any individual or group offering to become a volunteer in a position of public trust will accept and abide by this background screening policy. All volunteers in a position of public trust (i.e. wearing a Corps uniform/name tag and working independent of Corps personnel) will be screened. Failure to do so is grounds for immediate termination of the volunteer agreement. Individuals who volunteer for a one-time event or who only work in proximity and direct supervision by a Corps Employee (i.e. lake cleanup, National Public Lands Day, Boy and Girl Scouts, etc.)

will not be required to have a background screen. All disqualified individuals have the right to dispute the findings of the background screening directly with the company providing the screening service.

All screens will be good for one fiscal year (maximum of 14 months). Anyone not accepted due to information in a background screen cannot reapply for another volunteer position. CESWF retains the right to require additional background screens at any time.

Process: Every individual required to submit to Background Screening must complete, sign and date the Consent and Waiver Release Form that includes a Privacy Act Statement. This form will be submitted and the individual cleared before the individual is left to work independently as a representative of the USACE or in a position of public trust.

Upon receipt of the above described document, the local Volunteer Coordinator or Accepting Official will submit the completed form to a screening vendor that will perform the background screen.

Persons unwilling to submit references or allow a background check should be RED FLAGS in the interview process.

All information received as a result of a background screen is strictly confidential. Screening results for all applicants shall be provided via DOD e-mail or other secure method to the designated Volunteer Program Coordinator or Accepting Official of the field office that submitted the request. Screening forms and results shall be secured at all times so that they are only seen by those determining volunteer eligibility and the individual volunteer to whom the information pertains.

The complete profile may be provided directly to a disqualified individual upon request. *Notification that the individual is prohibited from participating in the Fort Worth District Volunteer Program shall be sent or delivered to the individual by the Volunteer Program Coordinator or the Accepting Official as soon as that determination has been made.*

Required Components of CESWF Background Screens:

- ***Social Security Verification*** – Shall verify the volunteer's name against the SSN provided and help eliminate the possibility of false names and/or information.
- ***Address Trace*** – Shall verify the volunteer's current address and identifies previous addresses. This information shall be utilized to determine the jurisdiction in which the background screening is conducted.

- ***State or County Criminal History Check*** – This check shall capture all misdemeanor and felony convictions within the jurisdictions identified in the Address Trace,
- ***Sex Offender Registry*** – Shall a search of all 50 state repositories including the District of Columbia for known sex offenders.

A profile report from the vendor who performs the background screen shall include all relevant information related to each of the above screening areas.

Automatic Disqualifiers for Participation in the Fort Worth District Volunteer Programs:

ER 1130-2-500 Chapter 10 Paragraph g; see Office of Counsel Opinion in Appendix C

- ***Violent crimes***
- ***Crimes against another person***
- ***Crimes involving the use of a weapon***
- ***Any other disqualifiers set by the local Accepting Official should be in writing and added to the local Volunteer Management Plan.***

Falsification of information on any volunteer application or the consent/release form is grounds for denial of participation in the program or termination of an existing volunteer agreement.

(See Appendix C for screening companies and sample consent forms which include the Privacy Act statement as recommended by Office of Counsel.)

D. Volunteer Agreement

All volunteers must sign Eng 4880r Volunteer Agreement and have it on file with a Job Description before beginning work.

V. VOLUNTEER SUPERVISION AND MOTIVATION

There are many aspects to consider as part of the volunteer program. The volunteer coordinator may be tempted to feel that once volunteers are on the job, the hard part is over. In actuality, the most critical part of the program has just begun - supervising the volunteer.

Many volunteer programs fail because supervisors don't consider their role as critical.

It is likely that volunteers will be supervised by any member of the Corps team at the office or project. Some staff members may not have received any training in supervising or supervisory techniques. These individuals will most certainly need some training in order to perform this new task effectively. (See Section II – Team Approach to Needs Assessment for guidance).

A. Identification of Volunteers

Fort Worth District volunteers in need of identification as outlined in EP 1130-2-429 will be provided with shirts, outerwear, hats, and nametags as dictated by their job duties and as outlined in these guidelines. It may be necessary to designate a different means of identification for each work category of volunteer. Some project offices may elect to use a variety of uniform colors to designate different positions. For instance, park hosts and volunteer gate attendants may be afforded a complete volunteer uniform. Relatively long-term maintenance volunteers may be afforded a ball cap and name tag. Short-term volunteers who do not come into contact with visitors may not need to be identified.

1. **Formal Shirt:** For duties in which meeting the public would be the volunteer's primary duty, a formal tan polo shirt with the NRM Volunteer patch embroidered or sewn on the front left breast will be worn. The shirt should be a high-quality cotton or cotton-poly blend to allow for ease of washing. A breast pocket is optional. The use of this shirt is comparable in use to the Class-B daily wear of Park Rangers.
2. **Work Shirt:** When the volunteer's duties do not primarily involve meeting the public, a tan work t-shirt is authorized. The shirt should also have the NRM Volunteer patch (or silk screened image) on left front breast. The shirt should be a high-quality cotton or cotton-poly blend to allow for ease of washing. The use of this shirt is comparable in use to the Class-C work uniform of Park Rangers.
3. **Outerwear:** For volunteers working during cold months, tan – or similar color if tan is not available - windbreaker, work jacket or other similar attire may be authorized. The outerwear will have the NRM Volunteer patch embroidered or sewn on the left breast. The District volunteer POC will provide further guidance as to the style of outerwear authorized at the time of purchase.

4. Hat: A tan ball-cap with the NRM patch located on the front center of the hat is also authorized for use with either style of shirt.
5. Nametag: A nametag is required for use with both the formal and work shirt anytime the volunteer may be interacting with the public. The nametag should be red plastic with white text. The volunteer's first name should be centered with the volunteer's title below. The nametag should be worn on the right breast of both shirts.



Example of nametag.

Procurement:

Nametags, Volunteer patches, polo shirts, hats and some other items may be purchased from the uniform web site following the directions below. At this time, tan t-shirts are not offered by the uniform company and may be purchased by the project separately. Projects may also elect to purchase all volunteer uniform items through an outside vendor if they meet these standards.

To order Corps volunteer clothing items:

1. Go to the website:
https://www.uniformsolutions.com/lma/pages_secure/default.asp?img=3
2. **Account Number:** Type in your project code (typically 5-6 letters total, with 3 letters for the district and 2-3 letters for the project in all caps, such as SWFLE.
3. **Password:** The project code in all caps again.
4. Click on **“Login”**.
5. Select **“Volunteer Program”**.
6. Use a government purchase card to make the purchase.

These instructions are accurate as of May 2007. Contact the Customer Service desk at Uniform Solution if you need assistance.

B. Incidental Expense Reimbursement

There may be occasions in which a volunteer incurs out-of-pocket expenses while performing their volunteer duties. As stated in ER 1130-2-500;

“Volunteers may be reimbursed for actual out-of-pocket expenses they incur in performing voluntary service when approved in advance and identified on the individual’s Volunteer Agreement form. Such expenses might include, but are not limited to, local transportation costs, meals during duty hours, and personal safety equipment. Reimbursement for transportation expenses to and from the volunteer’s place of residence should be considered reasonable if, as a minimum, they are within the normal commuting distance from the work site”.

The determination of what is a reimbursable expense and what is not should be made at the project level by the Accepting Official, with input from the Volunteer Coordinator and other project staff involved in the management of the Volunteer Program. Once a decision has been made on what will be a reimbursable expense, an ***Incidental Expense Reimbursement Plan shall be developed.***

Development of Incidental Expense Reimbursement Plan

An Incidental Expense Reimbursement Plan shall address the following topics:

- ***What expenses are reimbursable?***
- ***What are the minimum and maximum dollar values?***
- ***What is the procedure a volunteer should follow to claim reimbursable expenses?***
- ***What are the procedures for receiving requests, payment and recordkeeping that the Volunteer Coordinator should follow?***

1. **What Expenses are reimbursable?** As previously stated, these expenses should be determined at the project level by the Accepting Official.
2. **What are the minimum and maximum dollar values?** Again, determined at the project level, all reimbursable expenses should have a reasonable minimum and maximum dollar range. Remember that a successful volunteer program should show O&M savings and creating a price range for these expenses should help the program keep that focus.
3. **What is the procedure a volunteer should follow to claim reimbursable expenses?** The first step in this process occurs prior to the volunteer incurring

an expense for which they wish to be reimbursed. Again, ER 1130-2-500 states “*when approved in advance and identified on the individuals Volunteer Agreement form*”, so any potential expense should be discussed between the volunteer and volunteer coordinator prior to occurrence. If the expense has been approved and the volunteer incurs that expense, a receipt showing the expense will be provided *in a timely manner* to the volunteer coordinator. *Only agreed-upon expenses on the receipt will be considered.*

- 4. What are the procedures for receiving requests, payment and recordkeeping that the Volunteer Coordinator should follow?** When receiving the request for reimbursement, the Volunteer Coordinator should make sure that they have received the receipt for the expense, and that the request is only for expenses previously agreed-upon with the volunteer. After reviewing the expense, the Volunteer Coordinator will either accept or deny the request based on the requirements set at the project level. If accepted, local payment procedures should be followed. All records of reimbursement should be kept for at least 1 full fiscal year.

C. Recognition and Awards

Awards and other forms of recognition take on additional importance in a program where participants are not compensated monetarily. Good records will indicate when volunteers have surpassed milestones set up for various volunteer awards.

Other than the intangible benefits discussed earlier (regarding why people volunteer), volunteering offers few tangible rewards. One tangible benefit of the program is awards and other forms of recognition. Since this benefit is limited, the supervisor will want to take full advantage of this motivational potential whenever appropriate. Having awards that are usable and meaningful inscribed with the Corps Signature and our “Making a Difference” slogan add program advertisement to your awards as well as provide on going recognition of there contributions.

The importance of properly recognizing the work and efforts that your volunteers have put into your project also extends beyond their own personal gain. Happy volunteers can be the best recruiting source for your program. Word of mouth can spread quickly, and if a volunteer feels they are appreciated, that volunteer will more than likely recruit other volunteers.

Your volunteers should be recognized for their time. The following SWF Tier of Awards is a guideline for the Volunteer Coordinator to establish an awards system based on the amount of hours volunteered. The awards for reaching these tiers are not set in stone; they are merely a list of recommended items. Find what awards work best at your project, and implement it.

❖ Recommended Awards Tier and Possible Award Items

- Sticker - First Time Volunteers or beginning of long term agreement
- Lapel Pin – 100 hours (free from clearing house if volunteer photos submitted)
- Set of Travel Mugs – 500 hours (approx \$3)
- Canvas Camp Chair - 1000 hours (approx \$12)
- Personalized Park Host sign with names - 2000 hours (Approx \$20)
- Door Mat – 3000 hours (Approx \$30)

Don't limit your awards to just physical items, however. Everyone is motivated in different ways and the travel mugs so enjoyed by one volunteer may be useless to another. Get to know your volunteers on a personal level to find out what's *really* important to them.

❖ Going with your volunteer to lunch, arranging a movie day together or giving a special "thank you" to an individual at a staff-wide meeting can be just as rewarding as a "thing" and costs the project nothing.

D. Volunteer Evaluation

Experienced leaders and directors of volunteer programs have observed over and over again that lack of feedback and direction can drain the energy from a volunteer program. Directly stating goals and holding people to reasonable standards in achieving them is essential to the continuing success of volunteer projects.

Volunteers, just like employees, need to know how they're doing. They need to know that their work is appreciated and necessary, and therefore they must have frequent feedback from supervisors regarding their work. The way the evaluation process is conducted may well be different when the subject is volunteer performance, but the need for doing it is no less strong.

The evaluation process is the specific feedback of the volunteers' performance based on the expectations outlined in the job description. A leader knows that the volunteer isn't being evaluated – the volunteer's performance relative to goals is. The person is being given feedback on specific contributions or shortcomings, with information related to enhancing future contributions. The process should be constructive, friendly, and directly related to the tasks the volunteer has done or tried to do. Don't wait to evaluate until corrective action is required. Think of the evaluation process as a big dose of prevention and a way to give recognition and encouragement to individuals.

Remember, volunteers are there because they want to accomplish something and do it well. A good supervisor coaches volunteers to do their best, just as he/she does with team members. Keep volunteer coaching focused on the positive and word all constructive criticism *carefully*. Successes must be praised and failures must be *tactfully* corrected.

1. Conducting the Evaluation

The evaluation session should be a two-way meeting. It is your chance to talk about the volunteer's performance, giving praise and possibly suggestions for improvement. It should also be the volunteer's opportunity to talk about how their participation can be enhanced, which might even include discussing their moving to a new volunteer position/location. Don't be insulted if a volunteer wants to see another area of the state/country. If you support them and encourage their volunteer participation elsewhere they may return to your program at a future time.

There are two basic reasons for conducting a volunteer evaluation:

- To help the volunteer work towards their full potential.
- To help the organization better involve volunteers.

The easiest method of conducting the evaluation session is to:

- Review the past.
- Analyze the present.
- Plan the future.

2. Some suggestions:

- Don't get overwhelmed by forms. Forms are helpful, but they are not the major concern during the discussion.
- Start with the job description. Begin by finding out if it in fact describes what the volunteer has been doing. Take notes so that you can adjust it closer to reality.
- Stick with the basics: job proficiency, working relationships, comparison with the last review.
- Listen as least as much as you talk. When you schedule the session with the volunteer, tell them this is their opportunity to evaluate the volunteer program and you want their ideas on how to make things better both for them and for other volunteers.
- Remember that the evaluation may show as much what you need to do as it does what the volunteer needs to do.

Sample Individual Volunteer Evaluation Forms and a timetable for their use is included in Appendix D.

E. Volunteer Termination

“...either the Corps of Engineers or I [the volunteer] may cancel this [volunteer] agreement at any time by notifying the other party.” (Eng 4880r Volunteer Agreement)

“The agreement for volunteer services may be terminated at any time by the accepting official or the volunteer.” (EP 1130-2-500 j)

- It is requested that volunteers who intend to resign provide advance notice of their departure and a reason for their decision. Exit interviews, when possible, should be conducted with volunteers who are leaving their positions. The interview should ascertain why the volunteer is leaving the position, suggestions the volunteer may have to improving the position, and the possibility of involving the volunteer in some other capacity or again in the future.
- There are times when the dismissal of a volunteer is necessary to maintain the credibility, integrity, and/or safety of the volunteer program. While the volunteer agreement allows for termination at anytime without cause, it is important to counsel the individual to maintain the credibility of the program. No volunteer shall be terminated until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for dismissal with the accepting official.

Local policy shall specify general reasons for possible or immediate termination. Reasons could include:

1. Reasons to counsel a volunteer and give them specific guidelines for improvement may include:
 - insubordination
 - failure to follow agency policies and procedures
 - failure to satisfactorily perform assignments.
2. Volunteers should understand from their introduction to the program that the following are grounds for immediate dismissal:
 - infractions of regulations
 - violations of the law
 - other unsafe or inappropriate conduct
 - being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while working
 - theft of property or misuse of agency equipment or materials
 - abuse or mistreatment of another individual

If the volunteer arrangement is clearly not working to the benefit of the project and no other appropriate role is acceptable to both parties, then it is time to terminate the agreement. A letter should be presented to the volunteer that formally cancels the volunteer agreement and thanks the volunteer for positive contributions to the program. Volunteers receiving campsites must clean, restore, and vacate their site in a specified amount of time.

VI. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

Proper training is a must for any worker, paid or volunteer. Regardless of the amount of experience a worker may have in a particular area, some degree of training will still be necessary. A volunteer training plan will be used to insure that adequate training is provided. This plan should be a simple framework. Volunteers should receive on-site professional development training as appropriate. Many volunteers will view this as a reward for their contributions. Training is considered a necessity to ensure that the Corps receives maximum benefits from its volunteers.

A. Orientation Plan

If long-term or specialized volunteers are viewed in the same capacity as staff members when they first report for duty, it will be easier to realize the need for orientation and training. When a new team member reports for duty, the order of the day becomes orientation.

Orientation must begin at the office or individual's worksite. Volunteers are at your worksite because of the quality experience they hope to have, and they will not last long if they feel lost or unappreciated.

B. Welcoming and Orientation for Short-Term Volunteers

If you are assigned a volunteer group or project to oversee, be sure that before you get started that any equipment or supplies that the Corps is providing is on site and that work can begin quickly.

1. Welcome the person and/or group and thank them for their time and contributions. Be sure to impart to them how important their work will be to our Federal Lands and Natural Resources.
2. Ensure that Volunteer Agreements (OF 301, ENG 4880-R, etc.) have been completed and turned in.
3. Cover basic information with the volunteers, such as where they can park their vehicle, hang up their coat, store or purchase a lunch, or get something to drink.
4. ***Discuss the duties and specifications of the work to be done, along with the Activity Hazard Analysis (AHA) and safety concerns.***
5. Get started! Volunteers don't want to waste their time any more than you want to waste yours.
6. At the end of the day or project: Thank the volunteers for the important work they have done, allow for feedback or questions, and invite them to participate on future projects.

C. Welcoming New/Returning Long-Term Volunteers

The Project Volunteer Coordinator should arrange to meet the volunteer(s) when they are scheduled to arrive at the park or office. If not available, then another staff member or volunteer familiar with the program can step in to assist. The Volunteer Coordinator should then follow up and welcome the volunteers as soon as possible.

1. If offering a campsite for their services, be sure that their site has been selected, and is cleaned and ready prior to their arrival.
2. Thank them for coming and welcome them to the team.
3. Let them know how to contact the Volunteer Coordinator if they need anything.
4. Let them know when you want to begin their orientation and training (develop an Individual Training Plan). Be sure they have at least one full day to get settled in before starting training.
5. Provide directions for local grocery stores, laundromat, hospitals, churches, post office and entertainment.

D. Orientation for Long Term Volunteers

Orientation can be performed by any team member familiar with the program.

1. USACE Missions

Most people are unfamiliar with the various missions of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Take the time to introduce your volunteers to these missions, and how the work they are doing will be aiding USACE in accomplishing these missions, be it Flood Damage Reduction, Natural Resource Management, Hydropower or Recreation. Make the volunteer feel like part of the team.

2. Project Overview

A. Lakes

- Discuss the history of the lake where your volunteers will be working, when and why the lake was built, and other site specific details. To aid in their learning of this material, it is recommended that an information sheet be provided to each volunteer, outlining some pertinent historical facts.
- Give the volunteers lake maps and allow them to orient themselves. Provide assistance when requested.
- Give "Hot Topics" for your project and talking points on how to answer specific questions.

B. Parks Operated at the Project

- It is important that the volunteers become familiar with the names, locations and policies of each park facility operated at their lake. Take the time to go over this information using lake maps, park maps, and other local project resources to aid in this process. Once again, it is recommended that an information sheet be provided to each volunteer for use as a quick reference tool.

C. The Project Team and How The Team Fits Together

- Volunteer Coordinator - Explain the job of the Coordinator.
- Other Staff - When at all possible, introduce the volunteers to the current team members including summer hires. Explain the programs for which each team member is responsible.
- Volunteers - Introduce your new volunteers to any other volunteers that you may currently have working at your project. Encourage them to work together and learn from one another, and once again, discuss how the volunteers are valued members of the team at your project.
- Management - When at all possible, introduce the volunteers to the current management at your project.

3. Why Volunteers are so Important to the Success of the Corps

- Most people who decide to become volunteers do so because they want to give back to their community and country. Volunteering at federal lands gives them this opportunity. Make sure that you thank them for their time and effort. If necessary, explain how shrinking budgets and rising costs have made volunteers even more important today than ever before.
- After covering a national perspective on volunteering, begin focusing on your project and the volunteer program. Discuss how volunteers impact the local area with the work they accomplish, and what work remains to be done.

4. General Duties of the Volunteer Position

- Model Campers: Discuss the importance of being a model camper with your volunteers. Cover the concept of customer service, and how to properly represent the Corps to the public, as well as applicable sections of Title 36 and additional park-specific rules. Also discuss site cleanliness and if necessary, the importance of good personal hygiene.

- ***Safety: Discuss the duties and specifications of the work to be done, along with the Activity Hazard Analysis (AHA) and safety concerns.***
- Once again, cover how to contact the Volunteer Coordinator or other project staff, and when it is appropriate to contact them. If warranted, provide a copy of Ranger schedule and phone numbers to the volunteers.

5. Specific Duties Training

- Basic orientation will be followed first by training for one or two tasks. After some work is accomplished, additional orientation can take place while training is underway for additional jobs. Variety is important to make any job more rewarding, especially for volunteers.
- An Individual Training Plan should be developed for each volunteer. This plan will be more specific and indicate not only the types of training required, but where, when and how it will be provided. These plans should be developed based off of information provided in OF 301, current JHA and AHA sheets, and additional correspondence with the volunteer. These plans should be given to the Volunteer upon arrival at the project, and discussed in-depth during the orientation meeting. An Individual Training Plan sample is found in Appendix E. See Section VII - Volunteer Safety for a list of available training for volunteers.

E. Possible Volunteer Duties:

Provided here is a listing of generic job descriptions that can be used as a basic template for volunteer position announcements. This is not meant to be a comprehensive list only some suggestions. Site specific details should be determined and included at the project level.

- **Archeological and Historical Research:** Research archeology and history of the project area. Produce written or oral histories as needed.
- **Artist and Exhibit Specialist:** Develop artwork for use in interpretive displays, bulletin boards, changing exhibit areas.
- **Beach and Playground Inspector:** Check areas for safety hazards and pick up litter and debris. Report any problems immediately to the project staff.
- **Biologist Assistant:** Participates in wildlife studies, developing wildlife habitat, evaluating results.

- **Boundary Patrol:** Patrol boundary by foot or vehicle. Note trespasses and encroachments, use simple survey tools, and replace missing or broken markers. Report all incidents to project staff for action.
- **Boat Patrol:** Experienced boaters with a minimum of a National Association State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) approved boating course may ride along to assist Motorboat Operator. (Such as Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Boater Education Course) This adds safety to our patrols and allows for additional patrols to be performed during periods of high project visitation such as holidays.
- **Campground Host:** Opportunity to make extended stays at campgrounds located in scenic areas and to meet many interesting and friendly people. Answer questions, help campers get settled, suggest things to do and places to go in the vicinity, and explain the campground regulations. Expected to help keep the campground neat, and attend to some minor repairs or maintenance. Usually a choice campsite is reserved for the campground host at no charge.
- **Campground Maintenance:** Campground maintenance work includes litter pick-up, light repair work, and restroom, table and fire-pit cleaning.
- **Computer Aides:** Programmers, data coding and editing. Helps staff learn software packages and gives advice as to best use of systems.
- **Construction Aides:** Install and repair fences, signs, trails, etc.
- **Customer Comment Cards:** Conduct scheduled customer surveys in various parks.
- **Landscaper:** Assist in beautification by planting flowers, mulching, weeding, watering and maintaining visitor use areas.
- **Litter Control:** Litter and debris cleanup on the lake or land by groups or individuals. Adopt-a-Park and Adopt-a-Stream programs apply as well.
- **Maintenance:** Covers a variety of jobs including litter pickup, trail tread work, maintaining hiking trails, erosion control, brush removal, and recreation maintenance in campgrounds.
- **Natural Resources:** Plant seedling trees, develop fish attractors, develop food plots and other activities to improve the environment.
- **Painter:** Paint a variety of things, including but not limited to equipment and facilities.

- **Photographer:** Using instant picture and video, photographically record routine and special events at the project. Maintain the project print and slide files. Update photos used in existing slide presentations. Photograph natural, cultural and human resources around the project.
- **Reception Desk:** Performs general office duties, including routine typing and filing, answering visitor questions, and answering the telephone.
- **Research:** Conduct research on natural, social and cultural resources related to the management of the project. Volunteers are welcome to submit research proposals for consideration.
- **Visitor Interpretive Services Aides:** Make public contact, dispense information and assist visitors. May include preparing and giving interpretive talks to the visiting public. Assist Rangers with tours, talks, walks, visitor center operations, update bulletin boards, distribute interpretive materials. Promote water safety through formal and informal appearances.
- **Weather Collection:** Read weather station gages and record data. Report weekend readings to Reservoir Control Office. allowing more consistent data for the National Weather Service.
- **Wildlife Management:** Build, check and maintain various nesting box structures. Replace, repair, build and install new boxes as needed. Maintain records of nesting habits. Food plot work and other habitat management activities possible.
- **Wildlife Survey:** Check wildlife areas for populations of wildlife and waterfowl.
- **Writer/Editor:** Work on Public Service Announcements and special event messages. Prepare lesson plans and interpretive programs. Write scripts for slide presentations.
- **Website:** Design and upkeep of Local Project website.

VII. SAFETY

ER 1130-2-432 Paragraph 6.d states, "Volunteers will be provided a work environment which is, in all respects, equivalent to that provided for Corps employees performing similar duties." In other words, treat volunteers just as you would staff members.

This must be especially true in the area of safety. The volunteer coordinator should work closely with the office or project safety officer to ***assure that all safety requirements (EM 385-1-1, and others) are met for volunteers.***

"*A Volunteer's Guide to Working Safely*" (EP 1130-2-432) is an excellent safety pamphlet designed specifically for volunteers. The volunteer coordinator will want to order a supply of these so that one can be issued to each volunteer. Volunteers should be encouraged to keep this pamphlet in their pocket for ready reference on the job. This will serve to reinforce the Corps safety emphasis.

A. Position Hazard Analysis (PHA)

PHA outlines an occupation or job specialty by tasks, hazards, necessary personal protective gear, and safe job procedures to minimize the risk of injury to a staff member or volunteer. It would normally cover all volunteers assigned to a job series at the project. Just as with staff members, the safety program for volunteers should begin with the Position Hazard Analysis (PHA).

Properly implemented, the Position Hazard Analysis (PHA) and the Activity Hazard Analysis (AHA) can be excellent management tools. Improved work methods can result in reduction of property damage costs, worker's compensation, tort claims, and absenteeism.

Through familiarity with both the PHA and AHA for any particular task, the volunteer will:

- Realize the hazards involved
 - Know how to protect him/her self from the hazards;
 - Understand the proper procedures necessary for safe completion of the task.
1. ***Each volunteer shall be provided with the PHA applicable to their series.*** Some volunteers may perform work in several different series. They may do office duties in the morning and maintenance duties in the afternoon. In such cases, they should be provided with all applicable PHAs. Sample PHA is available in Appendix F.
 2. Volunteers should become familiar with the hazard analysis for their own job and utilize the information provided prior to the performance of the job series related tasks. ***These analyses are reviewed and updated annually and Signed by each volunteer. They are then filed in the individual volunteer's personnel record*** (which includes all records related to that volunteer's service within SWF).

B. Activity Hazard Analysis (AHA)

AHA's are mini versions of the PHA that detail the hazards and safety requirements of a specific task such as the operation of a chainsaw.

1. ***They shall be used for any task performed outside the routine tasks covered by the PHA.*** The onsite supervisor shall assure that the AHA is reviewed and signed by all involved parties - staff members and volunteers alike before they become involved in these tasks.
2. Signed AHAs shall also be kept in the volunteer's personnel record.

A compilation of the Position Hazard Analyses (or position series hazard analyses) and Activity Hazard Analyses necessary for the various job series that will be occupied by volunteers in the Fort Worth District are found in Appendix E

C. Personal Protective Equipment

A listing by task of personal protective equipment that will be furnished to, or utilized by, volunteers performing various tasks shall be included in local Volunteer Management Plan. These items should be covered in PHA or AHA for specific tasks. If an employee would or should be provided a safety item then a volunteer should also be provided the same items (e.g. - work gloves, eye protection, dust masks, safety toe boots, etc).

D. Procedures for Certification and Licensing or Authorization of Operators

Another important consideration of the safety program for volunteers is the assurance that volunteers are properly trained for any specialized task or the operation of any specialized equipment, vehicles, or vessels. ***According to regulation, it is the responsibility of the accepting official to certify that volunteers are proficient in the operation of any equipment assigned and that they meet the same licensing requirements applicable to Corps staff.*** (Individual needs for training or licensing should be listed on specific individual volunteer training plans as outlined in Section VI of this Manual).

Certifications Currently Offered to Volunteers in SWF:

- Defensive Driving Course - offered on-line, email the safety office (Julie Castro) with volunteer's name and she will set up the online course. Must be completed by any volunteer who will drive a government vehicle.
- First Aid and CPR Certification - Project staff should receive this training through the Safety Office annually. Allow volunteers to join you or look into having a

course just for volunteers; contact your local Red Cross Chapter for more information and course options.

- All Terrain Vehicle Operators - must be completed by any volunteer utilizing ATVs, Mules or other off road vehicles. Check with local trainers for next course offering.
- Motorboat Operator Licensing Course - for any volunteer operating a vessel, however, not required to ride along in a vessel. (Space in this course is reserved for employees first.)

Trainings that shall be given to volunteers before undertaking specialized tasks:

- Chainsaw Operation, Maintenance and Safety - Videos obtained through Safety Office. An experienced operator should observe volunteers safely operating and give needed instruction before allowing them to operate independently.
 - Mowing Considerations and Hazards
- ❖ Volunteers are encouraged to join staff for the monthly safety meeting (sign off on the trainings in their training record)

Authorizations for equipment use: (check list for Authorization Criteria and Authorization card template are provided in Appendix E)

- Backhoe
- Skid Steer
- Dump Truck

These are not comprehensive lists but should get you started. Remember, if it is offered to employees and volunteers will be performing the same tasks, we need to train them equally or better to ensure their safety and for our protection against liability.

E. Authorization for Volunteer Use of Corps Equipment

An Office of Counsel opinion on volunteers operating vehicles, vessels, or other types of equipment in the Fort Worth District can be located in Appendix E. Also, see ER 1130-2-500 Chapter 10, Paragraph h.

F. Accident Reporting Requirements

Sometimes, despite the most intensive safety efforts, accidents happen and volunteers may be involved. ***In cases which result in personal injury or property***

damage, the same emergency actions and procedures applicable to Corps staff members will be undertaken regarding volunteers. The only difference will be a notation in item 17 on ENG Form 3394 (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Accident Investigation Report) denoting "other volunteer". Form CA 1 must also be completed if injuries require medical attention. (See Section VIII- Recordkeeping for more details.)

VIII. RECORDKEEPING

Recordkeeping is of the utmost importance to the management of a successful volunteer program. In developing a recordkeeping policy, you will develop consistency, accurate and updated records, as well as protect the Corps of Engineers from potential legal issues and liability. The more accurate and complete the personnel files, the better covered the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the responsible staff members will be from liability for the negative actions of volunteers in the program. We must be able to prove due diligence to safeguard all project resources and the public from danger.

A. General Records

In order to measure the success of any program, accurate records must be available for review. The forms specified in the volunteer regulation, as well as the reporting requirements, provide one vehicle for program evaluation.

- Monthly, collect all volunteer service hours recorded on ENG 4882r-*Volunteer Service*. (Included in Appendix G.)
- ***Accurate records of each volunteer's time shall be kept in his/her personnel file.*** They will assist you in keeping up with your recognition program and provide the required FY end data you will need.
- ***OMBIL end of year data (total number of volunteers and the total combined number of hours) is required to be*** entered into OMBIL before the close of each year's FY. This data will help in the evaluation of your program. (See section IX – Program Evaluation.)
- Volunteer evaluations of the program and your evaluation of their performance shall be kept in their personnel file. (See Section V – supervision and motivation for details. Sample evaluation forms are located in Appendix D.)

B. Injuries to Volunteers

Volunteers may be injured on the Corps worksite despite the best preventative measures. When this happens:

1. ***File the proper accident and injury forms (Eng Form 3394, CA-1, CA-16, etc.) and keep a copy of all forms in the volunteer's personnel file.***
2. ***Complete appropriate incident/accident reports involving volunteers immediately and through proper command channels. Retain a copy of all reports in the volunteer's personnel file in addition to files kept for the project.***

3. ***For any injury requiring medical attention complete a CA-1 and send it with the injured volunteer when they seek medical attention. (This will allow the proper Workman's Compensation claim to be made). Submit CA-1 and CA-16 along with accident report to your supervisor. Volunteers receive the same benefits as federal employees and the same emergency procedures should be followed. On Eng. Form 3394 US Army Corps of Engineers Accident Investigation Report) item 17 denote "other Volunteer"***
4. See Section VII – Safety for more information.

C. Incidents Caused by Volunteers

Volunteers working within the scope of their duties may injure someone else or cause damage to someone's property.

- ***Volunteers are covered for tort claims the same as paid employees.***
- ***Fill out Eng. Form 3394 US Army Corps of Engineers Accident Investigation Report (item 17 denote "other Volunteer") and submit through normal channels. Keep a copy in the volunteer's personnel file.***

D. Supporting Records

In the event of a claim pertaining to B and C above, it will be important to have accurate records of:

- ***Volunteer's qualifications for the job as supported by Application OF 301, interview notes, and background screening report. (See Section III – Recruitment and Appendix B for more details). All of these items must be in the volunteer's personnel file.***
- ***Volunteer's working hours/dates (use ENG Form 4882 – Volunteer Service Record found in Appendix G (or similar) and file each one in their personnel file.***
- ***Volunteer Training Plan (use form in Appendix E). Be sure to sign off along with the volunteer after each portion of the training plan is completed and keep it in his/her personnel file.***
- ***PHA and subsequent AHAs should have been filled out and signed by the volunteer before beginning each specific task. Those should also be filed in his/her personnel file. (See Section VII-Safety for additional information).***

E. Confidentiality

All volunteer personnel records are confidential and must be kept in a locked cabinet or safe with restricted access. Any paperwork that includes sensitive information (Social Security numbers, Driver License number, etc.) shall be kept under lock and key at all times. Only the Accepting Official, the Volunteer Coordinator and the Volunteer to whom the file pertains should have access. See Office of Council memo and Privacy Act summary in Appendix F for further clarification.

IX. Program Evaluation

The evaluation process is an important tool for the volunteer program. This process will provide vital information that will be used to measure positive and negative outcomes. There are several ways to evaluate the volunteer program and items in this section should be utilized as a tool for a continual improvement process for meeting the established goals. Choose the tools that work best for your specific needs.

A. Responsibilities

Accepting Official - This position has the overall program evaluation responsibility, but can designate any and all of the process to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Volunteer Coordinator - Synthesize evaluation input from all sources to determine program effectiveness and future direction. With this information, the program's status will be easily communicated to all team members.

Volunteer Supervisors – Provide feedback to the Volunteer Coordinator to ensure program effectiveness through formal methods of evaluation and ongoing informal communication.

Volunteer – Provide feedback as required to their supervisor regarding their experience.

B. Conducting the Evaluation

Maintain a file of program evaluations to show a history of the program's effectiveness, benefits and challenges. Showing how the program has improved and provided increasing benefits over time can be a powerful justification for continuing the program. Evaluations also provide a record of lessons learned for future volunteer coordinators.

There are several types of evaluations that could be used to form a complete picture of the volunteer program and whether the program goals are being met: volunteer program evaluation worksheet, completion of tasks from Needs Assessment, monetary savings, net benefits, and personal feedback.

C. Volunteer Program Evaluation Worksheet

The worksheet is a vehicle by which the Accepting Official evaluates the overall program. The worksheet serves as a tool for determining if all responsible team members are fulfilling their roles within the program. The Accepting Official should sit down and communicate with the supervisors about program expectations and supervisor responsibilities. This worksheet should be performed on a yearly basis, but can be done more regularly. A sample worksheet is available in Appendix H.

D. Needs Assessment Task Completion

The Needs Assessment is discussed in detail in Section II. A simple list detailing the jobs which have and have not been completed is an easy way to determine if the volunteer program is meeting the project's needs. It will also be helpful for determining monetary savings realized by volunteers from each project as discussed below. The current year's need assessment should reflect the previous year's program evaluation.

E. Monetary Benefits

Determining the monetary benefits of volunteers to the project can be addressed in several phases: Volunteer Value of Service Hourly Rate minus the cost of supplies, comparing the cost of using volunteers to the cost of using a contractor, determining an "added value" from a project.

- In Section VIII, *Recordkeeping*, the importance of reporting Volunteer Value of Service Hourly Rate and Volunteer Hours in OMBIL is discussed. Your district volunteer POC or the Gateway should be able to provide the year's volunteer value (for example, in FY 07, it is \$18.77).
- Each completed task on your Needs Assessment shall reflect the total hourly value. A comparison of this reported total hourly value, minus the cost of supplies for volunteers, shall be used to determine the total value the government gains from the use of volunteers to perform the task.

Total Hourly Value Calculation

<i>Number of Volunteers</i>		<i>Number of hours worked</i>		<i>Hourly Rate for current FY</i>		<i>Total Hourly Value</i>
<input type="text"/>	X	<input type="text"/>	X	<input type="text"/>	=	<input type="text"/>

Project Value Calculation

<i>Total Hourly Value</i>		<i>Supply Costs</i>		<i>Project Value</i>
<input type="text"/>	-	<input type="text"/>	=	<input type="text"/>

For example:

Two volunteers spend 4 hours each painting a bath house in one of your parks. The paint and supplies cost you \$44.

So, for FY 07, the Project Value Calculation would be:

<i>Number of Volunteers</i>		<i>Number of hours worked</i>		<i>Hourly Rate for current FY</i>		<i>Total Hourly Value</i>
2	X	4	X	18.77	=	\$150.16

<i>Total Hourly Value</i>		<i>Supply Costs</i>		<i>Project Value</i>
\$150.16	-	\$44.00	=	\$106.16

- By comparing the cost of using a contractor to complete the same task the volunteers complete, a definitive picture reveals the actual cost savings to the government.

Savings to Government Calculation

<i>Cost of contractor to complete job</i>		<i>Volunteer Supply Costs</i>		<i>Savings to Government</i>
[]	-	[]	=	[]

plus the volunteer Value of Service amount

For example:

The same painting project from above would cost the government \$315 if a contractor was used, according to your IDIQ contract price list.

So, the savings to the government for this project would be:

<i>Cost of contractor to complete job</i>		<i>Volunteer Supply Costs</i>		<i>Savings to Government</i>
\$315.00	-	\$44	=	\$271.00

plus the volunteer Value of Service amount of \$150.16

- The added value projects that would not have otherwise been completed without the aid of volunteers should not be overlooked. A monetary value is calculated using the Project Value Calculation as usual. However, these projects deserve a special demarcation in your evaluations as 'something extra' we are able to do with volunteers to increase our level of service. You may wish to put a note next to these tasks on your Needs Assessment or have a special section for them altogether if you write a report at the end of the year.

For example:

A local youth group tackled painting pictures of Life Jackets and a Water Safety message on all the boat ramps at your lake. This project was not something your project would have paid for, but still has value to the government. The group of 14 kids and adults supplied the paint and worked 10 hours each for a total value of volunteer work equaling (for FY 07) \$2,627.80 of added value to the Water Safety message at your project.

F. Net Benefits

In addition to the monetary contributions volunteers may make to an organization, there are other intangible net benefits realized as well as challenges and difficulties. In the end, so long as the benefits outweigh the challenges, the volunteer program can be considered successful.

The worksheet found in Appendix H can be used to determine if your volunteer program is truly benefiting your project in less tangible ways. It can be used to assist in communicating the strong and weak points of the program to upper management. It is also a tool to help you in determining where you should focus your efforts in the future. Fill out the form a minimum of once a year.

G. Personal Feedback

The personal feedback from and about the volunteers is as important to evaluating your program as the monetary and net benefits. Everyday stories - good reports from the public about a park host, a long-term project completed, a successful relationship with a staff member or other positive examples of volunteers as team members - can go a long way toward building future successes. Negative events and stories can also serve as a lesson learned or proof that your program has improved since those events. Use the techniques below to round-out your program evaluation in a personal way.

- Take the time during ranger meetings, volunteer meetings, safety meetings and day-to-day activities to get feedback from all team members and make sure staff and volunteers hear about how the team is becoming stronger. See Sections II, III, V, VI, VII for more information on volunteer-staff relations.
- Keep copies of customer comment cards that mention volunteers as well as newspaper articles, letters to the project office and other personal testimonies of the good – and bad - points of your volunteer program.
- Note trends in the feedback from volunteer exit interviews and how they do or do not change in response to changes in the volunteer program.