



South Atlantic Division

WATER SAFETY INITIATIVES NEWSLETTER

Quarter 3 • Published July 2024

Goals for Water Safety Initiatives Newsletter

Why participate in this quarterly newsletter?

- Showcase what your project or office is doing
- Share water safety programs & initiative ideas between projects and offices
- Provide a brief record of SAD water safety initiatives

Water Safety Initiatives Newsletter Timetable

Quarter 1 | Oct. - Dec. | Submit by Dec. 25th

Quarter 2 | Jan. - Mar. | Submit by Mar. 25th

Quarter 3 | Apr. - June | Submit by June 25th

Quarter 4 | Jul. - Sept. | Submit by Sept. 25th

"I Got Caught" Campaign

Keep up the great work catching adults wearing life jackets!



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ANNOUNCEMENTS & REMINDERS



EXAMPLES OF WATER SAFETY INTERPRETIVE & ROVING INTERPRETATION SCENARIO VIDEOS DEVELOPED BY NATIONAL WATER SAFETY COMMITTEE

<https://corpslakes.erdc.dren.mil/employees/training.cfm?Id=watersafety>

Use the link above to find training videos developed by the National Water Safety Committee on how to share water safety messages while roving or facilitating a program. These videos are designed to be used for USACE employees and volunteers (not for the public).



SAD QUARTERLY AWARDS SCHEDULE

Quarter 1 | Oct. - Dec. | Submit by Feb. 14th

Quarter 2 | Jan. - Mar. | Submit by Apr. 28th

Quarter 3 | Apr. - June | Submit by July 28th

Quarter 4 | Jul. - Sept. | Submit by Nov. 30th

Send nominations to your district representative on the SAD WS PDT!

The SAD Water Safety PDT wants to recognize you for your outstanding efforts to educate the public on water safety, the environment, Corps mission, your project, and more!

- Awards program open to all employees within the Operations Community of Practice
- Recipients receive time off awards
- Nominations can be received from anyone (co-workers, supervisors, self-nominations)
- No effort is considered too small
- Can include - direct contacts, social media engagement numbers, EKO cards, and pictures

DLL-SAD-WATER-SAFETY

If you would like to be either added or removed from the DLL-SAD-Water-Safety listserv please email Emily Jones the SAD Water Safety Representative at Emily.A.Jones@usace.army.mil

CHARLESTON DISTRICT (SAC)

Photo: @CharlestonCorps

Charleston District Office

LowCountry Live With US Coast Guard – SAC, USCG Sector Charleston and Bobber appeared on LowCountry Live on June 7 to promote water safety before the Summer. SAC spoke about the importance of safe boating and wearing a lifejacket on the Intracoastal Waterway. The USCG spoke about different tools to have in your boat and ways to get help in case of an emergency. The appearance was broadcast on live TV across the LowCountry.



St. Stephen Elementary Bobber Visit – Nathan Wilkes, Ronnie June and Bobber visited St. Stephen Elementary School on May 29 to promote wearing a lifejacket this summer. Students heard a presentation from Nate and Ronnie, did demonstrations with lifejackets and got to meet Bobber! The students then received swag bags with frisbees and other water safety items. St. Stephen Elementary has had multiple drowning deaths in the past few years, making our presentation even more timely and important.



JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT (SAJ)

Photo: @JacksonvilleDistrict

Okeechobee Waterway



May 2024:

During the month of May 2024, Ranger Robert Wiggins coordinated with Lamar advertisers for three different USACE Water Safety PSAs on digital billboards (English and Spanish messages) along various federal highways. The water safety PSAs appeared repeatedly throughout the month. These digital billboards were located between Stuart and Jensen Beach and along Kanner Highway and Monterey.

These digital messages were seen by an average of 6800 vehicles an hour and peaked at 10,000 vehicles an hour, during the afternoon rush hour between 1600 and 1800.

Saint Lucie (SLS) Volunteers at their monthly Water Safety training with Ranger Robert Wiggins learned how to properly throw and recover a life ring and throw life bag.

June 2024:

Ranger Wiggins and SLS Volunteers also participated in the I got caught wearing my life jacket initiative by awarding the first group along the Okeechobee waterway at docks and boat launch of the Saint South campground area.

Ranger Robert Wiggins and SLS Volunteers also focused their energy and efforts in day to day contacts and delivered the water safety message to visitors from Florida, Canada, and Australia at the Saint Lucie Visitor Center.



JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT (SAJ)

Photo: @JacksonvilleDistrict

W.P. Franklin South Recreation Area



On Friday, May 17th, W.P. Franklin South Rangers Megan Parsons and Rob Hill, as well as volunteers Adam and Kara Paul and Joe Dombkowski participated in “Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day”. To promote the use of life jackets while in and around the water, this team demonstrated how comfortable it is to wear a life jacket while doing everyday tasks, such as mulching! This event was posted on the W.P. Franklin South Recreation Area and the Jacksonville District social media sites and got a total of 87 indirect water safety contacts, as well as approximately 20 direct contacts.

On Thursday, June 20th, Ranger Megan Parsons did a water safety presentation for the Task Force Virgin Islands Puerto Rico PRB Teams meeting to kick off the summer season. Parsons gave water safety tips for fun and safe summer, taught the saying “Reach, Throw, Row, Don’t Go”, and gave some information about boating safety. Approximately 60 water safety contacts were made.

REACH, THROW, ROW, “DON’T GO!”

Proper Rescue Method

REACH: Hold on to the dock or boat and reach out your hand, oar, fishing pole, etc.

THROW: Toss objects that float for the person to grab

ROW: If you’re in a boat, use oars to move closer to the person in the water. **DON’T** use the boat’s motor to get closer.

Don’t Go In, Get Help! **Don’t Go:** Don’t go in the water unless you are trained. Call for help.



On Friday, June 21st, Ranger Megan Parsons and USACE volunteers Cassie, Bobby, and Phoenix Cullen, participated in “Reading with a Ranger” at Riverdale Public Library in Fort Myers, Florida. Ranger Parsons read the children’s book called “Stewie the Duck Learns to Swim” by Kim and Stew Leonard Jr., which included a water safety rules song for everyone to sing and repeat four times throughout the story.

After the reading, Ranger Parsons did a water safety activity having two volunteers place an unpeeled and peeled orange in water to represent wearing a lifejacket versus not wearing a lifejacket. This activity provided the children a visual of why it’s important to wear a lifejacket so that they can float like the unpeeled orange (wearing a PFD), and not sink like the peeled orange (not wearing a PFD).

To close the event, “Bobber” the Water Safety Dog made an appearance to hand out water safety bags and to take photos with the families. A total of 50 direct water safety contacts were made plus an additional 68 indirect contacts from social media.

MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

Alabama River Lakes



On Friday, April 24th, Rangers George Hunter and Joseph Ponder spoke with the Autauga County 4H Club boating safety and water safety. Rangers spent time going over the 5 Rules of Water safety, how to properly fit a lifejacket and general boating safety tips. 20 water safety contacts were achieved.

Alabama River Lakes held their Kids Catfish Rodeo on Saturday, June 8th, 2024. Kids 15 and under were allowed to fish at no cost and take home their catches. Rangers supplied water and snacks, handed out hundreds of water safety items and issued out 10 free lifejackets. Approximately 250 people were in attendance.



On Saturday, June 22nd, White Pond Baptist Church held Bingo night for the campers at Gunter Hill Campground. Ranger Christina Collins was in attendance and did a short water safety program for all attendees. 2 lifejackets were added to the prize table for the evening. Other water safety items were handed out to all attendees. 50 water safety contacts were achieved.



MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

Allatoona Lake

Allatoona Lake partnered this summer with the American Canoe Association, Georgia River Network, and others to provide low-cost Kayak 101 training classes for individuals interested learning more about the recreational sport and improving their skills and safety. On May 18, three Kayak 101 classes were taught in USACE provided areas at the same time as classes being presented in 6 other states. In all, 43 classes were presented more than doubling what had been accomplished the year before. Initial totals show around 80 participants taking part in the events at Allatoona including both instructors and students. Allatoona Lake is the first USACE Lake to participate in the main event and was the first area in the State of Georgia to commit to the program. There will be a total of 11 classes taught this summer on Allatoona Lake.

In addition to the ACA Georgia, Georgia River Network, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, other organizations that also partnered/participated in the program include: Georgia Power Company, Trust for Public Lands, Georgia Canoeing Association, The Outdoor Foundation, Savannah Coastal Ecotours, Middle Georgia Kayaking, Miller Kayak Trips and Training, REI Co-op and REI Co-op Experiences, Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Half Moon Outfitters, Westbrook Supply Co., and Southern Conservation Trust.

Yahoo Sports: <https://sports.yahoo.com/corps-engineers-coast-guard-help-035900484.html>

Paddling Magazine: <https://paddlingmag.com/stories/2024-national-safe-boating-week/>



MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

Allatoona Lake

In the 3rd quarter, Allatoona Ranger and Volunteer staff have participated in 6 events with partners Cherokee County Safe Kids, Cherokee County Safety Town, Cobb County Safe Kids and the Cobb County Safety Village. In Cherokee County, Rangers presented Water Safety Programs (June 10, June 17) to two classes of children at the Cherokee County Safety Town and Buddy Beaver and Volunteer staff attended the two graduation ceremonies (June 14, June 21) making a total of 350 water safety contacts. Water Safety Volunteers also attended two Cobb County Family Fun Days at the Cobb County Safety Village (June 11, June 18) making 953 total water safety contacts.

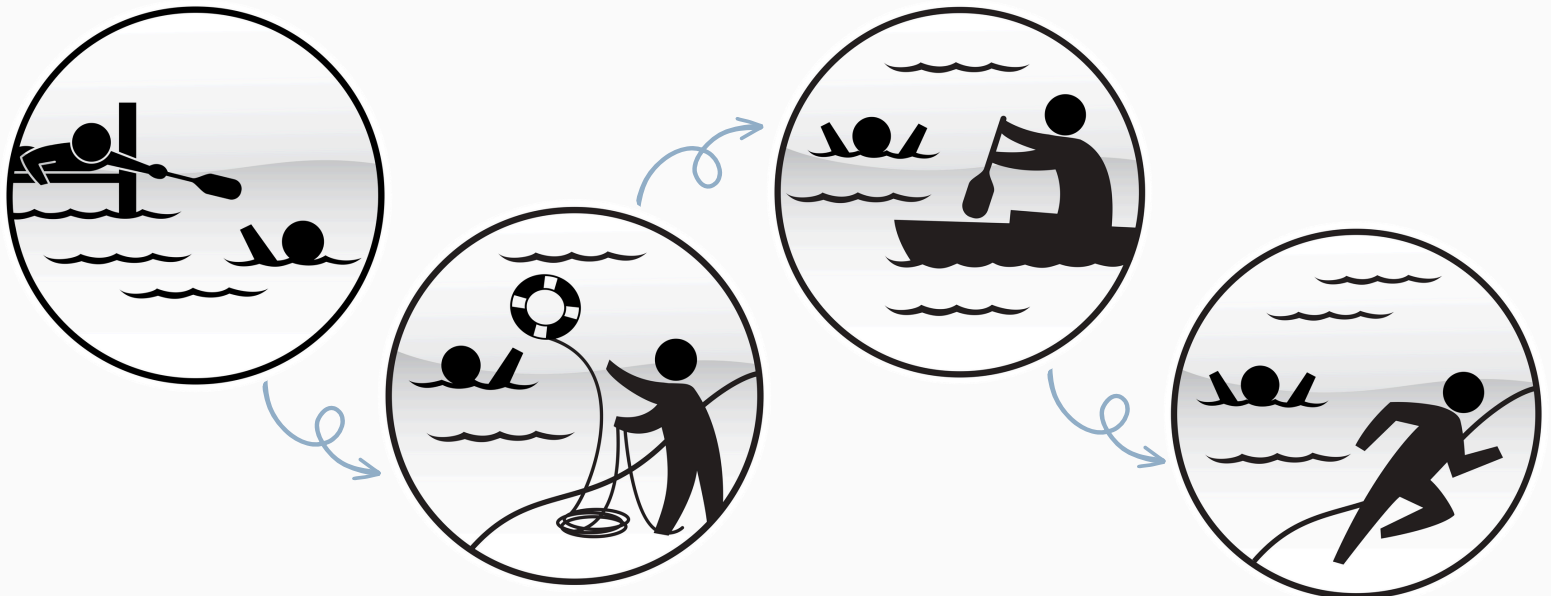


MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

Lake Seminole

This event took place at the pioneer settlement in Blountstown, FL, and was a combination of a water safety program with a science program. The participants were between kindergarten and fourth grade. For the science side, we had blind boxes and Fred the alligator. Afterwards, Ranger Bennett reviewed the importance of REACH, THROW, ROW, DON'T GO, while having the kids try on a lifejacket.



SAVANNAH DISTRICT (SAS)

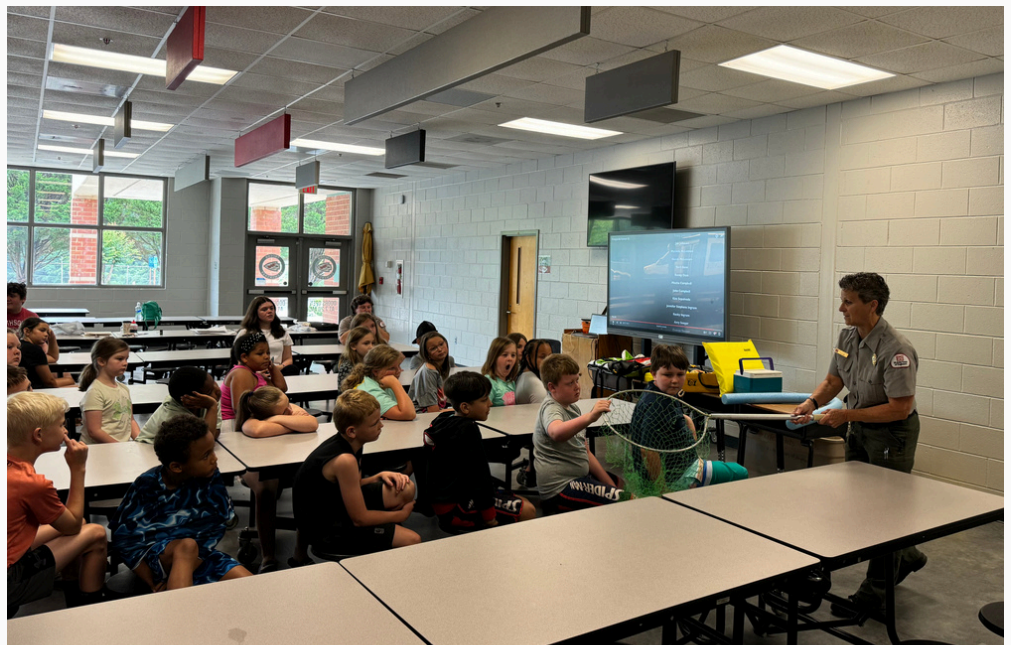
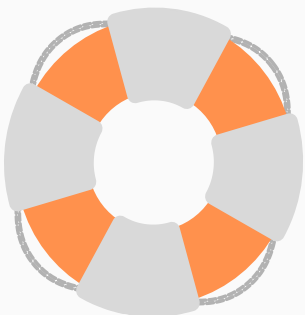
Photo: Richard B. Russell Lake

Hartwell Dam & Lake

Rangers handed out 12 water safety banners to the following project partners to be posted in parks on Hartwell lake that are leased from the Corps; Coast Guard Auxiliary, Portman Marina, Anderson County Emergency Management, City of Clemson, Hart County Govt, and Lake Hartwell Development. Picture attached of banner recipients at Asbury Shores (Lake Hartwell Development Lessee).



Park Ranger Dotson conducted a program for 55 students enrolled in Stephens County Jr. Deputy Camp. She focused on duties of a Park Ranger, how they work with the local Sheriff's department in the parks, and water safety. This weeklong summer camp is designed to expose and educate children to multi-faceted Emergency Management system of the county while allowing them to have fun with sports, games, and swimming time.



SAVANNAH DISTRICT (SAS)

Photo: Richard B. Russell Lake

Hartwell Dam & Lake

Project Rangers conducted 7 water safety programs for a total of 364 water safety contacts. Programs included Western Carolina Sailing Club Boating Course, North Georgia Tech Wildlife Society, Stephens County Jr. Deputy Program, Girl Scout Troop #642, Anderson County Crisis Pregnancy Center, Hart County STEM Program, and "I Got Caught" national water safety program lunch bag initiative. Pictures attached of ranger selfie handing out "I Got Caught" campaign lunch bags, Ranger Crabtree at Pregnancy Center, and Ranger Demore conducting a dam tour for Girl Scout Troop #642.



Park Ranger Annette Dotson conducted a radio spot with a local lake community radio station. This initiative is designed to connect the lake community with Hartwell Lake Rangers. It gives Rangers across all program areas an opportunity to address current issues, policies, permit processes, and gives us a captive audience to convey a message of water safety on the lake. This "Chat With a Ranger" interview targeted the upcoming 4th of July Holiday and the importance of water safety on the lake. Picture attached of Ranger Dotson in the sound booth at the local radio station.



SAVANNAH DISTRICT (SAS)

Photo: Richard B. Russell Lake

J. Strom Thurmond Dam & Lake

April 20, 2024, Thurmond Lake staff partnered with the Kroc Center in Augusta, GA, to participate in the SPLASH (Swim, Play, and Learn Aquatics Safety Habits) Summit. The Kroc Center, YMCA, and Augusta Aquatics center focused primarily on water safety as it relates to pools. Park Ranger Hannah Sue Hulpke and volunteers focused on water safety around lakes, as well as properly fitting a life jacket. Our team made at least 150 individual high quality water safety contacts!



April 23 Park Ranger Evan Brashier and Kevin Madsen as well as project volunteers attended the 2024 Earth Day event at Phinizy Swamp in Augusta, GA. Park Ranger Brashier focused on natural resources, sharing animal pelts and skulls with visitors. Park Ranger Madsen and Bobber the Water Safety Dog focused on water safety. A total of 575 quality water safety contracts were achieved.



Columbia County 4TH Grade Water Safety Program
May 10, 2024, For the 2nd year in a row, the J Strom Thurmond Recreation Section (Henry Way, Kevin Madsen, Hannah Sue Hulpke, Makayla Barlow, and volunteer Amy Madsen) promoted Every Kid Outdoors program, water safety, and the importance of life jackets to every (1,972) 4th grade student in Columbia County Georgia. This year the physical presentation took place at Stevens Creek Elementary School, with the event streamed to other schools.



SAVANNAH DISTRICT (SAS)

Photo: Richard B. Russell Lake

Richard B. Russell Lake



The Richard B. Russell 34th Annual Kids Fishing Derby took place at the Banks fishing area on Hwy 72 in Calhoun Falls, SC. on April 27, 2024. The event was open to the public with a pre-registration requirement. Approximately 24 hours before the event, Russell staff stocked 1,135 pounds of channel catfish within a blocked off portion of a cove. This made for a highly successful angling opportunity and as such produced a gathering of 240 participants. The public was given ample opportunity for fishing and was provided lunch afterwards along with a water safety presentation. Water safety was targeted to both adults and children, with an emphasis on recognizing dangers around water and the proper rescue methods for responding (Reach, Throw, Row, but don't Go!).



WILMINGTON DISTRICT (SAW)

Photo: @PhilpottLake

B. Everett Jordan Dam

On Saturday, June 8th, a Time of Remembrance event was held at Jordan Lake's Ebenezer Church Recreation Area. The ceremony was organized by the families of drowning victims, and was held in memory of those who drowned at Jordan Lake in 2023. Chief Ranger Shannon Maness and Ranger Elaine Wittry attended and gave a water safety demonstration to an audience of 40 people.



Rangers from Jordan Lake worked with Safe Kids Chatham County to spread the word about water safety to parents and caregivers. Ranger Elaine Wittry and members from Safe Kids facilitated 3 water safety classes on April 19th, May 16th, and May 22nd for parents and spoke to a total of 22 families with young children.



On May 3rd, Jordan Lake Park Ranger Elaine Wittry participated in Hampton Day at Kimberly Hampton Primary School on Fort Liberty. 285 preschool and kindergarten students learned about wildlife, the role of park rangers, and how to stay safe when visiting lakes and pools.



WILMINGTON DISTRICT (SAW)

Photo: @PhilpottLake

John H. Kerr Dam & Reservoir

Ranger Debra Hood facilitated an “Engineer a Life Jacket Program” at the Lunenburg County (VA) Career Fair where all middle schoolers and high schoolers participated from the county. The engineer a life jacket program asks participants to build a life jacket for superhero pool dive toys with the goal of keeping the superhero’s head above water. Ranger Hood spoke to approximately 300 students about various careers with the US Army Corps of Engineers and water safety.



Natural Resource Management Specialist Shannon Crews worked with Natural Resource Specialist David Schwartz at the NC I-85 welcome center where they spoke to 178 members of the public about the Corps Mission and water safety.

Ranger Emily Jones and Brandy Holt facilitated a water safety program at the Clarksville (VA) Library for over 30 participants. We discussed how to recognize if someone is struggling in the water and how to use “reach, throw, row, don’t go – go for help” to assist the person struggling. Participants played the “reach, throw, row, don’t go – go for help” relay race game.



WILMINGTON DISTRICT (SAW)

Photo: @PhilpottLake

Wilmington District Rangers



In May, the Wilmington District Water Safety Team and NC State Parks partnered on water safety videos at Falls Lake. Rangers Lisa Bredl, Philpott Lake, David Schwartz, Falls Lake, and Elaine Wittry, Jordan Lake worked alongside NC State Park Rangers and Public Affairs staff from both agencies to film the videos to be used on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and more.



SAD FY24 Q2 AWARD WINNERS

Q2 Water Safety Award Rusty Newton, West Point Project (SAM)

During "Read Across America" week Ranger Newton visited local elementary schools, reinforcing vital water safety habits while also fostering a love for reading. His proactive efforts have generated increased interest in water safety presentations, expanding the reach of the West Point Project's water safety outreach program back into local school systems which will have positive impacts to the West Point community well into the future.

Q2 Education Award Christina Collins, Alabama River Lakes (SAM)

Park Ranger Christina Collins coordinated Alabama River Lakes' inaugural Earth Day event, positively impacting the community by fostering a deeper connection to nature and promoting environmental awareness. Attendees made pinecone bird feeders, participated in a scavenger hunt and played games that taught them how they can be better stewards of our planet.

Congratulations