



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

South Atlantic Division

WATER SAFETY INITIATIVES NEWSLETTER

Quarter 2 • Published May 2025



Photo: John H. Kerr Reservoir
(Dan Robillard)

Goals for Water Safety Initiatives Newsletter

Why participate in this quarterly newsletter?

- Showcase what your project or office is doing nation-wide
- 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. 30th

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

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

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

The most expensive cushion in the world.

Not wearing it could cost your life.



Nearly 90% of drownings on Corps of Engineers lakes could have been prevented had the victim been wearing a life jacket.



Don't sit on it! WEAR it!

www.CorpsLakes.us/watersafety

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ANNOUNCEMENTS



Water Safety Product Orders

Did you submit a product order?

Water safety product orders have begun shipping, so you should receive your order within the next few weeks. Please keep in mind that the orders will be filled in the order that they were received, so on a first-come first-serve basis. If you don't receive all the products you ordered than more than likely those products were out of stock before your order was filled.



USACE Publications Depot Update

Closing September 30, 2025 or sooner.

The USACE Publications Depot where all the National Water Safety Promotional Products are stored and shipped out of is going to be closing September 30, 2025 or sooner, so to get all the water safety promotional products out of the depot some of you may receive a larger quantities of some of the products you ordered.

As of right now there are no plans to purchase any National Water Safety Promotional Products this year because certain things need to be worked out since the depot is closing. That means that there is a possibility that you will not receive any National Water Safety Promotional Products next year, so you might want to hold onto any extra products you might receive this year and/or purchase some water safety promotional products using any O&M funds that you might have. Artwork for the National Water Safety Promotional Products has been placed on the NRM Gateway in the water safety section under the Water Safety Graphics Library for you to use if needed to purchase your own water safety promotional products. Here is the link to the artwork.

[https://corpslakes.erdc.dren.mil/employees/watersafety/graphics.cfm?](https://corpslakes.erdc.dren.mil/employees/watersafety/graphics.cfm?Option=PromotionalProducts)

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Water Safety Media Resources

Join DLL-SAD-Water-Safety listserv by emailing Emily.A.Jones@usace.army.mil to receive monthly emails with water safety graphics and text to post on USACE social media sites, websites, bulletin boards, etc.



<https://corpslakes.erdc.dren.mil/employees/watersafety/water.cfm>

QUARTERLY/ANNUAL AWARD REMINDERS

SAD QUARTERLY AWARDS

Quarter 1 | Oct. - Dec. | Submit by Jan. 31st
Quarter 2 | Jan. - Mar. | Submit by Apr. 28th
Quarter 3 | Apr. - June | Submit by July 28th
Quarter 4 | Jul. - Sept. | Submit by Oct. 30th

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

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

Water Safety Individual Annual Award

- Sent forward as SAD nomination for national annual award

Water Safety Team Annual Award

- Sent forward as SAD nomination for national annual award

Education Individual Annual Award

Education Team Annual Award

Send nominations to your district representative on the SAD WS PDT by the middle of November 2025!

SAD ANNUAL AWARDS

Look for emails in October & November of every calendar year requesting nominations for each of these awards! Emails will include:

- Nomination submission deadlines
- Process for submitting nominations
- What to include in the nomination packet

JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT (SAJ)

Photo: @JacksonvilleDistrict

W.P. Franklin Visitor Center - Okeechobee Waterway

On January 8th, 2025, a group of 20 students from Riverdale High School visited the W.P. Franklin South Recreation Area and Lock as part of a STEM-focused career exploration program. This immersive field trip provided students with an opportunity to learn about careers in environmental science and engineering through real-world examples and hands-on experiences. Students listened to presentations by Lee Martin, a USACE biologist, and Megan Parsons, a USACE park ranger. After, Lock operator, Jason Pritt, led the students on a tour of the W.P. Franklin Lock, offering a behind-the-scenes look at its operations. Students learned about the lock's role in navigation, its manatee protection systems, and the importance of water safety.



On Saturday, February 1st, 2025, Ranger Megan Parsons and USACE volunteer Cindy Krouse represented the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the Cape Coral Waterways Science Festival, a community event focused on environmental education, water resources, and conservation. Four of our high school service-learning students assisted in staffing our booth, engaging with attendees, and distributing water safety informational materials and giveaways. Throughout the event, we educated the public about the Okeechobee Waterway's ecological and recreational significance, and provided resources on water and boating safety, making approximately 500 contacts.



On Saturday, March 15th, 2025, Park Rangers Megan Parsons, Jorge Leyro-Montalvo, and Robert Hill, along with USACE volunteers, participated in the 2025 Clewiston Sugar Festival. This event is the largest winter outreach effort for the rangers, and this year, they engaged with approximately 1,100 visitors. Using their interpretive trailer, rangers and volunteers educated attendees about the Okeechobee Waterway and the Corps' missions. They also promoted water safety by distributing informational brochures and interacting with the public, including photo opportunities with "Bobber the Water Safety Dog."



MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

Carters Lake

On March 18, Dalton's Chick-fil-A hosted a special event called the Stuffed Animal Campout Story Time. During this event, Ranger Spence and McKittrick led a discussion where they shared tips on how to stay safe while camping and how to be mindful when around water. The story time provided an opportunity for kids to learn important safety tips for being at a campsite, such as fire safety. Additionally, Ranger Spence and McKittrick emphasized the importance of water safety, teaching everyone how to stay safe near lakes, rivers, or pools, and the most important thing to wear around water: life jackets!



MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

West Point Lake

Park Ranger Rusty Newton participated in Read Across America Week by reading to Eastside Elementary 2nd grade classes and Huguley Elementary School's kindergarten classes on March 07, 2025. While participating in the activities he made 85 water safety contacts by discussing safe habits around water and reading "Water Watcher: The importance of Wearing a Life Jacket." He also enjoyed reading "Green Eggs and Ham" to the students in honor of Dr. Seuss.



On March 18, 2025, Park Ranger Rusty Newton and Park Ranger Chris Brewer participated in Fairfax Elementary School's Career Day. Both Rangers spoke with each class from Pre-K to 5th grade, over 700 students, about the many hats park rangers wear, the importance of environmental stewardship, natural resource management, the Corps' mission, and water safety. The rangers explained the need for park rangers to protect and preserve our natural resources for future generations to enjoy. The rangers closed out their talks with each class with a water safety message expressing the need for each person to wear their life jackets when in and on the lake.

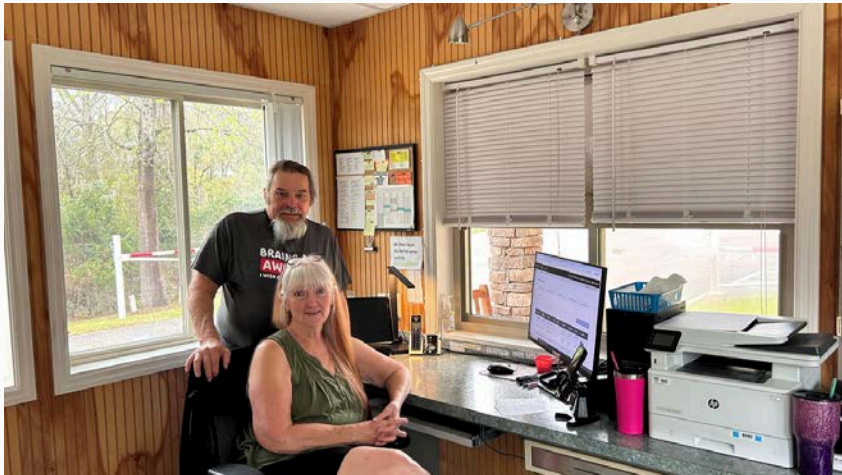


MOBILE DISTRICT (SAM)

Photo: @USACEMOBILE

Walter F. George Reservoir

During the months of January-March, a total of 246 water safety contacts were made through the efforts of Park Attendant Contractors and Volunteers at Walter F. George Reservoir. Often we overlook efforts made by contractors and volunteers that ensure visitors to our lands and waters are safe. They are trained in “reach, throw, row, don’t go,” offer PFDs to boaters and swimmers from our loaner stations, and engage in general safety with campers/visitors as well. They are a cornerstone to the success of our water safety mission!



SAVANNAH DISTRICT (SAS)

Photo: @SavannahCorps

J Strom Thurmond

On Friday March 21st, Park Rangers Makayla Barlow and Hannah Sue Hulpke were invited to Greenbrier High School by Mrs. Chassidy Gerlach to present to her three environmental science classes that recently covered natural resource energy sources. Makayla and Hannah Sue covered the history, mission, and local importance of the dam and its major benefits. At the end of the program, Rangers Barlow and Hulpke spoke about the importance of water safety, especially the students who were reaching the most at-risk age group. Rangers highlighted some of the risks that may take place around the water and spoke about real life experiences. The rangers wanted to express, how despite being young and capable of swimming, they are still at risk. 83 quality water safety contacts made.



On Saturday March 14th Park Ranger Makayla Barlow caught four adults wearing their lifejackets at Amity Boat Ramp. This resulted in 10 quality water safety contacts between the participants' guests and curious bystanders. Makayla highlighted the importance of wearing lifejackets and how much rangers appreciate the efforts of those adults that choose to be safe and teach those around them that wearing a lifejacket is the number one safety device when on or near the water.



WILMINGTON DISTRICT (SAW)

Photo: @JohnHKerrReservoirBuggsIslandLake

John H. Kerr Dam & Reservoir

In February of 2025 in partnership with staff from W. Kerr Scott Reservoir, Natural Resource Specialist Alec Mitchell and Park Ranger Brandy Holt attended the Central Carolina Boat Show & Fishing Expo. They talked to nearly 2,000 attendees about water safety, natural resource management, and the Corps mission. The employees had a great time interacting with so many people and creating a positive memory for many young children that visited the booth.



On March 12th Ranger Emily Jones facilitated a program at the Clarksville (VA) Public Library for 17 participants about the water cycle and how important understanding the water cycle is when considering water management at US Army Corps of Engineers lake projects. Participants learned about the water cycle and played a game where they pretend to be water molecules moving through the water cycle. A water safety message was given as well at this program.

On Saturday, March 29th Rangers Elaine Wittry and Emily Jones, Carmen Boyette (Wilmington District Natural Resource Management Section staff), and Stewart Gilmore (Wilmington District Natural Resources Lakes Branch Chief) spoke with over 200 participants at the 37th NC Science and Engineering Fair hosted at NC State University. The students, teachers, and parents learned about how hydropower is created and how to engineer a life jacket. A water safety message was given to every participant.



SAD FY25 Q1 AWARD WINNERS

Q1 Water Safety Award

Michael Linville, West Point Lake (SAM)

Park Ranger Michael Linville is recognized with the 1st Quarter Individual Water Safety Award for outstanding efforts promoting water safety at West Point Lake. Ranger Linville was instrumental in reaching thousands through proactive engagement in community events such as trunk or treat outings, community parades, and special events such as the “Special Day for Special People” event. His dedication, strong interpersonal skills, and positive attitude make him an invaluable asset. Ranger Linville’s actions reflect great credit upon himself, West Point Lake, the Mobile District, the South Atlantic Division, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Q1 Education Award

Lisa Bredl, Philpott Lake (SAW)

Park Ranger Lisa Bredl is recognized with the FY25 Quarter 1 Outstanding Individual Education Award for outstanding work supporting the very successful Streamside Trees in the Classroom Program at Philpott Lake. Ranger Bredl hosted three planting days, each including eight educational sessions and a water safety presentation. A total of 403 students participated and received Every Kid Outdoors cards. Her proactive approach and dedication to environmental education and water safety are commendable. Ranger Bredl’s actions reflect great credit upon herself, Philpott Lake, the Wilmington District, the South Atlantic Division, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Congratulations

SAD ANNUAL WATER SAFETY AWARD WINNERS

SAD Annual Individual Water Safety Award Annette Dotson, Hartwell Lake (SAS)

Park Ranger Annette Dotson from the Savannah District is recognized as the 2024 SAD Water Safety Individual of the Year for her outstanding work in promoting water safety at Hartwell Lake. Coming from a smaller project in the Savannah District, Park Ranger Dotson recently made the move to Hartwell where she quickly made a significant impact. She hit the ground running, and over the past year has seized every opportunity to connect with visitors, roll out innovative water safety initiatives and grow partnerships for continued success.

SAD Annual Team Water Safety Award Jacksonville District Water Safety Team (SAJ)

The Jacksonville District Water Safety Team is recognized as the 2024 SAD Water Safety Team of the Year. This dedicated group of Park Rangers made significant strides over the past year to engage with their community, breathing new life into the water safety program across their region. The team's efforts have been focused on implementing innovative initiatives, conducting outreach and education programs, and collaborating with local partners and stakeholders. Through their dedication and creative approach, the team has grown a more robust program that will have positive impacts for years to come.

Congratulations

SAD ANNUAL EDUCATION AWARD WINNERS

SAD Annual Individual Education Award Grace Trimble, W. Kerr Scott Lake (SAW)

Park Ranger Grace Trimble is awarded the 2024 South Atlantic Division Outstanding Individual Education Award for her outstanding contributions to education and community outreach at W. Kerr Scott Lake. She delivered engaging environmental education programs on site and in the local community, while also collaborating with and supporting colleagues across the Wilmington District. Her work extends beyond public environmental education activities to include mentoring college students, environmental educators, and other U. S. Army Corps of Engineers staff. Her dedication to education, community outreach, and partnership-building has made a lasting impact!

SAD Annual Team Education Award Carters Lake (SAM)

Carters Lake is awarded the 2024 South Atlantic Division Outstanding Team Education Award for its outstanding educational programs and activities. Project staff and volunteers collaborated with partners to deliver a wide range of engaging educational programs, including in-school initiatives, nature center activities, and community outreach events that emphasized water safety, environmental stewardship, and outdoor skills. They also broadened access to public lands for 4th graders through Every Kid Outdoors events. The team's efforts have fostered ongoing engagement in education and the community.

Congratulations