

Partnership Advisory Committee 2025 Charter

The Chief of the Natural Resources Management (NRM) Community of Practice, Operations Division, USACE, has appointed a permanent committee to expand the role of non-federal entities in serving the public through partnerships to develop innovative ways to overcome challenges, improve opportunities on public lands, and leverage resources. The NRM Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) exists to encourage a partnership culture and to assist districts and projects in developing that culture. The committee supports the efforts of all NRM personnel by:

1. Forming, strengthening, and fostering relationships to accomplish our missions by actively collaborating with customers and stakeholders to build a better partnering environment.
2. Developing and providing training to USACE NRM staff to build and improve internal partnering competencies and capacity.
3. Providing current guidance and historical examples of sustainable partnering efforts on the Corps of Engineers Gateway
<https://corpslakes.ercd.dren.mil/partners/partners.cfm>
4. Shaping the direction of the NRM partnership program by setting annual priorities, goals, and developing new programs and tools.

The committee will achieve the above stated support by assisting in the evaluation of USACE partnership authorities, regulations, interpretations, culture and institutional knowledge, and comparing them to other federal agencies. These evaluations will result in recommendations to HQUSACE to streamline processes and achieve a cohesive, consistent, and understandable program for USACE personnel and their stakeholders.

ER/EP 1130-2-500, Chapters 9, 11, 12 and Appendices P, Q, R, T and U and August 2016 Implementation Guidance for Section 1047(a) Volunteers provide guidance to establish partnerships with government agencies and private organizations to assist USACE in achieving multiple tasks and providing expanded program funding to support project purposes.

This document defines the goals and objectives of the committee, the mode of its operation, and the tasks it will undertake. Appendix A lists the names, locations, committee term, and telephone numbers of the current committee chair and members.

Natural Resources Management Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) Goals

The goals of the PAC are to assist in the establishment and support of a partnership program that will:

1. Increase **partnership knowledge** at all levels among NRM and external stakeholders
2. Build **partnering capacity**
3. Target **funding**
4. Recommend improvements to the **legal authorities** to assist the partnering processes
5. Support the **Natural Resources Management National Strategic Plan**

PAC Objectives and Action Items

Goal #1 - Increase partnership knowledge at all levels among NRM and external stakeholders

1. Educate the internal NRM community.
 - a. Host partnership and volunteer webinar trainings each year.
 - b. Provide updated partnering guidance on the Gateway
 - c. Develop a culture that promotes and supports relationship/trust building.
 - d. Participate in district conferences to provide access to PAC resources. This would help identify projects interested in and needing help with building and sustaining partnerships.
 - e. Lead at least two NRM Partnership PROSPECT Courses each fiscal year.
 - f. Promote the inclusion of partnering philosophies into career development planning.
 - g. Meet with district and field staff to identify challenges, issues, areas for improvement, and collaboratively develop recommendations and solutions.
 - h. Publish twice-yearly partnership and volunteer newsletter.
2. Educate external stakeholders.
 - a. Participate in regular meetings with the Corps Foundation and other partner organizations.
 - b. Develop additional National MOUs to promote partnering with USACE.
 - c. Maintain statistical data on partnerships and look for innovative ways to distribute data.
 - d. Create promotional materials to encourage new partnerships via the Corps Lakes website, NRM Gateway, and printed materials.

Goal #2 - Build partnering capacity

1. Encourage development of friends groups, cooperating associations, and similar organizations
 - a. Provide guidance to internal NRM community to establish Cooperating Associations
 - b. Provide guidance to the Corps Foundation and other partners on how to partner with USACE
 - c. Provide assistance to field projects with participating stakeholders interested in establishing a cooperating association.
2. Identify partnership funding resources
 - a. Review success stories and history of USACE and other organization's partnership development.
3. Provide updated guidance and successful partnership examples using the NRM Gateway for communication.
4. Partnership module in CWBI-OPS
 - a. Encourage participation at project level through regular reminders in advance of deadlines.
 - b. Provide annual CWBI-OPS webinar training.
5. Continue annual Excellence in Partnership and National Volunteer award programs and promote opportunities for other award/recognition programs such as the Volunteer Excellence Coins and Enduring Service Award.

Goal #3 - Target Funding

1. Identify and leverage resources (federal, state, local, and private).
 - a. Continue to request funding for the Handshake Program.
 - b. Support legislation to fund partnership projects as requested.
 - c. Communicate grant programs for partnership projects.
 - d. Investigate alternative funding opportunities.
 - e. Share best practices.

Goal #4 - Recommend improvements to the legal authorities to assist the partnering processes

1. Aid in the analysis of existing authority and policy.
 - a. Help identify impediments to successful partnering.
 - b. Provide assistance to the NRM community in using existing authorities.
 - c. Recommend changes and additions to those authorities that prevent our ability to partner in innovative ways

- d. Suggest legislative language needed to effect these changes.
2. Support simplification of the partnering process.
 - a. Help to create commonly accepted definitions of authorities, agreements and processes.
 - b. Suggest ways to streamline forms and agreement templates to provide equal benefits to stakeholders as well as USACE entities.

Goal #5 - Support the Natural Resources Management National Strategic Plan

1. Communication: Engage stakeholders, elected officials, partners, and local communities at all levels to build awareness of the NRM program and achieve win-win opportunities.
 - a. Assist RLAT/SAT in developing national-level NRM program specific messaging that highlights the importance of outdoor recreation, public safety, land use management and the NRM role in protection of project purposes.
 - b. Develop regular national communication with recreation industry stakeholders.
2. Resourcing: Explore opportunities to broaden partnering authorities and prioritize budget packages that utilize partnership contributions for gained efficiencies.
 - a. Engage with partners and the ASA(CW) for changes to legislation expanding the use of cooperative management with private entities and authority parity with other federal land management agencies.
3. Program Delivery: Foster Partnerships and Interdisciplinary Collaboration
 - a. Capitalize on opportunities to work with external entities to achieve common goals and advance the USACE NRM mission.
 - b. Implement practices associated with sharing resources across business lines and among adjacent agencies.
 - 1) Open lines of communication by seeking knowledge and expertise from and providing updates to other business lines to identify areas where resources can be shared.
 - 2) Collaborate with adjacent federal and state land management agencies for shared invasive species and fire management.
 - 3) Seek new authorities to partner with adjacent public lands that allow expenditures of appropriated funds for joint management activities.
 - c. Expand and build on partnerships with public agencies, tribes, underrepresented groups, universities, businesses, nonprofit organizations and technology groups.
 - d. Develop new and update existing partnership agreement templates and share best management practices for increased efficiencies.

PAC Structure

The committee shall consist of one subject matter expert (SME) from each division. Additional SMEs will be added as necessary. Each division representative shall be evaluated by the committee and the proponent for rotating off the committee following a term of 5 years (see Appendix A). Terms may be adjusted as needed to avoid more than two team members rotating off in the same year. A chairperson of the committee will be elected by the committee for a 2-year term. The chair may serve for one additional 2-year term if the team elects them. The committee may include subject matter experts to use as resources from support elements such as Contracting, Office of Counsel, Resource Management, Planning, Logistics, or other offices within Civil Works. The proponent shall be the Senior Policy Advisor for Partnerships and act as the liaison between the PAC and HQUSACE and other HQUSACE elements.

Committee vacancies are communicated to the proponent along with recommendations for specific credentials required to fill each role (e.g., OPM, specialist, field level, district level, division level) to ensure or enhance the committee's diversity as needed. All vacancies are approved by the Chief of NRM, HQUSACE, from nominations submitted by the MSCs, following the proponent's and PAC's recommendations. Each MSC must submit at least two nominations for PAC selection, with a preference for candidates who have not previously served on the PAC team to foster the growth and development of new members.

There is no limit on the number of candidates who may apply for each vacancy. Prospective members will undergo informal interviews. New members will serve a one-year probationary period to acclimate to their PAC role and support team success and cohesion. Should a committee member transfer outside their originally represented MSC, their service to that MSC will end; however, they may continue as an "at-large" member if needed.

PAC Operation

Funding for labor, travel and per diem costs for the members of the PAC to attend committee meetings will be the responsibility of the team member's project or district. HQUSACE may provide development costs for partnership tools approved by the PAC and HQUSACE for development.

The committee shall establish an annual work plan (see Appendix B). The development of work plans shall be coordinated with HQUSACE by the Senior Policy Advisor for Partnerships. The PAC will meet when necessary but at least once a year. The goal is to have one meeting to discuss PAC annual work plan and other pertinent topics and another meeting to present the Excellence in Partnership annual award and revise goals as necessary, where funding allows. PAC members will spend the majority of time at each member's permanent duty station corresponding by telephone and via email. It is expected that each committee member will spend on average 12 hours per

month (outside of the week-long meetings) completing duties for the PAC. Each member of the PAC shall also assist in teaching at least one PROSPECT class per year.

The committee shall schedule its own meetings as needed to provide input to HQUSACE on specific issues and work plans. The committee will develop its own meeting agendas, select locations for meetings and establish sub-committees as it sees fit. All such actions will be coordinated with the Senior Policy Advisor for Partnerships.

The committee shall coordinate all reports, minutes, recommendations, etc. with the Senior Policy Advisor for Partnerships.

PAC Chair

The committee chair tasks and activities include:

1. Develop annual work plans in coordination with other committee members and the Senior Policy Advisor for Partnerships.
2. Delegate member to prepare minutes of meetings and routine reports. Coordinates comments and suggestions from other committee members. Disseminate final copy to committee members, HQUSACE and coordinates posting to the NRM Gateway partnership pages.
3. Conduct meetings and teleconferences.
4. Conduct all committee business in accordance with charter guidelines and existing policies and procedures.
5. Assist committee members to focus on work plans and group tasks. Communicates regularly with the Senior Policy Advisor for Partnerships regarding activities of the committee.
6. Coordinate the scheduling and develop agendas to conduct monthly meetings.
7. Function as a neutral facilitator for committee members.

HQUSACE PAC Proponent

The proponent shall be the Senior Policy Advisor for Partnerships and act as the liaison between the PAC, RLAT, SAT, and HQUSACE. The proponent fulfills a function critical to the smooth operation and success of the committee. It is, therefore, imperative that the proponent attend all full PAC meetings and teleconference calls. Among other duties, the proponent will perform the following tasks and functions:

1. Work with Handshake Program coordinator to manage program budget.
2. Advise the PAC of current HQUSACE policy regarding issues that are discussed at meetings and teleconference calls.
3. Discuss PAC recommendations with the Chief of NRM and provide feedback to the committee. This includes directives for additional action, status reports of actions taken in response to committee recommendations and issues to be addressed by the committee.
4. Review all draft PAC meeting minutes, bulletins, user forms, annual work plans, and final draft submissions to the NRM Gateway, etc., and provide comments back to the committee.
5. Coordinate actions of the PAC with appropriate HQUSACE organizational entities (e.g. Office of Counsel, Real Estate) as well as support laboratories (ERDC/IWR) in a timely manner.
6. Act as the HQUSACE coordinator for any draft regulations or policies that the PAC is requested to act on.
7. Act as the USACE NRM partnership liaison at interagency meetings and report back to the committee results of actions that will affect committee work products or efforts.
8. Be an internal champion for human and finance resource needs, regulatory changes required, and legal improvements necessary to improve the partnering capabilities of USACE.

Appendix A*
PAC Members

Division/District	POC	PAC term	Phone Number
Mississippi Valley Division	Phil Manhart (Vice-Chair)	Jan 2021 – Dec 2025	217-343-4662
South Pacific Division	Taylor Baughn (Chair)	Jan 2021 – Dec 2026	707-561-2123
Great Lakes & Ohio River Division	Mike McCoy	Jan 2022 - Dec 2026	304-399-5144 x 5144
Northwestern Division	Keith Hyde	Jan 2022 – Dec 2026	208-343-0671
North Atlantic Division	Jared Gagnon	Jan 2024 – Dec 2028	978-318-8027
South Atlantic Division	Robert Wiggins	Jan 2025 - Dec 2029	772-219-4575
Southwestern Division			

Proponent/Subject Matter Experts	POC	Phone Number
Headquarters	Heather Burke	503-808-4313
Office of Counsel	Brandon Pitcher	202-761-5250

*Updated October 2024

**Appendix B
Calendar Year 2024 Annual Work Plan**

Action Item	Lead	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Bay Model Class (FY26)	Taylor												
Boy Scouts MOU	Jared	Ongoing											
Building Capacity Webinar	Heather/Al I												
Corps Foundation	Heather	Ongoing											
EIP/VOY awards	Mike												
EIP/VOY webinar	Mike											Early	
ER Update	Heather	Ongoing											
Gateway example outreach	All (see list)												
Girl Scouts MOU	Phil	Ongoing											
Handshake program	Phil/ Jared	Ongoing											
Handshake webinar	Phil/ Jared												
Nat'l Vol Week cards	All			31st									
Newsletter	Heather/Al I												
New England Class (FY26)	Jared	Ongoing											
Note taker	Phil	Ongoing											
CWBI webinar	Taylor												
NWTF MOU	Mike	Ongoing											
Partnership Photo Contest	Keith	Ongoing											
Pheasants Forever MOU	Jared	Ongoing											
PROSPECT	All	Ongoing											
Kansas City Class (FY25)	Keith												
Raystown Class (FY25)	Jared												
Rend Class (FY25)	Phil												
Volunteer webinar series	Heather												
Volunteer Poster/Handout	Rob/SWD												
Volunteer Coin Reminder	All												

NRM Gateway Page Updates

Each PAC member will reach out to their division twice a year for new partnership agreements and examples to add to Gateway.

NRMG Page	Lead	Last Review/Update
Awards		
Challenge Cost Share Coop Management		
Challenge Partnerships	Keith	
Contributions	Phil	
Cooperating associations	Mike	
Cooperative agreements		
Economy Act	Keith	
GETS	Jared	
Grants	Taylor	
Handshake	Phil	
Health/Fitness/Medical	Mike	
Military	Keith	
MOU/MOA	Jared	
National Partners	Jared	
CWBI-OPS	Taylor	
PAC	Jared	
SCA		
Schools/Universities		
Special Events	Taylor	
Volunteers		
Water safety	Mike	