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Mobile District Natural Resources Chief to receive ARC Legends Award

**Photos**

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By Tim Oberle  
USACE Mobile

The American Recreation Coalition (ARC) will recognize Ken Day, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Mobile District natural resources chief, as the recipient of the organization's Legends Award June 1 during the Partners Outdoors Conference in Washington D.C. The award is presented annually to one individual from each major recreation-related federal agency for outstanding contributions to outdoor recreation.

In selecting the agency's awardee, the USACE evaluated nominees based on four different criteria including quantifiable improvements to recreation opportunities or participation in recreation, reliance upon partnerships with organizations in the private sector, the utilization of creative solutions to enhance recreation, and community accolades.

With more than 40 years dedicated to improving the Nation's recreation facilities, Day is certainly deserving of the recognition.

“Over the past 39 years, [Ken] Day has demonstrated unwavering dedication to ensuring the preservation and enhancement of recreation resources throughout the South Atlantic Division,” said Andrea Murdock-McDaniel, USACE acting chief of operations and regulatory. “His work has resulted in numerous improvements to both the recreation and natural resources programs.”

As the Nation's largest provider of outdoor recreation, the USACE operates more than 2,500 recreation areas across the country and hosts more than 360 million visitors each year. Of the 360 million, more than 28 million visit the Mobile District alone; leaving Day to oversee more visitors each year than Disney World's Magic Kingdom.

“The biggest thing is to try to keep it focused on the customer...to ensure they have a good experience,” Day said.

Aiding Day in his mission to provide world-class recreation is a local initiative called Volunteer Village. The program allows individuals to camp at certain project offices for free in exchange for volunteer work.

“Essentially we are providing them free camping and sewer and water hookups, and they in turn provide a minimum number of volunteer hours back to the projects each week,” said Day. “It has been a key to our success because it helps us to leverage our otherwise scarce resources.”

Day’s extensive experience has contributed to the improvement of both district-level and national-level programs. In fact, in 2006 he helped to develop the Recreation Area Management Analysis System (a precursor to the online tool Rec-BEST), which has allowed project managers across the country make more informed decisions on the operation of their recreation programs.

“Ken was instrumental in the development and implementation of the Recreation Area Management Analysis System and the District Online Incident Reporting Center,” explained Murdock-McDaniel. “The Recreation Area Management Analysis System was later adopted nationally...presenting a balanced scorecard and national comparison on key factors for budget development.”

Throughout his career, Day has also invested time to develop outreach strategies that promote mutually beneficial partnerships with historically black colleges. In fact, he organized a conference to recruit minorities to natural resource-related career fields and played a major role in establishing the first African American Alumni Scholarship Endowment for forestry.

“He is a champion of natural resources management career development.... and (he) certainly earned the recognition offered by the ARC’s Legends Award,” said Murdock-McDaniel. “[His] legacy with the Corps forever will be the mentoring and development of natural



Ken Day (Back row far right) poses for a photo with other park rangers at Allatoona Lake, Ga. in 1978. Day began his career at Allatoona Lake, and currently works as a Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District. (Photo by Courtesy Photo)



Ken Day, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District natural resources chief, has been selected to receive a Legends Award from the American Recreation Coalition during the Partners Outdoors Conference June 1 in Washington D.C. The award is presented annually to one individual from every major recreation-related federal agency for outstanding individual contributions to outdoor recreation. (Photo by Courtesy Photo)

resource management professionals throughout the Southeast region.”