

# Bridging the Gap

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*'Bridging the Gap' is an electronic publication produced biannually by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC). The purpose of this newsletter is to provide information about partnerships and volunteer programs around the country. For more information, or to submit stories for future editions, contact your PAC team representative.*

## Your Partnership HQ Update

*Heather Burke, National Partnership Program Manager, HQUSACE*

### The Great Outdoors Fund: Helping USACE Find Donors

The Great Outdoors Fund (TGOF) is a nonprofit organization which seeks donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations to provide grants for improvements to recreation infrastructure, access, and habitat. If you have a project that needs funding, please send an email to [lori@thegreatoutdoorsfund.org](mailto:lori@thegreatoutdoorsfund.org) to request access to the TGOF database where you can add your project proposals.

### Skilled Laborers In Search of Volunteer Opportunities at USACE Projects

The Union Sportsmen's Alliance (USA) is a nonprofit organization comprised of union workers around the country who are dedicated to volunteering their skills and expertise to complete hands-on, community-based volunteer projects to improve public access to the outdoors, enhance wildlife habitats, restore America's parks, and engage youth in the outdoors. With a national MOU in place with USACE, USA members are now looking to help us out! If you have a volunteer project in need of skilled volunteers, please fill out the Volunteer Request Form found on the NRM Gateway and send to Mari Lou Livingood at [marilou@unionsportsmen.org](mailto:marilou@unionsportsmen.org) or Forrest Parker at [forestp@unionsportsmen.org](mailto:forestp@unionsportsmen.org) to submit your requests for assistance from USA volunteers.

### 2021 National NRM Workshop: Update your IDPs

A PDT is currently planning the National NRM Workshop that will take place in April 2021. If you'd like to learn more about partnerships as well as other NRM key topics, be sure to list the workshop on your Individual Development Plan (IDP) or you could risk losing the opportunity to attend!

### Partnerships in NRM PROSPECT Courses

Would you like to learn more about USACE NRM partnership authorities and how to use them to the maximum extent and benefit for your project? Each year we offer two PROSPECT courses at various locations around the country where you can hear success stories from instructors and other participants, learn the do's and don'ts of partnering, and meet/learn directly from partners at a local USACE project. Work with your District training coordinators now to be added to one of the next classes:



**August 3 – 6, 2020**

Willamette Valley Project, Eugene, OR (Portland District)

**October 26 – 29, 2020**

Philadelphia District Office (Philadelphia District)

**May 3 – 6, 2021**

Allatoona Lake, Cartersville, GA (Mobile District)

# 2019 National Volunteer of the Year Award: The Wall Family

Johnny Jones, Park Ranger, W. Kerr Scott Reservoir, SAW



Eric and Cathy Wall represent USACE at a special event



The Wall family keeping the trails clear at W. Kerr Scott



USACE  
volunteers  
are worth  
their weight  
in  
GOLD!

The National Volunteer Award, sponsored by the Corps Foundation, was created to recognize the extraordinary service provided by volunteers, draw attention to their vast skills and contributions, and encourage an attitude of stewardship and responsibility in caring for USACE lands and resources.

This year's award winners are **the Wall family (Eric, Cathy, Alec, and Harrison)** from **W. Kerr Scott Reservoir in the Wilmington District (SAD)**. The Wall family has volunteered since 2016, providing more than 3,100 hours of service and at least \$80,000 in value to USACE. Their tireless efforts and unending dedication to USACE missions ensured visitors could enjoy the recreational opportunities and natural resources at W. Kerr Scott in a safe and enjoyable manner.

How did they do this? They cleared trails of fallen trees, installed benches in parks, collected trash from the shoreline and river, maintained and painted the Environmental Education Center new addition, supplied life jacket loaner stations, collected recyclable materials, taught environmental programs to children, wore Bobber and Buddy costumes at events, staffed gatehouses, operated the front desk at the Visitor Assistance Center, kept the aquarium clean, planted flowers in the backyard habitat, assisted in the chestnut tree research project, relayed information to the public at shows and festivals, built and installed fish structures, registered winter campers, conducted visitor use surveys, inspected equipment, washed Park Ranger vehicles, sold America the Beautiful and USACE passes, repaired signs, maintained chainsaws and equipment, cleaned restrooms and campsites, assisted Park Rangers on boat patrol, and the list goes on. In the end, the better question is "What didn't they do?"



# 2020 Handshake Program Projects

*Heather Burke, National Partnership Program Manager, HQUSACE*

The Handshake Program is an incentive program developed by HQUSACE for field sites to develop partnerships and use partnership authorities to encourage community engagement. For FY 20, there was \$200,000 available for competition. Nine projects were selected for funding. The funded sites involve 52 partners who have pledged more than \$936,000 to invest in these projects:

- ◆ Big Hill Lake- Trail mapping and maintenance
- ◆ Blue Marsh Lake- Mountain bike skills area and trail
- ◆ Carlyle Lake- Accessible outdoor classroom
- ◆ Mississippi River Project- Tree planting
- ◆ Pine Bluff- Trailhead/restroom improvements and pollinator garden
- ◆ Rend Lake- Archery complex and mountain bike trail
- ◆ Rivers Project- Outdoor classroom amphitheater
- ◆ Raystown Lake- Trail improvements
- ◆ Lake Texoma- Boat ramp

For more information regarding the Handshake Program, please visit the [Handshake page](#) on the NRM Gateway or contact your division Partnership Advisory Committee member.



*Carlyle Lake proposed outdoor classroom*



*Pine Bluff trailhead restroom design*

## 2019 National Excellence in Partnerships Award: Lake Shelbyville Fish Habitat Alliance (LSFHA)

*Jon Summers, Operations Manager, Lake Shelbyville, MVS*

The Excellence in Partnerships Award, sponsored by the Corps Foundation, recognizes exceptional contributions by a partner providing substantial support to the USACE Recreation and Environmental Stewardship programs. This year's winner, the **Lake Shelbyville Fish Habitat Alliance in the St. Louis District (MVD)** is a group of anglers, local businesses, volunteers and state and federal partners that work together to improve the health of the Lake Shelbyville fishery. The great successes the group has amassed since their formation in 2016 is nothing short of astounding! Their notable accomplishments include placing more than 875 artificial structures and numerous aquatic plantings into Lake Shelbyville, amassing an impressive list of partners supporting the mission of the LSFHA, securing two grants totaling \$87,000, making the National Fish Habitat Partnership's "Top Ten Waters to Watch" list, and hosting a successful banquet netting more than \$20,000. It just goes to show what can be accomplished by a determined group of people that share a vision and love of the resource. The LSFHA serves as a model for organizations throughout the country. Their efforts have contributed

greatly to the success of USACE in meeting its environmental stewardship and recreation objectives as well as contributing to the quality of the fishery for the surrounding community to enjoy. *See more photos on page 8.*



*LSFHA members assemble Shelbyville Cubes to be placed in the lake for improved fish habitat.*

# W. Kerr Scott Showcases Partnerships

Francis Ferrell and Johnny Jones, NRM Specialists, SAW

their partnerships started, what kind of challenges they faced, and how they recognize and celebrate success.

One of the key takeaways that comes up over and over in the Partnerships in NRM class field trip is that USACE can no longer go it alone in managing our Recreation and Environmental Stewardship missions. We must build and maintain successful partnerships in order to provide world class water resource projects to the nation. Park Ranger Johnny Jones, the lake's partnership program manager, told the class "The fingerprints and footprints of partners and volunteers can be found throughout the W. Kerr Scott project. Whether it be cleaning the shoreline, operating gatehouses, building and maintaining trails, or leading interpretive programs, just to name a few, the hard work and dedication of volunteers and partners is evident to the general public and the USACE staff."

"The fingerprints and footprints of partners and volunteers can be found throughout the W. Kerr Scott project. Whether it be cleaning the shoreline, operating gatehouses, building and maintaining trails, or leading interpretive programs, just to name a few, the hard work and dedication of volunteers and partners is evident to the general public and the USACE staff." ~ Johnny Jones, Park Ranger



One of the most enjoyable parts of the Partnerships in NRM Prospect class is the field trip, where participants hear and see first-hand examples of successful partnerships at USACE projects. In October 2019, W. Kerr Scott Lake hosted the class in Wilkesboro, NC and showed off their expansive partnership and volunteer program, providing ideas and inspiration for the class to take back to their home projects.

There was a lot to see at W. Kerr Scott, and the class had a busy day, meeting and hearing from 12 different partners and volunteer groups. The partners represented a variety of partnership agreement types, including Cooperating Associations, Handshake Funding, Challenge Partnerships, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Contributions, and Volunteer Agreements.

For the first few days, the class enjoyed perfect fall weather in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, but of course on the day of the field trip it rained for the majority of the day! Fortunately, the rangers that made up the class were used to working in adverse weather, and they didn't let the rain dampen their enthusiasm in asking questions and learning about the project's innovative partnerships. Bundled up in their rain gear and umbrellas, the class heard partners talk about how



Volunteers Butch and Trish Tatu speak to the class about the work they have accomplished over three years of service.



Donor wall in the Environmental Education Center



Melissa Walker from Bleu Moon Productions discusses setting up a Cooperating Association agreement with USACE to put on historical plays at the Forest Edge Amphitheater.

# 5th Annual War Hero Hunt Fosters Continued Partnership

5

Michael H. Saucier, Chief, Natural Resources Management, Atchafalaya Basin Floodway, MVN



*TOP:* Veterans bagged 10 deer during the 2019 WWH Deer hunt.

*MIDDLE:* WWH host, Mike Cheramie, stands between two of the veterans selected to participate in the 2020 WWH duck hunt on USACE's North Farm.

*BOTTOM:* Veterans and hunting guides with their waterfowl during the 2020 WWH hunt.

The New Orleans District hosted the 5th Annual Wounded War Heroes (WWH) hunt on January 13 and 14, 2020 on the USACE fee-owned properties at Indian Bayou and North Farm. The hunt took place within the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System Project, managed for recreation, environmental stewardship, and flood damage reduction. In addition to USACE, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), Ducks Unlimited, Wounded War Heroes, local veterans, hunting clubs, and Piggly Wiggly partnered to provide lodging accommodations and excellent cajun meals.

Seven veterans were pre-selected through the WWH program to participate in the hunt. On Monday morning and evening, the hunters were guided by USACE park rangers and LDWF biologists to hunt in all-access deer stands within the designated Indian Bayou hunting area. After last year's very successful deer hunt, the veterans were expecting abundant game. This year would prove to be different, with disastrous weather leading to an unproductive hunt. However, the hunters enjoyed much camaraderie and storytelling by Sheriff "Dune." The gloomy weather from Monday continued into Tuesday, but a duck's preference is different than that of a deer. The fog and rain at the North Farm allowed several of the veterans to bag their limit of six ducks. Most of the ducks were gadwall and teal, but one lucky hunter was skilled enough to take a white-fronted goose.

With the increasing popularity of this event, New Orleans District intends to continue or possibly expand the hunts to other USACE projects. Without the partnership provided by the State of Louisiana and the NGOs, this event would not have been possible. For more information, please contact Michael Saucier at 504-862-2525.

*Do you know who the PAC team representative is for your district? See page 8 for a complete list!*



# Conemaugh River Lake Receives Archeological Research Expertise

April Richards, Natural Resources Specialist, Conemaugh River, LRP



The Anthropology Department of Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) has partnered with USACE on Conemaugh River Lake property due to its cultural richness. A few field studies have been conducted by the university in the past.

Earlier this year, Professor Ford contacted USACE with a proposal to conduct an archaeological field school near the old site of Newport Village, which was settled by Europeans in the late 1700s near the Conemaugh River. After obtaining all necessary permits and real estate instruments, 17 IUP students spent six weeks in the summer learning archaeological field techniques such as creating shovel test pits, excavation units and geophysical surveys. During their lab, they dug up pieces of stone debris that showed humans were at this location as much as 8,000 years ago.

Artifacts were transported to the IUP archaeology lab to be cleaned and cataloged according to Department of the Interior standards. The students are studying the artifacts during the Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters. Once processed, the artifacts will be curated with USACE and a report



will be provided to Conemaugh and the Pittsburgh District Office.

Additional projects have been identified and both entities are looking forward to working together in the coming years. At present the organizations are working towards formalizing their research relationship with a MOU.

"A group of students and professors from Indiana University of Pennsylvania discovered something unexpected while working on an archaeological dig near Blairsville Borough—artifacts from 8,000 years ago. Anthropology professors Ben Ford and Bill Chadwick oversaw 17 IUP students for six weeks while they dug, mapped and explored Newport Village, which thrived from 1790 to 1820 near where Black Lick Creek meets the Conemaugh River."

[IUP Digs Into Blairsville, Find Artifacts 8K Years Old,](#)  
WESA-FM (Pittsburgh's NPR News Station), August 28, 2019



Dr. Ford teaches on-site to a group of IUP students.

# FY 19 Partnership and Volunteer Accomplishments



## PARTNERS ON PAPER?

**Do you need help formalizing a partnership?**

**Confused about where to start?**

**Reach out to your PAC rep today for help!**

**Want to know more about the various types of partnerships featured in this newsletter?**

**Visit the NRM Gateway Partnerships page!**

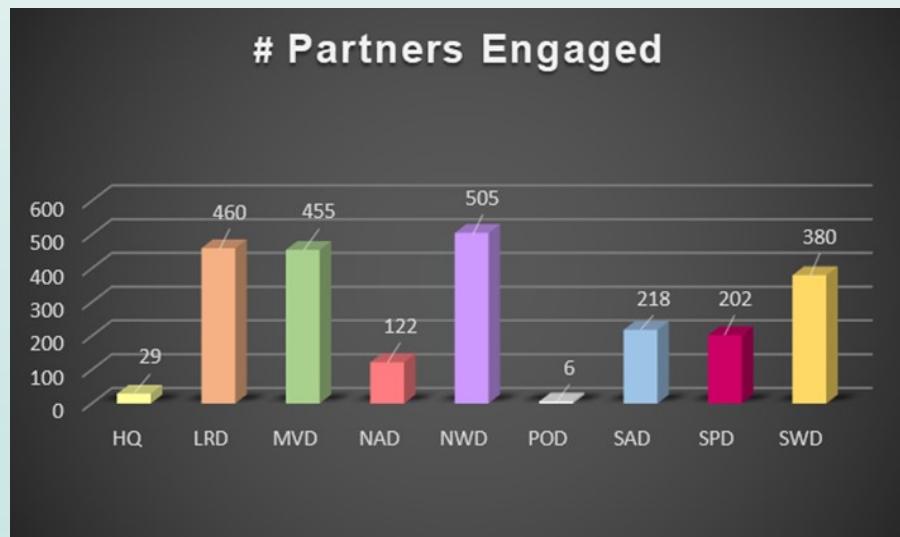
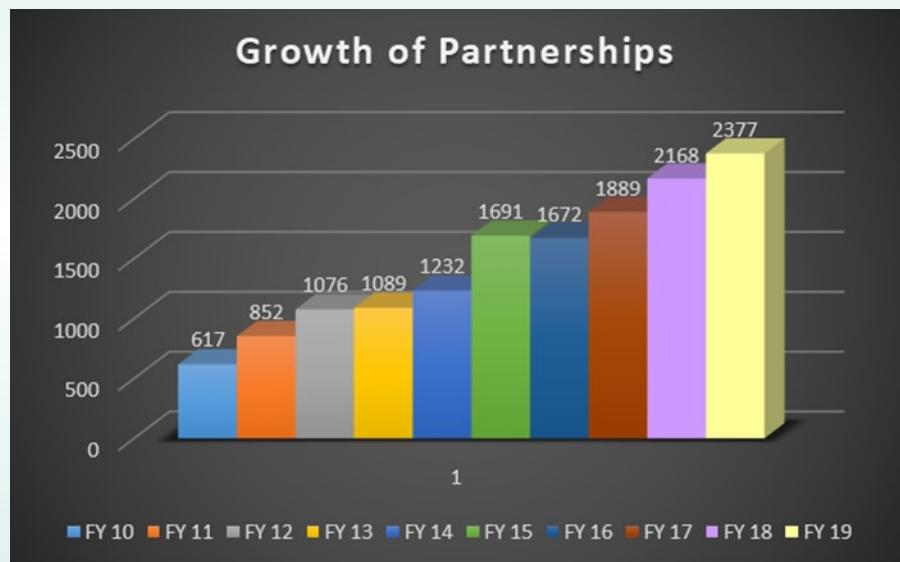
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Cape Abilities partners with the Cape Cod Canal (NAE) for litter pick up.

*Heather Burke, National Partnership Program Manager, HQUSACE*

- \* Total partners: 2,377 (9.6% increase from FY 18)
- \* USACE projects with partnerships: 264 of 403 (66%)
- \* Total value of partnerships: \$118,367,539 (68% increase from FY 18) (USACE: \$23.6 million investment/Partner leveraged investment: \$94.8 million)
- \* Number of volunteers: 28,550
- \* Volunteer hours: 1,505,860
- \* Value of volunteer service: \$38.3 million (Total volunteer hours x \$25.43/hour— Standard rate set by the Independent Sector and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.)
- \* USACE projects with volunteers: 291 of 403 (72%)



# NRM Gateway Spotlight: Partnerships Training

Heather Burke, National Partnership Program Manager, HQUSACE

**Partnerships - Training**

**APPL Presentations**

- APPL Advocacy Webinar, April 2014- pdf version

**Corps of Engineers Ongoing Available Training/Presentations**

- 2015: Rock Island Partnership Workshop (Mar 10-12)
- 2017 NRM Workshop Partnership/Volunteer presentations
- 2018 Excellence in Partnerships and Volunteer of the Year Award webinar, Oct 2018
  - EIP and Volunteer of Year webinar recording, Oct 2018
- Grants - 2017
- Handshake application webinar - August/September
- Handshake Program, March 2019
- How to Naturally Manage our Resources through Collaboration and Public Participation, June 2019
- Introduction to the Corps NRM Partnership Program - January 2017
- Military Partnerships - July 2017
- NRM Assessment/OMBIL FY 19 NRM Assessment/OMBIL Partnerships Module Data Entry

  - PowerPoint
  - Video Download

- SCA National Cooperative Agreement Work Order Procedures webinar - Oct 2016
- USACE/APPL Partnership Workshops
  - Exportable Training: PowerPoint Presentations from previous workshops
  - Volunteer Management Modules 1-3 (Position Descriptions, Recruitment, Interviewing) - February 2015
  - Volunteer Management Modules 4-7 (Motivation, Supervision, Training/Orientation, Delegating) - April 2015
  - Volunteer Management Modules 8-12 (Performance Reviews, Performance Problems, Recognition) - June 2015
  - Volunteer Program, April 2019
  - WRDA 2016- Challenge Cost Sharing Cooperative Management Agreements, May 2018
    - Webinar Recording
  - WRRDA 2014 Volunteer Implementation Guidance, August 2016

**FITV Interagency Volunteer Training**

- 55-Minute Training Series: Training Busy Staff to Succeed with Volunteers

**Partners Speakers Webinar Series**

- 2019
  - The Great Outdoors Fun, Nov 2019
  - Kids to Parks, Feb 2019
  - Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership, April 2019
  - Kids in Parks TRACK TRAILS National MOU, May 2019
- 2018
  - Kids in Parks: Designing Self-guided Trails that Get Kids in Parks, Mar 2018
  - Agents of Discovery Augmented Reality Platform and App
    - Pricing Sheet for USACE
- 2017
  - Park Prescriptions Program, Jan 2017
  - FLW Fishing Tournament Partnerships webinar, Feb 2017
  - Clean Trails.org (pdf of presentation), October 2017
  - US Forest Service-Barton Health Community Wellness Partnership, Oct 2017
    - Master Challenge Cost Share Agreement between USFS Lake Tahoe and Barton Health

The Partnership Advisory Committee and our partners provide multiple webinars and presentations throughout the year to keep everyone up to date on partnership opportunities and program changes. With everyone's busy schedules, we know it's often difficult to participate in the live webinars. Did you know that you can find all of them on the NRM Gateway at your convenience? Click here to visit the [Partnerships-Training page](#) and watch recorded versions of the presentations or review the webinar slides.



## ***Meet Your PAC Team:***

**Heather Burke: HQUSACE**

**Stacy Sigman – Chair: MVD (Lake Ouachita)**

**Scott Sunderland: NAD (Blue Marsh Lake)**

**Francis Ferrell: SAD (Falls Lake)**

**Allison Walker: LRD (Nashville District Office)**

**Taylor Saia: SPD (Northern Area Operations)**

**Rob Jordan: SWD (Lewisville/Ray Roberts Lakes)**

**Heath Kruger: NWD (Omaha District Office)**

**Tennille Hammonds: At-large member (RPEC- Fort Worth)**

## **Lake Shelbyville Fish Habitat Alliance (Cont. from page 3)**



Local students prepare to transplant aquatic plants raised in the nursery maintained by the LSFHA.



A large crowd of 290 enjoying the first annual Lake Shelbyville Fish Habitat Banquet in February 2019 raising over \$20,000.



Shelbyville cubes

