Cooperating Associations

Partnerships in NRM
PROSPECT Course

US Army Corps of Engineers
BUILDING STRONG®

Authorities

Authorities:

- 33 USC 2328, WRDA 1992, Sec 225
- ER & EP 1130-2-500, Chapter 9-Cooperating Associations

Cooperating Associations vs. Friends Groups

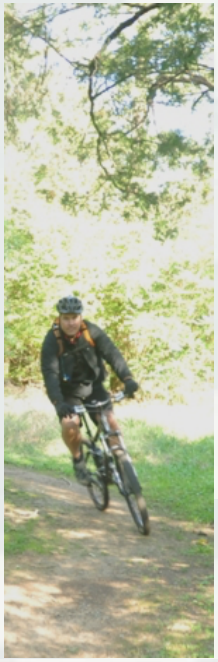
They are NOT the same thing!

- **Cooperating Association**: refers to a legal entity, organized under state law, which enjoys a non-profit and tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Service codes and which operates under the terms of a cooperating association agreement with the Corps.

- **Friends Group**: generally refers to local volunteer groups of citizens organized for a specific purpose or interest in a particular geographical area. Friends groups may or may not have 501(c) status. A friends group does not become a cooperating association unless an agreement is signed with the Corps.

Benefits of Friends Groups

- Even without a formal agreement, a friends group can get a lot accomplished for your project and be advocates for the Corps
- Example: Friends of Shutes Branch at Old Hickory Lake – Completed over 1300 hours of volunteer work to build a bike trail. Saved the Corps $40k
- Could not raise enough money needed to start a non-profit and become a cooperating association



Benefits of Cooperating Associations

- Associations can purchase materials, equipment, programs, exhibits, services, and publications to be used at the project.
- Fundraising, sponsoring, collaborating
- Associations can develop an organized constituency not typically accessible to the Corps.
- Associations can be advocates for the Corps. Some can lobby if they are established with that mission.
- Can hire support staff to help Corps missions.

Getting Started

- Consult with Office of Counsel early in the process of trying to develop a new cooperating association.
- Determine if there is an existing association or non-profit group in your area.
- USACE employees can facilitate activities that lead to creation of a cooperating association.
- Nonprofit groups must have a developed structure and operating procedures.
- Provide them resources to assist with forming an association
  - Web resources (IRS.gov, etc.)
  - Supporting associations (APPL)
  - Training

Partnering with an Existing or New CA

- Existing associations:
  - Pros
    - Availability of funds for start-up operations
    - Track record for references
    - Familiarity with Corps policies
  - Cons
    - Less control and flexibility
    - Potentially larger overhead expenses
    - Less focus on individual projects
- New associations:
  - Pros
    - More control
    - Lake/project focused
    - Clearer reporting
  - Cons
    - No history/predictability
    - Greater opportunity for failure

Cooperating Associations

- Cooperating Associations must have:
  - Board of Directors
  - Complete Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws
  - Non-profit 501 c status
  - Mission that aligns with the Corps mission

Cooperating Associations

- USACE Efforts
  - Provide the Association with Corps' goals, programs and activities.
  - Provide members with a sample agreement to review
  - Sign the agreement
  - Establish annual goals
  - Now the hard work begins…

Cooperating Associations

- USACE Efforts
  - Currently 60+ Cooperating Associations and Friends groups in Partnership with the Corps
  - http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/coopassoc/coopassoc.cfm

Success Story

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bV3IAXbEXC4

Clean Jordan Lake: Stewards of Change

CLEAN IT UP

Adopt-A-Feeder
Stream
Buckingham Hill- Apex

DO NOT LITTER

www.CleanJordanLake.org

US Army Corps of Engineers ®
Wilmington District

How Does Litter Harm Jordan Lake?

Small animals mistake trash, including cigarette butts, for food and can die from ingesting toxic chemicals that also impair water quality

Birds and other small animals are killed or injured when they get trapped in fishing line, 6-pack rings, plastic bags & other trash

Human illness can be caused by rodents & mosquitoes that are attracted to open containers

How Long Does Litter Stay in the Environment?

*Polystyrene foam materials can stay in the environment for over 1 million years.

Tell your family and friends NOT to litter. If you see litter, PICK IT UP. Volunteer with www.CleanJordanLake.org and the U.S Army Corps of Engineers.

REMEMBER: LITTERING IS ILLEGAL.

Cooperating Associations

- Remember: Successful Partners…
  - Want the partnership to succeed
  - Seek win-win solutions; being flexible but focused
  - Are open and clear about their own goals
  - Listen well and respond to other views
  - Are prepared to trust
  - Have integrity and act consistently
  - Effectively and efficiently carry out tasks and responsibilities
  - Will not just sweep difficulties under the carpet

Recap Questions

When you are developing an agreement to set up a cooperating association, who within your organization should you involve early in the process?

Office of Counsel

Recap Questions

TRUE of FALSE

Your cooperating association is having a fund raising event and has asked for your assistance in being a co-chair of the planning committee.

It is okay for you to do this.

FALSE

Recap Questions

Cooperating Associations CANNOT:

a. Operate bookstores in Corps facilities.
b. Charge special event fees.
c. Enforce Title 36.
d. Manage Corps recreation areas.

Recap Questions

TRUE of FALSE

A cooperating association and a friends group are the same thing.

FALSE

Questions?