

Handshake Partnership Program

Partnerships in NRM
PROSPECT Course



Hartwell Lake



®



Program History/Purpose

- Program originated in 2004
- Incentive for field sites to use develop partnerships and use partnership authorities
- Encourage community engagement
- Promote mutually beneficial activities
- Requires a formal agreement to achieve a mutually beneficial project (not just two people informally shaking hands)
- This is NOT a grant or granting program, although it looks very similar. It is an internal partnership stimulator.

Philpott Lake



Investment (FY 04 – FY16)

Handshake Funds: \$ 2,594,335
(161 project recipients)

Corps Offices: \$ 2,270,942

Partners: \$ 7,538,512

Total : \$ 12,403,789



Blue Marsh Lake



Jordan Lake

Basics

Challenge Partnerships Projects

- ▶ Corps facilities and resources maintained at 100% Corps expense
- ▶ Agreement with a non-federal public or private entity
- ▶ Within current spending authorities and in approved OMP



Basics

- \$100,000 total program available in FY 17
- \$20,000 maximum individual request
- \$5,000 pollinator project bonus
 - ▶ Could receive up to \$25,000 total with bonus
 - ▶ Incentive to formalize partnerships that benefit pollinators
 - ▶ Does not have a bearing on the application score, but does affect overall funds distribution



Project Examples: Trails

- Rock'n the Trail (NWK- Rathbun 2013)
- Fitness Trail (LRL- Caesar Creek 2013)
- **Persimmon Hill Multi-Use Trail/Spy Glass Hill (Enid 2004, 2007)**
- **Warsaw Riverwalk and Trail (Center Hill 2008)**
- West Alabama Birding Trail (SAM- Black Warrior 2011)
- **Trans-Ozark Trail Expansion (SWL- Norfolk 2009)**
- Tall Grass Heritage Trail (NWK- Melvern 2006)
- Blueways Trail (SAW- Philpott 2014)
- Mountain Bike Trail Skills Park (NAB- Raystown 2015)





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Project Examples: Recreation

- Archery Range (NAB- Jennings Randolph 2015)
- Campground Environmental Ed Pavilion (LRP- Tionesta 2013)
- **Gum Grove Launch Ramp (Dale Hollow 2009)**
- **Disc Golf Course (Allatoona 2015)**
- Roanoke River Basin Blueway Access (SAW- JH Kerr 2012)
- Community Picnic Shelter (SAW- Cape Fear 2012)
- East Bank Recreation Area Improvements (Tenn-Tom 2008)
- **Buffalo Valley Stream/Fishing Access (Center Hill 2008, 2010)**
- Natural Playscape (MVR- Red Rock 2014)





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Project Examples: Env. Stewardship

- Fisheries Habitat Enhancement (NWK- Smithville 2013)
- Shoreline Erosion/Trail Stabilization (Blue Marsh 2008/2010)
- Wildlife Management Area Model (SPN- Mendocino 2015)
- Warm Season Grass Restoration (LRL- Barren River 2009)
- Invasive Species Wash Station (MVP- Gull 2012)
- **Longleaf Pine Restoration and American Chestnut Re-Introduction Program (SAM- Allatoona 2007/2011)**
- Turtle Habitat Restoration (NAE- Edward MacDowell 2015)
- Dexter Wetland Restoration (NWP- Dexter 2010)
- Feral Cat Population Management (NAE- Cape Cod 2006)





Project Examples: Accessibility

- **ADA Pond and Pier (MVK- Ouachita 2013)**
- Wheelchair Access to Waterfall (NAE- Tully 2010)
- Island Creek Disabled Veterans Boat Dock (SAW- JH Kerr 2010)
- Sunset Trail Pond Accessibility (NAB- Jennings Randolph 2009)
- Accessible Watchable Wildlife Trail (LRP- Kinzua 2008)
- Universally Accessible Picnic Sites (MVR- Coralville 2007)
- Visitor Center Accessibility Improvements (LRB- Mt Morris 2007)
- ADA Fishing Pier, Boat Dock, Duck Blind (MVS- Kaskaskia 2015)
- Denby Bay ADA Trail (MVK- Ouachita 2005)





Project Examples: Interpretation

- Russian River Coho Salmon Documentary (SPN- Sonoma 2011)
- Eagle Nest Project (SWF- Waco 2013)
- Outdoor Learning Center (LRL- Rough River 2012)
- **Visitor Center and Trail Improvements (SAM- Allatoona 2009)**
- Kaskaskia/Mississippi River Interp Area (MVS- Kaskaskia 2010)
- **Raystown Conservation Ed Partnership (NAB- Raystown 2008)**
- Interpretive Gardens (MVP- Cross Lake 2015)
- Environmental Education Center (W Kerr Scott 2010)
- NW Discovery Water Trail Guide (NWP/NWW 2004)





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Project Examples: Safety

- Lucky Peak Mutual Aid Radio Repeater (NWW- Lucky Peak 2010)
- Regional Life Jacket Loaner Initiative (SAD- 2009)
- Severe Weather Warning System (MVS – Rend 2006)



Applications

- Application - NRM Gateway Partnership Page
<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/partners/partners.cfm>
 - MS Word form
 - Example Applications
- May submit multiple applications but each lake project may receive funding for only one Handshake project
- Recipients not required to sit out a year before applying again. However, must submit mandatory reports from previous year's funding and enter data in OMBIL before eligible for current funds.



Time Line

- Application Period Begins July
- Application Deadline Sep

- Recipients Announced Dec
- Agreement Deadline Aug
- Expend Funds 2 yrs
 - ▶ funds transmitted to District/Project via FAD



Let's take a closer look at the Handshake Application:

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/partners/partners.cfm>

Please review instructions before completing application!

Corps Lake/River Project Name: [REDACTED]

District / Division: [REDACTED]

Handshake Proposal Title: [REDACTED]

Corps POC Name: [REDACTED]

Telephone: ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED] - [REDACTED] ext. [REDACTED]

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

A. Checklist:

1. Will the Handshake funds be spent on Corps facilities and resources that are being fully maintained by the Corps? Yes No
2. Will the Challenge Partnership agreement be with a non-federal public or private entity(ies)? Yes No
3. Is the proposed activity within current authorities and contained in the annual or 5-year work plan in the approved lake project OMP? Yes No
4. Have all of the NEPA requirements been considered for this project? Yes No
5. Did you participate in a Handshake Webinar in 2015 or review a 2015 Handshake Webinar on the Gateway? Yes No

Applications – Recent additions

- NEPA consideration: Yes/No checkmark
- Webinar attendance: Yes/No checkmark
- Summary Statement (or Introduction): Should be a brief 3 to 4 sentence summary of the overall project. This field is limited to 1,500 characters.
- Change in bonus categories
 - ▶ First time recipient
 - ▶ Invasive Species project



Start Early

- September may seem like a long way off, but it will come quickly.
- Determine your project
- Work with prospective partners
- Identify needs and each partner's contribution
- Is the Handshake Program the right fit?



Smithville Lake

Lake Okeechobee



**It is very important when completing a
Handshake Application to
READ and FOLLOW
the Application Instructions.**

There are point deductions if not.



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A good application includes a thorough description about:

- the partners
- the project
- the overall benefit of the partnership

AND

Clearly addresses each evaluation criteria in concise paragraphs

It must tell us why the proposed project is valuable. Don't assume we already know.

Truman Lake



Handshake Project Summary Statement

- Describe the partnership and the work to accomplish
- The summary is limited to 1,500 characters, the total description should be no longer than three pages.
- Include the basic who, what, when, where, how.
- Outline concisely:
 - Who will accomplish each task
 - New facilities
 - Renovations to existing facilities
 - Research
 - Visitor Services
 - Educational or interpretive products created



Pomme de Terre Lake



Application Evaluation Criteria

Specifically address how the project will meet the six evaluation criteria

- **Longevity/Sustainability**
- **Partnership Value**
- **Recreational Benefit**
- **Environmental Stewardship Value**
- **Communication and Education Value**
- **Innovativeness/Uniqueness**



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Scoring

- Each application is evaluated and scored 1 -10 for each criteria, then weighted.
 - Sustainability/Longevity (12.5%)
 - Partnership Value (20%)
 - Recreational Benefit (20%)
 - Environmental Stewardship Value (20%)
 - Communication and Education Value (15%)
 - Innovativeness (12.5%)

- Maximum score for each application is 200 points per evaluator (usually 8 evaluators).



Scoring

- Each PAC member evaluates all applications and submits scores to coordinator.
- Scores are combined to get total score (1,600 max).
- Bonus points are added
- Applications that do not meet the guidelines outlined in the instructions will have points deducted from their final score.
- Projects are ranked in the order of total score.
- Funds are disbursed according to ranking and amount requested.
- It is possible that the lowest ranked funded project will not receive all of requested funds.



Criteria #1: Longevity/Sustainability

What is the life span of the product and the benefit to the Corps?

- What is long term benefit of the project?
- How long do you estimate it will be around?
- What is long term cost?
- Will there be on-going maintenance required?
- By whom?
- Will the project be removed or closed if maintenance is required but not funded?
- Longer term benefit and less O&M compete better



Criteria #2: Partnership Value

What is the significance of the partner's contribution to the project (e.g. critical partner, matching dollars, materials, in-kind services, etc.)?

- This category evaluates both the value of the partner and the value of their contributions.
- More partners compete better because there is a stronger partnering benefit and more potential contribution.
- The higher proportionately the value of the partner is to the COE, the more attractive the application.
- Include in this section what the Handshake funds will be used to purchase or provide (cost breakdown).
- Higher % of partner contribution competes better
- Significance of partner to the project competes better



Criteria #3: Recreational Benefit

Does the project improve the overall recreation experience for the project's users? Does it provide opportunities for various user types?

- What experiences are created?
- Who benefits?
- Are there multiple user groups?



- The more diverse and multi-functioning the recreation experience can be, the better the application will score.



Cottage Grove Lake



Criteria #4: Environmental Stewardship Value

How does the project contribute to the natural world, and the improvement of the Corp's natural and/or cultural resources?

Topics that usually score well in this category:

- Pollinator projects
- Invasive species control
- Aquatic & fisheries habitat improvements
- Wildlife habitat improvements
- Trails
- Research
- Improvements to the natural environment usually score better



Jordan Lake



Center Hill Lake



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Criteria #5: Communication and Education Value

Does the project increase public understanding of the Corps and its missions through interpretation, outreach, education and public information?

- It is important to show the effort in education
- It is important to show the impact of the efforts
- Is it interactive or is everything static?
- Explain how the benefits of the project are conveyed to the public and how the project improves the COE image.

Allatoona Lake



Much of the land surrounding Lake Allatoona remains forested. Located between Georgia's coastal plain and mountains to the north, this Piedmont area consists of low rolling hills covered in a mix of hardwoods and pines. Oak, hickory, sweetgum, beech, and maple share space with longleaf, shortleaf, Virginia, and Loblolly pines.

Common wildlife includes turkey, white-tail deer, grey squirrels, eastern chipmunks, and countless species of songbirds. Less numerous species like fox, coyote, and beaver also live around Lake Allatoona, but are seldom seen by our visitors. Perhaps you'll catch a glimpse of some of our wildlife on your walk today?

A few it is more likely to see you than you to see him. The quarter you see the more likely you'll be to spot our elusive wildlife.

**WALKING IN PIEDMONT MIXED FOREST
COOPER IRON FURNACE TRAIL**

US Army Corps of Engineers
MILWAUKEE DISTRICT

Criteria #6: Innovativeness

Describe the innovative nature of the partnership or the project. Are other organizations doing this kind of project? How is this project important and unique?

- What makes this idea so different?
- Why is it special?
- Is the partnership innovative or is it the project?
Explain the difference if there is one.
- **Convince the reader, “Wow, that is different.”**



William Dannelly Reservoir



Application Guidelines

- Don't assume the reader knows what you know.
- Project diversity is good, but not required.
- Follow the instructions on length:
 - Max of 1,500 characters on summary statement
 - Max of 3 pages of narrative and
 - Max of 4 pages of drawings/photos/maps/plans
- Provide the information in an easy to read, easy to find format.



FY 16 Incentive Point Category

- Projects that have never been chosen to receive Handshake funding previously are eligible to receive 200 bonus points
- Handshake applications that include invasive species control will be eligible to receive 100 bonus points.



Melvern Lake



Program Basics

- No required % matching contribution by partners
- Partner's contributions = cash, volunteer services/labor, materials, supplies
 - Reference ER & EP 1130-2-500 Ch 11
- Make sure to include all contributions made by partners on the application
- Proposals with higher % of partner contribution and participation usually compete better



Program Basics

- Handshake funds must be spent via the same processes as any other appropriated funds; in accordance with contracting laws, FAR, DFAR, and AFAR, and all other regulations.
- Projects must consider NEPA requirements that may be necessary prior to beginning work on the Handshake project
- Cannot “Give” Handshake Funds to partners
 - The Corps does not have granting authority
- Handshake funds cannot be spent to fund permanent Corps positions (labor) or travel



Managing Expectations

- Realistic view of the opportunity
 - FY 17: 15 applications
 - FY 16: 23 applications (16 selected)
 - FY 15: 33 applications (13 selected)
 - FY 14: 26 applications (13 selected)
 - FY 13: 27 applications (11 selected)
 - FY 12: 36 applications (13 selected)
- Handshake recipients: MVD (37), SAD (36), NWD (27), LRD (21), NAD (13), SWD (12), SPD (10)
- Prior to applying, discuss with partners what you will do if project is not selected
 - Go ahead with project using more local office and/or partner funds
 - Agree on a scaled down version
 - Identify funding from other sources, ie Corps Foundation grants
 - Try a different project
 - Cancel project



Q/A from previous classes

- *What happens if your project is selected, but your partner can't come up with their funding?*

The handshake funds are returned and likely offered to the next highest scoring applicant

- *What if cost of project is less than expected?*

The unused funds are returned. Handshake funding can only be used for the stated project.

- *How long do you have to expend your funding?* 2 years

- *Can the Corps contribution consist of just labor?* Yes

- *Can you use a different partner if your original partner falls through?*
Yes

- *Where can the funds be spent?*

Only on Corps lands and waters operated and maintained by the Corps



Review

- *What type of agreement is used if you are selected to receive Handshake funds?*

Challenge Partnership Agreement

- *What is the maximum amount of funding you can request?*

\$20,000

- *What is the maximum amount of funding you can receive?*

\$25,000

- *What amount of match is required by the partner for you to receive Handshake funds?* \$ 0

- *What is the deadline for submitting a Handshake Application?*

September or the end of the FY.

- *What are the six evaluation categories?*

Longevity/Sustainability, Partnership Value, Recreation, Environmental Stewardship, Communication & Education, Innovativeness



Handshake Program Gateway Page

Handshake Program

The Handshake Program offers a source of seed money to Corps installations for worthwhile partnership projects. The intent of this program is to initiate new, or enhance existing recreation and natural resources management opportunities. The objective is to provide an incentive to Corps projects to utilize partnering initiatives to their fullest potential. In addition, this funding is intended to encourage local organizations to partner with the Corps to construct, operate, and/or maintain local partnering projects. The Handshake Program is a way for the Corps to demonstrate our recognition that partnerships flow in both directions (i.e. partnerships are a "handshake," not a handout). Corps leadership has demonstrated their commitment to a partnership culture by establishing this program.

PLEASE NOTE: At this time, USACE has no authority or mechanism to give a non-federal partner funds. Contact your district partnering POC or division Partnership PDT member if you have questions concerning this issue.

Questions about this program should be directed to [Allen Gwinn](#), Handshake Program POC at 814-658-6810.

- [Handshake Program Fact Sheet](#)
- [Challenge Partnership Template](#)

Final Report Forms

- [FY 2013](#)
- [FY 2012](#)
- [FY 2011](#)
- [FY 2010](#)

- [Applications and Agreements](#)
- [Program Presentations](#)
- [How To Prepare a Winning Handshake Application Webinar](#)

Handshake Program Recipients

- [Summary of 2004 – 2013 Recipients](#)

Handshake Program Applications and Agreements

Trails

- 2009:
 - Carlyle [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Norfolk [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2010:
 - Waco [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Hartwell [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2011:
 - BWT [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Carlyle [Application/Agreement](#)
 - DeGray [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Ouachita [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2012:
 - Hartwell Lake [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Lost Creek Lake [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Rathbun Lake [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Stockton Lake [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2013:
 - Caesar Creek Lake [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Mark Twain Lake [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Rathbun Lake [Application/Agreement](#)

Recreation

- 2009:
 - Dale Hollow [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2011:
 - Alabama River [Application/Agreements](#)
 - Oahe [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Philpott [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2012:
 - [Application/Agreement](#)

Interpretation

- 2009:
 - Allatoona [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Cottage Grove [Application/Agreement](#)
 - DeGray [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Mendocino [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Walter F George [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2010:
 - W Kerr Scott [Application/Agreement](#)
 - Kaskaskia [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2011:
 - Sonoma [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2012:
 - Rough River [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2013:
 - Waco Lake [Application/Agreement](#)

Accessibility Improvements

- 2009:
 - Jennings Randolph [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2010:
 - Tully [Application/Agreement](#)
 - John H Kerr [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2013:
 - Lake Ouachita [Application/Agreement](#)

Safety

- 2009:
 - SAD [Application/Agreement](#)
- 2010:
 - [Application/Agreement](#)



Handshake Scoring Exercise

Each student should have a Handshake Scoring Exercise sheet and a Handshake Project Exercise sheet

- We will walk through each of the application sections together
- There will be examples of good and poor application language
- We will score each of the examples and then write your own for your proposed Handshake project.



Example Statements

Let's begin by evaluating previously submitted examples of sustainability / longevity.

On your Handshake Scoring Exercise sheet, score each example from 1-10.
(1 = lowest/ 10 = highest score)

Each statement should be evaluated independently of any other statement.



Sustainability Examples

1. Both the ABA/ADA compliant boat dock upgrade and fishing pier will be constructed of concrete with steel hand rails and will therefore be flood resistant.
2. The materials we are using will last.



Partnership Value Examples

Double click on spreadsheet to access data entry fields:

	Local Corps Office	Handshake Funds	SCA	Partner 1	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8	Total
In-Kind Services	\$5,000	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,000	\$4,500	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$18,500
Travel	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials and Supplies	\$10,000	\$25,000	N/A	\$1,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$41,500
Equipment Use	\$0	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000
Funds Contributed	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personal Property	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Volunteer	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$4,272	\$4,272	\$1,282	\$1,068	\$0	\$5,126	\$2,777	\$6,408	\$25,205
SCA Intern/Crew	\$0	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other (explain below)	\$0	\$0	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$15,000	\$25,000	\$0	\$5,272	\$4,272	\$6,282	\$20,068	\$4,500	\$5,126	\$8,277	\$6,408	\$100,205
Share of Total Cost	15%	25%	0%	5%	4%	6%	20%	4%	5%	8%#	6%	100.0%

1. These partners have made significant contributions to the project in volunteer hours, materials, and in-kind services.
2. The project will serve to strengthen our existing partnerships.



Recreational Benefit Examples

1. The revitalization of the area will provide critical opportunities for plant identification, bird and wildlife watching, lessons in wildlife attraction, photography, and quiet reflection with universal access...
2. The benefit to recreation will be a much safer and user friendly group picnic area.



Environmental Stewardship Examples

1. The projects will also drastically reduce sediment loads entering the lake in the areas where surface water interacts with the erosion prevention projects; improve the fishery and provide additional habitat for invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, waterfowl and a variety of upland wildlife...
2. It would be a great method to turn an environmental risk into an environmental benefit



Communication and Education Examples

1. Wayside exhibits, signs, educational instruction, and existing bulletin boards will all be used to discuss the environmental stewardship mission, the flood control mission, efforts to improve water quality, and enlighten visitors on the other recreational possibilities.
2. It will be a site for interpretive programming involving paddling, water safety, exploring, birding and others...



Innovativeness Examples

- 1 ...is innovative because it attacks four different erosion sources at four different locations with four different specific solutions and provides a multitude of other recreational benefits at the same time.
2. This partnership will utilize common goals to help build stronger recreation and educational opportunities, benefiting all parties.



Exercise

- On your Handshake Project Exercise sheet, fill in the name of your lake, the title of your Handshake project, and potential partners that you might work with.
- Develop a summary statement outlining YOUR plan to work with your partners for your proposed Handshake project. (10 min)
- The first sentence should say exactly what you are doing.
- Develop the evaluation factors.



Handshake Project Exercise Review

- Break into groups of 2-3
- Share your Handshake proposals with your groups and help each other fill in the gaps to make your proposal more competitive.
- Need a few volunteers to share their proposals with the class for critique and more ideas for improvements.

