

# Handshake Partnership Program

Partnerships in NRM  
PROSPECT Course



## 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 shaking hands (informal))
- This is NOT a grant or granting program, although it looks very similar. Internal partnership stimulator.

Philpott Lake



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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 authorities and in approved OMP



BUILDING STRONG®

## Basics

- \$250,000 – \$300,000 total annual program
- \$30,000 maximum request
- \$5,000 cooperating association bonus
  - ▶ Could receive up to \$35,000 total with bonus
  - ▶ Incentive to formalize partnerships by entering into a cooperative agreement
  - ▶ Does not have a bearing on the application score, but does affect overall funds distribution



BUILDING STRONG®

## Time Line

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| ▪ Application Period Begins                     | July  |
| ▪ Application Deadline                          | Sept  |
| <hr/>   |       |
| ▪ Recipients Announced                          | Dec   |
| ▪ Agreement Deadline                            | Aug   |
| ▪ Expend Funds                                  | 2 yrs |
| ▶ funds transmitted to District/Project via FAD |       |



BUILDING STRONG®

# Applications

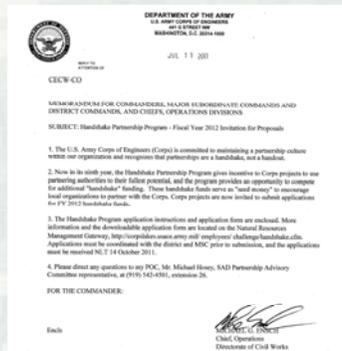
- Application - NRM Gateway Partnership Page

<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.



BUILDING STRONG®

# Applications – New This Year

- NEPA consideration: Yes/No checkmark
- Webinar attendance: Yes/No checkmark
- Summary Statement: 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
  - Partner contributions >70%



BUILDING STRONG®

# 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

BUILDING STRONG®

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

There are point deductions if not.



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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



## 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.



BUILDING STRONG®

# 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**



**BUILDING STRONG®**

# 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).



**BUILDING STRONG®**

## Scoring

- Each PAC member evaluates all applications and submits scores to coordinator.
- Scores are combined to get total score (1,400 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.



BUILDING STRONG®

## Handshake Exercise

Pass out the Handshake Forms

- Break into groups of 3-4
- Each person / group will develop a trail construction project with a shelter and kiosk at the trail head.
- We will walk through each of the categories together
- There will be examples of good and poor application language
  - You have to evaluate each and share with the class
  - You will then have time to write your own



BUILDING STRONG®

## Summary Statement

First, develop a summary statement outlining YOUR plan to work with the Friends of YOUR NAME Lake to build a nature hiking trail with kiosk and shelter.

The first sentence should tell us exactly what you are doing.

Do not exceed 1,500 characters (including spaces).

If you exceed the character limit points may be deducted.



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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**



BUILDING STRONG®

## Sustainability Examples

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

Each example should be scored 1-10.



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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.
3. The materials have a life span of 20+ years and were chosen for the project to ensure a long lasting, low maintenance fence.
4. The shoreline stabilization rip-rap will not require any additional annual maintenance once it is installed.
5. This shoreline will not erode.



BUILDING STRONG®

## Sustainability Examples

6. It will be around for a long time.
7. It is expected that the platform will provide a stable eagle nesting place for 20+ years.
8. This project will last for future generations.
9. We will find a Friends group to provide the on-going maintenance.
10. The anticipated operative life span is a minimum 30 years due to the durable nature and longevity of the components.



BUILDING STRONG®

## Sustainability Statement

Now...write your own sustainability description for your trail / kiosk / shelter...

and let's share and score examples 1-10.



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$5,272</b>	<b>\$4,272</b>	<b>\$6,282</b>	<b>\$20,068</b>	<b>\$4,500</b>	<b>\$5,126</b>	<b>\$8,277</b>	<b>\$6,408</b>	<b>\$100,205</b>
<b>Share of Total Cost</b>	15%	25%	0%	5%	4%	6%	20%	4%	5%	8%#	6%	100.0%

Each example should be scored 1-10.

1. The project will also serve to strengthen our existing partnerships by...
2. ...this project will be yet another example of their involvement in the creation of new recreation opportunities.
3. These partners have made significant contributions to the project in volunteer hours, materials, and in-kind services..



BUILDING STRONG®

## Partnership Statements

Write your own partnership description...

and let's share and score.



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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?



Tenn-Tom restroom

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



Cottage Grove Lake



## Recreational Benefit Examples

Just like before, each example should be scored 1-10.

1. Even though low stream flows during non release times or drought conditions would prohibit or limit kayaking and canoeing, these access points would still be heavily used by anglers and picnickers wanting to participate in stream activities.
2. Improved fishing not only allows for more recreational activity but also drives tourism, and provides economic impact to area communities...
3. 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...
4. The benefit to recreation will be a much safer and user friendly group picnic area.



BUILDING STRONG®

## Recreation Statements

Write your own recreation description...

and let's score some.



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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



BUILDING STRONG®

## Environmental Stewardship Examples

Each example should be scored 1-10.

1. It is important to work proactively to keep additional invasive species from entering the lake and to prevent further spread of existing invasive species.
2. 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...
3. This project will improve the ecosystem through habitat restoration, invasive species eradication, fire risk reduction, and improve wildlife diversity.
4. It would be a great method to turn an environmental risk into an environmental benefit



BUILDING STRONG®

# ES Statements

Now...write your own ES description...

and let's share.



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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



## Communication and Education Examples

Each example should be scored 1-10.

1. Interpretive signs located around the course will provide educational, cultural, environmental and historical significance.
2. 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.
3. It will be a site for interpretive programming involving paddling, water exploring, birding and others...
- 4...by promoting safety and knowledge on water related activities available around our lakes.



## Communication & Ed Statements

Now...write your own communication and education plan...

and let's share.



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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

BUILDING STRONG®

## Innovativeness Examples

1. This type of project has never been attempted in our region where there are several different union groups working together as volunteers.
- 2 ...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.
3. This project has taken a different approach in the development of a partnership...
4. This project will provide conceptual to visual progression in educating the public on the environmental concept of erosion control.
5. This partnership will utilize common goals to help build stronger recreation and educational opportunities, benefiting all parties.



BUILDING STRONG®

## Innovative Statements

Write your own innovation statement...

and let's share.



BUILDING STRONG®

## Application Suggestions

- 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.



Walter F George Lake

## FY 16 Incentive Point Category

- Projects where the partners' contributions meet or exceed 70% of the total project costs = 100 bonus points
- Projects that have never been chosen to receive Handshake funding previously = 100 bonus points
- Categories may change for FY17.



Melvern Lake



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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



BUILDING STRONG®

## Managing Expectations

- Realistic view of the opportunity
  - 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



BUILDING STRONG®

# 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

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

### Recreation

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

### Interpretation

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

### Accessibility Improvements

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

### Safety

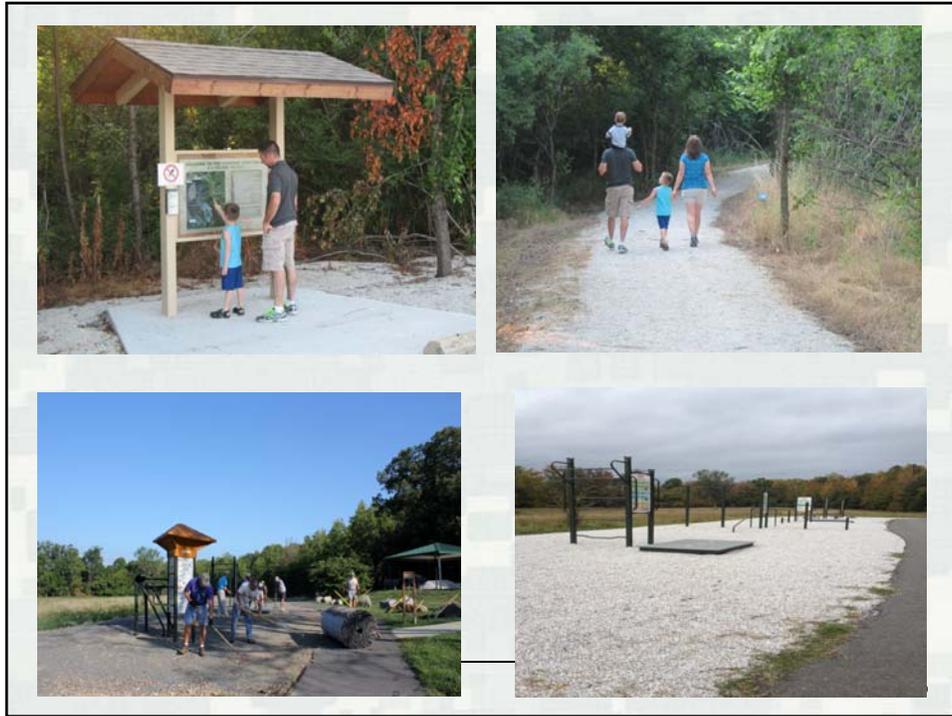
- 2009:
  - o [SAD Application/Agreement](#)

## Project Examples: Trails

- **Rock'n the Trail (NWK- Rathbun 2013)**
- Fitness Trail (LRL- Caesar Creek 2013)
- McGregor Park Trail (NWP- Lost Creek Lake 2012)
- **Persimmon Hill Trail/Spyglass Hill Trail (MVK- Enid 2004/2007)**
- 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)



BUILDING STRONG®



## Project Examples: Recreation

- Archery Range (NAB- Jennings Randolph 2015)
- Campground Env Ed Pavilion (LRP- Tionesta 2013)
- Paint Creek Kayak/Canoe Access (LRH- Paint Creek 2012)
- **Rockhaven Equestrian Park (NWK- Clinton 2012)**
- Roanoke River Basin Blueway Access (SAW- JH Kerr 2012)
- Community Picnic Shelter (SAW- Cape Fear 2012)
- **ADA Fishing Pier, Path, Parking (SAW- Falls Lake 2014)**
- **Kids Fishing Pond and Trail (NWK- Stockton 2014)**
- Natural Playscape (MVR- Red Rock 2014)



BUILDING STRONG®



BUILDING STRONG®

## Project Examples: Env. Stewardship

- **Fisheries Habitat Enhancement (NWK- Smithville 2013)**
- Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention (NWO- Fort Peck 2013)
- 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)



BUILDING STRONG®



## 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)



**BUILDING STRONG®**



## Project Examples: Interpretation

- Eagle Nest Project (SWF- Waco 2013)
- Outdoor Learning Center (LRL- Rough River 2012)
- Russian River Coho Salmon Documentary (SPN- Sonoma 2011)
- **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)
- **Rathbun VC Preliminary Design (NWK- Rathbun 2004)**
- NW Discovery Water Trail Guide (NWP/NWW 2004)



BUILDING STRONG®



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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)**



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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 fee-owned Corps land operated and maintained by the Corps



BUILDING STRONG®

## 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?*  
\$30,000
- *What is the maximum amount of funding you can receive?*  
\$35,000
- *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



BUILDING STRONG®

## Handshake Exercise

Now take the other Handshake development template and make some brief start to the creation of a Handshake Project at your lake / project / site.



BUILDING STRONG®



BUILDING STRONG®