# **Volunteer Program**

#### **Partnerships in NRM PROSPECT** Course

"The views, opinions and findings contained in this report are those of the authors(s) and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position, policy or decision, unless so designated by other official documentation."

US Army Corps of Engineers

Saylorville Lake













## **The Corps Volunteer Program**

Volunteers play an important role in protecting natural resources and maintaining recreation facilities at Corps projects.

#### In 2018: 31,156 volunteers contributed 1,621,763 hours of work with an estimated value of \$40 million

Volunteers can perform almost any task that a paid employee can:

- Park/Campground/Visitor Center hosts
- Interpretation/education
- Fish and wildlife habitat improvements
- Invasive species management
- Trail construction and maintenance
- Photography.... And more!





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# **Why You Need Volunteers**

Budget realities do not allow you to accomplish your mission with the staff you have.



- Volunteers are your link to the local community. They are often some of the best advocates of the Corps of Engineers and our partners.
- Volunteers have unique skills and abilities that you can draw on.... Anything from a lifetime of experience to the strength and enthusiasm of youth

Every position we fill with paid staff, is a missed opportunity to engage the community and build our constituency.







### What Volunteers Can and Can't Do

- Volunteers can perform almost any task that a paid employee can do, provided they have received training or have experience.
- They can perform duties that once were, or are currently preformed by Corps employees.
- Cannot:
- Enforce Title 36
- Create policy



• Volunteers will not be used to displace any personnel of the Corps of Engineers





## **Creating Strategic Volunteer Jobs**

- What problem are you trying to solve or what community need are you trying to meet?
- What are the forces contributing to that problem/ what are the obstacles you must overcome to solve the problem?
- Which strategies can you afford to pursue with paid staff?
- What can volunteers do to pursue the other strategies?

#### Example: Carters Lake "Volunteer Hub"

- List of tasks that need to be done and hours earned for doing the job
- Volunteers select the job they want to do and sign up on the board
- Each job has list of equipment needed and where to find it
- Result = More productive/happier volunteers/less supervision needed



# **Motivating Your Volunteers**

- It is the volunteer coordinator's goal to achieve planned results through other people, by giving them:
  - Ownership
  - Responsibility for outcomes
  - Authority to think
  - A defined way to determine success
- Create a sense of community



- When you find good volunteers, inquire about their future plans.
   Let them know you want them back.
- Have FUN. Having fun and spending time with your volunteers is better than any certificate or award.



## **Volunteer Management**

• Assigning work/Job Hazard Analysis

Recognizing if your volunteer is the wrong person for a particular task

• Dealing with difficult people



• Don't avoid having difficult discussions.

• Know when to cut someone loose.



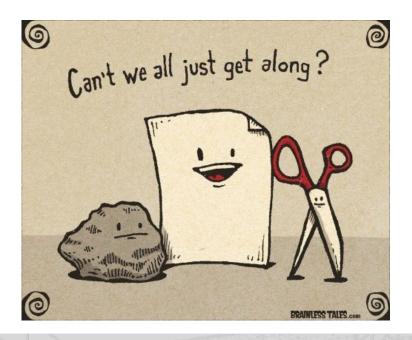
"I take it this department has had conflicts."





#### **Volunteer Management Exercise**

- 1. In teams of 2 or 3, use scenario cards to role play situations you might encounter. One group member will play the role of the volunteer, another will be the volunteer coordinator.
- 2. Class discussion: How did it go? Any best practices?







### **Volunteer Program Authority/Policy**

- 33 USC 569c (Public Law 98-63), Amended by WRRDA 2014 Sec 1047(d): Gave the Chief of Engineers the authority to accept the services of volunteers and provide for their incidental expenses, including expenses relating to uniforms, transportation, lodging, and the subsistence of those volunteers to carry out any activity of the Corps except policy making, law or regulatory enforcement.
- ER/EP 1130-2-500, Chapter 10 Corps of Engineers Volunteer Program. Superseded by 12 August 2016 "Implementation Guidance for Section 1047 (d) Services of Volunteers, of the Water Resources and Reform Development Act (WRRDA) 2014, Public Law 113-121" (Currently working to convert 2016 guidance into ER/EP format)
- Policy Letter 04-01, October 2004: Established the Corps use of the Independent Sector's hourly rate to determine the value of service
   FY19 rate = \$25.43 (Updated each April)



#### Legal Alien/Permanent Resident Volunteers

Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551)



Foreign passport that contains a temporary I-551 stamp or temporary I-551 printed notation on a machine-readable immigrant visa (MRIV)



Appendix E of ER: Examples of acceptable documentation forms

- Volunteer service may be accepted from legal aliens (permanent residents) or foreign exchange students.
- Must present J-1 or F-1 Student Visa (or passport if in the U.S. in tourist status from a visa-waiver country where visas are not required) or U.S. Permanent Resident Card INS Form I-551 (formerly known as Alien Registration Receipt Card) for review and verification.





## **Background Checks**

- **Required** for any volunteer in <u>one or more</u> of the following scenarios:
  - Individuals who volunteer for more than 180 calendar days in a year
  - Positions that require wearing the Corps volunteer clothing/name tag who work independently of Corps personnel
  - Positions that work independently of USACE personnel that are regularly in contact with children under 18 without a parent or guardian present. (\*Ref: Army Directive AD 2014-23)
  - Positions that require access to government files and records.
  - Positions that require the collection or handling of fees
  - Positions that require access to a Corps networked computer
  - Background checks are effective for one year (\*Ref: HQ Security Office)
  - Checks can be shared between districts/offices for same volunteer







### **Background Check Procedures**

- Volunteer Coordinators shall work with their District Security Office to obtain background checks and follow proper procedures
  - Districts with procedures in place (on NRM Gateway): LRN, LRP, MVR, NAD, NWP, NWS, SAJ, SAM, SAW, SWF, SWL, SWT
- National Crime Information Center Interstate Identification Index (NCIC III) is the baseline check for <u>non-CAC</u> volunteers. Valid for one year.
- All information received as a result of a background check will be held in confidence and handled according to Privacy Act regulation. Required components include, at a minimum:
  - Social security verification
  - Address trace
  - State or county criminal history
  - Sex offender registry to search all 50 states for known sex offenders



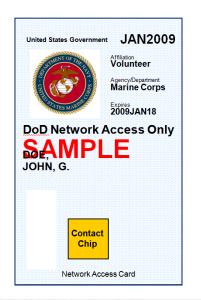


#### **Computer Access For Volunteers**

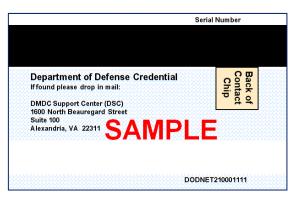
 Volunteers requiring government computer access connected to Department of Defense (DOD) networks must be issued a Volunteer Logical Access Credential (VOLAC) card.



• There is no cost for the VOLAC card, but there may be a cost associated with obtaining the required fingerprints during the background check process.

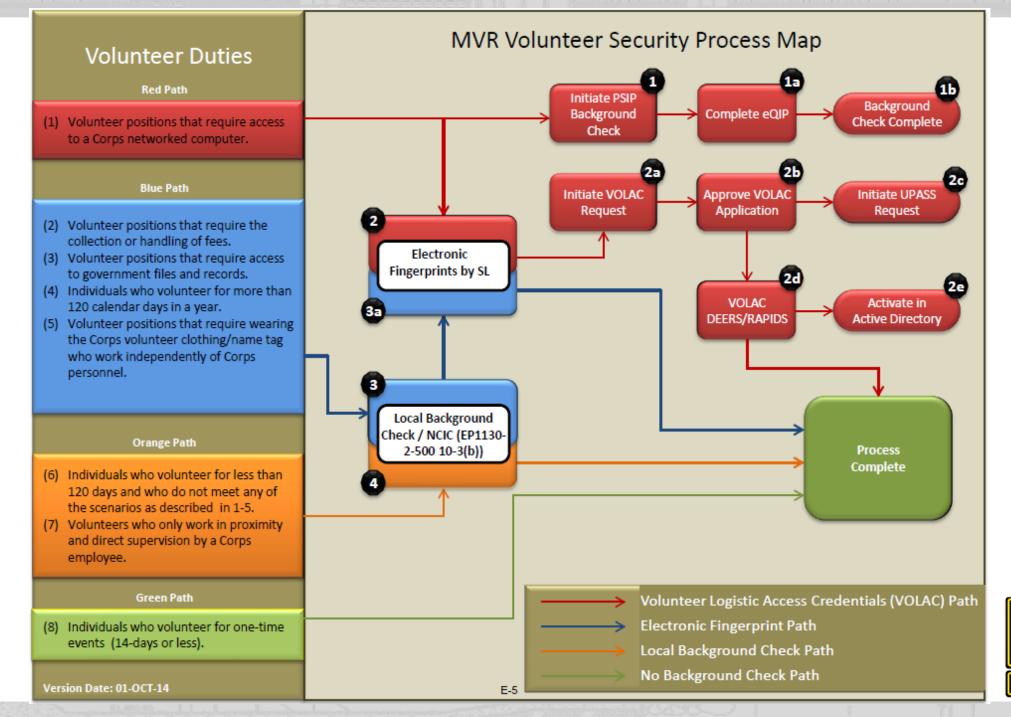


• Volunteers who only use stand alone government computers that are not connected to a DoD network do not require a VOLAC

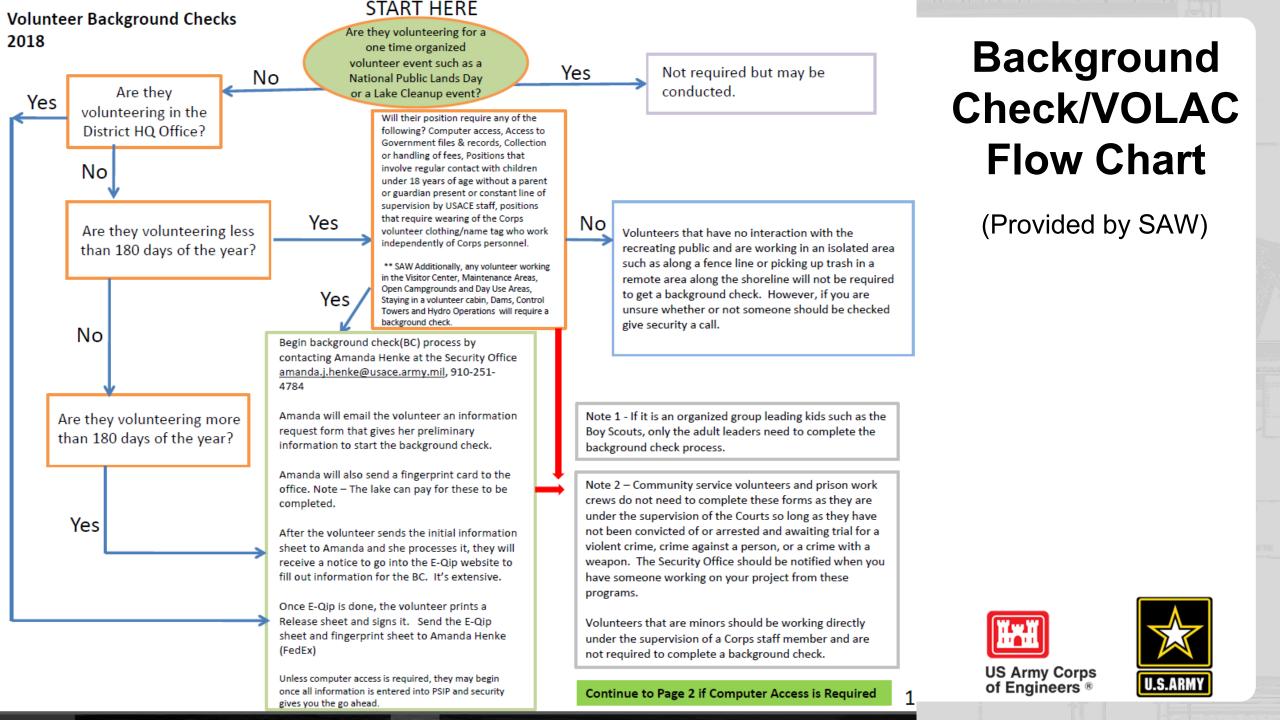








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#### **Children Volunteers**

- Children under the age of eighteen years may be volunteers, provided they have the written consent of their parent or guardian on the OF 301a Volunteer Service Agreement form.
- If children are volunteering as part of a group, the leader must provide a complete list of group participants and separate OF 301a agreements signed by the parents/guardians for all participants under the age of eighteen.
- Used to accept the form of another organization (school, youth group, Boy Scouts, etc)
- Army General Counsel ruled that signing another organization's consent form is not sufficient to protect USACE.



## **Surety Bonds**

- When the LWCFA was repealed, the Corps was no longer required to bond volunteers, and also had no authority to pay for bonds. This did not impact the use of bonds for contractors.
- Bottom line: The Corps <u>can</u> continue to use volunteers to collect fees under the authority of 33 USC 569c.
- Volunteers need to go through the same fee collection training as a government employee and must sign a statement on the volunteer agreement that states the person accepts the risk and liability of handling government funds.
- Volunteers may pay for their own bonds, but it is not a requirement.
- Comment from Army General Counsel: Surety bonds are normally used to protect against default of a contractual obligation. It is inconsistent for USACE to require volunteers to obtain a surety bond when USACE employees are not required to do so.



## **Volunteer Clothing**

- Official Corps volunteer clothing items must be purchased from the Corps uniform contract provider. Local purchase of similar items to the contact in different colors is not authorized.
- Multiple quantities of items may be provided to an individual. (Recommend 1 clean shirt per day of work week.)
- Volunteers are not authorized to wear the NRM uniform patch or any other item of the official NRM Class A-B-C-D uniform.
- For volunteers performing maintenance duties, T-shirts may be ordered from a local vendor with the Corps logo and "Volunteer", but must be in colors similar to those offered under the uniform contract, with the exception of safety colored shirts and reflective materials.







# Volunteer Clothing

#### Available from VF Imagewear:

- Vests: red
- Sweatshirt jacket: red
- Ball cap: white/black
- Ball cap- summer: khaki or red
- Name Plate
- Patch (by request to uniform committee)



Volunteer



#### To order:

Go to the Website:

https://www.vfsolutions.com/lma/

Account Number: UAA code in CAPS (or project code - typically 5-6 letters

total, with 3 letters for district and 2-3 letters for project.)

**Example: LRNOLD** is the code for Old Hickory Lake in the Nashville District.

Password: UAA code in CAPS (same as above Account #).

Click on "Login" - "Continue" - "Volunteer Program" is at the bottom left.

Use the government VISA credit card to purchase.





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#### **Food/Beverage Purchases**

- Food and beverages may be provided to volunteers only when such subsistence is incidental to the rendering of volunteer services.
- The GPC card may only be used to purchase food with prior written approval from the District Commander.
- Volunteers may be reimbursed for meals during the period of volunteer work, which shall not exceed the GSA schedule for government per diem.
- Meals and beverages provided for a recognition event are not incidental to the rendering of volunteer services, and are therefore impermissible.
- Any food or beverages purchased under this policy must be reviewed and approved by the District Resource Management Office (RM) and documented (i.e. email or Memorandum for Record (MFR)).







# **Volunteer Lodging**

- Volunteers may be provided modest lodging at the project where their service occurs and not be required to pay a user fee.
- Districts may use appropriated funds to rent, purchase, or construct volunteer accommodations.
- Permissible lodging may include mobile homes, RVs, campers, cabins, hotel rooms, apartments, former government housing, or campsites.
- Accommodations should be noted on the volunteer agreement.





### **Volunteer Transportation**

- Reimbursement for transportation expenses to and from a volunteer's residence may be authorized if within a reasonable commute
- Reimbursement for POV mileage will not exceed rates identified in the JTR.
- Long distance travel may be reimbursed in cases where it can be shown that the services of the volunteer are of exceptional value.
- Invitational travel orders approved at the District level shall be used for long distance travel.
- Long distance reimbursement will not exceed the amount identified in the JTR
- Transportation may include any mode recognized by the JTR, including POV, public transportation, trains, and airplanes.



### **Volunteer Appreciation**

	Print Form E-mail
ĨŦĨ	United States Army Corps of Engineers
	Certificate
	of Appreciation
	Duccented to:
	Presented to:
	Presented to:
	In appreciation and recognition of your generous contribution.
	In appreciation and recognition of your

- Projects are encouraged to show appreciation for volunteer services received. Volunteers may be issued a certificate of appreciation to acknowledge their service, as well as be featured in articles, on websites, and thanked in person.
- Items such as celebration meals, appreciation gifts, or cash awards are not authorized for purchase with appropriated funds for volunteers, but <u>may be</u> <u>donated</u> by Friends groups, cooperating associations, or other partners to recognize outstanding volunteers.
- Individual and family/couple volunteers are now eligible for the Enduring Service Award, National Volunteer Award and Volunteer Excellence Coins, sponsored by the Corps Foundation



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#### **National Volunteer Award**



2015: Hugh Clark, Shenango River Lake (LRP)
2016: Bill Barnes, Lake Ouachita (MVK)
2017: Will & Judy Carter, Saylorville Lake (MVR)
2018: Melody & Randy Parks, Lucky Peak (NWW)



#### **Volunteer Appreciation**

#### Volunteer Appreciation Walls









#### **Volunteer Pass Program: Corps Pass**

- Approved in November 2012: enables volunteers who have served a minimum of 100 hours at Corps managed areas to receive a free Annual Day Use Pass
- Volunteers can accumulate hours at multiple Corps projects.
- Volunteer hours will be verified and entered by volunteer coordinators in a centralized database.
- Database launched in late May 2013 <u>https://gateway.erdc.dren.mil/nrm/vhs/</u>
- <u>https://gateway.erdc.dren.mil/nrm/vhs/district.cfm</u> (District access)
- 45 lakes participating with 446 passes issued between 2013 2018
- Supplemented by the ATB Volunteer pass in 2016







## Volunteer Pass Program: ATB Pass

- Went into effect on January 1, 2016 when the Corps fully implemented the America the Beautiful pass program
- 250 hours of cumulative service = free America the Beautiful Volunteer Pass
- Volunteers can accumulate hours at Corps, BLM, BOR, FWS, USFS, and NPS sites. Hours earned at other agencies must be verified by the volunteer's prior coordinator.
- Volunteer hours earned at Corps lakes will be verified and entered by volunteer coordinators in the centralized database that is also used for the Corps pass.
- Covers entrance fees and day use fees at participating agencies for one year from date of issuance



### **Volunteer Coin Program**

- Created in May 2015. Sponsored by the Corps Foundation
- Coins awarded to regional nominees for the National Volunteer Award and national winner, and to volunteers who perform extraordinary acts of service
- New larger coin recently developed





### **Volunteer Safety**

- The same safety briefings, trainings, and equipment provided to Corps personnel will also be provided to volunteers
- Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) must be completed and signed by the Corps volunteer coordinator/supervisor and the volunteer, and saved with the Volunteer Agreement form
- Activity Hazard Analysis (AHA) may also be completed for specific one time tasks/events, or to supplement the JHA
- Samples of JHAs and AHAs on the Gateway
- Injuries to volunteers are reported in the same manner as those involving Corps personnel: CA-1 & CA-16 (must be filled out by a Dr).

ACTIVITY: Entering excavations or trenches	ANALYZED BY/DATE: Bill Clevenger 13 April 2002	<b>REVIEWED BY/DATE:</b>
PRINCIPAL STEPS	POTENTIAL SAFETY/HEALTH HAZARDS	RECOMMENDED CONTROLS
Ensure work area is safe	Injuries to head or feet, falls	Wear hardhat, safety-toed shoes and safety glasses. Use ladders for access or exit of excavations
Entering excavations/trenches	Slide slope failure. Shoring collapse	Excavation/trench sides should be sloped according to the OSHA Regulations concerning side slopes for excavations/trenches. Do <b>not</b> enter an excavation/trench unless you feel it is safe. all unsecured objects should be moved away from the edge of the excavation/trench. Assure that slopes are according to regulation or approved shoring and ladders are used. Reference EM385-1-1, Section 23.
Briefly inspect excavation/trench side slopes or shoring	Objects falling into excavation/trench	All materials should be moved at least two feet from the edge of the excavation
Exit excavation/trench	Falling off ladder	See JHA for "Using Ladders". Do <b>not</b> use a backhoe bucket to enter/exit an excavation/trench

### **Volunteer Reporting in NRM Assessment/OMBIL**

- Volunteer data must be captured each year during October in the NRM Assessment tool
- Annual Project Data Update: Record total number of volunteers, volunteer hours, and reimbursable expenses
- Annual Partnerships Update: Record number of volunteers and volunteer hours that the partner provides
- Hours served by SCA and other youth conservation corps groups should be entered as volunteer hours in both update sections.



# Volunteer Data Decision Tree

Available on NRM Assessment/OMBIL Partnerships FAQ page and Volunteer Program FAQs page:

http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/faqs.cf m?Id=partner-OMBIL&Nav=partner&View=Yes

https://corpslakes.erdc.dren.mil/employees/faqs.cfm ?Id=volunteer&View=Yes

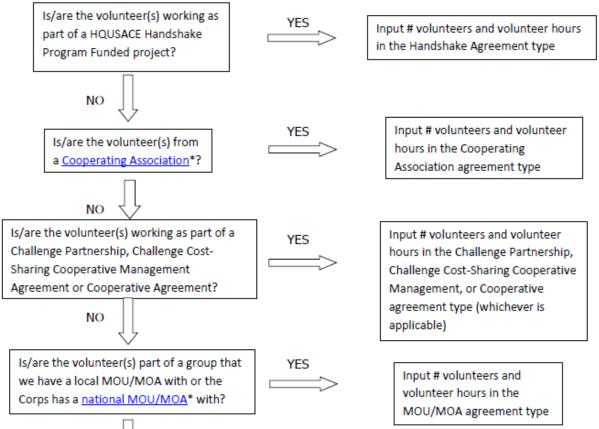
#### Step 1. NRM Assessment Tool NRM Module, Step 1- Volunteer Information

Enter ALL volunteer hours in this section of the NRM Assessment Tool. This is where you will capture the total number of volunteers, total hours of volunteer service (which will auto-calculate the total value of the service), and total incidental expenses reimbursed to all volunteers for the FY.

#### Step 2. NRM Assessment Tool Partnership Module

In addition to gathering information about the overall number of volunteers, hours, and value, we are also trying to capture more detailed data about volunteers that are part of a partnership. Some volunteers such as camp hosts, gate attendants, and other individuals who volunteer may only be counted in the NRM Module update. Other volunteers that are part of a partner organization should also have their hours counted in the Partnership Module update.

Please use the flow chart below to determine whether to count a particular individual volunteer's or group of volunteers' hours in the Partnership Update section of OMBIL.



### **Volunteer Program Forms**

- **OF 301:** Volunteer Application (Approved by OMB for all agency use)
- **OF 301a:** Volunteer Agreement (Approved by OMB for all agency use)
- **OF 301b:** Volunteer Group Agreement (for adult groups)
- ENG Form 4882-R: Volunteer Service Record
- **Standard Form 1164:** Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business (Volunteer's incidental expenses)
- Standard Form 87: Federal Employee and Military Fingerprint Card (Used for background checks for VOLAC card)
- Standard Form 85: Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (for VOLAC)
- **OPM 306:** Declaration for Federal Employment (for VOLAC)





#### **Resources: NRM Gateway**

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US Army Corps of Engineers ® https://corpslakes.erdc.dren.mil/employees/volunteer/volunteer.cfm

#### **Natural Resources Management Gateway**

Home Visitors Lake Discovery Recreation Env Compliance Env Stewardship Partners & News/Events People Forums Learning GETS Tools New Postings Submit Index/Search

#### Volunteer Program

#### Headquarters POC

Corps projects offer many volunteer opportunities in recreation and natural resources management. Volunteers can serve as park and campground hosts, staff visitor centers, conduct programs, clean shorelines, restore fish and wildlife habitat, maintain park trails and facilities, and more. Corps personnel can recruit their own volunteers or get help from the <u>Volunteer Clearinghouse</u>, (1-800-VOL-TEER or 1-800-865-8337), a national information center for people interested in volunteering at Corps projects across the country. Corps offices that have upcoming projects or events that volunteers can assist with may use the Volunteer Clearinghouse to <u>submit their volunteer projects on-line</u>.

- Policy & Procedures
- Volunteer Forms
- Program History
- Training
- Volunteer Clearinghouse
- Related Sites
- National Public Lands Day
- Division & District POCs 3
- Volunteer Awards
- Volunteer Program Annual Reports

- News / Current Issues
- FAQs
- Good Enough to Share
- Volunteer Clothing, Posters, and Brochures

to the future . . .

- Volunteer Plans and Handbooks
- Job/Activity Hazard Analyses
- Background Checks/Volunteer Computer Access
- Corps Photo Album for Volunteers
- Volunteer Pass Program

#### Who Can Volunteer?

You are eligible to volunteer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers if you are:

- A U.S. citizen or a legal alien (permanent) resident), or foreign exchange student with J-1 or F-1 student visa
- 18 years or older
- Anyone under age 18 may participate with written consent from a parent or guardian.

Many volunteer positions do not require prior experience, but let us know if you have an area of expertise.



#### When Can You Volunteer?

Volunteer opportunities are available for a day. a weekend, or long-term. Positions range from office work to vigorous physical outdoor labor. You may work part time or full time, anytime of the year.





How to Volunteer

in volunteering with the Corps.

to volunteer.

information about your interests, talents,

You can also find opportunities at www. volunteer.gov, where you can apply directly

dates available, and locations you may want

online for a position. To find out more about





### **Resources:** Volunteer **Brochure**

#### U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

#### Making a Difference

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VOLUNT



Volunteers play a valuable role in helping the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers care for the environment and provide high quality recreation opportunities. Each year, people like you give their time, expertise, and resources to serve millions of visitors who enjoy Corps-managed lands and waters



The Corps of Engineers is the nation's largest federal provider of outdoor recreation, with stewardship responsibilities over 12 million acres at 404 lakes and rivers projects located in 43 states. Our volunteers are people who want to give back to their communities and are interested in the work of the Corps' natural resources management program.

#### Why Volunteer?

People volunteer for many reasons. Some like the flexibility volunteering allows, while others want to make a difference, or want to gain news skills/experience.

Volunteering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a great opportunity to:

- Meet people and form new friendships
- Explore and live in new places
- · Work in beautiful outdoor settings
- Provide community service
- Increase your career options
- · Earn college credits with internships
- Enjoy free camping while serving Have fun!

#### Where can you serve?

Corps lakes and river projects are located throughout the United States. Visit www. corpslakes.us to find a lake near you.





What Can You Do?

You will become part of a team of more than a half million volunteers who, in the last decade, have served more than 15 million hours worth \$300+ million.

How our volunteers help:

#### Recreation

- Build and maintain trails
- Serve as campground/visitor center hosts
- Conduct educational programs and tours
- Develop and build displays
- Maintain facilities
- Collect fees

#### Natural Resource Management

- Remove invasive species
- Plant native vegetation
- · Build and install wildlife/fish habitat
- GIS/Mapping
- Remove trash and debris

#### Administration

- Write or edit materials for publication
- Photography
- · Computer/database entry

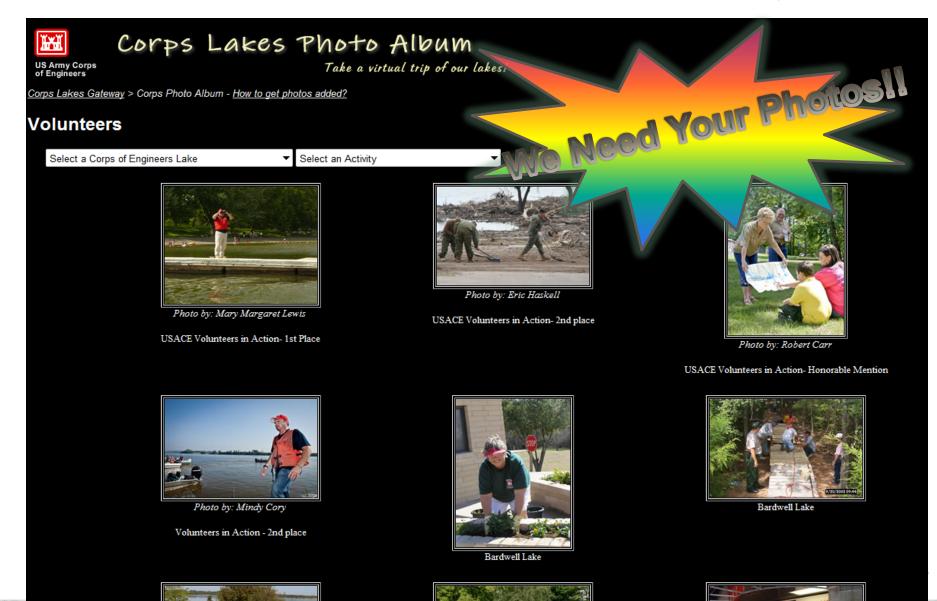
.... And so much more!



**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES** 

#### **Resources: Corps Lakes Photo Album**

https://corpslakes.erdc.dren.mil/visitors/album.cfm?Option=View&Id=0&Activity=Volunteers



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#### **Resources: Volunteer Clearinghouse**

http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Recreation/Volunteer-Clearinghouse/

800-VOL-TEER (800-865-8337)

POC: LRN- Bobby Jackson (615) 736-7192



<u>HOME</u> > <u>MISSIONS</u> > <u>CIVIL WORKS</u> > <u>RECREATION</u> > VOLUNTEER CLEARINGHOUSE

#### Volunteer Resources

Volunteer Clearinghouse

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers in Action

Contact Us

Submit a Listing

Useful Links Water Safety Corps Lakes Gateway USACE Natural Resources

Education Foundation

#### Volunteer Clearinghouse

Welcome to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Volunteer Clearninghouse. The Corps of Engineers, which is the steward of almost 12 million acres of land and water, offers many volunteer opportunities to care for recreation facilities and natural resources.

The Volunteer Clearinghouse serves the Corps of Engineers nationwide to link potential volunteers with Park Rangers at lakes and waterways that need them. The clearinghouse provides information about the volunteer program and directs people to the point of contact, usually a Park Ranger, at the lake or location of interest.

Callers should be ready to provide information about their interests, talents, dates available and locations they may want to volunteer.

Corps Park Rangers, serving as volunteer coordinators, can also use the Volunteer Clearinghouse to help find volunteers. Volunteer coordinators that need volunteers can send their volunteer vacancies to the Clearinghouse to be listed on the website.

Volunteer opportunities include:

#### Camparound Host



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# Volunteer.gov Update

- New interagency contract set up September 2018, managed by NPS
- Used by 9 federal agencies and 22 state partners
- Higher security for PII protection, mobile platform, social media, online application, more user friendly
- Currently under development





# Questions?





