

Handshake Partnership Program

Partnerships in NRM
PROSPECT Course



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Program History/Purpose

- Program originated in 2004
- Incentive for field sites to 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



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Investment (FY 04 – FY19)

Handshake Funds: \$ 2,948,224
(184 project recipients)

Corps Offices: \$ 2,559,752

Partners: \$ 8,379,935

Total : \$ 13,887,911

***60% was contributed by 560 total partners**



Most Handshake Awards



- Raystown – 7last won 2017
- **Allatoona - 5last won 2015**
- Shelbyville - 5last won 2017
- **Mark Twain – 5last won 2016**
- Carlyle – 4last won 2016
- Mendocino – 4last won 2015
- Philpott – 4last won 2014
- W Kerr Scott - 4last won 2016
- Rend – 4.....last won 2019
- Waco – 4.....last won 2019



Winners by Category

- Trails - 57
- Recreation (non-trail) - 38
- Environmental Stewardship - 53
- Universal Access - 17
- Fishing - 13
- Education - 3



Lake Shelbyville 2012



JH Kerr Lake 2012



Basics

- 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
- \$200,000 total program available in FY 20
- \$25,000 maximum individual request
- Incentive Points:
 - The project will be completed with involvement of a national MOU partner with which the Lake or Project hasn't previously partnered. (100 pts)
 - The project reduces O&M cost to the Corps over the lifecycle of the proposed project or improves existing infrastructure. (100 pts)



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Project Examples: Trails

- West Penn Trail Bridge Rehab (LRP-Conemaugh 2015)
- Fitness Trail (LRL- Caesar Creek 2013)
- Orange Oswald Climber Access Trail (LRH- Summersville 2019)
- Chestatee Canoe Trail and Launch (SAM- Lanier 2004)
- West Alabama Birding Trail (SAM- Black Warrior 2011)
- Interpretive Trail (MVK- DeGray 2011, 2016)
- Tall Grass Heritage Trail (NWK- Melvern 2006)
- Blueways Trail (SAW- Philpott 2014)
- Mountain Bike Trail Skills Park (NAB- Raystown 2015)



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Highest Total Value, Highest Partnership Value

SWL - Norfolk Lake 2009

Expansion of the Trans - Ozark Trail

Total Value - \$777,500

Handshake Funds – \$ 10,000

Corps Funds \$143,000

Partner Total \$634,500



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Project Examples: Recreation

- Archery Range (MVR- Saylorville, 2019)
- Fishing Tournament Center (SAW- Philpott 2011)
- Campground Environmental Ed Pavilion (LRP- Tionesta 2013)
- Gum Grove Launch Ramp (LRN- Dale Hollow 2009)
- **Disc Golf Course (SAM- Allatoona 2015)**
- **Roanoke River Basin Blueway Access (SAW- JH Kerr 2012)**
- Community Picnic Shelter, ADA improvements (LRE- Soo Locks, 2018)
- ORV Park Improvements (NWK- Milford 2016)
- Buffalo Valley Stream/Fishing Access (LRN- Center Hill 2010)
- Natural Playscape (MVR- Red Rock 2014)



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Brady Park, St. Marys Falls Canal

A gathering place

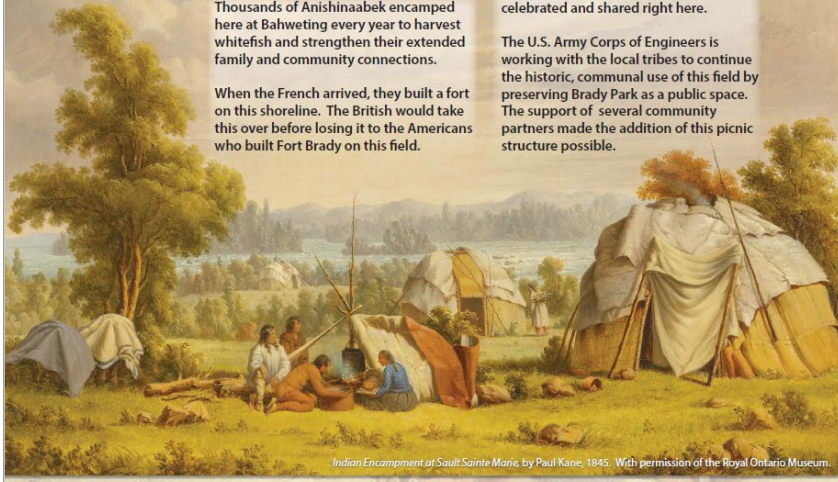
The St. Marys River has drawn people to this field for thousands of years.

Thousands of Anishinaabek encamped here at Bahweting every year to harvest whitefish and strengthen their extended family and community connections.

When the French arrived, they built a fort on this shoreline. The British would take this over before losing it to the Americans who built Fort Brady on this field.

Meanwhile, this area remained a sacred site for the Anishinaabek and a social center for the local community. Sacred ceremonies and significant events were celebrated and shared right here.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is working with the local tribes to continue the historic, communal use of this field by preserving Brady Park as a public space. The support of several community partners made the addition of this picnic structure possible.



Indian Encampment of Sault Sainte Marie, by Paul Kane, 1845. With permission of the Royal Ontario Museum.



July 4th parade on Brady Park Grounds, 1876. Courtesy Archives of Michigan.



School children from an American flag more than 100 feet long during a celebration at Brady Park, ca. 1920. Courtesy of the Chippewa County Historical Society.



Military parade in Brady Park, ca. 1925. Courtesy of the Chippewa County Historical Society.



Picnic Structure
Project Partners:



Sault Ste Marie
PURE MICHIGAN
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU



The Interlake
Steamship Company



Project Examples: Environmental Stewardship

- Shoreline Erosion/Trail Stabilization (NAP- Blue Marsh 2010)
- Wildlife Management Area Model (SPN- Mendocino 2015)
- Warm Season Grass Restoration (LRL- Barren River 2009)
- Invasive Species Wash Station (MVP- Gull 2012)
- Honey Bee Hives and Pollinator Garden (SAM- Carters 2018)
- Turtle Habitat Restoration (NAE- Edward MacDowell 2015)
- Fisheries Habitat Enhancement (MVS- Carlyle 2016)
- American Chestnut Reintroduction (LRP- Shenango 2011)
- Feral Cat Population Management (NAE- Cape Cod 2006)



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Highest Partner Value by Category: Environmental Stewardship

SPN – Lake Sonoma

Fish Hatchery Stream Access and Restoration

- Total Project Value: \$182,750
- Handshake Funds: \$10,000
- Corps Total: \$17,500
- Partner Total Value: \$165,250
- Number of Partners: 6



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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)



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Highest Partner Value by Category: Accessibility Improvements

SAW – John H Kerr: 2010

Island Creek Disabled Veterans Boat Dock/Access

- Total Project Value: \$213,176
- Handshake Funds: \$25,000
- Corps Total: \$63,176
- Partner Total Value: \$150,000
- Number of Partners: 2



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Project Examples: Interpretation

- Russian River Coho Salmon Documentary (SPN- Sonoma 2011)
- Eagle Nest Project (SWF- Waco 2013)
- Outdoor Education Area (NWK- Stockton 2016)
- **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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Highest Partner Value by Category: Interpretation

W. Kerr Scott Lake

Environmental Education Center Exhibits

- Total Project Value: \$265,000
- Handshake Funds: \$30,000
- Corps Total: \$130,000
- Partner Total: \$105,000
- Number of Partners: 2



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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
<https://corpslakes.erdc.dren.mil/employees/handshake/handshake.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.



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Time Line

Application Period Begins	July
Application Deadline	Sep
<hr/>	
Recipients Announced	Dec
Agreement Deadline	Aug
Expend Funds	2 yrs

– funds transmitted to District/Project via FAD



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Applications – Recent additions

- NEPA consideration: Yes/No checkmark
- Review by District Office of Counsel: Yes/No checkmark
- Awareness of FAR/DFAR/AFAR contracting laws and regulations: Yes/No checkmark
- Webinar attendance: Yes/No checkmark



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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.



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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



Handshake Funding Cost Breakdown

- Clearly spell out what the Handshake funding will be used for
- Detail materials, supplies, contracts, etc that will be purchased.



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).



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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.



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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



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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.
- Higher % of partner contribution competes better
- Significance of partner to the project competes better



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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.

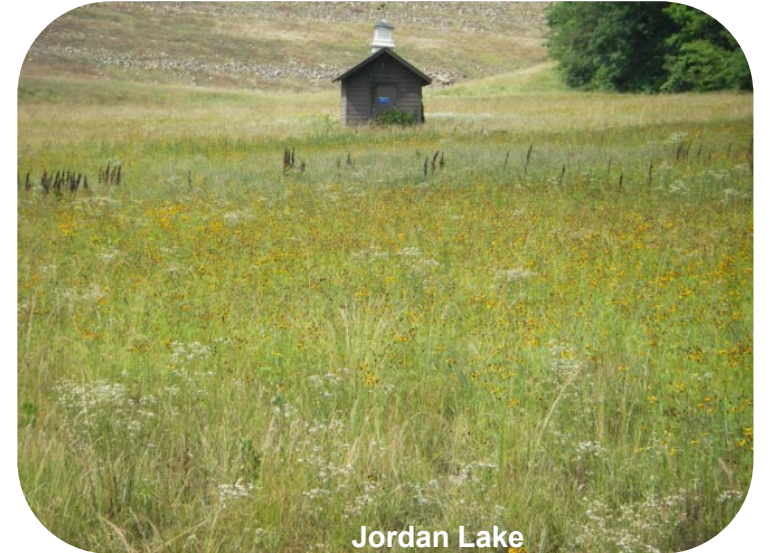


Criteria #4: Environmental Stewardship Value

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 USACE image.



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?

Hickory Maple Sweetgum

Can you find an example of these five types of tree?

Oak Beech

A fox kit is more likely to see you than you to see him. The quieter you are the more likely you'll be to spot our shrew wildlife.

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

US Army Corps of Engineers
March 2012

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



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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.



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FY 20 Bonus Point Categories

- Partnering with a national MOU organization that the Project hasn't worked with before (100 pts)
- Demonstrates O&M savings. Must show how and how much. Bonus points for no additional O&M or reduced O&M (100 pts)



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



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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



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Managing Expectations

Realistic view of the opportunity

FY 20: 16 applications (in process of scoring)

FY 19: 11 applications (6 selected)

FY 18: 18 applications (7 selected)

FY 17: 15 applications (9 selected)

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)



- 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



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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



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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
- *Can I give the Handshake funds to the partner to spend?*

No, only the Corps can use the Handshake funds

- *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



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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 [Heath Kruger](#), Handshake Program POC at (402) 995-2716.

2018 Application

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

- [Applications and Agreements](#)
- [Success Stories](#)

Handshake Program Recipients

- [Spreadsheet of Handshake Recipients 2004 - Current](#)
- [Recipient Memos 2004 - Current](#)

Final Report Forms

- [FY 2016](#)
- [FY 2015](#)
- [FY 2014](#)
- [FY 2013](#)

- [News/Current Issues](#)
- [How To Prepare a Winning Handshake Application Webinar](#)

Handshake Program Applications and Agreements

Trails

- 2011:**
 - BWT [Application/Agreement](#) - Alabama birding trail development, brochure, website
 - Carlyle [Application/Agreement](#) - River walk 1.5 mile multi-use trail with accessible fishing pier
 - DeGray [Application/Agreement](#) - One-mile Interpretive geology trek and multi-use trail
 - Ouachita [Application/Agreement](#) - 16 mile extension of Vista Trail
- 2012:**
 - Hartwell Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Mountain bike trail facility improvements
 - Lost Creek Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Nature trail signs
 - Rathbun Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Trail rehabilitation
 - Stockton Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Multi-use trail (1.6 mile)/ parking lot construction
- 2013:**
 - Caesar Creek Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Fitness trail
 - Mark Twain Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Campground/VC connector trail construction

Environmental Stewardship

- 2011:**
 - Allatoona [Application/Agreement](#) - American chestnut restoration
 - Shenango River [Application/Agreement](#) - American chestnut re-introduction
 - Francis E Walter [Application/Agreement](#) - Borrow area habitat restoration
- 2012**
 - Gull Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Invasive species wash station
- 2013:**
 - Fort Peck Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Aquatic invasive species prevention
 - Lake Red Rock [Application/Agreement](#) - Fish habitat improvement rearing pond construction
 - Raystown Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Wildlife and Bird Watering/Pond rehabilitation
 - Smithville Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Aquatic habitat enhancement/fish structures
- 2014**
 - New Hogan [Application/Agreement](#) - Recycling program development
 - Allatoona Lake [Application/Agreement](#) - Osprey platform construction
 - Kaw Reservoir [Application/Agreement](#) - Archaeological research project
 - Carr Creek Lake [Application/Agreement](#)