

# Volunteers

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US Army Corps of Engineers  
**BUILDING STRONG**®

# What You will Learn

- How volunteers can be used to augment your existing project to carry out the Corps mission
- The volunteer's role in project operations and their limitations
- How to care for and retain your volunteers



# What Volunteers Can Do

- ER/EP 1130-2-500, Chapter 10 provide policy, guidance, and procedures for the Corps Volunteer Program
- 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 performed by Corps employees.
- Examples include boat operations, mowing, maintenance work, vehicle operation, gate attendants and fee collectors.
- Volunteers have the same benefits of protection as Federal employees under the Federal Employee's Compensation Act and the Tort Claims Act



# What Volunteers Cannot Do

- Enforce Title 36
- Volunteers will not be used to displace any personnel of the Corps of Engineers.



# 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... from a lifetime of experience to the strength and enthusiasm of youth.



# Who Can Volunteer

- Citizens of the United States
- Children with parental consent
- Convict crews (non violent offenders)
- Corporate volunteers



# Where to Find Volunteers

- Look far and near. Look to your local community for some, and look nationwide through Workamper News for others.
- Be honest in describing what duties you will expect your volunteers to perform.
- Accurately describe the living conditions.



# Strategies for Volunteer Success





# What are we supposed to do?

(tips on how to save the volunteer coordinator's sanity)



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Hi! My name is Bob.  
I love to volunteer and  
stay busy. I will worry  
you to DEATH if you do  
not have something for  
me to do.



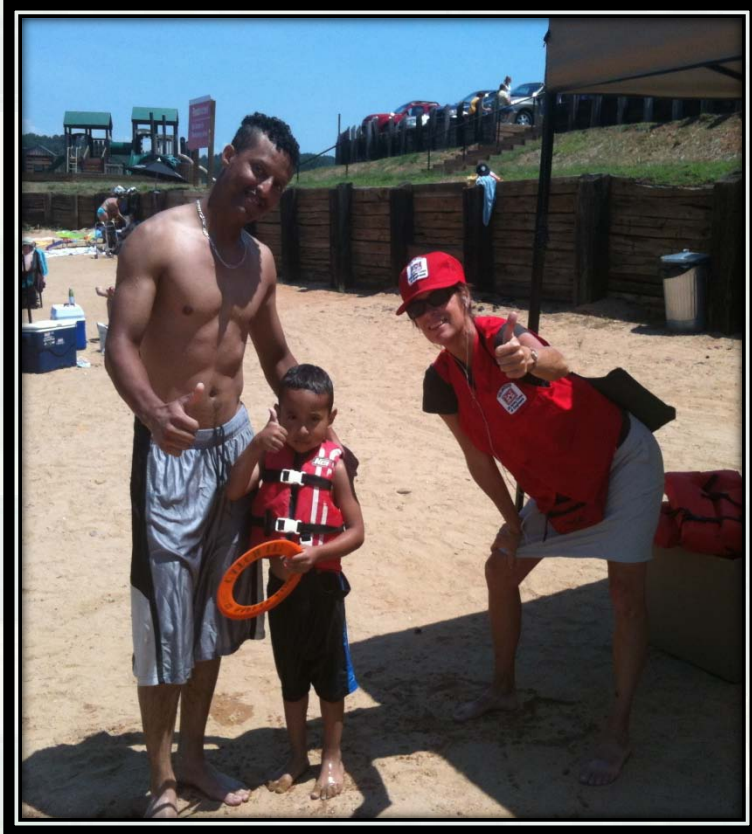
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- Create repeatable work
- Make equipment accessible
- Define clear boundaries (i.e. good hearts do not necessarily equate to good carpenters)



# Repeatable Work



- front desk
- swim beach patrol
- playground inspections
- litter cleanup
- campground maintenance
- landscaping
- interpretative programs

Tip: Make all necessary equipment available without a ranger's assistance if possible.



# Hold Weekly Meetings!!!

- Discuss work schedule
- Allow staff to address volunteers
- Go around the room and give volunteers opportunity to provide ideas and concerns



Weekly volunteer meetings were a BIG and unexpected hit at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir



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# 11<sup>th</sup> Commandment Know Thy Volunteers!



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# Retired Navy



Guess what he likes?



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Courtesy boat inspections during busy holidays



Water safety programs



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# Ms. Creative



Georgie organized a successful story telling festival at an underutilized amphitheatre. All proceeds benefited a local literacy program. This event was a very positive community outreach effort.



# Mr. Wizard & Mr. Fix it



- boosted wireless internet signal
- created scope of work for new volunteer campsites
- electrician
- master carpenter
- major work on government house renovation



# Ms. Active

(Don't put her behind a desk)



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# The Volunteer Village

How W. Kerr Scott went from good to GREAT!



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# Must Have

- Water
- Electric (50 amp)
- Dump station access

# VERY Nice!

- Onsite sewage
- Washer/dryer access
- Wireless internet

# Setting up “The Village”



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# W. Kerr Scott's Village was built in an unused day use area



- 4 sites
- Onsite water, electric and sewage
- Wireless internet
- Laundry room (SUPER popular)
- Walking distance to visitor center



# Avoid This!!!

(verbatim quotes from volunteers)

“I’ve met some surly rangers in my time”

“They didn’t really care about the volunteer program”

“They told us we were *just volunteers*”



# Do This!!!

- Create a sense of community (you can't force or fake it but you can foster it)
- **CONSTANTLY** inquire about good volunteers' future plans. Let them know you want them back.
- **HAVE FUN.** Having fun and spending time with volunteers trumps any certificate.





# Inclusion



Inclusion gives  
volunteers more  
personal meaning  
in their work.  
- Mira Miyashiro



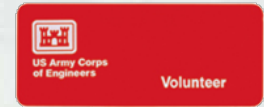
# Reimbursable Expenses

- Volunteers do not receive any salary, but in some cases may be reimbursed for actual out-of-pocket expenses.
- Reimbursement is not required, should be approved in advance, and identified on the Volunteer Agreement.
- Some expenses might include local transportation costs and meals during duty hours.
- Reimbursement is authorized by ER1130-2-500, Ch. 10. Document the incidental expenses on Standard Form 1164, Claim for Reimbursement and follow your district's procedure.





# Volunteer Clothing



- Volunteers are the front line of the Corps to the public.
- Volunteers that come in contact with the public may be identified with Corps volunteer apparel.
- Shirts, hats, vests, jackets, nametags, and patches are available to identify volunteers and provide recognition.
- These items are available through VF Solutions:

[www.vfsolutions.com/lma](http://www.vfsolutions.com/lma)



# Recognition



- Presidential Volunteer Service Award. Must have 500 hours to qualify. This is a free service.

<http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/>

- The Corps cannot furnish gifts.
- The Corps can issue certificates of appreciation
- Say "Thank you!"

The image shows a sample "Certificate of Appreciation" form from the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The form includes the Corps logo (a red square with a white castle tower) and the text: "United States Army Corps of Engineers", "Certificate of Appreciation", "Presented to:", "In appreciation and recognition of your generous contribution.", and two blue horizontal lines for a name and a date. At the bottom, there are small text labels: "FORM 1000-AMBL, SEP 2012", "PERFORMER EDITION AND SERIALS DATE", and "PREPARED BY: 1000-AMBL-001 (REVISED)".

# References/Links

- National Volunteer Clearinghouse:
  - ▶ 800-VOL-TEER (800-865-8337)
  - ▶ [www.lrn.usace.army.mil/volunteer](http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/volunteer)
  - ▶ POC: Allison Ross (615) 736-7988
- [www.volunteer.gov](http://www.volunteer.gov)
- Volunteer application: Optional Form 301 (Can be downloaded at <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/volunteer/volunteer.cfm>)
- Volunteer Agreement: Optional Form 301A
- NRM Gateway: (policies, procedures, forms, handbooks, FAQs, etc.) <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/volunteer/volunteer.cfm>

