

Handshake Partnership Program

Partnerships in NRM
PROSPECT Course



Hartwell Lake



®



Program History/Purpose

- Program originated in 2004
- Incentive for field sites to 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.

Philpott Lake



Investment (FY 04 – FY14)

Handshake Funds: \$ 1,996,350
(131 project recipients)

Corps Offices: \$ 1,852,659

Partners: \$ 6,568,363

Total : \$ 10,417,434



Blue Marsh Lake



Jordan Lake

Basics

1. 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



2. Student Conservation Association (SCA) Intern/Crew - stand alone projects

- ▶ The SCA intern/crew project does not have to be part of a challenge partnership project to compete for Handshake funding
- ▶ SCA program information on NRM Gateway Partnership Page
 - <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/partners/sca/sca.cfm>
- ▶ SCA currently undergoing changes but still eligible

3. Combination of these



Basics

- \$350,000 total annual program
 - ▶ Increased from \$300,000 for 2014
- \$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



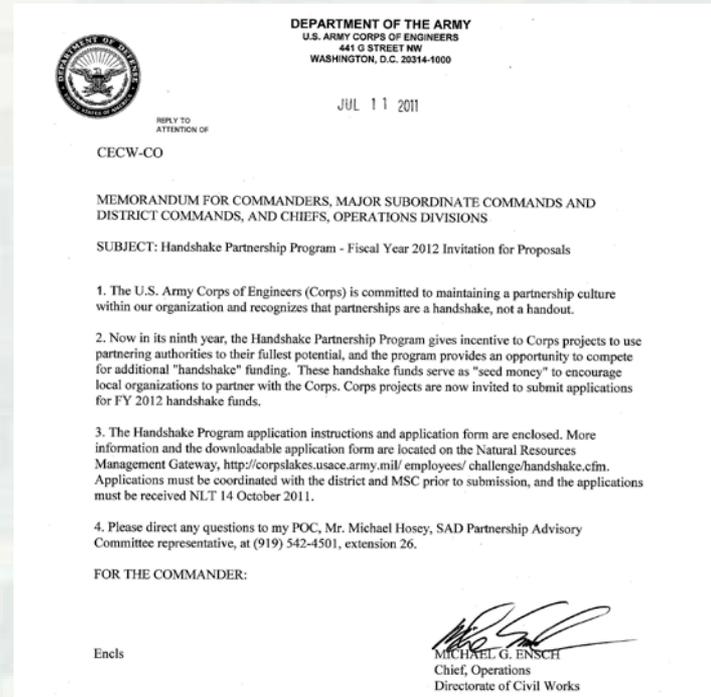
Time Line

- Applications Period Begins July
 - Application Deadline Oct
-
- Recipients Announced Dec
 - Agreement Deadline Aug
 - Expend Funds 2 yrs
 - ▶ funds transmitted to District/Project via MIPR or FAD



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 no longer 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.



Start NOW

- Determine your project
- Work with prospective partners
- Identify needs and each partner's contribution
- Is the Handshake Program the right fit?



Toad Suck Ferry Lake



Lake Okeechobee

Handshake Project Description

- Describe the partnership and the work to be accomplished.
- The description should be no longer than three pages.
- Include the basic who, what, when, where, how.
- Outline concisely the tasks needed to complete the project and who will accomplish them, e.g., new facilities, renovations made, research reports, type of visitor services, cultural or natural resources preserved, educational/interpretive products created, etc.



Pomme de Terre Lake



**The most important thing to remember when
completing a Handshake Application is to
READ and FOLLOW
the Application Instructions.**



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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



Truman Lake



Application Evaluation Criteria

Specifically address how the project will meet the following six evaluation criteria (**each evaluation criteria should be addressed in a separate paragraph**)

- Sustainability
- Partnership Value
- Recreational Benefit
- Environmental Stewardship Value
- Communication and Education Value
- Innovativeness



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 will it 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**



Sustainability Examples

Properly constructed the project should easily last for 15 years.

It is expected that the platform will provide a stable eagle nesting place for 20+ years

The materials were chosen for the project to ensure a long lasting, low maintenance fence.

The gate structure is made from pvc pipe and concrete, so the expected life of these structures is thirty years or greater..

The group day use area including the group fire ring, bbq grill, picnic area and corrals will last over thirty years without extensive maintenance. The shelter, for example, has 30 year shingles.



Partnership Value

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

- This category evaluates both the value of the partnership and the contribution of the partner – not just the dollars and cents
- More partners compete better because there is more potential contribution
- The more benefit the COE receives with less cost makes the application more attractive.
- Higher % of partner contribution competes better



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%

The project will also serve to strengthen our existing partnerships by...

This project will include the development of a new partnership with Natural Biodiversity, a 501.c.3 organization.

The 3 partners for this project will be completing 95% of the physical labor for the project and also providing almost half of the materials.



Environmental Stewardship Value

Does the project contribute to the physical improvement of the environment?

- Topics that usually score well in this category:
 - Invasive species control
 - Aquatic & fisheries habitat improvements
 - Wildlife habitat improvements
 - Trails
- Improvements to the environment usually score better



Jordan Lake



Center Hill Lake



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Environmental Stewardship Examples

It is important to work proactively to keep additional invasive species from entering the lake and to prevent further spread of existing invasive species.

Restoring the shoreline and littoral zone of the reservoir establishes structures in the lake which will support a wide array of habitat for aquatic organisms.

With the slow steady long-term decline in water quality, the implementation of this project will help with shoreline erosion, decrease runoff, and will slow the eutrophication process.

It would be a great method to turn an environmental risk into an environmental benefit.



Recreational Benefit

Does the project improve the recreation experience for multiple user types?

- What experiences are created?
- What is the recreational benefit of this project?
- 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



Recreational Benefit Examples

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.

Improved fishing not only allows for more recreational activity but also drives tourism, and provides economic impact to area communities...

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...

This is an unique recreation area that provides ample recreational opportunities such as orienteering, geocaching, paddling, hiking, bird watching, photography, camping and snowshoeing. The primary users will be paddlers, nature enthusiasts and youth groups..



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 how the COE missions will be distributed or promoted. What is the impact of the message?
- Is it interactive?
- Static handouts?
- Explain how the benefits of the project are conveyed to the public and how that improves the image of the COE

Hartwell 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?

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

A fox kit is more likely to see you than you to see him. The squirrel you see the most likely you'll be to spot our elusive wildlife.

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

US Army Corps of Engineers
Hatch, Georgia

Communication and Education Examples

This project will provide a great “first-hand” educational opportunity to the public about the importance of protecting and preserving wildlife .

The shelter would serve as an outdoor class room by local schools and other resource agencies for presentations on environmental stewardship, navigation, public recreation, and water safety. The location is also ideal for presentations on the cultural history of the area.

It will be a site for interpretive programming involving paddling, water safety, exploring, birding and others...

...by promoting safety and knowledge on water related activities available around our lakes.



Innovativeness

Describe the innovative nature of the partnership or the end result. 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 certainly a new way to do it.”**



Innovativeness Examples

To our knowledge, this trail would be the first of its kind, innovative in that it provides a new concept of community based recreation and fitness while providing environmental stewardship during the activity.

This project will set an attractive precedent for further shoreline renovations and will be a model for Lake Association Members, neighbors, and visitors.

This project has taken a different approach in the development of a partnership...

This project will provide conceptual to visual progression in educating the public on the environmental concept of erosion control..

No other recreation facilities in the local area provides a fitness trail within a natural setting.



Application Suggestions

- Don't assume the reader knows what you know.
- When the application says, “specifically address how the project will meet the following six evaluation criteria,” make sure each evaluation criteria is addressed in a separate paragraph.
- Provide the information in an easy to read, easy to find format.



Walter F George Lake



Scoring

- Each application is evaluated and scored for each criteria, then weighted.
 - Sustainability (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.
- Bonus points are added...
- 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.



FY 15 Incentive Point Category

- Handshake applications with multiple partners may qualify to receive bonus points on their evaluation score.
 - ▶ Applications with 3 partners will receive 25 bonus points.
 - ▶ Applications with 4 partners will receive 40 bonus points
 - ▶ Applications with 5 partners will receive 50 bonus points
 - ▶ Applications will receive an additional 10 bonus points for each additional partner

**Note: Only non-federal partners who are signatories on the CPA will count towards bonus points



Melvorn 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.
- Cannot “Give” Handshake Funds to partners
 - The Corps does not have granting authority
- Handshake funds cannot be spent on permanent Corps salaries (labor) or travel



Managing Expectations

- Realistic view of the opportunity
 - FY 15: 33 applications
 - FY 14: 26 applications (13 selected)
 - FY 13: 27 applications (11 selected)
 - FY 12: 36 applications (13 selected)

- Handshake recipients: SAD (31), MVD (28), NWD (23), NAD (13), LRD (16), SWD (11), SPD (9)

- 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
 - Try a different project
 - Cancel project



Project Examples: Trails

- Rock'n the Trail (NWK- Rathbun 2013)
- Fitness Trail (LRL- Caesar Creek 2013)
- McGregor Park Trail (NWP- Lost Creek Lake 2012)
- Interpretive Geo-Trek and Multi-Use Trail (MVK- Degray 2011)
- West Alabama Birding Trail (SAM- Black Warrior 2011)
- Trans-Ozark Trail Expansion (SWL- Norfolk 2009)
- Tall Grass Heritage Trail (NWK- Melvern 2006)
- Overmountain Victory Trail (SAW- W. Kerr Scott 2005)
- Lewis and Clark Trail (NWO- Oahe 2004)





Project Examples: Recreation

- Bussey Point Horse Camp (SAS- Thurmond 2013)
- 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)
- Cattail Bay Rec Area Access Improvements (NWO- Oahe 2011)
- Twin Ridge Fishing Tournament Central (SAW- Philpott 2011)
- Pine Meadows Amphitheater (NWP- Cottage Grove 2009)





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Project Examples: Env. Stewardship

- Fisheries Habitat Enhancement (NWK- Smithville 2013)
- Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention (NWO- Fort Peck 2013)
- Pond Rehab (NAB- Raystown 2013)
- Fisheries Improvements (MVR- Red Rock 2013)
- Invasive Species Wash Station (MVP- Gull 2012)
- American Chestnut Re-Introduction Program (LRP- Shenango 2011)
- Borrow Area Habitat Restoration Project (NAP- Francis Walter 2011)
- 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 Pond and Env Ed Area (SWF- Waco 2006)
- Denby Bay ADA Trail (MVK- Ouachita 2005)





Project Examples: Interpretation

- Eagle Nest Project (SWF- Waco 2013)
- Outdoor Learning Center (LRL- Rough River 2012)
- Russian River Coho Salmon Documentary (SPN- Sonoma 2011)
- Environmental Ed Center Improvements (SAW- Kerr Scott 2010)
- Steelhead Trout Interpretive Murals (SPN- Mendocino 2009)
- Raystown Conservation Ed Partnership (NAB- Raystown 2008)
- Wayside Interpretive Panels (SPN- Bay Model 2006)
- Rathbun VC Preliminary Design (NWK- Rathbun 2004)
- 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)



Q/A from previous classes

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

The funds are 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



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?*

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

