

Cooperating Associations

Partnerships in NRM
PROSPECT Course



US Army Corps of Engineers
BUILDING STRONG



Authorities

Authorities:

- 33 USC 2328, Water Resources Development Act of 1992
- ER & EP 1130-2-500, Chapter 9-Cooperating Associations



Cooperating Associations vs. Friends Groups

They are NOT the same thing!

- **Cooperating Association:** refers to a legal entity, organized under state law, which enjoys a non-profit and tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Service codes and which operates under the terms of a Cooperative Agreement with the Corps.
- **Friends Group:** generally refers to local volunteer groups of citizens organized for a specific purpose or interest in a particular geographical area. Friends groups may or may not have 501(c) status. A friends group does not become a cooperating association unless a cooperative agreement is signed with the Corps.



Benefits of Cooperating Associations

- ▶ Associations can purchase materials, equipment, programs, exhibits, services, and publications to be used at the project.
- ▶ Fundraising, sponsoring, collaborating
- ▶ Associations can develop an organized constituency not typically accessible to the Corps.
- ▶ Associations can be advocates for the Corps. Some can lobby if they are established with that mission.
- ▶ Can hire support staff to help Corps missions.



Getting Started

- ▶ Consult with Office of Counsel early in the process of trying to develop a new cooperating association.
- ▶ Determine if there is an existing association or non-profit group in your area.
- ▶ USACE employees can facilitate activities that lead to creation of a cooperating association.
- ▶ Nonprofit groups must have a developed structure and operating procedures.
- ▶ Provide them resources to assist with forming an association
 - Web resources (IRS.gov, etc.)
 - Supporting associations (APPL)
 - Training



Partnering with an Existing or New CA

- Existing associations:
 - ▶ Pros
 - Availability of funds for start-up operations
 - Track record for references
 - Familiarity with Corps policies
 - ▶ Cons
 - Less control and flexibility
 - Potentially larger overhead expenses
 - Less focus on individual projects

- New associations:
 - ▶ Pros
 - More control
 - Lake/project focused
 - Clearer reporting
 - ▶ Cons
 - No history/predictability
 - Greater opportunity for failure



Cooperating Associations

- Cooperating Associations must have:
 - ▶ Board of Directors
 - ▶ Complete Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws
 - ▶ Incorporation
 - ▶ Non-profit 501 c status
 - ▶ Mission that aligns with the Corps mission



Cooperating Associations

- USACE Efforts
 - ▶ Provide the Association with Corps' goals, programs and activities.
 - ▶ Provide members with a sample Cooperative Agreement to review
 - ▶ Sign the agreement
 - ▶ Establish annual goals
 - ▶ Now the hard work begins...



Cooperating Associations

- USACE Efforts
 - ▶ Currently 60+ Cooperating Associations and Friends groups in Partnership with the Corps
 - ▶ <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/coopassoc/coopassoc.cfm>



Success Story



BUILDING STRONG®

Cooperating Associations

- Remember: Successful Partners...
 - ▶ Want the partnership to succeed
 - ▶ Seek win-win solutions; being flexible but focused
 - ▶ Are open and clear about their own goals
 - ▶ Listen well and respond to other views
 - ▶ Are prepared to trust
 - ▶ Have integrity and act consistently
 - ▶ Effectively and efficiently carry out tasks and responsibilities
 - ▶ Will not just sweep difficulties under the carpet



Recap Questions

When you are developing a cooperative agreement to set up a cooperating association, who within your organization should you involve early in the process?

Office of Counsel



Recap Questions

TRUE of FALSE

Your cooperating association is having a fund raising event and has asked for your assistance in being a co-chair of the planning committee.

It is okay for you to do this.

FALSE



Recap Questions

Cooperating Associations CANNOT:

- a. Operate bookstores in Corps facilities.
- b. Charge special event fees.
- c. Enforce Title 36.
- d. Manage Corps recreation areas.



Recap Questions

TRUE of FALSE

A cooperating association and a friends group
are the same thing.

FALSE



Questions?

