

Corps of Engineers (CE) Women Pioneers in Natural Resources Management (NRM)

Avis Kennedy



Avis Kennedy is center front in this 1979-80 era photo taken in front of the double-wide trailer that served as the CE Resource Manager's former office at Old Hickory Lake, TN. Also shown are Park Rangers Jerry Strother in back, Angela Calos on left and Carolyn Bauer on right.

One of the women who pioneered Natural Resources Management careers in the Corps of Engineers is Avis Kennedy. Avis had a long federal career, and generously shares her time and expertise to various causes as a retiree.

Avis Kennedy began her career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1978 after graduating from Southern Illinois University with a degree in Wildlife Biology. She was the first female Park Ranger at Cordell Hull Lake in Tennessee and one of the first four female park rangers in the Corps' Nashville District.

Avis served 33 years in the CE Natural Resources Management Program, progressing through positions as Park Ranger, Outdoor Recreation Planner, and Conservation Biologist. She retired in 2011 after 15 years as the Chief of Natural Resources Management Branch, Nashville District.

Along the way, Avis served in special temporary assignments that utilized her expertise in natural resources and environmental issues. These include Nashville positions as Planner; Resource Manager at Cordell Hull and J. Percy Priest Lakes; and Chief, Regulatory Branch. In 2008, Avis served temporarily as the national Business Line Manager for Environmental Stewardship in the Corps' Washington Headquarters.

In 2009, Avis led a Park Ranger Staffing Study for the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division that resulted in increased staffing at Division lakes for the purpose of improving water safety and fatality prevention. As of 2017, Avis is the Chair of the Tennessee Valley Authority's Regional Resource Stewardship Council and serves on the Corps Foundation's Advisory Committee.

In 2017, Avis was recruited by the agency to come back to work part time to oversee the Master Plan update at Raystown Lake, PA. She agreed and provides invaluable expertise and insight to that important effort.