

Corps of Engineers (CE)
Women Pioneers in Natural Resources Management (NRM)
Deborah “Debby” Chenoweth



Debby Chenoweth became a Park Ranger in 1973. Note the green dress, the first official female Corps Park Ranger uniform

One of the women who pioneered Natural Resources Management careers in the Corps of Engineers is Deborah “Debby” Chenoweth. Debby had a long federal career, and generously donates her time and expertise to various causes as a retiree.

Debby was the third female Corps of Engineers Park Ranger in the nation when she was hired at Caesar Creek Lake, OH in January 1973. Although the first two hires left within a year, Debby had a long and successful career progression with the Corps that took her across the country. She progressed from a GS-5 level Park Ranger to Area Manager for the Miami River Area; Assistant Chief, Natural Resources, Missouri River Division; Assistant Chief, Natural Resources Division, Ohio River Division; Environmental Program Manager, ORD; Operations Project Manager, Bonneville Lock and Dam; and retired from the Corps in January 2007 as Chief of Operations for the Portland District GS-15.

Debby was always a leader and mentor who helped many others follow in her footsteps. Debby contributed much to the NRM program through participation on national task forces, notably the CE NRM Career Advancement Steering Committee.

In retirement, Debby served for several years on the Corps Foundation board. Debby now spends much of her time volunteering for the Lutheran church on local, state and national boards. She serves as the chair of her local history museum and on an advisory board for Portland State University’s Mark Hatfield School of Government. As of 2017, she works closely with her local food bank, helping to plan and fundraise over \$1 million to build a new food bank and warehouse in Hood River.