



NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

2024 Annual Report

2024



U.S. ARMY



US Army Corps
of Engineers®



MESSAGE FROM THE NRM CHIEF

As I took the time to reflect on 2024, and over the past six years that I have had the privilege to write this message, I quickly realized I had a resounding focus on one thing—our *Natural Resources Management team*. Like most years, 2024 had challenges, but more importantly, *because of our team*, it was a year of meaningful accomplishments.

Our team hosted over 260 million visits to USACE's Civil Works projects, including visitors from around the world that came to observe the total solar eclipse.

Our team pursued new outreach efforts that resulted in life-saving impacts with a 7% decrease in public recreation fatalities.

Our team remained driven to complete much needed repairs and cost saving efficiencies to the recreation infrastructure of our projects.

Our team never waived in our focus to ensure and support all of the critical missions entrusted to USACE.

Going forward, I recognize that our program will need to be adaptable and responsive to change. I know that together, we will continue to prioritize the safety of our team and our visitors, we will continue to implement new technologies and program efficiencies, and we will continue to manage our nation's public lands and waters for future generations.

To say that I am proud of the hard work, resilience, and commitment that each and everyone one of you have in implementing USACE's Natural Resources Management Program is an understatement. *OUR* work matters and *YOU* inspire me.



JEFF KRAUSE

Chief, Natural Resources
Management

OUR MISSION

The Natural Resources Management Program (NRM) delivers safe public access to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) lands and waters in a manner that protects all project purposes and mission areas through responsible outdoor recreation, environmental conservation, and land use management while partnering with communities to serve the American people.

OUR VISION

Conserve natural resources and provide public recreation opportunities that contribute to the quality of American life.



YOUR HQ NRM TEAM



The headquarters (HQ) NRM team is comprised of dedicated professionals that are dispersed geographically across the USACE enterprise. This motivated team strives to support staff members at field projects while addressing the fast-paced challenges and opportunities presented to the NRM program.



Jeff Krause

Chief, Natural Resources Management



Heather Burke

Partnership Program Manager



Heath Kruger

Senior Policy Advisor for Park Ranger Activities



Michael Richards

Land Use Program Manager



Pam Doty

Water Safety Program Manager



Myrna Lopez Ortiz

Environmental Compliance & Sustainability Program Manager



Allison Walker

Federal Lands Transportation Program Manager



AJ Jensen

National Sign Program Manager



Jason Owen

Recreation One Stop Agency Program Manager



Tara Whitsel

Environmental Stewardship Program & Business Line Manager



Ryan Hartwig

Recreation Program & Business Line Manager



Amanda Kruse

IIJA & DRSSA Program Manager



>>2024

Career Assignment Program (CAP)

The NRM and Environmental Compliance CAP provides an opportunity for USACE's future leaders to gain valuable experiences and insights into both the NRM and Environmental Compliance programs. The opportunity allows participants to work directly with headquarters staff and become familiar with various roles and responsibilities.



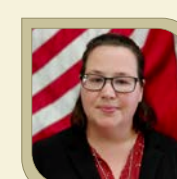
Allen Gwinn
2024 NRM CAP
Operations Project Manager,
Raystown Lake



Scott Kraynak
2024 EC CAP
Natural Resources Specialist, Muskingum Area Office



Rachel Rush
2024 NRM CAP
Natural Resources Specialist,
Huntington District



Brittany Leibel
2024 EC CAP
Civil Engineer,
Fort Randall Dam



NRM LEADERSHIP TEAMS



OUR LEADERSHIP TEAMS

The NRM Program is supported by several national leadership teams. These teams serve in an advisory capacity to Headquarters (HQ) USACE, providing strategic planning, policy guidance, budget recommendations, and much more. Over 150 personnel from across USACE serve and provide the support needed to advance our program.

- **ES & REC Budget CATT** Coach, Assist, and Train Teams
- **ISLT** Invasive Species Leadership Team
- National Water Safety Team
- NRM Users Group
- NRM Uniform Committee
- **PAC** Partnership Advisory Committee
- **Park Ranger CoP Advisory Board** Park Ranger Community of Practice
- **RLAT** Recreation Leadership Advisory Team
- **SAT** Stewardship Advisory Team
- **SAWG** Sign Advisory Working Group
- **VERS CATT** Visitation Estimation & Reporting System



A CLOSER LOOK AT THE PAC

The Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) exists to encourage and assist in developing a partnership culture. The committee supports the efforts of all NRM personnel by:

- Forming, strengthening, and fostering relationships to accomplish missions by actively collaborating with customers and stakeholders to build a better partnering environment.
- Developing and providing training to USACE NRM staff to build and improve internal partnering competencies.
- Providing current guidance and historical examples of sustainable partnering efforts on the NRM Gateway
- Shaping the direction of the NRM partnership program by setting annual priorities, goals, and developing new programs and tools.



ACROSS NRM: FEDERAL LANDS HIGHWAYS

Federal Lands Highways (FLH) administers numerous programs and types of funds to facilitate transportation improvements for many federal land management agency partners, including USACE. These programs provide a funding source for transportation improvements in an environment where funding for transportation improvements in USACE recreation areas is not readily available.

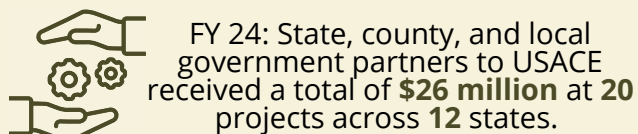
>> FLTP

FLH Programs provide funding and support for repair and rehabilitation of roads, bridges, parking areas, and other transportation features in USACE managed recreation areas through the Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP).



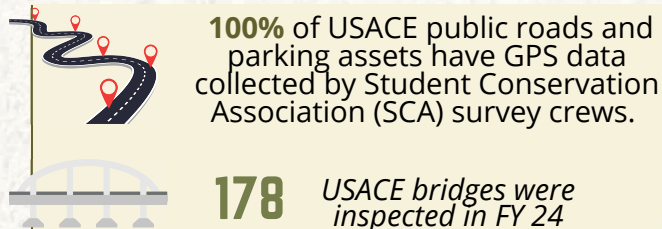
>> FLAP

Funding and support for the enhancement of state, county, and city managed transportation that improves access to USACE lands is provided through the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP).



>> FLPP

FLH Programs provide funding and support for conducting transportation related research, developing asset management collections and data management systems, and conducting long range planning through the Federal Lands Planning Program (FLPP).



>> ERFO

FLH Programs provide funding and support for emergency repairs and recovery from natural disasters through the Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads (ERFO) Program.



>> PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Initial planning to replace the Lost Creek Pedestrian Bridge began in FY 22 with successful application for Federal Lands Transportation Program funding. Due to increased materials and construction costs, the project was rescoped with assistance from Federal Highways Administration and reached a successful contract award on the third solicitation attempt. In October 2024, the Lost Creek Pedestrian Bridge was physically completed and opened for use, helping to improve recreation, allowing for stewardship of project lands, and expediting emergency response whenever need.





ENERGY AND WATER CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE



**\$12
MILLION**

In FY 24, USACE received approximately \$12M in appropriated funds for energy and water conservation and cost saving measures.



ENERGY & WATER CONSERVATION

USACE Civil Works has been implementing energy, water and alternative fuel options in programs and activities in accordance with statutory requirement dating back to 2005. The Energy Act of 2020 requires agencies to install energy and water meters and implement energy conservation measures. The Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007 mandates agencies to reduce energy and water use intensity. The Energy Policy Act of 2005 requires the incorporation of renewable and alternative fuel sources. The intended outcomes of these efforts are to pursue energy and water efficiencies, cost savings, and operational improvements in Civil Works operations.



ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The discovery and demonstration phase has been initiated to inform the transition of USACE environmental compliance tracking to Army's Environmental Performance Assessment System (EPAS). By making this transition, we will be gaining significant efficiencies and programmatic improvements including, but not limited to the following:



Adopting an existing database that is already in compliance with Army IT and cyber security requirements.



Accessing built-in capabilities, including dashboards and reports, to help us improve performance on the Risk Management and Internal Control Program (RMICP) goal to correct 75% of prior year findings.





ACROSS NRM: VISITATION

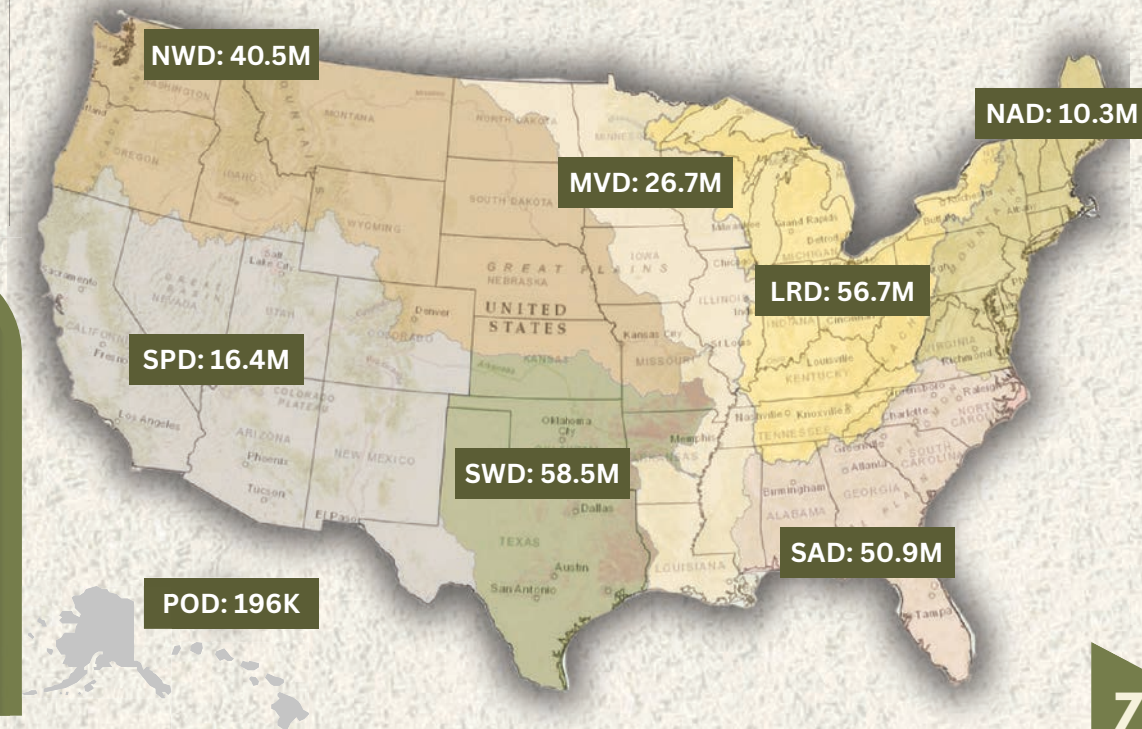


In FY 24 over **260 million** visits were recorded at USACE recreation projects. As part of an effort to ensure accurate visitation data, the Visitation Estimation Reporting Coach, Assist, and Train Team completed a considerable effort to align data associated with visitation from various sources including the Corps of Engineers Financial Management System remittance, automated fee machines, and Recreation One Stop .

USACE VISITATION 2020-2024

2020	255,896,508
2021	268,332,451
2022	266,044,439
2023	268,762,359
2024	260,447,042

2024 VISITATION BY REGION





ACROSS NRM: VISITATION



>> VISITATION IMPACTS

The money spent by visitors to USACE lakes on trip expenses adds to the local and national economies by supporting jobs and generating income. Visitor spending represents a sizable component of the economy in many communities around USACE lakes.

Value to the Nation benefits are based on FY 23 data.



**\$13
BILLION**

\$13B in visitor spending within 30 miles of USACE lakes



**\$10
BILLION**

\$10B in sales within 30 miles of USACE lakes



**\$2
BILLION**

\$2B National Economic Development (NED) benefits



80,000

80K jobs within 30 miles of USACE lakes



**\$5
BILLION**

\$5B in value added within 30 miles of USACE lakes



76

USACE projects that recorded more than 1 million visits



**60.5
MILLION**

The 10 most visited USACE projects recorded a combined 60.5 million visits



86%

Day Use visitation accounts for 86% of total visitation





ACROSS NRM: SOLAR ECLIPSE

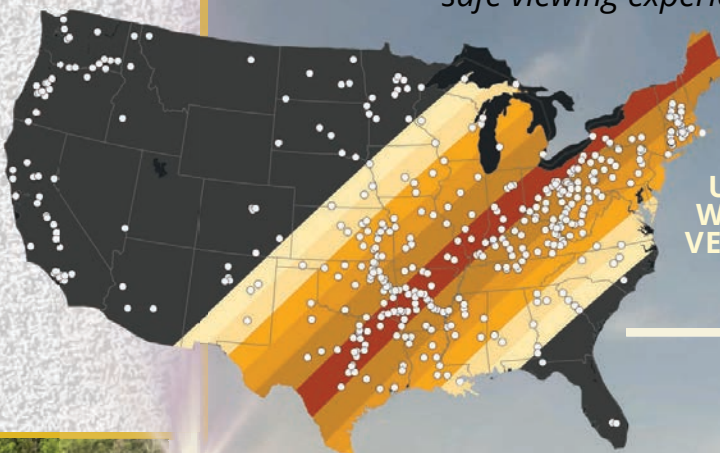
➤➤ TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE

On April 8, 2024, a total solar eclipse crossed North America, passing over Mexico, the U.S., and Canada. Many USACE projects hosted events to celebrate the eclipse and welcomed visitors from around the nation and the globe to witness this once-in-a-lifetime event.

➤➤ VISITORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



- Argentina
- Australia
- Belgium
- Canada
- England
- Germany
- South Africa
- And more!

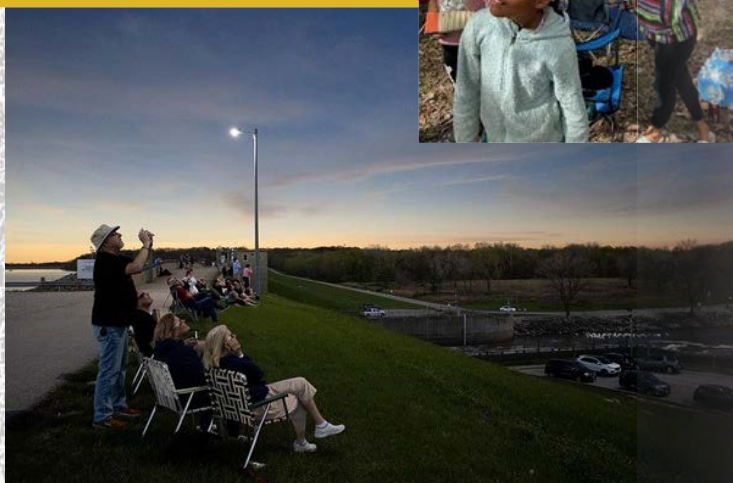


339

USACE PROJECTS
WERE WITHIN THE
VIEWING RANGE OF
THE ECLIPSE

➤➤ PATH OF TOTALITY

Staff at Lake Ouachita, Lake Greeson, and Carlyle Lake stationed Park Rangers at key areas where people arrived to view the eclipse. Recreation areas were near capacity with visitors using day use areas.



➤➤ *Rend Lake Project hosted more than 12,000 visitors for the 2024 Solar Eclipse. With over four minutes of totality, viewers from around the globe sought out Rend Lake. Visitors from Canada, Germany, England, and 32 states were accommodated by the recreation features the project offers. Diligent planning efforts by the Rend Lake team and their partners resulted in a safe viewing experience.*





ACROSS NRM: PARK RANGER EFFORTS



>> Supporting USACE Missions

USACE Civil Works (CW) projects were established to protect the safety and ensure the prosperity of our nation by mitigating the risk of flood events, providing safe and efficient navigation for the transportation of goods, delivering a clean renewable source of energy through hydropower, and maintaining storage capacity for water supply. With the creation of these projects came the responsibility to ensure sustainable management of public lands and waters. NRM staff maintain the responsibility and commitment to ensuring the protection of all project missions while carefully balancing environmental and recreation needs.



Project Patrols



Support to All Missions: NRM staff patrol project lands and waters; maintaining the protection of all services provided.

Support to All Missions: NRM staff perform cleanup services after major storm events, regaining access to mission critical infrastructure as well as recreational facilities.



Storm Cleanup



Precipitation Surveys



Support to Flood Risk Management: NRM staff perform snow surveys to inform flood risk decisions.

Support to Navigation: NRM staff provide interpretive programming at the Soo Locks in the Detroit District. NRM staff also provide Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math opportunities to local communities and project visitors.



STEM Opportunities



Gate Operations



Support to All Missions: NRM staff train for confined space entry and mission operations to supporting flood risk, hydropower, and navigation needs.

Support to All Missions: NRM staff remove debris from project waters for flood risk management and navigation.



Debris Removal





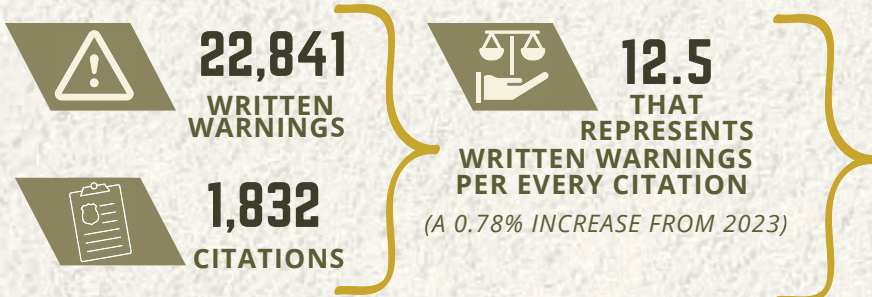
ACROSS NRM: PARK RANGER EFFORTS



>>> Citations and Warnings

Each year, Park Rangers across the country utilize written warnings and citations under Title 36 as a tool to perform various visitor assistance functions required of their position. Written warning and citation data is entered into the CWBI-OPS Citation Module, compiling citation data from each lake project. Recorded written warnings and citations help demonstrate trends with public users and utilization of resources and can be used to inform Visitor Assistance programs at all levels across the enterprise.

In 2024, USACE Park Rangers Issued:



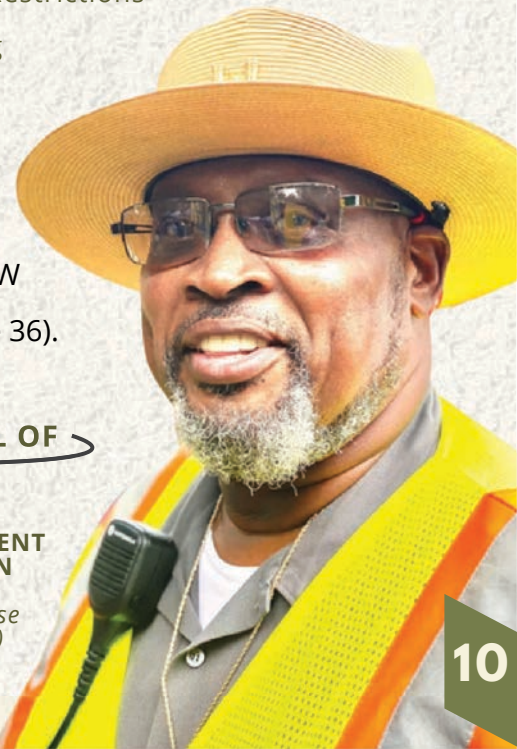
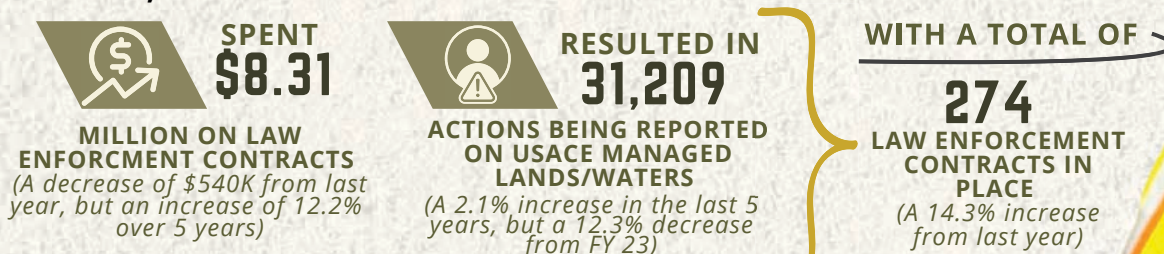
2024 TOP 5 VIOLATION CATEGORIES

- 1 Recreation Use Fees
- 2 Vehicles
- 3 Posted Restrictions
- 4 Camping
- 5 Vessels

>>> Law Enforcement Contracts

District Commanders are delegated the authority to contract with states and their political subdivisions to obtain increased law enforcement services at CW projects to meet needs during peak visitation periods and to augment the citation authorities granted to USACE under 36 CFR Chapter III, Part 327 (Title 36).

In 2024, USACE:





RECREATION



USACE is one of the leading federal providers of outdoor recreation in the nation. Over 400 lake and river projects in 43 states provide a diverse range of recreational opportunities. By providing controlled access and management on USACE lands and water, recreation program managers play a key role in the successful execution of all project missions.



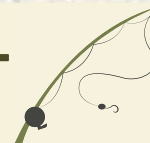
7,400+
MILES OF
TRAILS



94,000+
CAMPSITES



33,000+
PICNIC SITES



2,000+
FISHING
TOURNAMENTS

>> Economic Impact



In 2024, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) released new data highlighting outdoor recreation's significant contribution to the U.S. economy. In addition to quality of life benefits to the many Americans that use our lands, the outdoor recreation industry contributed a record \$1.2 trillion in economic output in 2023, supporting 5 million American jobs and accounting for 2.3% of the nation's Gross Domestic Product. This was the seventh consecutive year the BEA has tracked the outdoor recreation industry, underscoring its resilience and importance to local communities, small businesses, and families across the country.

Recreation plays a vital role in driving economic activity, innovation, and outdoor enjoyment.



Recreation contributes \$1.2 Trillion to the economy.

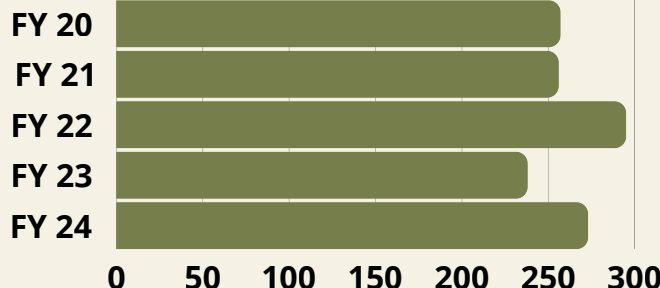
Recreation supports 3.1% of all American jobs.



>> Recreation Budget

The FY 24 appropriated budget for the USACE Recreation Program was nearly **\$275 million** including specific work. Additionally, nearly \$43 million was received through various supplemental programs.

In FY 25, the President's budget for the Recreation Program is just over **\$280 million**, not including any supplemental program funding that may be received.





RECREATION



America the Beautiful Revenues

Other revenue generated in FY 24 included \$2.2 million in ATB pass sales which was returned to the point-of-sale site.



Special Use Permit Fees

Other revenue generated in FY 24 included \$2.5 million in Special Use Permits, which was returned to the point-of-sale site.



Special Recreation Use Fees (SRUF)

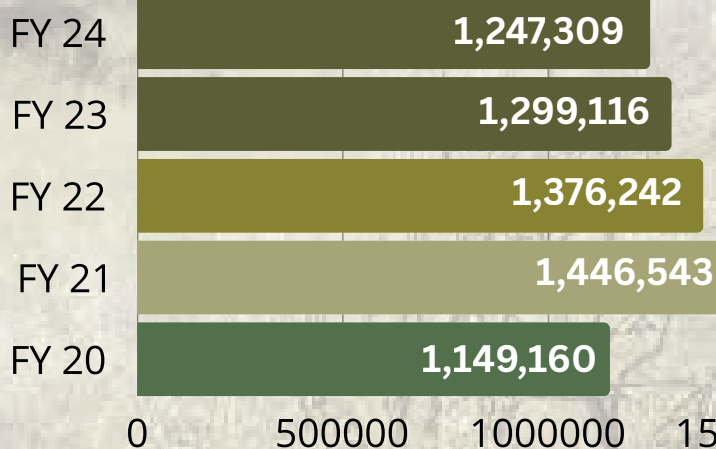
In FY 24, USACE collected a total of \$60.3 million, most of this is used to offset general treasury funding.

Recreation Revenue

Recreation revenue is the summation of three types of fees authorized under three statutory authorities (16 U.S.C. § 460d-3, WRDA 2014 Section 1047, and WRDA 2014 Section 1048).

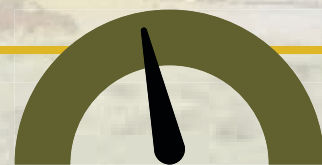


>> USACE Camping Reservations



>> FY 24 Camping Reservations

In FY 24 there were approximately **1.2 million** USACE camping reservations, which was slightly less than FY 23. The average monthly utilization rate for the fiscal year was 39.45%.



39.45%





ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



The Environmental Stewardship (ENS) Program protects, preserves, and restores significant ecological and cultural resources at Civil Works projects nationwide, all while balancing land use activities. These efforts contribute to the quality of American life by managing and conserving natural resources consistent with ecosystem management principles and provide a sustainable environment for future generations.



12 MILLION
ACRES OF PUBLIC
LAND AND WATERS
MANAGED

>> ENS BUDGET



In FY 24, **\$143.8 million** was enacted by Congress for the ENS Program with an additional **\$4.9 million** of MR&T funds. Similar to past years, **nearly 34%** of the \$143 million was for work associated with fish, forest, and wildlife habitat management along with pest and invasive species management. Additionally, funds continued to be requested by other business lines, such as navigation, hydropower, and flood risk management for work associated with biological opinions.



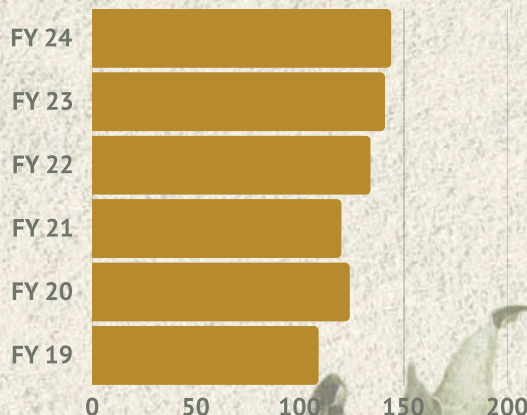
1 MILLION
ACRES OF
GRASSLANDS



7 OF THE TOP 10
MIGRATORY BIRD
FLYWAYS CROSS
OVER USACE
LANDS & WATERS



14%
U.S. FRESHWATER
FISHING





ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



Similar to previous years, notable focus areas within the ENS Program included boundary management, shoreline management, and the revision of project master plans.



PROJECT MASTER PLAN REVISIONS

113

USACE has focused significant effort and funding to revise project master plans and ensure that each project has a relevant, concise plan for strategic management.

Since 2020, **113** Project Master Plans have been revised. At the end of FY 24, **244** projects had a master plan with a date of 1996 or newer.



BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT

8,500

USACE is responsible for protecting over **38,000 miles** of boundary line—that's 6 times the length of the Mexico and Canada borders combined.

In FY 24, USACE staff, with the support of volunteers and contractors, inspected over 8,500 miles of boundary.



SHORELINE MANAGEMENT

76,589

In FY 24, USACE projects with a shoreline management program managed 76,589 Shoreline Use Permits.

Additionally, USACE managed 36,067 licenses in support of the Shoreline Management Program.



INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT

200

In FY 24, the presence of nearly **200** species of invasive organisms were noted at USACE projects. In FY 24, USACE's Portland District entered into six Noxious Weed Cooperative Agreements for the management of undesirable plants on USACE lands and the Jacksonville District supported the collection of 40,000 alligator flea beetles to be used as biocontrol for alligatorweed by 14 different agencies across eight states.



PRESCRIBED FIRE MANAGEMENT

826

During FY 24, 826 prescribed burns were conducted by USACE staff, contractors, and partners in an effort to implement habitat improvements, reduce invasive species impacts, and reduce hazardous fuel loads.





PARTNERSHIPS



At the heart of every successful organization is the strength of its partnerships and the dedication of its volunteers. As we look back on 2024, we are reminded of how crucial these relationships are in



helping USACE achieve our NRM mission and create lasting impact. This annual partnership summary highlights the power of collaboration—showcasing not only the tangible outcomes we’ve achieved together but also the shared values and collective efforts that drive our success.

FY 24 Partnership Efforts

Partner Investment:
\$112.7 million (79%)

USACE Investment:
\$29.9 million (21%)



4,286 TOTAL PARTNERS



308 of 422 USACE PROJECTS WITH PARTNERSHIPS
(73% of USACE Projects)

Our Partners

Partnerships are vital in fostering connections and raising awareness about USACE missions. The selfless commitment, diverse skills, and expertise of our partners enrich every project. We deeply appreciate the invaluable contributions of our partners and volunteers to the USACE NRM program and look forward to expanding our collaboration in the years to come.



PARTNERSHIP GROWTH



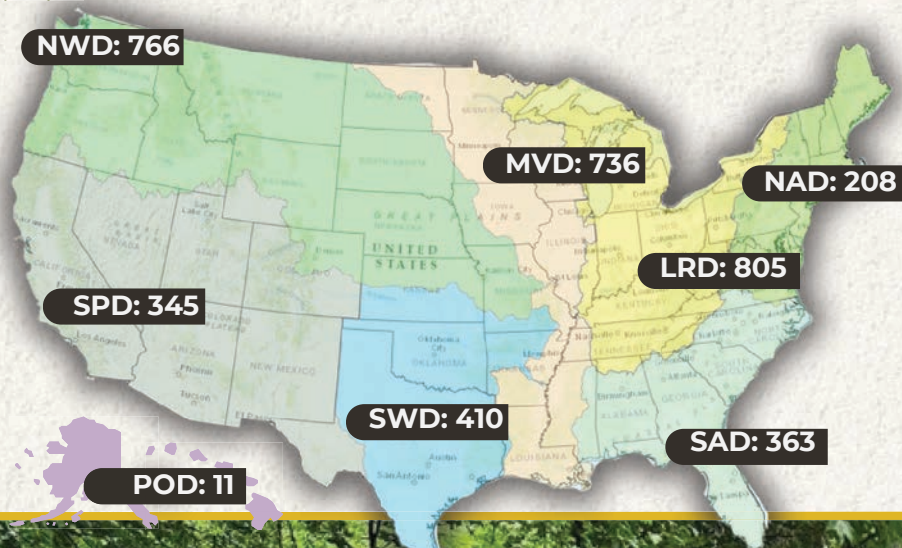


PARTNERSHIPS

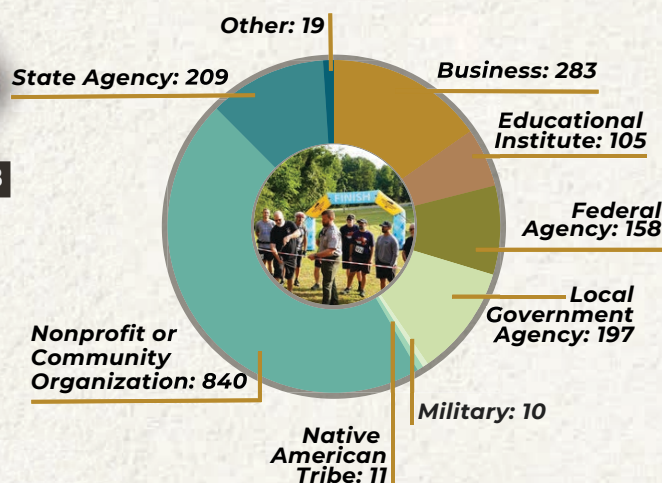


A total of **295** USACE projects partnered with **56** organizations that have a national MOU in place, providing educational programs, and health and safety, environmental, and recreation improvements. A total of **56** USACE projects benefited from the assistance of **67** nonprofit cooperating associations, which supported special events, interpretive activities, exhibits, and programs; operated bookstores; and bolstered volunteer programs.

PARTNERS ENGAGED BY REGION



OUR PARTNERS





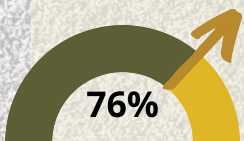
VOLUNTEERS



37,946
TOTAL
VOLUNTEERS



1,751,141
TOTAL
VOLUNTEER
HOURS SERVED
(Equivalent to 842 full
time employees)



334
PROJECTS USING
VOLUNTEERS



\$58.6
MILLION
TOTAL VALUE OF
VOLUNTEER HOURS

Volunteers play a valuable role in helping USACE care for the environment and provide high quality recreation opportunities. Each year, people generously give their time, expertise, and resources to serve millions of visitors who enjoy USACE managed lands and waters.

- **RECREATION.** Within the Recreation Program, volunteers have assisted in the construction and maintenance of trails, served as campground and visitor center hosts, conducted interpretive programs, developed and built displays, assisted in the maintenance of facilities, and collected fees.
- **ADMINISTRATION.** Volunteers assisted in various administrative roles, including writing and editing materials for publications, completing computer and database entry, and assisting in capturing our workforce and visitors in action through photography.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP.** Volunteers have performed a variety of duties assisting staff in managing our natural and cultural resources, such as removing invasive species, planting native species, building and installing artificial nesting structures, and monitoring wildlife species.





VOLUNTEERS



National Public Lands Day

National Public Lands Day (NPLD) continued to be an important partnership between USACE and the communities surrounding our civil works projects. USACE provided volunteer opportunities in conjunction with NPLD at 57 civil works projects across 27 districts and all MSCs. Nearly 4,450 volunteers joined 285 USACE employees to provide over 19,000 hours of service (the equivalent of nine annual full time employees) removing invasive species, collecting debris and trash from shorelines and parks, planting trees, improving wildlife habitat, and maintaining trails.



4,448

volunteers that provided



310

tires removed



157

pieces of infrastructure maintained

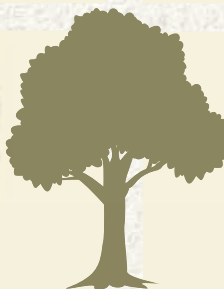
19,244

hours of service



6,792

trees/shrubs planted



546

miles of shoreline cleaned



22,390

square feet of invasive plants removed



49,434

pounds of trash collected



Recognizing Our Volunteers

Over the past five years, the USACE volunteer workforce has averaged approximately **33,000** volunteers providing **1.5 million** hours of service annually.



31

USACE ANNUAL PASSES AWARDED

(for 100 hours of volunteer service)



222

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL PASSES AWARDED

(for 250 hours of volunteer service)



33

VOLUNTEER EXCELLENCE COINS PRESENTED

(for EXCEPTIONAL service)



WATER SAFETY



1,772

USACE BOAT
RAMPS
(PLUS 1,959
OUTGRANTED)



485

USACE BEACHES
(PLUS 339
OUTGRANTED)



530

MARINAS
LEASED TO
CONCESSIONS



690

USACE LIFE
JACKET
LOANER
STATIONS
(PLUS 186
OUTGRANTED)



Partnership With the Corps Foundation

The USACE National Water Safety Program works in cooperation with the Corps of Engineers Natural Resources Education Foundation (The Corps Foundation) to enhance and promote the Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns Campaign. In FY 24, The Corps Foundation received a \$195,000 Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund grant, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) to enhance and promote the campaign. The Corps Foundation then donated insulated lunch bags and neck gaiters to the National Water Safety Program, which were distributed to USACE lakes to use in their "I Got Caught" initiatives.

This was the fifth year that The Corps Foundation conducted the Life Jacket Video Contest in cooperation with the USACE National Water Safety Program. Twenty-four qualifying entries were received. Using USCG grant funds, the first-place winner, for their 55-second video entry, received \$5,500 and the 25-second video first place winner received \$2,500. The winning entries were made into public service announcements (PSAs) for all USACE offices and others to use. The PSAs can be viewed on the National Water Safety Program's YouTube Channel, www.youtube.com/user/USACEwatersafety, and downloaded from the National Water Safety Program's DVIDS unit, www.dvidshub.net/unit/USACE-WS.



SHARING WATER SAFETY

➤➤ Please Wear It

The "Please Wear It" Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter pages are the National Water Safety Program's social media pages that are used to promote the Life Jackets Worn...Nobody Mourns campaign to adults. These social media pages are managed with The Corps Foundation using USCG grant funds.



➤➤ Bobber the Water Safety Dog

Bobber the Water Safety Dog is the USACE National mascot for water safety. In FY 24, Bobber continued to make numerous appearances at events with help from park rangers and other USACE employees.

The new "Bobber Goes to the Beach" storybook created by the National Water Safety Program has been shared by park rangers with numerous kids. Due to the success of the storybook, the National Water Safety Program created "A Holiday Visit from Bobber" book that was provided electronically for park rangers to share with kids during the winter holiday season.



Unfortunately, with over 264 million visits, public recreation fatalities do occur. In FY 24 the total number of public recreation fatalities at USACE projects decreased to 150 lives lost. Of those, 96% were water-related.

USACE staff, volunteers, and partners work hard to educate our visiting public about water safety because even one life lost is too many.



3,690,300
PLEASE WEAR IT
FACEBOOK TOTAL REACH



35,434
PAGE LIKES



37,575
PAGE FOLLOWERS



652,386
DIRECT ON-SITE WATER
SAFETY INTERPRETIVE
CONTACTS



768,765
DIRECT OFF-SITE WATER
SAFETY INTERPRETIVE
CONTACTS





RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

➤➤ Hiram M. Chittenden Award

The Chief of Engineer's Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence recognizes outstanding achievement using interpretation to enhance public understanding of USACE, prompting positive experiences and attitudes, and encouraging voluntary stewardship of natural, cultural, and created resources. The 2024 recipient of this award is Ms. Emily Jones, Natural Resources Specialist, John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir, Wilmington District.

Ms. Jones is recognized for her exceptional ability to make meaningful connections while sharing the messages of environmental stewardship, recreation, and flood risk management. Emily has gone above and beyond her regular duties to showcase the history, missions, and recreational opportunities at John H. Kerr Dam and Reservoir. Through her efforts to build and strengthen partnerships in the community, participation in regional and national teams, presentation of programs to local groups, and innovative use of social media, Emily is truly making a difference. Her work ethic, innovation, and drive to educate the visiting public and community is unmatched and inspiring.

Congratulations and thank you Emily!



➤➤ Additional Nominees

Additional nominees for the Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence included:

- Megan Sleeper (NWP)
- Briana Edwards (NAE)
- Paige Laughunn (MVS)
- Jeanette Johnson (LRE)

➤➤ NRM Employee of the Year

The NRM Employee of the Year Award is awarded to an individual who has exhibited exceptional leadership and selfless service to the NRM Program. The 2024 recipient of this award is Ms. Michelle Hart, Natural Resources Project Manager, Portland District.

Ms. Hart is recognized for professionalism in advancing NRM efforts within the Portland District, the Northwestern Division, and USACE. Michelle's service on the USACE NRM User Group and NRM National Recruitment Video PDT

enhanced the NRM mission and organization. Her leadership and selfless service as Technical Lead for Willamette Valley Master Plans and regional Visitor Assistance Module 1F trainer enhanced NRM program management and ensured uniformed Rangers are professional, skilled, and safe. She is highly respected by all her peers, is a reliable and valued subject matter expert in her program areas, and collaborates industriously to reach greater success.

Congratulations Michelle and thank you!



➤➤ Additional Nominees

Additional nominees for the NRM Employee of the Year included:

- Joel VanOrd (LRP)
- Kim Russell (NAE)
- Megan Parsons (SAJ)
- Taylor Saia (SPK)
- Alexander Klepac (SWF)

Congratulations to ALL of our award winners and nominees.

You set an example of excellence and your contributions to the Natural Resources Management Program, USACE, and the Nation are commendable.



RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

Excellence in Partnership Award

The Excellence in Partnership Award annually recognizes exceptional contributions by a partner providing substantial support to the USACE Recreation and Environmental Stewardship programs.

The 2024 Excellence in Partnership Award recipient is the Mississippi River Water Trail Association (MRWTA). MRWTA has been a partner with USACE since 2005, contributing over 20,000 volunteer hours, \$180,000 in professional services, and \$50,000 of materials and equipment donated to the St. Louis community and the Mississippi River. It is the shared mission of the Rivers Project and the MRWTA to create safe, accessible opportunities for lifelong enjoyment of paddling on the Mississippi River.



Additional Nominees

Additional nominees for the Excellence in Partnership Award included:

- LRD-Scioto Area Corps Cooperating Association, Burnsville Lake, Huntington District
- NAD-AmeriCorps Cape Cod, Cape Cod Canal, New England District
- Whitman County Public Health, Lower Granite Lock and Dam, Walla Walla District
- Phillips 66 Ponca City, Kaw Lake, Tulsa District

Additional Nominees

Additional nominees for the Volunteer of the Year Award included:

- LRD-Sharon and Mike Mick, Burnsville Lake, Huntington District
- LRD-Ron Sergesketter, Patoka Lake, Louisville District
- LRD-Chip Winger, Barren/Nolin River, Louisville District
- SAD-Olga Cupo, Lake Okeechobee, Jacksonville District
- SWD-Gale and Beverly Wells, Clearwater Lake, Little Rock District
- SWD-Robert and Teresa Sherrill, Eufaula Lake, Tulsa District

Volunteer of the Year Award

The national volunteer award recognizes extraordinary service provided by volunteers, draws attention to their vast skills and contributions, and encourages an attitude of stewardship and responsibility in caring for USACE managed lands.

This year's USACE National Volunteer of the Year Award recipient is Stanley J. Frerich of Lake Georgetown in the Fort Worth District. Mr. Frerich has supported USACE and the recreating public by serving as a park host and maintenance volunteer at Lake Georgetown since 2021 with more than 2,300 hours of service. Mr. Frerich's background in general maintenance and experience as an equipment operator has been invaluable in addressing various problems and challenges encountered in the parks.





RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

The National Water Safety Awards are presented in cooperation with the National Boating Federation to recognize a USACE employee and team that have contributed to boating and water safety and through their efforts have made a difference in saving lives on our nation's waterways.



>> National Water Safety Employee of the Year

Travis England, Natural Resources Specialist at Allatoona Lake in the Mobile District, was selected as the recipient of the 2024 USACE National Water Safety Employee Award. Mr. England stood out for his innovative and comprehensive contributions to water safety. He assisted with coordinating the distribution of over 7,000 donated loaner life jackets across the South Atlantic Division, educated nearly 2,000 students about water safety, and created the Golden Life Jacket award at Allatoona Lake, which has fostered a continuing culture of safety among the lake's staff. His initiatives, passion for water safety, and consistent engagement with the community is admirable and reflects great credit upon himself and USACE.



>> National Water Safety Team of the Year

The Carlyle Lake Water Safety Team in the St. Louis District was selected as the recipient of the 2024 USACE National Water Safety Team Award. Despite being faced with many challenges, the team exhibited unwavering dedication to promoting water safety. They established new partnerships and participated in new events while still focusing on their popular annual events and initiatives, which included using partnerships to continue their "I Got Caught" initiative at Carlyle Lake and coordinating with local schools to present water safety programs to over 850 high school students. This proactive approach demonstrates their commitment to going above and beyond in promoting water safety and is greatly appreciated.



>> Additional Nominees

- LRD Water Safety Employee of the Year–Gabby Fontaine, Park Ranger, Old Hickory Lake, Nashville District
- MVD Water Safety Employee of the Year–Chris Gurner, Natural Resources Specialist, Mississippi Project Office, Vicksburg District
- SWD Water Safety Employee of the Year–Randi Clifton, Natural Resources Specialist, Oologah Lake, Tulsa District

>> Additional Nominees

- LRD Water Safety Team of the Year – Cordell Hull Lake NRM Staff, Nashville District
- NAD Water Safety Team of the Year – Raystown Lake Staff, Baltimore District
- NWD Water Safety Team of the Year – Willamette Valley Project Park Rangers, Portland District
- SAD Water Safety Team of the Year – West Point Lake Staff, Mobile District
- SWD Water Safety Team of the Year – Keystone Lake Staff, Tulsa District



Partners in Action:
Jared Presley (LRH)



NATIONAL WATER SAFETY PHOTO CONTEST

The National Water Safety Program conducts a photo contest every two years. All entries must be associated with water safety except for those in the Non-Water Recreation category. The winning photos are posted on the NRM Gateway at <https://corpslakes.erdc.dren.mil/employees/watersafety/photos.cfm>

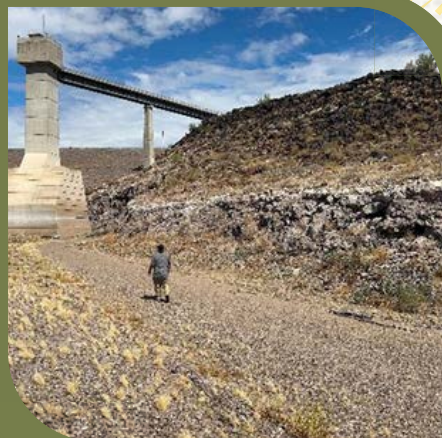
First Place Winners



Water Recreation:
Colton Johnson (MVR)



Employees in Action:
Josh Friend (NWP)



Non-Water Recreation:
Marlene Schmitt (SPL)



Commercial Boating:
Michelle Briggs (LRE)

Second Place Winners:

- Michelle Briggs (LRE)
- Paige King (NWS)
- Joseph Paul Bruton (SPK)
- Paige King (NWS)



Honorable Mention Winners:

- Donald Copenhaver (LRE)
- Carmen Paris (LRE)
- Michelle Briggs (LRE)
- Pam Bowie (SPA)
- Paige King (NWS)





The Natural Resources Management Annual Report is an unofficial publication of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). It is produced with the purpose of providing readers with information about the USACE Natural Resources Management Program. Editorial views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.