

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SAYLORVILLE LAKE PROJECT
5600 NW 78TH AVENUE
JOHNSTON, IA 50131

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)
SOP No. 04-01

CEMVR-OD-S

5 January 2004

1. Purpose. A volunteer program to accommodate Saylorville Lake's expanding mission and services to customers. The program will also serve as an avenue to cultivate a local supportive constituency for the Corps as well as develop stewards of our parks and natural resources.
2. References.
 - a. ER 1130-2-500 Chapter 10, The Corps of Engineers Volunteer Program
 - b. EP 1130-2-500 Chapter 10, The Corps of Engineers Volunteer Program
 - c. EP 1130-2-429, Volunteer Coordinators Handbook
 - d. ER 1130-2-550 Chapter 9, Recreation Use Fees
3. Applicability. This SOP applies to all staff members, volunteers, and potential volunteers.
4. Procedures.
 - a. Volunteers may be utilized in almost all aspects of project operations except Title 36 CFR and other regulation enforcement, setting policy, or supervising Corps staff members.
 - b. The Operations Manager designates the project volunteer coordinator. This employee is also the designated Volunteer Accepting Official for the project. The volunteer coordinator is responsible for overall recruitment, marketing, training of volunteer supervisors, orientation, managing volunteer records, evaluations, recognition, and annual reports. All forms will be available from the volunteer coordinator. The volunteer coordinator also annually updates program goals.

- c. Most volunteer positions will have a staff supervisor in addition to the volunteer coordinator. The staff supervisor provides the day-to-day supervision, is the first-line of contact for the volunteer, and ensures that all paperwork is completed and submitted to the volunteer coordinator in a timely manner. Staff supervisors will be determined before the beginning of each recreation season and will be reflected on a volunteer program organization chart.
- d. Each spring the volunteer program coordinator will orient the rest of the team on the status of the project volunteer program and their role in the program. The volunteer coordinator will assist with training employees as necessary to provide volunteer supervision.
- e. Volunteer Position Descriptions are created for each job. Position descriptions detail the required volunteer job duties, including training, record keeping, hours of service, physical requirements, and government provided items and services. Every recurring position should have a position description on file. These positions include Administration, Full-Time Campground Host, Part-Time Campground Host, Day Use Entrance Station Host, Visitor Center Host, Volunteer Host Coordinator, Butterfly Garden Volunteer, Bluebird House Volunteer, and Natural Resource Volunteer. These descriptions may be updated as necessary and should be attached to volunteer agreements for the respective positions. Every new volunteer position should have a written position description. Special event or one-time volunteer positions can use the Work Description portion of the Volunteer Agreement provided that the job responsibilities can be adequately described in the space provided.
- f. The volunteer coordinator will maintain a list with available positions so that potential volunteers may know what is available. Staff members who have a volunteer need should submit a volunteer service request form and position description to the volunteer coordinator prior to any recruitment of volunteers for a particular position. The volunteer coordinator will review the position description and provide a list of potential volunteers to the staff supervisor.

- g. Volunteer applications will be available and accepted at all times. Unsolicited applications will be entered into the volunteer database for consideration as positions come open. However, when recruitment is necessary the following avenues will be pursued. Position openings will be listed on the Corps National Volunteer Clearinghouse. Local volunteers will be recruited from sources including but not limited to schools, churches, clubs, scouts, universities, and local businesses. The local United Way Volunteer Center will be used as a recruitment center with listings of available positions. News releases can be used to recruit for specific positions. Word-of-mouth by current volunteers has proven to be by far the best recruitment method for Saylorville Lake.
- h. Volunteers must submit an application to the volunteer coordinator. This can either be the Optional Form 301, 'Volunteer Application for Natural Resource Agencies' or preferably the Saylorville Lake Volunteer Application. This application is available at the Visitor Center, Administration Office and on the Saylorville web site. Once the application is received it will be entered into the volunteer database and a confirmation letter will be sent to the potential volunteer by the volunteer coordinator.
- i. When the volunteer coordinator is made aware of an open position, he or she will use the volunteer database to compile a list of potential volunteers. If no volunteers are found the volunteer coordinator may recruit for the position. Acceptable volunteers from the database or recruitment will be contacted. In some cases, especially where a job requires specific skills or public interaction, it may be necessary to interview potential volunteers. Either the volunteer coordinator or the staff supervisor for the position may interview volunteers. A record of this interview is kept in the individual volunteer's file. All volunteers interviewed will be notified when a selection is made.
- j. An Agreement for Individual/Group Volunteer Services form, ENG Form 4880-R is crucial and provides the legal basis for the agency/volunteer relationship. When a volunteer is matched to a position and before

they begin work the Volunteer Agreement Form is completed. It is the responsibility of the staff supervisor to ensure that these forms are filled out before work begins and returned to the volunteer coordinator within 1 week of the volunteer beginning work. A brief description of the job to be performed should be filled in and a position description attached to the form and signed by the volunteer. If a volunteer performs more than one job, they need a separate agreement and attached job description for each job. These forms shall be kept in the individual's file. A new volunteer agreement for each volunteer position must be signed annually.

- k. Group Volunteer Agreements will be accepted for organized groups. Group leaders will provide a list with each group member's name and address to the volunteer coordinator. Group leaders are also responsible for providing each group member's hours to the staff supervisor or volunteer coordinator.
- l. Any volunteer under the age of 18 must have a signed parental consent form, ENG Form 4881-R, before beginning any kind of volunteer work. This includes members of organized youth groups. However, if the group leader has already obtained a signed parental release, this may be used in place of ENG Form 4881-R. Copies of these releases must be provided to the volunteer coordinator before volunteer work begins. Volunteers under the age of 18 will not use power equipment, operate government vehicles, or be exposed to chemicals.
- m. Volunteers shall receive orientation before or during the first week of volunteering. This will be achieved with written materials, brief presentations, or on-the-spot training for those providing minimal service hours. Volunteer hosts and other volunteers providing significant service shall receive formal orientation and training appropriate to their position. Volunteer coordinators will be provided one-on-one training in their positions and formal outside training as appropriate.
- n. Volunteers must be qualified to perform the assigned work. Volunteers operating government vehicles must hold a valid driver's license and a copy of that

license must be provided to the volunteer coordinator for the files. Volunteers who are assigned to operate machinery or equipment (such as chain saws, power shop tools, or specialized equipment) must first have demonstrated their proficiency in the operation of that equipment and their understanding of safety requirements to the satisfaction of the staff supervisor and the volunteer coordinator.

- o. Staff supervisors are responsible for ensuring that volunteer hour sheets are submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator at the end of each month. These hours will be entered into the volunteer database. Failure, by a volunteer, to submit hour sheets by the end of the month two or more times will be grounds to terminate the volunteer.

- p. Volunteers shall be provided a safe work environment, equivalent or better in all respects to that provided Corps employees and contractors performing similar duties.
 - (1) Activity Hazard Analyses. A compilation of the various activity hazard analyses for tasks that will be conducted by volunteers will be kept on file and attached to the appropriate position descriptions. Volunteers shall receive a handout on working safely.
 - (2) Personal Protective Gear. Volunteers shall be provided gloves, goggles or other equipment as necessary to perform tasks in a safe manner.
 - (3) Accident Reporting Requirements. If a volunteer is injured while performing work included in their position description, the reporting process will be identical to that followed for Corps employees. The field incident report is the first level of reporting and will be filled out by the first staff member made aware of the incident. The incident will be reported to the staff supervisor and/or volunteer coordinator. When necessary and appropriate, medical reports will be submitted and/or the county sheriff's department contacted to take a report.

- (4) As long as an appropriate volunteer agreement form has been signed prior to service, volunteers are covered in case of injury under the Federal Employees Compensation Act and the Tort Claims Act. They are considered to be Federal employees for these purposes only.

- q. All volunteers are provided a ball cap identifying them as a volunteer and shall be worn at all times while performing their duties. Volunteers that have direct contact with the public as a primary purpose of their duties (Visitor Center, Campground, and Day Use Hosts) shall be provided with a uniform which shall be worn at all times while performing their duties. The volunteer uniform shall be procured locally by the Corps of Engineers and consist of a ball cap, shirt, and a nametag. Volunteers will receive 2 shirts their first year of service and one replacement shirt as needed each year they return. At the discretion of the volunteer coordinator, sweatshirts and coats may also be issued to volunteers performing duties in early spring and late fall.

- r. Fee Collection. Volunteers are authorized to sell permits and collect fees from the public at campgrounds, day-use facilities, visitor centers, administration offices and other locations where fee collection is normally performed as a government function. The accepting official shall ensure that volunteers sign a statement (on the volunteer agreement or other document) that accepts the risk and liability of handing government funds. The accepting official shall also ensure that volunteers are properly trained.
 - (1) Volunteers are agents of the Army and are protected under 31 USC 3527(a). This statute states, in part, that "the Comptroller General may relieve an accountable official or agent of the agency responsible for the non-negligence loss or deficiency of public money, when the head of the agency decides that the official or agent was carrying out official duties when the loss or deficiency occurred, and the loss or deficiency was not the result of fault or negligence by the official or agent." Volunteers are strictly

liable for all funds received and may be required to prove non-negligence for any loss in order to gain relief under the above statute.

- (2) Volunteers must also obtain a fidelity bond from a federally-approved bonding institution for losses outside the purview of the above statute. Government funds may be used to cover the cost of surety bonds for volunteers. A fidelity bond is not a grant of relief for the volunteer nor does the Corps relinquish its rights against the bond or volunteer in a non-negligent loss case.

s. Volunteers may be provided campsites at Saylorville Lake through one of three programs. All volunteers will follow Title 36 CFR and Saylorville Lake campground guidelines, including the number of units per site. Volunteers must camp in well-maintained, factory-manufactured camping units. Full-time volunteers must have hard-sided units.

- (1) Volunteer Camp Pass Program for Part-time/Temporary Volunteers. Volunteers may be provided free camping for providing volunteer service. Volunteers participating in this program earn one night of free camping, on an \$18.00 site, for every 3 hours of service provided. A Volunteer Camp Pass valued at \$6 per hour of service (\$3 if Golden Age/Access Passport holder) will be issued the first week of each month to account for the previous months volunteer service. Volunteer Camp Passes are valid only at Saylorville Lake campgrounds, are non-transferable, and cannot be used for making NRRS reservations. Volunteer Camp Passes expire at the end of the camping season during which they were earned; except passes issued during the off-season (when campgrounds are closed) will expire on May 31st of the next camping season. Volunteers in this program will not be permitted to stay in the same campground longer than 14 days during any consecutive 30-day period. Each volunteer's staff supervisor will ensure that a camping pass is issued at the

beginning of the month and that volunteers receive their camping credit. The volunteer will pay any camping fees in excess of the camping pass. Volunteers will keep the passes until all nights of camping have been used. Used camping passes will be turned in to the Volunteer Coordinator.

- (2) Public Campground Volunteer Campsites. Some volunteer positions, such as campground hosts, require the volunteer to camp on a designated site in one of Saylorville Lake's four public campgrounds while providing the volunteer service. The volunteer program coordinator will also designate 5 campsites in these campgrounds for volunteers to use, full-time, free of charge, each season. Volunteers in positions designated as season-long or "full-time" that do not require the volunteer to camp on a specific site (ISOP, Administration, or Natural Resource Management) are allowed to select a campsite from a list of available designated volunteer sites. Prior to or at the beginning of the recreation season, "full-time" volunteers must commit to donating a minimum of 21 hours of service per week for an extended period of time or 630 hours for the entire recreation season. Volunteers that do not average 21 hours per week over the course of the recreation season will be considered part-time volunteers and will be required to pay for the balance of their campsite. This will be specifically stated in the Volunteer Agreement.
- (3) Sandpiper and Oak Grove Volunteer Campsites. Visitor Center and Day Use Entrance Station Hosts will be randomly assigned campsites in the volunteer campground located in the Sandpiper Recreation Area. Hosts may trade campsites as long as both parties agree and the volunteer coordinator is notified. The volunteer coordinator for the day use entrance station will be assigned a campsite in the Oak Grove Recreation Area. Visitors to volunteers stationed in the volunteer campgrounds will be allowed up to a 14-day stay every 30 days as long as Title 36 CFR

and Saylorville Lake Campground Guidelines are followed. If visitors cause a disturbance and/or are in violation of Title 36 CFR or Saylorville Lake Campground Guidelines, the volunteers and/or visitors will be asked to leave the campground. Prior to or at the beginning of the recreation season, these volunteers must commit to donating a minimum of 21 hours of service per week or 630 hours for the recreation season.

- t. While reimbursement of incidental expenses is authorized, it is Saylorville Lake's policy that reimbursement for meals or mileage will not be offered to volunteers. In some cases, cooperating association funds may be used to provide registration costs for training volunteers or other incidentals. With approval from the Operations Manager, travel expenses for volunteers may be reimbursed when the service of the volunteer exceeds the cost to the project.
- u. Staff supervisors are responsible for turning in signed volunteer agreements, proof of training, monthly hour sheets, and used camping permits to the volunteer coordinator. The volunteer program coordinator is responsible for keeping current and accurate records for all volunteers donating time. Files for each individual volunteer will be kept with applications, interview notes, agreement forms, camping pass usage and recognition or awards. An electronic database shall be maintained and updated monthly to provide mailing lists, track service hours and other data as needed. The volunteer coordinator will provide a quarterly report to the Operations Manager with quarterly and year-to-date totals of volunteer hours and value of service to the project. An annual narrative report will document challenges of the program, successes, awards, and other events. It will also specify the number of volunteers that donated time, the number of hours donated and the value of service as described in the volunteer regulation. These numbers will be reported in OMBIL.
- v. Volunteer Evaluation. Each staff supervisor supervising full-time volunteers will evaluate the respective volunteers at the end of the season. The

evaluation will be either verbal or written. This evaluation should be shared with the volunteer and a record of the evaluation provided to the volunteer coordinator for the file and database comments.

- (1) Volunteers in full-time host positions (including campground, visitor center, and day entrance station booths) will be evaluated at least 1 time during the recreation season and at the end of the season. The volunteer coordinator and staff supervisor will determine written evaluation procedures before the start of the recreation season and information about the process will be provided to the volunteers during their orientation. Once an evaluation is completed, the staff supervisor will review it with the volunteer and provide a copy to the volunteer coordinator for the file and database comments.
- (2) The Volunteer Host Coordinator will evaluate volunteers in the Part-time Campground Host program at least one time during each of their volunteer sessions. These evaluations will be submitted to the staff supervisor at the end of each host period. The host coordinator and staff supervisor may review the results with the volunteer. Copies of the evaluations will be provided to the volunteer coordinator and added to the volunteer file and database.
- (3) Volunteers in temporary or short-term volunteer positions may be evaluated as the staff supervisor sees fit. Any comments should be submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator in written form and will be added to the volunteer file and database.

- w. A spring "kick-off" event will be held each year to provide training and orientation for the upcoming recreation season. An "end-of-the-season" event will also be held to review successes, provide information about the next season, and recognize outstanding volunteers. The volunteer coordinator and other team members will determine a 'Volunteer of the Year' each season. This person will be recognized with a framed certificate. Every effort will be made to send

personalized thank-you cards by the volunteer coordinator or volunteer supervisor to each volunteer. The whole Saylorville Team will assist with verbally thanking volunteers. Volunteer recognition is also achieved through regular communications, training, and special activities and events throughout the year.

- x. Failure to comply with any of the guidelines above may be grounds for termination of volunteer service. The following steps will be used to respond to problems with volunteers.
 - (1) Address the problem at the time of observation. Make sure the volunteer is aware of the problem and ask for compliance. When possible, the staff supervisor or volunteer coordinator should be contacted before talking with the volunteer.
 - (2) Document the encounter. Complete an FIR, which will be submitted to the volunteer coordinator for the file and database.
 - (3) Volunteer coordinator, staff supervisor, and volunteer will meet. During this meeting the incident or incidents will be discussed as well as solutions to the problem.
 - (4) Termination of the volunteer. In extreme situations, situations where no solution can be resolved, or after 3 incidents, volunteers may be terminated with a written letter from the volunteer coordinator. Termination will be immediate upon presentation of the termination letter. Volunteers receiving campsites must vacate their site within 24 hours.

- y. Each year the volunteer program will be evaluated and reviewed by a team, which will then provide input to the goals for the next fiscal year.

/s/
Stephen B. Fairbanks
Operations Manager
Saylorville Lake