



**U.S. Army Corps  
of Engineers  
St. Paul District**

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**Public Affairs**

# Corps Facts

## Recreation

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It is the mission of the recreation/natural resource management program of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to provide quality, public outdoor recreation experiences to serve the needs of present and future generations while being consistent with ecosystem management principles. As stewards of public lands, the St. Paul District has a special responsibility to assure resource accessibility for today and tomorrow and provide high quality outdoor recreational opportunities for all. The St. Paul District manages approximately 28,546 acres of fee title lands above the summer water levels and 447,187 water surface acres. Key products and services include:

### **Operation and Maintenance of Corps' Recreation Areas**

The St. Paul District operates 49 recreation areas throughout the region, ranging from Jay's Lake, Millstone and Bad Axe landings along the Mississippi River in Pools 9 and 10, to full service campgrounds at Eau Galle River Lake and Blackhawk Park in Wisconsin, the campgrounds in the Mississippi River Headwaters Lakes project in central Minnesota and Lake Ashtabula in North Dakota. These areas provide 712 individual campsites, nine beaches, 30 boat launching ramps and numerous individual picnic sites. These recreation areas are an important component of the region's tourism. In terms of national economic benefits, it is estimated the nearly 1.5 million visitor days of use at the district's developed areas generated more than \$10 million in benefits to the individual. Camping fees are charged at Corps' campgrounds, and a number of the areas also charge day use fees. In fiscal year 2003, the district collected more than \$650,000 in recreation fees.

### **Recreation at the Locks and Dams**

There are recreation facilities at all of the district's locks and dams, except Lower St. Anthony Falls in Minneapolis and Lock and Dam 5A, near Winona, Minn. Facilities range from visitor centers at Upper Saint Anthony Falls in Minneapolis and Lock and Dam 7 near La Crosse, Wis., to interpretive displays, observation areas and information kiosks at most of the lock and dam sites.

### **Corps' Land Managed by Others**

Much of the Corps of Engineers' owned lands are licensed or leased to other federal, state and local governments for management, especially along the Mississippi River navigation channel. There are 45 developed recreation areas managed by other public entities, ranging from city parks to full service marinas. The district has a recreation and natural resource management staff that works in cooperation with these entities, as well as serves as a liaison between agencies.

### **Interagency Cooperation**

Corps' employees involved in recreation coordinate with various federal, state and local government agencies that also have an interest in outdoor opportunities at Corps' sites. Major interagency cooperative efforts include: serving as chair of the River Resources Forum's Recreation Work Group, overseeing a study of recreational users and their perceptions, supporting recreational boating studies, developing beach management plans and conducting regular-user surveys. They also cooperate with non-government entities to provide recreational opportunities. For example, the Cross Lake Recreation Area has entered into an agreement with the Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway organization and Lake Ashtabula is working with the Shyenne Valley Scenic Byway organization and the local chapter of national North Country Trail organization to provide enhanced recreational opportunities for visitors to Corps' parks.

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### **Dispersed Recreation**

A significant amount of recreation occurs on Corps' managed lands and waters outside of developed recreation areas. This dispersed use includes visitors to wildlife management areas, low-density (undeveloped) recreation areas and visitors accessing the project from adjacent lands.

### **Economic Impacts of Recreation**

The impact of the district's recreation program on the local/regional economies is significant. In fiscal year 2003, the estimated 9.1 million visitors to district lands and waters spent approximately \$226 million within 30 miles of the recreational site, of which \$133 was captured in the local economy, generating \$174 in total sales and supporting an estimated 4,000 jobs. The district's recreation program is an important component of the local economy.

### **Making Reservations**

For more information on making camping reservations at Corps of Engineers' parks, see [www.reserveusa.com](http://www.reserveusa.com) or call toll free 877-444-6777.