



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
New Orleans District

# News Release

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Corps encourages volunteers to clean up 11<sup>th</sup> Annual National Public Lands Day set for Sept. 18**

**NEW ORLEANS** – Volunteers are invited to improve public lands at three locations in Louisiana Sept. 18 as part of National Public Lands Day.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New Orleans District will host nature lovers for the 11th annual National Public Lands Day to help care for the land. The project locations are:

**Atchafalaya Basin**, near Henderson. Volunteers will clean up a portion of the Indian Bayou area along the West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee. Meet at 8 a.m. at the first parking area on the West Protection Levee road just north of Henderson, Exit 115 on Interstate 10. Contact: Corps Park Ranger Dan Sammon, 337-585-0853.

**Bonnet Carré Spillway**, near Norco. Volunteers will plant trees in the ATV area and remove invasive aquatic plants from fishing ponds, as well as remove trash from the spillway. Meet at 9 a.m. at the ATV parking area. Contact: Corps Park Ranger Adam Tarplee, 985-764-0126.

**Old River Lock**, near Lettsworth. Volunteers will plant fall wildlife-forage plots and do the annual cleaning and repair of wood duck boxes. Meet at 9 a.m. on LA 15 at the camping and parking area on the north side of the lock. Contact: Corps Natural Resources Manager Michael Saucier, 504-862-2525.

This year's projects are co-sponsored by the Corps and Toyota Motor Sales USA. Trash bags, gloves, and refreshments will be provided as appropriate. For information on the Corps recreation program, visit <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil>, click on Recreation, Recreation Sites. For more information on National Public Lands Day, activities, contacts, and downloadable photos from past events see <http://www.npld.com/>.

For the first time, NPLD volunteers who work at a site managed by any of five federal agencies will be rewarded with a "fee-free" coupon that may be used for one day of entrance during the next year at any public land site managed by those agencies: Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and USDA Forest Service.

Thousands of volunteers will clear trails, build bridges, plant trees, and take part in hundreds of other activities. In what has become the largest volunteer hands-on effort of its kind in the nation, participants will lend a hand to the very lands they use to hike, bike, hunt, climb, fish, swim, picnic, or just plain relax.

Since 1994, National Public Lands Day has increasingly demonstrated Americans' concern for their lands. One of every three acres of land in the U.S. – 600 million acres in all – belongs to the American people.

The first event was sponsored by three federal agencies and attracted 700 volunteers to three sites. Last year, nearly 80,000 volunteers and numerous federal, state and local agencies contributed \$10 million in improvements at 550 public parks, monuments, wildlife refuges, forests and grasslands, marine sanctuaries, lakes and reservoirs. The workers built or refurbished 500 miles of trails, constructed 60 bridges and 100 other structures, planted 6,600 trees and 15,200 plants, cleared nearly 60,000 pounds of invasive plants, and removed nearly 2 million pounds of trash.

The Corps is one of the nation's largest providers of outdoor recreation, operating more than 2,500 recreation areas at 456 projects, mostly lakes, and leasing an additional 1,800 sites to state or local park and recreation authorities or private interests. The Corps hosts about 375 million visits each year at its lakes, beaches and other areas, and estimates that 25 million Americans visit a Corps project at least once a year for recreation.