



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
Walla Walla District

News Release

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Contact: Gina Schwetz

Corps finds lessee to reopen Snake River parks

Walla Walla, Wash. – The Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will host a public signing of a lease contract to operate three Corps-owned public parks along the lower Snake River. The event is set for 11 a.m. on April 17 at Chief Timothy Park, located about 10 miles west of Clarkston, Wash.

Northwest Land Management, with offices in Carson and Cle Elum, Wash., was selected from among eight proposals submitted to the District in January to manage public recreation facilities at the three parks – Chief Timothy, in Asotin County; Lyons Ferry, in Franklin County and Central Ferry, in Whitman County.

“I’m thrilled that our efforts to keep these parks open to the public have finally paid off,” said Walla Walla District Commander Lt. Col. Edward J. Kertis, Jr. “Finding a new lessee to operate these beautiful parks represents a win for the Corps, local communities, and especially, the recreating public.”

The parks had previously been leased to the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. The State notified the Corps in April 2002 of their intent to return the parks to the Corps due to budget cutbacks.

The District quickly began a process to find qualified lessees to take over operation of the parks as an alternative to closure.

District officials went to great effort to find a qualified operator to lease the parks.

“The process the District implemented on this issue is a classic example of the President’s management agenda for federal agencies to facilitate public-private partnerships,” said Kertis.

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The District held public meetings and worked with public entities in an effort to find a local government organization to take over operation and maintenance of the parks. When no viable public interest was identified, the District marketed the concession lease to private entities. An

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PARKS 2-2-2

area-wide marketing campaign generated more than 100 requests for applications to lease the District parks. Eight completed proposals were returned for consideration and a competitive selection was made.

“With more than 11 years operating in Washington, Northwest Land Management has extensive experience in managing federal recreational facilities,” said Jana Brinlee, a District real estate specialist and project manager for the parks issue. “They’re a solid company with a history of success in parks management.”

Northwest Land Management brought additional experience to the table. Their parent company, California Land Management Services Corporation, has been in the outdoor recreation business for 22 years. Between the three companies owned by CLM Services Corp., they provide facility maintenance and visitor services for more than 200 different recreational facilities for federal, state and city organizations in Washington, Oregon, California and Nevada.

“Our sister companies often draw lessons-learned from each others’ experiences to improve our own operations,” said Eric Mart, president of CLM Services Corporation. “We can also share resources back and forth between our operations when needed.”

In Washington State, Northwest Land Management manages numerous U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service campgrounds and visitor day-use areas throughout the Gifford Pinchot National Forest near Mount Saint Helens. They also operate similar Forest Service recreation services at Chinook Pass and White Pass recreation areas in the Wenatchee National Forest. Their selection to operate the lower Snake River parks marks the first time Northwest Land Management has worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“We’re excited about the opportunity to work with the Corps,” said Mart. “It’s particularly gratifying to be part of the solution to keep these wonderful Eastern Washington parks and their recreation facilities open to the public.”

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MEDIA ADVISORY: Print and broadcast outlets planning to attend are asked to contact Gina Schwetz in the Public Affairs Office at (509) 527-7020 no later than noon on Wednesday, April 16, to allow event planners to reserve media parking spaces closest to the event. Requests for brief interviews with any of the key participants will need to be coordinated with PAO to ensure access as these officials will only be available for about 30 minutes following the event. Attending outlets should plan to be set up and ready in position at least 15 minutes prior to the start of this event.

-30-

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