



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers** ®  
Walla Walla District  
Public Affairs Office

# News Release

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## Corps parks get new lease on life

**Clarkston, Wash.** – Outdoor recreation enthusiasts will be able to continue camping, boating, swimming and picnicking at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers parks along the lower Snake River this summer. During a ceremony held today at Chief Timothy Park near Clarkston, Wash., Walla Walla District Commander Lt. Col. Edward J. Kertis, Jr. signed lease contracts with Eric Mart, president of Northwest Land Management, for the company to operate facilities at Chief Timothy, Lyons Ferry and Central Ferry parks.

The parks' futures had been in question after the State Parks and Recreation Commission announced a year ago their plans to terminate their leases with the District. District officials went to great effort to find a qualified operator to lease the parks.

“These parks have been immensely popular with the public since they opened in the mid- to late- 1970s. You can’t begin to imagine the volume of phone calls, e-mails, letters and visitors my District has gotten since first word around a year ago that these facilities might not stay open,” said Kertis. “The Army Corps of Engineers wanted to find a way to keep these recreation jewels open for everyone to be able to enjoy. Thanks to the hard work and talent of a lot of folks on my staff, support and encouragement from many elected officials and an unmistakable pattern of public concern about access, we have made it happen. This new lease covers an initial 10-year period with options for as much as 35 years. That’s a lot of recreation for the public to enjoy.”

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Corps officials selected Northwest Land Management from among eight proposals submitted to the District in January to manage public recreation facilities at the parks. NLM plans to reopen the parks by Memorial Day Weekend.

“Northwest Land Management plans to operate these parks much like they have been in the past,” said Mart. “After an assessment period we’ll plan any needed changes and improvements to

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better accommodate the public’s recreation needs.”

The parks are located along the historic Lewis and Clark Trail. Popular park activities include trail walking and biking, picnicking, camping, wildlife viewing, fishing and hunting access, boating and swimming. Steelhead and salmon anglers, as well as hunters, frequently use the parks during various fishing and hunting seasons. The parks’ visitation typically exceeds an estimated quarter million visitors yearly.

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