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News Release

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Ice Harbor Natural Resources staff wins national safety award

BURBANK, Wash. – For the second time in two years Walla Walla District employees have won a prestigious award for a water safety program.

The National Water Safety Congress announced March 14 that it selected the natural resources staff at Ice Harbor Lock and Dam for a Merit Award in Region 6, which includes the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Alaska.

“They impressed me with the cooperative nature of the effort, the fact that it’s very much a team effort working to support water safety activities throughout that area,” said Randy Henry, Region 6 vice president of the National Water Safety Congress, who made the selection for the award. “It looks like the team has been very successful in reaching a large number of people visiting their facilities.”

Henry cited the team’s water safety messages shared at a sportsman’s show, at the Ice Harbor parks, and in local schools.

Park Ranger Jeanne Newton, who coordinates Ice Harbor’s water safety program, also cited the team’s installation of life jacket loaner kiosks, placement of water safety ads on Tri-Cities buses and as slides shown before movies at a local theater, and messages delivered via a low-power radio station as other methods to remind visitors to remember safety in, on or near the water.

Ice Harbor Park Manager Lanell Adams said she nominated the team for the award, “because of the tremendous effort that the entire staff took on for the whole year in sharing the message and getting it out and doing what we needed to do to make the visitors safer when they come to see us.”

Ice Harbor Dam is located 9.7 miles up the Snake River from its confluence with the Columbia River. Annual visitation at Ice Harbor’s recreation areas often exceeds 300,000.

Newton received the award on behalf of the natural resources staff on April 18 at the 2008 International Boating and Water Safety Summit in San Diego. The meeting provided an opportunity for the Ice Harbor team to share their ideas with other professionals who promote water safety.

“I think it’s great that people take a proactive stance on water and boating safety up there at the Ice Harbor area,” Henry said. “I know that they’re saving lives in doing that work.”

The same award was presented in 2007 to Ranger Deb Norton, who runs the water safety program at Walla Walla District’s Dworshak Dam and Reservoir near Orofino, Idaho.

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