US Army Corps of Engineers
Life Jacket Policy Test

Lynda Nutt
Manager, USACE National Operations Center for Water Safety

Summary as of March 2011

USACE Test - Three Regions

USACE Study Lakes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Test Lakes</th>
<th>Control Lakes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh Test</td>
<td>Youghiogheny River Lake Shenango River Lake (All Western PA)</td>
<td>Berlin Lake (OH) Tygart Lake (WV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicksburg Test</td>
<td>Grenada Lake Enid Lake Arkabutla Lake Sardis Lake (Mississippi)</td>
<td>Ross R. Barnett Reservoir Bay Springs Lake (Mississippi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento Test</td>
<td>Pine Flat Lake (Central CA)</td>
<td>Millerton Lake (Central CA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Policies by USACE Test Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Non-motorized</th>
<th>Boats Less than 16 feet</th>
<th>Boats 16-26 feet</th>
<th>Boats greater than 26 feet</th>
<th>Swimming</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-swimmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicksburg District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>When outside designated area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento District (Pine Flat Lake)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>When 100' from shore (Ca law)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The test isn’t about whether life jackets save lives

WE KNOW THAT THEY HAVE IN THE PAST and WILL IN THE FUTURE!

But Why?
Situation

- Greater than 90% of recreational drowning victims pulled from Corps waters were found WITHOUT life jackets

Observation

- Almost ALL of our accident victims would have had a greater chance of survival if they had been wearing a life jacket.

The Arguments: Life Jacket Wear Requirements

...imply that water-based recreation is unsafe
* nearly 2,000 people who died on Corps waters since 1998 proves to Corps there are risks
...will kill water-based recreation
* it may impact it for a while, but tests to date prove otherwise; Vicksburg lakes visitation has increased during the test. Gas prices hitting $5 or more per gallon may do more harm

The Arguments: Life Jacket Wear Requirements

...take away personal freedom of choice
* just about life jacket wear on regulated waters; regulation is one of the “tools” granted to the Corps to minimize recreation risk
...reek of ‘Big Brother Watching You’
* ...we probably are anyway (tongue in cheek); recreation risk management is a priority

The Arguments:

...Corps stats do not show a significant number of fatalities: on average 150/year over last decade
REALLY? Not significant?

The test allows us to know more BEFORE we make a decision

- Management challenges
- Two-sides of the coin
- Parameters that make sense
  ► IF policy – what?
- Changes in wear behaviors
The test has allowed us to educate on life jacket options

- Safe
- Safe AND comfortable
- AND fashionable

Test wrap up 2011

- Compile 3-year report and determine final recommendations for leadership
- Host a partners/stakeholders’ informational meeting for pre-Command briefing discussion
- Conduct Commander/leadership briefing, with final recommendations