

Corps Ranger sets stage at Superbowl

Photo and story by Bruce Hill, Jr., USACE Public Affairs

Like coffee needs a cup and socks need shoes, the Corps went hand-in-hand with Superbowl Forty two.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Albuquerque District Park Ranger, Phil Martinez, who normally patrols Abiquiu Lake in Northern New Mexico, was in Glendale, Arizona at the Superbowl promoting water safety and the Corps in early February.

Martinez is one of only two Corps park rangers nationwide chosen to represent the Corps at the public events leading up to this years Superbowl.

Because of his great interpretive skills and talents in the bilingual arena at the national level, Martinez was a top choice.

"I'm here to promote water safety to anyone who'll listen," said Martinez. "Many of

the people who stop by the Corps exhibit are from New Mexico."

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers exhibit was part of the Outdoor Recreation Village in the parking area at the University of Phoenix Stadium from Jan 31 to Feb 3, highlighting healthy outdoor recreation opportunities across the country. Martinez and natural re-

source specialists engaged visitors to explore the many places to have fun, learn and get fit at Corps Lakes

the Corps exhibit.

"People were very receptive," he said.



As a special attraction, Corps representatives used Google Earth and interactive trip planning sessions to help visitors develop custom itineraries that fit their needs. A number of customers even got to have their itinerary emailed to them at the end of the event.

"The experience was like the New Mexico State Fair multiplied by 10. There was a multitude of people there of all shapes, sizes and diversities."

"We had our Mascot Bobber there, took a lot of photos with families and children and emailed the pictures to them after the event. It was a great public relations opportunity for the Corps," he said.

The goal was to bring awareness to Corps recreation opportunities,

across the nation.

"The way our exhibits were positioned, people had to pass by to get to the main Superbowl attractions like access to the players and cheerleaders. We got the herd as they were heading to the feeding grounds," said Martinez. "I reached out to people as they walked by and invited them over to

water safety, volunteer opportunities and benefits generated by the 383 Corps Lakes nationwide.

The Corps is the number one provider of outdoor recreation in America with more than 400 million visitors annually to nearly 5,000 Corps sites around the country.

