



Mississippi River Project



US Army Corps
of Engineers®

Camping Season Has Arrived

The camping season has arrived along the Mississippi River Project! This month we will see several of our Class "A" recreation areas open for the season and that means you will see more activity along the banks of the Mississippi River. Although the air temperatures will be rising keep in mind that the water temps in the river will remain cool well into the early part of the summer. Just to be on the safe side if you are going to be near the water have your life jacket on and ready. You never know when a simple slip or trip could land you in the river.



AMERICORPS GROUP TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO MISSISSIPPI RIVER PROJECT

What has 20 arms, 20 legs, and works for no pay? The answer is the AmeriCorps NCCC work group that you will be seeing in Corps of Engineers parks this upcoming spring and summer! The Mississippi River Project of the Corps was successful in landing one of these work groups for the time period of 02 May – 26 June 2013 to perform much needed upkeep and repairs to our aging facilities in many of our recreation areas, and in our natural areas up and down the river. The group is sponsored by the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps program and offers work experience to America's youth while helping out in areas of national service. This program focuses on meeting needs related to disaster services, energy conservation, environmental protection, infrastructure improvement, and urban and rural development.



The group will be base camped at a couple of our larger recreation areas like the Thomson Causeway and Clark's Ferry during their 8 week stay, but will perform work in many recreation areas from Potosi, Wisconsin on down to Muscatine, Iowa on both sides of the river. They will be performing tasks such as painting buildings, landscaping work, tree trimming, debris removal, flood cleanup, brush removal, and a multitude of other tasks. They will also assist our natural resource management staff in areas of invasive species removal, tree plantation maintenance, and general forestry maintenance if the river and weather cooperate!

The group does not charge a direct fee for their service. They purchase and cook their own meals and will be given campsites to set up their base camps as well as a place to store their food. They can and will accept donations of food from local communities and civic groups or social agencies to assist them during their stay. The members are recruited nationally and are from different social, cultural, and educational backgrounds. Over 30% of the students are college graduates, 30% have some college background, and the remaining members have graduated high school or are working on graduating with a GED. A group of these youths worked for the Mississippi River Project in 2012, but only for a couple of weeks, while they painted and marked entrance and closure gates in almost all of our parks north of the Quad Cities.

NATURE BACKPACKS AVAILABLE IN CORPS PARKS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project has created a Nature Backpack Program in an effort to provide an opportunity to encourage children to learn more about the natural world.

The nature backpacks contain many different indoor and outdoor activities to engage children. Some fun outdoor activities include a nature scavenger hunt, bug and bird watching, and how to make a whistle from just a blade of grass. Did you know you can tell the temperature by listening to a cricket? The backpack includes many different tools to entice young nature lovers to explore their surroundings including binoculars, a nature book, bug boxes, and a magnifying glass. The nature backpack also includes fun indoor activities such as coloring and drawing pages, word finds, crossword puzzles, and amazing facts. Did you know an earthworm has five hearts? Or pileated woodpeckers hammer their heads into a tree up to 20 times a second?



Backpacks will be available at the fee booths in the following Class "A" parks: Grant River, Blanding Landing, Thomson Causeway, Fisherman's Corner, Clark's Ferry, and Shady Creek. The backpacks will also be available for nature adventures at The Mississippi River Project Office, The Visitor Center on Arsenal Island, and at the Quincy Ranger Station. Anyone interested will be able to check out on loan a backpack for the day. For more information on how to check out a backpack, contact one of the following Mississippi River Project offices:



Dubuque Ranger Office: 563-582-0881

Thomson Ranger Office: 815-259-3628

Mississippi River Project Office: 309-794-4526

Mississippi River Visitor Center: 309-794-5338

Muscatine Ranger Office: 563-263-7913

Quincy Ranger Office: 217-228-0890

AND THE WINNER IS...

Patrick Downie of Walcott, IA and Doug Hoffman of East Moline, IL who were each chosen to receive one free weekend of camping on the Mississippi River Project at any of our campgrounds along the river. Thank you to everyone who stopped by our booth at the QCCA Outdoor Show and RV Camping Show this past February and signed up to win. Come visit with our ranger staff again next year at the QCCA Expo Center for your chance to enter and win.

MWR CAMPSITES FOR ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY FAMILIES



MWR is a military term that stands for "Morale, Welfare, and Recreation". The MWR program is a quality-of-life program that directly supports readiness by providing a variety of community, Soldier, and Family support programs, activities, and services. Over the past few years the Mississippi River Project has chosen to designate one campsite at several of our class "A" recreation areas as an MWR site. This includes Grant River, Thomson Causeway, Fisherman's Corner, Clark's Ferry and Shady Creek Recreation Areas.

These MWR campsites will be available for ACTIVE military and their family members of all branches of service to reserve for up to two weeks at a time, free of charge, to show our support to active military personnel and their families for all of the sacrifices they make to protect and preserve our freedom. Active military personnel can make reservations for use of the site anytime between Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day weekend for up to 14 days by contacting the fee booth in person or by telephone. The site must be reserved no less than three days in advance of their arrival. On days when the MWR site is not reserved or occupied it will be available to any walk-up camper to camp upon – and regular pricing will apply. Those wishing to camp on the site will be limited to registering for a maximum of two nights stay, but may re-register for additional two nights (up to a maximum of 14 days) if the site continues to be unused or unreserved by any active military personnel. These MWR sites cannot be reserved by any other military personnel, army civilians or retired military personnel. It is for ACTIVE duty personnel only. Proof of active duty will be required upon registration.

Dubuque Ranger Station News

GRANT RIVER CAMPGROUND

OPENS FOR THE SEASON – APRIL 12

The Grant River Recreation Area is known for its beautiful views of the Mississippi River and fantastic sunsets. It is located 2 miles south of Potosi, Wisconsin off of Highway 133. The campground features a tent camping area, 63 large RV sites, 50 amp electrical service, sewer dump station, a shower building and much more! This popular family getaway spot offers something for everyone including two playgrounds, horseshoe pits, a picnic shelter, and a boat ramp.



EARTH DAY EVENT AT GRANT RIVER – MAY 4

The Park Rangers with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Dubuque, Iowa would like to invite you to a special Earth Day/Park Clean Up that will take place Saturday, May 4, 2013. Activities at the Grant River Recreation Area located 3 miles south of Potosi, Wisconsin, off of Highway 133, will include a park clean up and small maintenance projects. Persons interested in participating should wear old clothes intended for spring weather and bring work gloves. Please contact the Dubuque Park Rangers by calling (563) 582-0881.

22ND ANNUAL ECO-MEET – MAY 10

The Dubuque Field Station will be hosting the 22nd Annual Ecology Meet at Eagle Point Park on Friday, May 10th. Topics to be presented and tested on are as follow: Forestry, Fish of the Mississippi, Water Safety, & Native Americans Along the Mississippi River. This year's sponsors include the Dubuque Audubon Society, Coca-Cola, & Papa John's.



Thomson Ranger Station News

KIDS TO PARKS DAY – APRIL 24



The National Park Trust created Kids to Parks Day to encourage children to explore the outdoors and motivate them to become conservation leaders of tomorrow. This spring Riverdale Jr. High School in Port Byron, Illinois, will be taking advantage of this opportunity while visiting the Thomson Causeway Recreation Area. As part of the day's events the students will be given guided tour of Hidden Slough Nature Trail, and a tour of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mississippi River Refuge Environmental Management Program (EMP) located at the Thomson Causeway Recreation Area.

The tours will cover the importance of wildlife and habitat conservations efforts. To complete the afternoon students will be shuttled to Lock and Dam 13 where a tour will be given of the facility to discuss the history and evolution of navigation on the Mississippi River.



THOMSON CAUSEWAY AND FISHERMAN'S CORNER CAMPGROUNDS OPEN FOR THE SEASON – APRIL 12

Thomson Causeway recreation area located in Thomson, IL and Fisherman's Corner recreation area located in Hampton, IL will be opening for the season on April 12, 2013. Each of these facilities offers great riverside camping with concrete camp pads and 50 amp electrical service along with a shower building, dump station, playground equipment and a great view of the Mississippi River. Reservations are accepted at both campgrounds and can be made by calling 1-877-444-6777 or visiting www.recreation.gov. Contact the Thomson ranger office for additional information on these two areas 815-259-3628.

EARTH DAY AT THOMSON CAUSEWAY – APRIL 20

The Mississippi River Project Thomson Ranger Office will be hosting the Annual Earth Day Cleanup at Thomson Causeway Recreation Area on April 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Boy Scouts of America Troop #117 and Cub Scout Pack #48 will work on cleaning up the Thomson Causeway Recreation Area. Work will include cleaning up debris, mulching landscape and performing trail maintenance to prepare the area for seasonal use. After the morning work the scouts will enjoy a complimentary lunch to thank them for their work.

Mississippi River Visitor Center News

QUAD CITY EARTH WEEK FAIR

The Mississippi River Visitor Center staff located at Locks and Dam #15 will be participating in the Quad City Earth Week Fair, April 18-19 at the QCCA Expo Center in Rock Island, IL. This event is open to area 2nd-5th grade classes from 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. each day. The Fair will feature over 50 booths with hands-on, interactive projects, crafts, games, quizzes, challenges and more! All booths have an environmental education theme. Check out www.qcearthweek.org for more info.



FREE BOAT SAFETY CLASSES OFFERED IN THE QUAD CITY AREA.



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces they will be offering several opportunities to attend a free boating safety education class. The classes will be held on the following Saturdays: April 13th, April 27th, and May 11th, 2013. Each class will run from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and only one class is required to complete your certification. This class is recommended for people who are new to boating on the Mississippi, families that enjoy weekend

boating adventures, or seasoned boaters who would just like to brush up on their safe boating knowledge. Anyone over the age of 12 can be certified. This is a classroom based safety course and will not include an on-the-water experience. Upon successful completion of the class and exam, participants will be issued an Illinois DNR Boat Safety certification which is honored in both Iowa and Illinois. These classes will be held at the Mississippi River Project Office at Locks and Dam 14 in Pleasant Valley, Iowa. Pre-registration is required, space is limited, and the classes fill quickly. To register, contact the park rangers at (309) 794-5338.

Muscatine Ranger Station News

EARTH DAY CLEANUP AT ANDALUSIA SLOUGH

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invites you to celebrate Earth Day by participating in a cleanup at Andalusia Slough along the Mississippi River. Free lunch will be provided following the day's work. This event will be held, rain or shine, on Saturday, April 20, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Andalusia Slough Recreation Area. The park is located 2 miles west of Andalusia, Illinois, along IL Hwy 92. Please meet at the park's picnic shelter the day of the event and bring gloves, shoes or boots and dress appropriately. In the event of flooding, this event will be rescheduled for another date after the flood.



Work will include park cleanup, landscape work and other park maintenance. In addition to enjoying the outdoors, your help in cleaning the park and river of garbage helps improve the ecosystem of the river and the appearance of the area.

To help make sure enough food is provided, individuals or groups interested in helping out with this worthwhile Earth Day event are encouraged to register by Monday, April 15, 2013. Please contact the Muscatine Park Rangers by calling (563) 263-7913, by email at mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil, by mail at 810 Main St., Muscatine, Iowa 52761, or visit our website: www.missriver.org

VOLUNTEER NEEDED AT CORPS OF ENGINEERS PARK



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi River Project is looking for a fulltime Volunteer Campground Host at Blanchard Island Recreation Area. The Volunteer Campground Host position runs from May 15, 2013 through October 15, 2013. The campground host is responsible for the daily tasks of greeting park visitors, informing campers of self-registration procedures, cleaning the restrooms daily, cleaning out fire rings weekly, and informing the park rangers of maintenance needs. Volunteers will not collect

nor handle money. Hosts will provide 40 hours of volunteer service per week and may serve for the entire recreation season or for any portion of the season. The volunteer selected for this position is provided a campsite with water and electric. A dump station is located in the park for use by the volunteer. Blanchard Island Recreation Area is located along the Illinois side of the Mississippi River just south of Muscatine, Iowa.

If you are interested in volunteering or have any questions, please contact the Mississippi River Project's Muscatine Park Rangers by calling (563) 263-7913 or by emailing mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil.

CLARK'S FERRY CAMPGROUND OPENS FOR THE SEASON – APRIL 12

The Clark's Ferry Recreation Area located in Montpelier, IA just 10 miles downstream of Davenport, IA off Highway 22. The campground features 45 large RV sites with 50 amp electrical service, a sewer dump station, a shower building, and much more! This beautiful riverside recreation area also offers a playground, horseshoe pits, a reservable picnic shelter, and a boat launching area.

Quincy Ranger Station News

JUNIOR RANGERS GETTING READY TO GRADUATE

The Quincy Park Rangers have been very busy with their Junior Ranger Program over the last several months. The Park Rangers have been teaching 3rd grade students at both Adams and Madison Elementary Schools in Quincy, IL. The Junior Ranger Program consists of a series of six lessons taught by the rangers. Lessons include; Ranger duties, Illinois mammals, Illinois forestry, water safety, web of life, and finally Jr. Ranger graduation. Each program lasts roughly one hour and programs are taught weekly for six weeks. The Jr. Ranger program has been a big success this year having already graduated 104 students and will have graduated 87 more within the next week.



FREE BOAT SAFETY CLASSES OFFERED IN THE QUINCY AREA.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces they will be offering four different opportunities to attend a free boating safety education class. The classes will be held on the following dates:

April 27th – Twin Oaks Club – 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

May 14th and 15th – Quincy Boat Club – Both nights 6:00 PM – 10:00 PM

June 8th – Quincy Boat Club – 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

July 13th – Quincy Boat Club – 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

April

2013

Only one 8 hour class is required to complete your certification. This class is recommended for people who are new to boating on the Mississippi, families that enjoy weekend boating adventures, or seasoned boaters who would just like to brush up on their safe boating knowledge. Anyone over the age of 12 can be certified. This is a classroom based safety course and will not include an on-the-water experience. Upon successful completion of the class and exam, participants will be issued an Illinois DNR Boat Safety certification which is honored in both Iowa and Illinois. Pre-registration is required, space is limited, and the classes fill quickly. To register, contact the Quincy Ranger Office at (217) 228-0890.

If you would like to be removed from our e-mail list please print "unsubscribe" in the subject line in a reply to us.

Thank you,

Natural Resource Management Staff

P.O. Box 2004 Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004

(309) 794-5338 E-mail - mvrodmn15@usace.army.mil Website - <http://www.missriver.org>