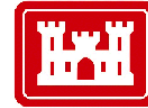




# Mississippi River Project



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®

## Low Water Worries

The late summer season is often a time when water levels on the Mississippi River drop lower than what most people are used to. This year because of the drought in much of the Mississippi River Valley, the river levels are dropping even lower than expected and are causing problems for boaters on the water. As a boater you might think that because hazards like wing dams, lateral walls, and sandbars are becoming more visible in the low water that it will be easy to avoid them. Although this is true for the ones you can see, it is the ones you cannot see that will be a real danger. Boaters should become familiar with the areas they are boating before they head out on the water. Navigational Charts are a useful tool and are readily available for purchase from the Mississippi River Project at the Mississippi River Visitor Center or can be downloaded online from <http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/NIC2/mrcharts.cfm> Recreational boaters on the river should boat with great caution during this time as many underwater hazards that are not typically a problem will suddenly ruin a good day on the river.



## ANNUAL FISHING CLINIC AT LOCKS AND DAM 14



Start planning to participate in the annual Mississippi River Project's Fishing Clinic scheduled for Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup> 2012. This is a free event that will be held at the Locks and Dam #14 Day Use Recreation Area located near Pleasant Valley, Iowa. The clinic will start at 9:00 and end at 3:00. Educational programs on water safety, fishing and fish ID will be held in the morning. A free lunch will be provided consisting of hot dogs, frog legs, "Floppy Joe's" (Asian Carp that's deboned and prepared like "Sloppy Joe's" but using Asian Carp instead of hamburger. Folks that have tried this dish have said that it tastes like chicken!) Asian Carp "hot dogs" will also be on the menu along with catfish fillets. The afternoon will consist of a fishing derby. Please bring your equipment; the Corps of Engineers staff will have a limited number of rods and reels for families to use. Bait (worms) will also be provided. Trophies and other prizes will be awarded to the youth. Pre-registration is required and can be done by calling (309) 794-4301.

## AMERICORPS GROUP COMPLETES WORK FOR THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER PROJECT

Sometimes partnerships with the COE are hard to find, sometimes they find us. Recently the Mississippi River Project – Natural Resource Management Section was approached by Stephan Silberman, the regional coordinator of the AmeriCorps Youth Employment program in NW Illinois, about hosting an AmeriCorps group for a week's worth of work this summer. The group was going to be in the area for 6 weeks from mid-May until late June, basing their camp out of the Mississippi Palisades State Park in Savanna, Illinois.

The AmeriCorps group is made up of 11 college age individuals from all over the country who can be requested by a regional coordinator to accomplish tasks for governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private citizens to do service to the country in exchange for work experience and modest accommodations. The group has their transportation and associated costs, meals and lodging provided by the hosting region. All members of the group have safety training in numerous tasks, and have safety equipment provided by the AmeriCorps program as well.



While working for the Mississippi River Project for a week, the group was tasked with accomplishing a necessary project directed by USACE Headquarters to standardize the marking of all recreation area closure gates. The Mississippi River Project has 42 such closure gates that all needed marking in the AmeriCorps service area. For OD-MN, that equates to work in eleven different recreation areas from Potosi, Wisconsin down to the Quad Cities in the states of Illinois and Iowa.

The project involved scraping off old reflective tape and paint, painting the metal gates, marking the gates with the proper reflective tape, and affixing a standardized sign to the gates to make them conform to the new national USACE standards. OD-MN provided the materials, safety training, and guidance to the group to perform the work, and the AmeriCorps volunteers (under the daily leadership of Calin Sterling – the group's work coordinator) did the rest. The logistics of the project and the time-consuming nature of the job saved the Mississippi River Project hundreds of dollars in labor costs to perform this necessary work. A real win-win situation for both the COE, and the AmeriCorps students as well!

## Dubuque Ranger Station News

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invites campers and the visiting public to attend campground programs held at the Grant River Recreation Area. Throughout the summer, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, presenters will cover a host of topics for all to enjoy. As a reminder, all campground programs are FREE to the public and are subject to cancellation or rescheduling in the event of rain or severe weather. Programs for the month of July include:

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT GRANT RIVER CAMPGROUND:

- Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup> - An Evening with Ranger Brian Blakeway
- Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup> - Night Sky, by Sharon Swiggum.
- Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> - Great River Road, by Ranger Brian Blakeway.
- Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup> - Creatures of the Night, by Ranger Brian Blakeway.



Grant River Campground is located 2 miles south of Potosi, WI off Hwy 133. The campground offers 73 campsites, electrical hookups, shower and restroom facilities, drinking water, a dump station, and playground.

To reserve a campsite contact the National Recreation Reservation Service toll free at (877) 444-6777. Campsites may also be available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, please contact the Dubuque Park Rangers by e-mail at [mvrodmn11@usace.army.mil](mailto:mvrodmn11@usace.army.mil) or by phone at (563) 582-0881.

## Thomson Ranger Station News

### 21ST ANNUAL MISSISSIPPI RIVER PHOTO CONTEST

The Annual Mississippi River Project Photo Contest is entering the home stretch. Participants have until August 24 to submit photos to the Thomson Ranger Office. Amateur photographers can submit photos in three separate categories: Wildlife, Recreation or Landscape. Photos must be taken on federally managed lands or waters in pools 11-16 of the Mississippi. If you would like more information regarding the contest, contact the Thomson Ranger Office at (815)259-3628

### THOMSON CAUSEWAY CRAFT SHOW



The Mississippi River Project Thomson Ranger Office will be hosting the Annual Camper Craft Show at Thomson Causeway Recreation Area on Saturday, September 8, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The Camper Craft Show is an event designed to inspire conservation of public lands through the creation of handmade goods and crafts from natural materials. Crafters interested in setting up a display must register with the Thomson Ranger Office by Friday, September 4. If you are interested in more information, or to register as a crafter, contact the Thomson Ranger Office at (815) 259-3628.

## **PROGRAMS AT THOMSON CAUSEWAY & FISHERMAN'S CORNER CAMPGROUNDS:**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invites campers and the visiting public to campground programs held at Thomson Causeway and Fisherman's Corner Recreation Areas. As a reminder, all campground programs are FREE to the public and are subject to cancellation or rescheduling in the event of rain or severe weather. Upcoming programs for the month include:

### **THOMSON CAUSEWAY PROGRAMS:**

- Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Fulton Dutch Windmill History
- Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 PM – Introduction to Canoeing – Guided Canoe Trip through Potters Marsh.
- Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Mississippi Mud Art with Frank Ross
- Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Fish Tackle Crafting with Jim Judson

### **FISHERMAN'S CORNER PROGRAMS:**

- Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Join Gene Buss to learn about cast iron cooking on an open campfire.
- Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – “Geology Rocks!” presented by ranger Ryan Watson.
- Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Sharon Peterson with the Scott County Kennel Club will be presenting on dog obedience.
- Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM – Mike Logan from Living Lands and Water will share what it is like to clean up the biggest river in the country.
- Saturday September 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 PM – Join local artist Frank Ross as he demonstrates a creative use for Mississippi Mud.



Thomson Causeway Campground is located on Lewis Ave and Main St. in Thomson, IL. The campground offers 131 campsites, electrical hookups, shower and restroom facilities, drinking water, a dump station, boat ramp, and playground.

Fisherman's Corner Campground is located just on Highway 84 just north of Hampton, IL. The campground offers 56 campsites, electrical hookups, shower and restroom facilities, drinking water, a dump station, and playground.

To reserve a campsite contact the National Recreation Reservation Service toll free at (877) 444-6777. Campsites may also be available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, please contact the Thomson Park Rangers by e-mail at [mvrodmn13@usace.army.mil](mailto:mvrodmn13@usace.army.mil) or by phone at (815) 259-3628.

## Mississippi River Visitor Center News

### LOCKS AND DAM #15 TOURS WRAPPING UP FOR THE SEASON

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project announces they will be offering free tours of Locks and Dam #15 on Saturdays and Sundays at 11:00am and 2:00pm through the Labor Day weekend. Participants must wear shoes with enclosed toes and backs, tennis shoes are preferred. Cameras and pictures are not allowed on the tour but they are allowed in the Visitor Center. Walking is required. Pre-registration is also required and the group size is limited. These tours leave from the Mississippi River Visitor Center which is only accessible via the Rock Island or Moline entrances. All persons over the age of 16 must carry a photo ID in order to enter the island. All vehicles are subject to random search and participants should allow 15 minutes extra to ensure proper arrival time. Pedestrians and bicyclists with helmets have access to the Mississippi River Visitor Center through the Rock Island gate only. Appropriate ID is required. Contact the ranger staff at (309) 794-5338 to make a tour reservation or for any additional questions.

### MISSISSIPPI RIVER PROJECT EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



#### Drew Vlazny – SCEP Park Ranger

My name is Drew Vlazny, and I am a SCEP (Student Career Experience Program) Park Ranger with the Corps at the Mississippi River Visitor Center. I grew up on a small farm just outside a small town in Northeastern Iowa called St. Olaf, home of the tenderloin and just a few short miles from Gunder, which is home of the Gunder Burger. On our farm, we primarily focus on raising sheep, (purebred Suffolk, as well as some commercial stock) which is where I got my start in 4-H. We show sheep at Clayton County Fair as well as the Iowa State Fair. In addition to the sheep we also maintain a few chickens.

As far as my career with the Corps, I spent last summer working for the Mississippi River Project at the Dubuque, IA field station and this summer I have been working at the Visitor Center on the Rock Island Arsenal. I have completed two years at Kirkwood Community College in the Parks and Natural Resources program and will continue my education this fall at Upper Iowa University, the Fayette Campus where I will pursue my degree in Environmental Science

and Biology.

## Muscatine Ranger Station News

### ALWAYS WANTED TO CAMP FOR FREE?

Volunteering as a campground host can be a fun and inexpensive way to enjoy some time along the Mississippi River as well as provide a great service to the visitors that use the area. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project is looking for a Fulltime Volunteer Campground Host to work at Blanchard Island Recreation Area until October 15, 2012. This campground is located along the Mississippi River just south of Muscatine, Iowa. 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 any money. Hosts provide an average of 21 hours of volunteer service per week and may serve for the entire recreation season. The volunteer selected for this position is provided a campsite with water, electric, and a dump station in the park. If you are interested in volunteering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers please contact the Muscatine Park Rangers by calling 563-263-7913 or email [kevin.j.zidarich@usace.army.mil](mailto:kevin.j.zidarich@usace.army.mil).

## **23RD ANNUAL SHADY CREEK CAMPER'S OUTDOOR CRAFT SHOW**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project is pleased to invite the general public to attend the 23rd Annual Camper's Outdoor Craft Show to be held at the Shady Creek Recreation Area picnic shelter on Saturday, August 18, 2012 from 9:00 am until 2:30 pm. Crafters will display baskets, candles, homemade wooden and hand-sewn items as well as many other interesting pieces. Many of the crafts will follow an "outdoor" related theme, and visitors will be able to view the preparation of many items. The show is free of charge.

The purpose of the craft show is to demonstrate the different ways that items from our environment can be turned into beautiful crafts, and how man-made materials can be transformed into something useful and beautiful that preserves our natural environment. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project is involved in educating the public on how to conserve and protect our natural resources.

Camping reservations for Shady Creek and Clark's Ferry Campgrounds can be made on the web at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) or call Reserve America at 877-444-6777. Shady Creek Recreation Area is located between Muscatine and Davenport, along Highway 22, about 10 miles east of Muscatine, Iowa. Clark's Ferry Recreation Area is located 5 miles east of Shady Creek Recreation Area on Highway 22. For general information and entry forms, please contact the Muscatine Park Rangers by mail, 810 Main Street, Muscatine, Iowa 52761, by phone at (563) 263-7913, by fax at (563) 263-1845 or by email at [mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil](mailto:mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil).



## **UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT SHADY CREEK AND CLARKS FERRY CAMPGROUNDS:**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invites campers and the visiting public to attend campground programs held at Clark's Ferry and Shady Creek Recreation Areas. Throughout the summer, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, presenters will cover a host of topics for all to enjoy. As a reminder, all campground programs are subject to cancellation or rescheduling in the event of rain or severe weather. Programming for the months of August and September include the following:



- Saturday, August 4, 2012, 6:00 PM, Shady Creek, and at 7:30 PM Clark's Ferry - A member of the staff from Muscatine County Conservation Board will present a live raptor program. Meet and learn about several different native lowan raptors.
- Saturday, August 11, 2012, 7:00 PM, Shady Creek Campground - Don Swensson travels downriver to pass on his years of experience and knowledge on how to fish the mighty Mississippi.
- Saturday, August 25, 2012, 8:00 PM, Shady Creek Campground - Members of a local Astronomy Club will point their telescopes to the sky for a presentation on stargazing and astronomy.
- Saturday, September 1, 2012, 8 PM, Clark's Ferry Campground - The final presenter of the year is always a popular one. Mike Hutchison of Iowa Parrot Rescue returns with a live demonstration about exotic birds. Learn about care needed for these beautiful birds.

Clark's Ferry Campground is located just off Highway 22 at 3860 Sunset Beach, Montpelier, IA 52759. Clark's Ferry offers 45 campsites, electrical hookups, shower and restroom facilities, drinking water, a dump station, playground, boat launch and wood. Shady Creek Campground is located at 3550 Highway 22, Muscatine, IA 52761. Shady Creek offers 53 campsites, electrical hookups, shower and restroom facilities, drinking water, a dump station, playground, boat launch and wood. To reserve a campsite, contact the National Recreation Reservation Service toll free at (877) 444-6777. Campsites are also available on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, please contact the Muscatine Park Rangers by e-mail at [mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil](mailto:mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil) or by phone at (563) 263-7913.



## **LOCKS AND DAM #16 TOURS WRAPPING UP FOR THE SEASON**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project invites the public to enjoy a tour of Lock and Dam #16. Every Sunday afternoon through September 2, 2012 at 2:00 PM, weather permitting, tours of Locks and Dam #16 will be conducted for the public. A special Labor Day weekend tour will also be held on Saturday, September 1, 2012 at 2:00 PM. Lock and Dam #16 is located off 102nd Ave West on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River about one mile upstream from the bridge in Muscatine, IA. Participants will be presented with a history of the Upper Mississippi River system, how the river system operates and the process it takes to move a barge through a lock. The tour is capped off with a walk on the lock structure. Walking is a part of the tour, so participants must wear shoes with enclosed toes and an enclosed back (tennis shoes are best). Advance reservations are required as group size is limited. Please allow approximately one hour to complete the tour. For more information and to make reservations, please contact the Muscatine Park Rangers by e-mail at [mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil](mailto:mvrodmn16@usace.army.mil) or by phone at (563) 263-7913.

## Quincy Ranger Station News

Quincy Rangers are in the dog days of summer in the southern reaches of the District as the summer recreation season soon nears its end. This was an unusual summer for the Quincy Rangers as they were able to experience a full recreation season without the daunting task of flood cleanup. It was a special treat for the public to see the full potential of what the recreation areas can look like without a flood. It took a great deal of hard work by the Ranger staff and maintenance crew to ready the areas for the summer.

It is very unusual for the Quincy area to be asking for rain, but like much of the Midwest, we are in serious need of some rain, not just to settle the dust, but also because the river is at a dangerously low level for recreational boating. Many people are experiencing engine troubles on their boats as they are plowing through shallow waters and clip wing dams outside of the navigation channel.



Familiarizing yourself with the river by using maps and having a boating safety education class can be a very helpful in these low river conditions. Charts for the Mississippi are available for purchase by calling 309-794-5338 or downloaded at <http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/NIC2/mrcharts.cfm> The Quincy Rangers are finished with teaching the IL DNR Boating Safety Education Classes for the year however, if you are interested in a boating education, online classes are available on <http://boat-ed.com>. You can contact the Quincy Rangers @ 217-228-0890 for further boating information in the Quincy area.

**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](mailto:mvrodmn15@usace.army.mil) Website - <http://www.missriver.org>