



# Media Advisory

## US Army Corps of Engineers®

Mississippi Valley Division/  
Mississippi River Commission  
[cemvd-pa@mvd02.usace.army.mil](mailto:cemvd-pa@mvd02.usace.army.mil)

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Contact: Public Affairs Office  
Phone: 601-634-5760 / 7783

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(Note to Editors: The following provides information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' recreation mission within the Mississippi Valley Division.)

## Recreation in the Mississippi Valley Division

Vicksburg, Miss., July 10, 2001 -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division, is a major provider of outdoor recreation. This may sound strange to some who hear it for the first time. In fact, it sounds strange to some who have been hearing it for years. However, a glance at the following statistics should convince most people that the Mississippi Valley Division does play a major role in recreation:

- The Mississippi Valley Division manages 1.8 million acres of land and water in portions of 12 states, an area equivalent to more than 1 million football fields.
- The division provides hiking, fishing, camping, boating, hunting, sightseeing, picnicking and many other recreational opportunities at 46 lakes and pools within its 370,000-square-mile boundary.
- Corps projects within the Mississippi Valley Division have:
  - 6,074 miles of shoreline
  - More than 600 recreation sites
  - More than 6,000 camp sites
  - 329 boat ramps
  - 32 visitor centers
- The majority of Corps recreation areas are within 50 miles of a large city.

## **2-2-2 Recreation**

Dating from the implementation of the Jadwin Plan, a component of the Flood Control Act of 1928, and resulting from the flood of 1927 on the lower Mississippi River, the Corps has been poised to play a major role in recreation. Three significant statistics combine to emphasize this point in a dramatic way:

- 80 percent of federal land in the 48 contiguous states is located in and west of the Rocky Mountains.
- 80 percent of the population of the 48 contiguous states lives east of the Rocky Mountains—where 20 percent of the federal land is located.
- 80 percent of the Corps's operational projects are also east of the Rocky Mountains—where 80 percent of the people are.

As demonstrated from the above, when 80 percent of the people of the lower 48 states go looking for recreation opportunities on federal land, they find the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

### **CORPS RECREATION TODAY**

The demand for recreation at Corps lakes today is large, diverse and dynamic. Over the last 50 years, the Corps has built and maintained a vast array of facilities to serve the nation's need for water-based outdoor recreation. Today, one out of every ten Americans visits a Corps lake, for a total of 400 million visits a year.

In addition to traditional activities like hunting, fishing, camping, hiking and boating, visitors are snorkeling, windsurfing, whitewater rafting and mountain biking.

A recent survey finds a majority of Americans feel that today's outdoor recreation is satisfying their needs for fun, fitness, rest and relaxation. But, the importance of recreation to the health and happiness of all Americans requires that the Corps continue to improve the variety and quality of Corps facilities to meet the demands of tomorrow.

### **CHALLENGES FOR TOMORROW**

Water is the number one recreation attraction in America today, making federal lakes an irreplaceable public resource. Congress created the National Recreation Lakes Study Commission in 1996. The Commission found that increased use of federal lakes is desirable, but limited by (1) funds for updated facilities, (2) barriers to effective partnering and (3) conflicting lake uses and goals.

### **3-3-3 Recreation**

The Commission recognized the value of Corps lakes in meeting recreation needs, but also found problems with deteriorating roads and facilities. The Corps has a budget of just over \$200 million (nationwide) to operate and maintain its recreation areas -- about 50 cents per visitor. User fees offset 20 percent of these costs.

A \$330 million program has been proposed to Congress to modernize recreation areas at Corps lakes. This program would update the design of facilities to meet the growing and changing demands of the American people.

The Corps' recreation mission is a value to the nation at several levels:

- To individuals -- the Corps' many lakes, rivers and beaches offer everyone fun, fitness, rest and relaxation.
- To communities -- Corps recreation areas provide outdoor playgrounds and classrooms for local groups and schools, and often become an integral part of the community.
- To the economy -- recreation promotes economic as well as personal and social well being, providing jobs and income for individuals and economic stability for American communities.
- To the environment -- the Corps manages the resources entrusted to it to preserve their value as environmental assets, and provide quality recreation for the American people.

Among the recreation areas within the Mississippi Valley Division are:

#### **St. Paul District**

Located three miles north of De Soto, Wisc., adjacent to the main channel of the Mississippi River, Blackhawk Park is the largest public use facility in Pool 9 of the mighty Mississippi. Many campsites are located along the shoreline and provide the camper with a picturesque view of the Mississippi River. Park Rangers provide a variety of programs and activities throughout the summer. Interpretive programs may cover such topics as recreation, local history and the environment. Other activities range from guided walks and campfire talks to natural craft programs.  
<http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/recreation/blackhawk/>

The Ronald Louis Cloutier Recreation Area, better known as the Crosslake Recreation Area is located at the Pine River Dam in Crosslake Minn. Located on the very popular Whitefish chain of lakes, the recreation area offers wooded camping setting with a variety of tree species being present, and an abundance of water-related recreational opportunities.  
<http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/recreation/cross/>

#### **4-4-4 Recreation**

The Lac Qui Parle Flood Control and Water Conservation Project is best known for its outstanding waterfowl hunting, particularly Canada Geese. Lac qui Parle project is also a tremendous place to view wildlife especially during the fall waterfowl migration. It is located on the Upper Minnesota River in western Minnesota near the South Dakota border. Lac qui Parle State Park is located on the west side of the Lac qui Parle dam. It has a modern campground and other recreation facilities to offer.

<http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/recreation/lacqui/>

Eau Galle Lake is a 150-acre lake surrounded by two day-use areas, a beach, two boat launches, one campground and several miles of hiking and equestrian trails. An abundance of largemouth bass, crappies, bluegills, and sunfish provide plenty of action for the angler year-round. The lake is located just north of Spring Valley, Wisc.

<http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/recreation/eaugalle/>

Lake Ashtabula is located near Valley City, N.D., and is situated in one of the most scenic river valleys in the region offering visitors a wide range of recreation opportunities. Popular activities include boating, camping, fishing, hunting, picnicking, swimming and snowmobiling. The Corps actively manages 13 separate wildlife areas at Lake Ashtabula. These areas provide quality habitat for many species of wildlife. Anglers at Lake Ashtabula will find a very productive sport fishery, home to abundant populations of walleye, northern pike, white bass, yellow perch and black bullheads. <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/recreation/ashtabula/>

Please see the following web site for more information on recreation within the St. Paul District: <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/recreation/>

#### **Rock Island District**

Bulger's Hollow Recreation Area is a multi-use recreational facility located three miles north of Clinton, Iowa. This recreation area site on the banks of the Mississippi River gives the visitor a captivating view of Pool 13, the widest pool on the upper Mississippi River. Visitors and campers especially enjoy the peaceful scenery and remoteness of this lesser-known Corps recreation area.

Clark's Ferry Recreation Area is located directly along the main channel of the Mississippi River, easily accessible off Highway 22 at Montpelier, Iowa. This 12-acre park is known for its mature landscaping, which provides shady campsites and an aesthetically pleasing environment. Clark's Ferry provides an excellent get away for an overnight visit or a day of picnicking, boating or fishing. Educational programs on a variety of subjects are offered on weekends during the season.



### **5-5-5 Recreation**

Fisherman's Corner Recreation Area is a topnotch campground that offers large picnic grounds as well as ample bank and levee fishing opportunities.

The recreation area, located on Highway 84 just north of Hampton, Ill., offers a good view of Lock and Dam #14 as well as a small aquatic marsh which is home to a variety of wildlife. A close up view of the barges and tows as they navigate above the dam is available from several of the campsites in the park.

Blanchard Island Recreation Area is an "off the beaten path," multi-use, recreational facility. It is located along the Mississippi River, on the Illinois side, four miles south of Muscatine, Iowa. This area offers the visitor a beautiful view of the river's backwaters. These elements create ideal habitat for Canada geese, great blue heron, bald eagles, deer, squirrel, turtles, frogs, fish and other wildlife.

The district also manages three reservoir sites in Iowa: Coralville Lake, Lake Red Rock and Saylorville Lake.

Please see the following web site for more information on the above as well as other recreation areas within the Rock Island District:

<http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/Recreation/recreation.html>

### **St. Louis District**

The St. Louis district has five lake projects within its boundaries: Mark Twain Lake and Wappapello Lake in Missouri, and Lake Shelbyville, Carlyle Lake and Rend Lake in Illinois.

The Clarence Cannon Dam and Mark Twain Lake attract up to two million visitors each year, provide a multitude of recreational opportunities and can supply 4.5 million gallons of drinking water daily to 13 communities in Northeast Missouri. <http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/MarkTwain/>

Wappapello Lake, nestled in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains, encompasses more than 44,000 acres of public lands and water. Each year, many local organizations partner with Wappapello Lake to present a number of special events, to include: Old Greenville Black Power Rendezvous, Intertribal Living Indian Village, Disabled Persons Fishing Day, Annual Drag Boat Races, Waterfest, etc. <http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/Wappapello/>

Bass Masters Magazine named Lake Shelbyville the Best Bass Lake in Illinois and more than 50 fishing tournaments are held at the lake each year.

Carlyle Lake, located about 50 miles east of St. Louis, Mo., in central Illinois, is one of the top 10 sailing lakes in the Midwest. <http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/Carlyle/>

## 6-6-6 Recreation

Throughout the summer, Rend Lake offers a variety of events that entertain, educate, enlighten and amaze -- from the Beach Blast water safety carnival to the Taste of Freedom celebrating the nation's birthday. [www.mvs.usace.army.mil/rend](http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/rend)

Please see the following web site for more information on recreation within the St. Louis District: <http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil/Recreation/>

### Vicksburg District

The "Thunder on the Water" event at Grenada Lake attracts 150,000 people annually and is one of the Top 20 events in the Southeastern United States. The Grenada Lake project is located 113 miles north of Jackson, Miss., and includes 254 picnic sites, 300 campsites and seven swimming beaches.

Sardis Lake, located 50 miles south of Memphis, Tenn., includes 98,357 total acres of land and water, with 83,000 acres of land open to the public for hunting. Rental cabins, amphitheater, indoor sports gym, boat rentals and an 18 hole golf course are just a few of the facilities and services available at the John W. Kyle State Park, located at the Sardis Lake project.

The district's Arkansas lakes - DeGray, Ouachita and Greeson - offer a total of 59 recreation areas, as well as 717 picnic areas, 2,238 campsites, 51 boat ramps and 31 swimming beaches.

The Vicksburg District's 10 projects, including the Ouachita-Black River Navigation project and the J. Bennett Johnston Waterway, host 30 million visitors annually. Some of the weekend events conducted at the lakes bring in \$4-\$6 million per weekend to local economies.

Each year, the district's lakes provide \$24 million of hydropower for less than \$4 million per year. In addition, many of the Vicksburg District's projects have exceeded their 50-year economic life and are now providing flood protection benefits for free.

See the following web sites for more information on the above as well as other recreation areas within the Vicksburg District: <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/>

## 7-7-7 Recreation

### New Orleans District

The Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System encompasses 595,000 acres of the largest contiguous tract of bottomland hardwoods in the United States. The Atchafalaya Basin is a scenic semi-wilderness area of hardwood forests, cypress stands, marshes and bayous. It is one of the last great river swamps left in the nation. Recreational opportunities include biking, boating, cultural or historic sites, camping, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, lodging, water sports, a wilderness area and wildlife viewing. [http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/recreation/Recreation\\_Sites\\_Atchafalaya.asp](http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/recreation/Recreation_Sites_Atchafalaya.asp)

Over the years, the Bonnet Carré Spillway has developed into an extensively used outdoor recreation area with approximately 250,000 visitors enjoying the spillway each year. These lands and waters provide opportunities for fishing, crawfishing, hunting, dog training, camping and wildlife watching. More specialized activities include retriever dog field trials and model airplane flying competitions. The spillway contains two boat launching sites and a primitive campground provided by St. Charles Parish. [http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/recreation/Recreation\\_Sites\\_Bonnet\\_Carre.asp](http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/recreation/Recreation_Sites_Bonnet_Carre.asp)

The Old River Lock was built to provide access from the Red and Atchafalaya rivers to the Mississippi. Recreational opportunities include boating, fishing and wildlife viewing on 2,535 acres of land and water. Picnic areas are available and pets are allowed. Ten miles upstream at the Old River Control Structure, two boat ramps -- one for the Mississippi River and one for the Atchafalaya River -- can be accessed on the outflow channel just below the Low Sill Structure. Driving directions to Old River can be found at [http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/recreation/Recreation\\_Sites\\_Old\\_River.asp](http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/recreation/Recreation_Sites_Old_River.asp)

See the following web sites for more information on recreation within the New Orleans District:  
[http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/recreation/Recreation\\_Sites.asp](http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/recreation/Recreation_Sites.asp)

### Entrance Fees

The federal government has established the Golden Eagle, Golden Age and Golden Access passports that cover fees at areas that charge entrance fees. This is very convenient when traveling to several areas that charge an entrance fee. The Golden Age and Access passports also provide a 50 percent discount on most use fees (camping, parking, boat launch, ramps, etc.) More information is available on these passports at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/recinfo/passports.shtml>

## 8-8-8 Recreation

### Reservations

Reservations can be made at many Corps campsites online by visiting [www.reserveusa.com](http://www.reserveusa.com), the official website of the National Recreation Reservation Service. This service is a partnership between the Corps and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service. Reservations may also be made by calling toll free, 1-877-444-6777.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division, includes portions of 12 states and encompasses 370,000 square miles. The district offices that conduct the programs and activities overseen by the Mississippi Valley Division are located in St. Paul, Minn.; Rock Island, Ill.; St. Louis, Mo.; Memphis, Tenn.; Vicksburg, Miss.; and New Orleans, La. [http://www.mvd.usace.army.mil/Pam/MVD map.jpg](http://www.mvd.usace.army.mil/Pam/MVD_map.jpg)