MAKING A DIFFERENCE...

IN NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & REGULATION

The Corps Natural Resources Management mission is to manage, conserve, and provide stewardship for 11.7 million acres of federal land and water while providing quality public outdoor recreation experiences to serve the needs of present and future

WILDLIFE BECOMES CORPS JOB

When the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built the Melvin Price Locks and Dam in Alton, Illinois, it put together more than concrete and mortar. The Corps also put together — and now manages — the Riverlands National Environmental Demonstration Area, a 1,200-acre tract adjacent to the dam that has been restored to pre-settlement conditions.

Today, the Riverlands is not just a wildlife refuge or a nature preserve, but an environmental awareness area to educate and inspire visitors about the significance and beauty of prairie and marsh. The 1,200-acre Riverlands site includes 850 acres of bottomland prairie, 300 acres of shallow marsh and a 15-acre prairie wildflower area with a trail. In addition, the Riverlands includes a 60-acre fishing lake, stocked by the Missouri Conservation Department with largemouth bass, channel catfish, redear sunfish and hybrid bluegill. The Raptor Rehabilitation and Propagation Project is working with the Corps to install a peregrine falcon hacking tower on the site, and later on the locks and dams itself.

The entire area is contoured so that water released from the Mississippi River flows through naturally without pumping, flooding the marshes.

"There will be constant recharging from the river so you don't get any stagnant water problem," said Pat McGinnis, the Corps Riverlands Project Director. "Having worked for the Corps, I've always thought of what you could do if you turned our energy toward the environment. Now when my kids are older, there'll be something left."

generations. In all aspects of natural and cultural resources management, Corps resource managers promote awareness of environmental values and adhere to sound environmental stewardship, protection, compliance and restoration practices.

Corps' natural resource managers oversee the management of diverse natural resources components such as fish, wildlife, forests, wetlands, grasslands, soil, air and water.

Typical duties include:

- Administering the forest/vegetative management, wildlife management, fishery management, shoreline management, wetlands management and cultural resources programs;
- Coordinating endangered species actions;
- Participating in the pesticides and hazardous and toxic waste programs.

Its multidisciplinary staff includes outdoor recreation planners, park (resource) managers and rangers, foresters, wildlife biologists, fisheries biologists, general biologists, landscape architects, environmental protection specialists, biological technicians and forestry/wildlife technicians.

Another key element of natural resources management is the Corps' regulatory program. Originally designed to control hazards to navigation, this program was greatly broadened to include all waters of the United States, including wetlands. All construction, and dredge and fill operations, in waters covered by the program, require a permit from the Corps, which processes more than 14,000 applications a year.

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