



NGRREC Field Station Open for Guided Tours Every Friday

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ALTON – Interested in science? Want to learn more about the Mississippi River watershed? If so, why not tour the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center's Jerry F. Costello Field Station?

The Field Station, which is located near the confluence of the Mississippi, Missouri and Illinois rivers at One Confluence Way in East Alton by the Melvin Price Locks and Dam, is open to the public Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Free, guided tours are given every Friday at 11:30 a.m.

“The Field Station's construction process, and the building itself, incorporates many green elements with a goal to attain Leadership in Energy Engineering and Environmental Design (LEED) certification at the highest level,” said Water Resources and Sustainability Coordinator Ted Kratschmer.

Touring guests can explore an interactive exhibit, sustainability touch screens and the green features of the Field Station, including a vegetative roof, educational dragonfly pond and mesocosms.

Mesocosms are large concrete channels containing water and plankton, which can be used as artificial environments for research. Up to 3.5 million gallons of Mississippi River water per day will be pumped to NGRREC's mesocosms and wet lab when the construction is complete later this year.

“Aquatic mesocosms of this scale that can be setup in multiple ways just don't exist anywhere else,” Aquatic Ecologist John Chick said. “Scientists from all over the world are interested in utilizing NGRREC's mesocosms for research.”

Because the Field Station is situated at the confluence of three major rivers in the third largest watershed in the world, NGRREC scientists are able to conduct important

research that helps to shed light on the structure and function of floodplain-river ecosystems.

NGRREC aspires to be a leader in scholarly research, education and outreach related to the interconnectedness of big rivers, their floodplains and watersheds, and the people who use them.

The National Great Rivers Research and Education Center is a partnership of Lewis and Clark Community College, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the Prairie Research Institute's Illinois Natural History Survey.

For more information about NGRREC visit www.ngrrec.org.