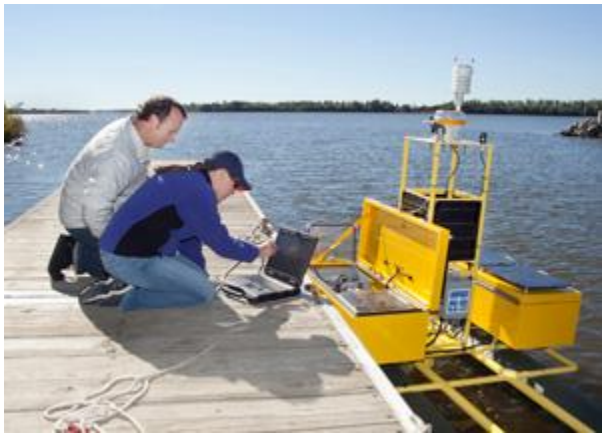


New Buoy Coming to Stoddard Island Complex in Wisconsin

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Lori Gittinger, Illinois Natural History Survey LTRMP Water Quality specialist, works with Kevin Simpson, YSI, Inc. Senior Project Manager for Global Systems and Services, as they launch the first buoy set up for the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center's Great Rivers Ecological Observatory Network project into the Mississippi River for the first time in October 2012.

GODFREY – In early October boaters, anglers, and hunters may notice a new buoy near the Stoddard Island complex in Navigation Pool 8 of the Upper Mississippi River in Wisconsin.

The new buoy will house water quality and weather monitoring equipment and is being set up by river scientists from the USGS Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center who are partnering with the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center's (NGRRECsm) Great Rivers Ecological Observatory Network (GREONsm) project.

These stations will be in place for several weeks and will continuously monitor

dissolved oxygen, water temperature, wind conditions, and water clarity, phytoplankton abundance, and nitrate concentration.

Dissolved oxygen and water temperature are important factors in determining habitat quality. The main purpose of these monitoring stations is to provide information that will increase our understanding of how water clarity, river stage, and discharge, weather conditions, and the concentration of plant nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) affect ecosystem function and structure of the Mississippi River and its floodplain habitats.

Ultimately, the GREON project has a goal of establishing a network of identical water quality monitoring buoys in great rivers around the world. The work in Pool 8 is an important preliminary step in establishing this network.

The monitoring station is marked with reflective tape and lights for nighttime visibility. The monitoring equipment is fragile and difficult to replace and the scientists request that boaters, anglers, and hunters avoid disturbing this equipment.

For further information contact Jeff Houser, an aquatic ecologist with the Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center, at jhouser@usgs.gov or (608) 781-6262.

The National Great Rivers Research and Education Center is a partnership of Lewis and Clark Community College and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

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. For more information, visit www.ngrrec.org