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Celebrate National Public Lands Day At The Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary

by Allison Rhanor

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WEST ALTON - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rivers Project Office, is partnering with local organizations to host a variety of stewardship activities that will give members of the community a chance to enjoy their federal lands and take an active role in their conservation in celebration of National Public Lands Day on September 24, 2022.

One of these activities is the Great Rivers Clean-up, hosted in partnership with the Piasa Palisades Sierra Club. "To date, the Great River Clean-up has netted over 45 tons of

trash and has recycled 10 tons of materials, all with the help of fantastic volunteers,” said Christine Favilla, Co-Coordinator of the Three Rivers Project of Sierra Club Illinois. “This 16th annual river clean-up is hosted in honor of National Public Lands Day and provides an exciting opportunity for our community to work together to protect and conserve the river that sustains us.”

Participants of the Great Rivers Clean-Up will meet at Lincoln Shields in West Alton, MO to board boats and clean trash from the Mississippi River’s shorelines and islands only accessible by water. Gloves, lunch, and a free t-shirt are provided by Sierra Club to all participants of the river clean-up.

Another activity in which the community can participate is a native prairie planting that morning led by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Rangers and Biologists. Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary is home to 25 acres of sand prairie, one of the most endangered habitats in the country, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers staff will lead the community in planting native plant species in this unique habitat while teaching about its vital role for hundreds of plant and animal species. Participants in this activity will meet at the Audubon Center at Riverlands.

“The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers looks forward to hosting National Public Lands Day at Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary,” said Josh Schulte, Lead Recreation Park Ranger, and Natural Resources Specialist at the Rivers Project. “We are privileged to work with partners like Sierra Club and Great Rivers Greenway, and are excited to play host to community stewardship activities led by not only our own staff but other great organizations.”

Registration for either activity is free and can be done at the following link, where registrants can also learn more information such as the time and duration of each activity, driving directions, and other logistics: <https://conta.cc/3dy5pOL>

“The weather looks like it will be perfect, so we hope to see a great turnout for this year’s National Public Lands Day at Riverlands,” said Schulte. “Bring your friends, and we’ll see you there.”

For more information please contact the Rivers Project Office at 618-462-6979.