



Ribbon Cutting For Accessible Kayak Dock At Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary

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WEST ALTON, Mo. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rivers Project Office will be hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 10th, at 10 a.m. for an accessible kayak dock and launch at the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary in West Alton, Missouri. This dock will connect to the existing accessible trail system at the Sanctuary

and will include a transfer bench that enables kayakers to transition both in and out of their kayak from a seated position.

Last year, in partnership with the Mississippi River Water Trail Association (MRWTA) and the Audubon Center at Riverlands (ACR), over 1,000 people enjoyed paddling programs at the Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary. “With the addition of this kayak launch, we hope to open up these programs and the entire Mississippi River to all members of the community with a desire to get on the water.” said Katelynn Dearth, Natural Resources Specialist and Park Ranger for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Rivers Project.

The MRWTA received a \$20,000 grant through the National Environmental Education Foundation’s (NEEF) Mobility and Accessibility Grant Program for this project. Since then, the Rivers Project, MRWTA, and NEEF have been working together to bring this project to reality for the local community. “None of this would be possible without the guidance, support, and expertise of our partners at NEEF, MRWTA, ACR, and Team River Runner,” said Dearth.

The weekend of the ribbon cutting, Team River Runner (TRR) will be hosting a regional meetup at Riverlands which will include the TRR Kayak Football Superbowl on Saturday, September 9th at 10:00 A.M. and will be open to public spectating. TRR is a nonprofit whose mission is to provide all active duty service members, veterans, and their families an opportunity to find health, healing, community purpose, and new challenges through adventure and adaptive paddle sports. Those wishing to come and watch this event can do so at the Riverlands Way Shelter, just past the Rivers Project Office on Riverlands Way.

Immediately following the ribbon cutting ceremony on September 10th, TRR will be the first users of the accessible launch as they embark on a paddle that will include locking through Melvin Price Locks and Dam. “Our organization is excited to participate in this ribbon cutting event with Team River Runner and USACE to celebrate this new access made for paddlers on our favorite river.” Said Craig Heaton of MRWTA. “To compound that excitement, we are honored to do that with veterans from TRR that have served our country in the armed services.”

The Rivers Project Office and its Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary is located at 301 Riverlands Way in West Alton, Missouri. Due to construction activity occurring on Riverlands Way by the Missouri Department of Transportation, the best way to currently access the Sanctuary is via Red School Road.

For more information, please contact the Rivers Project Office at 636-899-2600.