

Handshake Partnership Program Report - FY 2010 Recipients

1. Name of Corps Project/Lake: Kaskaskia River Project

2. Handshake Project Name: Kaskaskia and Mississippi Rivers Confluence Interpretive Area

3. What has been accomplished? Please provide photographs; before, during, and after!:

	Total
Handshake Program Funding Amount	\$25000
Local Corps Office Funds (total expended on labor, materials, contracts, etc.)?	\$20250
Partner's Contributions (total value of funds, goods, services, volunteer hours, etc.)	
Partners Name	Total Value of Contributions
1 Tower Rock Stone	\$10000
2 A & K Rentals	\$10000
3 Randolph County Board of Commisioners	\$1000
4 Randolph County Historical Society	\$1500
5 Illinois Historic Preservation Agency	\$1000
6 Lower Kaskaskia Stakeholders, Inc.	\$3500

4. Handshake Program Recipient Feedback

Please take this opportunity to provide feedback on all aspects of the Handshake Program and the Challenge Partnership Agreement authority. Your productive comments are important to the ongoing improvement of the program. Make sure to let us know how the Handshake funds have benefited your efforts to initiate and/or strengthen your partnerships.

A. Comments About Handshake Program: The Handshake Program allows many projects to complete desired endeavors that may have otherwise been stopped do to funding issues. The funding helps to defer expenses. The Kaskaskia and Mississippi River Confluence Interpretive Area has been well received by the public and is seeing lots of use in the short amount of time it has been available.

B. Comments About Challenge Partnership Agreement: The Challenge Partnership Agreement allows the Corps and partners to come together to accomplish the needs of the public by combining funding and efforts. This also allows the Corps to serve the public and their needs more effeciently by getting their direct opinions about aspects of the project. Without these agreements between the Corps and partners there would be less involvement from the local entities.

C. Recommendations: None

5. Handshake Summary:

Please also include a separate one-page newspaper type article describing the project and the benefit to the Corps of Engineers and to the public as a result of this partnership project. Examples can be found on the gateway under Handshake Success Stories.

Kaskaskia River Confluence Trail, Illinois

The Kaskaskia River Confluence Trail is a peaceful recreation trail nestled in the heart of historic Southwestern Illinois south of St. Louis, MO. The trail is located at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kaskaskia River Project and provides access to the shoreline at the confluence of the Kaskaskia and Mississippi Rivers. This is the only public river access site on the banks of the Mississippi River for 100 miles in the State of Illinois. Visitors can step back in history and enjoy the beautiful scenery or enjoy the rhythmic flow and the two rivers merging together.

The trail is approximately 12 feet wide and 0.4 mile long, one way. The trail provides outdoor recreation needs for walking, bicycling, jogging, a leisurely stroll, wildlife watching, hunting in designated areas and access to fishing at the mouth of the Kaskaskia and Mississippi Rivers. A variety of freshwater game fish such as, largemouth bass, crappie, bluegill, white bass, and walleye are regularly caught in these rivers. For those wishing to observe and connect with the wonders of the great outdoors, this trail goes through a high quality bottomland forested area with prairie grasses in open areas providing habitat for native Flora and Fauna.

The Kaskaskia River Confluence Trail was developed as a recreational trail by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with the help of its partners. This trail opened new partnerships with local communities and stakeholders in the area who have assisted the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the development and installation of the recreation trail. These partnerships include Tower Rock Stone, A& K Rentals, Randolph County Board of Commissioners, Randolph County Historical Society, Kaskaskia Church Council, Liberty Bell of the West Chapter, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), Center for French Colonial Study, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and the Lower Kaskaskia Stakeholders, Inc. The trail supports the Corps Mission (recreation, environmental stewardship, navigation, flood risk management) values of the river and key historical significance of the region.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers staff located at the Kaskaskia River Project has been intensely involved in the design and maintenance of the trail and will continue to have an instrumental role in maintenance and development for the future. Due to its close proximity to the Kaskaskia and Mississippi Rivers flooding is a major concern; therefore, plans for the trail include removable displays and asphalt pavement that can be swept off after water events.

Aspects of the Kaskaskia River Confluence Trail are the outdoor interpretative displays, a trail brochure and a flood proof stone amphitheater and fire ring at the confluence for educational programs and other various outdoor activities. This trail is a wonderful addition to the area since the completed amphitheater and trail will provide a place for local schools and organizations to use and see the importance of the area along with local and traveling individuals. Since being designated a National Recreational Trail by the Department of the Interior the trail it is finally been given the proper recognition to an area that has been known by the locals for its richness of natural and historic splendor that it so deserves and has been unnoticed in the past. This area will continue to serve all who take an adventure to the Kaskaskia River Project.



