

## Earth Day 2007 in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Rock Island District

On April 22, two of Rock Island District's most popular events were held at Coralville Lake, north of Iowa City, Iowa, -- the Earth Day Garlic Mustard Grab and Prairie Rescue. Volunteers pulled up garlic mustard plants by their roots in an effort to rid the area of the aggressive plant that overwhelms many native plants and prevents them from getting the sunshine, water and nutrients they need. Iowa was once dominated by tall grass prairies, but today less than one-tenth of one percent of the original prairies remain. Coralville Lake is fortunate enough to have some of the complex ecosystem remaining, but to ensure that the prairie grass remains, it is necessary to pull out shrubs and small trees that invade the sand prairie remnant. Volunteers helped do just that on April 22. At the same time as the two events mentioned above, volunteers also helped cleanup the mountain bike trail and the disc golf course.

Rock Island personnel supported several other cleanups as well, the Grant River Recreation Area, south of Potosi, Wisconsin, held a special Earth Day/Park Clean Up on April 14. The Thomson Causeway Recreation Area Annual Earth Day Awareness and Cleanup in Thomson, Illinois, was held on April 21, and involved tree planting, landscaping, and a cleanup of the park grounds. Also, on April 21, the River Rubbish Rendezvous was held for Andalusia Slough Recreation Area, just west of Andalusia, Illinois. Volunteers participated in park and river cleanup, landscape work and other park maintenance, all designed to help improve the river's ecosystem. Fifth-graders from LaSalle County School participated with the Friends of LaSalle County Parks and the Illinois Waterway Visitor Center on an Earth Day event held on May 3 at Catlin Park, in the Ottawa, Illinois area.