



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
St. Louis District®

Press Release

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Illinois' Kaskaskia Watershed Recognized for Excellence

St. Louis – In early May more than 550 environmental and natural resources professionals from around the country gathered together in St. Louis for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' annual Environmental and Natural Resources Conference. On the conference's final day the Army's Chief of Engineers, Lieutenant General Carl A. Strock, presented the *Partners in Stewardship Award of Excellence* to Andrea Lewis, Operations Manager at Lake Shelbyville, Shelbyville, Ill., and Ed Weilbacher of the Kaskaskia Watershed Association in Illinois for their efforts in sustainable partnership practices.

The Kaskaskia Watershed Association was created with the goal to develop, enhance and protect the ecological and socio ecological values of the natural resources within the Kaskaskia River watershed that balances the needs of a wide variety of local, regional and national stakeholders. The Corps' St. Louis District manages the two lakes on the Kaskaskia River – Carlyle Lake and Lake Shelbyville.

Numerous collaborative efforts have been initiated between the Corps and the Kaskaskia Watershed Association, merging federal, state and local government jurisdictions to address watershed challenges. This relationship has helped reconcile conflicting needs and demands in the Kaskaskia River system and helped create material improvements to Corps infrastructure and operations.

The Partners in Stewardship Awards grew out of the first-time gathering in November 2003 of the seven primary U.S. land management agencies at a conference called *Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship*. The conference provided over 1,600 attendees a unique opportunity to learn what makes partnerships work, hear success stories, and gain skills to bring back to their organizations.

The awardees represent some of the most innovative partnerships showcased during the conference. The partnerships selected for the award are recognized as strong programs moving forward into 2005 and serve as examples of "best practices" for the seven land management agencies. The federal agencies include the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, and Bureau of Indian Affairs.

For additional information about Joint Ventures: Partners in Stewardship:
<http://partnerships2003.nps.gov/home.html>

Information about Corps of Engineers partnerships:
<http://corplakes.usace.army.mil/partners/partners.html>

For interviews, interested media can contact the Lake Shelbyville Project Office at 217-774-3951 and the Kaskaskia Watershed Association at 618-566-4451.