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MCICSL Newsletter

Mammoth Cave Intl. Center for Science and Learning

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MCICSL Newsletter - October 2015

Shannon R. Trimboli Education Coordinator
Western Kentucky University, shannon.trimboli@wku.edu

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October 2015 Highlights

Mercy Academy Begins Study of Mammoth Cave's Aquatic Habitats



An engineering class and an ecology class from Mercy Academy, an all-girls high school located in Louisville, became our newest citizen scientists this month. The engineering and ecology classes partnered to build and program a submersible remotely operated vehicle (ROV) that can be used to inventory underwater habitats. This month a small group of students and their teachers came to Mammoth Cave to test their ROV in one of our underground rivers. They had a very successful trial run and were able to record video of cave fish, surface fish that had been washed into the cave, and part of a sunken boat from one of the old river tours. Everyone is looking forward to future visits when the students can continue their research and help us learn more about our underground rivers.





National Cave and Karst Management Symposium

The National Cave and Karst Management Symposium was held in Cave City, October 19-23. The Mammoth Cave International Center for Science and Learning (MCICSL) was heavily involved in the symposium. MCICSL staff led a workshop on managing white-nose syndrome in show and wild caves, gave a talk on Mammoth Cave National Park's response to white-nose syndrome, and led two field trips – one giving an introduction to the karst of Mammoth Cave National Park and the other on show cave management, protection, and interpretation at Mammoth Cave National Park. MCICSL's Research Director and Education Coordinator also assisted with the organization of the symposium.

National Network of Research Learning Centers Releases New Strategic Framework

The Mammoth Cave International Center for Science and Learning is a member of the national network of Research Learning Centers. The network consists of 19 Research Learning Centers located throughout the National Park Service. This summer the network began developing a new strategic framework. The strategic framework was released on October 1 and is endorsed by Raymond M. Sauvajot, NPS Associate Director of Natural Resource Stewardship and Science, and Julia Washburn, NPS Associate Director of Interpretation, Education, and Volunteers. The strategic framework can be viewed at https://www.nature.nps.gov/rlc/framework.pdf.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Natural Resource Stewardship and Science
Washington, D.C.

Strategic Framework for National Park Service Research Learning Centers

Research Learning Centers support and integrate research, education, and communication in national parks. Assisting researchers, translating research results for managers, and engaging visitors in scientific discovery are key activities that connect parks and science.

THIS IS AN EXCITING AND VISIONARY TIME IN THE NATIONAL Park Service. Our centennial is inspiring vibrant conversations about the traditional and new roles that the Service can play in American society. These conversations have yielded new strategic initiatives and forward-looking documents like "A Call to Action," "Revisiting Leopold," and "Achieving Relevance in Our Second

This strategic framework presents a bold vision of parks as places to conduct, apply, learn, and engage the public in science. It outlines achievable goals that can be pursued by existing RLCs, parks interested in establishing new RLCs, and other NPS employees and partners who share a vision for integrating science with stewardship and public engagement. It shows

October Education Highlights

Below is a sample of the many educational activities that MCICSL facilitated or led this month.

- Service learning opportunities for Gatton Academy Students
- Ball State University geology class in-depth educational experience focused on the geology of Mammoth Cave National Park as part of a week-long trip studying the karst geology of Kentucky.
- Western Kentucky University semester-long honors class on Mammoth Cave National Park
- University of Memphis geology students learned about the surface and subsurface karst geology of Mammoth Cave National Park.
- McMaster University geology students learned about the geology of Mammoth Cave.
- National Cave and Karst Management Symposium - 2 workshops, 2 field trips, and 1 oral presentation
- Students from Mercy Academy began citizen science project studying Mammoth Cave's underground rivers.

October Research Highlights

Below is a sample of the many research projects occurring at MCNP this month.

- Aquatic surveys of biota and cultural artifacts
- Dye traces of local karst hydrology
- Cave formation restoration
- Acoustic and camera surveys
- Reptile and amphibian surveys
- Cave survey and mapping

FY16 Education Report

One of the MCICSL's tasks is to provide advanced science educational programs. Most of these programs are for college classes and professional audiences, but a few are for the general public or advanced high school classes. These advanced science education programs provide participants with in-depth learning opportunities led by subject-matter-experts. Occassionally they include a citizen science component, but most do not. In federal fiscal year 2015, MCICSL led or facilitated over 22,000 direct contact hours of advanced science educational programming for approximately 1,700 people.

Follow our activities on social media.

https://www.facebook.com/pages/Mammoth-Cave-International-Center-for-Science-and-Learning/842046972539082