

# Aquatic History: Follow the River



**SUGGESTED GRADE LEVELS:** MS

**SUBJECTS:** Social Science

**SKILLS:** identification, research, discussion, interpretation, comparison, inference, prediction, data collection, communication, problem solving, decision making, graphing, analysis

**CORRELATION TO**

**ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS:** Social Science 16.E.2a, 16.E.2c, 16.E.3a, 16.E.3b, 16.E.3c, 16.E.4a, 17.C.2b, 17.C.2c

## Objectives

Students will: 1) identify some major events that occurred along Illinois waterways; and 2) describe the relationship of each event to other historical events.

## Method

Students will research major events related to Illinois rivers and construct a time line.

## Background

Throughout history, rivers have been important routes for transportation of goods and passengers. They have provided and continue to provide many items necessary for human survival: food, water, fuel and shelter. Events affecting the environment have occurred through history, with many key events directly related to waterways. Some events have been positive and served to preserve, protect and enhance natural resources, while others have been detrimental to habitat or wildlife resources.

## Materials

research materials and tools, paper, writing implements

## Procedure

1. Divide the class into small groups. Be sure that each group has access to research materials and/or tools. Assign a group recorder, artist and presenter. Ask each group to research the aquatic history of a different time period in Illinois.
2. Have students use the information that they collect to develop a time line showing significant historical events that occurred along Illinois waterways in this period. Historical items listed in this activity provide a basis for further research and discussion. Students should add other events found during their research.
3. As a class or in small groups, discuss what happened to the environment with each event. Discuss how the economy and wars affected the settlement of Illinois. Add this information to the time line.

## Extensions

1. Research and map the location of early forts along Illinois waterways. Who owned these forts? Did they change hands? What remains of each fort today? Why were they placed in these specific locations?
2. Students will write and act in a play representing a significant event in Illinois' aquatic history.
3. Have students predict what will happen in regard to aquatics in Illinois in the next 100 years. Ask them to explain their predictions.

## Evaluations

1. Students will submit the completed time line for their assigned years.
2. Students will present findings to the entire group.
3. Students will develop and conduct a review game for their assigned years.



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# Suggested Time Line Events

... 1492 ...

First Europeans come to North America.

... 1600 ...

The land that is to become Illinois encompasses 21 million acres of prairie and 14 million acres of forest.

... 1607-1900 ...

The frontier expands and resources are used. There are abundant and seemingly inexhaustible supplies of timber, fertile soil, wildlife, water, minerals and other resources available for use and exportation to Europe. The area is viewed as a hostile wilderness to be conquered, opened up, cleared and used as quickly as possible. This attitude led to enormous resource waste and little regard for future resource needs.

... 1673 ...

Jolliet and Marquette cross Illinois.

... 1680 ...

Fort Crevecoeur is constructed on the bluffs above the Illinois River near Peoria.

... 1680 ...

Vincennes, Indiana, is established as a fur-trading post.

... 1682 ...

Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, and Henri de Tonti reach the mouth of the Mississippi River. Later they build Fort St. Louis atop of Starved Rock along the Illinois River.

... 1699 ...

A Catholic mission is established at Cahokia.

... 1702 ...

A fort and mission are added at Vincennes, Indiana.

... 1703 ...

Kaskaskia is established.

... 1717 ...

The original French settlements in Illinois are placed under the government of Louisiana.

... 1723 ...

Prairie du Rocher is settled.

... 1723 ...

Fort de Chartres is constructed.

... 1754-1763 ...

The French and Indian War takes place.

... 1763 ...

The Treaty of Paris transfers the Illinois country from France to England.

... 1775-1783 ...

The American Revolution occurs.

... 1778 ...

On December 9, Virginia creates the county of Illinois.

... 1782 ...

A smallpox plague, brought from Europe, wipes out entire Native American villages along the Mississippi River and throughout the Midwest.

... 1787 ...

Congress passes the Ordinance of 1787 establishing the Northwest Territory. Illinois was one of five future states in the territory.

... 1790 ...

Several communities are established in the current Randolph, Monroe and St. Clair counties.

... 1791 ...

New Fort St. Louis is established on Lake Peoria.

... 1803 ...

Fort Dearborn is established on the site of present-day Chicago.

... 1806 ...

Shawneetown is settled (resettled in 1809) as the first permanent community in that area and serves as the chief river port on the east side of Illinois.

... 1810 ...

Several flatboats loaded with coal are shipped from the Big Muddy River in Jackson County to New Orleans.

... 1811 ...

The first steamboat makes a voyage down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans.

... 1812-1815 ...

The War of 1812 occurs. After the war, Fort Dearborn is rebuilt, Fort Armstrong is erected at Rock Island and Fort Edwards is constructed at Warsaw.

... 1814 ...

Alton is founded.

... 1815 ...

Edwardsville is founded.

... 1817 ...

The Illinois legislature passes a measure to provide for the damming of the Kaskaskia River to construct a "fishery."

... 1817 ...

The first steamboat travels upstream to St. Louis.

... 1818 ...

Lawrenceville, Fairfield and Vienna are founded.

... 1818 ...

Illinois becomes the twenty-first state in the nation.

... 1820 ...

Galena is settled.

... 1820 ...

The first steamboat travels upstream to Peoria.

... 1830s ...

The Great Lakes route becomes an important travel route to the west.

... 1833 ...

Chicago is organized as a town. Native Americans are induced to relinquish their last square-mile claim on Illinois.

... 1836-1848 ...

Construction begins on the Illinois and Michigan Canal from Lake Michigan to the Illinois River.

... 1861-1865 ...

The Civil War occurs.

... 1870 ...

Construction begins on the Illinois and Mississippi Canal between Hennepin and Rock Island.

... 1872 ...

The Illinois legislature passes the first fish conservation law that prohibits the obstruction of the passage of fishes in all waters within the state and places a size limit on nets used for fishing.

... 1879-1913 ...

The Illinois Fish Commission is established and operational.

... 1890-1900 ...

The Chicago Sanitary District builds a canal between Chicago and Lockport.

... 1897 ...

The first game warden is hired in Illinois.

... 1899-1913 ...

The Illinois Game Commission is established and becomes operational.

... 1903 ...

Illinois requires a resident hunting license and declares it illegal to sell waterfowl killed in Illinois.

... 1907 ...

Illinois establishes a fur-taking season. A license is now required for the use of nets for seining purposes.

... 1908 ...

Fort Massac is established as the first Illinois state park.

... 1909 ...

Laws are enacted making it illegal to bait ducks in Illinois.

... 1911 ...

Illinois requires nonresident hook-and-line fishing licenses.

... 1913 ...

The Illinois governor combines the separate Fish and Game commissions and creates the Game and Fish Commission. The first two fish hatcheries are established at Spring Grove and Havana.

... 1915 ...

The Illinois Game and Fish Commission purchased a special "State Fish Car" to distribute fish from the hatcheries via the railroads.

... 1917 ...

Illinois abolishes the Game and Fish Commission and establishes a Division of Game and Fish under the Department of Agriculture. The Illinois Natural History Survey is formed.

... 1918 ...

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act is implemented for the protection of migratory birds.

... 1919-1930 ...

A canal is constructed between Lockport and Utica.

... 1922 ...

Sag channel is constructed.

... 1923 ...

Illinois requires the first resident hook-and-line fishing licenses with monies deposited into a special Fish and Game fund.

... 1924 ...

The Illinois Department of Conservation is established.

... 1929 ...

The National Wildlife Refuge system is created to provide protection for wildlife habitat, especially waterfowl habitat.

... 1929 ...

The stock market crashes in October.

... 1929 ...

Beaver reintroduction begins in Illinois.

... 1933 ...

The Civilian Conservation Corps is created. Two million unemployed young men are hired to plant trees, develop park and recreation areas, restore silted waterways, provide flood control, control soil erosion, protect wildlife and carry out other conservation projects.

... 1933 ...

President Franklin D. Roosevelt founds the Soil Erosion Service under the United States Department of Agriculture to correct some of the enormous erosion problems that have ruined many of the farms of the Great Plains states and to provide technical assistance to farmers. It was renamed the Soil Conservation Service in 1935. The name was changed to the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1995.

... 1934 ...

The Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act requires waterfowl hunters to possess a federal hunting stamp to attach to their state hunting license. Funds from the sale of the stamps are used for waterfowl research and for purchasing waterfowl refuge lands. Receipts from stamp sales are deposited in a special U.S. Treasury account known as the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund.

... 1937 ...

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (or Pittman-Robertson Act) levies a federal tax on all sales of guns and ammunition. It is an 11 percent excise tax with money returned to the states based on the number of licensed hunters and the population of the state. Funds are used for hunter safety education programs, land acquisition and research. The funds also provide federal aid to states for management and restoration of wildlife.

... 1940 ...

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is formed and given the role of managing the National Wildlife Refuge system and protecting wild species in danger of extinction.

... 1947 ...

The Illinois Department of Conservation organizes a statewide lake development program to build lakes for sport fishing and other recreational purposes.

... 1948 ...

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act is established.

... 1950 ...

The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act (or Dingell-Johnson Act) levies a 10 percent federal tax on fishing equipment. It provides federal funding to the states for management and restoration of sport fish in the marine and fresh waters of the United States.

... Circa 1960 ...

A minimum size limit is set for lake trout (1.5 pounds) and whitefish (2 pounds) in Lake Michigan.

... 1962 ...

Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring*, is published.

... 1963 ...

The Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act passes to provide protection to unique and pristine habitats.

... 1964 ...

The Land and Water Conservation Act collects revenues from admission fees to publicly owned land and federal oil leases. These funds are used to acquire lands and waters having scenic, recreational or other values.

... 1965 ...

The Water Quality Act is passed requiring a study of water pollution.

... 1967 ...

Laws are passed to make it unlawful to take lake trout, Coho salmon or Chinook salmon from Lake Michigan.

... 1968 ...

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is passed to protect rivers and river segments with outstanding scenic, recreational, geological, wildlife, historical or cultural values. Rivers are classified as wild, scenic or recreational.

... 1969 ...

The National Environmental Policy Act requires a comprehensive evaluation of the environmental impact of an activity before it is

undertaken. All federal agencies must respond to the same policy to address environmental issues. A Council of Environmental Quality is established. The Environmental Impact Statement process is initiated to disclose effects of actions on the environment, propose alternative actions and describe environmental consequences.

... 1970 ...

The first Earth Day event is celebrated in the United States on April 22. Twenty million people in more than 2,000 communities demand better environmental quality. Between 1969 and 1989 Congress passed more than 20 pieces of legislation to help protect air, water, land and wildlife.

... 1970s ...

Asian carp species are imported into the United States to use in aquaculture.

... 1972 (1987) ...

The Clean Water Act is enacted to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the nation's waters. Regulations and programs are developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reduce the quantity and toxicity of pollutants entering surface waters within the United States.

... 1972 (amended in 1977, 1985) ...

The Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act is passed.

... 1973 (amended 1982, 1985, 1988)

The Endangered Species Act is administered by the Office of Endangered Species within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This Act is a process to set aside or protect ecosystems, resources or species from harm with an emphasis on the ethical responsibility to plants and animals from a variety of viewpoints, including economic, aesthetic and ecological values of the species and the needs of society.

... 1974 (1986) ...

The Safe Drinking Water Act establishes standards for drinking water and for protecting underground sources of drinking water from contamination.

... 1977 ...

The federal Pollution Control Act passes.

... 1985 (1990 amended by Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act) ...

The Food Security Act passes and includes a "swampbuster" provision stating that farmers who drain wetlands and plant crops on the area are ineligible for federal farm subsidies. The Act includes the Conservation Reserve Program that takes millions of acres of the most erodible croplands out of production. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Soil Conservation Service and state Department of Conservation.

... 1986 ...

The Emergency Wetlands Resources Act is enacted directing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan to identify and rank federal and state wetland acquisitions.

... 1990 ...

The Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act is designed to protect against aquatic exotic invasive species, particularly those that arrive in ballast water.

... 1994 ...

River otter reintroductions are initiated in Illinois. Otters from Louisiana are released along the Little Wabash River in southern Illinois.

... 1995 ...

Conservation 2000 enacts a six-year \$100 million initiative for comprehensive long-range natural resources planning and management.

... 1995 ...

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is formed.

... 1996 ...

The National Invasive Species Act is passed.