



## Research center to be named for Costello

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ALTON — A longtime proponent of developing Alton's riverfront, U.S. Rep. Jerry Costello will be honored by having an internationally important research facility named in his honor.

Dale Chapman, president of Lewis and Clark Community College, said that the college's new river field station will be named The Jerry F. Costello National Great Rivers Research and Education Center Confluence Field Station. The board formally approved the decision several weeks ago.

"I was surprised and humbled when I was informed several weeks ago that those involved with the Center decided to name it after me," Costello, D-Belleville, said in a statement sent at the request of The Telegraph. "I am very proud to have played a significant role in a project of this importance for the region. It joins other projects I have been involved with — including the Clark Bridge, the Alton marina and riverfront development and the Lewis and Clark Interpretative Center — as success stories for the Riverbend."

At Chapman's request, Costello has been involved with the project since its inception more than a decade ago. The product of an educational partnership among Lewis and Clark Community College, the University of Illinois and the Illinois Natural History Survey, the center's mission is to advance knowledge of the environmental issues concerning the Mississippi River and other big rivers along with their watersheds throughout the world.

"I was intrigued by the concept, as I have always believed that our location on the Mississippi - with great proximity to the Missouri, Ohio, Illinois and Kaskaskia Rivers — is one of our most unique and compelling regional features, with great importance for our economy," Costello said.

Chapman said that Costello has long recognized the area's significance for river ecosystem research.

"What has been particularly gratifying is how quickly the project came together and students began to use the facility. This is a truly international endeavor that will support groundbreaking research and educational opportunities," Costello said. "Importantly, the center takes a hands-on, multigenerational approach to learning that incorporates both eminent scholars and local children.

In Congress, Costello has served on the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, eventually becoming a senior member of the Subcommittee, and on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to secure authorization and funding for the project.

"We believe this is the first facility in our region to be named in Congressman Costello's honor," Chapman said. "We're proud to be the first given his incredible track record and service to the region — this is a worthy tribute to a dedicated public servant."

The first phase of the four-phase construction project will be dedicated at 1 p.m. Oct. 26, with Gov. Pat Quinn and Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan invited, among other state officials.

V.I.P invitations were mailed out this week, with 300 to 500 people expected to attend the dedication.

In a nod to one of the river's unique aspects, chef Phillippe Parola of Baton Rouge will prepare silver fin (Asian carp) for guests to sample.

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