



MISSISSIPPI RIVER NEWS

Fall 2019 / Winter 2020

*The official newsletter of Mississippi Park Connection and
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.*



MISSISSIPPI PARK CONNECTION

Discover your river

Mississippi Park Connection is the official nonprofit partner to the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. We seek to enrich the life of the river and the lives of all who experience the national park through youth education programs, environmental stewardship volunteerism, and outdoor community engagement events.



The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area is a 72-mile national park, binding together more than 85 state, regional and local parks from Coon Rapids to Hastings. The purpose of the 54,000-acre river park, established by Congress in 1988, is to preserve, protect, and enhance the significant values of the waters and land of the Mississippi River corridor.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER NEWS

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Community Connection on the River

Katie Nyberg, Executive Director, Mississippi Park Connection
John Anfinson, Superintendent, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

This fall and winter season it is important to remember the places outside of our homes and work that provide space for reconnection, recreation, and relaxation. The Mississippi National River and Recreation area is like a 72-mile community backyard. It's an informal public green space where people of every background can enjoy life just as easily as they would in their own homes.

The cold and dark winter months, filled with work and school, can cause us to feel cooped up and disconnected from our communities. Let the river inspire you to get outside by making connections to your community, to nature, and to yourself—despite the weather!

Learn about the inner workings of your community's river industry on a Working River Tour. Volunteer with others who care about the environment at a habitat restoration or tree-planting event. Embrace the effects of winter through a guided tree-identification hike. Share in a commitment to preserving, protecting, and enjoying your national park by becoming a member of Mississippi Park Connection. Discover your passion for a new winter activity at Winter Trails Day. And before you know it, National Park Week in April will be right around the corner.

We hope this season's events ignite discovery and inspire a daily connection with your community and the Mississippi River.



Working River Tours

Callie Sacarelos, Communications and Marketing Associate
Mississippi Park Connection

Experience the intersection of nature and industry on the Working River Tours. As a contrast to the serenity of the river parks, this series highlights the ways humans harness the immense power of the river as a resource. Members can register for all tours in advance of the general public.

- OCT** ○ **Upper River Services** manages barges importing and exporting goods to and from the Upper Midwest.
 - **District Energy's** hot water systems provide heating and cooling to downtown Saint Paul and the West Side.
- NOV** ○ **Saint Paul Metro Plant** safely discharges the water refuse of 1.8 million people back into the Mississippi River.
- DEC** ○ **Star Tribune Heritage** prints the Star Tribune, the Pioneer Press, and the regional edition of USA Today.
- JAN** ○ **St. Anthony Falls Laboratory** is a leader in confronting energy and environmental issues of the 21st century.
- FEB** ○ **Minneapolis Water Works** filters 21 billion gallons of tap water out of the Mississippi River each year.
- MAR** ○ **Xcel Energy's** Riverside plant uses an efficient integration of combustion turbine and steam turbine technology.
- APR** ○ **Xcel Energy's** Hennepin Island station generates electricity utilizing the power of St. Anthony Falls.

RAVEs: River Action Volunteer Events

Erin Steinhibel, Park Ranger
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area



RAVEs are made possible with generous support from our incredible partners at Patagonia.

River Action Volunteer Events, or RAVEs, are a great way to connect with your community, support the health of the river, and learn something new during a season that puts many of us in hibernation mode. They combine habitat restoration, education, and outdoor recreation, giving volunteers a sense of fulfillment that keeps them coming back again and again.

Winter RAVEs involve a guided hike through the park with interpretation from a park ranger. They also give participants opportunities to explore places with limited access like Macalester College's Katharine Ordway Field Station. This year we are also bringing back the winter survival skills RAVE. Build a shelter and a fire in the wilderness before fulfilling a restoration project at Crosby Farm Regional Park. Spots are limited, so sign up today at parkconnection.org/events.

Investing in Your Community

Anna Waugh, Development & Communications Manager
Mississippi Park Connection

As enthusiastic supporters of the official nonprofit partner to the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, Mississippi Park Connection members have a lot to be proud of. Not only are members protecting and enhancing one of the world's ecological treasures, they are also benefiting the local Twin Cities community.

Members give donations to make a meaningful impact on the river and in return receive a twice yearly “sneak peek” email that allows them to register for events before the general public and receive discounts on ticketed events. This season, members will have early access to the popular Working River Tours, including an exclusive tour of a river barge with Upper River Services. In May, members will be able to purchase pre-sale tickets to our most in-demand event, *Murder on the Mississippi*.

You can become a member for \$35 as an individual or \$60 for two adults and any children in the household. If you can give more, your impact on the river grows!

parkconnection.org/membership

GROW YOUR IMPACT



\$100

Grow, plant, and maintain a tree for three years



\$250

Send a whole classroom of 4th grade students on a river field trip to connect with science outdoors



\$1,000

Conduct the annual bald eagle count to discover how many eaglets were born in the national park

Ways to Get Involved



PARTICIPATE

Explore the park through a wide range of public programs such as birding, biking, boating, and outdoor activities that put you in touch with nature.

Join our monthly e-newsletter to learn about fun events happening in the park this season.



SUPPORT

Gifts have a big impact on park programs. Annual and monthly memberships or periodic donations strengthen your commitment to preserve, protect, and enjoy the Mississippi River.

\$1,000

St. Anthony Falls Level

\$60

Family

\$35

Individual



ACTIVATE

Volunteers of all kinds are a crucial component in park operations, educational programs, and habitat restoration. It's a fun and rewarding way to provide your community with a connection to the river.

Adapting to a Changing Climate

Mary Hammes, Environmental Stewardship and Volunteer Manager
Mississippi Park Connection



Mary and former Minnesota GreenCorps member Auste Eigirdas taking GPS points of tree canopy gaps with University of Minnesota researchers.

In 2019 our state experienced record-setting flooding. According to the National Weather Service, the Mississippi River at Saint Paul remained in flood stage for 42 consecutive days, beating 2011's record of 33 days.

A changing climate means trees in the floodplain forest will need to survive longer periods of inundation more frequently. A healthy forest canopy is intimately tied to the benefits of a healthy river. How do we know which tree species will do well? What size trees should we be planting and where?

Our Adaptive Silviculture for Climate Change (ASCC) project will seek to answer these questions and guide us in adapting to a changing climate. Last summer, we identified a series of small forest research plots in Crosby Farm Regional Park. These plots are an on-the-ground opportunity for a 20-year floodplain study that will inform management techniques here and around the country for many years to come.

This work was made possible by the Wildlife Conservation Society's Climate Adaptation Fund through a grant made by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

Mississippi River Crew

Becca Hanson, Mississippi River Crew Leader
Mississippi Park Connection and Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa

Few people can say their office is a small island in the backwaters of the Mississippi River and their morning commute includes a canoe full of chainsaws. As a leader for Mississippi Park Connection’s Mississippi River Crew, my days are never dull.

One example of the work we do on the river can be found on Settlers Island, a small landmass near Cottage Grove. My crew and I were tasked with transforming the island into a water-trail stop by clearing a voracious invasive species called buckthorn.

The Mississippi River Crew provides project assistance to our partners on the river while creating rare paid positions for high school youth and young adults in the environmental sector. My days are always different, and I wouldn’t have it any other way. I feel extremely proud of myself, my crew, and

all the people we’ve worked hard with to conserve our great Mississippi.



Isabelle, Caroline, Becca, and Amelia removed buckthorn with the help of volunteers and partners on Settlers Island in August 2019.

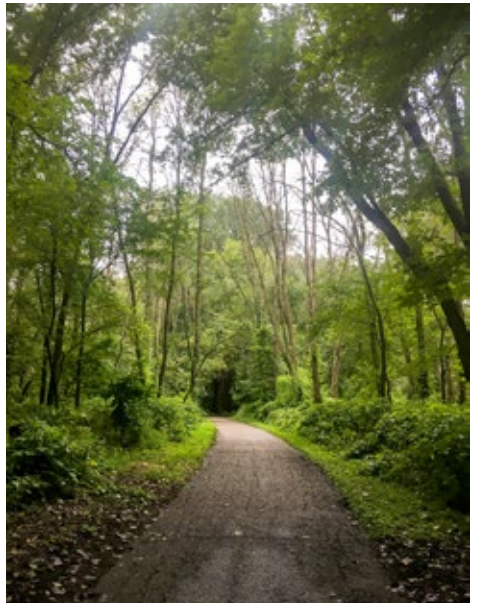
Crosby Farm Regional Park

Callie Sacarelos, Communications and Marketing Associate
Mississippi Park Connection

The location and geography of Crosby Farm Regional Park makes a walk through its floodplain forest, marshy wetland, and tranquil lakes feel like stepping into a magical wonderland. Nestled at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers, just under the bluffs of the Mississippi River, this gem is hidden in plain sight in the heart of a major metropolitan area.

The 700-acre park's biodiversity, coupled with seasonal transformations, make it a delight to visit year-round. Nearly seven miles of paved trails meander around two small lakes and along the sandy banks of the Mississippi River, peaking in and out of tree canopy. Crosby is part of the river's migratory bird flyway, making it idyllic for birds and birders alike in the spring and fall.

When you visit, look for white tree tubes that are helping newly planted trees grow as part of our Plant for the Future campaign. The health of Crosby's tree canopy is a major contributing factor to flood mitigation, soil health, water quality, and healthy wildlife habitat.



Ask Ranger Gordon

Deb Dietzman*, Volunteer and friend of the park
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

As a ranger, Gordon Dietzman serves as a multi-faceted resource, leading fishing programs, staffing the visitor centers, assisting with canoeing programs, and even taking a television reporter ice fishing during the Super Bowl. Gordon likes to help visitors explore the Mississippi River by asking the question that provokes thought and reflection.

Gordon has a rich background in natural research interpretation and education. For more than a decade at this park, “ask Ranger Gordon” has been a go-to response to many visitors and staff seeking an insect identification, a factoid of river history, or a great spot to take the family fishing.

Throughout his career, Gordon has shared his passion for the natural world as a published photographer and presenter, as a board member of the Minnesota Naturalists Association, and as the education manager for the International Crane Foundation. You can meet Gordon this fall on a fishing program or visit him in the Mississippi River Visitor Center. Come this winter, Gordon starts his next adventure: retirement. But you can probably still catch him fishing on the river.








Gordon rescuing Great Blue Herons after the 2011 tornado in North Minneapolis.

*Deb and Gordon have been married since 1989.



MAP LEGEND

-  Boundaries of the park (areas shaded green)
-  Mississippi River Paddle Share Stations
Rent a kayak at www.paddleshare.org
-  Mississippi River Visitor Center
Located at the Science Museum of Minnesota
-  Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam
Visitor Center open during summer months
-  Ranger On Call Stations
Audio tours, www.rangeroncall.com

SITES ALONG THE RIVER

- 1 Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park
- 2 River Park
- 3 Manomin County Park
- 4 North Mississippi Regional Park
- 5 Mississippi Watershed Management Org.
- 6 Boom Island
- 7 Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam
- 8 Stone Arch Bridge
- 9 Mill Ruins Park
- 10 Minnehaha Regional Park
- 11 Coldwater Spring
- 12 Fort Snelling State Park
- 13 Hidden Falls-Crosby Farm Regional Park
- 14 Pickerel Lake
- 15 Lilydale-Harriet Island Regional Park
- 16 Mississippi River Visitor Center
- 17 Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary
- 18 Lions Levee Park
- 19 Spring Lake Park Reserve
- 20 Hastings Riverfront

MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL RIVER AND RECREATION AREA

Learn more about the national park in the Twin Cities at nps.gov/miss

SEPTEMBER 2019 - APRIL 2020

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit parkconnection.org/events for details and registration information.

M = Member Early Access

V = Volunteer Opportunity

F = Fundraiser Event

- SEPT** ○ Sept 28 National Public Lands Day @ Coldwater Spring **V**
- OCT** ○ Oct 2 Working River Tour @ Upper River Services **M**
 Oct 5 The Big Sit (birding event) @ Coldwater Spring **V**
 Oct 12 Fossil Walk with a Paleontologist @ Coldwater Spring
 Oct 15 Tree Planting @ Pig's Eye Regional Park **V**
 Oct 16 Working River Tour @ District Energy **M**
 Oct 19 Fall Color Paddle @ Vermillion River
- NOV** ○ Nov 6 Volunteer Awards Night @ Kellogg Square
 Nov 14 Give to the Max Day @ parkconnection.org **F**
 Nov 19 Working River Tour @ Saint Paul Metro Plant **M**
- DEC** ○ Dec 13 Working River Tour @ Star Tribune Heritage Printing **M**
 Dec 14 Tech Nature @ Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge
- JAN** ○ Jan 8 Working River Tour @ St. Anthony Falls Laboratory **M**
 Jan 11 Winter Trails Day @ Fort Snelling State Park
 Jan 18 Tech Nature @ Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge
 Jan 25 Winter RAVE @ Coldwater Spring **V**
- FEB** ○ Feb 5 Fireside Chat @ Kellogg Square **M**
 Feb 8 Winter RAVE @ Katharine Ordway Field Station **V**
 Feb 12 Winter Tree ID Hike @ Crosby Farm Regional Park
 Feb 22 Winter Survival RAVE @ Crosby Farm Regional Park **V**
 Feb 25 Working River Tour @ Minneapolis Water Works **M**
- MAR** ○ Mar 10 Working River Tour @ Xcel Energy Riverside Plant **M**
 Mar 28 Welcome Back the Herons @ Marshall Terrace Park
- APR** ○ Apr 18 Junior Ranger Day @ Mississippi River Visitor Center
 Apr 18-26 National Park Week
 Apr 25 Saint Paul Spring Cleanup @ Indian Mounds Regional Park **V**
 Apr 29 Working River Tour @ Xcel Energy Hennepin Island Station **M**

Volunteer Training Series

Learn new skills and meet other volunteers at a series of trainings in the colder months. Build your knowledge of the park by learning about animal tracking, astronomy, and more! Volunteer Training will take place the third Wednesday of each month starting in November and continue until spring. Event details will be posted to parkconnection.org/events.

All events are subject to change. Check our online events calendar for up-to-date information and to register for events at



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CONNECT WITH US



WANT THE BI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER?

Email info@parkconnection.org
 Call 651-291-8164
parkconnection.org/newsletter



National Park Service
 Mississippi River Visitor Center
 651-293-0200
nps.gov/miss