

IN THIS NEWSLETTER

Hello volunteers!

Spring has sprung and we are excited to see you out along the river as park programs pick up with the coming of warmer weather. We need help at a seed pod program early this month. Don't miss out on becoming a crew leader for the 2018 season. Required training for new crew leaders is April 5th. Volunteers are needed to lead students in a habitat restoration project at Fort Snelling State Park as part of the **Climate Change Field Trip**. Volunteer are also needed on this same program to help with a weather station activity.

May is going to be full of volunteer opportunities. **Big River Journey** and **Journey to the Falls** will return for another season of bird watching, artifact finding, and otter spotting. We are also launching two new pilot programs called **Learning Journeys** which will be overseen by River Educators, our newest staff additions. These programs will need assistance from volunteers who have an interest and skill in working with fourth grade student populations. Volunteers are needed to assist staff with learning stations, provide safety, help with organizing groups of students, and to overall provide an inclusive learning environment. Each learning journey offers unique features for students to learn about an aspect of the Mississippi and volunteers would greatly add to the quality of their experience.



Students listen to park ranger Lyndon Torstenson explain how they can use weather observations and historic climate data to learn about climate change. Volunteers assist with this program every spring and fall.



Big River Journey is a popular program among teachers, students, and volunteers. All look forward to the opportunity to spend a day on a riverboat learning about and enjoying the natural wonders of the river.

Unless otherwise noted, please sign up for volunteer opportunities through the online scheduling tool located on the Mississippi Park Connection website (<http://parkconnection.org/volunteer/volunteer-registration/>). Know that you can always reach out to staff with any volunteer-related questions by calling 651-293-8458 or emailing miss_volunteer@nps.gov.

OPPORTUNITIES

(details follow)

Seed Pods at BSCI, 4/3
New Crew Leader Training, 4/5
Climate Change Field Trip, 4/6, 4/19, 4/20
Bruce Vento EcoStewards, 4/19
Bird Walk Field Trip, 4/23

May:

Big River Journey
Journey to the Falls
The Living River Paddleboat Learning Journey
Saint Anthony Falls Photography Learning Journey
Bruce Vento Ecostewards

Seed Pods at BSCI

Tuesday, April 3
11:00 am – 1:00 pm
Location: [4100 Hamline Ave N, St. Paul, MN 55112](#)

Come help us make seed pods with the staff at Boston Scientific. This event will be located in their office lunchroom. We need volunteers to help show drop-in volunteers how to make seed pods and to explain the importance of prairie plants.

Contact: Mary Hammes, mhammes@parkconnection.org or 651-291-9119.

Climate Change Field Trip Assistants

Friday, April 6 - 10:00 am – 2:30 pm
Thursday, April 19 - 10:00 am – 2:30 pm
Friday, April 20 - 9:30 am – 2:00 pm
Location: Fort Snelling State Park Visitor Center

Weather Station Education Assistant

Climate Change Field Trip volunteers will assist NPS ranger at weather station activity site. Weather station VIP's will help 4th-8th grade students use monitoring equipment and record data.

Contact: Lyndon Torstenson, 651-293-8426 or lyndon_torstenson@nps.gov

Habitat Restoration Assistant

Habitat restoration volunteers will help staff lead students in a invasive species removal project.

Contact: Mary Hammes, mhammes@parkconnection.org or 651-291-9119.

New Crew Leader Training

Thursday, April 5

MISS Headquarters, 111 Kellogg Blvd E., Suite #105, Saint Paul MN 55101

Are you interested in stepping up your game as a volunteer? Would you like to lead others in habitat restoration events? We are looking for volunteer crew leaders for the 2018 season. Volunteer crew leaders commit to attending a few large group habitat restoration events per month, April through October. At events, volunteer crew leaders assist general volunteers in plant identification, invasive species removal and planting techniques. Volunteers must be comfortable working in variable weather conditions and spending time standing, crouching and walking on uneven ground. Crew leaders are models for safety and strong work ethics – as a crew leader, you can inspire others to become stewards of the Mississippi River! The crew leader training will be a full day (5-6 hours) of skill training including a field visit.

Volunteers must contact: Mary Hammes with a note of interest in being a crew leader for 2018 in order to attend the training. mhammes@parkconnection.org or 651-291-9119.

Bird walk with Hastings ELL Students (grades 4-12)

Monday, April 23

8:00 am – 10:30 am

Location: Fort Snelling State Park, Savage Visitor Center

Do you enjoy walking and birding? Can you tell a white-breasted nuthatch apart from a chickadee and a yellow-rumped warbler? Expert enough! We will meet at 8:00 to discuss routes. Walk with students from 9:00 am – 10:30 am.

Contact: Brian Goodspeed 651-647-1452 brian_goodspeed@nps.gov

The Living River Paddleboat Learning Journey

May 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25

9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Location: Padelford Packet Company, Harriet Island

This learning journey will emphasize the river's ecosystem and will include a three station rotation on the Jonathan Padelford riverboat! The stations will feature a 'Fish Lifecycle' station, an eco-scavenger hunt using binoculars, and a freshwater mussel station. Overall, students will understand how people are connected to the river and its ecosystem. Volunteers will not be asked to lead any educational activities, but will be expected to help set up and take down stations, aid in keeping students engaged, and help the program lead with various tasks (very similar to volunteer role in Big River Journey)

Contact: Jim Ford, email only please, jim_ford@nps.gov

St. Anthony Falls Photography Learning Journey

May 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15

9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Location: Meet at Mill City Ruins Park

This learning journey will emphasize geography, history, and engineering aspects of the milling district using original photographic and painting artifacts. Students will be using photography tools to help re-imagine historic photos and paintings from the area, as well as receive interpretive information about the area. Overall, students will understand how places change over time. Volunteers will not be asked to lead any educational activities, but will help students with their cameras and photographs, and aid in keeping students engaged. This learning journey will take students across the stone arch bridge and into Saint Anthony Falls Lock & Dam and involves a fair amount of walking.

Contact: David Kappelhoff, email only please: dkappelhoff@parkconnection.org

Big River Journey

Weekdays in May

Daytime hours

Once again, Big River Journey will bring thousands of students, grades 3-5, onto the Mississippi River! Would you join us as a volunteer? On a riverboat? River Birds, Ecosystem Ottersystem, Crime Lab and Mystery of the Disappearing Waterfall are great activities because volunteers care!

Register to volunteer: We hope to be posting the field trip dates and times by March 29th on our new volunteer calendar at <http://parkconnection.org/volunteer/volunteer-registration/>

Contact: Brian Goodspeed 651-293-8414 or brian_goodspeed@nps.gov with questions.

Bruce Vento EcoStewards

Thursday, April 19; Tuesday, May 1; Thursday, May 17

5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Saturday, April 28 & May 12

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Location: Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, 4th Street E, Saint Paul 55106

Map of the meeting location (<https://goo.gl/GwPaKs>). Parking available along Commercial St.

Help out NPS & MPC park partner St. Paul Parks and Recreation on habitat restoration events throughout the spring season. Projects will vary by date. No experience is necessary—this is a great activity for anyone who wants to get outside, explore Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary and learn about restoring our natural areas. All tools will be provided. Volunteers must wear closed-toed shoes and long pants. You will be working outside so please make sure you dress for the weather. Please also bring a water bottle for drinking.

Register here (<https://goo.gl/TYLgmk>)

Contact: Tricia Wehrle, St. Paul Parks and Recreation, environment@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 651-632-2411

Mississippi Park Connection

Mississippi Park Connection is the charitable partner of Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. Mississippi Park Connection is committed to preserving, protecting, and enjoying the Mississippi River, the national park that runs through the Twin Cities. Among many things, we work closely together (we even share office space) to operate our joint volunteer program. Learn more at <http://parkconnection.org/>

*Karen Katz, Park Ranger, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area
111 Kellogg Blvd E., Suite #105, St. Paul, MN 55101-1256, 651-293-8458*

This is the volunteer newsletter for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, a national park unit located in the Twin Cities. The monthly newsletter details volunteer opportunities for the given month. If you are interested in an opportunity or have questions, contact the person listed. If nothing fits your interest or availability, don't worry, next month brings new opportunities! To volunteer, unsubscribe, or for more information contact miss_volunteer@nps.gov or (651) 293-8458. Please circulate freely to interested parties.