

## New Outdoor Clubs in the Heart of the City

The Mississippi River Fund and the National Park Service are leading an effort to develop new outdoor clubs for youth in the Twin Cities. Working with partner schools participating in the Urban Wilderness Canoe Adventures (UWCA) program, the clubs provide ongoing engagement for students interested in the outdoors, right in the heart of the city.

Two “fellows” with the UWCA program will be leading the outdoor clubs, beginning fall 2014. Maria Lee is heading up an outdoor club with two Minneapolis

schools in coordination with the YMCA's Beacons Program, and Michelle Vang runs the outdoor club for fifth graders from Battle Creek Elementary in St. Paul in partnership with the Eastside YMCA.

Club activities range from the basics, like learning how to dress for being outdoors in a Minnesota winter, or learning how to make s'mores over a fire, to fishing and environmental restoration work.

*Thanks to the National Park Foundation for supporting this work.*



Outdoor Club kids learn how to build a fire at a Mississippi River park.

## Meet Your New Park Superintendent



In August, we welcomed a new superintendent of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, Dr. John O. Anfinson.

John began his federal career as an archeologist student trainee with the St. Paul District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1980. He moved on to become Chief of Cultural Resources and District Historian. He joined the National Park Service in 2000 as the Cultural Resources Program Manager and became Chief of Resource Management in 2010.

“I am thrilled to be the new superintendent of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, especially as we approach our 100th anniversary in 2016,” says John.

“To celebrate this event and to carry out the park service's mission in our second century will require close partnerships like the one we have with the Mississippi River Fund.”

The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area is the only NPS unit whose mission is to protect, enhance, and interpret the world-renowned Mississippi River. Established in 1988, the park runs through 25 communities—five counties—and is managed by a plethora of local, state, and federal entities. Consequently, the National Park Service relies on partnerships for everything it does.

“John's proven ability to build strong relationships to solve difficult issues makes him the perfect person for this job,” said Patricia Trap, Acting Regional Director for the Midwest Region. “Few people know the Mississippi River, especially the 72-mile national park, like John.”

*\*Members of the Mississippi River Fund are invited to a special event with John on February 12. Details at [missriverfund.org](http://missriverfund.org).*

## SUPPORT YOUR PARK

## A Gift that Will Grow for Generations



No matter what the occasion, we all have those hard-to-shop-for people in our lives. The Mississippi River Fund has some great gift ideas for you—and the Mississippi River!

You can help restore a national cultural and historic landmark, Coldwater Spring. A gift of \$100 will plant a tree to help restore the oak savanna at Coldwater Spring. Invest in a grove of 12 trees with a gift of \$1,000. This meaningful contribution also makes you and the gift recipient members of the Mississippi River Fund! All gifts are accompanied by a personal note from the giver and a special certificate. Donors' names will also be included in our Tree Builders Trust.

Know a bird lover? Buy them a gift certificate for a trip aboard the park's pontoon boat on the Mississippi and enjoy a guided tour featuring

beautiful scenery and fabulous birding with a national park ranger. We offer numerous tours throughout the summer and early fall for just \$25 per person.

With a donation of \$35, **give someone the gift of membership** and we will send them your greetings along with a set of beautiful note cards featuring artist G.W. Anderson's scenes of Coldwater Spring through the seasons. Membership also includes:

- Discounted registration for events
- Invitations to members-only events
- Mississippi River Fund newsletter

Visit [missriverfund.org](http://missriverfund.org) or call us at 651-291-8164 to purchase any of these special gifts that will be sure to delight your friends and family and benefit the river for years to come.

INIOR

Support your national park and receive benefits year round—become a member of the Mississippi River Fund! Discounted registration and member events are just a few of the perks. **Join today at [missriverfund.org](http://missriverfund.org).**

MISSISSIPPI  
River Fund

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River Fund

The mission of the Mississippi River Fund is to strengthen the enduring connection between people and the Mississippi River and build community support for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. The fund supports the park's environmental stewardship and education programs, including outdoor recreation, education, and volunteerism.



In 1988, a national park was created in Minnesota to preserve, protect, and enhance the significant values of the waters and land of the Mississippi River corridor. Known as the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, the park extends for 72 miles along the river, running through the heart of the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area.

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MISSISSIPPI  
RIVER NEWS

111 Kellogg Blvd E, Suite 105  
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## FEATURED PROGRAM

## WELCOME

## Big River Art Contest Celebrates Young Artists &amp; River Stewards

Big River Journey, the park's longest running education program, brings nearly 6,000 school kids on river field trips in Minneapolis and St. Paul every year. A favorite feature of Big River Journey for many of the kids (grades 4-6) is the Big River Art Contest.

The Big River Art Contest brings in hundreds of submissions from dozens of local schools, with 16 winners selected annually. The impact of the art contest can be seen simply through the time students spend



Photo by Duffy & Partners

The long days of summer are behind us, but adventure awaits you in your national park. I encourage you and your family to embrace all four seasons in Minnesota, no matter the temperature!

Check out our events calendar and join us for ice fishing, birding, snowshoeing, and ice harvesting. How many national parks do you know that offer “Ice Fish with a Ranger” programs? After you've tried snowshoeing at Coldwater Spring or

watched an eagle dive for prey on patches of open river at Point Douglas in Hastings, you can stay connected with us from your cozy abode. Check out [RangerOnCall.com](http://RangerOnCall.com) and follow us on Facebook and Twitter to learn about the most up-to-date happenings on the river and in the park. Remember, the Mississippi River Visitor Center at the Science Museum of Minnesota is open year round. While you're there, view the Big River Art show, featuring art created by Twin Cities school kids and inspired by the Mississippi River. Check out exhibits and visit with park rangers about the recreational opportunities we offer every season. Our park rangers are ready to assist you in planning your river experience!

We look forward to seeing you at the river this winter, spring, summer, and fall!

national parks do you know

The artwork also inspires and educates the public when on display. View this year's Big River Art winning pieces, now on display at the Mississippi River Visitor Center, and additional Big River Art at the Mill City Museum and Fort Snelling State Park Visitor Center.

Como Elementary Students display their Big River Art

WINTER 2014-15

Photo by Brian Peterson, Star Tribune

# MISSISSIPPI RIVER NEWS

Newsletter of the Mississippi River Fund & Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

MISSISSIPPI RIVER NEWS





## Volunteer Voices

By Stan Hunter,  
Education Program  
Volunteer

As a National Park Service volunteer, I try to help children have some of the same experiences that made my own childhood so wonderful.

I grew up on a Michigan farm and walked a mile to my two-room country school. On the way home, I investigated everything. The creek got me almost every day. I would want a better look at a crayfish or frog, or to see if I could jump to that next rock and—splash! Luckily, my mother had done the same thing as a girl, and probably would have been disappointed with me if I came home dry.

Our park programs work because the kids are always actively involved. On the geocaching program, kids are racing through the woods from one place to another, shrieking with laughter, thoroughly enjoying the outdoors. Big River Journey teaches kids to think differently about the river, like seeing a backwater lake and realizing it teems with life. On the UWCA, I love hearing comments like: “Wow, the river’s pretty clear and clean. I thought it was dirty and ugly!”

I can’t duplicate my childhood experiences for the kids who visit the park. But I hope that some of my enthusiasm is contagious.



To register your volunteer group, contact Anna Waugh, Project Manager & Volunteer Coordinator: 651-291-9119, [awaugh@missriverfund.org](mailto:awaugh@missriverfund.org).

To register as an individual volunteer, contact Kathy Swenson, National Park Ranger & Volunteer Coordinator: 651-293-8424, [kathleen\\_swenson@nps.gov](mailto:kathleen_swenson@nps.gov).

## Winter Volunteering—Don’t Let the Cold Slow You Down!



In Minnesota, even the darkest, coldest days of winter are good days to get outdoors. Each year, hundreds of people gather at Fort Snelling State Park to celebrate snow and ice at **Winter Trails Day**, sponsored by REI. The festivities allow participants to try all kinds of winter sports and activities including snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, skijoring, geocaching, and naturalist guided hikes. You can also learn traditional ice harvesting, how to play a snow snakes game, and build a quinzee.

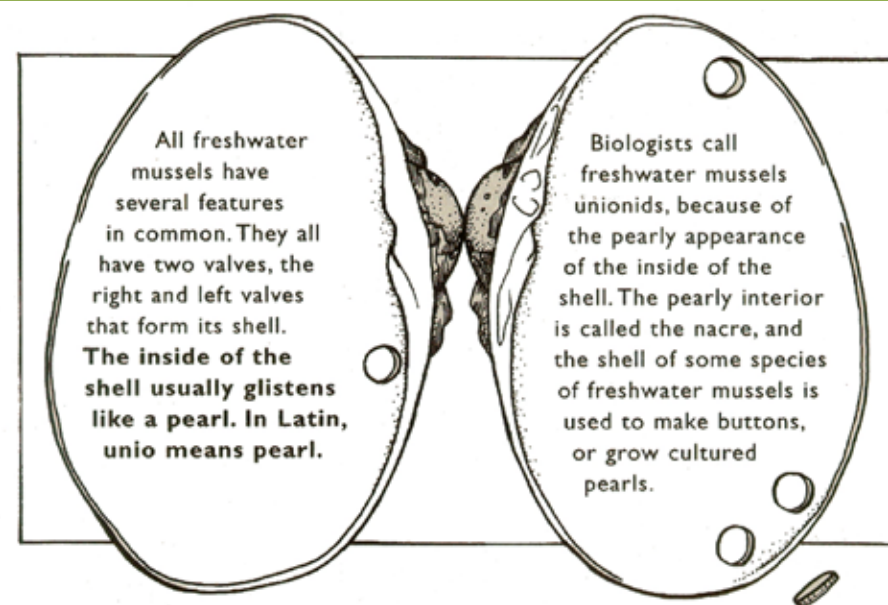
Hardy volunteers are needed each year on Snelling Lake to facilitate Winter Trails Day activities and teach new generations about fun in the winter sun. Everyone is invited to warm up with free hot chocolate and a big bonfire.

Want to keep moving all winter? Join us for a winter **River Action Volunteer Event**. We’ll walk out across the snow at Coldwater Spring to haul buckthorn that was cut throughout the fall. It’s easy to keep warm when your body is moving!

Indoor action more your speed? Schedule a day to volunteer to **make seed bombs** with your school or company. We’ll pack the seeds with compost and soil so they have a better chance of surviving when we plant them in the spring. Don’t have a group? We are always looking for **committed volunteers** to work in the Mississippi River Fund and Mississippi National River and Recreation Area’s offices in downtown Saint Paul.

## Mississippi Mussels WORD SEARCH

People and mussels have a long history together. We’ve used them to make tools, jewelry, and buttons. Because their health is tied to the river’s health, they need us to keep the water clean. Complete this word search to boost your mussel vocabulary!



K P S O E K U G L S U B D H P  
V Y H W M S C V M T M T F O J  
U A E D U L J B R P E A L Y E  
H K L N S M R U F N J L O X S  
Q J L V S C S T X G U W S N T  
U N I O E R Q T I T A E H E I  
W S H V L S F O A W Q N A U M  
O N F L S A U N I O N I D S A  
Z M I A E J T S H E K T R V T  
R A L R G S R E D B Y L Y K E  
U V C O A B I O L O G I S T V  
G A F J B W N E N A F U C O G  
N D W E M D G S V L N A D O S  
R Y A G E Y S P T U O C T F R  
K B T W M G R O W T H G R L M

FIND THE  
FOLLOWING  
WORDS IN THE  
WORD SEARCH:

MUSSELS  
UNIO  
UNIONIDS  
VALVES  
FOOT  
SHELL  
NACRE  
RINGS  
ESTIMATE  
BUTTONS  
BIOLOGIST  
POLLUTANTS

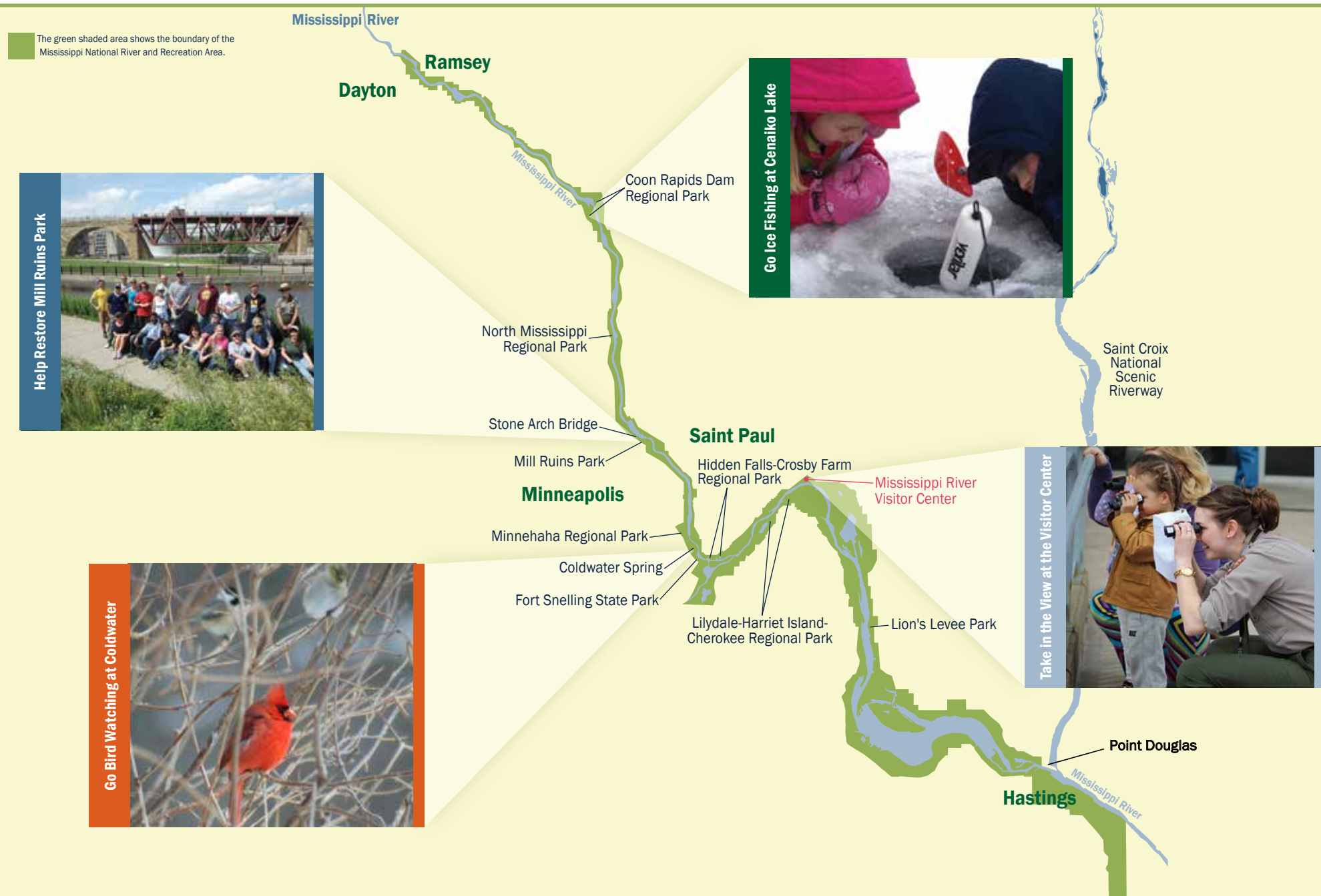
## Become a Junior Ranger!

Junior Rangers are young people who promise to learn about, explore, and protect our national parks.

Learn how at [nps.gov/miss/forkids](http://nps.gov/miss/forkids)



## JUNIOR RANGERS



## MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL RIVER & RECREATION AREA

Explore the river near you or join us for an upcoming program at one of our featured sites. Stop by the Mississippi River Visitor Center to chat with a national park ranger and pick up a copy of the *Mississippi River Companion*, featuring detailed maps and information.

OCTOBER 2014 – MAY 2015

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit [missriverfund.org/events](http://missriverfund.org/events) for more event details and registration information.

- October 11** Second Saturdays at Coldwater Spring
- October 11** Prairie Bike Ride & Restoration Event\*
- October 12** The Big Sit—Birding at Coldwater Spring
- October 15** Fall Colors Birding Boat Tour
- October 17** Mississippi River Forum
- October 18** River Action Volunteer Event—Biking\*
- October 26** Dog Walk at Coldwater Spring
- November 13** Give to the Max Day
- November 21** Mississippi River Forum
- November 22** Tree Walk at Coldwater Spring
- December 19** Mississippi River Forum
- January 3** Winter Fun at Coldwater Spring
- January 10** Winter Trails Day
- January 17-19** Take-A-Kid Ice Fishing Weekend
- January 17** Ice Fish with a Ranger
- January 24** River Action Volunteer Event—Snowshoeing\*
- February 7** Snowshoe Fun at Coldwater Spring
- February 10** River Readers Book Club
- February 12** Member Event with Superintendent John Anfinson
- February 21** Making Seed Bookmarks\*
- March 14** River Action Volunteer Event—Snowshoeing\*
- March 20** Member Tour at St. Anthony Falls Lab
- March 24** Volunteer Recruitment Fair
- April 18-26** National Park Week
- April 19** Junior Ranger Day

### \* Volunteer opportunity

All events are subject to change.

Members receive free or discounted registration for most programs, including invitations to members-only events.

Join today at [missriverfund.org/join](http://missriverfund.org/join)

CONTACT



National Park Service  
Mississippi River Visitor Center  
651-293-0200  
[nps.gov/miss](http://nps.gov/miss)

MISSISSIPPI  
River Fund

Mississippi River Fund  
651-291-8164  
[info@missriverfund.org](mailto:info@missriverfund.org)  
[missriverfund.org](http://missriverfund.org)

Connect with us:



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