



The mission of Mississippi Park Connection 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 connection 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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Photo by Leon Kosek

MISSISSIPPI RIVER NEWS

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MISSISSIPPI RIVER NEWS

Newsletter of the Mississippi Park Connection & Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

9102 Jan 16
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FEATURED PROGRAM

4Play = 4 Fun Seasons

By **Kate Havelin**, **Mississippi Park Connection Communications Coordinator**



Photo by Leon Kosek

Whatever the season, whatever the weather, adventures await outdoors. Starting this January, one Saturday each season, newcomers and longtime Minnesotans will come together to play with purpose. 4Play will help newcomers learn how to savor each season, Minnesota style.

4Play is a new effort organized by Greater MSP and Mississippi Park Connection. The inaugural 4Play kicks off January 9, 2016, with cool adventures from snowshoeing and ice skating to ice fishing, cross country skiing and quinzhee building. So you don't know what a quinzhee is? You'll find all about

quinzhees, which are snow caves, at Fort Snelling State Park, where you can play with outdoor adventure experts—rangers from the National Park Service and the Department of Natural Resources, along with staffers from REL.

So bundle up and grab your friends as we celebrate the best of Minnesota winter during this regional day of play. We've got the ice, snow, and cold: they're the perfect ingredients for outdoor play. So come outside and join the fun. 4Play means 4 seasons of fun 4 all.

Coming Attraction: National Parks IMAX Debuts

By **Jodi Petrich**, **Centennial Coordinator**

The National Park Service turns 100 in 2016, marking a major milestone in the preservation of America's wild, pristine spaces.

MacGillivray Freeman Films in partnership with Brand USA and the Giant Dome Theater Consortium (GDTCo), an alliance of seven U.S. science museums that includes the Science Museum of Minnesota, is bringing the magnificence of these landscapes to IMAX® and giant-screen with the release of "NATIONAL PARKS ADVENTURE." Presented by Expedia, Inc., the film's scheduled global release will coincide with the Centennial and will begin its run at the Science Museum of Minnesota's William L. McKnight-3M Omnitheater on March 4, 2016.

Narrated by Academy Award® winner Robert Redford, the film takes audiences on the ultimate off-trail adventure into the nation's awe-inspiring great outdoors and untamed wilderness. Featuring the perspective of national parks ambassador and world-class mountaineer Conrad Anker, his stepson Max Lowe and family friend Rachel Pohl, these modern-day explorers visit spectacularly wild and beautiful places—including Yellowstone, the Everglades, the Redwoods, and Arches—revealing a tapestry of inspiring natural wonders.

Friends of the park will have the opportunity to attend a sneak preview during a Centennial fundraising event on February 24, 2016. Save the date to celebrate our national parks, including the one in our backyard.



National Park Service Centennial

By John Anfinson, Superintendent,
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area



The National Park Service will celebrate its 100th birthday on August 25, 2016, and the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area is in the spotlight.

The Centennial goal is “To connect with and create the next generation of park visitors, stewards, and advocates.” The NPS knows that America has changed dramatically since 1916. Today, over 80% of Americans live in urban areas. If the NPS wants to reach its goal, it has to engage people in cities.



For this reason, our Washington and Midwest Region offices have high expectations for this park. They expect us to double or even triple our volunteer numbers, and they are looking to us to reach more youth in our programming.

To me, the Centennial represents an opportunity to put this park on the map, inside NPS and outside. I hope people see the Centennial as an opportunity to find new ways to experience the river. Make 2016 the year to find your park.

New Name for Our Organization

By Katie Nyberg, Executive Director, Mississippi Park Connection



For ten years we have operated as the Mississippi River Fund. We began as a local fund of the National Park Foundation, developed into an independent charity and worked very effectively with our most important partner, the National Park Service. Over the past several months the board and the staff have been engaged in a discussion about our identity. Do we have the right name? Does it reflect our mission of connecting people to the river and the national park?

Our staff and board have spent the last several months with Studio Mpls,

a terrific local design firm made up of talented people who love the river as much as we do. I am happy to share our new identity with you. This fall, the Mississippi River Fund will become Mississippi Park Connection.

Mississippi Park Connection better reflects our mission to strengthen the connection between people and the Mississippi River. Stretching over 72 miles, our national park presents an infinite number of ways to connect with the river. And in each experience, Mississippi Park Connection sees opportunity—in education, recreation, science, the arts, community engagement and more. Strengthening connections is our mission for a park that’s a national treasure and a river of global acclaim. Ever flowing, always changing, the Great River offers endless promise. Discover your river.



MISSISSIPPI PARK CONNECTION

Discover your river

SUPPORT YOUR PARK

Three Easy Ways to Help

By Anna Waugh, Mississippi Park Connection
Development Coordinator

Leaf peeping, fishing, walking, biking, paddling, birding, and snowshoeing. There are so many to explore our park. And if you want to support our park, here are three easy ways to make a difference:



1. Become a member of Mississippi Park Connection. When you become a member or make a donation, you are showing your support for our park. So what happens to your gifts? Your donations help restore prairies and woodlands. Your donations help thousands of kids connect to the river. (To see kids’ perspectives on our park, check out the newest Big River Art winners in this issue.)

2. Give to the Max. On Thursday, November 12, show your love for the park on Give to the Max Day. Of course, you can donate to the park any day of the year, but Give to the Max Day makes donating a special event, with prizes, special matching grants and more.

3. Boost your donation with an employer matching program. Many companies offer matching gift programs that provide financial support to nonprofits when their employees or former employees donate or volunteer. Find out if your company participates and then direct your gift to Mississippi Park Connection.

No matter how you choose to give, your support matters!

give
TO THE MAX
DAY 
NOV 12, 2015

FEATURED PARTNER SITE

Manomin County Park

By Brian Valentine, National Park Service Ranger

Manomin County Park encompasses the confluence of Rice Creek and the Mississippi River in Anoka County. Manomin is the Anishinabe (Ojibwe) word for wild rice, which reportedly grew in the creek many years ago. The park is located in Fridley, about one and a half miles north of Interstate 694. From I-694, take East River Road to reach the park.

In fall, the trees become a colorful canopy that accentuates the park’s period-style gazebo overlooking the river. The falling leaves turn the creek into a speckled stream of orange and yellow, a visual memo that winter is coming. In winter, Manomin feels more like a primitive, snowy island. Its wintery surface becomes a visual log book of charismatic animal life along the river.

Manomin Park is also home to the Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts. This former tavern and farm house is now a community center that encourages and showcases the work of local artists. Banfill-Locke is a great place to stop in and see what’s on the minds of your local arts community.

Nearby, the Mississippi River Regional Trail will take you nine miles upstream, into the city of Anoka, or five miles downstream to Minneapolis. Manomin County Park’s address is 6666 East River Road, Fridley.



Manomin County Park photo
courtesy Anoka County Parks



RIVER VOLUNTEER



Volunteer Voices Ultra Creative Volunteers

By **Tony Johnson,**
Ultra Creative

Ultra Creative is a Minneapolis-based creative studio with a passion for creating hard-working art. With bold imaginations and strategic design, Ultra sets brands in motion by crafting projects that grab attention and creative content that gratifies.

When Mississippi Park Connection realized that Ranger on Call, the free audio guide to exploring the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, was suffering from lack of awareness due to the mass amount of signage along the metro area Mississippi corridor, they reached out to Ultra Creative for help.

Since the Ultra Creative offices are located right on the banks of the Mississippi, the nature lovers in our agency were thrilled with the opportunity to share our fondness for one of our state's most iconic treasures.

We created a completely new graphic identity for Ranger on Call that sets the program apart from the other signage along the river to better engage onsite visitors. This new modern design and iconography takes historical education from stodgy and ignorable to fun and engaging for all generations.

Since the new signage went up, use of the Ranger on Call service has increased by nearly 300%.

Student Ambassadors

By **Quinn Feller and Kelly McCann,** Centennial Volunteer Ambassadors



We are the newest additions to the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area and Mississippi Park Connection family and couldn't be happier to be a part of it! We are both Centennial volunteer ambassadors with the Student Conservation Association (SCA). SCA hired us, along with 68 other people, to work at national park sites all around the country to meet the goals of the Centennial.

Our objective is to increase public awareness, community involvement, and volunteer participation at the park. Here in the Twin Cities, you'll see us in the community tabling at farmers' markets, working with kids in new summer camp programs, and engaging the

public at park events. We do everything from promoting park events on social media to designing an invasive species and freshwater mussel station for some 500 summer campers.

If you'd like to read more about the Centennial volunteer ambassador program, visit our blog at nps100sca.wordpress.com.



To register your volunteer group, contact Mary Hammes, Environmental Stewardship and Volunteer Manager: 651-291-9119, mhammes@parkconnection.org. To register as an individual volunteer, contact Kathy Swenson, National Park Ranger & Volunteer Coordinator: 651-293-8424, kathleen_swenson@nps.gov.



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.



Junior Rangers

“Explore, Learn, and Protect!” That is the National Park Service’s junior ranger promise made by youth around the country.

Explore our storied American river and earn your junior ranger badge at the Mississippi River Visitor Center, Mill City Museum, Coon Rapids Regional Dam Park, and the Great River Road Visitor Learning Center.

Come to our visitor center on Saturday, April 23, 2016, for Junior Ranger Day activities. Contact Ranger Caroline Stedman at 651-293-8464 for more information or visit us online at nps.gov/miss/forkids.

You can also download special junior ranger workbooks to learn about fossils, the night sky, wilderness, and the Underground Railroad. Visit nps.gov/kids to get your copy.



Become a Junior Ranger!

Junior rangers are young people who promise to learn about, explore, and protect our national parks. Earn your junior ranger badge at our Mississippi River Visitor Center.

Learn how at nps.gov/miss/forkids

JUNIOR RANGERS

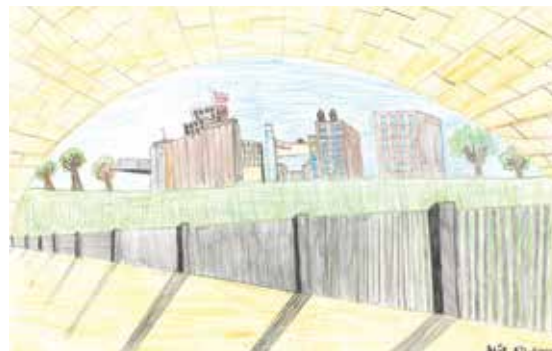
Big River Art Winners

Each year, nearly 6,000 school kids head to the river for Big River Journey and Journey to the Falls fields trips in Saint Paul. And each year, hundreds of those students submit their artwork to our Big River Art Contest. The National Park Service welcomes entries from across the United States. Check out the four grand prize winners’ art here, and stop by the Mississippi River Visitor Center to see all sixteen winning artworks.

Big River Art Grand Prize (below):
Samuel Canick, 4th grade, Capitol Hill Magnet

Journey to the Falls Grand Prize (right):
Juliet Ali-Caccamo, 6th grade, Friends School

Mighty Mississippi Grand Prize (bottom right):
James Corley Sanders, 5th grade, Home Art Lessons



Caring for the River Grand Prize (below):
David Carlson, 4th grade, The Blake School



CONTACT



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Connect with us:



Want this bi-annual newsletter mailed to you? Contact info@parkconnection.org or call 651-291-8164.

Photos courtesy of the National Park Service and Mississippi Park Connection, unless otherwise noted. To be removed from the mailing list, please contact info@parkconnection.org or 651-291-8164.

OCTOBER 2015–MAY 2016

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

- OCTOBER 7** Mississippi Park Connection Member Pontoon Ride
- OCTOBER 10** Second Saturdays @ Coldwater Spring
Second Sats are free family fun!
- OCTOBER 17** Bike with a Ranger—Fall Colors Tour @ Harriet Island
- OCTOBER 17** Big Sit Birding @ Coldwater Spring
How many birds can we see from one spot?
- OCTOBER 21** Mississippi Park Connection Member Pontoon Ride
- DECEMBER 12** Duck Watch @ Point Douglas
- DECEMBER 19** Winter Hike/Snowshoe @ Coldwater Spring
- DECEMBER 31** Candlelight Walk @ Fort Snelling
- JANUARY 9** Winter Trails Day/4Play @ Fort Snelling
- JANUARY 16** Take a Kid Ice Fishing
- JANUARY 23** Snowshoe RAVE—River Action Volunteer Event—@ Ordway
- FEBRUARY 11** Evening Hike/Snowshoe @ Coldwater Spring
- FEBRUARY 24** NPS IMAX sneak preview @ Science Museum
- FEBRUARY 27** Snowshoe RAVE—River Action Volunteer Event—@ Coldwater Spring
- MARCH 4** NPS IMAX movie premiere @ Science Museum
- MARCH 24** Volunteer Recruitment Fair
- APRIL 16-24** National Park Week
- APRIL 21** Bike RAVE—River Action Volunteer Event
- APRIL 23** Junior Ranger Day @ Mississippi River Visitor Center

Members receive free or discounted registration for most programs, including invitations to members-only events. Join today at parkconnection.org/join

All events are subject to change.

Photo by Leon Kosek