



MISSISSIPPI River Fund

2007 – 2008 Annual Report

MISSISSIPPI River Fund

We are pleased to introduce the Mississippi River Fund's first annual report. Our 2007–2008 fiscal year was our first year as an independent nonprofit. Until July 2007, our fund was part of the National Park Foundation. After a few years as an entity under the Foundation's umbrella, we were ready to operate 100% on a local level, deepening our partnership with the community and our National Park.

Our journey as an independent organization dedicated to bolstering the efforts of the National Park Service for the Mississippi River begins with the completion of a joint strategic planning process with the National Park Service. Never before have a National Park and a foundation entered into dual process like this. We are very proud of our joint vision and look forward to achieving our goals over the next three–five years and beyond.

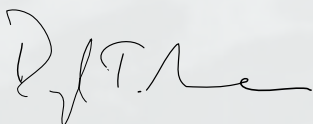
In addition to successfully completing joint strategic plans the fund continues to create and expand new park programs. Last year, after only four short years as an organization, we passed the \$1 million dollar mark in funded projects that support our National Park and improve the health of the Mississippi River.

Thanks to the support of generous individuals and organizations, our other major accomplishments include:

- Expanding the award-winning Big River Journey program to Minneapolis. Journey to the Falls will bring thousands of new students onto the river, supporting classroom achievement and creating future river stewards.
- Launching a new Water Quality Initiative with the assistance of the McKnight Foundation. We are working with the National Park Service and many municipalities and landowners upstream of Minneapolis to keep our drinking water clean.
- Raising the visibility of our special urban National Park to the people who enter it every day! As park Superintendent Paul Labovitz put it, "We probably have the most visited National Park in the country. The problem is, very few people know they are in a National Park." The Mississippi River Fund is committed to raising awareness and appreciation of our National Park within our community. From bridge signs to public events, the Mississippi River Fund works to connect the community with this tremendous resource.

We have a National Park right here in our own backyards, joining communities all along the gorgeous 72-mile river corridor. At the Mississippi River Fund we have only begun to nurture, protect and strengthen this wonderful park, and we are excited to continue that journey with all vital constituencies along the park corridor. We want to express our gratitude to the Mississippi River's closest friends – our donors, volunteers, trustees and visitors – who help champion our cause to make this park as revered and vital as any National Park in the United States.

Best regards,



Doug Moore
Chairman



Katie Nyberg
Executive Director

Plan your next trip to the park by starting at www.missriverfund.org



From left to right: Katie Nyberg, Paul Labovitz, and Doug Moore

As our National Park celebrates its first twenty years and looks ahead to the future, I am continually inspired by our great Mississippi River and partners that value the river as a precious asset to our community.

I am also inspired by our partnership with the Mississippi River Fund. Since 2003, the fund has been a major partner, providing crucial funding for programs and raising park awareness. Last year our partnership evolved as both organizations engaged in strategic planning to chart our course over the next five years. Our major projects include increasing visitation to and on the river, guiding land use decisions, improving water quality, and preserving our historic places.

We are excited to bring more people to and on the Mississippi River. Signs marking the river and the park are now installed on most of the bridges crossing the Mississippi within park boundaries. We've increased our Bike with a Ranger program and delivered such opportunities from Coon Rapids to Hastings this past year, including several rides in both Saint Paul and Minneapolis during the Republican National Convention. And Big River Journey and Journey to the Falls delivered great school programs to thousands of children. None of these programs would be possible without the help of generous Mississippi River Fund donors.

We are also defining the National Park Service role in addressing water quality challenges with the McKnight Foundation's support of the Mississippi River Fund. With a number of organizations working on pieces of the water quality issue, we hope to use the National Park Service brand to move everyone in a positive direction for the river.

There are many challenges and opportunities in the next few years. How can we save the Upper Post at Fort Snelling and convert this neglected treasure into a vibrant part of our community? How can we give 10,000 children, our future river stewards, on-the-river learning experiences? How can the National Park Service facilitate a partnership with other great rivers of the world? Our unique public/private partnership with the Mississippi River Fund will play a key role in realizing these opportunities.

We expect more excitement for 2009 as we increase our efforts to understand the park's biodiversity and create more recreation and education programs. To learn more about where we are headed in 2009 and beyond, I invite you to visit us online at www.nps.gov/miss.

Thanks for your commitment to the Mississippi River and our National Park.

Sincerely,

Paul Labovitz
Superintendent
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

Our Vision

In the coming years, the Mississippi River Fund will play a pivotal role in ensuring the National Park is preserved, protected and enhanced for the enjoyment and education of all. The fund will be a source of vital financial support as well as a source of community connection, expertise, advocacy and inspiration for the park. The Mississippi River Fund will champion the park and facilitate public/private partnerships to build community support for this national treasure.

About the Mississippi River Fund

Our mission is to strengthen the enduring connection between people and the Mississippi River and to build community support for our National Park.

The Mississippi River Fund supports important stewardship and community engagement programs that fill the gap between federal funding realities and core park programs, including:

- **Education Programs** like Junior Rangers enhance understanding and appreciation of the river.
- **Water Quality** protection vital to the health of the river and our community.
- **Habitat Restoration** preserves and protects the park's globally significant resources.
- **Our Shared Heritage** and the significant role our National Park plays in American history and culture.

OUR CORE VALUES

- We recognize that our quality of life is intrinsically tied to the river.
- We recognize the national resources and expertise that the National Park Service brings to our local community and we are committed to working with them to bolster their efforts.
- We believe we can achieve the best future for the river and our community by bringing together citizens and public and private entities.
- We value the very elements that designate this a National Park – clean water, cultural landmarks, critical habitat, and our shared natural and cultural heritage.

Program Highlights 2007 – 2008

STEWARDSHIP

Volunteer Seed Starters Program

The Mississippi River Fund and REI proudly sponsored the park's Seed Starter program – a new partnership in 2008 involving community volunteers, local businesses and National Park staff aimed at improving natural spaces along the Mississippi River by restoring native plant communities. The park provides seeds and growing instructions and Seed Starters volunteers plant the seeds, nurture the seedlings, and record the plants' growth and success. As the plants mature, volunteers transplant the seedlings into prairie restoration sites along the Mississippi River. Participants include school children, seniors, corporate employees, and others who donate their time and enthusiasm to the Seed Starters program.

Mississippi River Bridge Signs

In early 2008, the Mississippi River Fund and the park celebrated the first installation of signs on metro area bridges demarcating our National Park. The fund is working to mark all Mississippi River crossings with the National Park Service arrowhead. This project is the first step in a large awareness-raising effort on behalf of the National Park Service.



EDUCATION

Big River Journey & Journey to the Falls

Each year, Big River Journey serves more than 5,000 fourth-to-sixth graders and 150 teachers. The only program of its kind, Big River Journey integrates on-the-river field experiences with classroom learning during the school year. Through the support of the Mississippi River Fund, the program expanded in 2007 with Journey to the Falls field trips along the Minneapolis riverfront; this program will serve an additional 1,000 students per year. Big River Journey also received the 2007 Partnership of the Year award from the Minnesota Environmental Initiative.

Junior Rangers

Through the National Park Service Junior Ranger program, children and their families engage together in fun, hands-on learning activities. These activities provide opportunities for the public to foster personal connections with the river, create fond, long-lasting memories, and promote new appreciation for our nation and its treasures. In 2007, our park inducted 550 new Junior Rangers with the help of a Mississippi River Fund grant.

National Park Movie

As a result of a grant from the Mississippi River Fund, Bell Museum Productions produced an 18-minute movie for the National Park to help families, students, visitors and community members connect with the park. The production also included a 30-second public service announcement for the park. View the movie online at www.nps.gov/miss.

Contributors July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008

Corporate & Foundation Support

Contributions of \$25,000 and above

The Patrick and Aimee Butler
Family Foundation
Ford Motor Company
The McKnight Foundation

Contributions of \$5,000 to \$24,999

Ecolab Foundation
General Mills Foundation
The Larsen Fund
Patagonia
REI
The Scrooby Foundation
Xcel Energy Foundation

Contributions up to \$4,999

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union
Jeffers Foundation
Saint Paul Garden Club

Individual Gifts

Gifts of \$15,000 and above

Mary Lee Dayton
Ellen D. Sturgis

Gifts of \$1,000 to \$4,999

H. Brewster and Susan Atwater
Cecelia and John Butler
Beth and Kevin Dooley
John and Kirsten Driscoll
David Hartwell and
Elizabeth DeBaut
Edwin and Elizabeth Hlavka
Marilyn Kingman
Margaret and Richard McBride

Gifts of \$250 to \$999

Conley and Marney Brooks
Edward and Sherry Ann Dayton

William and Janice Dircks
W. John Driscoll
Barbara Forster
Lucy Hartwell
Donald Janes
Philip and Joanne Von Blon
Sarah Winton

Gifts of \$100 to \$249

Susan Boren and S.R. Pinku
Paul Brown
Andrew Cook
John Cowles, III and
Page Knudsen Cowles
Julia Dayton
Kay Erickson and Mike Madigan
Nancy Feldman
Peter and Mary Gove
Bert and Susan H. Gross
John Hedberg
Holly Puk Jett
John and Lynda Kern
Peggy Korsmo-Kennon
Greg Lais
Lora Landers
Margaret Lynch
Paul Markwardt
Jennifer McDaniel
Meryl McKinney
Phyllis Moen
Ted and Judy Nagel
Katie and Jeff Nyberg
Lawrence Olson
Margaret Ordway
Betsy Packard
Corwin and Doris Peterson
Mary and Frank W. Plant
Sally Polk
Rich Reardon
Jim Roe
Lawrence and Mary Schwanke

Barbara and Kevin Stephenson
Marilyn Thompson

Gifts up to \$99

Sharon Abrahamsen
Julie Andrus
Malcolm Bastron
Tom Benson and Tara McMichael
Nathan and Jennifer Block
Laurie Boche
Tom and Sally Burke
Jane and Jay Carroll
Eunice and Byron Dokken
Susan Flynn
Janette Grazzini-Cook
Carol Johnson
Steven Kaplan
Mildred E. and Willard Kehrberg
Sally and Anders Knutzen
Luanne Koskinen
Mark and Wendy Kuzma
Vernese Lathrop
Jose and Zoila Lopez
Thomas Meyer and
Martha Meyer-VonBlon
Megan Roche
John Schwieger and Susan Bodum
Denise St. Marie
John Tulloch
Lois Whitehorn
Kathe Wilcoxon
Jean and John Wolf
David Wright

In-Kind Gifts and Services

Affinity Plus Federal
Credit Union
General Mills
REI

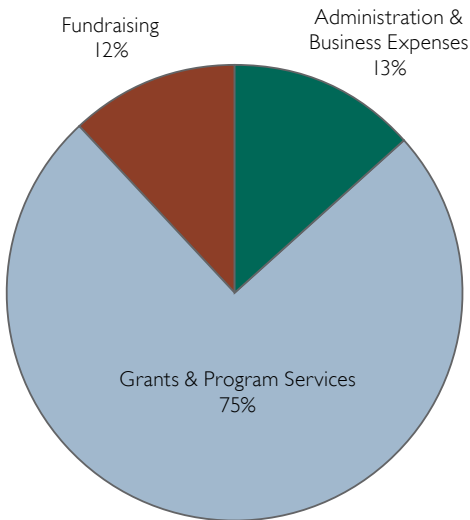
Financials

Expenses

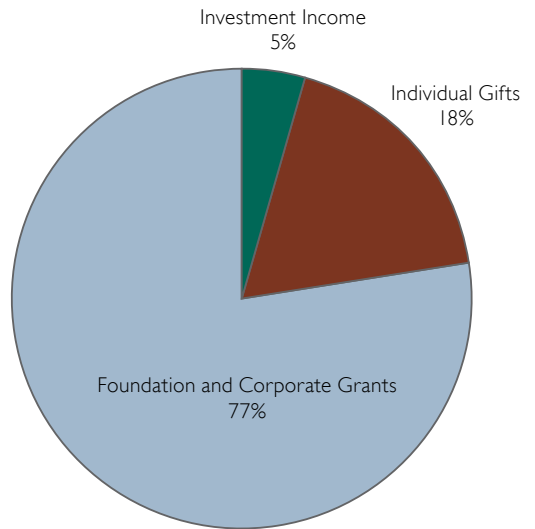
Administration & Business Expenses	\$33,893
Grants & Program Services	\$187,853
Fundraising	\$29,601
TOTAL	\$251,347

Revenue

Investment Income	\$17,097
Individual Gifts	\$68,505
Foundation and Corporate Grants	\$291,050
TOTAL	\$376,652



Expenses



Revenue*

* Some of the income recognized in the revenue chart is for 2009 programs.

Volunteer Spotlight

Patagonia Employees Become Citizen Scientists for the Mississippi River Fund

On sunny days last summer, employees from Patagonia's Saint Paul store played hooky from work to track down turtles on the Mississippi River. Store employees logged 320 volunteer hours to conduct the first basking turtle survey in our National Park.

Through the Patagonia intern program, employees have the opportunity to take time off work to volunteer with an environmental group of their choice. The Mississippi River Fund is the honored recipient of Patagonia grants that provided skilled interns for 2007 and 2008. Teams of interns traversed our 72-mile park by canoe collecting data on the seven species of turtles that live in the park. The research gathered will help to establish a baseline for monitoring Mississippi River turtles and provides important data to help the National Park determine future river restoration priorities.

"We're always exploring ways we can make a difference in the Twin Cities community," said Ellen Grady, manager of the Saint Paul store. "We are interested in increasing our involvement with local environmental groups and being part of ongoing research within the Mississippi National River is a perfect fit."

Photo: Ellen Grady

Mississippi River Fund Board of Trustees

Doug Moore, Chair
Vice President, Advertising & Branding, General Mills

Robert H. Bruininks
President, University of Minnesota

Ceci Butler
President, Artists to Watch

Chris Coleman
Mayor, City of St. Paul

Tricia Davidson
Principal & Managing Partner, Duffy & Partners

Mary Lee Dayton

Beth Dooley

John B. Driscoll

David Hartwell
President, Bellcomb Technologies

Eric Jolly
President, Science Museum of Minnesota

Marilyn Kingman

Keith Malbrue
Senior Vice President, Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union

R.T. Rybak
Mayor, City of Minneapolis

Leslie Sandberg

Steve Simon
Attorney, Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi LLP
Member, Minnesota House of Representatives

Anne Simonson

Ellen Sturgis

Mississippi River Fund Staff

Katie Nyberg
Executive Director

Rebecca Newhouse
Annual Giving & Events Coordinator

Contact us at:
26 East Exchange Street, Suite 408
Saint Paul, MN 55101
651-291-8164
info@missriverfund.org
www.missriverfund.org