



# MISSISSIPPI PARK CONNECTION

*Discover your river*



**Annual Report**  
2017-2018



Every time we do something ourselves we miss an opportunity to partner with the community and make a bigger impact for the park. This year, we've entered into some terrific new partnerships that are helping us to scale up our impact for the river and for our community. A new partnership with Conservation Corps of Minnesota and Iowa is critical to the Plant for the Future Campaign. Youth Outdoors Crews from the Corps are working in the forest nearly every day to complete our goal of planting and maintaining 15,000 healthy trees by 2021.

During the spring and fall, we are capitalizing on the vast experience of retired teachers through the new River Educator program, which is helping elementary school students learn about history, navigation, and the natural world. In addition, our partnership with Northern Lights.mn has inspired captivating public art through Illuminate the Lock at the St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam Visitor Center.

In 2018, the Park Connection supported projects across the Mississippi River with nearly \$1 million in donations. This funding is critical to who we have become and essential to what we can be.

It takes a wide and diverse community of friends to accomplish big ideas. When we say "we," we mean all of us: organizational partners, donors, volunteers, teachers, moms and dads. Through your generosity and passion for the river, Mississippi Park Connection is able to help our park and our partners achieve big goals. Thank you for sharing in our community of river stewards.

  
Katie Nyberg  
Executive Director

  
John Anfinson  
Superintendent, Mississippi  
National River and Recreation Area

  
James Eastman  
Board Chair

**"The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area turned 30 years old in 2018. We have come a long way, especially in the past 15 years, but only because of our strong partnerships, many of which Mississippi Park Connection fosters and grows."**

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John Anfinson



**Thank you to the 5,016 volunteers  
who gave 17,661 hours  
of their time and talent to our park.**



# Our Growing Impact

## 2016

## 2018

Mississippi River Paddle Share

266



People who paddled on Mississippi River Paddle Share

Coldwater Spring

74,921



People who visited Coldwater Spring

Upper Saint Anthony Falls Lock and Dam

15,441



People who visited the Lock and Dam Visitor Center

Mississippi River Visitor Center

45,461



People who visited the Mississippi River Visitor Center

Youth Education

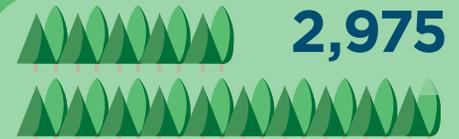
19,753



Children who participated in youth education programs

Tree Plantings

510



Number of trees planted

## Padelford Riverboats Inspire the Next Generation



When Tammy and Gus Gaspardo started working as deckhands at the Padelford Packet Boat Co. in the mid 1980s, they had no idea that they would be running the Twin Cities flagship riverboat company together thirty years later. It's a family affair with Tammy's cousins working in the office alongside their daughter, Sam, and their son, James, who just earned his boat pilot's license in June. "Believe it or not, we work really well together," says Tammy. "We're a tight-knit group."

The Gaspardo Family has made a huge difference in the lives of more than 80,000 Twin Cities children through their partnership with the Big River Journey program and the National Park Service. "Twenty-two years," says Gus, "those early kids are adults now!"

Tammy continues, "It always amazes me how many kids out there have heard of the Mississippi, but they've never gotten out there. They've never been on a boat. And they say, 'whoa, this is so big!' and some of them are kind of scared, and so we give them some encouragement."

Thanks to yearly in-kind donations from the Padelford Riverboats, students from across the metro area are able to travel the river with steep discounts on boat tickets that put the program in reach for schools with small field trip budgets. "Big River Journey connects students to the outdoors," says Gus. "It's invaluable."

“You get the students outside of the classroom and they can actually see it and feel it and be there. It’s like the bulb goes on.”

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Captain Gus Gaspardo





Photo by National Park Foundation

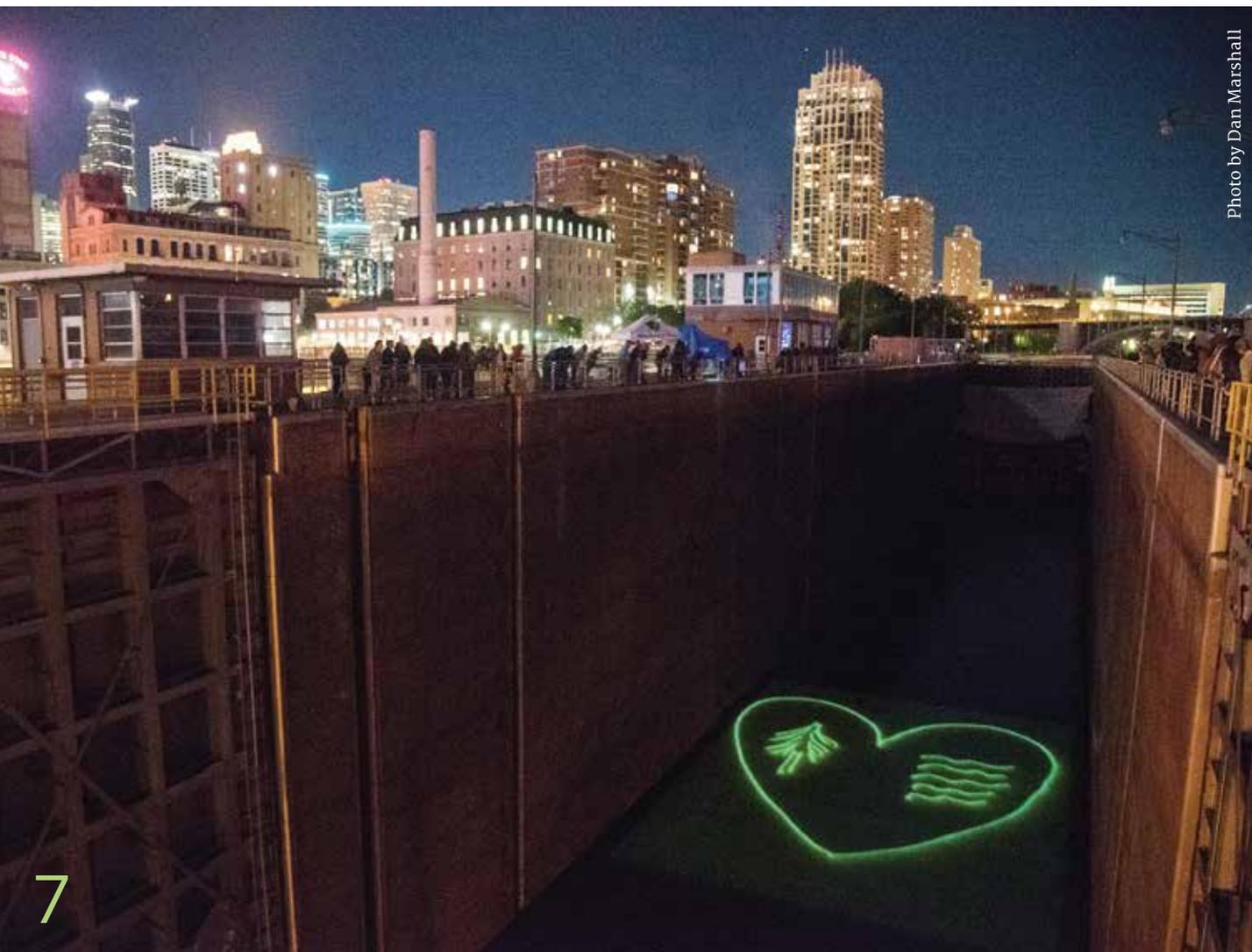


Photo by Dan Marshall

# A New Vision for the Minneapolis Riverfront



Photo by Mark Heithoff and the RiverFirst Campaign of the Minneapolis Parks Foundation

The Minneapolis Riverfront is a special place to Paul Reyelts. “Not many city centers have a national park running through them.” Paul, the founding board member of Friends of the Lock and Dam, has a vision: “to develop St. Anthony Falls into a destination visitor and interpretive center.”

**“Our vision for The Falls has inspired a strong coalition of support and caused government at all levels to take notice and take action toward developing a world-class park and visitor center at this iconic site.”**

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Paul Reyelts

“The National Park Service is an incredible resource serving the region. And, of course, the Mississippi River is a globally recognized landmark. St. Anthony Falls, the Stone Arch Bridge and the monolithic structure of the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock are gems that add sparkle to the necklace of wildlife and nature found in the remaining 72 miles of the river park.”

Thanks to Friends of the Lock and Dam and other donors, Mississippi Park Connection has been able to support the National Park Service in operating the visitor center at Upper St. Anthony Falls since 2016. Daily tours and special events like Illuminate the Lock brought 18,015 visitors to the Falls in the last year alone.

## Plant for the Future



This year, Mississippi Park Connection entered into a three-year partnership with Surly Gives a Damn (SGAD) and Dangerous Man Brewing Company Volunteers (DMBC Volunteers) to support our Plant for the Future Campaign. The two groups are hosting volunteer events each spring and fall for three years and have pledged to plant 7,200 trees together by the end of 2020. Surly Gives a Damn has also sponsored a community tree nursery where new trees will grow strong roots over the summer months to prepare them for planting in the fall.

“My utopia idea is that the kids will grow up here and look back and say my mom and dad planted this forest. They will see that its people enjoying each other’s company and craft beer—changing the face of the city and the environment,” says Hilari Bandow, DMBC Volunteers’ coordinator.

“Bigger community, bigger impact. That’s what I want,” says Mary Sellke, executive director of Surly Gives a Damn. “It’s not just about doing the event, it’s also about having people be bigger than themselves, bigger than Surly, bigger than Mississippi Park Connection. Together, all boats shall rise. Give them more information, have them do more, experience more, and then they’ll know more. I love being part of a three-year plan because it allows us to look larger scale. Hop on board. Make the change. We want a world right? It’s not that hard. Mississippi Park Connection makes it easy. Go plant a tree.”

“Intentionality is what our volunteers are about. They like to work hard. If they aren’t busy, then they get upset. You’re digging. You’re cutting. You’re in the mud. That’s what makes Mississippi Park Connection so cool.”

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Hilari Bandow



# Contributors

## Contributions of \$250,000 and above

National Park Foundation

## Contributions of \$100,000 to 249,999

National Park Service

## Contributions of \$25,000 to \$99,999

3M Foundation

The Driscoll Foundation

Friends of the Lock and Dam

Minnesota Historical Society

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Patrick and Aimee Butler Family Foundation

Martha Wren

## Contributions of \$10,000 to \$24,999

Gray Plant Mooty\*

KEEN Effect

Krahl-Thacker Family Fund

Mortenson Family Foundation

NEEF

REI

Bill and Judy Walter

XCEL Energy Foundation

## Contributions of \$5,000 to \$9,999

The Alces Trust

Johanna Bell

David Winton Bell Foundation

Ecolab Foundation

Frederick and Margaret L. Weyerhaeuser Foundation

M.A. Mortenson Companies, Inc

Merchology

Eric Michael and Josh Hillger

Padelford Packet Boat Co.\*

Patagonia

Kristin Rasmussen

River Road Foundation

City of Saint Paul Cultural STAR Program

WM Foundation

## Contributions of \$1,000 to 4,999

Capitol Region Watershed District

Barry Clegg and Roberta Swenson

John Cowles and Page Knudsen Cowles

Dangerous Man Brewing Company

Mike and Laura Day

Deloitte

William Driscoll and Lisa Hoffman  
*In Honor of Jack and Kristen Driscoll*

Easy and Company\*

The JAMF Nation Global Foundation

Karen and Eric Kaler

Leslie Kinsman

Minnesota United Soccer Club, LLC

Okabena Advisors

Open Door Foundation

Eric PirkI

Plantra, Inc.\*

Prairie Island Indian Community

Surly Brewing Company\*

Surly Gives a Damn

Susan and Bert Gross

Tattersall Distillery\*

Tennant Company

Tree Trust

Visual\*

Mark Wilson

## Contributions of \$500 to \$999

4Imprint\*

John Anfinson

Anonymous

Boston Scientific

Nathan and Julia Cross

Edward and Sherry Ann Dayton

Chad and Maggie Dayton

Eric DeClouet

James Eastman and Cynthia Kriha

Sandy Fuller

Ellen Grace

Cline and Dianne Hickok

Jim Stensvold and Sarah Kline-Stensvold

Sally McLean

Media Star

Michael A. and Corinne M. Mitchell

Katie and Jeff Nyberg

Suzanne and Rick Pepin

RBC Foundation - USA

Marcia and Gary Richter

Mark and Julie Sullivan

Karen and Leslie Suzukamo

VOYA Financial

Scott Vreeland

Marilyn Wells and Doug Throckmorton

Alan and Lynn Wyman

Xcel Energy

## Contributions of \$100 to \$249

Anonymous

Denny and Cindy Appleman

William Barton

Sally Bell

Thelma Boeder

Edna Brazaitis

Robert Bruininks and Susan Hagstrum

Laurel Bruno

Sally Chapman

Michelle Clegg

Jeannette Cleland and Tim Schumann

Joan Cochran and Matthew Crellin

Augsburg College

Susan Cushman

Tricia Davidson

Carolyn and Dennis Davidson

Grant Davis

Dan and Ariel Dressler

Paul Eaves and Kathleen Rickert

Nancy Feldman

Susan Flynn

Elizabeth Gabler

Jean Garbarini and Tim Carl

Cynthia Gillett

Wilma Gitchel

Brian Goodspeed

Christine Hammes

Hands on Twin Cities

Mary Harrington and Jesse Okie

Kate Havelin and Leo Timmons

Edward Heimel and Christine Klejbuk

Bob and Dodi Helman

Mary Helmin

Mary Hilfiker

Elizabeth Hixon

Susan Horn

Anne Hunt

Stan and Mary Hunter

Holly Jett

Steve and Debbie Johnson

William Jones

Linda Jones

Jeff and Jessica Jones

Cathy Jordan

Nick Karasch

Mark Kinsey

JoAnn Kyrall

Paul and Sue Labovitz

Greg Lais and Patty Thurber

Lee Larson

Barbara Lehn

## July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

Al and Kathy Lenzmeier  
Fred Linehan  
Margaret Lynch  
Paul Markwardt  
Larry Martin  
Donna Meyer  
Dan Millenacker  
Jessica Miller  
Shannon Montgomery  
Chris Mortenson and Nathalie Salas Gonzalez  
Mark and Katie Mortenson  
Nancy Nelson  
Chuck Nelson  
Elizabeth Neuvar  
Richard and Joan Newmark  
Ian and Sarah Nicholson  
Scott and Sarah Nyberg  
Carol Oelke  
Jodi and Patrick Massey  
Scott and Rachel Parkin  
Ron and Jane Petrich  
Pete and Judy Regnier  
Alan Robbins-Fenger  
Carissa Scanlan  
Dwayne Schense  
Michele Schermann  
David Schmidt and Sara Klasky  
Anne Simonson  
Michelle Sylvander  
Guff Van Vooren and Vicki Raport  
Linda Verbeck  
Martha Vest  
Darlene Walser  
Anna Waugh and Cyrus Butler  
Lark Weller  
Karen Westphall  
Claralouise Wheeler  
Douglas Wild

### Contributions up to \$99

Dean and Janet Anderson  
Anonymous  
Malcolm Bastron  
Ann Beane  
Fred Bertschinger  
Andy Birkey  
Bethany Birnie  
Becca Brackett  
Tom Breviu  
Roger and Ronnie Brooks  
Amy Browne  
Corey Burrington  
Ann Calvert

Rebecca Calvo  
*In memory of Courney Ryan*  
Jeanne Caturia  
Kyle Christopherson  
Whitney and Sarah Clark  
Ben and Kathy Cohen  
Joseph Collins  
*In memory of Courney Ryan*  
Francine Corcoran  
Stewart Corn  
Kenny Cosgrove  
John Crippen  
Eric Crouch  
Laurel Cutright  
Dave Degenhardt  
Kristina DeLaundreau  
Liz Dengate  
Steve Dietz  
Michael Dorn  
Sheril Doughman  
Nancy Duncan  
Sally Dunn  
Mary Dushane  
Tom Evers  
Deborah Fellows  
Meg Forney  
Graco Foundation  
Susan Fredstrom  
Catherine Furnberg  
Lori Giebel  
Cynthia Goehring  
William Grant  
Mike Hahm  
Patrick Hamilton  
Mary Hammes  
*In memory of Courney Ryan*  
Larry Hampel and Mary Kopet  
Rich Harrison  
Christina Hausman  
Randall Henderson  
Elizabeth and Dean Hoever  
Jayme Hogan  
Eric Jolly  
Sonja Jones  
Alora Jones  
Byron Karns  
Lisa Keitel  
Glenn Klapperich  
Melanie Kleiss  
Justin Kutzer  
Vernese Lathrop  
Rubin Latz  
Nicky Leingang  
Deb Lewis  
Michael Longen

Lord of Life Lutheran Church  
Amanda Lovelee  
Amy Lytton  
Steven Marking  
Darcey McCampbell  
Alexis McCarthy  
Bruce McKenzie  
David McLaughlin  
Lauren Melcher  
Dave Miller  
Steve Mitrione  
*In memory of Courney Ryan*  
Jonathan Moore and Thad Radel  
Jane Morgan  
Amelia Narigon  
Eugene and Julie Ollila  
Lon Otto  
Sarah Peters  
Ashley Pethan  
Gabrielle Pillmann  
Suzanne Rhees  
Cheryl Rivinius  
Rita Rocheford  
Maery Rose  
Jeff Rosenquist  
Vernon Schaaf  
Jack Schaffer  
Don Shelby  
Bob Sirr  
Neil Smarjesse  
Russ Stark and Katherine Murray  
Diane Steen-Hinderlie and John Olson  
Kathy Steinberger and Jim Young  
Christine Steinwand  
Chuck Stupca  
Kathy Swenson and Daniel Burbank  
Paula Swingley  
Trey Titcomb  
Tyler Titus  
Matt Toburen  
Lyndon Torstenson  
Joanne Trygestad  
Denise Twardoski  
Lindsay VanPatten  
*In memory of Courney Ryan*  
Lee Vue  
Michael Walker  
John Waugh and Kathleen Lively  
David Wickre  
Kristin Wyeth  
Josh Yank  
Nathan Zietlow, Sarah Risser, and Henry Zietlow  
Carol Zoff

# Volunteer of the Year: Elizabeth Heeren



## Why do you volunteer?

“I volunteer to help people become aware of and learn about the fantastic natural resources around them here in the Twin Cities metro area, and to personally do a little bit to help maintain and protect those natural resources. [It’s also] a spectacular way to draw attention to the National Park!”

## What is your favorite spot along the river?

“The river gorge between the Ford [Parkway] bridge and the Lake St./ Marshall Ave. bridge is my favorite spot along the Mississippi River.”



In May 2018, the National Park Service conducted its first prescribed burn on the 13 acres of prairie at Coldwater Spring.

## Board of Trustees

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 John B. Driscoll  
 James Eastman, *Board Chair*  
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 Mike Hahm, *Office of Mayor Carter*  
 Sam Holsen  
 Cathy Jordan  
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 Chris Mortenson, *Board Secretary*  
 Scott Parkin  
 Kristin Rasmussen  
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 Mark Sullivan

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 Mary Hammes, *Environmental Stewardship and Volunteer Manager*  
 David Kappelhoff, *Education Coordinator*  
 Angela LaCroix, *Minnesota GreenCorps Member—Urban Forestry*  
 Andrew Marotz, *Volunteer Coordinator*  
 Katie Nyberg, *Executive Director*  
 Lee Vue, *Communications Associate*  
 Daniel Wattenhofer, *Urban Forestry Specialist*  
 Anna Waugh, *Development and Communications Manager*

## Conservation Corps Crew

Rebecca Hanson  
 Kristin Hawkinson  
 Xylia Lang  
 Sam Ly  
 Andrew Marotz, *Crew Leader*

## Mississippi River Fellows

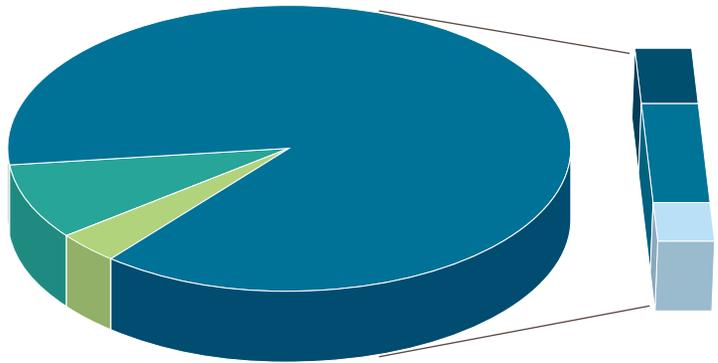
Haddy Bayo  
 Talon Benavides  
 Marli Lewis

## Visitor Service Specialists

Jordan Boudreaux  
 Jessica Miller  
 Mai Ker Thao

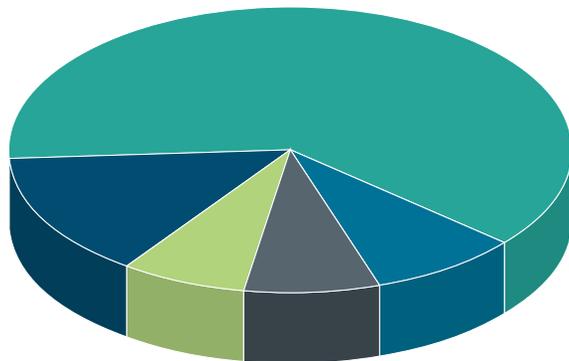
# Financials

## Expenses



■ Program Services . . . . .	\$944,484
■ Environmental Stewardship . . . . .	\$271,093
■ Community Programs . . . . .	\$484,072
■ Youth Education . . . . .	\$189,319
■ Fundraising . . . . .	\$37,727
■ Administration . . . . .	\$91,987
<b>TOTAL . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,074,198</b>

## Revenue



■ Foundation and Corporate Grants . . . . .	\$564,122
■ Government Grants . . . . .	\$79,218
■ Endowment Distribution . . . . .	\$69,210
■ Programs Revenue and Other . . . . .	\$65,497
■ Individual Gifts . . . . .	\$130,532
<b>TOTAL . . . . .</b>	<b>\$908,579</b>

\* Some funds that were raised in 2017 were used for 2018 program expenses.



**MISSISSIPPI PARK  
CONNECTION**  
*Discover your river*

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Saint Paul, MN 55101  
[parkconnection.org](http://parkconnection.org)

Photos by Mississippi Park Connection  
unless otherwise noted.



Photo by Bethany Birnie