

**MISSOURI NATIONAL RECREATIONAL RIVER (MNRR)  
LONG RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN (LRIP)  
FOUNDATION DOCUMENT  
REVISED March 22, 2011**

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## **FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS**

### **COMPREHENSIVE INTERPRETIVE PLANNING**

The National Park Service (NPS) has adopted a unified planning approach for interpretation and education. This approach combines planning for interpretive media, personal interpretive services, and education programs. The Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP) is the basic planning document for interpretation and was formally adopted as part of NPS guidelines in 1995. Responsibility for creating the CIP lies with each park's superintendent.

#### **What is a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan?**

The CIP process helps parks make choices. It provides guidance to park staff by clarifying objectives, identifying audiences, and recommending the best mix of media and personal services through which to convey park themes.

Although the CIP as defined in Director's Order No. 6 is composed of specific elements, good planning is customized to meet each park's needs and situation. The CIP is not a recipe. Rather, it is a guide to effective, goal-driven planning. While it considers past interpretive programming, it is primarily a forward-looking document that concentrates on actions needed to create or sustain a vigorous and effective interpretive program for the future. All CIPs have three components: the Long Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP), a series of Annual Implementation Plans (AIP) and an Interpretive Database (ID).

#### **What is a Long Range Interpretive Plan?**

The heart of the CIP is the Long Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP). The LRIP defines the overall vision and long-term (7-10 years) interpretive goals of the park. The process that develops the LRIP defines realistic strategies and actions that work toward achievement of the interpretive goals. The Long Range Plan features two phases. One, the Foundation phase articulates significance, themes, and target audiences. The Foundation Document (this document) addresses those elements of the plan, and includes a review of existing conditions.

The second phase of the LRIP process recommends interpretive services, media, and partnerships for the site, looking ahead to the next five to seven years. A Team Draft articulates those elements, and, after review, the Long Range Interpretive Plan is finalized.

#### **The Annual Implementation Plan and Interpretive Database**

The completed LRIP is a critical part of the CIP, but it does not stand alone. Actions in the LRIP are divided into annual, achievable steps and reproduced in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), the second component of the CIP. The AIP simplifies the park's annual planning process by planning for implementation based on the actions

outlined in the LRIP. The third component of the CIP is the Interpretive Database (ID), an ongoing compilation of information, reports, bibliographies, plans, and inventories that document the park's history and the process of developing the LRIP.

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MISSOURI NATIONAL RECREATIONAL RIVER**

*This section describes how the park came to be.*

The Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR) was created by two acts of Congress that amended the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968. The 59-mile stretch from just below Gavins Point Dam to Ponca State Park was designated in 1978 by Public Law 95-625. In 1991, Congress enlarged the MNRR via Public Law 102-50, which added the 39 miles from just below Fort Randall Dam to Running Water, the lower 20 miles of the Niobrara, and the lower 8 miles of Verdigre Creek.

The "Recreational River" designation refers to the amount of development along the banks of these stretches of the Missouri. Under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, a virtually untouched river is designated "Wild," a river with some development is designated "Scenic," and a river with a significant development along its banks is designated "Recreational." Due to agricultural, residential, recreational, and tribal activities along the river, the MNRR is designated a Recreational River.

In 1997 the National Park Service combined the four river segments into a single unit called the Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR). The MNRR is managed by a collaborative effort between the NPS and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Several other agencies, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and the South Dakota Department of Game Fish and Parks also have regulatory responsibilities within the river corridor. Because much of the 34,000 acres within the boundary is privately owned, local units of government retain primary responsibility for land use controls. Thus, management of this nationally significant resource is very much a partnership effort.

## **PURPOSE AND PRIORITIES**

*Park purpose statements describe the specific purposes for which a site was set aside. They provide the context within which interpretation and education take place.*

The purpose of the Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR) is "to conserve and promote unimpaired for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations the publicly accessible corridor, relatively free-flowing character, water quality, and the cultural, historical, fish and wildlife, geological, and recreational values of the Missouri National Recreational River."

During a recent Core Operations Evaluation (September 2009), priorities were identified that are essential to achieving the park's purpose. These priorities represent the essential focal points to which park resources should be applied:

- Preserve and protect the relatively free-flowing condition of these stretches of the Missouri River and the water quality of the area.
- Preserve and protect the unique natural and cultural landscapes associated with the MNRR corridor.
- Protect and maintain the ecology of the area, including the geology, habitats, vegetation, fish and wildlife.
- Provide for appropriate recreational opportunities.
- Provide information and orientation to visitors through formal and informal interpretive programs, non-personal services, outreach, and curriculum-based education opportunities.
- Work with partners to manage and protect resources.
- Ensure safety and protection for park employees and visitors.

## **STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

*Park significance statements describe what is distinctive about the combined resources of the river. Statements can reflect natural, cultural, scientific, recreational, and inspirational values, as well as other aspects. These statements summarize the importance of the park to the nation's natural and cultural heritage.*

### **Free-Flowing River**

- Although the Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR) has been extensively impacted by human activity, it is among the few remaining segments of the Missouri that still exhibit some characteristics of a natural undammed and unchannelized river.
- The MNRR's complex ecosystem features are shaped by dynamic natural processes, including shifting, meandering, braiding, and the creation and scouring away of chutes and sandbars, providing unique opportunities for the study of river dynamics and its resulting diverse habitats which include bluffs, islands, riparian forests, bottomlands, wetlands, and prairie.

### **Recreation**

- The MNRR provides an outstanding array of recreational opportunities, including wildlife watching, hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, boating, and paddling in an exceptionally scenic setting.

- The MNRR's spectacular and diverse scenery on the water, from the banks, and from the bluffs high above the river provides not only remarkable beauty, but also a striking contrast to the rolling Great Plains environment that surrounds it.

The MNRR is a non-traditional type of national park within the National Park System. It is managed through partnerships with multiple federal, state, local, and tribal agencies and private landowners with the common mission to preserve, protect, and enhance the River's outstandingly remarkable natural, cultural, and historic resource values and recreational opportunities.

### **Fish and Wildlife**

- The MNRR provides critical habitat for three federally-designated threatened and endangered species -- the pallid sturgeon, piping plover, and Interior least tern -- and more than half of the additional threatened and endangered species listed by the states of Nebraska and South Dakota.

### **Culture**

- The area now designated as the Missouri National Recreational River reflects a long-standing, ongoing, multi-layered human history as past and present homeland to the Ponca, Yankton Nakota, Santee Dakota, and other American Indians' living cultures, as a route for European-American exploration and commerce, and as a critical pathway for the settlement of the West.

## **PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES**

*Primary interpretive themes embody the most important ideas or concepts to be communicated to the public about the river. They convey the significance of the resource and highlight the links between tangible elements, intangible meanings, and universal concepts that are inherent in the park's resources. The themes connect resources to larger processes, systems, ideas, and values, and emphasize the relevance of river stories. They define the core content of the educational experiences the park offers, and serve as the building blocks upon which interpretive services and educational programs are based.*

### **Free-Flowing River**

Whereas the Missouri River was once a wild, meandering force for change cutting through the heart of America, the MNRR now protects rare-stretches of this national treasure, which creates a landscape for healthy biodiversity, for the uplifting and inspiration of humanity, and provides unique opportunities for the study of river dynamics and the resulting diverse habitats.

Potential storylines that could be interpreted under this theme include:

- The pre-development Missouri River represented one of North America's most diverse ecosystems with abundant braided channels, riparian lands, chutes, sloughs, sandbars, and backwater areas that were typical of an overbank flood ecosystem.
- As the last relatively free-flowing remnants of America's longest river, Missouri National Recreational River is protected as a national park so all people have the opportunity to experience its outstandingly remarkable values and learn the stories carried in its currents.
- The Missouri River changes over different scales of time, with some changes occurring rapidly and others taking eons. Through natural erosion and deposition shallow areas can quickly become deep while others fill in with transported sediment, landforms can be repositioned unpredictably, and the river's course can literally change overnight.
- Missouri National Recreational River's accessible and unique features illustrate a complex geological past and provide a dynamic living classroom for studying the creation and transformation of landforms over time.
- The geologic record found in the rocks, fossils, and sediments of the Missouri National Recreational River can also provide insights into past and ongoing local and global climate change and how resident species have responded to these changes.
- Missouri National Recreational River provides unique opportunities for river education and research as well as opportunities to implement restoration and recovery efforts.

## **Recreation**

A network of interdependent partners provides a broad backdrop for a diversity of nature- and water-based activities that promote opportunities for visitors to escape daily life and engage in solitary and/or social recreational experiences at a variety of skill levels.

Potential storylines that could be interpreted under this theme include:

- People can escape from their daily routine to enjoy a contemplative visit to Missouri National Recreational River that can refresh their lives, improve their feelings, and lift their spirits.
- The Missouri National Recreational River offers a rich variety of opportunities for visitors to recreate on its resources in a responsible, safe, and sustainable manner.
- Visitors have the opportunity to view some landscapes along the river that have remained recognizable over the centuries.

## **Fish and Wildlife**

The diversity of both abundant and rare species found at MNRR reflects the river's complex ecosystems, which are important not only for biological survival, but also for research, education, recreation, and appreciation.

Potential storylines that could be interpreted under this theme include:

- The Missouri National Recreational River includes a wide variety of ecosystems that provide habitats for fish, wildlife, and plants. These habitats are critical to maintaining biological diversity and understanding how species have adapted to environmental and climatic change over time. Vestiges of these habitats have remained intact for centuries.
- All species and habitats have been impacted by regulation of the river's water and sediment levels. Habitat restoration and active management for fish and wildlife is necessary to counteract negative human impacts to them.

## Cultural

In addition to its rich, multi-layered 10,000 years of human history, the Missouri National Recreational River region is a living example of the ways in which people continue to struggle to balance the legal and cultural rights of individuals and communities with impacts on the river's natural processes, and provides a place of reflection to consider where we ourselves stand in the balance.

Potential storylines that could be interpreted under this theme include:

- The American Indians' heritage on the Missouri River is ancient, contemporary, and integral to the landscape.
- Lewis & Clark and the Corps of Discovery explored the newly purchased Louisiana Territory (that expanded the United States by one-third) by traveling up this section of the Missouri River, searching for a through water route across the continent. They also met the area's native inhabitants and recorded its flora and fauna.
- The Missouri River waterway led European-Americans west seeking adventure, exploration, conquest, trade, settlement, and commerce resulting in the creation of the Dakota Territory in 1861 with Yankton as its Territorial Capital.
- Ponca Chief Standing Bear's desire to return to his tribe's ancestral homeland resulted in a landmark Supreme Court decision in 1878 affirming that Indians are persons under the U.S. Constitution.
- The Homestead Act of 1862 brought many settlers to these segments of the Missouri River, resulting in the creation of the state of Nebraska in 1867.
- Various ethnic settlements' farms and agricultural use have helped preserve much of today's Missouri National Recreational River landscapes.
- To control seasonal floods and provide better transportation, people in the 20<sup>th</sup> century transformed the Missouri River and its landscapes through construction of dams and levees, which led to increased environmental awareness and, eventually, the creation of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Today, there are multiple perspectives regarding past and future river development.
- Changes to the Missouri River floodplain as a result of dams, channelization, and bank stabilization – built in response to public desire of the times – have resulted in significant changes in plant and animal communities, including threatened and

- endangered species. Even human communities, such as the Town of Niobrara, Nebraska, have relocated to avoid the river's changing course.
- The U.S. Army has a long-lasting and continuing role in this area of the Missouri River from western exploration and the establishment of Fort Randall through today's activities by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
  - The Missouri River requires thoughtful, cooperative management to function in a manner resembling its natural state. Everyone can contribute to stewardship of the river.

## **MANAGEMENT GOALS**

*These goals describe management's intent in offering interpretive and educational programs and services. The goals include:*

- Creating an open and transparent planning process
- Sharing perspectives and engaging in dialogue with members of the MNRR's diverse publics and user groups
- Engaging landowners and other members of the public as supportive partners in the development of interpretation and education programs
- Exploring new ways of partnering with organizations whose missions intersect with those of the MNRR.
- Providing increased public access to MNRR's features and facilities
- Increasing support for and fostering awareness of the resource protection role of the National Park Service, especially in regard to the outstandingly remarkable values of the river as identified in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act enabling legislation
- Fostering stewardship, conservation, and preservation ethics among visitors and local residents
- Conveying past, current, and future cultural stories with the river as their connector

## **VISITATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

Since the park has multiple entry points along the river, it is difficult to track annual attendance accurately. Figures include the number of visitors to the Lewis and Clark Visitor Center, an electric eye count of visitors to the Ponca State Park MNRR Resource and Education Center, and traffic counters at four locations in or near the park. Visitation has increased in the last three years, from 167,960 in 2006 to 186,313 in 2009. Attendance is highest in the summer months. In 2009, the busiest month was August, with 53,661 visitors. As might be expected, December and January are the least attended months.

Little substantive data has been collected as to the nature and demographics of visitors to the MNRR, but a Visitor Services Project survey through the University of Idaho has been scheduled for summer of 2011 that will provide some insight about the park's visitors and what services and programming are of interest to them. Most of the audience is thought to be recreational in nature.

## **AUDIENCE SEGMENTS**

*The basis for categorizing audience segments for the interpretation and education program lies in whether or not a particular audience requires communication in a way that is distinct from that of the general park audience or comes to the park for specific purposes or activities. Factors to consider include the life experiences of the individual or group, level of education, learning styles, language, cultural traditions, time available for interaction, and others.*

Audience segments at the Missouri National Recreational River are:

- General public: This includes “typical” adult and family visitors to the MNRR on an average day, including tourists.
- Curriculum-based visitors, i.e., teachers and students: This audience comes to support specific learning goals.
- Local residents: These are the people who live near the river, and perhaps tend to take its features and assets for granted.
- Recreational users: This audience may overlap with some of the others, but includes visitors who come specifically for recreation: to fish, paddle, hunt, camp, hike, etc., but not necessarily for interpretive services or programming.
- Online virtual audience: This audience visits via the park website and social and other electronic media.

Note that visitors with disabilities are not called out as a separate audience because programs and media should be designed according to universal design standards that provide access for nearly all visitors.

## **DESIRED VISITOR EXPERIENCES**

*Statements of desired visitor experiences describe how the river's interpretation and education program facilitates intellectual, inspirational, emotional and physical experiences for visitors. These statements describe what visitors to the park would like to learn, feel, do, or experience when visiting the park (either in person or remotely).*

Park staff, stakeholders and members of the public ranked the following statements as being most critical to the visitor experience:

**Free-Flowing River:** Visitors want to be inspired. They want to:

- Contemplate their spiritual place in an ecosystem that includes a last vestige of the way the Missouri, one of the great rivers of the world, flowed when it was truly wild and free.
- Experience nature on a relatively “free-flowing” river that looks much as it might have before human alteration.
- See environments not commonly seen elsewhere.

**Recreation:** Visitors want to be able to enjoy features of the river and the surrounding landscapes. They want to:

- Be orientated to recreational activities and locations.
- Experience the natural landscape quietly and peacefully, uninterrupted by elements of the bustling, hectic, everyday world.
- Exercise in nature.
- Take photographs.
- Hike through riparian areas.
- Hunt and fish.
- Participate in physical challenges not commonly available elsewhere.
- Take a powerboat out on the river.
- Paddle on the river via kayak or canoe.
- Experience nature in immersive ways that are not available in urban environments.

**Fish and Wildlife:** Visitors love wildlife. They want to:

- View wildlife species in their natural habitats, including birds.
- Learn about ecosystems and the plants and animals that live here.
- Hunt and fish.
- Photograph wildlife.

**Culture:** Visitors want to gain historical perspective. They want to:

- Follow the Lewis and Clark Expedition’s trail and experience.
- Learn about American Indian cultures.
- Learn about riverboats and their crews, fur traders and trappers, homesteaders, river managers, and other people with past (and present) connections to the river.

## **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

*This section includes influences and opportunities both inside and outside the park, resource-based issues, and internal issues that affect interpretation and education. Collectively, it reflects the perspectives of the Missouri National Recreational River's upper management, staff members, partners, stakeholders, and members of the public.*

*“The river does not belong to us; we belong to the river.”*

-- Comment by a tribal representative on the  
Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee

### **Opportunities**

- The LRIP presents an opportunity to conceptualize and market the MNRR as a “recreational and heritage corridor” that is shared and promoted by all participating partners, across state and county lines, through well-coordinated, corridor-wide initiatives, perhaps with the help of local Convention and Visitors Bureaus, creating a regional, “Ponca to Pickstown” recreational and heritage experience.
- There is an opportunity for the MNRR to model ways of preserving the river for future generations while acknowledging and respecting private property rights, and to demonstrate that people can work with the natural world instead of trying to “conquer” it.
- The close association with Lewis and Clark Lake State Recreation Area strengthens the MNRR’s “recreational” brand.
- The LRIP provides opportunities to plan for more programs and events that will bring people to the river and raise awareness that these reaches are part of the National Park System, managed by the National Park Service.
- It provides opportunities to offer more recreational and educational opportunities particularly for school age and Gen Y (twenty-something) audiences.
- There is an opportunity to help people understand how they can participate in protecting threatened and endangered species.
- There is an opportunity to tie in the stories of Native cultures, past and present, to that of the MNRR.
- There is an opportunity to provide wilderness-type experiences in the midst of the MNRR’s agricultural setting.
- There is an opportunity to give a voice to the river and bank, the birds and other wildlife, local farmers and land owners, and others whose view of the MNRR and its use may differ from those of visitors.

### **Challenges**

- The two sections of the river that make up the MNRR need to speak for and provide a contrast to other reaches of the river that have been irretrievably altered.

- There is a need to educate the nation on the role of the Missouri River Basin in the development of America.
- The National Park Service does not currently have a venue of its own from which it can promote and interpret the MNR. However, the NPS will explore opportunities to create one as they arise.
- The name “Missouri National Recreational River” is confusing. It is not clear to members of the public what “Recreational River” means, and even long-time area residents are not fully aware that the MNR is a national park. This is partly due to multiple managing partners and partly because the NPS currently owns relatively little land other than the Bow Creek and Mulberry Bend Overlook tracts, which total less than 300 acres.
- There is tension between local zoning laws, National Park Service river management regulations, and the desire of private individuals to develop and protect their private property along the river.
- There is a need for more communication with and listening to landowners’ perspectives about access, permissions, restrictions, sandbar management, bank stabilization, unfunded programs, how to encourage respect for land owners/ownership, and other similar issues.
- There is a need for more access points: not just boat ramps, but other ways for multiple audiences to access, enjoy and observe the river, including land access, trails, observation areas, and picnic grounds. More access to the river will lead to more involvement and support from the public.
- There is a need for primitive camping areas along the river for paddlers that would allow for longer, more manageable, and immersive river trips.
- There is a need for a map of the river for paddlers and other river users that shows mile markers, campgrounds, access points, restrooms, and other visitor amenities.
- There is a need for recreational use of the river that is sustainable over generations. It is a challenge to balance the need for more access with the prevention of harmful use or excessive development.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### THE SETTING

The Missouri National Recreational River consists of two units, separated by the Lewis and Clark Lake, a reservoir managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with shoreline recreational facilities owned and operated by the States of South Dakota and Nebraska. The 39-Mile District runs downriver from just below Fort Randall Dam near Pickstown to Running Water, SD above the reservoir. The 59-Mile District from extends from just below Gavins Point Dam near Yankton, South Dakota downriver to Ponca State Park in Nebraska. The National Park Service (NPS) shares management on the river with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; and South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks.

The park's new headquarters building is located near the river in Yankton, SD, leased through the General Services Administration. The headquarters building has a small lobby area that could be converted to a visitor contact station in the future, but the park currently has no public venue of its own at which to greet the public, no friends' group, a very limited cooperating association agreement (single title proceeds), and no venue of its own from which to offer educational and retail items. In addition, the NPS currently owns relatively little land along the river, approximately 250-300 acres. As a result, people in the area are not widely aware of the presence of the NPS, and those who are aware do not clearly understand the NPS' role in managing the river.

The National Park Service will soon acquire "Green Island," a plot of land on the Nebraska side of the river just west of the new Discovery Bridge across the Missouri River from Yankton. The original historic Meridian Bridge is currently being retrofitted as a low-impact biking and hiking trail from historic downtown Yankton to the Nebraska shore. From there, new low-impact trails will be constructed to provide access to Green Island. The trail is a joint project of the NPS, the City of Yankton, and the State of Nebraska, and will represent a step toward a stronger physical presence for the National Park Service in the area.

## **PARK PARTNERS AND FACILITIES**

Interpretive services in the Missouri National Recreational River Corridor are provided by the National Park Service in partnership with other agencies that have a role in managing and interpreting recreational resources and facilities along the MNRR. In total, MNRR partners operate nine different visitor or welcome centers along or near the river, and MNRR interpretive staff participate in providing some level of interpretive services at several of them. Please note that these partners are listed in alphabetical order rather than geographically. These partners include:

- City of Springfield's Terrace Park
- City of Yankton Parks and Recreation Department
- Clay County Park
- The non-profit Corps of Discovery Welcome Center
- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission's Niobrara State Park and Ponca State Park Missouri National Recreational River Interpretive and Educational Center ;
- South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks' Lewis and Clark Recreation Area, including Lewis and Clark Boy Scout Camp
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Lewis and Clark Visitor Center near Gavins Point Dam, Fort Randall Dam Visitor Center, and Fort Randall Historic Site
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Gavins Point National Fish Hatchery
- University of South Dakota's Missouri River Institute
- Yankton Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitor Bureau Visitor Center

**City of Springfield, SD's Terrace Park** includes an overlook that provides an outstanding opportunity to interpret glaciation and dynamic river geology via wayside exhibits. Because the flow rate of the river is slowed as it approaches Gavins Point Dam, the river has deposited a great deal of sediment there, creating an ever-increasing delta. Wayside exhibits are needed to explain what is happening on this stretch of the river, and why the delta creation is considered a natural riverine process.

**City of Yankton Parks and Recreation Department Trails** include **Paddlewheel Point**, which starts just outside the Chamber Visitor Center to the southeast and connects to both Yankton's **Riverside Park**, extending to just beyond the Discovery Bridge to the west, and the **Auld-Brokaw Trail** which winds to the northwest along Marne Creek then through Yankton for 2.75 miles. Other than some plant identification markers, the Paddlewheel Point trail is not interpreted.

The historic **Meridian Bridge**, which connects historic downtown Yankton with the Nebraska shoreline across the Missouri River, is scheduled to re-open in 2011 as a pedestrian and biking trail. This, along with a new low-impact trail on the Nebraska side of the river, will connect Yankton and Green Island, providing additional recreational opportunities along the Missouri National Recreational River.

There is potential for NPS involvement in developing interpretive wayside exhibits along these trails, as well as connecting with the MNRR's recent selection as one of fourteen new pilot national parks for the "Let's Move Outside" Program, an initiative sponsored by First Lady Michelle Obama. The overall objective of Mrs. Obama's initiative is to get children and families outside, to create healthy habits and lifestyles through outdoor activities, and to enjoy nature, especially on public lands.

Multi-agency and partner annual events that take place in Riverside Park in which the MNRR participates include the Missouri River Watershed Education Festival, River Clean-Up, and Clean Boat campaigns (at multiple locations) each May and Riverboat Days, a city-wide festival held each August. The NPS will also be a part of Yankton's Sesquicentennial celebration in June 2011.

**Clay County Park** is located on the river just southwest of Vermillion, South Dakota. It offers river access with a boat ramp, picnic shelter, observation deck, and a primitive nature trail that connects the river to the adjacent campground, which is operated by South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks. In 2010, park staff participated in the annual River Appreciation Day for Clay County sixth graders for the first time and hopes to be invited to present again each year. Other than that event, the park has not presented programming at this location; however, there are wonderful facilities and untapped opportunities.

**Corps of Discovery Welcome Center.** The Welcome Center is located high on a bluff just off Highway 81, a few miles south of Yankton on the Nebraska side of the river. Created by a private non-profit organization as part of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, this venue now struggles to attract visitation. A series of wayside exhibits

on site interprets the Missouri River Valley and the Meridian Bridge on Highway 81, but the river itself is not visible from the site. The Welcome Center includes a large gift shop offering a wide variety of souvenirs and locally made items, as well as brochures from area attractions. There is an unused room that is suitable for exhibits, programs, or multimedia presentations. Other assets include a large parking lot, attractive grounds, and a hiking trail.

**Nebraska Game and Parks Commission's Missouri National Recreational River Resource and Education Center at Ponca State Park.** This relatively new facility (opened in 2004) features a large interpretive display and exhibit area, a field laboratory, and conference rooms. It was developed in partnership with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, the National Park Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and many private and public foundations and organizations. Exhibits created under the auspices of the NPS address people's use of the river from prehistoric times to the present, river ecology, and stewardship. It is located at the southern- and eastern-most end of the MNRR.

**Nebraska Game and Parks Commission's Niobrara State Park.** The park is located mostly on a high bluff above the river, from which spectacular views of the confluence of the Niobrara and Missouri Rivers can be enjoyed. The park office is very small, offering little space for interpretation other than a small computer kiosk that could be enhanced with additional content about the MNRR. The park features picnic pavilions, a number of lovely campgrounds, and rustic cabins, as well as a group lodge that is available for meetings and teacher workshops. An interpretive shelter overlooks the confluence. There are multiple hiking and horse trails, both on the bluff and going down to the confluence and along the riverbanks. The trail system also includes an old railroad trestle-turned-trail.

MNRR staff participate in and present at popular Niobrara State Park summer weekend programs.

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission also manages several boat ramps, a marina, and campgrounds located on the Nebraska side of the river throughout the MNRR Corridor. MNRR staff present interpretive programs at Weigand Campground.

**South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks' Lewis and Clark State Recreation Area.** The state of South Dakota operates recreational and interpretive facilities centered around Lewis and Clark Lake, a stretch of the river that is a reservoir created and managed by the USACE's Gavins Point Dam. Facilities include several campgrounds, a small Welcome Center with a retail counter and a limited number of exhibits on Missouri River wildlife, an amphitheater for interpretive programs, a bike trail, a horse camp and trails, and a privately operated marina. Although the lake is not a part of the officially designated MNRR, NPS staff has regularly presented programs in the amphitheater.

The **Lewis and Clark Boy Scout Camp** is also located in the recreation area. MNRR staff partner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to present summer programs approximately once a week to scouts before the troops depart on river trips.

South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks also manages several other campgrounds located throughout the MNRR Corridor. These include one co-located with Clay County Park, Springfield State Recreation Area, North Point, Randall Creek, and South Shore campgrounds in addition to multiple boat ramps.

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Fort Randall Dam Visitor Center.** The USACE's small visitor center at Fort Randall Dam is only open during the summer season. It features exhibits on wildlife, paleontology, tribal life, and the dam. On-site wayside exhibits interpret dam features. MNRR staff occasionally present programs at South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks' North Point and Randall Creek Campgrounds near Fort Randall Dam. There is potential space in this visitor center for limited NPS exhibits.

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Fort Randall Historic Site.** Fort Randall was once part of a string of frontier forts protecting westward expansion efforts. Waysides exhibits interpret the fort's history. Remaining tangible elements include the Fort Randall Cemetery and the Chapel. The chapel is now nestled beneath a modern pavilion to protect it from the elements. An overlook above the remains of the fort and chapel provides wayside exhibits and a panoramic view of the fort site, the dam, the river, and the USFWS Karl Mundt National Wildlife Refuge established to protect Bald Eagles (there is no public access to the refuge).

MNRR staff occasionally offer programs at the Fort. Re-enactments by organized groups are a popular annual program. The area is also part of the Randall Creek Recreational Area, which is managed by the state of South Dakota. It includes a USACE wildlife viewing platform with wayside exhibits and scopes.

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Lewis and Clark Visitor Center at Gavins Point Project.** This is arguably the largest and most visible visitor venue in the MNRR because of its proximity to Gavins Point Dam and two nearby USACE campgrounds. The dam offers guided tours during the spring and summer and opportunities for fishing. The Visitor Center is well-appointed, with a number of professionally-produced exhibits on the river, its history, and inhabitants. An interactive map addressing the creation of the dams and the resulting reservoirs does not indicate nor mention the MNRR. A small space in a corner of one area of the Visitor Center is allocated for a trade show-style exhibit on the MNRR, and a small number of items in the sales area reference the National Park Service. NPS staff currently help operate this visitor center and offer interpretive programs here, including Junior Ranger programs.

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Gavins Point National Fish Hatchery.** The hatchery features one of only six captive pallid sturgeon brood stock in the world. Exterior exhibits interpret the sturgeon breeding program. The facility, which also features other native species of fish and amphibians, is not staffed, but visitors can enter

and view the exhibits and aquaria on their own. MNRR staff do not currently provide any programming or services at this facility. However, a USFWS/NPS Liaison has an office located in the NPS headquarters building in Yankton so there is potential to partner with her more on interpretation, education, and outreach programs.

**University of South Dakota's Missouri River Institute.** The Institute is unit of the University of South Dakota that was established to develop and promote research, education, and public awareness of the natural and cultural resources of the Missouri River Basin. Institute partnership initiatives with the National Park Service include development of an interpretive water trail (see page 20 for more details), an annual teacher workshop, and creation of a Quaternary Geologic Mapping and Geochronology of the MNRR corridor. The Institute is also a strong partner in park research.

**Yankton Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center and Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB).** This well-organized facility distributes information about all visitor services, activities, and attractions in the Yankton area. It issues a weekly newsletter listing area events including those of MNRR, and sponsors several committees and events. The park is an active member and MNRR officials sit on the Education and CVB Committees and participate in monthly meetings and Chamber networking events. The modern building includes some exhibit space, with a modest section set aside for the MNRR. It is located within sight of and a short walking distance from the park headquarters building.

In addition to these partners, the MNRR is also located along part of the **Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail**, another interpretive partner and unit of the National Park System which spans 11 states, following the Corps of Discovery's epic journey.

## INFORMATION AND ORIENTATION

**Wayfinding.** One hundred twenty-six miles of river and many unmarked adjacent access roads managed by multiple partners create tremendous challenges for visitors wanting to focus their visit on the Missouri National Recreational River. It is not clearly evident to visitors and area residents alike that the MNRR is actually a national park. A standard National Park Service Unigrid brochure is available for the park. It highlights features and attractions operated by various partners. Signs identify the MNRR at river crossings, but only one with the NPS arrowhead. The park suffers from a lack of identity to date due to the lack of a substantial land base, as well as the need for its own public information venue. The park also lacks a film and general interpretive publication to provide orientation and address the MNRR's stories.

**Website.** The MNRR website offers standard NPS features, including directions and wayfinding instructions. It includes a digital "flyover" of the river in the Multimedia Section, and a Spanish language summary of park features, activities, and information.

## THE INTERPRETIVE EXPERIENCE

**Interpretive media.** The main interpretive media in the park to date are wayside exhibits, many of which have been produced by the NPS in partnership with an impressive array of agencies and organizations. Almost every wayside sign lists a different set of partners and, consequently, they lack a consistent or uniform appearance, which also adds to area residents' and visitors' confusion. Partners include the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; City of Yankton Department of Parks and Recreation; South Dakota Arts Council; South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks; South Dakota Department of Tourism; South Dakota Department of Transportation; Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; Nebraska Department of Roads Enhancement Program; Federal Highway Administration; Missouri-Niobrara River Confluence; Spirit Mound Historic Trust; and the Yankton Sioux Tribe.

The park and Missouri National Recreational River Water Trail partners are currently in the process of writing and designing a series of 26-30 wayside panels to provide safety, orientation, navigation, and interpretive information that will be installed at various access points between Fort Randall Dam and Sioux City, Iowa. In addition to the aforementioned partners and logos, some of these signs will also include logos from the City of Sioux City, IA; City of Vermillion; Izaak Walton League of America; Missouri River Futures; the Sierra Club; the University of South Dakota's Missouri River Institute; and other partners yet to be identified.

The MNRR maintains small exhibits in two partner visitor centers: the Lewis and Clark Visitor Center, and the Yankton Chamber of Commerce. In addition, the exhibits on the MNRR at the Ponca State Park Resource and Education Center were developed by the National Park Service.

**Programs.** During the summer, ranger-guided walking and biking tours, interpretive talks, movie nights, fishing and canoeing clinics, Junior Ranger programs, and demonstrations are offered at various partner sites along the river, including the Lewis and Clark Visitor Center, Ponca State Park, Niobrara State Park, Lewis and Clark State Recreation Area campgrounds in South Dakota and Nebraska, and Riverside Park in Yankton. All programs are free but park entrance fees are charged by state parks operated by Nebraska and South Dakota. Topics have traditionally centered on the history of the river and surrounding region: the Lewis and Clark Expedition, steamboats, early trade along the Missouri, and homesteading.

Park staff also participate in several annual multi-partner programs including the Missouri River Watershed Education Festival in Riverside Park for local middle and high school students (first Friday in May), annual Missouri National Recreational River Clean-Up (first Saturday in May), Clean Boat Event (weekend at beginning of recreation season, usually third weekend in May), and Ponca State Park Expo and Education Day in mid-September.

A **Missouri National Recreational River Water Trail** is under development as the result of an effort by several governmental, non-profit, and academic organizations to encourage use of and improve access to the Missouri River for kayakers and canoeists; however, these signs will also serve motor boat operators, anglers, and other recreationists who visit these river access points. Fourteen double-sided interpretive and wayfinding signs are currently being designed and written for Phase I of the Water Trail, which is located along the Missouri National Recreational River from just below Gavins Point Dam near Yankton, South Dakota, downriver to Ponca State Park in Nebraska, as well as an additional 20 river miles to Sioux City, Iowa for a total of 79 miles. The trailhead-facing side of the sign will have maps, safety, wayfinding information, and interpretive content for that segment of the Water Trail. The side of the signs that face the river will include site-specific interpretive information about the unique natural and cultural resource features that will be encountered on the next downriver segment of the trail. Funding for Phase I of the Water Trail was secured through an NPS Challenge Cost Share Grant, and a grant from Nebraska Game and Parks Commission with additional funding support from the City of Yankton, City of Vermillion, City of Sioux City, University of South Dakota's Missouri River Institute, Sierra Club, Missouri River Futures, and Izaak Walton League of America. The park has also recently been notified of funding for Phase II signs through the National Park Service's Connecting Trails to Parks grant program. These additional signs will be located on the 39-mile district from just below Fort Randall Dam to Lewis and Clark Lake above Gavins Point Dam. MNRR has also submitted a funding request for Phase III in FY2012, the final phase, which will include developing a virtual tour and downloadable technology applications for both virtual visitors, and to entice new visitors to explore the Water Trail.

Trailhead signs are a critical tool for providing wayfinding and orientation information as well as conveying the significance of the natural and cultural features of the trail to users. They will also help educate trail users about the outstandingly remarkable values and importance of the Missouri National Recreation River as both a natural and cultural resource and the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail as a cultural resource. The Missouri River Institute from the University of South Dakota has taken the lead role in the development of Phase I and the park plans to continue facilitating their positive partnership role in Phases II and III by developing a CESU agreement to manage Phases II and III of the Water Trail. Since most of the park is the river, this water-based recreational trail will be a key resource for local residents and visitors alike.

**Website.** The MNRR website offers about a dozen brochures with both historical and science-oriented information, from Lewis and Clark to threatened and endangered species to controlling the spread of zebra mussels and other invasive aquatic organisms. Historical topics include early explorers, riverboats, and the story of Chief Standing Bear, an early advocate for American Indian civil rights. Information is available on the three

National Historic Register sites that are also part of the park corridor: Spirit Mound Historic Prairie, Meridian Bridge, and Fort Randall.

The science and nature section of the website offers information on park wildlife and native plants. It also addresses resource management issues and river ecology.

Some of these and other park brochures are also offered at some partner sites, but distribution is inconsistent. The website remains the most consistent source for information and printed matter. It also includes a small number of photo albums featuring scenes on the river. However, there remain opportunities to expand and build on the foundation of the current website, including adding social media and technology tools, more links, curriculum materials, and other resources to engage both virtual and potential actual visitors.

## EDUCATION PROGRAM

The park is tremendously under-utilized as an educational resource for all grade levels, from kindergarten through university level. Schools classes do visit the MNRR; however, it is primarily as part of a field trip to the Gavins Point National Fish Hatchery and the Lewis and Clark Visitor Center at Gavins Point Dam, where programs are offered in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Field trips to the Lewis and Clark Visitor Center usually involve an age-appropriate “scavenger hunt” activity through the exhibits, a video presentation, and a tour of the power plant.

In addition, MNRR staff offer seven different outreach programs in which rangers visit the classroom. These are targeted to fourth and fifth grade and involve media presentations and, in some cases, hands-on materials. Programs can be adapted to a wider age range.

Park staff is currently planning a full-spectrum formal curriculum-based educational program that focuses on standards and includes both field trips to the park and classroom outreach programs. Work toward this goal has already begun, with a strategic planning focus group for teachers in June 2010, and a teacher workshop in August. Plans include a number of initiatives over the next year, including:

- In 2011, activities will include a spring National Parks Week teacher workshop and several summer teacher workshops including one at Niobrara State Park, a Missouri River Institute Teacher Workshop at Ponca State Park, and additional MNRR Curriculum Development and Review Workshops. Additional future workshops may also include joint workshops with Niobrara National Scenic River, Project WET: Discover A Watershed, Project WILD, Project Learning Tree, Project Archaeology, and other park resource-focused workshops.
- Junior Ranger Program Special Projects Funding has been granted in FY2011 to develop and print age-differentiated activity books and create online

program materials. The year 2010 marked the park's first ever celebration of National Junior Ranger Day, which it plans to make an annual event.

In addition, a Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program was started in 2010 and will be continued in summer of 2011. Teachers worked with Park Staff to begin strategic planning and develop an initial conceptual framework for park curriculum. They also began developing lesson plans that align park resources and themes with state standards for both Nebraska and South Dakota. In 2010, seven teachers (five full-time and two part-time) were hired for eight weeks during the summer, including some from each state and at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Please see Appendix A: Draft Education Strategic Plan for the Missouri National Recreational River's Curriculum-Based Education Program for more details.

## PERSONNEL

The Interpretation and Education Division is a very small one. In addition to the Chief of Interpretation and Education, positions currently include one permanent Interpretive Park Ranger, two seasonal Park Rangers, three seasonal Park Guides, and a Community Outreach, Partnerships, and Education Director. In addition, Teacher-Ranger-Teachers work for up to eight weeks during the summer, based on available funding.

**MISSOURI NATIONAL RECREATIONAL RIVER  
LONG-RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN  
Potential Action Items**

<i>What</i>	<i>Priority</i>			<i>With whom</i>
	High	Med.	Low	Partner
<b>Programs</b>				
Create Mobile Ranger Station to present roving programs at venues throughout the length of the river				??? [USACE, SDGFP, NGPC, USFWS, etc.]
Develop Night Sky program				Yankton HS, International Dark Sky Initiative
Offer birding walks (morning & evening)				USFWS, Audubon, Healthy Yankton?
Assess the need for more instructional programs on recreation: how to fish, paddle, camp, etc. (esp. in northern section); develop as need indicates				USACE, SDGFP, NGPC, USFWS, Scouts
Dialogue/provide opportunities for tribal members to interpret their own stories via various programs				Tribes
Develop joint programs with teachers/school at Santee and Yankton Sioux and Ponca Cultural Center				Tribes
Develop program on impact of steamboats on area development				MRI, local historians, SD & NE Historical Societies, tribes, USACE
Develop program on engineering infrastructure: roads, bridges, dams, transportation				USACE, MRI, local historians, SD & NE Historical Societies, tribes
Develop program on Pick-Sloan Act				USACE, MRI, local historians, SD & NE Historical Societies, tribes
Develop program on MRRIC (Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee)				MRRIC, USACE, MRI, local historians, SD & NE Historical Societies, tribes
Develop new Green Island programs, including LNT & bird walks				City of Yankton, USACE, Healthy Yankton
Provide Leave No Trace training to Youth Leaders				BSA, GSA,
Develop and provide merit badge support programs				BSA, GSA,
Develop lesson plans and curriculum materials about park resources that are aligned with stated education standards				Teachers and school districts
<b>Let's Move Initiative</b>				Let's Move; community youth groups, Healthy Yankton, Yankton Park & Rec, tribes, scouts, community centers, SDGFP, NGPC (for all)
Revise Jr. Ranger program: more activity/action based				
Promote family canoe clinic to increase participation				
Develop new family nature hikes				
Engage youth in resource protection/habitat restoration				NPS Resource Mgt Division; USACE, SDGFP, NGPC, USFWS, Yankton CofC

<i>What</i>	<i>Priority</i>			<i>With whom</i>
<b>Potential Action Item</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Med.</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Partner</b>
<b>Traditional media</b>				
Develop Media Outreach Plan				Local and regional media outlets – press, radio, tv
Continue development of water trail signage				Missouri River Institute (MRI), Yankton CofC and others
Wayside exhibits on Paddlewheel Point trail				Yankton City Park & Rec
Fitness trail on Paddlewheel Point trail				Yankton City Park & Rec, Healthy Yankton, Let's Move Initiative, Yankton CofC
New wayside exhibit at Wiseman Monument to balance POV				Tribes, NGPC
Update wayside exhibits at Ft. Randall to include Native American story				Tribes, USACE
Install new wayside exhibits at Chief Standing Bear Bridge overlook to tell the Chief's story				Ponca tribe, SD DOT
Install new wayside exhibits on Green Island				City of Yankton, Yankton CofC
Install new waysides at the Delta				City of Springfield, SCGFP
Write a General Interpretive Publication (basic book to sell) about the park				Jefferson National Monument Assn,
Develop a short introductory film or video about park				
<b>Digital media</b>				
Update and expand park website				
Add social media links				
Add oral histories podcasts to website				MRI, SDPBS
Support production of virtual tour of Spirit Mound (under way)				MRI
Interactive web/virtual tour of float down the river				MRI and others
Develop a mobile app for use on the water				MRI and others
Promote water trail via social media				MRI and others
Create detailed web-based itinerary-building tool to meet individual visitor's desired experience & recreational goals (print versions, too)				USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, tribes, tourism orgs., others
Provide links to birding smart phone apps, birding sites, & information				USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, MRI
Provide information on best locations for photographs				USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, MRI
Create online gallery of visitor photos of MNRR				
Provide printable maps/info on best hunting, fishing, hiking, boating locations (see below under Access & facilities)				USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, MRI
Provide link to dates and locations of local powwows				Tribes
Add information to website about Yankton Sioux Treaty Monument				Yankton Sioux tribe

<i>What</i>	<i>Priority</i>			<i>With whom</i>
<b>Potential Action Item</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Med.</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Partner</b>
Create web link to Ponca tribe, Santee Sioux, Winnebago, and Three Affiliated Tribes websites				Tribes
Provide support for development of wayside exhibits interpreting reconstructed lodge				Ponca Tribe, NGPC, University of Nebraska-Omaha
Add link to Hwy 12 Scenic Byway				Scenic Byways
Create podcasts for website				
<b>Corridor concept</b>				
Introduce corridor concept through Missouri River National Resource Committee (Gene Bormann)				MRNRC, MRRIC, MRI
Work with partners to promote & develop Missouri River corridor concept, including branding, joint marketing, partnered programs, grant opportunities: people with a common purpose working together.				MRNRC, MRRIC, MRI, USFWS, SCGFP, NGPC, tourist orgs., SD & NE DOTs, tribes
Create an umbrella website for the corridor built on existing Missouri River Basin Outreach Information and Education				MRI, MRNRC, MRRIC, USACE, USFWS, SCGFP, NGPC, tourist orgs., SD & NE DOTs, tribes
Signage on I29, I90, Hwy 50, Hwy 12, Hwy 8				USACE, MRI, USFWS, SCGFP, NGPC, tourist orgs., SD & NE DOTs, tribes
Create interagency interactive kiosks for consistent messaging at all partner venues and off-site.				USACE, MRI, USFWS, SCGFP, NGPC, tourist orgs., SD & NE DOTs, tribes
Create a shared graphic identity for the corridor				MRNRC, MRRIC, MRI, USFWS, SCGFP, NGPC, tourist orgs., SD & NE DOTs, tribes
Install/create exhibits/interactive kiosks at area airports				MRNRC, MRRIC, MRI, USFWS, SCGFP, NGPC, tourist orgs., SD & NE DOTs, tribes
Rack cards at tourist venues outside park boundaries				USACE, MRI, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, tourist orgs., SD & NE DOTs, tribes
Develop a framework/assemble a digital collection of resources/information/images, etc., to be shared by partners				USACE, MRI, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, tourist orgs., SD & NE DOTs, tribes
<b>Access and facilities</b>				
Research locations for potential hiking trails that get people closer to the river.				USACE, Clay County, City of Vermillion, SD &

<i>What</i>	<i>Priority</i>			<i>With whom</i>
	<b>Potential Action Item</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Med.</b>	<b>Low</b>
				NE DOTs; others
Research additional opportunities for access to a view of the river				USACE, Clay County, City of Vermillion, SD & NE DOTs; others
Create web-based (& print) itinerary-building tool to meet individual visitor's desired experience goals				USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, tribes, tourism orgs., others
Publicize the fact that hunting and bow fishing are permitted; issue map identifying best locations				USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, tribes?
Publicize/issue map identifying best fishing grounds				USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, tribes?
Issue special boating maps showing boat ramps, amenities, & best stretches for motor boats (more detail than Unigrid)				USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, MRI, tribes?
Issue maps for paddlers showing put-in/take-out points & best areas; graded by ability				MRI, USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, tribes?
Issue detailed hiking maps for prime hiking areas				USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC
Develop Green Island hiking trail				City of Yankton, USACE?
Explore development of new hiking trails at Bow Creek and Mulberry Bend Overlook				[USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC?]
Explore development of new hiking trails at Goat Island, Mulberry Bend/Clay County Park, & Hwy 121				USACE, Clay County, NE DOT
Provide bird list with map listing best locations				USACE, USFWS, SDGFP, NGPC, MRI, tribes
Set up bird blind(s) for viewing				Niobrara SP
Support development of hiking trail near new Ponca tribal HQ near Verdigre Creek				Ponca Tribes, NGPC
Explore possibility of NPS presence at Ft. Randall VC				USACE
Explore possibility of NPS presence in Clay Co. Park				Clay County, SDGFP
Explore possibility of NPS presence in Corps of Discovery VC				Corps of Discovery, NGPC
Explore possibility of NPS presence at Dakota Territorial Capital Replica				City of Yankton
Explore possibility of reconfiguring MNRR HQ to accommodate visitor contact station				

## **APPENDIX A: Draft Education Strategic Plan for the Missouri National Recreational River's Curriculum-Based Education Program**

### **Vision Statement:**

The Missouri National Recreational River and the National Park Service, through its collaborative education partnerships, will be a source of inspiration that fosters responsible environmental stewardship and creates a positive sense of place among current and future visitors and residents throughout the river corridor.

### **Mission Statement:**

Through its full-spectrum, curriculum-based education program, the National Park Service and partners will provide an array of standards-based educational experiences and curriculum enrichment resources about the Missouri National Recreational River, its outstandingly remarkable values and natural, cultural, and historical resources for preschool through university level students as well as accredited professional development opportunities for teachers.

### **Goals and Objectives:**

- Create and distribute standards-based, interdisciplinary activities, experiences and resources.
  - Create a Missouri National Recreation River corridor map that includes listings of specific educational resources by location.
  - Develop a website providing easy access for all educational resources.
- Collaborate with other local agencies in order to provide activities, resources and experiences to expand the park's ability to serve the communities' educators and their students.
- Offer professional development and life-long learning opportunities for educators and community members.
- Foster professionalism, stewardship, and accountability within the Missouri National Recreational River corridor.
- Collaborate with Missouri National Recreational River corridor educators and other stakeholders to plan and develop meaningful, relevant materials that meet both park and stakeholder education needs.

**Topic Areas:** three major categories with sub-topics listed for each.

#### **Natural History**

- Earth Science
  - Geology
  - Paleo-Oceanography
  - River Systems/Hydrology/Sedimentation/Water Chemistry
- General Ecology
  - Populations/Diversity/Interdependence/Adaptation
  - Dynamic Ecosystems/Habitats
  - Human Impacts
  - Threatened and Endangered Species/Causes

- Preservation/Conservation/Sustainability
- Global Climate Change and effects
- Energy Systems and Transfers
  
- Botany/ Plant Biology
  - Plant communities
  - Invasive/Exotic vegetation
  
- Wildlife Biology
  - Management
  - Mammology/Ichthyology/Ornithology/Entomology
  - Invasive/Exotic animals

#### Living Cultures and Cultural History

- Early Cultures
  - Archaeology/Cultural Displacement
  - American Indian History/Living Cultures
  - Settlers/Pioneers
  - Steam Boat/River Life
  - Westward Expansion
- Politics & Economics
  - Lewis and Clark
  - Civilian Conservation Corps/Works Project Administration
  - Pick-Sloan Plan of 1944
  - Homestead Act of 1862
  - Wild & Scenic River Act of 1968
  - Current Issues

#### Recreational

- Activity Awareness
- Responsibility/Stewardship/Leave No Trace
- Safety/Dangers/Hazards

## **APPENDIX B: The Planning Team**

### Missouri National Recreational River

Steve Mietz, Superintendent

\*Anne Doherty-Stephan, Community Outreach, Partnerships, and Education  
Director

Gia Wagner, Chief, Division of Resources Management

\*Dugan Smith, Interpretive Park Ranger

\*Nicole Snyder, Teacher-Ranger-Teacher/Volunteer

John Rokosz, Seasonal Interpretive Park Ranger

Hector Diaz, Seasonal Park Guide

Josh Olmsted, Park Guide

\*Lisa Yager, Biologist

Brian Korman, Biological Technician

### National Park Service

\*Peggy Scherbaum, NPS Harpers Ferry Center, Project COR

Karla Sigala, Interpretive Specialist, Lewis & Clark National Heritage Trail

### Stakeholders and Workshop Participants

Ken Block, DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Greg Blumer, Corps of Discovery Visitor Center

Gene Bormann, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

\*Tim Cowman, University of South Dakota Missouri River Institute

\*Corey Davis, Boy Scouts of America, Sioux Council (SD)

\*Carol Hale, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Jim Heisinger, citizen of Vermillion, Sierra Club, Spirit Mound Historic Trust

Brenda Johnson, freelance writer

Todd Larson, City of Yankton Parks and Recreation Department

Paul Lepisto, Izaak Walton League of America

Mike Mitchell, private citizen

\*Broch Muhs, Boy Scouts of America, Many Rivers Council (NE)

Angie O'Connor, Avera Sacred Heart Hospital/Healthy Yankton

Phyllis Packard, citizen of Vermillion, Clay County Commissioner

Brian Paulsen, Chief of Police, City of Yankton

Jim Petersen, Missouri River Bank Stabilization Association

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\*Dean Spader, Sierra Club

Shane Bertsch, Lewis and Clark Recreational Area, South Dakota Division of  
Game, Fish and Parks

Dan Sternhagen, Lewis and Clark Recreational Area, South Dakota Division of  
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Jerry Wilson, Clay County Commissioner

Linda Wuebben, City of Crofton

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