

Gorge Stewards Quarterly

Published by Friends of the Mississippi River • Volume 2 Number 2

Big River Relief Returns to the Gorge

The Mississippi River Relief – Big River Clean-up is returning to the Twin Cities and Friends of the Mississippi River is thrilled to be a part of this week-long effort by hosting a clean-up night for the Mississippi River Gorge Stewards on Monday, June 16th from 5-8 p.m. Community members and other volunteers are needed to help improve the trails and wildlife habitat around the gorge by picking up litter along the Mississippi shoreline in the Seward and Longfellow neighborhoods of Minneapolis. Roll up your sleeves and help make this tremendous project a success!

To sign up to volunteer or for more information, please contact Katie Galloway at 651/222-2193 x5 or email her at kgallowa@fmr.org.

New Program Brochure – In Color!

The Gorge Stewards program has a new brochure – and it's in color! We are excited to have this new resource available to help in promoting the program to other gorge area residents. With several bright color photos and valuable information about the Mississippi River Gorge, the new brochure will be an effective tool in recruiting additional volunteers as the Gorge Stewards program continues to grow and evolve. If you have not yet seen the brochure and would like to receive a copy, please contact Katie Galloway via email at kgallowa@fmr.org or by phone at 651/222-2193 x5 or you can always pick one up at the next buckthorn removal or seed collection!

Friends of the Mississippi River would also like to distribute some of the new brochures to neighborhood coffee shops, libraries, parks, and recreation centers. If you would like to help with this distribution by dropping off a few brochures at your favorite coffee shop or local hang-out, please contact Katie at the number listed above.



Intergenerational Stewards Active in the Gorge this Spring

Residents of the Becketwood Senior Community and high school students from Minnehaha Academy have been active along the river this spring, participating in the new Gorge Stewards Intergenerational Project, which was launched by Friends of the Mississippi River this past winter after receiving a grant from Recreation Equipment, Incorporated (REI). The goals of this pilot program are to educate students and seniors about the ecological value of the Mississippi River Gorge while helping to facilitate and establish an on-going relationship between youth and seniors in the community.

To kick things off this spring, FMR gave slide presentations to the three Minnehaha Academy classes that have participated in this project. The presentations gave an overview of the natural history and ecological importance of the river gorge and also informed students about some of the problems that are degrading habitat and adversely affecting water quality in the area. Learning more about the natural features of the gorge helped to prepare students for two spring stewardship events, as part of the intergenerational project.

On May 7th a group of 12 Environmental Studies students worked together with six Becketwood residents to pull garlic mustard from some of the areas surrounding 34th Street and West River Road. Participating in this activity allowed the group time to interact and learn from each other, while helping to fight and prevent the continued infestation of a rapidly spreading exotic species.

Students from two honors biology classes again joined residents from Becketwood on May 23rd to remove buckthorn seedlings, a common exotic species in the area, from both the grounds of Becketwood and the parkland directly across the street. This project provided students with another opportunity to build relationships with the seniors and from an ecological standpoint, helped to restore the natural balance of the plant communities at the site.

To celebrate the work of everyone involved in this project, an Open House was held on May 29th at Minnehaha Academy. Project participants and community members in attendance enjoyed an ice cream social and took part in this opportunity to celebrate the work and accomplishments of this river stewardship project.



Wally Bratt (left) of the Becketwood Community and Environmental Science students from Minnehaha Academy remove garlic mustard from the gorge.

Canoe Adventure Volunteers Needed

Friends of the Mississippi River's Sixth Annual Mississippi River Canoe Adventure is coming up on Saturday, July 26th and if you have yet to experience this event or see the Mississippi Gorge from a canoe, this is a perfect opportunity. The Canoe Adventure, part of the Minneapolis Aquatennial, involves approximately 500 paddlers canoeing through the Mississippi River Gorge from Bohemian Flats Park near the University to Hidden Falls Park in St. Paul.

Volunteers are an essential part of making this event a success. There are volunteer shifts available in the morning or afternoon, allowing you to help with event set-up or tear-down and still participate in the paddle. By volunteering for the Canoe Adventure, you will be able to join the paddle, free of charge. For more information about volunteering for the event, contact Katie Galloway at 651/222-2193 x5 or by email at kgallowa@fmr.org. If you would like further information about the Mississippi River Canoe Adventure, check out our website at www.fmr.org/canoe.html.

Photo by ColdSnap Photography/Mark Lissick



Gorge Stewards Calendar

All activities are free and open to the public.
This calendar is subject to change (and grow!)

June 11th - Buckthorn Seedling Pull

West River Parkway & 25th Street, 6-8 p.m.

Help remove buckthorn seedlings from trails in the Seward neighborhood by using weed wrenches.

June 16th - Shoreline & Flats Clean-up

Minneapolis Rowing Club, under the Lake St. Bridge, 5-8 p.m.

Participate in the Mississippi River Relief and pick up litter from the shoreline of the gorge area.

June 21st - Sumac & Woody Species Removal

West River Parkway & 36th Street, 9 a.m. - noon

Join crews from the Minneapolis Park & Rec. Board at the prairie and oak savanna to remove invasive sumac.

July 10th - Plant Communities Tour

Prospect Park Neighborhood, Location TBA, 6-8:30 p.m.

Learn about the plant communities around Prospect Park and how to identify both native and non-native species.

August 16th - Meeker Island Interpretive Program

Desnoyer Park Neighborhood, 10 a.m. - noon

Hear about the history of the Meeker Island Lock and Dam from National Park Service historian, John Anfinson.

The Mississippi River Gorge Stewards is a neighborhood approach to protecting, restoring and interpreting a natural sanctuary in the heart of the Twin Cities sponsored by Friends of the Mississippi River. Funding is provided by the Longfellow Community Council, the Seward Neighborhood Group, Recreational Equipment Incorporated, Gannett Foundation (as recommended by KARE 11) and the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

*For more information about the Gorge Stewards Project or to get involved,
please contact Katie Galloway at Friends of the Mississippi River
651/222-2193 or kgallowa@fmr.org.*



Friends of the Mississippi River
46 East Fourth Street, Suite 606
Saint Paul, MN 55101

www.fmr.org

Friends of the Mississippi River is a leading citizen organization working to protect and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.