

**OUR MISSION: FRIENDS OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER ENGAGES CITIZENS TO PROTECT, RESTORE AND ENHANCE THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND ITS WATERSHED IN THE TWIN CITIES REGION.**

In 2009, Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) celebrated its 16th year of leading the Twin Cities community in river and watershed stewardship. The generous contributions of time and resources from our supporters and volunteers enabled us to make important progress toward our goal of protecting and improving the health and vitality of the great river. We are grateful for this support.



**WATER QUALITY INITIATIVES**

FMR is undertaking a number of initiatives to protect and improve water quality not only in our stretch of the river but regionally and statewide as well. Significant 2009 highlights from this program area include:

**The Blue Star Program**

Minnesota's current regulatory framework offers little in the way of positive recognition for communities that achieve excellence in runoff pollution prevention. This year, FMR began work to develop the Blue Star Recognition Program to offer cities that excel in eliminating runoff pollution the positive public recognition they deserve. The program, which will launch in July 2010, features a voluntary self-assessment that allows

communities to compare their water management policies and practices with their peers. High-scoring cities will receive the Blue Star Award for excellence in stormwater management.

**The Clean Water Act & The Mississippi River**

With the pending completion of new Mississippi River water quality standards and the development of several large-scale river clean-up plans, Minnesota is facing key decisions that could dramatically improve water quality through strategic and aggressive development of clean water policies. Through a combination of policy advocacy, grassroots organizing, legal strategies, public education, and other tools, FMR is helping lead a coalition of environmental, recreational, and

agricultural organizations to advocate for effective and strategic implementation of the federal Clean Water Act in Minnesota.

**CRITICAL AREA REFORM**

One of the most exciting and high-profile developments in 2009 was the passing of the Mississippi River Critical Area Reform Bill during the 2009 legislative session. FMR led and coordinated the effort to pass this bill, which directs the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to develop rules governing land use, development, and natural resource management along the river corridor through the Twin Cities. The passage of the legislation enabled FMR to begin work with the DNR and the National

CONTINUED TO THE BOTTOM OF THE INSIDE

*Paddle it. Protect it.*

**2010 MISSISSIPPI RIVER CHALLENGE**

**A fully supported paddling event to promote a cleaner, healthier river.**

If you've never experienced the Twin Cities from the perspective of the river, the Mississippi River Challenge is the way to do it! Let the cities recede beyond the trees and atop the bluffs while you paddle stretches of quiet beauty, then emerge again as you paddle the urban riverfronts and pass through the locks. This one-of-a-kind journey showcases the ecology, history, scenic beauty and cultural value of our stretch of the Mississippi in a way that no other event can. Stay close to home this summer, and experience your local river. Paddle the Mississippi River Challenge.



[www.mississippiriverchallenge.org](http://www.mississippiriverchallenge.org)

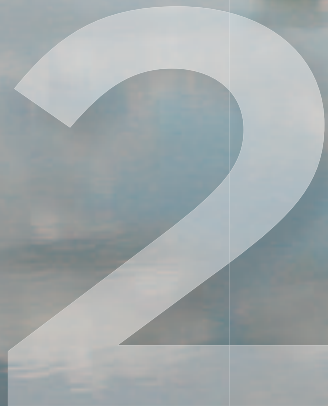


**Friends of the Mississippi River**  
360 North Robert Street  
Suite 400  
Saint Paul, MN 55101  
651.222.2193  
[www.fmr.org](http://www.fmr.org)

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
St. Paul, MN  
Permit No. 1581

♻ Recycled with 25% Post-consumer Waste.

**S U S T A I N I N G O U R R I V E R L E G A C Y**



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**DEAR FRIENDS**



**2009 was a very exciting year for Friends of the Mississippi River.**

Among the great successes of 2009, FMR led the effort to successfully pass the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Reform Act. The legislation authorizes new state standards to protect the unique public values of the river for generations.

In 2009 FMR permanently conserved three priority parcels of land totaling 53 acres and we carried out restoration activities on 624 acres.

FMR has worked tirelessly through our watershed protection programs to strengthen implementation of the Clean Water Act in Minnesota. In 2009 we convened a working group of environmental leaders to develop a

coordinated campaign to address runoff pollution. These efforts will lay the groundwork for stronger rules that will lead to cleaner water in the Mississippi River.

Last July, we held the sixth annual Mississippi River Challenge and it was our most successful yet with 415 paddlers that raised over \$130,000 for FMR's river conservation work. The Challenge is a very unique event that allows people to experience the wild side of the Twin Cities from the vantage point of the river.

Again in 2009, volunteers helped make all this work possible. FMR received 8,478 hours of support from more than 2,980 volunteers who made our efforts to protect and restore the great river

stronger than ever. The accomplishments of the past year could not have been possible without our very talented and dedicated staff, the financial support of our members and partners, and the amazing work of our tremendous volunteers.

In the end the river and our community are the beneficiaries. Thank you to all of you who keep this organization thriving!

Sincerely,

Stewart F. Crosby  
Chair, FMR Board of Directors

