



Friends of the Mississippi River Gorge Stewards Program Sponsorship and Marketing Opportunity

You are invited to participate in an exciting opportunity to support community volunteer efforts to protect the Mississippi River Gorge, and in doing so, generate business from people who live, work and play in your neighborhood.



Photo by Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

Overview

Friends of the Mississippi River invites you to participate as local business sponsor of the Mississippi River Gorge Stewards Program, a successful project that since its inception in 2001 has engaged thousands of community members and volunteers in education and stewardship activities in the gorge in both Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The popularity of this program among community members grows substantially each year – and they will appreciate your support. National studies have shown that 60-80% of adults say they are more likely to patronize businesses associated with a cause they care about.

Sponsors of the Gorge Stewards Project have a choice of three contribution levels, each with benefits designed to provide real marketing value for your business. In addition to directly reaching nearly 1,000 program participants annually, Friends of the Mississippi River will also list your business on brochures, newsletters, and our website, reaching a broad local audience of thousands of potential business patrons.



Please take the opportunity to review the sponsorship benefits page included with this proposal.

Friends of the Mississippi River

is a citizen-based organization that works to protect and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities area. Established in 1993, the organization has 1,500 members and engages more than 4,000 volunteers and program participants annually. FMR's full-color annual report on program activities and financial information is available upon request or on our website.

The Mississippi River Gorge Stewards

Initiated in 2001 in partnership with the Longfellow Community Council, the program offers a series of training, educational and stewardship events that focus on protecting and restoring the Mississippi River's wildlife habitat, water quality and recreational values. The program has grown to include all of the Minneapolis and St. Paul neighborhoods along the gorge, where hundreds of volunteers participate each year in litter clean-ups, buckthorn removals, native plantings, seed collecting, trail monitoring and other stewardship activities. Training and educational events focus on the natural and cultural history of the river as well as hands-on restoration. These events provide local residents with exciting opportunities to experience and learn about the river and find out how to get involved as a volunteer. In 2008, more than 1,100 people participated in Gorge Stewards events.



Partners and Funding

FMR partners with the Minneapolis Park Board, the National Park Service, local neighborhood councils, and others to coordinate and promote the Gorge Stewards project. The Mississippi Watershed Management Organization and the Capitol Region Watershed District are also partners and in 2008 they funded portions of the program. FMR is seeking an additional \$12,000 from local businesses, community organizations and foundation grants to support this work. These funds will be used to cover event coordination and promotion costs, such as staff-time, event supplies, food, and marketing materials. In-kind sponsorships that can directly offset some of these costs are welcome, with some limitations.

For more information, please contact:

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