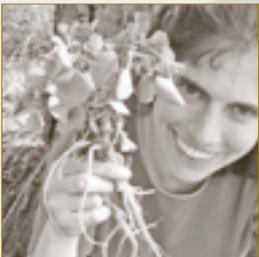


FRIENDS OF THE
MISSISSIPPI RIVER

2004 Annual Report



Many hands
in stewardship
of the
great river



Letter from the Board Chair



So many people in so many ways are doing their part to protect and enhance the great Mississippi River.

DEAR FRIENDS,

What is your connection to the river? This icebreaker question to new board members during our traditional FMR board orientation dinner is a question I would also love to pose to all volunteers and supporters who contribute so much to the work of Friends of the Mississippi River. The answers are varied, often passionately offered, and sometimes quite personal.

Many encountered the river early; some live or have lived near it. Others have studied its history, ecology and evolution. All have been moved by its majesty and romance.

Listening to, and harnessing, this emotional connection is an important part of the role of FMR. Albert Schweitzer put it this way: “Judging by what I have learned about men and women, I am convinced that far more idealistic aspiration exists than is ever evident. Just as the rivers we see are much less numerous than the underground streams, so the idealism that is visible is minor compared to what men and women carry in their hearts, unreleased or scarcely released.”

During 2004, we expanded our staff expertise in water quality monitoring, financial management and communications. We recruited new members to our Board of Directors with skills and a broadened perspective in such areas as public health, land use planning, public relations and policy development. But it is the expanded engagement of citizen volunteers, drawn from all age groups and political stripes, that is our greatest success.

In 2004, we engaged nearly 2,000 people (three-fourths of them youth) in storm drain stenciling and more than one hundred citizens in wetland health monitoring. In neighborhoods and communities throughout the Twin Cities we have mobilized about 800 volunteers to carry out stewardship activities, including exotic species removal, river clean-up and tree planting. And in communities such as Farmington, Lino Lakes, St. Paul Park, Hastings and Apple Valley we organized hundreds of citizens to advocate for the river by writing their elected officials, attending public meetings and organizing their neighbors. So many people in so many ways are doing their part to protect and enhance the great Mississippi River.

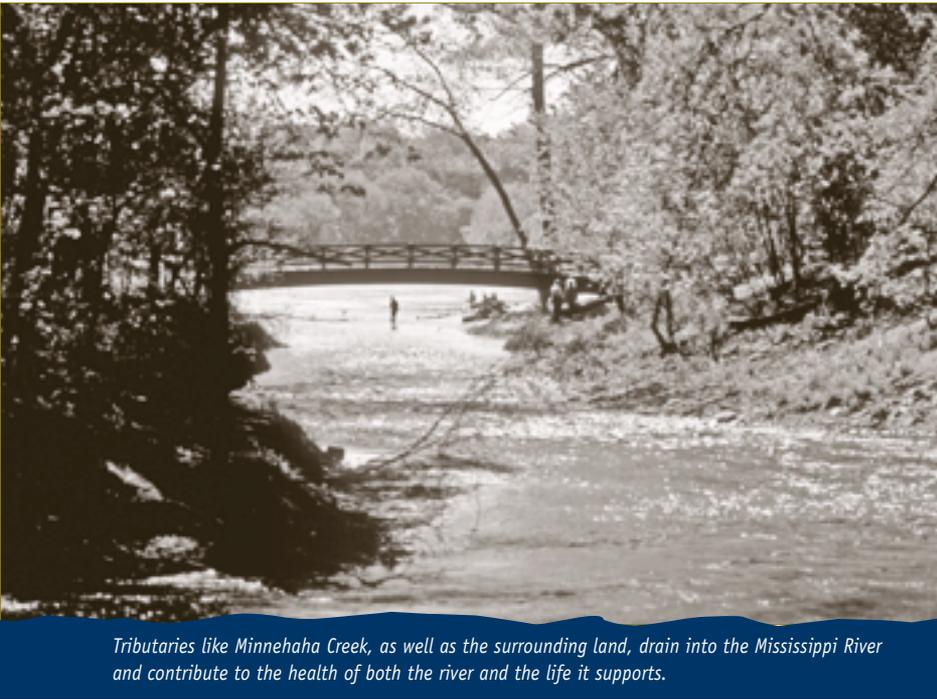
Our work continues to have short- and long-term components. Thwarting buckthorn growth has immediate benefits; enrolling new acreage in land stewardship activities yields results in a few years; and supplying local communities with the tools to guide growth in river-friendly ways will have far-reaching effects. As a Chinese poet observed in 500 B.C., “If you are thinking a year ahead, sow a seed. If you are thinking ten years ahead, plant a tree. If you are thinking a hundred years ahead, educate the people.”

On behalf of FMR’s board and staff, I extend our appreciation to you – the many friends who have supported our work with your ideas, volunteer work, financial contributions and program participation. We look forward to your continued involvement with us as we seek to preserve and restore the Mississippi River.

Warm regards,

Phil Riveness
Chair, Board of Directors

Program Overview



Tributaries like Minnehaha Creek, as well as the surrounding land, drain into the Mississippi River and contribute to the health of both the river and the life it supports.

Photo: NPS/MNRRA

As the Mississippi River flows 2,350 miles from its headwaters at Lake Itasca State Park in northern Minnesota to its mouth at the Gulf of Mexico in Louisiana, it sustains life in countless ways – it provides wildlife habitat, drinking water, transportation, agricultural support, recreational opportunities and the peaceful haven of a natural retreat.

Founded in 1993, Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is likewise sustained by the volunteers who work

alongside us to protect and enhance this abundant natural resource and its watershed as it flows through the Twin Cities area. Every year, thousands lend their hands to conserve its land, protect its water quality, enjoy its beauty and to encourage others to be stewards of this great river.

LAND CONSERVATION

The Mississippi River is an ecological resource of international significance. It is a migratory corridor for up to half of

North America's waterfowl and shorebirds as well as millions of songbirds. In the Twin Cities, the river's scenic bluffs, floodplains, prairies and shorelands are disappearing quickly as new development displaces natural landscapes. The urgency of protecting the river's ecological functions provides the focus for our many restoration and conservation initiatives. FMR works with public and private landowners, local governments and concerned citizens to protect and restore critical lands by providing technical assistance, planning, land management and hands-on natural resources restoration services.

WATERSHED PROTECTION

Water quality continues to be one of the most pressing concerns for the Mississippi River, as the entire Twin Cities stretch of the river fails to meet federal water quality standards. The quality of our water is closely linked to land-use policies and practices within the watershed. FMR is working to make the Twin Cities a model for watershed planning and decision-making that improves and protects water quality. Through our program activities, we work to activate citizens, shape the priorities of local governments and influence public policy related to local water quality.

RIVER CORRIDOR STEWARDSHIP

Known around the globe, the Mississippi River is a cultural and historical wonder that defines our place in the world, in our country, in our state, in our neighborhoods. The Twin Cities expanse of the river hosts the only true gorge on the river's entire length, along with many other historic, ecological and scenic features. As communities move to embrace the river and capitalize on its exceptional value, we risk new developments that will degrade or even destroy the very qualities they seek to highlight. FMR works within river communities to provide the leadership, technical assistance and expertise in grassroots advocacy required to ensure that the essential values of public access, scenic views and environmental quality are respected as communities turn toward their riverfronts.



Paddlers enjoy the stunning vistas of the great river as it flows through the Twin Cities.

Land Conservation



In 2001, FMR and several partners developed the Mississippi River Greenway Strategic Plan to create continuous greenway corridors and guide our conservation efforts along the river in Dakota County.

As the spine supports the human body, so does the Mississippi River serve as the backbone of an extensive natural corridor in our country. In the Twin Cities, we envision the river as an interconnected system of natural areas and open space corridors that provide habitat for plants and wildlife, protect water quality and offer exceptional views and recreational opportunities for residents. In service of that vision, FMR and numerous partners surveyed the land to identify what natural areas remain and which have the potential to

be conserved and restored. We then developed plans to connect these areas to the river, creating continuous corridors called greenways (see greenways map above).

Identifying these critical sensitive areas has provided a focal point for our work. In 2004, our major initiatives were carried out in areas that run along and connect to the river in Dakota and Washington counties.

FMR staff work with landowners, government officials, community members and other stakeholders to

develop natural resources management plans, leverage funds and carry out on-the-ground restoration work, often involving many volunteers. From residential property owners to corporate land managers to government agencies, we work closely with landowners to develop individualized plans that connect them with technical assistance and funding to best protect and restore their property.

Conserving the ecological integrity of the land is crucial to the health of the river. With rapid development of land along the Mississippi River and in its watershed, we are in danger of losing forever some of the last pristine river habitat.

In 2004, FMR conducted restoration activities on 484 acres (up 4% from 2003) involving ten sites (up 20% from 2003). The following project updates provide a snapshot of our extensive work.

PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL LANDOWNERS

The Benjamin Property

FMR has worked for several years to help landowners Harry and Patty Benjamin restore and manage a five-acre prairie on their river terrace near Hastings. The Benjamins have enrolled their property in FMR's Heritage Land Registry (see item on next page) and the family has contributed much of the sweat equity

for the project. In 2004, we monitored first-year progress on the new prairie.

The Robinson Property

It is wonderful to see the progress as four years of active management begins to pay dividends on this four-acre bedrock bluff prairie remnant in Ravenna Township south of Hastings. This year we conducted a prescribed burn and continued monitoring the site for invasive species.

The Sand Coulee

This 60-acre sand prairie in Marshan Township is the largest native prairie remnant in Dakota County. For two years, FMR has been working with five private landowners to restore and manage the health of this very special resource. In 2004, FMR conducted a 25-acre prescribed burn, removed trees and brush and engaged volunteers to collect seed for future distribution in the tree-cut areas.



This prescribed burn on the Sand Coulee prairie south of Hastings is a natural process used to improve the health of natural areas.

The Wiklund Property

Woodland, grassland and wetlands all thrive on this beautiful 25-acre parcel in Rosemount. This year, FMR staff completed an extensive management plan and seeded a seven-acre prairie restoration. In addition to restoring her property, landowner Aina Wiklund also worked with FMR this year to permanently protect the land as open space (see profile on next page).

PRIVATE CORPORATE LANDOWNERS

3M - Cottage Grove

The 3M Company owns 3,000 acres of property along the Mississippi in Cottage Grove. In 2004, FMR worked with 3M employee volunteers to remove buckthorn and collect prairie seed for future use on the property.

Flint Hills Resources – Pine Bend

For six years, FMR has worked with Flint Hills Resources to restore and manage nearly 100 acres of high-quality bluffland along the river in Rosemount. Home to native oak savanna, large oak woodlands and very rare sand gravel prairie remnants, this property is part of a 1,300-acre natural area complex known as Pine Bend Bluffs. As project managers, we worked with the nonprofit Great River Greening to conduct prescribed burns and restore prairie. In the fall, we organized 200 volunteers to plant 10,000 acorns in what will one day be a restored oak savanna.



Community volunteers, shown here installing wetland plants along the shore of Lake Rebecca, are an important part of our conservation work.

PUBLIC LANDOWNERS

The Empire Wastewater Treatment Plant

This year, FMR organized dozens of volunteers to install 700 trees and shrubs on 1,200 feet of streambanks as part of a multi-year restoration of this 400-acre property, owned and operated by the Metropolitan Council, along the Vermillion River in Empire Township near Farmington. We monitored first-year growth of a 50-acre wet meadow restoration site and worked to enhance plant species diversity on a 30-acre grassland. The project was honored as a finalist for a 2005 Minnesota Environmental Initiative Award. It will benefit both habitat and water quality for years to come.

Hastings River Flats Park

This new 215-acre floodplain park along the river in downtown Hastings once housed petroleum tanks and is now the site of important riverfront restoration. In 2004, working with the city of Hastings, we developed a 1,300-foot lakeshore restoration plan and organized 50 volunteers to install plants along the Lake Rebecca shoreline. We also monitored first-year growth on 32 acres of wet prairie restoration and helped rally 85 volunteers to haul and stack invasive buckthorn.

The Dwight Malcolm Trust Property

Formerly a private parcel, this 50-acre bluffland property was sold to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in 2003 to become part of the new Pine Bend Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area. In 2004, FMR began restoration of the site using dedicated funds from a trust established by the land's former owner, the late Dwight Malcolm. Working closely with the DNR, we developed a five-year management plan and began removing invasive species.

Spring Lake Park Reserve

This Regional Park along the Mississippi is owned and managed by Dakota County. Working with county parks staff, this year FMR began long-term planning to control exotic trees and shrubs in the Church's Woods area of the park.

Many funders made our work on these projects possible. Metro Wildlife Corridors funding was provided by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR). Funding for other projects was provided by the Dakota County Farmland and Natural Areas Program, the St. Paul Foundation, the Department of Natural Resources Metro Greenways Program, Flint Hills Resources, 3M, the Upper Mississippi River Forestry Partnership's Neotropical Migratory and Forest Bird Habitat Program, the Metropolitan Council and the Malcolm Trust.



This wood sorrel, found on dry prairies, responds well to prescribed burns.

"It feels very good to have this little spot of land saved as a wildlife sanctuary and restored prairie," says Wiklund. "Future generations can get an idea of how beautiful all the land around here once was."

LANDOWNER PROFILE: AINA WIKLUND

On a bright summer morning, Aina Wiklund spotted a deer in her garden. Rather than clap her hands or shout to shoo it away, she told the deer in a kind but reprimanding voice, "Go away from there." The deer considered her carefully, and then turned its back to the garden to graze nearby.

Aina has many such stories that define the relationship she has developed with the animals on the land she has inhabited for forty years. Her twenty-five acres in Rosemount, a fast-growing suburb in Dakota County, form an oasis of nearly undisturbed land in a disappearing native landscape.

Through an agreement forged by FMR, the Department of Natural Resources, the City of Rosemount and Dakota County, Ms. Wiklund has permanently protected her land in its natural state. She has placed a conservation easement over the entire property, which permanently protects it from development. In addition, FMR developed a management plan for the property that provides guidance on how the natural areas will be restored and maintained. In 2004, we began restoration.



Seeding the seven-acre Wiklund prairie.

"It feels very good to have this little spot of land saved as a wildlife sanctuary and restored prairie," says Wiklund. "Future generations can get an idea of how beautiful all the land around here once was."

PINE BEND BLUFFS SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL AREA (SNA)

A corridor of riverfront wilderness, the beautiful 1,300-acre Pine Bend Bluffs natural area on the border between Rosemount and Inver Grove Heights, has been the focus of much of our work with landowners. On a Saturday in May, Pine Bend Bluffs SNA was formally dedicated, the culmination of years of work among several organizations.



The Mississippi-Vermillion Heritage Land Registry, an FMR initiative, highlights the stewardship efforts of landowners.

FMR's role in this project and others like it is that of landowner liaison. We often are the first to approach landowners to discuss restoration and permanent protection of their property and we work to provide advice and technical assistance to interested landowners as projects move forward. In this project, FMR worked with several adjacent landowners to permanently protect parcels of extremely high ecological quality. We made first contact with landowners in 2000, and remained integral to the process in which the DNR has now purchased three properties totaling 216 acres.

MISSISSIPPI VERMILLION HERITAGE LAND REGISTRY

This year, the Heritage Land Registry continued its effective mission to help both public and private landowners actively protect and improve their land. Landowners voluntarily enroll their property in the Registry to demonstrate their intention to be good stewards of the land's environmental gifts through actions such as providing habitat for wildlife or protecting water quality. By the end of 2004, there were 48 landowners and 2,579 acres enrolled in the Registry.

Watershed Protection



Rain gardens, such as this one installed by the City of Burnsville, are popping up all over the metro area, cleaning stormwater, providing habitat for butterflies and birds and beautifying the landscape.

Water is basic to life, and virtually everyone agrees that water quality is one of the greatest environmental concerns facing us today. As polluted runoff degrades the Mississippi River and its tributary watersheds, so too does it degrade the health of residents who drink the water, eat the fish and swim in the lakes and streams.

FMR worked this year to protect and improve the river's water quality by educating citizens about these issues and getting them involved in both

influencing policy and plugging into the hands-on work of watershed protection.

Our Watershed Initiative focused our efforts on local land-use planning in two high-growth watersheds – the Vermillion River and Rice Creek. The goal of this initiative is to create a model for engaging citizens in local decisions that affect water quality.

A number of ongoing and new programs and partnerships also supported our work to protect water quality. Our Storm Drain Stenciling

COMMUNITIES AT WORK



In its seventh year, FMR's Storm Drain Stenciling Project continued to increase public awareness of stormwater pollution. We taught school and community groups about polluted runoff from sources such as lawns, parking lots and city streets. These groups then distributed educational materials and marked local storm drains with

the message "Please! Don't Pollute! Drains to River." In St. Paul and Minneapolis, 1,753 volunteers stenciled 4,333 drains and distributed 15,263 informational door hangers to Twin Cities households, churches, community centers and schools.

In a related effort, FMR held water quality workshops for 225 community members interested in watershed-friendly lawn, garden and automotive practices. Because of the strong interest in rain gardens that developed from these workshops, we presented an additional workshop focused on creating residential rain gardens and emphasizing their importance to our lakes, rivers and wetlands.

Project continued to grow in 2004, increasing public awareness of stormwater pollution. This year we added a series of workshops on watershed-friendly practices, such as installing rain gardens, that citizens can use in their own lives (see sidebar).

As a member of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership (MEP), we worked again this year on the package of water quality-oriented legislation known as the Protect Our Water initiative. MEP is a coalition of 87

Minnesota environmental and conservation organizations working together to protect and conserve Minnesota's precious natural environment. We participated in MEP's legislative forum, organized in-district meetings between legislators and their constituents who are members of MEP groups and rallied citizens to attend the Protect Our Water Lobby Day at the state capitol.

Watershed Initiative

FMR's Watershed Initiative was created to focus on tributary watersheds in the fast-growing fringes of the Twin Cities area. Our work is shaped around the idea that important decisions related to water quality are made at the local level, and that citizens can effectively influence that process when they understand the issues and get involved. We work to develop a reciprocal relationship between citizens and local governments.

An important part of developing these active relationships is creating awareness of the critical link between human and ecological health, and the effect land use can have on quality of life. A healthy watershed provides safe drinking water, high quality habitat for wildlife and clean water for swimming and boating. In the Vermillion River watershed, drinking water wells have been found to be polluted with pesticides and nitrates at levels dangerous to human health. The connection between managing surface

water and protecting public health could not be more clear. When we help people make that connection, we create energy around getting involved in local land use policy decisions. Many citizens have stepped forward to learn more and voice their opinions, creating a new respect for their watersheds and a new vision for its care and use.

To be most effective, we focused on the Vermillion River and Rice Creek watersheds and began to tailor our efforts in each area. Since we want to replicate this project in other watersheds, FMR is working with a professional evaluator to document our methods and measure our progress, and to provide a rigorous, unbiased evaluation of our work.

VERMILLION RIVER WATERSHED

The Vermillion River watershed, which includes most of Dakota and part of Scott counties, provided significant opportunities for us in 2004. While three-fourths of the watershed is rural, its suburbs are some of the fastest growing in the state. This year, we helped shape a ten-year plan that will significantly impact water quality in the watershed, expanded press coverage around water quality issues, offered workshops to the community and involved citizens in wetland monitoring and advocacy.

In 2004, the Vermillion River Joint Powers Organization developed a ten-

year watershed management plan. As participants in the process, we involved citizens in a push for development standards that protect water quality. The draft plan reflects our priorities: the need for watershed-friendly development standards, septic system compliance and buffers along waterways.

We partnered with local elected leaders to present two community workshops entitled *The Future of the Vermillion River and its Watershed*, which engaged citizens in the practical decisions that will have a long-term

We involved citizens in a push for development standards that protect water quality, and the draft plan reflects our priorities: the need for watershed-friendly development standards, septic system compliance and buffers along waterways.



Dakota County wetland monitors immerse themselves in the natural world while providing useful data to their local community.



Jane Porterfield, one of more than 100 wetland volunteers, identified invertebrates at a training coordinated by FMR.

effect on public health and environmental quality. People started talking and the press paid attention. Between June and December, seventeen stories on the Vermillion River ran in significant media outlets, either quoting FMR staff or describing our efforts in the watershed.

RICE CREEK WATERSHED

Much of our work in the Rice Creek watershed, which includes parts of Washington, Ramsey and Anoka counties, revolved around Hardwood Creek. For years, some landowners along the creek have pushed to have the creek

dredged and managed to maximize drainage at considerable expense to landowners and downstream water quality. Another option, which FMR supported, would have re-meandered the creek and restored native vegetation, both along its banks and in adjacent wetlands, greatly enhancing the creek's capacity to protect water quality. In the end, FMR worked with watershed managers and local citizens to pass a compromise plan that significantly reduces the ditch's negative impact on water quality while still providing additional drainage capacity.

Downstream in Lino Lakes, we are working with residents and city staff to address resource protection in their growing community. FMR engaged a watershed engineer to review city plans and ordinances and to develop recommendations for how these can be amended to accommodate growth while protecting the health of local lakes, streams and wetlands. The review will be completed in 2005.

WETLAND HEALTH EVALUATION PROGRAM (WHEP)

This year FMR coordinated WHEP in Dakota County, an award-winning, community-based monitoring program in which trained volunteers inventory plant and invertebrate species in their local wetlands. WHEP volunteers follow protocols and methods that were

developed by scientists at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The rigorous protocols, combined with a sophisticated quality assurance component, produce usable and scientifically valid results. FMR worked with 103 volunteers who contributed 1,672 hours to monitor 29 wetland sites in eight cities in Dakota County.

Taking their work a step further, volunteers from WHEP and Vermillion River Watch (a stream wetland

monitoring program for high school students) presented monitoring results to elected officials in five cities. FMR helped facilitate these presentations, which were funded by the Volunteer Stream Monitoring Partnership (VSMP), to help volunteer monitors move their work from field study to policy action.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: JOE BEATTIE

Visit a Hastings wetland in the summer months and you're likely to encounter Joe Beattie (far left in photo below) and a team of local volunteers taking invertebrate samples or performing a plant survey as part of the Wetland Health Evaluation Program. Stroll along the Vermillion River in the spring or fall and you may run into students from Mr. Beattie's field biology class collecting bugs as part of the Vermillion River Watch program. This hands-on participation in biological research, as part of both his personal and professional lives, stems from his love of being outside, immersed in nature.

Beattie's teaching philosophy is rooted in what he calls "authentic biology" – getting his students out in the field, engaged in true research. Students have helped FMR remove invasive species such as garlic mustard and buckthorn, plant native species as a shoreline buffer and collect seeds from native prairie plants. Each year, Beattie also takes his students to the Vermillion River bottoms for a service project to pick up trash. Over the past six years they have removed a total of 2,600 pounds of garbage from their adopted segment of the Vermillion.



River Corridor Stewardship



The river corridor enjoys special protections by law, but it takes the vigilance of many citizens to ensure its special qualities are preserved.

The Mississippi River provides many blessings to the communities through which it flows. Its unique ecological significance, its many scenic and historic sites and the numerous recreational opportunities it offers make it an incomparable and sought-after asset. FMR is helping to build a large and diverse constituency committed to protecting those qualities because they understand the river's ecological and historical significance. This year we engaged thousands of citizens in

educational events, stewardship activities and advocacy to protect the river.

GORGE STEWARDS

The area known as the Mississippi River Gorge (St. Anthony Falls to the confluence with the Minnesota River) is an amazing natural sanctuary that runs through the two largest cities in the state. Its significant natural areas and extensive trail system, as well as its proximity to a large urban population,

make the gorge a logical place to focus on community stewardship.

A model for citizen involvement in the river, the Gorge Stewards project focuses on creating a network of river protection volunteers around the gorge. In 2004, FMR added Highland Park in St. Paul to the list of neighborhoods we currently engage – Longfellow, Seward and Prospect Park in Minneapolis and Merriam Park and Macalester-Groveland in St. Paul.

Volunteer training and stewardship events are a central aspect of Gorge Stewards. In 2004 we completed 34 Gorge Stewards events (an increase of 21% over 2003). Nearly 1,000 community members got involved in the life of the river and volunteers donated 984 hours of their time. Some of the events had an ecological or historical focus, and some were educational presentations or open houses. Others were hands-on events, such as clean-ups, invasive species removal, trail monitoring and seed collection.

RIVER CORRIDOR ADVOCACY

Interest in living and recreating along the Mississippi River has increased steadily over the past three decades, largely due to improvements in water quality since the Federal Clean Water Act of 1972. This has led to positive changes, such as the expansion of

riverfront parks, public open space, trails and interpretive centers and, through the work of FMR and others, an expanded constituency of people who care about and connect with the river. The river's renaissance has also led to some negative consequences by inspiring development in the corridor that does not adequately protect the Mississippi's unique assets.

FMR works to ensure that protecting and enhancing the special qualities of the river are always considered when decisions are made about land use along the Mississippi, and this year FMR continued to play a strategic and active role in riverfront planning and development. Following are highlights of our work on a number of important projects.

Upper Harbor Terminal Redevelopment Study

One of our proud accomplishments this year was initiating a process to redevelop industrial riverfront land in a way that will complement and protect the river. We partnered with the national nonprofit American Rivers and the City of Minneapolis to study redevelopment scenarios for the Upper Harbor Terminal site, a 48-acre, city-owned parcel in north Minneapolis.

At a three-day community design workshop, citizens and government stakeholders developed plans that would both leverage and enhance the value of

the river. These plans include a large, new riverfront park and an adjacent residential neighborhood. FMR continues to work closely with the city and the park board to work through the complex redevelopment process while maintaining active citizen participation.

North Minneapolis

This year, FMR continued to play a leadership role on the Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee, planning river development north of downtown Minneapolis, including the eventual establishment of continuous parks and trails on both sides of the river.

We were also instrumental in negotiating a trail easement from a private landowner for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board on riverfront property, which will provide a key connection to North Mississippi Regional Park. Additionally, FMR staff served on a



The Upper Harbor Terminal Redevelopment Study envisions continuous natural parkland along the river and a new residential neighborhood in north Minneapolis.

task force charged with planning park development for the west side of the river near downtown.

Rosemount Interpretive Trail

FMR worked with the City of Rosemount to plan an interpretive trail that will connect the City of Rosemount to the west end of Spring Lake Park Reserve on the river. The trail will traverse developed, developing, rural and industrial properties, and could include restoration of natural areas adjacent to the trail and interpretive elements.

River's Edge Development

Working with local citizens, FMR pushed to modify a development planned for a beautiful backwater bay in Grey Cloud

Island Township. As proposed, the River's Edge development would violate state law and substantially harm the river environment. We successfully organized citizens to contact township board members about protecting part of the land from annexation to the City of St. Paul Park, where it could be developed.

St. Paul River Corridor

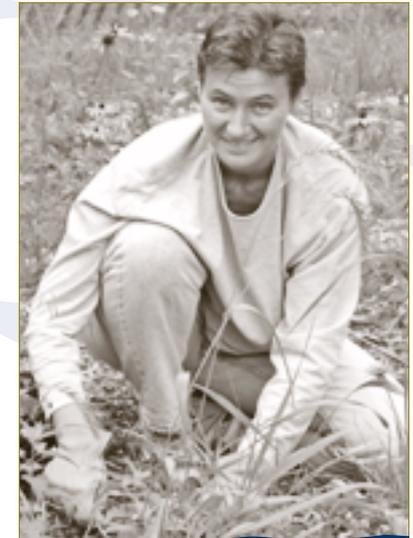
FMR coordinated direct citizen advocacy on several developments proposed for the St. Paul corridor of the Mississippi River.

We worked with local groups, the National Park Service and individual citizens to organize St. Paul residents around a proposed residential tower on the West Side flats just across the river from downtown. As proposed, the development would have significantly exceeded the existing height limit for this area, obscuring views to and from the river. FMR set up a balloon test in which we raised a large red helium-filled balloon to varying heights on the proposed site of the development and photographed it from numerous locations throughout the river valley. The resulting slide show helped elected officials and the public to gauge the visual impacts of the proposed development. In the end, the neighborhood organization voted to uphold the existing height restrictions.

Another project, the Bridges of Saint Paul, proposes a massive residential, retail and entertainment complex on the

West Side flats with multiple towers of 30 stories. FMR provided written comments as part of the environmental review for the project and advocated for limiting heights on the flats to below the elevation of the surrounding bluffs in order to preserve historic and scenic views.

FMR has also participated in the citizen task force charged with updating St. Paul's zoning code for the river corridor.



A gorge steward weeds a planted native prairie in Minneapolis. Ongoing assistance from volunteers ensures good stewardship of natural areas in the river corridor.

FMR works to ensure that protecting and enhancing the special qualities of the river are always considered when decisions are made about land use along the Mississippi.

Volunteers and Events

VOLUNTEERS

It's our volunteers who make us what we are. Some are individuals who show up to help restore prairies or make phone calls, and others are groups who stencil drains and clean up trash along the river. There are faithful office volunteers who show up every Tuesday evening and there are those who put forth a one-time effort. Some help us with leadership and others are hands-on activists. All of them share their gifts and put their love of the river to work. We applaud the thousands of people who gave their hands and hearts in service of the river this year.

Thank you!

2004 VOLUNTEERS

Academia Cesar Chavez • Karen Alexander • Miyo Alexander • Marney Allen • Angela Anderson • Cary Anderson • Jason Anderson • Wendi Anderson • Carrie Andresen • Jane Anfinson & David Wick • John Anfinson • Brian Ashman • Avalon School • John Avoles • Dan Bale • Lisa Barajas • Janelle Barrens & 4-H Town and Country Club • Julie Barrett • David Bart • Laura Bates • Marc Battistini • Joe Beattie • Julie Beitler • Carey Bell • Jesse Bell • Benjamin Banneker School • Anne Benusa • Tom Berg • Brian & Barb Berggren • Andrew Bergquist • Blake School • Michael Blissenbrough • Simba Blood • Kathy Bonnett • Jeanine Bontrager • Sally Botsford • Erin Bowley & Jeremy Szopinski • Boy Scout Troops #82, #516 • Boy Scouts - Eagle Scout • Becky Boyer • Audrey Boyle • Boys & Girls Club - West Side • Mark Brandt • Leroy Bratland • Aaron Brewer • Holly Breymaier • Kris Brodersen & Sharon Kimble • Peter Brower & Leslie Modrack • Katy Brown • Brownlow Family • Amy, Emily & Kristen Bruner • Deb Buckingham & Hastings Girl Scouts • Jean Buckley • Sarah Burk • Burroughs Elementary • Bob Butterbrodt • Susan & Rich Cairn • Candace Campbell • Glenn Carlson • Carolyn Carr & Jonathan Sellman • Peg & Mark Challengren • Cynthia Chapin • James & Mary Chastek • Arta & Chuck

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A volunteer digs in at a woodland restoration event.

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SPECIAL PLACES TOURS

There's nothing like a day on the river to inspire commitment to the river, a wonderful resource in our own backyard. FMR conducted twelve interpretive events and outings in 2004, attended by 285 people, featuring some old favorites as well as several new ones. Both fun and educational, Special Places Tours teach people about the Mississippi's ecology, culture and history while encouraging river stewardship.

Increasingly popular, most tours are over-registered long before the actual event. This year's tours included new birding hikes at Pine Bend Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area and Springbrook Nature Center, the popular wildflower walk at Grey Cloud Dunes, a wade into the Vermillion River watershed, a new paddle in the Rice Creek Chain of Lakes, the traditional fall



The Mississippi River Challenge gives paddlers a new perspective on the natural and urban landscapes that line the river.

colors paddle in the Gorge, snowshoeing and owl watching at Spring Lake Park and more.

FIRST ANNUAL MISSISSIPPI RIVER CHALLENGE

A resounding success, the inaugural HealthPartners Mississippi River Challenge celebrated the natural beauty and history of the river. On two days in August, nearly 300 participants paddled 44 miles along the river, supported by nearly 2,000 pledge donors and 40 sponsoring companies and organizations. Their efforts raised a net amount of \$45,000 to support FMR's river conservation work. The event was supported by extensive media coverage, which raised the profile of the river in the Twin Cities and brought in a wide range of participants. Eighty percent of the paddlers were new to FMR. Participants were required to raise \$200, and many substantially exceeded that amount, linking their enjoyment of the river to the important work of protecting it.

Paddlers embarked from beautiful West Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park on an island-studded river lined with towering cottonwoods and natural areas. In Minneapolis, they passed through the industrial working river in the northern stretch, marveled at the splendor of the St. Anthony Falls historic district downtown and paddled the scenic Mississippi River gorge below the falls. Participants stopped in several riverfront



Bird lovers enjoy an outing at Crosby Farm Regional Park in St. Paul, one of FMR's popular tour locations.

parks and passed through three locks on the first day. At Fort Snelling State Park, living history actors greeted paddlers, who climbed to the historic fort for an evening of revelry, relaxation and rejuvenation.

After camping overnight inside the fort, participants awoke to a beautiful sunrise and reclaimed their crafts for the final 22-mile leg of the Challenge. After negotiating classic floodplain forests and passing through downtown St. Paul and the Pig's Eye Lake area, participants and spectators celebrated the journey's completion at scenic Grey Cloud Island in Cottage Grove.

Paddlers embarked from beautiful West Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park on an island-studded river lined with towering cottonwoods and natural areas.

Financials

GRANTS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND CONTRACTS

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GOVERNMENT

City of Rosemount
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Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Partners
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Metro Greenways
Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources
Minneapolis CPED (MCDA)
Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board
Mississippi Watershed Management Organization
North American Wetland Conservation Act
City of St. Paul
Volunteer Stream Monitoring Partnership (U of M)



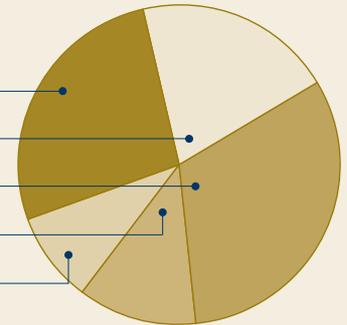
FMR is a proud member of the Minnesota Environmental Fund.

We are honored to meet all the accountability standards of the Charities Review Council.

2004 FINANCIAL STATEMENT*

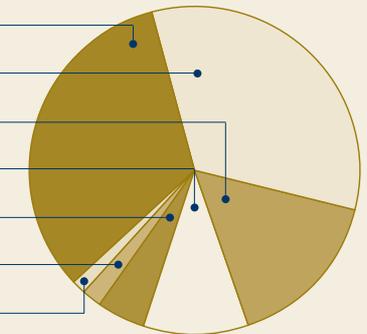
Expenses

Program Total	\$776,540.00	78.61%
Land Conservation	\$271,281.00	27.46%
Water Quality	\$191,830.00	19.42%
Sense of Place	\$313,429.00	31.73%
Fundraising	\$116,685.00	11.81%
Management	\$94,626.00	9.58%
Total Expenses	\$987,851.00	



Revenue

Foundations	\$336,551.00	33.10%
Government	\$336,721.00	33.12%
Individuals	\$162,099.00	15.94%
Corporations	\$105,799.00	10.40%
Other	\$42,241.00	4.16%
Workplace Giving	\$19,272.00	1.90%
Fees	\$13,957.00	1.37%
Total Revenue	\$1,016,620.00	



* From an independent audit conducted by Judd, Ostermann and Demro, Ltd., Certified Public Accountants.

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Chuck Swanson & Theresa Kervin
Paul Swanstrom
Michael & Sandra Swinoff
Brook & Peter Tabor
Charles & Janet Tarino
Theresa Joan Teel
Michael Tegeder
Tine Thevenin
Barbara L. Tholin
Bradley Thorson
T.P. Timmer
Joseph Tombers
Charlene Torchia & John Huffaker
Judith Mary Trepka
Joel & Elizabeth Trinkle
Solveig Tschann
Lavone Tueting
Beverly Turk
Twyla Rose Vander Weerd
Jill Vecoli
Lisa Vecoli & Marjean Hoeft
John W. Vegter
Jean Velleu & Jim Law
Linda Verbeck
Janis Verruso
Nick Verstegen
Lyn Verthein
Harold Vestermark
Mary Ellen Vetter
John E. Vierow
Brad Vifquain
Joyce Vincent

Sarah Waddle
James Wade
James Waggoner
Bernard Waibel
Michael Walker
Julia Wallace
Donald Wallgren
Jay T. Walljasper
Alison Walsh
Fay Walther
Susan B. Ward
James & Jolene Warnke
Janet Watchman & Joel Weisberg
Thomas F. Waters
Lawrence & Dee Weaver
Jerome & Alice Webster
David Wee
Rebecca A. West
Richard Westby
Julie Westerlund
Steve Weston
Henry Whiteside
Arwen P. Wilder
Andrea F. Williams
Jan Williams
Joan Williams
Terrence Williams &
Patricia Hampl
Jeffrey Willius
JoAnne Wilson
Buzz Wilson
Helen C. Wilson
Chester Wilson &
Suzanne Donsky
John & Judith Winslow
William F. Wittenberg
Dr. Stephen F. Wolf
Carrie F. Wolke
Paul Wood
Paul & Megan Wright
Mary Mihin Wrobel
Evelyn Young
Joyce M. Young
Kirsten Zerhusen
Linda Zick
Dallas & Eileen Zimmerman
Carol Zoff
Paul Zorn & Janet Petri
Steve Zwicky
Anonymous (6)

\$50 to \$99

Teri Alberico
Anne M. Anderson
Walter & Virginia Bailey
Robert Ball
Julia Wallace
Gregory & Coral Bastien
Beth Ann Baumann
Justin M. Becknell
Elizabeth & Tom Bell
Laurie Biehn
Mary Blood
Sharon & Harold Bobgan
Larry & Cathy Bogolub
Ken Bradley
Laran Brandt
Kris Brodersen & Sharon Kimble
Mark Bundgaard
Rebecca A. West
Mary Cady & Steve McCauley
Sharon Carlson
Kathy & Ron Carlson
Mark J. Carpenter &
Ann Kraemer
Carolyn Carr & Jonathan Sellman
Dr. Frank B. Cerra
Natalie J. Chapman
Milton C. Chester
Stephen L. Christenson
Anne Clark
Doug Connell
Stewart Corn & Ellen Ferrari
William Crosley
John Curry
Michael & Judith Curtis
Mary Ellen Davis
Beth Desnick
James Dimick
Laura Donovan
Mary-Carolyn Dorfman
David & Debbi Eggenberger
Virginia K. Ekola-Reeves
John & Ann Elward
Tom & Lorri Evans
Sarah & Mark Fabel
Duane & Candis Fancher
Al Farmes
Barry & Diane Fernald
Gary C. Fifield
Meg Forney & Jon Fagerson
Helen Foster & Frederick Cooper

David Foster & Sarah Stoesz
Elizabeth Frick
Arlene Fried
Joan Furlong & Randy Strobel
Rhoda R. Gilman
Jon Kevin Gossett
John & Mary Gould
Paul & Ling Greenwald
Barry Greenwald & Greta Gaard
Tom Griffin
Frank Griffin
Matthew Grigal
Richard Grimes
Anne Marie Gromme
Jon & Betty Gross
Jane Gundersen
Jim Haefemeyer
Myrna Halbach
Michele Hanson
George E. Harding
Susan Hardman-Conklin &
Peter Conklin
Kathy Haugrud
John Hedin
John E. Heil
Nicole Henry & Erik Rogers
Kellie Nadine Hoffman
Susan & Charlie Hoffman
Sue & Richard Holleschau
Robert L. Holt
Dale Homuth
Patsy & Bob Huberty
Kathleen Jaglo-Joseph &
Daniel Joseph
Marion Johnson
Michele & Timothy Johnson
Thomas & Victoria Johnson
Wendy Johnson
Donald & Phyllis Kahn
Jane Kalin
Martin & Esther Kellogg
Jennifer & Bill Kellogg
Carol R. Kelly
Gordon & Diane Kepner
Kenneth & Carol Kidder
Robert Kistler
Amy Klobuchar
Karen Kobey
Ken & Theresa Kossan
John Kraft

Lestie & Susan Kraus
Steven W. Kreitz
Ron Kroese & Kimberly Colburn
Chris & Linda LaBarre
Duane Lengsfeld
Ann Lewandowski & Jim Howitt
Liz Liddiard
Gordon Lindholm
Charlene Lofren
Barbara Lukermann
Peggy Lynch
Susan & Albert Madison
Richard Manka & Karen Ringsred
Gwen Martin
Nancy & Robert Martin
Jeffrey Masco
Dennis Mashuga
Joe May
Mike & Kay McCarthy
Don McClure
Sam McNellis
Debbie Meister &
Gene Christenson
Theresa Mlinar
Dr. Charles F. Moldow
Moms Club of Hastings
Kari Moratzka &
Adam Gottesman
Larry J. Mullenburg
Nancy Murphy
Kathy Nelson
Wayne Nelson & Lynn Huntoon
Randy Neprash, Sara Barsel &
Hannah Neprash
David Niemi & Sherry Coatney
Michael & Christine Nord
Herb & Donna Opp
Gabe Ormsby
Jim Ouray & Karn Anderson
Gregory Page
Marjorie & Mark Paller
Eric Palmer
Georgette & Steve Parker
Chuck & Ellen Peck
Ann M. Petersen
Thomas & Margery Peterson
Merle Peterson
Jay Peterson & Kathy Ripke
James K. Philippy
Rex Porter & Deb Todhunter

Anil K. & Clare M. Poulouse
John T. Quaife & Judy M. Geck
Christopher Quinn
Barry D. Reimnitz
Erik Reseland
Ellen & Don Richard
Terry R. Richmond
David Rischall
Richard Roessler
Brad & Pam Rosch
Roberta Rott
Brynhild Rowberg
R.T. Rybak & Megan O'Hara
Gretchen & Paul Sabel
Elizabeth Z. Savage
Joanne Schentzel
Patrick Seeb
Gary Seim
Rebecca & John Shockley
James S. Simonson
Steve Sitte
Howell Smith II
Evelyn R. Solomon
Beth Storey
Larry Storey
Steve & Judy Swanson
Donald J. Swanson
Michael Swift
Mark Ten Eyck & Laraye Osborne
Denise Tennen
Vangi Tingelstad
Carol Urness
David & Lynn Van der Haar
William Vanderwall
Steven Vincent & Jill Weese
Van Giang Vo
Greta Wagle
Lillian Wallis
Liz Walton
Gordon Weber
William N. Weir
Karen Weium
Marvin & Connie Wenzel
John & Kelly Wheaton
Ethel H. Wonson
Barbara Wonson-Liukkonen
Billie Young
Dr. Mahmood A. Zaidi
Richard Zgodava
Anonymous (2)

\$100 to \$499

Clifton Aichinger
Roger & Sue Aiken
Matt & Yvonne Anderson
John Anfinson
Scott Appelwick &
Edward Sootsman
Robert D. Aronson
Mary Kay Arthur
Peter Bachman & Janet Rice
Barbara Cox & Joseph Bagnoli
Barr Engineering Company
Harrison R & Patti Benjamin
Joan & John Berthiaume
Charlie Betz & Sue Magdalene
Gina Bonsignore & Rick Garber
Rod & Susan Boren
Steve Bubul & Lee Lewis
Philip Burke
Robert Bussell
Donna & Allan Butler
Ann Calvert
Candace Campbell
H. Mead Cavert
Jean Chesley
Whitney & Sarah Clark
Burt & Rusty Cohen
Naomi Cohn

Edward & Elizabeth Colburn
Don & Nancy Corniea
John & Sage Cowles
Paul & Georgia Crockett
John & Eva Cross
Pat Davies
Mark & Mary Ann Davis
Douglas & Wendy Dayton
Edward Dayton
Paula De Cosse
Tom & Kathy Diffley
Scott Dohmen
Joe Dowling & Siobhan Cleary
Jim & Carole Drake
George Dunn & Donna Harris
Dianne L. Eberlein
Lynn Eberly
Penny Eldridge
Brett Emmons
Nancy & Robert Feldman
Kim Feller & Gary Wirth
Bonita Fisher
Forrest & Lisa Flint
Dallas Fogg
John French
Susan Funk & Wood Kidner
Mr. & Mrs. R. James Gesell
Lyn Glenn
Peter J. Goss

Adam Gottesman
Dr. Mark Greenwood
Ted & Michele Grindal
Joan Growe & Tom Moore
Linda Halone
Susan & Stephen Hanson
Bud & Carol Hayden
Derek & Megan Hayes
Kate Higgins
Richard Higgins
Chris Higgins
Madison Hobbs
Keith Holm
Kathryn Hoyman
David Huff
Patricia Hurd
Clyde Illg
Mari B. Ito
Kate Jaycox & Mike Hatting
Cameron Johnson
Roger & Louise Jones
Thomas A. Keller
Tom Kelley & Kathy Stack
Dr. David & Ellen Knighton
Linda Krach & Robert Kriel
Geraldine Krueger
Kristine Legler Kaplan
Helen Lichliter
Ken Lubinski
Peggy & David Lucas
Chuck Lutz
Marsha C. Macey
Tom & Phyllis Mahan
William Mahlum
Bonnie Marron &
Bert Hollinshead
Lisa McDonald
Dan & Nancy McGuinness
Joan McKenney
Dorothy & Jack Merwin
Sara Meyer
Kimberly Middendorf
Amy Middleton & Therese Durkin
Bill Milbrath
Hokan & Penny Miller
Lois Mizuno

Ted & Pam Mondale
Andrew Moratzka
Lynn & Tim Moratzka
Kelly & Rick Moreno
Jon & Louise Morgan
Steven J. Morse
Joe Murmane
Brad Murray
Ron & Becky Nargang
Heidi & David Naughton
Richard & Nancy Nicholson
Jim Nystrom
Ellen O'Malley & the Finding
Nemo Fan Club of MN
Gary Oberts
Edward Oliver
Char & Tharlie Olson
Rebekah Ormsby
Rae & Rick Ormsby
Constance Otis
Kim Petersen
Patricia Ploetz & Ed Matthees
Michael & Lyne Prichard
Rip & Gail Rapson
Gene & Judy Rayburn
Timothy Remus
Peter Ribbens
Jean Roberts
Carolyn H. Roby
Frank & Janet Rog
Toni Rosen
Nancy Schouweiler
Marcia Schultz
Douglas & Ann Scott Dumas
Debbie Sershon
Lee Sheehy
Shelley Shreffler
Steve Sikora &
Lynette Erickson-Sikora
Katharine Simon-Dastyck &
Gerald Dastyck
Al Singer
Paul & Erika Sitz
Kate Smith
Rob & Amy Stolpestad
Charles Sullivan & Sandra West
Marcia & Bert Sundquist
Synovate
Bob & Sandy Tilsen
Ken Tilsen & Connie Goldman

William L. Tilton
William Tobakos
Lyndon Torstenson
Anne Towey
Jeannine McCormick &
Stanley Trollip
Jane Untz & Richard Zhao
Gary Van Erp
Aaron Van Moorlehem
Shirley Venard
Sue Vento
Scott Vreeland & Lorie Bergstom
David Waldemar
John Weitz
Deanna Wiener & Jim Tilsen
Stephen Wiley
Writers Rising Up to Defend
Place, Natural Habitat,
Wetlands
Anonymous (3)

\$500 to \$999

Julie Bach & Scott Brownlee
Adam Bock
Stewart & Lesley Crosby
Lisa Doerr & Ron Erickson
Sylvia Johanneson
Art & Martha Kaemmer
Margery Martin
Perry McGowan & Sheila Smith

\$1000 and up

Bruce Chamberlain
Brooks & Jen Crosby
Tom & Ellie Crosby
Bruce & Ruth Dayton
EcoTrust
Peter & Mary Gove
Julia & Eric Hynnek

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS

Stephen Jung from
Tom & Elizabeth Bell
Kris & Katie Layon from
Kent & Marilyn Christensen
From Don McClure:
Robin Cortes
Tammy Coyne
Greg Eppich
Chris Heid
Jac Papineau
Jason Schulberg
Tom Schul
Ben Shannon
Gayle Stoeber
Charles Stone
Nancy Stone
Sharon Throne
The Staff of Eco Education from
the Board of Eco Education
Jason Tennesen from
Laura Knudson
J.B. Kinny from
Jennifer Peterson
Finnigan Michael Ross from
John Roos
Mary Scheide from
Nancy Schouweiler
Maria Parke for Hung Doan

MEMORIALS

John Ekperg in honor of
Polly Henderson
Kim Feller & Gary Wirth
Shotsy & Ward Johnson in honor
of Stewart & Lesley Crosby
Constance Kerrins in memory of
Roy Ruzicka & given as a
gift membership to Benedict
Ruzicka

MATCHING GIFTS

3M
The McKnight Foundation
Xcel Energy Foundation
Tennant Foundation
US Bancorp
Carolyn Foundation
American Express Foundation

FMR is very honored to have received a \$6,800 memorial donation in 2004 from friends and colleagues of Gabe Cyr.

Mrs. Cyr lived for many years on the bluffs of the

Mississippi River at Pine Bend. She and her husband Oscar owned and operated the Pine Bend Ski Area for many years and she served as recreational race director at Buck Hill for twenty-four years. She died in 2000. In addition to the gift, Buck Hill sponsored a New Year's eve memorial ski race and fundraiser, with proceeds benefiting FMR. It will become an annual event.



Staff and Board



Standing: George Dunn, Katie Galloway, John Anfinson, Claire Stokes, Ed Oliver, Heather Haynes, Peter Gove, Irene Jones, Chris Higgins, Tom Lewanski, Whitney Clark, Kate Jaycox, Ron Nargang, Lynn Moratzka, Deanna Wiener, Phil Riveness, Forrest Flint, Candace Campbell, Karen Schik, Tera Thompson, Gabe Ormsby. **Kneeling:** Beth Storey, Connie Lanphear, Hokan Miller, Daniel Huff, Stewart Crosby, Perry McGowan. **Not pictured:** Kay Yanisch, Michael Osterholm, Ted Mondale.

This past year, FMR added several new board members and two new staff positions.

Chris Higgins is a public relations professional whose interest in the natural world dates to his days as a counselor at a camp along the Eel River in northern California. For the past seven years Chris has worked for Padilla Speer Beardsley Inc., providing public relations and strategic communications services primarily to businesses.

Edward Oliver comes to FMR with a distinguished record of professional accomplishment and public service. He served as a state senator for ten years, carrying several pieces of environmental legislation during his tenure. He is a former director of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board and currently serves on the Great Lakes Commission. In business, Oliver is the owner of Oliver Financial and is a director of the TwinWest Chamber of Commerce.

Dr. Michael Osterholm joined the FMR Board in July and brings with him a passion for natural resource restoration, especially that of trout streams. Dr. Osterholm is currently director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP) and a professor, School of Public Health, at the University of Minnesota. He is a former Minnesota state epidemiologist and is a leading expert on bioterrorism.

In early 2005, we also welcomed **Ted Mondale** to the board. Ted brings a wealth of public policy and political expertise to FMR. He is the CEO of Nazca Solutions, an information technology company that helps local governments and school districts to be more efficient and consumer-friendly. Previously, Mr. Mondale was chair of the Metropolitan Council and served two terms in the Minnesota state senate. In the private sector, Mr. Mondale was executive vice president of Petters Group, LLC, and also served as vice president of Public Sector Services for United HealthCare.

Our expanded staff includes **Connie Lanphear**, who manages communications and the office, and **Claire Stokes**, in charge of finance. In early 2005, **Kay Yanisch** took over coordination of the Mississippi River Challenge.



Friends of the Mississippi River

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651-222-6005 (fax)

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ORGANIZATION INFO AND WEBSITE

FMR continues to enhance and develop its primary website. We received an average of 8,532 visits per month in 2004 (an increase of over 300 per month from 2003).

We also launched a new website for the Mississippi River Challenge: www.MississippiRiverChallenge.org. This site provided online registration and pledging, and led to the development of FMR's new online donation acceptance capabilities. The Challenge site received 103,267 hits in 2004, with an overwhelming percentage of registrants and pledge donors using the online services. The site has been significantly upgraded for 2005, allowing more seamless use for participants and pledgers.

FMR's web-based Mississippi River field guide is now live! Our most elaborate web development project to date, the guide is a resource about

points of interest along the river in the metro corridor. Each stop has a story and photos, as well as geographical information about the site. The guide is searchable by a variety of criteria, such as category of interest (history, geology, etc.). Check it out at www.fmr.org/fieldguide/.

