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☐ \$25 Individual
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Summer/Fall 2018

Friends of the
Missouri National Recreational River
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Yankton, South Dakota 57078
FOMNRR.org

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The mission of the Friends of the
Missouri National Recreational River is
to build awareness, enhance and
advocate for the scenic, recreational,
fish and wildlife, ecological, geological,
cultural/historical values and
economic and recreational opportunities
of the Missouri River, a component of
the National Wild and Scenic Rivers
System.

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Happy 40th Birthday!

Welcome to our Golden Edition of River Connection. The
Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR) celebrates its
40th anniversary on November 10, and what better way to
celebrate than by unveiling its new 15-minute interpretive
film. A public premier showing of the film will take place at
the Dakota Theater in Yankton, Saturday, November 10, at
7:00 p.m.



We invite you to #FindYourWay and explore America's national wild, scenic,
and recreational rivers in our nation and to #FindYourMNRR by participating in
ranger-led hikes and programs, canoe and kayak clinics, and junior and adult
ranger programs this summer and fall at Missouri National Recreational River.

On October 2, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Wild and Scenic
Rivers act, to preserve selected rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and
recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present
and future generations. Administered by a variety of federal, state, and local
agencies and nonprofit organizations, the Wild and Scenic Rivers System is
notable for safeguarding the characteristics of these 208 protect rivers in our
nation, which the MNRR is one of, while also recognizing the potential for their
use and development.

National Park Service staff and the Friends of the MNRR encourage you to
explore the river and trails of the Missouri National Recreational River and to
#FindYourWay to your own adventured and inspirational moments in your
national park.



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Thank you to the generosity of our Members, Donors, and Volunteers that have enabled us to provide project support to Missouri National Recreational River! Our funding aids education programs; trail improvements; interpretive programs to enhance the visitor experience; and assistance with the Roscoe Junior Ranger Academy.

Your Donations and Services Help Us

- Promote programs such as the Missouri River Watershed Festival, Missouri River Cleanups, Lake Yankton Outdoor Festival, and the Roscoe Junior Ranger Academy.
- Implement programs and activities that increase public awareness and appreciation of the river.
- Monitor actions and activities that could impact Missouri National Recreational River.

The Friends of the Missouri National Recreational River (FOMNRR) is a group of passionate river people who volunteer to promote the well-being and connectivity of the 98-mile Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR), a unit of the National Park Service. The FOMNRR is a non-profit organization comprised of private landowners, citizens at large, conservation organizations, and federal, state, tribal, and local government representatives to share, exchange, and advocate the safety and well-being of the national park. The group also shares a common respect and appreciation for the river's natural and cultural integrity and strives to build awareness, enhance and advocate for the scenic, recreational, fish and wildlife, and economic opportunities of the Missouri River.

Our national parks are America's treasured landscapes and resources. They belong to all of us, and we all share the responsibility to leave these resources intact and in good health to our children, and theirs, and far into the future. Your donations to FOMNRR have meaningful impact, and we hope you'll make a special gift to honor the 40th Anniversary of the MNRR and 50th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System this year.

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Pass It Forward. Pass It On.

Summer/Fall 2018



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Yankton Rexall Drug

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



The Vermillion Area Community Foundation (VACF) recently awarded \$2000 to the FOMNRR to help with the development of a hiking trail along a wild and scenic stretch of the river near Vermillion. Known as the Frost Trail, this trail provides public access and hiking opportunities along the Missouri River. The VACF funding will be used to create and install informational signage along the trail. More information about the trail can be found on FOMNRR website.

VACF supports projects that improve the quality of life in the Vermillion area for as many residents as possible. Thank you VACF for your donation!



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What’s Been Happenin’!

Missouri River Watershed Festival

Nearly 500 high school students from Nebraska and South Dakota attended the festival on May 3rd. Students went to seven of eighteen hands-on presentations about the river, conservation and our natural resources. This was the 10th anniversary of the festival. FOMNRR members volunteered as “guides” and led students around River-side Park. Next year’s festival will be May 2nd.

Students learn and touch fish at the Missouri Fish station with help from staff at Gavins Point National Fish Hatchery.

By Paul Lepisto, Friends Member



Missouri River Clean Up

Over 115 volunteers turned out for this year’s Missouri River Cleanup May 5th. This was the 15th anniversary of this event. The cleanup netted over a half ton of litter and trash making the river cleaner for fish and wildlife and a more pleasing place for people to recreate. Next year’s cleanup will be May 4, 2019.

Volunteers arriving back to the Yankton’s Riverside boat ramp with a load of river trash.



Lake Yankton Outdoor Festival

Over 1,100 people attended the Lake Yankton Outdoor Festival and Homestead Day Event June 9th. Held at Pierson Ranch and the Training Dike people saw nearly 30 presentations giving them information on how they can enjoy the river and the outdoors. Thanks to the members of the FOMNRR that made these events successful. A very special thank you to Dennis Menke for his fundraising efforts to offset the costs for the events.



MNRR Invasive Species Awareness Week

For the 10th year boaters and anglers received information so they can prevent spreading invasive species. The goal is to teach people to clean, drain and dry their equipment every time they come off the water. To date nearly 300 packets have been handed out to boaters and anglers from seven states.



Superintendent’s Corner

Rick Clark, Missouri National Recreational River



November 10, 2018 marks the 40th anniversary of when the MNRR was first established by Congress. October 2, 2018 marks the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic River Act. The passage of the of the Act created the National Wild and Scenic River System, which today includes 12,734 miles of wild (6,207 miles), scenic (2,752 miles), and recreational (3,775 miles) river managed by four different federal land management agencies, including the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management. Collectively, only ¼ of 1% of the nation’s rivers have the distinction of being declared one of America’s national rivers. The MNRR is one of them and we should be proud. I could not have been prouder when on July 6th I was extended an invitation by a friend to fly in his personal airplane along with two of my children along the entire reach of the park’s 59-Mile District from Gavins Point Dam to Ponca State Park. What a vantage point to see this remarkable river, and what perspective! And, to hear my children, who represent the next generation of our Country’s caregivers (stewards), exclaim “wow, this place is really cool,” gave me goose bumps.

Anniversaries are a time for reflection. Soon to celebrate the park’s 40th anniversary, we are fortunate to have the opportunity to showcase all the splendor that the Missouri National Recreational River has to offer. Our vision and mission as outlined in the Park’s 2016-21 strategic action plan are challenging, but ones that are attainable through public and private partnership, and in the spirit of joint river stewardship. I extend a personal invitation to each and every one of you as ‘friends’ of the park to join us on our 40th anniversary November 10, 2018 in Yankton for the premier showing of the park’s first ever educational film dedicated to the continued preservation and enjoyment of the MNRR, one of America’s treasured national rivers.



Mark Your Calendar

- **August 18-19:** Yankton Riverboat Days and Art Festival
- **September 14-15:** Missouri River Expo Education Festival and Missouri River Expo, Ponca State Park
- **September 29:** Missouri River Cleanup, 39-Mile District—Verdel to Springfield
- **October 1-6:** Return of the White Pirogue—Corps of Discovery Reenactment from Ft. Randall to Ponca.
- **October 6:** Annual Meeting at Ponca State Park - 11:00 a.m.
- **November 10:** MNRR’s 40th Anniversary Party at Yankton’s Dakota Theater beginning at 7:00 p.m.

For complete listing of programs and events, please visit the Facebook page of Missouri National Recreational River or the park’s website at nps.gov/mnrr. Follow us on Instagram @MissouriRiverNPS Twitter @MissouriRecNPS

A Wild & Scenic River

By Lisa Yager, MNRR Biologist



The 39-Mile District of the MNRR was my childhood backyard. I grew up watching bald eagles soar, sandbars and channels morph with time, the season's blossom and fade as foliage along the ever-present bluffs turned to gold then brown and back again. The narrow river valley, lined with old-growth cottonwood trees, brought a sense of security. Dam releases and other river issues were ordinary conversation. Watching the river was the perfect pastime. The Wild and Scenic nature of this stretch of the Missouri River was personal. I came to know this river years before I wore an NPS arrowhead and uniform.

In 1991, when I was just a young child, the MNRR was expanded to include the 39-Mile District which flowed right past my parent's farmstead. This district encompassed not only the first 39 miles of the Missouri River below Fort Randall Dam, but also the lower 20 miles of the Niobrara River and 8 miles of Verdigre Creek, a tributary of the Niobrara. Congress determined that this stretch of river was special and worthy of protection for future generations.



I experienced the river's "Outstandingly Remarkable Values" years before I learned what those words literally meant. The **ecological, fish and wildlife, geological, scenic, recreational and cultural values** were the framework in which I saw the world.

I grew up with a fascination for how the river worked, to understand how all things - sandbars, water, cottonwoods and fish to name a few - **ecologically** were seamlessly interconnected. That same childhood fascination and curiosity led to years of study and degrees in river ecology.

Wild & Scenic River

continued from page 4



Fishing was a common hobby and food source for my family. My fondest fishing memories are not catching the largest or first fish, but simply enjoying the river and experiencing my first intimate contacts with **fish and wildlife**. I can vividly recall the excitement of catching a fish (even just a channel catfish), as well as the setting sun, reflecting on the calm, glass-like water.

I have always been astonished by the personality and beauty of the chalkstone bluffs which line much of the 39-Mile District. Each bluff layer has a unique story to tell. As a child I dreamed of finding the next

fossil, maybe a plesiosaur (you can always dream big!). I still eye the bluffs with a critical eye, not only to understand their story, but also to note the unique **geological** story.

Our home was surrounded by astounding **scenic** beauty; yet, it was so familiar that it became commonplace. However, I would quickly be reminded of the river's scenic qualities by those who witnessed this beauty for the first time. Seeing and understanding the scenic beauty through new eyes is still invigorating.

The island side channel directly across from my home was peaceful, full of abundant wildlife. It was truly an example of the river's natural qualities and ecology. Exploring this side channel was always my favorite **recreational** activity and remains a vivid memory.

Old Baldy, a known point of interest for the Lewis and Clark expedition, was visible from my home with just the right angle of morning sun. That simple reminder could be overwhelming, knowing I was in the same vicinity as so many explorers, steamboat captains, and Native Americans. It was my reference point for understanding our shared **cultural** heritage.

Now, the Missouri River is my career and I have the privilege to work with "my" section of the Missouri River. The 39-Mile District of the MNRR lies at the core of who I am. Now I have the pleasure of sharing that passion and understanding with other park stakeholders. Witnessing someone experience the 39-Mile District for the first time or through a new perspective remains a joy.

