



*"With River Days of Action, we take a lesson from the River:  
we reach our grandeur by uniting."*

-Michael Anderson, Director of Outreach and Education, Mississippi River Network

In its third year, the Mississippi River Network's (MRN or the Network) River Days of Action brought thousands of people together from June 8 – 18th, 2023, for unified action and events from Headwaters to the Gulf of our mighty Mississippi River! From hands-on habitat restoration and recreation events to captivating webinars and engaging place-based tours, the initiative uplifts the entire Network and the Mississippi River's people, land, water, and wildlife.

"River Days" continues to be a shining example of collaboration and coordination across the Mississippi River watershed. We are humbled to report that this year's River Days of Action was the most impactful yet! Here's a rundown of the numbers:

## River Days of Action 2023 By the Numbers:

- 60 organizations hosted 35 events
- 2,000+ people attended the events
- 322 new River Citizens
- 523 people took the 'Universal Action' totaling 1,454 emails sent to Congress
- 1,500+ webpage visitors
- 12 MRN members participated in 'River Giver' raising \$9,500+ from 103 donors





While the numbers tell a powerful story, they are one of many stories that make up the River Days of Action 2023 anthology. From an organizing standpoint, all River Days events were united by theme (taking action to create a healthier Mississippi River), universal action (emailing Congress urging the protection and increased funding of vital Farm Bill Conservation Programs), and timing (June 8 – 18<sup>th</sup>). Having a unified structure provided a springboard for MRN members and partners to plug into the initiative while being able to offer creative and inspiring events that best meet the needs and interests of their communities and audiences. The result was an impressively diverse display of meaningful events. Here's what a few members and partners had to say:



## River Days of Action Event Stories:

**“Our volunteers found the activity fun and educational; they were surprised that our City’s downtown district has so many gutters that drain straight to the Mississippi River. They were glad they could apply stencils and plaques informing pedestrians of this knowledge!”**  
-Christine Favilla, Sierra Club Piasa Palisades

**“We all envision many exciting projects and partnerships to come out of our River Days of Action programming!”**  
-Melissa Sauter, Mississippi River Water Trail Association

**“This was our first, true community-building event since Covid19 and people were thrilled, excited and full of hugs and joy. The event was inspiring as well as connecting.”**  
-Angelle Bradford, Sierra Club Delta Chapter

**“Mississippi River Network provided an opportunity to have sustainable grassroots conversations within our community dealing with environmental and racial justice issues. We received comments from several citizens that are very concerned about those issues!”**  
-Vickie Roberts-Ratliff, Land Literacy & Legacy, and Bridging Winona



In addition to mobilizing current MRN members and partners, River Days of Action is a bridge for bringing in new organizations and community collaborators. This year, approximately 15 participating organizations were first-time collaborators with the Network (either through hosting their own event or, more commonly, in partnership with an existing member). We know a diverse, intersectional, and multi-faceted coalition is essential to embrace the issues and opportunities facing our Mississippi River's people, land, water, and wildlife. We are grateful to all our Network members and partners – new and longstanding!





## **First-ever Network Collective Fundraising Effort Enhances River Days of Action!**

In 2023, MRN launched the River Giver fundraising opportunity as part of River Days of Action. This gave River Citizens and other Mississippi River enthusiasts another way to participate in River Days of Action whether there was an event in their area or not. River Giver brought in over \$9,500 from 103 donors to support the work of the Mississippi River Network and participating member organizations, including Friends of the Mississippi River, Green Interchange, Harpeth Conservancy, A House Unbuilt, Iowa Environmental Council, Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance, Louisiana Bucket Brigade, Mississippi Park Connection, Mississippi Water Trail Association, National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium, National Wildlife Federation, and The Wetlands Initiative. This program is complete, but you can still [donate to Mississippi River Network](#) and find a [Network member](#) to donate to them directly.



## **Learn More About River Days of Action**

Are you looking for more River Days of Action information? Here are a few options:

- Visit the River Days of Action 2023 website at [www.1mississippi.org/riverdays](http://www.1mississippi.org/riverdays) and find the archived [events calendar](#), interactive event map, and more
- Find recorded River Days events on the [1 Mississippi YouTube channel](#), such as:
  - [Climate Science Needs on the Mississippi River](#) featuring Olivia Dorothy, American Rivers
  - [How the Farm Bill Helps Create a Healthier Mississippi River](#) featuring Maisah Khan (Mississippi River Network), Liz Rupel (Illinois Stewardship Alliance), and Jesse Womack (National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition)
- [Read the River Days of Action 2021 and 2022 reports](#)
- Make a difference year-round by taking our [10 Actions to Create a Healthier Mississippi River](#)



**A 'Big River' thank you to our Mississippi River Network members,  
partners, funders, River Citizens, volunteers, and participants.  
By hosting events, collaborating, and promoting, you all made  
River Days of Action 2023 a success. Thank you!**

Walton Family Foundation, Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund, WestRock Foundation, A House Unbuilt, American Rivers, ArtReach St. Croix, Audubon Neighborhood Association, Big Muddy Adventures, Bridging Winona, City of Murfreesboro, Clarksdale Recycling, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Delta Blues Museum, Environmental Policy and Innovation Center, Friends of the Mississippi River, Gene Slay's Girls and Boys Club of St. Louis, Great River Greening, Green Interchange, Green Lands Blue Waters, Harpeth Conservancy, Illinois Stewardship Alliance, Iowa Environmental Council, Kindred Nature, Lake City Arts, Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District, Lake Pepin Legacy Alliance, Land Literacy & Legacy, League of Women Voters of Minnesota, League of Women Voters of Iowa, League of Women Voters Upper Mississippi River Region, Louisiana Bucket Brigade, Lower Mississippi River Foundation, McFadden Community Center, Mill City Farmers Market, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Mississippi Center for Justice, Mississippi Park Connection, Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative, Mississippi River Water Trail Association, Mississippi Speed Record, Mississippi Valley Traveler, National Caucus of Environmental Legislators, National Great Rivers Research and Education Center, National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium, National Park Service – Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, New Orleans Green Tours, Perennial Pantry, Quapaw Canoe Company, Red Wing Hispanic Outreach Center, River City Outdoors, River des Peres Watershed Coalition, Rural Roots Louisiana, Saint Louis Aquarium, Sierra Club Delta Chapter and Baton Rouge Group, Sierra Club Piasa Palisades, Sustainable Farming Association, The Water Collaborative of Greater New Orleans, The Wetlands Initiative, Two Paddles LLC, Upper Mississippi River Basin Association, WaterBar, Wilderness Inquiry. Thanks to these organizations and to all the individuals who attended or participated!

For questions or comments, contact [info@1mississippi.org](mailto:info@1mississippi.org).