



# Mississippi National River & Recreation Area

***“The Mississippi River’s National Park”***

John O. Anfinson, Superintendent



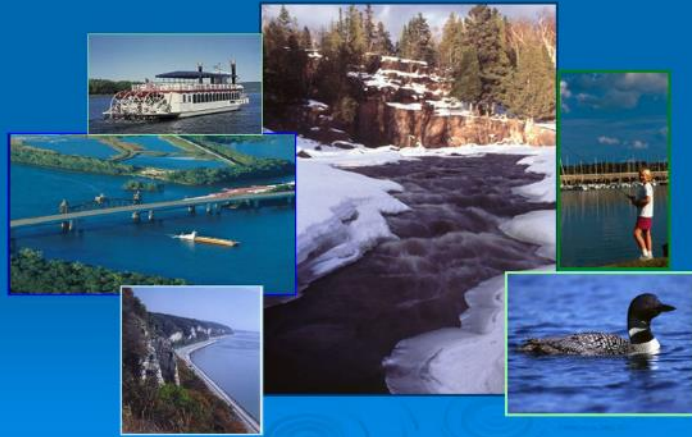
# A Business Lesson Learned From the Mighty Mississippi River



Here to  
LEARN



## The Mighty Mississippi



Cruising the Mighty Mississippi  
*Memphis to New Orleans*  
October 18 - 26, 2020 | American Queen®



# MIGHTY MISSISSIPPI



# Foundations



# Statue of Liberty





Liberty Bell,  
Independence  
National  
Historical Park



# Antietam National Battlefield



# Cliff Dwelling, Mesa Verde National Park







# Glacier National Park





# Sequoia National Park

# Grand Canyon National Park



# Mississippi National River & Recreation Area





# Mississippi National River and Recreation Area



- Established 1988
- 72 Miles of the Mississippi River
- 4 Miles of the Minnesota River
- 54,000 acres
  - 64 acres fee title
- 5 counties
- 21 towns & cities
- 4 townships
- Yellow = Boundaries
- Partnership park
- Headquarters – St. Paul



# St. Paul, Head of Navigation







# Establishment Context

- 1973 Minnesota Critical Area Act
- 1976 Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Executive Order
  - – Democratic Governor Wendel Anderson
- 1979
  - Renewed by Republic Governor Albert Quie
  - Made permanent by the Metropolitan Council
- 1988 Congress established MNRRA
- 1994-95 Comprehensive Management Plan signed by the Governor Arne Carlson and Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt

# 3 Missions

- MNRRA was established by Congress to
  - (1) protect, preserve and enhance the significant values of the Mississippi River corridor through the Twin Cities metropolitan area,
  - (2) encourage coordination of federal, state and local programs and
  - (3) provide a management framework to assist the state of Minnesota and units of local government in the development and implementation of integrated resource management programs and to ensure orderly public and private development in the area.

# Some of What the Critical Area Rules Address

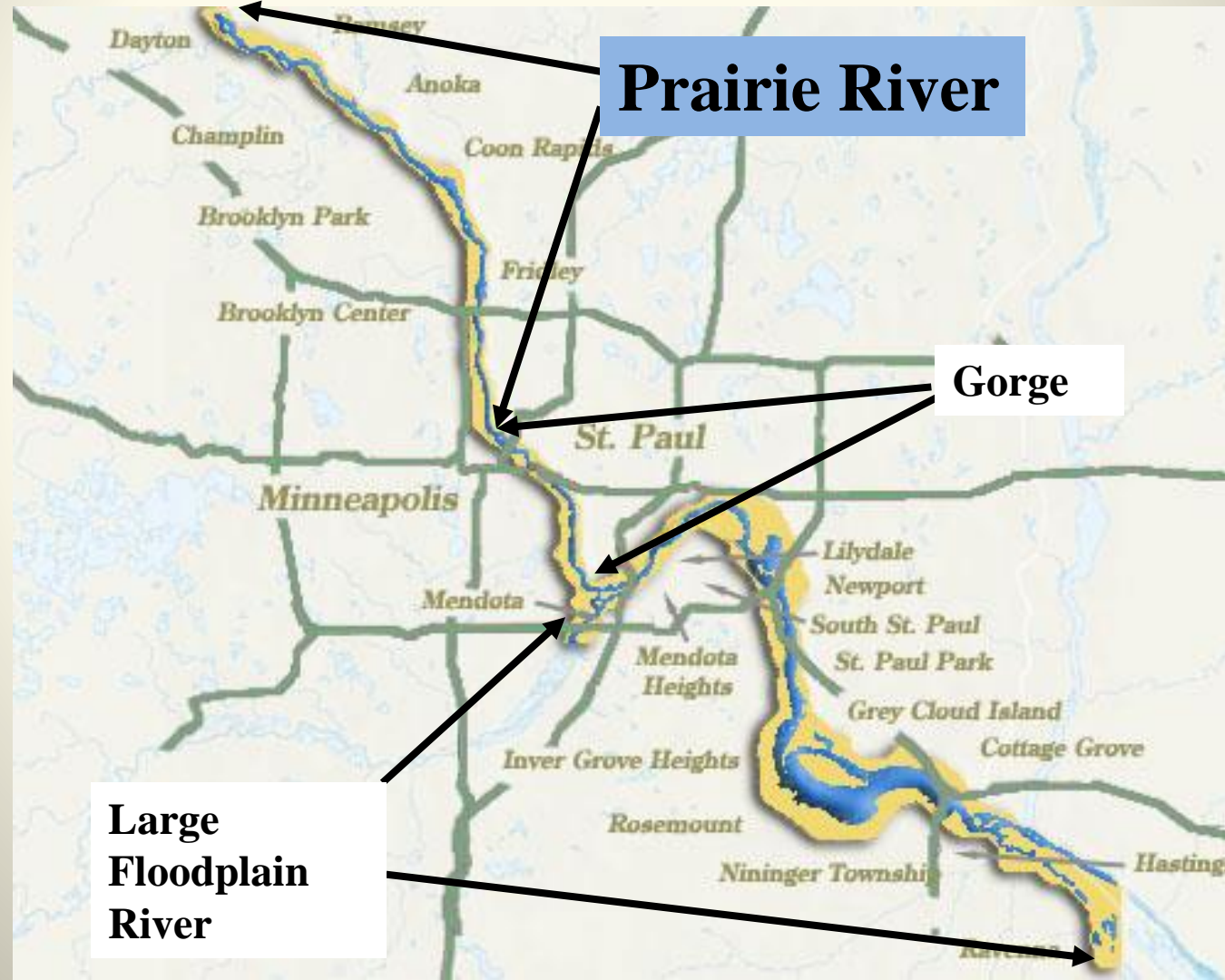
- Responsibilities and duties of state, regional and local government
- Preparation, review, approval and adoption of local plans and ordinances
- Establishment of six districts, each with dimensional standards for water and bluff setbacks, and building height
- Standards for
  - protecting bluffs and steep slopes
  - vegetation management and land alteration in sensitive areas
  - protecting key resources as part of new development and redevelopment

# Six Critical Area Districts

- **Rural & Open Space District (CA-ROS)**
  - Rural undeveloped and developed low density residential land that is riparian or visible from the river, often contains tracts of high quality ecological resources.
- **River Neighborhood District (CA-RN)**
  - Developed residential lands and existing/planned parkland that are visible from the river, or that abut riparian parkland
- **River Towns and Crossings District (CA-RTC)**
  - Historic downtown and river crossing commercial areas, as well as existing institutional campuses.
- **Separated from River District (CA-SR)**
  - Land that is separated from and not visible from the river.
- **Urban Mixed District (CA-UM)**
  - Commercial, institutional, and industrial mixed-use areas as well as existing/planned parklands.
- **Urban Core District (CA-UC)**
  - Urban cores of Minneapolis and St. Paul.



# Three Mississippis



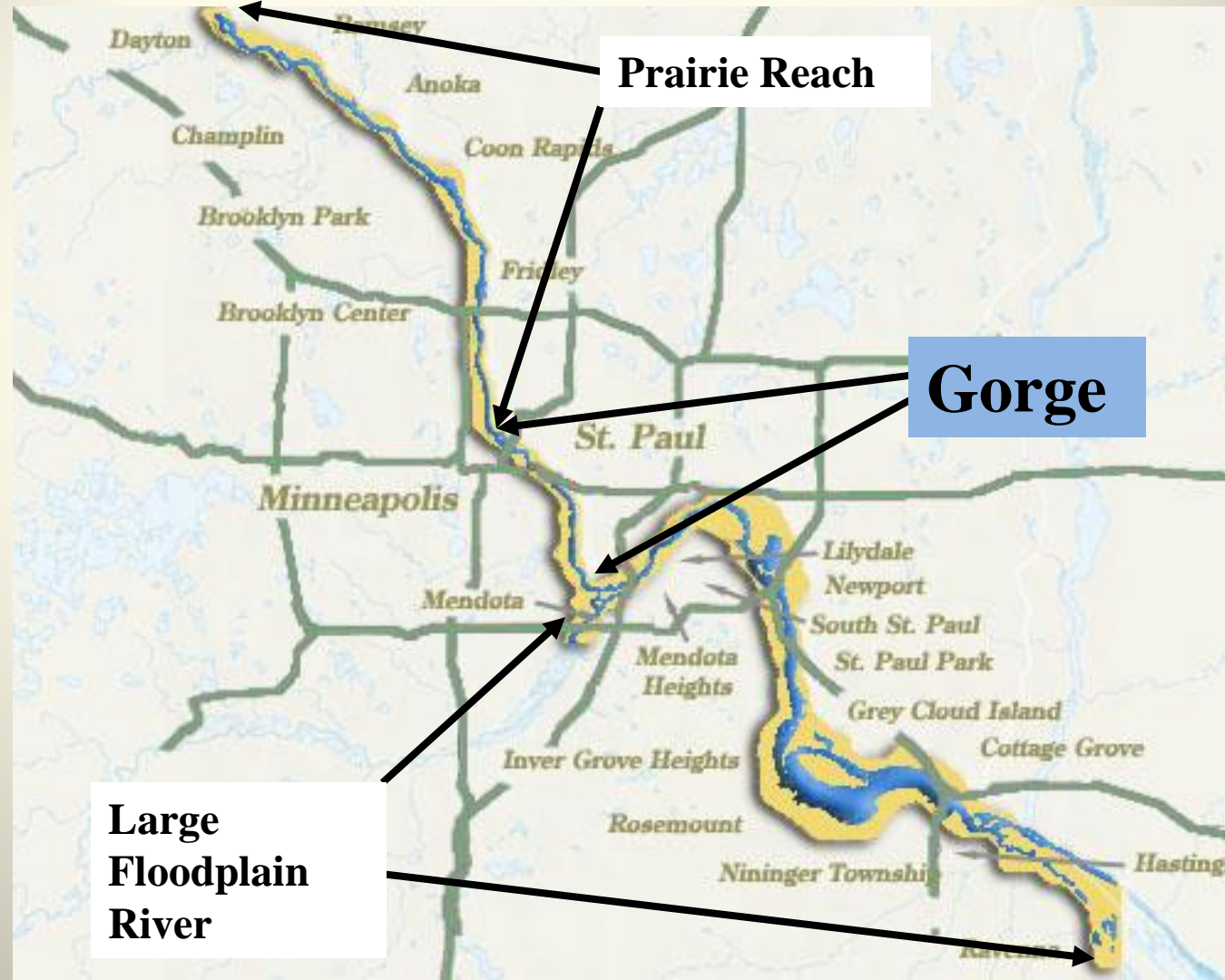


# Prairie River

- Northern border to St. Anthony Falls
- 25.6 miles
- Undeveloped, suburban and urban
- 2 free flowing reaches and 2 impoundments
- Banks not bluffs
- Limited floodplain, some islands and side channels
- No commercial navigation now that the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock is closed.



# Three Mississippis



**Prairie Reach**

**Gorge**

**Large  
Floodplain  
River**



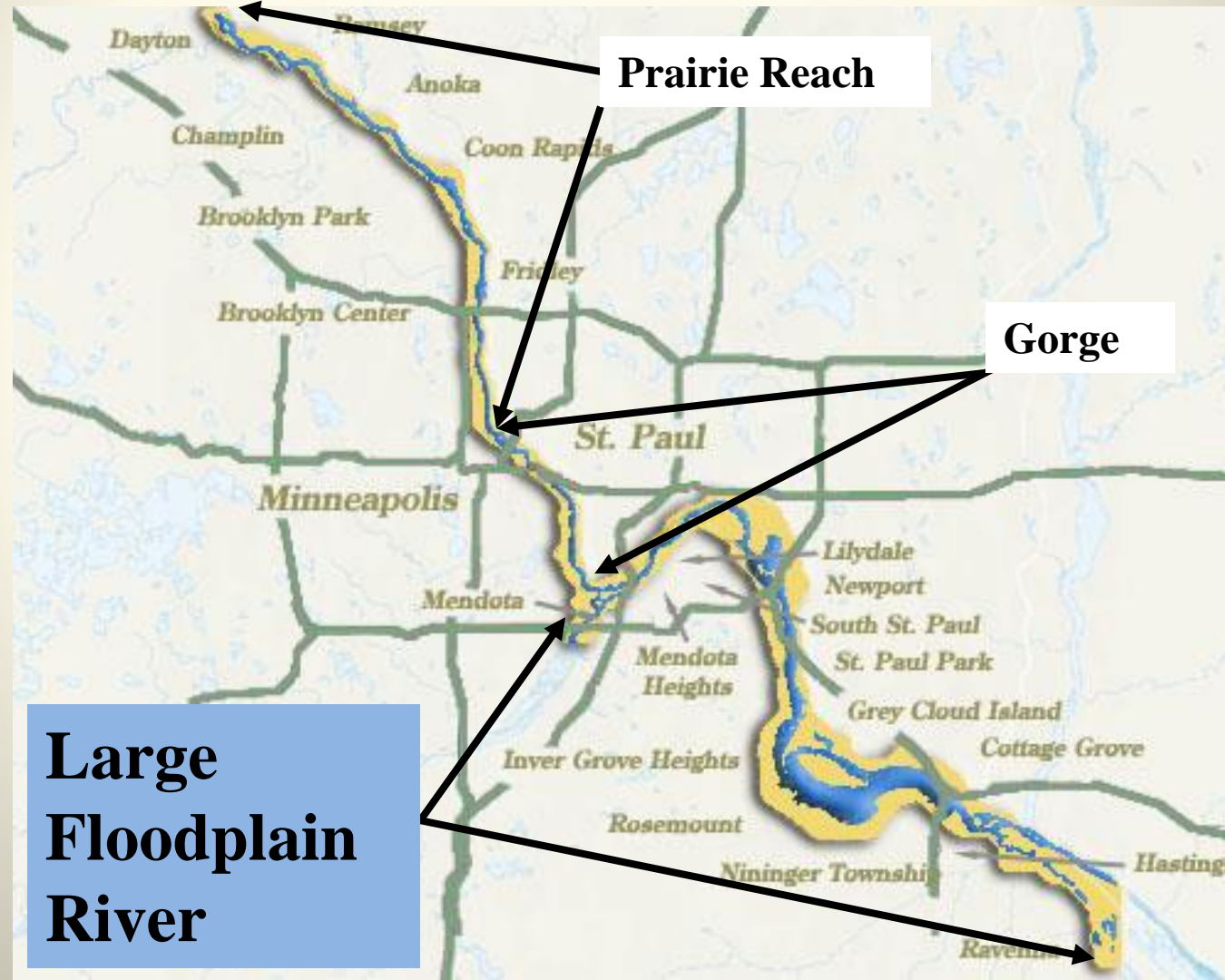
# Gorge



- St. Anthony Falls to the Minnesota River
- 8.5 miles
- Bluffs 1/4 to 1/3 mile apart, 80-110 feet high
- Tight, narrow canyon
- No islands, very little floodplain no backwaters
- No more commercial tow boats, only tour boats and small boats



# Three Mississippis



Prairie Reach

Gorge

Large  
Floodplain  
River

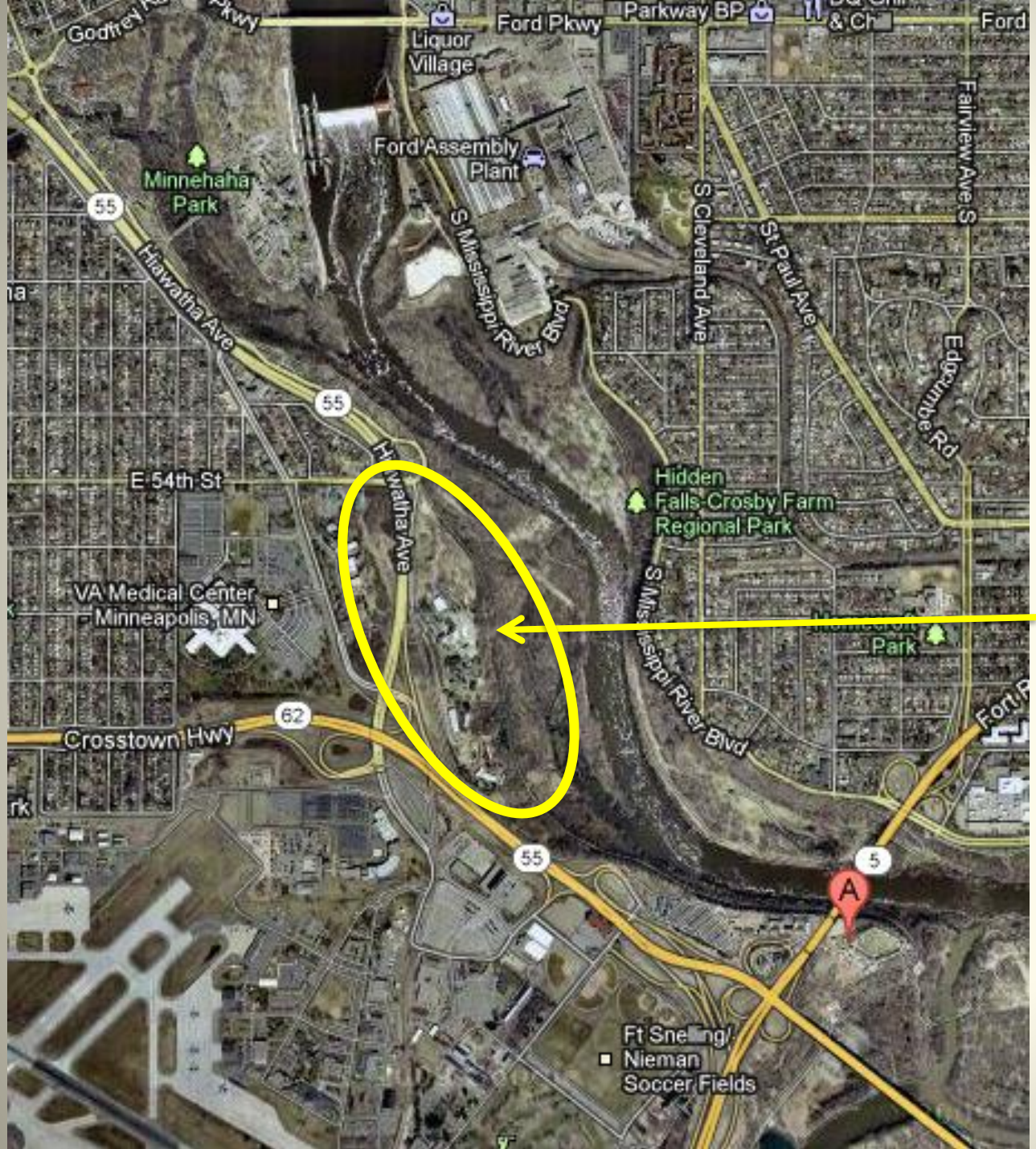


# Large Floodplain River

- Minnesota River to southern boundary
- 38.5 miles
- Undeveloped, suburban & urban
- Bluffs 1/2 mile wide to >2 miles
- Large floodplain, backwater lakes, small and large islands
- Commercial and all other navigation

# Mississippi River Visitor Center Science Museum of Minnesota





Coldwater  
Spring

# Coldwater Spring



# USAF Lock & Dam, Minneapolis



# Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock & Dam, Minneapolis



Visitor Center – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor



# Friends of the Lock & Dam Vision



Friends of the Lock & Dam; Mill City Times

# Watergate Marina, St. Paul



# Park Headquarters & River Learning Center



[https://fmr.org/sites/default/files/styles/1280w/public/screen\\_shot\\_2018-03-12\\_at\\_5.14.44\\_pm.png?itok=14VH7oxh](https://fmr.org/sites/default/files/styles/1280w/public/screen_shot_2018-03-12_at_5.14.44_pm.png?itok=14VH7oxh)

# Big River Journey



[https://www.nps.gov/miss/parknews/images/BRJ\\_FSSP2.jpg](https://www.nps.gov/miss/parknews/images/BRJ_FSSP2.jpg)

# UWCA – Embarking Mississippi River, Minneapolis



“...for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations.” National Park Service

# Fishing with a Ranger



# Fur Trade History with a Ranger



# Special Events – Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock





# Southside Aces – Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock





# Politician Paddles



# Murder Mystery Theater on the Mississippi Cast



<https://parkconnection.org/murderonmississippi>

# Plein Aire Artists at Coldwater Spring



# Warbler Paddle in the Vermillion River Bottoms



Mississippi Park Connection

# Mussel Monitoring and Protection



# Eagle Monitoring – Lead and Mercury





# Urban Wildlife – Coyote Census



# eDNA Testing for Asian carp

- Environmental DNA or eDNA testing is done by collecting water samples and then analyzing the samples in a lab.





# Our Potential: Midwest Region Parks

- 2015      112,349      25<sup>th</sup> of 60 parks
- 2016      221,266      17<sup>th</sup> of 60
- 2017 & 2018      430,000+      14<sup>th</sup> of 60
- 2024      >1,500,000      Top 5





