



*The Men's Kayak Cross event for Paris 2024 began at the U.S. Olympic Team Trials in Oklahoma City.
Photo: RIVERSPORT.*

Oklahoma!

Where Olympic Winds Come Sweeping from LA2028

by By Risa Shimoda, Mike Knopp, and Jeff Turner

For a place that turned its back on its riverfront just over 20 years ago, Oklahoma City serves as a model for how paddlesports can become a transformational beacon for a community through programming, facility development, and events that engage all sectors of the community and beyond. A far-fetched idea to transform a blighted, dry riverbed area not long ago will now put Oklahoma City on the world stage in a way community leaders never imagined, and it will impact the identity of the city for generations to come.

Oklahoma City is host to unique and specialized world class sports venues for paddlesports and softball; rather than build something new in Southern California for the LA28 Olympic and Paralympic Games, both paddlesports and softball competitions will be hosted in Oklahoma City. An article published June 2024 in [OKC Modern Frontier](#) explains:

While Southern California has more professional and collegiate sports venues than any area in the United States, there is no Canoe Slalom venue that exists locally (or anywhere in the Western U.S.), and the largest Softball venue in Southern California seats fewer than 2,000

(continued, page 5)



Main Office

Risa Shimoda, Executive Director
PO Box 5750, Takoma Park, MD 20913-5750
(301) 585-4677 / cell (301) 502-6548
executivedirector@river-management.org

**River Training Center
River Studies and Leadership Certificate**
Temporary Contact Risa Shimoda

National Rivers Project
James Major, Coordinator
(540) 717-3595 / james@river-management.org

Communications
Bekah Price, Coordinator
(423) 943-2000 / bekah@river-management.org

RMS Store / Merchandise
Judy Culver
(928) 443-8070 / jculver@blm.gov

RMS Journal
Sera Janson Zegre, Editor / Design
(970) 201-6163 / sera@river-management.org

National Officers
Kristina Rylands, Interm President, Mariposa, CA
(209) 761-6674 / kristinarylands@gmail.com

Shannon Bassista, Vice President, Boise, ID
(208) 373-3845 / sbassista@blm.gov

Helen Clough, Secretary, Juneau, AK
(907) 790-4189 / hcloughak@gmail.com

Rob White, Treasurer, Salida, CO
(719) 221-8494 / rob.whiteco@gmail.com

Emma Lord, Chapter Liaison, Loudon, NH
(518) 728-4029 / emma_lord@nps.gov

Member At-Large
Chris Geden, St. Louis, MO
(314) 607-4803 / chris@rivercityfdn.org

Past President
Judy Culver, President, Taos, NM
(928) 443-8070 / jculver@blm.gov

Ex-Officio Advisors
Bob Randall, Kaplan, Kirsch & Rockwell LLP
(303) 825-7000 / brandall@kaplankirsch.com

Nate Hunt, Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell LLP
(303) 825-7000 / nhunt@kaplankirsch.com

Steve Chesterton, US Forest Service
(202) 205-1398 / stephen.chesterton@usda.gov

Editorial Policy

Articles are not edited for content and may not reflect the position, endorsement, or mission of RMS. The purpose of this policy is to encourage the free exchange of ideas concerning river management issues in an open forum of communication among the RMS membership. Unless indicated, points of view are solely those of the author.

Executive Director's Eddy

Greeting the New Year

We are excited for you to discover new opportunities to learn from peers and partners and invite you to join us when you see topics of interest and as time allows. You will see in-person and virtual workshops programs, and Wild and Scenic Rivers webinars that provide both technical insights and new perspectives to help river managers understand and act in alignment with their responsibilities.

River Management Roundtables will continue to develop the Water Trails Working Group community and continue to address tenets of workplace culture that inspire and empower some, and require thoughtful navigation for others. Regardless of the topic or 'temperature' of the conversations, we always aim to offer value by benefiting from those whose perspectives reflect considerable skill, experience, and wisdom.

We look forward to celebrating the technical, historical, and cultural aspects of both the most consequential dam removal in our nation's history on the Klamath River at the 2025 River Management Symposium in Ashland: registration has been surprisingly strong, months ahead of our April 8 opening plenary. Participants will hear about the dam removal and river restoration on rivers in the region and elsewhere in the US; studies about use and evaluation of allocation systems; and hands-on river access planning design charette.

We greet the new year one woman down—without the skill, talent and confident approach to work and play of our River Training Center Coordinator Angie Braley. Angie has grown our River Training Center into a program that is respected for the standards it upholds and the nimbleness that has welcomed further innovation and enthusiastic participation. She has supported our awesome River Training Center instructors with training opportunities and tools to help them grow their respective programs more easily and effectively and she has played point for the River Studies and Leadership Certificate advisors by listening to their needs and instituting an online system to track students' program progression.



Risa Shimoda, RMS Executive Director

Angie has choreographed our River Training Center instructors, who have been critical to the success and growth of the program. These RMS members, colleagues, and partners include Jennifer Back, Becky Blanchard, Rod Bonacker, Steve Chesterton, Dave Cernicek, Mollie Chaudet, Mike Eberle, Tangy Ekasi-Otu, John Field, Liz Lacy, Jim MacCartney, Tony Mancuso, Colter Pence, Bill Sedivy, Roy Smith, Liz Townley, Monica Zimmerman, and others. We also appreciate RMS volunteer River Management Roundtable program leaders Ryan Ainger, Darrell Bowman, Dave Cernicek and Liz Lacy (again), and Tali MacArthur, Bob Stanley, and John Wenck. We could not offer opportunities to help river managers learn and grow as we have without your smarts, expertise and experience! If you think of someone I have missed, please ping me.

Finally, and hardly less in importance, we appreciate the tremendous effort that continues to be put forward by our chapters, whose trips have begun to introduce students and early career professionals to agency, academic and industry veterans. Chapter trips show, repeatedly, that they can provide the 'magic' introduction of like-minded professionals who may not realize how much they have in common, and how much they can learn from and grow with each other.

President's Corner

Turning the Pages of my RMS Chapter: Year End Reflections and a New President for a New Year

December has arrived more quickly than expected this year, and with it comes my decision to step down as President of the River Management Society as of January 1, 2025. I would like to thank RMS members for trusting me with the reins of this great organization. But, alas, I wish to shift my focus to other endeavors, including more time on the oars.

Kristina Rylands, Pacific Chapter President, will step in as interim RMS President until the national board elections are held. Kristina has the passion and innovative ideas to help move RMS national board onwards and upwards.

The board is also excited to welcome Chris Geden, Program Manager from Thrive Outside in St. Louis, Missouri, who has accepted the appointment of Board Member at Large.

As I turn the pages of my chapter at RMS, I'd like to highlight successes from the year. Key accomplishments in 2024 include 241 River Training Center videos, as well as the successful recruitment of long-standing members to join the membership and succession planning committees.

Here are some other key data points to celebrate:

- Over the last two years, RMS membership has reached record highs, driven by a demand for tools, training, and opportunities to collaborate.
- 1,200+ river professionals participated in training workshops and regional events.
- 43,000+ visitors visited the National Rivers Project website, which introduces river visitors to recreational segments and their stewards.
- 8,000 views of recorded content on RMS YouTube
- 9 students earned the River Studies and Leadership Certificate, and are preparing with us to lead the next generation of river professionals.



Judy Culver, RMS President

I would like to highlight again the nine students who received the River Studies and Leadership Certificate in 2024:

- Amber Martin, Colorado Mesa University (CO)
- Kennedy Perry, Fort Lewis College (CO)
- Austyn Rice, Northeastern State University (OK)
- Leah Fletcher, Northeastern State University (OK)
- Danielle Juarez, Northern Arizona University (AZ)
- Macie Wagner, Northern Arizona University (AZ)
- Ella Buckwalter, Virginia Commonwealth University (VA)
- Isabelle Pillow, Virginia Commonwealth University (VA)
- Jennoa Fleming, Virginia Commonwealth University (VA)

Finally, RMS board, staff, and partners are working alongside the Northwest Chapter to line out the Restoring Rivers for a Resilient Future Symposium that will be held in Ashland, Oregon April 8-10, 2025. The planning team received a record number of presentation proposals. It promises to be another amazing symposium filled with great career-focused learning and networking opportunities.

May I see you on the river with water dripping off my oars and the sun setting over my shoulder. ❖

Judy Culver, RMS President

We are inspired by our members' work to study, protect and manage North American rivers, and we look forward to another year of supporting each of you.

Risa Shimoda
Executive Director

Journal Feedback, Please!

Please take a few minutes to offer feedback on the *RMS Journal*.



Scan this

Midwest by James Major

Explore the Chapter with National Rivers Project



State	Segments	Miles
Illinois	116	3,633
Indiana	29	2,877
Iowa	52	4,750
Kansas	2	362
Michigan	98	4,458
Minnesota	41	4,646
Missouri	33	5,961
Nebraska	11	462
North Dakota	1	13
Ohio	78	3,867
Oklahoma	0	0
South Dakota	3	240
Wisconsin	204	4,098

National Rivers Project

The National Rivers Project is the result of partnerships with federal managers, state agencies, municipal governments, non-profits, local paddling clubs and individuals. We are grateful for the generosity of these organizations' time and resources in contribution to this endeavor.

For more info visit:

<http://www.nationalriversproject.com/>

(Oklahoma!, continued from page 1)

people, which does not meet the expected spectator demand for Softball at the Olympic Games. Instead of undertaking additional construction projects to build temporary venues for these sports, LA28 will assign Canoe Slalom and Softball competitions to the world-class venues in Oklahoma City.

According to RIVERSPORT OKC Founder Mike Knopp, the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to host the Olympics is an adjective salad: exciting, daunting, stressful, and hopeful. He sees hosting the Olympics as important for the community as a point of pride.



Ria Sribar and Evy Leibfarth competing in Kayak Cross at U.S. Olympic Team Trials in Oklahoma City. Photo: RIVERSPORT.

The opportunities include both those to introduce his city to the world (literally!) and to ignite programs and introduce both folks in town and those in the region who may not have visited to do so. The city will no doubt offer reasons for visitors to arrive early and stay in town beyond their chosen race or event.

With the unprecedented accessibility of paddling equipment and water access across the United States today, there has been no greater moment than now to spark a new, sustainable momentum in paddlesports, bolstered by the 2026 World Championships and 2028 Olympic Games.

International Canoe Federation (ICF) is working with RIVERSPORT to leverage this milestone opportunity for paddlesports in America by establishing Oklahoma City as the ICF continental training hub. The city will be a base for RIVERSPORT and American Canoe Association, the federation

for Olympic, ParaOlympic and non-Olympic International competitive paddle sports disciplines in the United States, to ignite connections between the robust recreational paddling communities through the inspiration that can come through the Olympic Movement. Creating a fan base for the sport through the thoughtful build up to the 2028 Olympic Games will elevate engagement in recreational paddling, similar to cycling and golf, while also creating a legacy pipeline to strengthen Team USA.

The next four years offer an opportunity to propel this momentum across the nation through a collaboration and focus across the industry, the national and international federations, and local communities and organizations. ❖

To see a release that itemizes the locations of various ompetitions, including Oklahoma City as the whitewater host, visit: <https://la28.org/en/newsroom/la28-updates-venue-plan.html>.



RIVERSPORT program brochures. Photo: Risa Shimoda.

Minnesota Led The Water Trail Way (in the 1960s!)

by Risa Shimoda, Nancy Stewart and Jack Henderson

Outdoor recreation activists Clyde and Shirley Ryberg worked diligently for years championing grassroots efforts to establish canoeing and boating opportunities in Minnesota. Due to their efforts, the 1963 state legislature and Governor Karl Rolvaag designated the Minnesota, St. Croix, Big Fork and Little Fork Rivers as the first canoe and boating routes in the state. The name was later changed to the Minnesota State Water Trails system. Governor Rolvaag saw these designations as an opportunity to “arouse the sleeping recreational giant” of canoeing, and as an opportunity for economic development and conservation.

Minnesota was the first state to establish a water trail system and remains as the state with the most extensive trail system in the nation. The statistics are somewhat staggering:

- 35 designated state water trails that represent 4,500 miles of water trail paddling
- 69,200 rivers and stream miles
- 11,842 lakes
- 3,010 public water access sites
- 815,000 registered boats
 - 615,000 motorized
 - 200,000 non-motorized

There is a Minnesota State Water Trail within an hour of almost anywhere in the state, so to promote paddling, the state has a variety of resources available to visitors. Extensive geospatial data has been collected to support mapping resources as well as internal operations. The data include river miles, access points, campsites, rest areas, portages and point out other features like dams, rapids, hazard areas and points of interest. Minnesota DNR offers traditional printed maps, geoPDF maps and an online interactive map.

Geospatial maps are available using the [Avenza Map App](#). You can download the app on your phone or tablet through the App Store for IOS devices and Google Play Store for Android devices. Once downloaded, open the Avenza Map Store and search ‘MNDNR’ and the river you would like to visit. The Minnesota DNR also provides geoPDF maps for state parks and recreation areas and land-based trails. The benefit of geoPDF maps is that your location is placed on the map and no internet or cell service is needed to use the map once it is downloaded. *Note:* The free version of the Avenza App lets you download and store three maps, some organizations charge a fee for their maps on the app, however most are free.



Map: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

RMS River Roundtable Recap: Water Trails & River Signage

The October 2024 River Management Roundtable provided an opportunity to learn how two water trail leaders are approaching the need for signage on rivers and streams that have been designated as trails. Signage seeks to help establish trail location, learn their traveled distance from the put in and distance left to reach the takeout, and identify sites of interest such as campsites, historical markers, or relief stations. This article summarizes resources offered by our panelists:

- Nancy Stewart, Water Recreation Consultant, Division of Parks and Trails, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and
- Jack Henderson, Manager of the French Broad Paddle Trail in North Carolina and Tennessee.

View the recorded roundtable on [RMS YouTube](#).



Traditional Site & Directional Signs



Minnesota has signs posted along each water trail to advise visitors of amenities and hazards. Signs are always helpful and sometimes critically important. Minnesota is still using a very traditional sign system developed in the 1990s when signs were produced in their DNR sign shop. Yellow lines and letters routed into a wood sign on a brown background allow them to both be unobtrusive and present their message clearly. Painted wood signs, however, are not long lasting so the maintenance required is high; they can also be hard to see in low light or if vegetation obscures them.

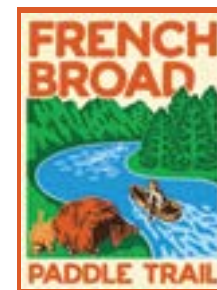
long lasting so the maintenance required is high; they can also be hard to see in low light or if vegetation obscures them.



Traditional (left) and modern signs (above). Images: Nancy Stewart.

Minnesota DNR is developing a new sign system that will have more modern graphics and materials. Aluminum signs will be less expensive and last longer. The option of adding reflective background will increase the visibility in low light settings. The new system is for all DNR properties so it is taking a long time to finalize; the signage will focus on universally recognized symbols and simple wording. ❖

French Broad Paddle Trail Signage



The French Broad Paddle Trail is a 140-mile recreation watercraft trail that flows from Rosman, North Carolina to Newport, Tennessee. The Paddle Trail was launched officially in 2012 by Riverlink and MountainTrue after the reach in Tennessee was designated a State Scenic River in 1968 and the section in North Carolina a State Trail in 1987.

Management of the French Broad Paddle Trail, including its campsites and access sites, is shared by agencies, regional nonprofits, businesses, and citizen volunteers. Staff and volunteers maintain and manage the paddle trail by keeping them clear of harmful debris, developing and maintaining signage, and hosting events to raise and maintain awareness of the resource and its value to the region.

Planned online information will highlight priority use(s) of a section, as well as an indication of the section's difficulty and boating safety tips.

The paddle trail has begun to develop signage for its access points and campgrounds, using American Whitewater Open-Source Signage Toolbox published online in early 2024. ❖

POPLAR BEND CAMPSITE

You are welcome to use this campsite as a daytime rest stop for free, however overnight camping requires a paid reservation. Visit www.frenchbroadpaddle.com/en/campsites for details.

CAMPSITE RULES:

- ⚠️ **Camping Area:** Stay within the campsite area and do not enter neighboring lands as this would be trespassing on private property.
- 🗑️ **Leave No Trace:** Do not leave any personal items, food, garbage, or other items behind, and do not attempt to burn trash or food.
- 🚽 **Composting Toilet:** Deposit all human waste into the composting toilet via the posted instructions, or carry it out by using an approved system such as a groover or WAG Bag.
- 🔥 **Fires:** Use only the designated fire ring and do not build new ones. Only burn dead, downed limbs and branches, and do not cut down live trees, or search neighboring lands for wood.
- 🪵 **Picnic Table:** Do not disconnect table from anchor. It is secured to prevent it from being swept away during floods.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



Example of French Broad Paddle Trail sign. Credit: Jack Henderson.

Oklahoma City Redefines Itself as a Paddlesports Resource

Inaugural paddlesports Trade Coalition Colab - An Important First Step

By Risa Shimoda, Mike Knopff, and Jeff Turner

[The Paddlesports Trade Coalition](#) (PTC) is a member-driven 501(c)(6) organization of brands, manufacturers, retailers/outfitters, sales representatives and associated organizations who are the voice and soul of the North American Paddlesports Industry. PTC's mission is to expand a vibrant community of participants in all human and sustainably powered boating activities. To this end, they will provide a collective strategy of industry growth initiatives to all paddlesports stakeholders through the development of effective overall industry consumer-facing selling strategies.

Formed in early 2023, the PTC fielded a membership initiative by autumn. The first Board of Directors election took place in January 2024 under the leadership of Stig Larson (CEO of Level Six, CEO of Terra Outdoor Group), adopting its first set of bylaws by March 2023. Initially formed with vital guidance from the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), the PTC functions independently as a fully formed 501(c)(6) national nonprofit trade organization. In July 2024, the PTC Board hired Jeff Turner as its first Executive Director.

The Organization held its first membership event, the PTC Colab, on September 4-6, 2024. Hosted by Riversport in Oklahoma City, the Colab hosted over 150 paddlesports industry retailers, associates, sales reps, sponsors, and supporters.

Attendees heard from experts on relevant trends in how the public communicates, shops, and prioritizes their activities and actions. They met veterans from other trade industries - Grassroots

Outdoor Alliance, Outdoor Industry Association, and Snowsports Industries America. Thought-provoking sessions asked manufacturers of brands, retailers, sales reps, and associates to articulate the major challenges they need to overcome to feel confident in their viability and achieve both healthy market share and profitability during the next 5-10 years. While each group's priority reflected their interest, there was agreement about the challenge of the public's evolving shopping habits, accelerated during the pandemic and complicated by manufacturers selling directly to consumers besides through retailers. Groups acknowledged the importance of reaching 'new' audiences to whom paddling experiences can be sampled and repeated, safely to grow them up as enthusiasts.

Building upon the foundation of 25 original members, PTC expanded to 136 members that span the paddlesports community. Today, PTC membership consists of 37% Retailers/Outfitters, 38% Brands, 13% Sales Representatives, and 13% Associates.

The week would not have been complete without opportunities to sample both familiar and new models on the nearby Oklahoma River and the Riversport whitewater course. All who attended contributed to a number of important conversations about the state of the paddlesports industry.

The second PTC Colab will be hosted again in Oklahoma City September 8-10, 2025. ❖

For more event information visit:

<https://www.paddlesportstradecoalition.org/ptc-colab>



PTC Colab

(left to right)

Nikki Rekman,
veteran paddlesports
sales representative

Steve Jordan-
President
Hurricane Kayaks

Jon Kahn- Owner,
Confluence Kayaks

Stig Larson-CEO,
Level Six

Jeff Moag-
Contributing Editor,
Paddlesports
Business.

Photo: Risa
Shimoda.

RMS News

New At-Large Board Member

Welcome
Chris Geden

Thrive Outside Program Manager
Director of Community Engagement, River City Foundation



The River Management Society Board of Directors has appointed Chris Geden to an at-large seat. Chris has been an enthusiastic volunteer and resource for pragmatic, on-the-ground, reality-based program input since we met him during a River Management Roundtable over two years ago. As an RMS Board member, Chris is excited, with input from members and partners, to create and grow opportunities for members of traditionally underserved and/or underrepresented communities to enter, practice, and lead river-based and other outdoor-focused companies, agencies and non-profit organizations.

Originally from New Jersey, Chris has called St. Louis home for over 30 years. With a passion for community development and outdoor education, he has spent over a decade working with young people through various organizations like the Children's Education Alliance of Missouri and the Gateway Region YMCA. His career has been deeply rooted in creating opportunities for youth to engage with nature and build lifelong skills.

Before joining River City Outdoors, Chris served as Recreation Supervisor and Program Director for the City of St. Louis. While he oversaw traditional 'sporting' activities by managing programs at the city's recreation centers and local pools, he sparked a love for the outdoors among young people by introducing them to fishing, tree climbing, archery, and geocaching.

As Community Engagement Director for River City Outdoors, Chris works to expand access to outdoor recreation and build stronger community connections, promoting environmental stewardship while helping individuals and families experience the healing and joy that outdoor activities can provide. He is also a fishing instructor and river guide in training for Big Muddy Adventures, where he leads river expeditions and shares his love of fishing with adventurers of all ages.

Chris is personally passionate about building access to healthy, sustainable food. As part of the leadership team behind the Tower Grove Farmers Market, he advocates for local food systems that nourish both the community and the environment. Chris enjoys spending time in the great outdoors—whether its camping, fishing, or paddling on the Mississippi. A lover of the ocean, he finds peace in swimming in large bodies of water and looks forward to exploring new rivers and seas. Above all, Chris wants to see diversity, equity, inclusion and justice in the outdoor space. ❖

Thrive Outside St. Louis

Led by River City Outdoors, this community is building a coalition to engage the St. Louis region in repeating and reinforcing outdoor experiences. They do this by activating a network of intersectional partners—nonprofits, schools, youth service providers, health organizations, recreation providers, and corporate and governmental—to share resources and skills. With an emphasis on youth and marginalized communities, Thrive Outside St. Louis is working to identify and reduce equity barriers while promoting positive outdoor experiences so outdoor recreation can be accessible and embraced by all people. Key initiatives include catalyzing equitable outdoor programming, supporting the development of Action Adventure Clubs, and supporting like-minded community groups. ❖

Advisory Board Partners include:

- River City Foundation
- Terrain Magazine
- Missouri Department of Conservation
- Great Rivers Greenway
- Trailnet
- Missouri Environmental Education Association
- The Boys & Girls Club of Greater St. Louis
- Northside Community Housing Inc.
- Ujima STL
- The Nature Conservancy in Missouri
- Clark-Fox Family Foundation

Community partners include:

- Big Muddy Adventures
- Black Trans Bike Experience/Black Transcendence
- Black People Who Hike
- City of St. Louis Parks
- Bus for Outdoor Access and Teaching
- East St. Louis Public Schools
- Fresh Thyme Market
- Gateway Region YMCA

- Gateway to the Great Outdoors
- Gene Slay's Girls & Boys Club
- GO! St. Louis
- Lift for Life Academy
- LinkSTL
- Marquette Recreation Center
- Missouri Interscholastic Cycling League
- Shaw Nature Reserve (Missouri Botanical Garden)
- Missouri River Relief
- Mississippi River Network
- Outdoor Afro
- St. Louis Public Schools
- St. Louis BWorks
- Sherwood Forest
- Sierra Club of Eastern Missouri
- Sinai Family Life Center
- STL Youth Jobs
- Thomas Dunn Learning Center
- USFS Urban Connections Program
- Upper Limits
- Vail Ski Resorts
- Vertical Voyages

A Current Flows Through Education: The River Field Studies Network's Year of Growth

by James Vonesh (VCU), Rodney Dyer (VCU), Danielle Hare (Cary Institute), Jabari Jones (Bowdoin University), John McLaughlin (UWW), Adriana Martinez (SIUE), Alison O'Dowd (Cal Poly Humboldt), Denielle Perry (NAU), Emily Philpott (VCU), Sarah Praskievicz (UNC-G), Andy Rost (UN-R), Christina Spohn (VCU), Andy Stubblefield (Cal Poly Humboldt), Elizabeth Waring (NSU), Susan Washko (WCU), Sarah Yarnell (UC-Davis), and Nicolas Zegre (WVU)

The River Field Studies Network (RFSN), funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), is dedicated to bolstering river science education across the US. Their approach is as dynamic as the rivers themselves, weaving together interdisciplinary training, open-source resources, and a passionate community of

educators. The year 2024 marked a period of significant growth for the network, building on past successes and expanding its reach into new territories.

One of the cornerstones of RFSN's work is its River Field Scholars Program, a year-long training program for educators passionate about river science. In 2024, RFSN celebrated the graduation of its second cohort of 15 scholars and welcomed its third cohort of 12 scholars, a diverse group representing a range of institutions and disciplines. This year's training program was redesigned based on feedback from previous cohorts, prioritizing community building and collaborative lesson development. A key element of this redesign was the shift of the River Rendezvous—an immersive, in-person gathering—to the beginning of

the training cycle, rather than mid-cycle as it had been in the past. This year, the rendezvous took place on the Klamath River in California, a location chosen for its unique opportunity to learn about rivers, river restoration, and human-river relationships in the context of the the largest dam removal project in American history. The Klamath Rendezvous took place over 9 days in early June and involved educational visits to restoration sites, meetings with stakeholders, a demonstration educational overnight rafting trip, and workshopping ideas for new open sources lessons.

The shift to a community-focused, brainstorming-oriented rendezvous allowed scholars to connect with each other and generate ideas for new lessons organically. After the rendezvous,



scholars were empowered to develop and refine their lessons throughout the summer, testing them in familiar settings with their own students at their home institutions. This new approach not only provided more relevant feedback but also significantly expanded the reach and impact of the program by including hundreds of students and community partners across the country in the lesson piloting process. Developing lessons after the Rendezvous also enabled Scholars to incorporate concepts and approaches from the Rendezvous into their lessons. By the end of the year, eight new open-source lessons were published on the QUBEShub platform, adding to RFSN's growing library of 18 lessons, with 11 more lessons in the pipeline.

The impact of RFSN's work extends far beyond the scholars themselves. The network's dedication to open-source resources means that these lessons are freely available to educators around the world. In 2024, the lesson library were accessed and downloaded thousands of times, showcasing the global reach of RFSN's impact. Furthermore, the new

approach to piloting lessons resulted in a remarkable surge in student engagement, with over 300 individuals participating, including graduate and undergraduate students, as well as community members.

RFSN's influence goes beyond lesson creation. The network also facilitated several collaborative projects, including a partnership with the Society for Freshwater Science Emerge Program, where RFSN scholars co-led a canoe trip on the Delaware River for Emerge fellows, focusing on community building, diversity, and inclusion in freshwater science. RFSN also continued its engagement with the NSF Belonging in Field Education initiative, participating in workshops and presenting at conferences.

Importantly, there have been some remarkable synergies between the NSF RFSN and the RMS River Studies and Leadership Certificate (RSLC) Program. Nearly all RSLC coordinators are RFSN members, with most RSLC coordinators positions being held by RFSN's core leadership team. Furthermore, the RFSN has served as a vital incubator for new

Nearly all RSLC coordinators are River Field Studies Network (RFSN) members, with most RSLC coordinators [being the] Network's core leadership team... the River Field Studies Network (RFSN) has served as a vital incubator for new RSLC programs...at least four new programs spearheaded by individuals...within the Network's framework.

RSLC programs, with at least four new programs spearheaded by individuals trained within the RFSN framework. This close relationship has led to innovative collaborative endeavors, such as the presentation delivered by James Vonesh, RFSN PI, at the national RMS board meeting. This presentation advocated for continued RMS support of RFSN activities, emphasizing the crucial role RFSN plays in bolstering the success of RSLC programs nationwide. Every student registered to attend or present at the upcoming 2025 RMS Symposium is enrolled in RSLC, advised by a member of the RFSN leadership team. The intertwined efforts of RFSN and RMS exemplify the power of collaboration in advancing river education and fostering the next generation of river stewards.

The RFSN's year in review paints a vivid picture of a thriving community of educators dedicated to fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for rivers. Through innovative training programs, accessible resources, and collaborative projects, RFSN is making a tangible difference in the field of river science education. As the network continues to evolve and expand its reach, its impact on society's relationship with rivers promises to flow for years to come. ❖

Check out the River Field Studies Network [2024 Year in Review Video](#).

2024 River Field Scholars Program Klamath River Rendezvous, California

(standing, left to right)

Jamie Marsh, Washington and Jefferson
 Erasme Uyizeye, Brevard College
 Andy Rost, University of Nevada-Reno
 Alan Waxman, University of California-Berkeley
 Gary Lee McMilen
 John McLaughlin, Western Washington University
 John Keyantash, California State University, Dominguez Hills
 Dayna Quick, College of Marin
 Suzanne Walther, University of San Diego
 Karen Mager, Southern Oregon University
 Andy Stubblefield, University of California-Poly Humboldt
 Denielle Perry, Northern Arizona University
 Cheyanne Olson, Rodgers State University

(kneeling, left to right)

Sarah Yarnell, University of California-Davis
 Ana Meza Salazar, NCSU
 Alison O'Dowd, California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt
 Thien-Kim Bui, Portland State University
 Erin Tracy, University of California-Davis
 (not pictured) Sarah Kelley, Dartmouth University

RSLC Alumni — the Next Generation of River Professionals



Christian Fauser
Northern Arizona University
(NAU) Alumnus —
Western Water Policy Associate
for the Theodore Roosevelt
Conservation Partnership

Where are they now?

RMS launched the RSLC program in 2015 in partnership with various universities to help students build a foundation of knowledge, skills, and experience in river-based science, policy, conservation, education, and recreation. Since then, 62 students have graduated with the certificate, and most have gone on to pursue careers in river management and stewardship. We showcase them to learn more about what the pathway from student to river professional looks like today.

My relationship with rivers has proven as dynamic as my personal growth and development. The mighty, muddy Mississippi River and its tributaries are an indelible constant that touched every aspect of my upbringing in Memphis, Tennessee. The Arkansas River through Browns Canyon, and an offer to spend a season running it commercially, invited me to my first chapter of life outside of the Southeastern United States. Learning about the ecological and anthropogenic causes of our low-water year on the Arkansas pushed me out to Missoula, Montana where I studied the impacts of dams on streams and creeks around Western Montana, began studying water law and policy, and recreated freely in every way imaginable on the Clark Fork River. My interest in water law and policy took me to Flagstaff, Arizona where I began obsessively engaging with the Verde River, less through my recreational pursuits, and more through the lens of Master's research. Now a full-fledged Arizona water nerd, I live in Phoenix, Arizona, where I work on issues such as aquatic ecosystem health, drought resiliency, and water security as they pertain to the Colorado, Verde, Salt, and Gila River systems.

I was introduced to the RSLC during my time at Northern Arizona University (NAU) in Flagstaff, where my academic advisor Dr. Denielle Perry was pivotal in getting me to register and complete the RSLC. At NAU, I completed an M.S. in Environmental Science and Policy. In pursuing my degree and the RSLC, I completed a thesis that investigated the political-ecological consequences of using fish barriers in aquatic invasive species management on a Wild and Scenic Eligible stretch of the Verde River. Additionally, I served as an assistant researcher and co-author on two academic articles. The first article addressed issues of interstate groundwater competition in the US, and the second investigated the intersection of climate policy, hydropower development, and environmental justice relative to Indigenous rights in the Little Colorado River Basin. The last, and most impactful, experience I had was serving as a member of the Upper Verde River Wild and Scenic River Coalition. The

coalition is a collaborative effort between several environmental non-profits working to advocate for a Wild and Scenic River designation for the Upper Verde River, and I had the opportunity to use my research to support the coalition's advocacy efforts.

My experience working collaboratively with a diverse group of stakeholders and environmental non-profits in the Arizona water policy and river protection space made me the best candidate for the job I currently hold: the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership's Western Water Policy Associate. In this policy-focused position, I have worked at the federal and state levels championing policies that enhance and scale watershed restoration work in Arizona, and also enhance drought resiliency and water security for communities in Arizona and across the Colorado River Basin. To this end, completing the RSLC armed me with the necessary technical knowledge and the ability to effectively work with a broad range of stakeholders, including local restoration practitioners, agency personnel, and federal and state lawmakers. Today, I work to identify and implement solutions to enhancing the health and resiliency of Arizona's watersheds and the communities that rely on them. ❖



BLM and RMS Make it Easy to Plan your Next Idaho River Trip

Joint press release from the BLM Idaho and RMS, published Oct. 18, 2024.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and River Management Society (RMS) are collaborating to make it easier to plan your next Idaho river trip by visiting the online National Rivers Project (NRP). This first-stop river trip planning website now features nearly 50 Idaho river trips and recently added 19 segments managed by BLM Idaho.

Visitors can search the NRP website to find which Idaho rivers are Wild and Scenic; learn the difficulty rating from beginner, intermediate or expert; and which rivers offer camping, fishing, boat ramps and even whitewater experiences. Idaho rivers provide many recreation opportunities, such as world-class fly fishing on the South Fork Snake River or steelhead fishing on the Clearwater River. Visitors also enjoy multi-day whitewater rafting on the Lower Salmon River or the Payette River.

“Water is a huge draw for many of us, whether it’s to cool down on a hot day, teach your children to fish, or experience the thrill of rapid-running adventure,” says BLM Idaho Recreation Specialist Shannon Bassista.

“This website features valuable information helping visitors plan and prepare for river-related activities and encouraging stewardship of our public lands and waterways.”

On the website, visitors can look up camping locations, river access and permit requirements, along with convenient links for more information.

“RMS has worked closely with our BLM Idaho partner to ensure the information on the website is accurate, so boaters and anglers can begin their trip planning with confidence,” notes NRP Coordinator James Major.

BLM Idaho manages 312 miles along 16 congressionally designated Wild & Scenic Rivers, which is second only to Oregon in the number of Wild & Scenic Rivers. Watch videos on river etiquette or “Ask a River Ranger” to be good stewards of your American public lands and waterways. ❖

Paddlers at Fall Creek on the South Fork of the Snake River in Idaho. Photo: Bob Wick / BLM.



Revitalizing Urban Waterway Communities: Streams of Environmental Justice

Smardon, R., Moran, S., & Baptiste, A. K. (2018). Routledge.

by Irene Curulli, PhD

This book, through its 10 engaging chapters, offers a compelling study of the challenges local communities face in transforming urban waterways. A key theme that connects these chapters is environmental justice, with the goal of providing beneficial solutions, promoting ecological improvements, and reconnecting urban residents with the rivers and streams that traverse their neighborhoods or lie hidden beneath the urban fabric. However, critical questions arise: How are waterways chosen for revitalization, and who is involved in the process?

The answers are complex, and actions cannot be easily generalized. The authors' use of a case study approach is particularly insightful, as it illuminates the diverse ways environmental justice leadership has facilitated the transformation of many rivers and streams across the US. By comparing these approaches through the lens of environmental justice, the case studies detail the challenges inherent in each specific context, outlining the procedures, responsibilities, and benefits of waterway restoration.

Chapter 3 provides a rich overview of the history and theories of the environmental justice movement and its relationship with stream restorations, making it especially informative for newcomers to the field. This chapter highlights the need to merge political ecological thought with environmental justice principles to determine how communities are involved in and benefit from revitalization efforts. Authors apply environmental justice and a political ecology framework to analyze numerous examples using the most widely accepted definition of environmental justice, which includes all individuals and communities and allows equal access to decision-making processes to achieve a healthy environment where everyone enjoys the same degree of protection. The use of the political ecology framework is particularly compelling because it interrogates the processes that shape current realities. According to the authors, political ecology goes beyond managerial approaches by acknowledging the power relations embedded in socio-environmental problems and the institutions that both shape and are shaped by these issues. Two key elements emerge from this analysis: first, urban waterways are areas where pollution and other environmental injustices have historically impacted low income communities and communities of color more than others; second, it is crucial to involve institutions and systems, rather than focusing solely on individual efforts, to improve the communities most affected by river revitalization.

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies (EPA, 2017).

Chapter 4 presents a comparative study of five urban cases: Mill River (Philadelphia), Chattanooga Creek (TN), Anacostia River (Washington, DC), Onondaga Creek (Syracuse, NY), and Bronx River (New York City). This chapter highlights successes and failures of environmental justice leadership in transforming these sites. To understand how environmental justice is integrated into river revitalization, the cases are compared to the structure of the involved stream restoration organizations, including the demographics of both the organizations' leadership and the communities where the restoration is occurring, as well as the intergenerational continuity of leadership and membership. A table summarizing the various themes across the cases identifies who initiated the process, the reasons behind it, the strategies employed, and the outcomes. This provides insight into how distributive and procedural justice can be addressed in river restoration initiatives.

Authors identify two key lessons that emerge from the variety of strategies used—ranging from media campaigns to public meetings, charrettes to weekly workshops, lawsuits to new partnerships, and urban gardens to collaborations with government. First, there is a need to incorporate both ecological principles and community interests by viewing the scientific and technical community as allies rather than project leaders. This approach places community interests at the center of the project while ensuring ecological protection is not neglected. Second, promoting intergenerational coordination is essential to prevent the continuation of environmental injustice both within and across generations. This involves incorporating outreach programs that engage both youth and elders in decision-making. Such an approach challenges stereotypes about young people being uninterested in natural resource management, acknowledges their perspectives, and contributes to more inclusive and balanced views on waterway use, health, and management. An example of this is the Landscape Literacy Project on Mill Creek in Philadelphia. The project involved female researchers and research assistants from UPenn working with local schoolchildren to build landscape literacy about the watershed, its environmental and cultural history, and key planning issues. This raised awareness of the environmental hazards of Mill Creek and its impact on the community, sparking interest in cleaning up the creek. However, an important concern authors highlight is that outreach programs intended to promote intergenerational continuity show no evidence of elders actively involved in the initiatives, nor of the younger generation taking over leadership roles in the organizations engaged in revitalization projects. In short, there is a tendency for generational gaps in river restoration and revitalization projects, which could affect long-term sustainability. Funding could play a crucial role in bridging this gap.



South Platte Denver, Colorado. Photo: Rick Smardon.

Chapter 7 explores the techniques used to engage communities in restoration projects. This chapter focuses on interactive processes for successfully engaging communities, presenting the Onondaga Creek (NY) case as an informative example. The creative techniques used to involve communities in the restoration project is well outlined and can be used as a model for application in similar contexts. Central to this process was community participatory mapping. This involved a series of planning maps and 40 creative play cards with graphic representations of revitalization options (e.g., restoring floodplains and riparian forests, providing recreation access, and acquiring land). These hydrological, biological, and land-use cards were used by three teams of participants, each focusing on different types of land use (urban, rural, and mixed), to place ideas in various stream segments. The ideas were then grouped into project areas representing potential future revitalization projects. Following this, 'themes were developed for each project area based on symbol groupings. Working groups reviewed and voted on their preferred potential project areas bundled into interconnected projects' (p.157). This participatory process was integral to decision-making and prioritization.

Compared to other participatory techniques, such as field trips, community talks, websites, and collaborations with schools or community groups—which are primarily one-way forms of communication—the use of community mapping and other interactive platforms makes public input a pivotal element in the decision support system process. The point is that each revitalization project develops its own platform and interactive process. While this isn't necessarily a bad thing, such instruments do not appear to be available to everyone. What about sharing?

I join the plea of the author of this chapter for a partnership

between academics and communities to grant accessibility to these resources via service learning.

In contrast, the European approach to environmental initiatives emphasizes transferability, outcome sharing, and open access to tools and platforms, driven by EU funding mechanisms. Projects are often designed to ensure that lessons learned, tools developed, and platforms created are accessible to all stakeholders and transferable across the continent. This is reinforced by EU funding requirements, which promote result dissemination and cross-border collaboration. Furthermore, European regulatory policies and international agreements play a central role in river and waterway planning and restoration, offering a more cohesive and standardized approach than in the US, where frameworks can be less centralized.

This common regulatory foundation in Europe supports broader, more inclusive, and sustainable environmental management. In so doing, this approach not only disseminates best practices widely but also bridges gaps between isolated projects, promoting long-term sustainability and inclusivity in environmental justice initiatives.

As this book emphasizes environmental justice with a focus on people, it raises a provocative question: What about the rights of nature, particularly rivers? Too often, environmental interests are overshadowed by societal priorities, compromising the integrity of rivers despite efforts to maintain water quality. The concept of the rights of nature posits that natural entities, like rivers, have fundamental rights, such as the right to flow, regenerate, and remain pollution-free. Increasingly, local governments and nations are recognizing these rights to address gaps in environmental protection, as seen with the Atrato River in Colombia, the Rhone River in France/Switzerland, Paris's Seine, the UK's River Dart, and the Maas River in the Netherlands.

Environmental justice and the recognition of the rights of nature, especially for rivers, are deeply intertwined. By extending justice to include the inherent rights of rivers, restoration efforts can address the needs of both human communities and the ecosystems they depend on. This perspective broadens the book's discussion of environmental justice, advocating for a future where the well-being of people and the intrinsic value of rivers are equally respected. It challenges us to envision a more equitable and sustainable world where environmental restoration and justice are inseparable from the rights of nature. ❖

Irene Curulli (igcurulli@vt.edu) is Associate Professor of Practice in the School of Design, Landscape Architecture program, Virginia Tech, VA.

Far-Reaching Impacts on North Carolina, Tennessee Rivers

By Larry Lempert, Canoe Cruisers Association (CCA) Editor

Note: Article reprinted with approval by the CCA of Greater Washington, DC. Founded in 1956, the CCA has members from Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia and other nearby regions. CCA is a kayak and canoe club whose main purpose is to unite persons interested in paddling the Potomac River Basin and adjacent watersheds. The CCA runs trips, teaches classes, promotes river safety, and participates in river access and watershed conservation efforts. In 2024, the CCA hosted 118 club trips with 1175 participants and 226 individual paddlers. 2025 marks the 70th year of the Potomac Downriver Race, the longest continually-held downriver race in the nation.

Hurricane Helene was a killer, with 226 lives lost across six states according to the latest report (Oct. 27) by the Washington Post. And the hurricane was a destroyer, with property losses from wind and flooding estimated to be between \$30.5 billion and \$47.5 billion across 16 states, according to insurance industry reports in October. The state hardest hit was North Carolina, where 102 people died as reported by the state's Health and Human Services Department.

These impacts will weigh heavily on those who regard North Carolina and Tennessee as meccas of whitewater paddling. Some of these states' classic whitewater rivers were heavily affected by Helene and will be reminders for years to come of the lives lost and property damaged—although, ironically for paddlers and whitewater-dependent businesses, sometimes riverbed changes turn out to be a positive for paddling. We will also see cleanup and repair efforts for years to come and will be affected by the rebuilding of washed-out roads, bridges, and railroads.

For informative observations focused on rivers, river communities, and river-dependent businesses, see:

- [Don't Let Railroad Rebuild Destroy the Nolichucky Gorge](#), by Kevin Colburn, American Whitewater, Nov. 6—"In the remote Nolichucky Gorge the flood almost totally reorganized the rapids—but not in a bad way.... With this said, the disaster of riverbed mining and destruction could erase the river's value in a matter of days or weeks, and it is utterly avoidable. If rapids and riverbanks continue to be mined the river will widen and be simpler and shallower."
- [American Whitewater Sues Agencies for Allowing Mining in Nolichucky River](#), by Kevin Colburn, American Whitewater, Nov. 18—"The Southern Environmental Law Center, on behalf of American Rivers and American Whitewater, sued several federal agencies [on Nov. 18], saying the agencies violated federal law by allowing a rail company to mine the Nolichucky River in East Tennessee."
- [Helene's damage to North Carolina's Green River affects businesses that depend on it](#), by Rolando Arrieta, NPR, Oct. 17—"Every whitewater kayaking guidebook is obsolete. All the rapids are different. They're going to have different names, different lines.... A couple of miles down the barely passable Green River Cove Road, this small community is

littered with upturned vehicles, crumbled roofs and what's left of homes along the river banks." [Editor's note: NPR's Rolando Arrieta is CCA's safety chair.]

- [Testing the Waters](#), The Safety Break podcast, Episode 16 (38 minutes)—Returning to the rivers of Western NC after Hurricane Helene.

[Editor removed list, links, and summary on hurricane's impacts.]

On the American Whitewater website, Kevin Colburn, AW's national stewardship director, has posted this warning on some of the classic Tennessee and North Carolina river runs: "WARNING: This run has been severely impacted by Hurricane Helene. Rapids are likely to have dramatically changed and access roads and parking are severely impacted or entirely gone." Rivers to which this warning has been applied include the Nolichucky and Pigeon in Tennessee and the French Broad, Green, Rocky Broad, and Swannanoa in North Carolina. [...]

Nolichucky: Post-flood YouTube shows a river with scoured banks, major changes, and huge amounts of railroad debris. The steel spans of the railroad bridge near the put-in are scattered in the river for several hundred yards downstream, and large sections of track are in the river in several places. Railroad reconstruction may generate more changes and debris. Expect major damage with respect to access points and shuttle roads.

Pigeon: Massive, roaring water scoured way up the banks and washed out a lot of I-40. The put-in for the Class III Gorge at Waterville (Walters) Powerplant took major damage, and it's unknown whether I-40 and the local roads allow access to the put-in and take-out. There is no hard information yet, but expect the takeout parking and surrounding outfitter facilities to have taken damage. YouTube video shows a lot of gabion wire mesh in the Dries, so the gorge may have it also. And we don't know what the highway reconstruction will do to the riverbed. There is potential for major changes to this run.

French Broad: Don't expect structural damage to the riverbed like what occurred in the Nolichucky, Pigeon, and Green, but do expect a huge amount of industrial and urban debris downstream of Asheville. Accesses may be closed for a while.

Green: Massive flooding, debris, and scour occurred. The Narrows changed significantly. Some rapids are flat-out gone, others massively changed. Some slower sections turned into debris plains, braided "hells" of trashy cobble and wood. The Lower Green probably changed significantly and has lots of wood, and there will be access and shuttle issues.

Rocky Broad: The III/IV/V sections above Lake Lure had massive scour, damage, and washouts. Access into the valley is totally gone, and temporary roads have been bulldozed across multiple washouts. When recreational access becomes plausible, expect a whole new river.

Swannanoa: Expect huge amounts of debris. ❖

[For removed content: https://www.canoeclub.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=394800&module_id=705001.]

Local Club Helps with Relief Efforts

By David (Cotton) Cottingham, Canoe Cruisers Association (CCA) President

As many people were about to go to sleep late on September 27, 2024, Hurricane Helene roared through western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee, devastating communities. High winds ripped trees out of the ground. Torrential rains, as much as 30 inches in 24 hours in some areas, raised water in creeks and rivers throughout the region to crest at previously unseen levels. Multiple homes and communities in the steep mountainous river valleys were destroyed. Over 100 people lost their lives due to Helene in North Carolina, and well over 200 across six states. Some river outfitters' facilities washed away completely.

The CCA Board decided to establish a Hurricane Helene Fund and by mid-November, CCA members had generously donated about \$3,000. CCA also committed \$500 from our limited coffers to support recovery.

CCA identified several local organizations that are coordinating response efforts. Working through the French Broad River Academy, an outdoor-oriented school in Asheville where many faculty members are paddlers, we found the Helene Rebuild Collaborative and became more familiar with their good work through the Calleva Kayak River School Steve-O McKone, who had made a trip to North Carolina with a significant donation of goods. The Collaborative was collecting tents, tools, food, and medical supplies, and a list of needed items.

Large six-person tents remained among the highest-need items. Risa Shimoda thought about people in the outdoor industry she has long known and identified Bo Terry, the owner of Sunrift Adventures in Travelers Rest, SC. Sunrift carries a comprehensive line of outdoor equipment including Northstar canoes, Perception and Dagger kayaks, and paddling gear. Bo contacted his product distributors to identify ones who would be good for CCA to work through. Risa arranged with ALPS Mountaineering in Missouri to purchase tents at a below-wholesale price. CCA purchased 10 large tents and ground cloths to donate to the Helene Rebuild Collaborative. Bo also donated onsite inventory and allowed ALPS to deliver the tents to his store, where I picked them up and delivered them to the Collaborative.

(continued, page 19)



(above, l to r) Cotton and Bo at van packed with tents the CCA purchased through Bo Terry's vendor for Helene response. Photo: CCA

(below) Cotton delivering donations from CCA at the Helene Rebuild Collaborative warehouse. Photo: CCA



Wild & Scenic Rivers

Congratulations to the 2024 National Wild and Scenic River Award Winners!

by Tangy Ekasi-Otu and Helen Clough

Every year the US Forest Service and the Interagency Wild and Scenic River (WSR) Coordinating Council present four wild and scenic river awards to celebrate stewards of the Wild and Scenic River system. A virtual awards ceremony was held on December 6, 2024. Recipients this year included **Risa Shimoda and Angie Braley of the River Management Society (RMS)**.

The Outstanding Support to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Program Award recognizes excellence or sustained contributions in wild and scenic river management. It recognizes individuals or groups who have contributed to excellent management of a wild and scenic river program by serving as an effective change agent in improving the stewardship of a wild and scenic river or wild and scenic rivers study. Other criteria for this award include leading efforts to develop a comprehensive river management plan, complete wild and scenic rivers study evaluations, and pursue other wild and scenic rivers-related inventory and monitoring work; identifying and implementing actions to address wild and scenic rivers resource issues and championing a wild and scenic river, advancing internal and external awareness and support.

Since 2018, the RMS River Training Center (RTC) has provided outstanding support to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Program through training and community-building for river professionals across the nation. Under Risa and Angie's leadership, the RTC has developed a robust set of traditional classroom and field-based workshops alongside a diverse catalogue of online webinars, roundtables, and other training tools. The RTC covers both the fundamentals of wild and scenic river management together with more specific topics like hydropower licensing processes. Each training draws participants from different backgrounds, encourages sharing of personal experiences, and connects new and seasoned professionals. To help further a culture of training and management excellence, the RTC leads an Instructor Cadre that invites folks to step up and become the next generation of river management experts. Risa and Angie's ability to leverage a community of learning and continue to sharpen their delivery of training demonstrates their commitment to going above and beyond to do the important work of supporting river management into the future.



The Outstanding Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Award recognizes a Forest Service employee, partner, or volunteer - individual or group - demonstrating excellence in wild and scenic rivers management and addressing needs of the river and surrounding communities. This year's award went to **Piper VanOrd, David Snyder, and Nathan Welker for the Allegheny Wild and Scenic River Cleanup in Pennsylvania**.

For many years, Piper, David, and Nathan have worked together to plan and grow support for the Allegheny Wild and Scenic River Cleanup. This annual event has resulted in the removal of over 140,000 pounds of metal, 1,800 tires, and nearly 600 cubic yards of trash from the river since 2009. More than 4,200 volunteers have contributed approximately 34,000 hours over the last 15 years, equipped with boats and safety gear from Piper's business, Allegheny Outfitters, and support from the Allegheny National Forest. In recognition of the need to connect more community members who lack adequate access to outdoor education and recreational opportunities, Piper, David, and Nathan have also led efforts to partner with the Urban Connections Program and the Student Conservation Association, inviting participants from Pittsburgh to experience an overnight canoe trip and practice Leave No Trace principles. Through their dedicated stewardship approach, Piper, David, and Nathan have helped to deliver the wonders and benefits of the Allegheny Wild and Scenic River to the public.

The Outstanding River Manager Award recognizes a Forest Service employee that demonstrates strong leadership in protecting and enhancing river values by building relationships and working to guide and carry out on-the-ground stewardship of a wild and scenic river. This year's award went to **Jason Williams, Trails and Wilderness Manager for the Prescott National Forest in Arizona**.

Jason has worked in land and resource management for nearly 25 years, throughout which he has demonstrated an ability to balance the complexities of multiple programs, agencies, legal requirements, communities, and landscapes. These skills have helped him serve in recent years as the main driver of the

Wild & Scenic Rivers

Prescott National Forest's Wild and Scenic River program. In particular, Jason recognized the need to ensure that the Upper Verde River received careful analysis and application of Forest Service study river protections in light of a proposal from the Bureau of Reclamation to construct two fish passage barriers. His familiarity with agency policy requirements was critical to the successful completion of a suitability study for the Upper Verde River in December 2023. Jason displayed strategic vision and leadership throughout the study process, informing the development of alternative actions that balanced restoration of native fish populations with the river's free-flowing condition and outstandingly remarkable scenery and recreation values. His tireless efforts to engage Forest Service staff and interested public not only led to positive outcomes from the suitability study process but also advanced efforts to protect the river values of the Upper Verde River going forward.

The Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council's Jackie Diedrich Wild and Scenic Rivers Leadership Award recognizes river-administering agency staff who have shown outstanding leadership to help manage wild and scenic rivers, build capacity for river stewardship, and/or develop exemplary training programs for river management professionals. This year's award went to **Jamie Fosburgh, National Park Service, Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers Program**.

Jamie has demonstrated an enduring commitment to wild and scenic river management for more than thirty years. He has been at the forefront of developing and growing the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers Program to support protection of designated rivers that flow mostly or entirely through non federal lands. Jamie has played an integral role in several congressionally authorized wild and scenic river studies and the associated efforts to clearly communicate those findings to Congress. He has also been a lead contact in New England for Nationwide Rivers Inventory consultations, served on the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Advisory Council and the National Park Service Wild and Scenic Rivers Steering Committee, and developed and managed the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers team. His easy-going management style is recognized and appreciated by partners and staff alike; his demeanor directly translates to the overall success of his team. By consistently serving in leadership roles, mentoring staff, and working closely with other agencies and partners, Jamie has made an invaluable impact on the Wild and Scenic Rivers community. ❖

(Local Club Helps, continued from page 17)

Addendum by Risa Shimoda, CCA Member

After Thanksgiving, additional funds were raised and available in the club's donation coffers. During the hosting of December 2024 River Management Roundtable, panelist French Broad Riverkeeper Hartwell Carson (2012 River Management Symposium, Asheville partner) shared an opportunity to contribute to his organization's purchase of a lift/dump truck, and the focus for Helene Relief had moved toward tools for rebuilding homes and businesses. The club donated \$2,000 to Hartwell's parent organization, Mountain True, and applied the same wholesale strategy for a purchase of tools near our local Potomac River. John Bell contacted Russ, a friend and manager at Glen Echo Hardware, to allow the club to purchase impact drill kits through Glen Echo Hardware at wholesale. Russ also donated four boxes of dust masks and two Makita carry bags full of work gloves and safety glasses for the relief effort! John drove to Columbia, SC to assist fellow World squirt boat team member Andy Grizzell, a City Park Ranger, with the 25th Annual New Year's Iceman Race on the Saluda River. Andy, who drove up to Asheville several times after the Helene disaster to donate food and supplies, delivered the goods to Asheville.

This story is one tiny example of what a community does for its own. The story continues, as does the need for us to continue to remember the people whose lives were upended by Helene on September 27th. ❖



(l to r) Russ, Risa, and John with purchased and donated tools from the Canoe Cruisters Association (CCA) for Helene Response. Photo: CCA

Posts from a NPS Wild & Scenic River Program Fellow



Lucy Netwick immersed in the nation's rivers at her desk in Washington, DC. Photo: Corita Waters / NPS.

Blog Post 1 (3/29/2024)

Do You Know How Big the National Park Service Is?

I have always considered myself pretty knowledgeable in the world of conservation and the *different* players that exist, but the first two months of my fellowship opened my eyes to so many things I didn't know that I didn't know. I am a GIS fellow for the Wild and Scenic Rivers Program under the Partnerships and Civic Engagement Division of the National Park Service. I had only ever heard of one of those things before. I spent the first two weeks of my fellowship learning about all the divisions and programs within NPS, and meeting so many incredible, important, and inspiring members of the Park Service. And I am still learning more every day. The National Park Service is one of four primary federal agencies that protect and manage the country's wild and scenic rivers. Rivers that get designated into the National Wild and Scenic River System

are free-flowing rivers (no dams or major man-made obstructions) with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values, which become further protected from adverse effects upon designation. The Nationwide River Inventory, which is my main project, is a huge list of river segments that are potentially eligible for designation. The last time the NRI was revised was in 1993, so this update and everything that comes with it is going to be a massive undertaking. However, I feel like I'm ready for it.

I feel very lucky to be a part of the Partnerships and Civic Engagement Division team. While I was extremely nervous my first day, and even my first couple weeks in the office, everyone that I've met has been so welcoming. I work closely with Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers, the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, the Interagency Wild and Scenic River Coordinating Council, the National Trails System, and so many more amazing

Blogging About Rivers

As a Geographic Information System (GIS) Fellow for the National Park Service Wild and Scenic River Program, *Lucy Netwick* blogged her progress in her goal to update the Nationwide River Inventory (NRI), a list of river segments that are potentially eligible for designation into the Wild and Scenic River Program. The last time the NRI was revised was in 1993.

Posts are reprinted with permission from Lucy Netwick / NPS.

programs. I feel very comfortable reaching out to people to learn more about them and what they do, as well as asking questions both privately and during larger meetings because I know no one will judge me for not quite knowing what we're talking about.

I've also been more than encouraged to attend networking events or face-to-face program meet-ups to build deeper connections with my peers and colleagues. For example, I attended the Federal GIS conference and Hike the Hill events in February, as well as a fellows meet-up and several Rivers Hill Week events in March, with more to come in April and May. I've also gotten a lot of advice over the last 2 months, but here is the piece that's stuck with me the most: it's not that serious. While I'm doing important work that I'm passionate about, I am here to learn and grow but also to try and fail. I have learned so much already and I can't wait to see what the next 9 months of my fellowship have in store for me.

Blog Post 2 (5/30): May Travels as a Wild & Scenic River Fellow

May was a very busy month! I got the opportunity to travel to Michigan for two events with my awesome supervisor. We first went to River Rally, which is a huge annual conference that gathers any and everybody who works on rivers. There were tons of people from nonprofits, state governments, watershed associations, academia, and more! It was interesting hearing all these perspectives around one thing we all care about: water access. It was oddly refreshing to be in such a large group (~500 people!) and know that you all have the same passions and values when it comes to the outdoors. River Rally had some amazing speakers and sessions, but also some amazing food! River Network really took care of us and planned tons of super fun events that always kept the energy up and the conversation going. I am super grateful to Hispanic Access for providing me the means to attend and I highly, highly recommend anyone who loves rivers to attend in the future.

Immediately after River Rally, my supervisor and I drove from Grand Rapids to the Huron-Manistee National Forest to attend the Interagency Wild and Scenic River Coordinating Council face-to-face meeting. The IWSRCC is a group with about 20 representatives from the National Park Service, Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management who do something with WSRs within their respective agencies. To say this is a knowledgeable group is an understatement. Luckily, many of the NPS representatives are people who I meet with on a regular basis so having that initial familiarity was very comforting. The Council has monthly online meetings, so I had virtually met the other interagency members before, but this was my first time meeting many of them in person! Having only had virtual interactions before, I was going into this trip thinking they were going to be all business. I was completely wrong. Before the actual Council meetings started, we had a couple group meals and got to kayak down the Au Sable Wild and Scenic River! We all

got drenched in the rain during our paddle but managed to keep laughing and joking the whole time. It was so great to interact with Council members in an out-of-office setting and realize that they are just regular people. Going into the following Council meetings, I had a lot more confidence since I had been able to build up my relationships with all the members and knew I could talk to or ask them about basically anything! Networking has never been my strong suit, but my advice coming out of this trip is that it doesn't have to be high stakes. Building a relationship with someone can start with something as informal as bonding about your pets or realizing you watch the same TV show. Overall, this trip has definitely been a highlight of my fellowship, and I now look forward to every IWSRCC meeting in my calendar.

Blog Post 3 (9/3/2024) What is the NRI?

As the time left in my fellowship is starting to run out, the work is only picking up! I am the GIS Fellow for the Nationwide Rivers Inventory for the Wild and Scenic Rivers program of the National Park Service (NPS). The Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI) is a listing of thousands of free-flowing river segments that contain one or more outstandingly remarkable values, making those river segments potentially eligible for Wild and Scenic designation. Being designated as Wild and Scenic affords rivers the protection and enhancement of the river condition and qualities, as well as prohibits water resource projects with direct and adverse effects.

NPS Director Sams has listed this update as a Director's Priority this year, highlighting how important this update is not only for river conservation but also river recreation. The last time the NRI was updated was almost 10 years before I was born. To say this is a big project would be an understatement. This update looked at rivers on federal lands using readily available data from the four river administering agencies: NPS, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management.

Thousands of segments were listed on the previous NRI, and thousands of additional segments were submitted. Being one of the main stewards of this GIS data has been incredibly empowering for me, as someone who just recently graduated and is now being trusted to oversee the management of the data received from four agencies. However, this has also been a great challenge.

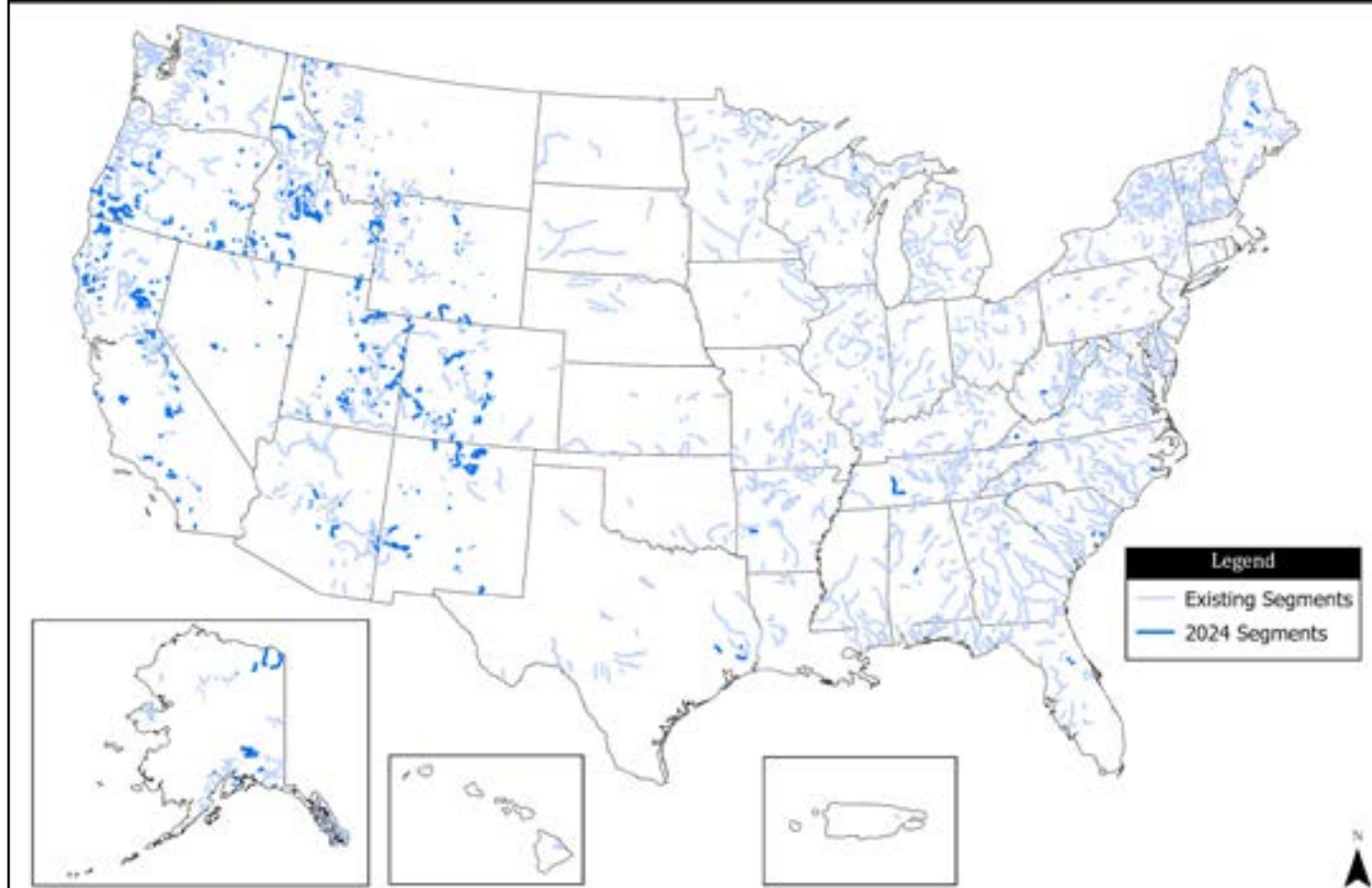
These agencies have their own methods for data collection, even internally across regions and units, so making all the data work together has not always been easy. It's taken tons of coordination and collaboration across and within agencies to make sure the data is as complete and accurate as possible. Once the final data was received, the quality assurance and quality control began. This was to make sure the data across agencies was cohesive. Some of the QA/QC checks we completed included processes as small as changing "NF" to "National Forest" and adding river study links, to writing reach descriptions for 500+ river segments and addressing hundreds of overlaps among the submissions. This process has taken many weeks, and it has many more to go.

On top of the data reconciliation, the NRI update also includes developing a new data viewer and updating the NRI web pages on NPS.gov. These responsibilities allow me to get more creative and use some of my other skills such as design, communications, and data visualization. While, at times, this project could get overwhelming, it's an amazing feeling knowing that the work I'm doing is protecting rivers and giving people the resources to recreate on our nation's most special waterways. There is still more work to be done before the NRI is ready for release, but I've loved every second of this fellowship and I'm so grateful for my team and their trust and guidance. Be on the lookout for the NRI! ❖

Note: This interagency effort added ~1,300 segments to the NRI, bringing the total number of segments to ~4,500, and the total mileage to ~90,000 miles. Special thanks to James Major at RMS. Read more details on Page 22.



Nationwide Rivers Inventory 2024 Federal Lands Update



By Lucy Nentwick

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act designates specific rivers for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and prescribes methods and standards by which additional rivers may be added. In partial fulfillment of Section 5(d) of the Act, the National Park Service (NPS) maintains the Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI) as a national listing of river segments that are eligible or potentially eligible for wild and scenic river designation. The NRI is a public source of information for:

1. Statewide river assessments and federal agencies involved with stream-related projects;
2. Any group concerned with ecosystem management, the inventory can provide the location of the nearest naturally-functioning system which might serve as a reference for monitoring activities;
3. A reference list of plant and animal species for restoration efforts on a similar section of river; and
4. For the recreationalist, it provides a listing of free-flowing, relatively undisturbed river segments.

The first version of the NRI was published in 1982 with another two rounds of updates completed by 1988. A federal lands update was completed in 1993, followed by an update using state-provided data in 1995. In November 2024, the NPS completed a federal lands update of the NRI using readily available planning information from regional NPS staff and the

three other Wild and Scenic River (WSR) administering agencies: the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and U.S. Forest Service. This update removed 320 miles of river segments that have been designated as Wild and Scenic, updated attribute information for existing NRI river segments, and corrected existing geospatial data to reflect river shape and mileage more accurately.

Because of the interagency nature of WSRs, the NRI update team worked closely with agency leads and data managers from across the four agencies to complete the update. A data management subcommittee was created within the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council to discuss the project, data and schema needs, and data projection.

This interagency effort added approximately 1,300 segments (nearly 10,000 miles) to the NRI, bringing the total number of segments to just under 4,500, and the total mileage in the NRI to approximately 90,000 miles.

This update also includes a new interactive map where users can explore the NRI. This map allows for searching by managing agency, management area, state location and more. Users can also set filters, download river data, add layers to the map.

Special thanks to James Major of RMS for assisting the USFWS review of over 500 Comprehensive Conservation Plans to identify new NRI river segments and with providing feedback in the early stages of the NRI data viewer development. ❖

Wild & Scenic Rivers

Eleven Point River Wild & Scenic Management Plan Updated After 51 Years

by Ed Sherman

The Eleven Point Scenic River Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) has received some simple, yet significant updates in 2024. The Eleven Point River had the honor to be among the first group of rivers in the nation to be designated when the Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSR) Act was initially passed in 1968. A CRMP was prepared in 1973 and amended in 1975. This new update was signed into effect on May 23, 2024, exactly 51 years to the day of the first plan signature. This 2024 CRMP update sets monitoring criteria for negative impacts to for Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs), and includes a climate adaptivity.

Acting Forest Supervisor Lenore Lamb shared, “Protecting waterways from pollution and preserving their free-flowing characteristics does not happen without effort, and this plan update will serve well in guiding those future efforts, so generations to come can enjoy the beauty of the Scenic Eleven Point River.”

Rivers designated through the WSR Act are required to have a CRMP to ensure the managing agency preserves specifically defined “river values” within that section of river under designation. These three values are its free-flowing nature, its water quality, and its ORVs. The WSR Act defines an ORV as a river-related value that is a rare, unique, or exemplary feature at a regional or national scale; and it requires that the Forest Service protect and enhance ORVs in designated river segments.

The Eleven Point Scenic River has multiple ORVs including: Wildlife, Geology, Recreation, Scenery, Fisheries, Ecology, and Historic/Cultural.

Throughout the process, the Forest Service’s Washington Office WSR team has been instrumental. Devoted staff at the very top of Wild and Scenic River management help the Mark Twain National Forest connect with the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute to conduct visitor satisfaction surveys and study the social science behind the Eleven Point. A climate change vulnerability assessment was coordinated by the staff at the Washington Office.

Mary Ellen Emerick (retired) led the interdisciplinary team to complete the plan, was instrumental in the development of the plan, and was the principal author.

Forest Recreation Manager, Ed Sherman, was a leader for much of the partner and public engagement that occurred to get this CRMP updated. Sherman shared:

“We are grateful for the many individuals and organizations that helped us update this plan, especially to the Osage Nation for sharing their Indigenous Knowledge – including the history and contemporary meanings of this sacred site. We also thank the River Management Society for their expertise and interest in seeing this river managed appropriately. I am proud to present this plan to the public, who will enjoy the wild and scenic values of the Eleven Point River for generations to come.” ❖



Photo: Tim Palmer.

Annual RMS Board Meeting Recap

by Judy Culver and Helen Clough

Our yearly meeting of the national RMS board was hosted by Shannon Bassista in Boise, Idaho October 3 to 7, 2024. Shannon, her family, and members of the Northwest chapter planned activities including a day float on the Payette River, which was well attended by Northwest chapter members.

The annual board meeting resulted in a few key outcomes:

1. Establishment of a succession planning committee to identify and recruit candidates for national office and vacant chapter positions, as well as a revival of the membership committee;
2. The need to establish a board work plan to complement the RMS staff work plan, which will be reviewed with the budget in the January 2025 board meeting;
3. 2025 board meeting will be held in Richmond, VA; and
4. 2027 symposium will be held in the Midwest Chapter; specific locations are being investigated.

Current and past RMS leaders enjoyed each other's company both in collaborative sessions discussing the future of RMS, as well as along the Main Payette River.

The board meeting culminated with a day of brainstorming sessions including:

1. How to identify and recruit candidates for national office and vacant chapter positions in Alaska, Midwest, and Northeast;
2. How to financially support those wishing to volunteer for board positions but are financially constrained;
3. How to support Restoring Rivers for a Resilient Future April 8-10, 2025 in Ashland, Oregon; and
4. How to continue to diversify our membership, as well as our funding sources.

The Southeast Chapter will host the RMS board meeting in Fall 2025 at the Virginia Commonwealth University Rice Rivers Center along the James River in Richmond, VA. ❖



RMS board, staff and friends gathered for a group photo after scouting a rapid on the Main Payette River.

Photo: Bekah Price.

RMS River Roundtable Recap:

Managing Rivers in the Face of Extreme Weather Events

On December 10, 2024, RMS hosted the final river roundtable of the year, welcoming 19 attendees from across the United States to discuss river management during flooding events.

How have communities, river management agencies, and water trail organizations prepared for catastrophic events like floods or dam breaches? While these events have become familiar in our newsfeeds, the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene has dwarfed others in recent memory, challenging our ability to respond and plan for long-term restoration.

The panel offered insights into disaster response and recovery, the ways communities redefine themselves during crises, and an approach for river restoration that considers the ways the river will seek to repair itself. These firsthand experiences from these river professionals, community leaders, and technical experts, whose contributions to disaster response may be helpful to you today and offer wisdom for the unanticipated tomorrow. ❖

View the recorded roundtable on [RMS YouTube](#).



Risa Honored with Leadership Award

by Kaycee Maas, American Canoe Association (ACA)

Havens Leadership Award recognizes individuals whose practices and behaviors best serve the interests and success of USA paddlesports athletes. This year, we are pleased to honor Risa Shimoda with the Havens Leadership Award in the 2024 ACA Annual Awards.

It seems like everywhere you look in the paddlesport world, you find Risa Shimoda connected to making things happen. This year, in the sphere of competitive paddling alone, Risa helped organize the 69th Annual CCA Downriver Race, attended the premier of the remastered classic film Fast and Clean, assisted in freestyle events around the country and still competes in Squirt boat. Risa is everywhere!

Under Risa's leadership this year, the Competition Council has been reactivated and reinvigorated as representatives from discipline committees have been meeting on a regular basis to communicate what each discipline is doing, share ideas about best practices, help committees organize and become more structured, develop a coaches education resource, and more.

The bottom line is Risa is a paddler. She truly embodies a multidiscipline, collaborative approach to paddlesport promotion and thanks to Risa's efforts, the future of paddlesport competition is bright. [Learn more:](https://americancanoe.org/congratulations-to-the-2024-aca-annual-award-recipients/) <https://americancanoe.org/congratulations-to-the-2024-aca-annual-award-recipients/>. ❖



Board and staff engage in a collaborative session, diving deep into key issues and mapping out the future of RMS.

Photo: Bekah Price.

Southwest

Meet the New Chapter Leadership...

Tony Mancuso, President



I was raised paddling creeks and rivers of Eastern Pennsylvania. Public access to public waters has been a constant thread since I was young. I started my professional relationship with rivers kayaking as a Lehigh river guide and moved out west to row gear boats and sleep on sandbars. It was easy to fall in love with the arid canyonlands of the Colorado Plateau while guiding trips for SPLORE, an adaptive whitewater outfitter. In 2017, I combined my experiences as a guide with time spent as an arborist, and began working for the Utah Division of Forestry. RMS has introduced me to my most inspiring and passionate colleagues. I hope to continue growing our rapport and camaraderie. Our rivers benefit as our collaboration increases, and I'm looking forward to continuing making friends and protecting rivers across the Southwest chapter.

Barry Weinstock, Vice President



I have made it to my 30th year of river running, including 13 as a commercial guide. My formal training was in biology, and I spent 5 years working as a biotech for a fish biologist. I also have 10 years in recreation management including 5 as river manager for the Rio Grande and Rio Chama. Recognizing the importance of the intersection between social and scientific disciplines, I've accomplished master's degrees in Water Resource Management, as well as Community and Regional Planning. I am excited to be a steward of our national resources, and happy to facilitate exciting adventures while preserving the health and natural beauty of the rivers.

Corrine Servis, Secretary



I am originally from California where I grew up spending time at the beach and exploring places like Yosemite and Joshua Tree national parks. After finishing my Environmental Studies degree at the University of California, Santa Barbara, I began my career in environmental consulting and renewable energy. A cross-country mountain biking trip in 2004 first introduced me to the beauty of Colorado and in 2007, I was drawn back as a whitewater rafting guide on the Arkansas River. I was hired by Colorado Parks & Wildlife in 2012, and have worked as a park ranger at Castlewood Canyon and Chatfield state parks, as the statewide training manager in CPW's Field Services Branch, and currently as the operations manager at the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA). I live in Salida, Colorado with my wife and our three children. I enjoy going on outdoor adventures, which always seem to include the element of water, and making lasting memories in the outdoors with my family. AHRA has a long-standing involvement with RMS, and I would like to continue that tradition. We want to help, learn, and share in protecting our rivers and the natural resources surrounding our river systems. It is a great honor and opportunity to stay involved and give back to the community.

Cameron Joseph Stark, Events Coordinator



I am a lifetime boater who has served five seasons with the BLM as a River Ranger in Desolation Canyon, having worked in recreation and maintenance with the federal government since 2009. I would like to keep my foot in the door with the management and happenings on our Western rivers and maintain positive relationships with the key players, as well as the familiar and new faces that keep our rivers flowing on the front lines and behind the scenes.

WANTED

Midwest Chapter Officers
Accepting Nominations Now!

More information about Chapter Officer roles can be found on RMS website

Southeast words & photos by James Vonesh

Rendezvous on the James

The Southeast Chapter of the River Management Society (RMS) recently held a successful rendezvous on the James River in Richmond, VA. The event saw a strong turnout with 24 participants from four states. The attendees represented a diverse group, including RMS leadership and members, newcomers to the organization, students in river studies and leadership certificate programs, along with program coordinators and professors. Government agencies were represented at the national, state, county, and municipal levels. Representatives from local businesses and river stewardship non-profits also attended.

The program kicked off at the Richmond City James River Park System (JRPS) headquarters overlooking the confluence of Reedy Creek and the James River. James River Association (JRA) James Riverkeeper Tom Dunlap provided a broader picture of the challenges and progress of stewardship efforts over the entire watershed. This was followed by a deeper dive by our local host, JRPS Superintendent Giles Garrison about the management of the section of the James that runs through metropolitan Richmond. The flagship of the municipal park system that sees millions of visitors each year and is home to some of the best beginner to advanced year-round whitewater in the mid-Atlantic. Participants also had the opportunity to enjoy a downtown rafting trip, led by student guides from the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Outdoor Adventure Program. The rendezvous wrapped up with a networking dinner of chili, campfire, acoustic guitar, and overnight in the bunkhouse at the VCU Rice Rivers Center. Located downstream of Richmond on the wide tidal estuarine of the James, the Rice Center will host the RMS board meeting in Fall 2025. ❖



(below and right): James River Rendezvous participants in a rafting trip on the Lower James River, led by student guides from the Virginia Commonwealth University Outdoor Adventure Program.



(left, top) Virginia Commonwealth University Rice Rivers Center dock downstream of Richmond on the tidal estuarine section of the James River; the Rice Center will host the RMS board meeting in Fall 2025.

(left) Richmond City James River Park System (JRPS) Superintendent Giles Garrison presenting about the management of the section of the James that runs through metropolitan Richmond at the JRPS headquarters overlooking the confluence of Reedy Creek and the James River.

(above and below) James River Rendezvous rafting trip with diverse scenery on the Lower James River, led by student guides from the Virginia Commonwealth University Outdoor Adventure Program.



RMS Chapter News

Alaska by Helen Clough

The Alaska Chapter has been inactive for some time now but hopefully that is about to change. We will be reaching out to current members, past members, and our long list of what we call “prospects” reminding folks of what RMS has to offer and hoping to generate interest in the symposium and in the chapter becoming active again.

So, if you are seeing this as an Alaska chapter member or prospect – think about what RMS means to you or could mean to you and how it could help in your professional life. Have you attended a RMS training, symposium or participated in one or more of our roundtables? Are you familiar with the amazing offerings these provide? The upcoming symposium is in Oregon – almost like down the street for us Alaskans who spend a good deal of our time traveling.

A change in national administration likely means a renewed focus on a number of resource development projects in Alaska that will affect many aspects of Alaska’s rivers. Whatever your focus, it

will be helpful to understand what’s involved, how to address opportunities and potential effects. Tourism continues to grow in Alaska and again opportunities and challenges are presented in management of Alaska’s rivers – being they State, Federal, private management – usually some combination of the three.

I encourage you to attend the symposium if you possibly can, pay your dues if you have lapsed, and get involved. What do you want the Alaska Chapter to do? In the past we sponsored a number of on-site trainings including some help on the water. We partnered among state and federal agencies to host various events. We took a few river trips. We held virtual meetings (back when it was just via telephone). We helped facilitate a lot of the river planning that happened up here.

We’ve always provided a safe place where those of us who work for agencies that sometimes aren’t on the best of terms can get together in a collegial environment to discuss our work and how to collaborate in spite of our differences.

Hope to see you in Ashland, on a river, or on Zoom soon. Reach out to me if you have questions or want more information. ❖



RMS Chapter News

Pacific by Dave Payne

Holiday greeting from the Klamath environs...

To the ghosts of river interns past,
We forged memories built to last.

We shared many river miles,
That produced thousands of smiles.

To the ghosts of river volunteers past,
We remember your sacrifices yet last.

The dams came down in twenty four,
The river is free and ready to tour.

The river began carrying loads of silt,
yet salmon returned to long lost redds without guilt.

Happy Camp’s hopes had come true, the Klamath remains alive.
Here’s wishing all, safe river travels in twenty-five. ❖

Dave is retired from US Forest Service in Happy Camp, CA.

Northeast by Emma Lord

NE Chapter is looking for new officers!

The Northeast Chapter is seeking engaged chapter members who are looking to play a critical role in connecting regional members and driving RMS’s mission to support professionals who study, protect and manage North America’s rivers. Consider being a Northeast Chapter Officer! The Northeast Chapter offers exceptional opportunities in leadership and collaboration with our membership and RMS National. Now is the time to apply your energy and creative skills in support of our Northeast Chapter. Officers serve a three-year term in one of four positions: President, Vice President, Secretary and Events Coordinator. Nominate yourself or a colleague for the 2025-2028 term today!

Please check out our Northeast Chapter webpage at [Northeast \(river-management.org\)](http://Northeast(river-management.org)). Also click on Chapter Bylaws for a description of officer duties. Feel free to reach out to your current chapter officers, members of the national board, or our Executive Director at rms@river-management.org with any questions. ❖

Emma is the outgoing Northeast Chapter President.

Midwest & Southeast

Join River Management Society's Southeast and Midwest chapters this spring for a gathering and multi-day float trip on the Buffalo National River in Arkansas.

We're partnering with:

- Arkansas Game & Fish Commission,
- University of Arkansas,
- Northeastern State University, and
- National Park Service

to paddle and camp along a beautiful section of river and learn about its management.

Sign ups will go live late November!

Please reach out to us with questions:

James Vonesh
RMS Southeast Chapter President
voneshjr@gmail.com

Jack Henderson
RMS Southeast Chapter Vice President
hendersonjc3@gmail.com

Rendezvous on the Buffalo River March 13-16, 2025



Photo: Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism.



2025 River Management Symposium: Restoring Rivers for a Resilient Future

April 8-10, 2025 | Ashland, Oregon

Join us for a week of skill building and collaborative learning following the largest dam removal in U.S. history! The *Restoring Rivers for a Resilient Future* River Management Training Symposium will be held April 8-10, 2025 in Ashland, Oregon, with field sessions at regional restoration sites.

River managers, scientists, advocates, and recreation leaders across the country will share approaches to navigating visitor use, flood prevention and recovery, fire and forest resilience, water quality, responsible recreation, and development.

Each biennial river management symposium offers a unique opportunity to network with experts and learn alongside professionals who are responsible for river restoration and management. You'll return home with practical tools to enhance your river's ecological, social and cultural resilience.



Check out the agenda online!

Our week's themes are RECOVER • RECONNECT • RENEW. A detailed agenda is posted online, including field sessions:

- Driving Tour of "New Klamath" River
- Raft the "New Klamath" River (Class II)
- Raft the "New Klamath" River (Class IV+)
- Let's Get Real! Exploring Rogue River Access Design from the River User and Designer Perspective
- FERC Workshop Field Session (by invitation only)
- Exploring Recreation on the Rogue: Rafting the Nugget
- Rogue Watershed Restoration: Fire, Floodplains, and Fish

Donate items to the auction!

The online and in-person auction elevates our partners' brands and helps make this event possible. Please consider donating river and outdoor equipment, outfitted trips or instructional classes, jewelry or works of art. Bidding will take place online in early April 2025, the week before the Symposium, and it will close on the final day of the Symposium with a live auction. Donors receive benefits noted in the 2025 Symposium Sponsorship Program. Please reference the sponsor information packet above to see how this might benefit you! To donate an item, visit our [Auction Item Donation Form](#).

Early registration rates through February 14, 2025

With questions, contact Risa Shimoda at rms@river-management.org or (301) 585-4677.



Learn more at <https://www.river-management.org/2025-rms-symposium>

RMS Sunsets Professional Purchase Program

by Rick Waldrup

When you log in as a member to the RMS website, there's a link on top called *Professional Purchases*. If you visited, which happens less and less frequently, it would bring you to a list of great companies that have offered RMS members a discount on some great river-related gear. In the past, the discounts were substantial, sometimes 30% or more. RMS requested a 5% donation post-purchase, which was well worth the benefit.

Over the years, many of these companies have revised (reduced) that discount due in part to a changed business environment and in some cases to buyers taking improper advantage of the program's intent. Professional discounts seek to put quality equipment in the hands of users who will illustrate the value of that gear by using it personally or professionally so that others are inclined to outfit themselves with some of that great gear. Buying things for friends and family, buying discounted gear to resell at a profit, and haggling with retail sales people to get a lower price are definitely no-no's. Lecture over. Good news follows.

First, most outdoor gear companies offer better discounts for river professionals if you apply directly; they tend to be very receptive to recruiting new ambassadors for their products. In most cases, will find a link on their webpage for pro purchases. Submit an application and they typically respond within a few days. If you are accepted, please adhere to their conditions to have a long and fruitful relationship.

At least for now, we (RMS) have decided to excuse ourselves from the professional purchase environment in terms of direct program involvement. Several of the companies that have offered discounts to RMS have not required our direct involvement; you can still claim RMS membership, and they will likely offer to discount your purchase. Companies that will likely continue to offer discounts to RMS members include: Jack's Plastic Welding (Aztec, NM), Partner Steel (Pocatello, ID), and Riverwear (Stanley, ID). Most of the other companies we have had a relationship with over the years will be receptive to your online applications, and probably offer a better discount than was available through RMS. These include; NRS (Moscow, ID), Cascade Outfitters (Boise, ID), Down River Equipment (Wheat Ridge, CO), Camp Time (Spokane Valley, WA), Rocky Mountain Rafts (Fayetteville, WV). You might also try companies like; Yeti (coolers and more), Keen (footwear and more), Astral (lifejackets, footwear, and more), Smith (sunglasses, goggles, and more), and Sawyer (oars and more). And there are a couple online applications that offer access to discounts through multiple companies, including Outdoor ProLink and Experticity.

We feel fortunate to have helped steer folks to great equipment and great discounts. Hopefully we can steer you to more great gear and even better prices. See you on the river! ❖

Rick has been the RMS Pro Purchase lead since 2021.

Sponsors & Partners 2025 River Management Symposium

Gold



Silver



Bronze



Student Scholarship



Welcome New RMS Members

Associate

Kara Nuckels, Regulatory Compliance Coordinator
Harris County Flood Control District
Houston, TX

Blake Towarnicki, Water Quality Specialist
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Helena, MT

Erin Eberhard, Water Quality Monitoring Scientist
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Helena, MT

Alisa Glenewinkel-Meyer
Interested in fluvial geomorphology, sediment transport
Saint Paul, MN

Stephen Carpenedo, Senior Wetlands Specialist
Montana Department of Environmental Quality- Wetlands
Helena, MT

Sean McCarty, River Restoration Director
Neponset River Watershed Association
Canton, MA

Landon Falke, Diadromous Fisheries Analyst
Azura Consulting LLC (NOAA Affiliate)
Woods Hole, MA

Meagan Gilmore, Water Quality Specialist
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Helena, MT

Emily O'Regan, Diadromous Fisheries Analyst
NOAA
Medford, MA

Ana Campa
Landscape Architect
Jackson, NH

Organization

Nebraska Game & Parks- Planning & Programming
Mike Archer, Assistant Division Administrator
Lincoln, NE

American Rivers
Lacey Davis, Associate Director of Floodplain Restoration
Washington, DC

Wisconsin Valley Improvement Company
Scott Blado, Environmental Specialist and Safety Coordinator
Wausau, WI

Individual

John Botros, River Access Program Coordinator
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
San Marcos, TX

Raymond Majewski
Bryson City, NC

John Griffin, Owner
RVA Paddlesports
Richmond, VA

Gigi Knowlton, Watershed Project Coordinator
Upper Merced River Watershed Council - Americorps
Mariposa, CA

Kathleen Guillozet, Sr. Director, Watersheds
Bonneville Environmental Foundation
Orcas, WA

Elektra Mathews-Novelli, Forest Hydrologist
Yurok Tribe
Arcata, CA

Rachel Ellis, Associate Director,
Southwest River Protection Program- American Rivers
Flagstaff, AZ

Joseph Keaveny, Staff Hydraulic Engineer II
Verdantas Flow Labs
Fort Collins, CO

Student

Northern Arizona University - Flagstaff, AZ

Jacey Beery
Gretchen Elliott
Mike Hanson
Jessica Raty

University of Northern Colorado - Greeley, CO

Genevieve Hankins

Virginia Commonwealth University - Richmond, VA

Shoshanah Ardush	Briana Loftus
Ethan Burroughs	Sean McAndrew
Mary Carson	Olivia McKee
Montgomery Curren	Matthew Neikirk
Celeste DeLuna	Declan O'Donnell
Tamara Eddy	Cameron Stratchko
Apollo Hurley	Ashley Thompson
John Lahey	

Chapter Officers

ALASKA (vacant)

PACIFIC

Kristina Rylands, President
Upper Merced River Watershed Council
Mariposa, CA 95338
(209) 761-6674 / kristinarylands@gmail.com

Leigh Karp, Vice President
BLM California Desert District
1201 Bird Center Drive
Palm Springs, CA 92262
(951) 697-5291 / lkarp@blm.gov

Larry Freilich, Secretary
Inyo County Water District
PO Box 337
Independence, CA 93526
(760) 920-1169 / lmfreilich@gmail.com

Bob Stanley, Events Coordinator
Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River
24545 State Highway 120
Groveland, CA 95321
(209) 962-7825 / beebob@yahoo.com

NORTHWEST

Cannon Colegrove, President
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
4600 Giant Springs Rd, Great Falls MT 59405
(406) 454-5854 / cannon.colegrove@mt.gov

Chris Elder, Vice President
Whatcom County, WA
PO Box 43, Acme WA 98220
(360) 840-3064 / celder@co.whatcom.wa.us

Echo Miller Barnes, Secretary
Hungry Horse Ranger Station
10 Hungry Horse Dr, Hungry Horse MT 59919
(971) 940-3583 / emillerbarnes@gmail.com

Lelia Mellen, Events Coordinator
National Park Service
2310 Flourhouse Way, Bozeman MT 59715
(406) 224-3509 / lelia_mellen@nps.gov

MIDWEST

Ed Fite, President
Grand River Dam Authority
15307 North Swannanoa Rd, Tahlequah, OK 74464
(918) 456-3251 / ed.fite@yahoo.com

Ed Sherman, Vice President
USDA Forest Service
#66 Confederate Ridge Road, Doniphan, MO 63935
(573) 996-2155 / edward.sherman@usda.gov

Bobbie Jo Roshone, Secretary
Niobrara National Scenic River
214 W. HWY 20, Valentine, NE 69201
(402) 376-1901 / bobbiejo.pennington@gmail.com

SOUTHWEST

Tony Mancuso, President
Utah DNR - Forestry, Fire & State Lands
1165 S Highway 191 Ste 6
Moab, UT 84532
(435) 210-0362 / tmancuso@utah.gov

Barry Weinstock, Vice President
BLM - Taos Field Office
1024 Paseo del Pueblo Sur
Taos, NM 87571
(575) 751-4768 / bweinsto@blm.gov

Corrine Servis, Secretary
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
307 W. Sackett Ave.
Salida, CO 81201
(719) 539-7289 / corrine.servis@state.co.us

Cameron Joseph Stark, Events Coordinator
BLM UT - Price
440 West 200 South Suite 500
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
(435) 636-3600 / cjstark@blm.gov

NORTHEAST

Emma Lord, President
National Park Service
54 Portsmouth St, Concord, NH 03301
(603) 224-0091 / emma_lord@nps.gov

John Field, Vice President
Field Geology Services
P.O. Box 985, Farmington, ME 04938
(207) 645-9773 / fieldgeology@gmail.com

John Little, Trip Coordinator
Missisquoi River Basin Association
737 Rushford Valley Rd
Montgomery Ctr, VT 05471
(802) 326-4164 / jaitittle58@gmail.com

SOUTHEAST

James Vonesh, President
Virginia Commonwealth University
1000 W. Cary St, Richmond VA 23284-2012
(804) 426-8553 / jrvonesh@vcu.edu

Vice President (vacant)

Elise Chapman, Secretary
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
615 McCallie Ave, Holt Hall, Room 328
Chattanooga, TN 37403
(423) 227-6151 / elise-chapman@utc.edu

Jack Henderson, Events Coordinator
French Broad Paddle Trail
P.O. Box 1242, Pisgah Forest, NC 28768
(703) 638-3616 / hendersonjc3@gmail.com

Canadian River Management Society

Contact: Max Finkelstein
tel (613) 729-4004 / dowfink@gmail.com

Give the gift of membership
to a colleague, student, retiree or friend!

RMS is a nonprofit organization.
All contributions are tax-deductible.



Become a Member

Name _____

Home Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Organization _____

Office _____

Work Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Work Phone _____

Email _____

Job Title _____

Duties/Interests _____

Rivers you manage _____

Membership Category (please check one)

- Individual \$60/yr (\$240 for 5 years - save \$60!)
- Associate \$40/yr
- Student \$30/yr
- Lifetime \$750 (for individuals only)
- Organizational (1-2 people) \$75/yr
- Organizational (3-4 people) \$150/yr
- Organizational (5-8 people) \$300/yr

Membership benefits are described online:
www.river-management.org/membership

Who referred you to RMS? _____

Make checks payable to "RMS" –
RMS also accepts VISA or Mastercard:

Card #: _____

Exp date: _____ Amount: _____

Send this form, with payment, to:
RMS, P.O. Box 5750, Takoma Park, MD 20913-5750
(301) 585-4677 • rms@river-management.org

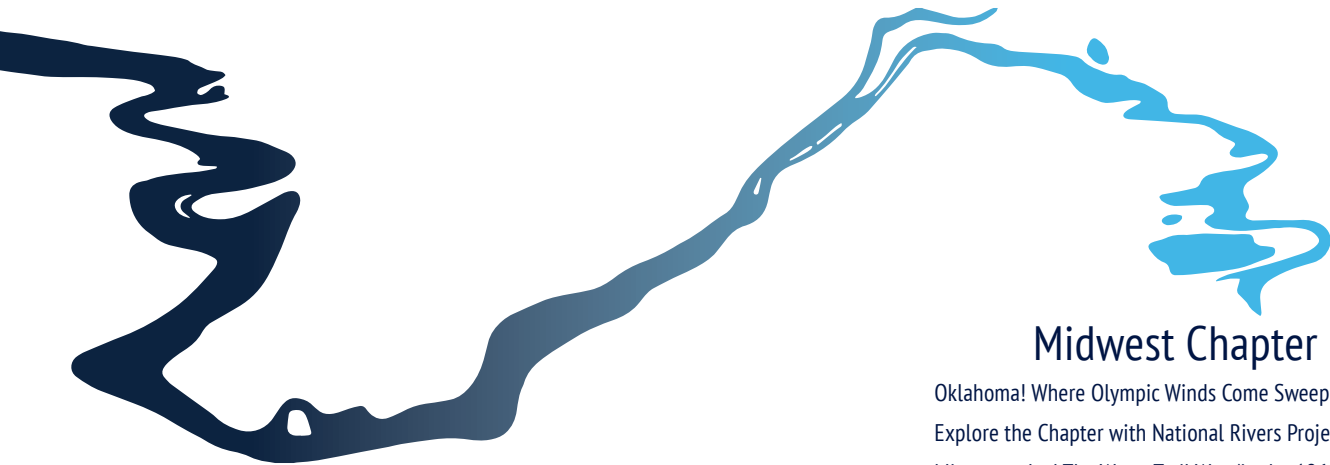


Non-Profit Org.
 US Postage PAID
 Permit 536
 Missoula MT 59801

RMS, P.O. Box 5750, Takoma Park MD 20913



Like and Follow Us! @rivermgt society



RMS Journal Submission Deadlines

Spring 2025	Vol. 38, No. 1	Southwest	Feb
Summer 2025	Vol. 38, No. 2	Northwest	May
Fall 2025	Vol. 38, No. 3	Northeast	Aug
Winter 2025	Vol. 38, No. 4	Pacific	Nov
Spring 2026	Vol. 39, No. 1	Alaska	Feb
Summer 2026	Vol. 39, No. 2	Southeast	May
Fall 2026	Vol. 39, No. 3	Midwest	Aug
Winter 2026	Vol. 39, No. 4	Southwest	Nov

Midwest Chapter Focus

- Oklahoma! Where Olympic Winds Come Sweeping 1
- Explore the Chapter with National Rivers Project 4
- Minnesota Led The Water Trail Way (in the 1960s!) 6
- French Broad Paddle Trail Signage 7
- Oklahoma City Redefines Itself as a Paddlesports Resource 8
- New At-Large Board Member Welcome Chris Geden 9
- The River Field Studies Network’s Year of Growth 10
- RSLC Alumni: Christian Fauser 12
- BLM and RMS Make it Easy to Plan Your Next Idaho River Trip 13
- Book Review: Revitalizing Urban Waterway Communities 14
- Far Reaching Impacts on North Carolina, Tennessee Rivers 16
- Local Club Helps with Relief Efforts 17
- 2024 National Wild and Scenic River Award Winners 18
- Posts from a NPS Wild & Scenic River Program Fellow 20
- Eleven Point River Wild & Scenic Management Plan Updated 23
- RMS News 24
- RMS Sunsets Professional Purchase Program 33