

2019

A Year in Review



FROM OUR DIRECTOR

2019 was a year for the record books on the Missouri River. Spring started out with an unprecedented flooding disaster in Nebraska followed by a year of nonstop runoff throughout the basin. The people of the river valley were bruised, but also in wonder of the river's power.

Our job at Missouri River Relief is to find ways to connect people to the Missouri River. When we can't work ON the river, we share all the most up-to-date information about the river that we can. We find other ways to bring the river to our community. We help those that need help.

Despite several postponements and reschedules we were able to complete almost everything we had on our schedule. We know that the river is in charge. For the past 19 years, we've found ways to work with the rhythms of the river and still keep an endless tide of people engaged, active and hopeful.

Our method is this. We provide opportunities for people of all backgrounds to get in touch with their river. To connect. We share enough knowledge and stories to draw them in. We craft experiences that feed that connection and cultivate a care and love for the river. And we provide opportunities for people to put that caring to work.

Connect. Care. Act. Thank you for making it happen.



STEVE SCHNARR

Director, Missouri River Relief



Steve Schnarr lives in Columbia, Mo. His favorite part of working for Missouri River Relief is introducing people to the Missouri River for the very first time.

See You on the River in 2020!

Our Mission

To engage individuals and communities along the Missouri River in the exploration, enjoyment, restoration and care of the river through hands-on river clean-ups, education programs and recreation.

OUR STAFF



MELANIE CHENEY
Office Manager

Assists the staff with programs and outreach. She manages the office and keeps the organization flowing smoothly.



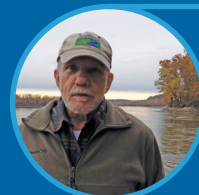
KRISTEN SCHULTE
Education Director

Earned her master's in Natural Science Education and has a passion for making students fall in love with the Missouri River.



KEVIN TOSIE
Operations Manager

Organizes community events along the Missouri River, working closely with our dedicated volunteer crew and partners to make it happen.



JOHN BRADY
Fleet Manager

Honorary poet laureate. John keeps watch over our fleet of machines and the spiritual vision of our river community.



KATY MILLER
Bookkeeper

Tracks our income and expenses and thanks our many generous donors when she's not busy as a local homebirth midwife.

EXPANDING OUR REACH



GROWING TO SERVE OUR RIVER

In 2019, we spread our arms wide to embrace growth and increase our capacity. Blessed with new equipment making it easier to more efficiently achieve our mission, we put our new boat, Lucia, to use right away in the spring. This 20-passenger boat (pictured below) has double the capacity of our other boats. The boat was purchased with generous donations from **Mid-Missouri Solid Waste Management District**, **Hulston Family Foundation** and **Missouri American Water**. A grant from the **Robert J. Trulaske Foundation** purchased a brand new pickup to haul boats and gear.

We brought aboard two education interns in the summer, Katie Hathaway and Carly Hopkins, to help with curriculum and programs. We brought aboard an AmeriCorps VISTA member, Laura Semken, to help grow our capacity. Our deep base of volunteers and donors exploded this year with a desire to help the river.

And our family grew, as the year closed our Education Director Kristen Schulte welcomed a new daughter to her family, growing the next generation.



Since 2001

183

River Clean-ups

27,838

Volunteers

940

Tons of Trash

25,852

Students & Teachers

32

Communities Served

“DEEP & STICKY” EDUCATION



MISSOURI RIVER DAYS

Adding layers to a river education experience

Learning is a process. One learning experience, no matter how great, probably won't lead to a big understanding. Students need more episodes for “deep and sticky” learning.

At River Relief, we give students powerful experiences that will inspire more memorable episodes in their learning about the Missouri River. Partnering with the National Great Rivers Research and Environmental Center, we hosted an Education Intern, Carly Hopkins, to help design a pre & post curriculum for Missouri River Days, **an education program that engages the entire 4th grade** in Columbia, Mo. with the Missouri River.

Carly designed the curriculum to include two pre-lessons and one post-lesson that align to 4th grade learning standards. Carly then piloted these lessons with grade school teachers. Piloting the lessons was one of her favorite parts of her internship experience.

She shared that “there’s something amazing about seeing your work unfold. The feeling of hearing the teachers read the words that went through countless revisions, and the kids absorbing it, it falls nothing short of complete elation.” Thanks to Carly’s hard work, Missouri River Days is now a “deep and sticky” learning experience that combines a pre-post curriculum with a Missouri River field trip.



CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS

2019 Education Programs

- **Environmental Educator Meet & Greet**
- **St. Louis Educators Workshop**
- **Missouri River Days**
with every Columbia Public School 4th grader
- **Missouri River All-Stars**
after school program and river trip
- **Missouri River Academy**
five-day overnight summer camp
- **Missouri River Sunset Excursions**
with Columbia Parks participants, and sponsors & partners from each river community
- **Investigating the Missouri River**
field trips with Oakland Middle School, Rock Bridge High School & AmeriCorps members from across the state
- **Stewardship on the Missouri River**
with Job Point YouthBuild participants
- **Leadership Ladder River Excursion**
with Mo. Department of Natural Resources employees



AMERICORPS VISTA

Increasing educational capacity



Meet Laura Semken, our new AmeriCorps VISTA Education Assistant! Laura is focused on education programs targeting Title I schools and community organizations that work with low-income individuals.

With over 19 years of experience in environmental education and a Master's in Environmental Education and Interpretation, Laura's wealth of knowledge has assisted River Relief in identifying funding and partners to build the capacity for Missouri River education programs.

This position is hosted in partnership with Stream Teams United.



BY THE NUMBERS

2,236

Students

298

Teachers

5,077

Hours on the River

25

River Trips

7

Educator Workshops

21

Missouri River Presentations

2019 Results

9

Clean-ups

1,149

Volunteers

19.5

Tons of Trash

168

Tires Removed

42

Miles Cleaned

5

Paddling Events

327

Paddlers

20

Communities

6,815

Total Participants

10,867

Total Participant
Hours on the River

Fort Osage River Clean-up



It stormed most of the day, but a tough batch of volunteers dodged the downpours and still removed **1.5 tons** of trash from the river.

The clean-up, our first based out of Fort Osage County Park, was focused on Mile 333, an area of forest that acts as a Trash Trap, collecting Kansas City litter during high water events.

Kansas City

Missouri River

Jefferson City River Clean-up



200 of the best volunteers ignored the rain and cleaned this stretch of river heavily impacted not only by flooding, but a devastating tornado that spread Styrofoam insulation along the banks. We removed **4.9 tons** of trash from the banks of the Missouri River including 41 tires and a staggering 176 large chunks of Styrofoam.

THE RIVER REQUIRES RESILIENCE

In our 19 years of working on the river, we've never experienced the magnitude of water coming down the Missouri River as we did in the Great Flood of 2019. The impacts on the communities and farms along the river will be felt for years to come.

One of the lessons the river teaches is resilience. Along the banks of the river are stands of willows.

Willows can bend in the current, be buried by floods and rebound, get harvested by beavers then resprout or reseed a new sandbar after a flood.

River Relief volunteers are like the willow trees. Difficulties with the weather and river levels are just part of the game. We proceed as the way opens. We are humbled by the river and bring our joy no matter what.

Weldon Spring River Clean-up



This was our first time cleaning this beautiful stretch of river just upstream of St. Charles. 153 volunteers removed **4.3 tons** of trash from the Missouri River. We were able to send 1.2 tons of that, mostly plastic, to the recycling center and all 51 tires were recycled.

Boonville

St. Louis

Washington River Festival and Clean-up



The stars aligned for this one, giving us a window of opportunity between large flood events. In addition to the river clean-up, our local partners threw an outstanding River Festival with music, education, art and great food. 169 volunteers removed **5.5 tons** of trash from the river, half of which was recycled.



"Winter Float Memories"
by Bryan Haynes



"Missouri River Sunset - 2018"
by Notley Hawkins

CONNECTING THE ART COMMUNITY TO THE RIVER

The Big Muddy Art Auction

Who doesn't love river art?

We are always looking for new ways to connect our communities to the Missouri River. One thing we do know is that the Missouri River is a source of inspiration for everyone that sits on its banks. When artists transform that inspiration into beauty that can be shared, there are whole new layers of connection going on.

This was our second time hosting the Big Muddy Art Auction at Orr Street Studios, and it was even more successful than our first one. Our goal is to make the event **a collaboration between our artist friends and River Relief**, so all of the proceeds from submitted artworks are shared.

Some of the artists that participated in 2018's "Just Plein Air & Water" painting adventure submitted pieces and we met some new friends who donated pieces. The diversity of perspectives was enlightening. The depth of talent was breathtaking. A love for the river saturated all of the works.

A local cattle auctioneer, John Harrison, did the calling and a room packed with 145 bidders kept things hopping. The event raised \$8,000 for Missouri River Relief programs and created new relationships with a focus on the river.

BRYAN HAYNES

Missouri River Artist



We met Bryan Haynes on the river. He helped haul hay bales for the Washington River Festival and got dirty with the rest of us.

The big river breathes a timeless power and energy into the landscape. Bryan's paintings find the patterns in that energy. They arrange the tiny details of the river world into a tapestry of connection. He brings history into the present and touches it with magic.

Bryan has never said "No" to a request for help from River Relief. We admire, honor and respect him. And stand amazed at his creations.



"Missouri River Triptych"
by Cindy Scott

TEN YEAR MILESTONES



TWO PROGRAMS CELEBRATE A DECADE OF SUCCESS!

Two of our most popular programs celebrated their 10th year in 2019. The Big Muddy Speaker Series and Race to the Dome both reach different audiences and connect people to the river in very different ways.



Ten years of exploring river issues and culture

Back in 2009 we hosted the first Big Muddy “Session” at a small cabin on the Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. At the time, we thought we’d try to have one talk per month for several months, then we figured we’d start to run out of topics.

Over 10 years later, the Big Muddy Speaker Series is still going strong. Each month a different expert on some aspect of the Missouri River shares their research, adventures, perspectives and data with our growing audience. From the story of the Missouri Indians to river engineering, from the politics of flooding to the science of pollution, from river art to expedition stories – we keep it interesting and strive to deepen everyone’s knowledge about this river.

RACE TO THE DOME

Hundreds of paddlers compete and explore the river in this benefit race



Whether you are a world-class competitive paddler or a mom and son combo on the Missouri River for the first time, Race to the Dome is the perfect event for you.

It’s really two simultaneous races, 16 & 28 miles – both ending at beautiful Wilson’s Serenity Point Park in Jefferson City.

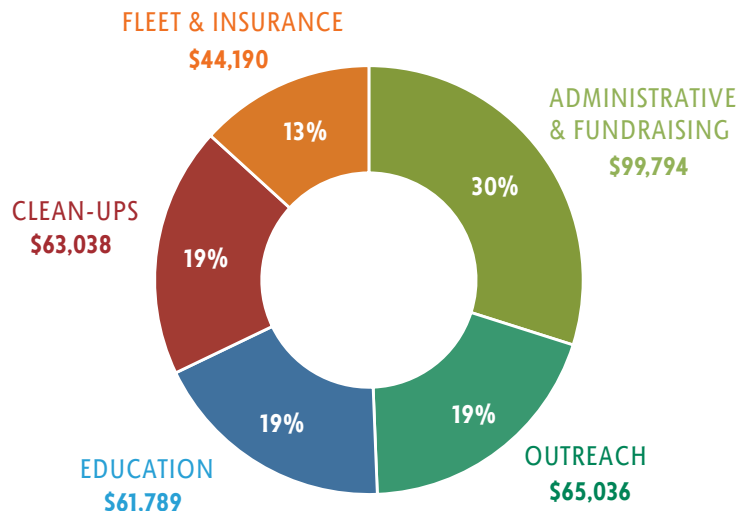
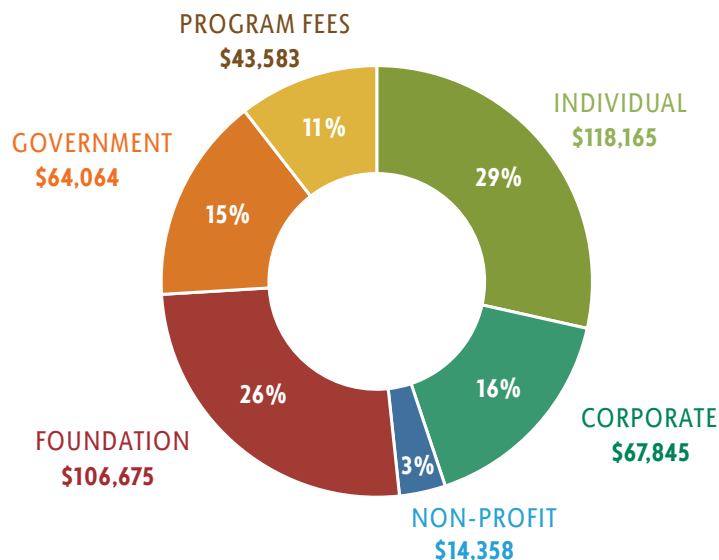
This event was started by Patrick Lynn, a friend from Jefferson City who had attended some river clean-ups and thought that the capital deserved a quality paddling race. And he wanted it to benefit Missouri River Relief! American Water, Jeff City’s water company whose plant is directly across the river from the race finish, decided to hop aboard as our title sponsor.

10 years later and this race has created a wonderful community of paddlers. Since 2010, **1,333 paddlers in 944 boats have finished this race!** It is the last race of the year and the gathering at the finish line has a joyful feeling of a reunion. The river created this community. That is the goal of everything we do.

FINANCIALS

REVENUE: \$414,690

EXPENSES: \$333,847



MEET THE BOARD

OFFICERS

NIC ROGERS, President
Stewardship Specialist,
Ozark Regional Land Trust

LYNNE HOOPER, Vice President
Urban Hydrologist,
Boone County Resource Management

KORY KAUFMAN, Secretary
Retired Science Teacher, Rock Bridge High School,
Columbia Public Schools

MICHAEL CRIST, Treasurer
Executive Director,
Managing member of Tatanka Resources

NIC ROGERS



Board President
Nic Rogers has volunteered for the last five years as a crew member, helping at river events from St. Louis to St. Joe; he has excelled at jobs like "ramp boss" and "dispatch", giving a helping hand to each and every volunteer who boards a boat. On top of that, he is a smooth board facilitator.

Thank you for your service, Nic!

BOARD MEMBERS

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Kansas City Parks & Recreation

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Retired Digital Learning Innovator

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Biology Instructor
University of Missouri

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Director of Osage Spring 12

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Financial & Commissioner with Columbia
Community Development Commission

HEIDI SHARP
Founder of Solstice Wellness

A BIG MUDDY THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

Our projects would be impossible without the generous donations of our many sponsors. Our gratitude is heartfelt.

SPONSOR OF THE YEAR



RIVERMILES, HOST OF THE MR340

\$20,000 - \$65,000



**Rio Vista
Foundation**

**John P. & Maida S.
Hulston
Family Fund**



\$10,000 - \$19,999



Anonymous



\$5,000 - \$9,999

Bass Pro Shops
City of Columbia
Columbia Public Schools
Community Foundation
of Central Missouri
Corvin Family Fund
Lewis & Clark Trail
Heritage Foundation

Mid-America
Regional Council
National Park
Foundation
Paddle Stop New Haven
REI
St. Louis-Jefferson Solid
Waste Management
Steve Sadich

\$2,000 - \$4,999

3M
Alpine Shop
Bill Jackson
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Columbia Convention &
Visitors Bureau
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Hydroflask
Lucky's Market
Mo. Department of Natural
Resources
Missouri Environmental Fund
Ruthie Moccia
Stream Teams United
Walmart

\$500 - \$1,999

4 Hands Brewing
Alliance Water Resources
Ashley Burnam
Astral Glass
Audubon Society of Missouri
Bank of Washington
Barney & Eileen Combs
Base Camp International
Big Muddy Adventures
Bill Fessler
Brandon Shoupe
Brian Mahieu Art
Bruce & Marvis Templar
Bryan Haynes
Bryan Swearingin

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Clark Fox Family Foundation
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Racin' Dave's Motorcycle
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Republic Services
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Susan Flader
The Blue Note
The Station House at
Katfish Katy's
Thomas Lemley
True/False Film Festival
Ultimate Survival
Technologies
Van Trust Real Estate



GET INVOLVED

VOLUNTEER

- At a Clean-up
- As an Educator
- On the Board

CREATE

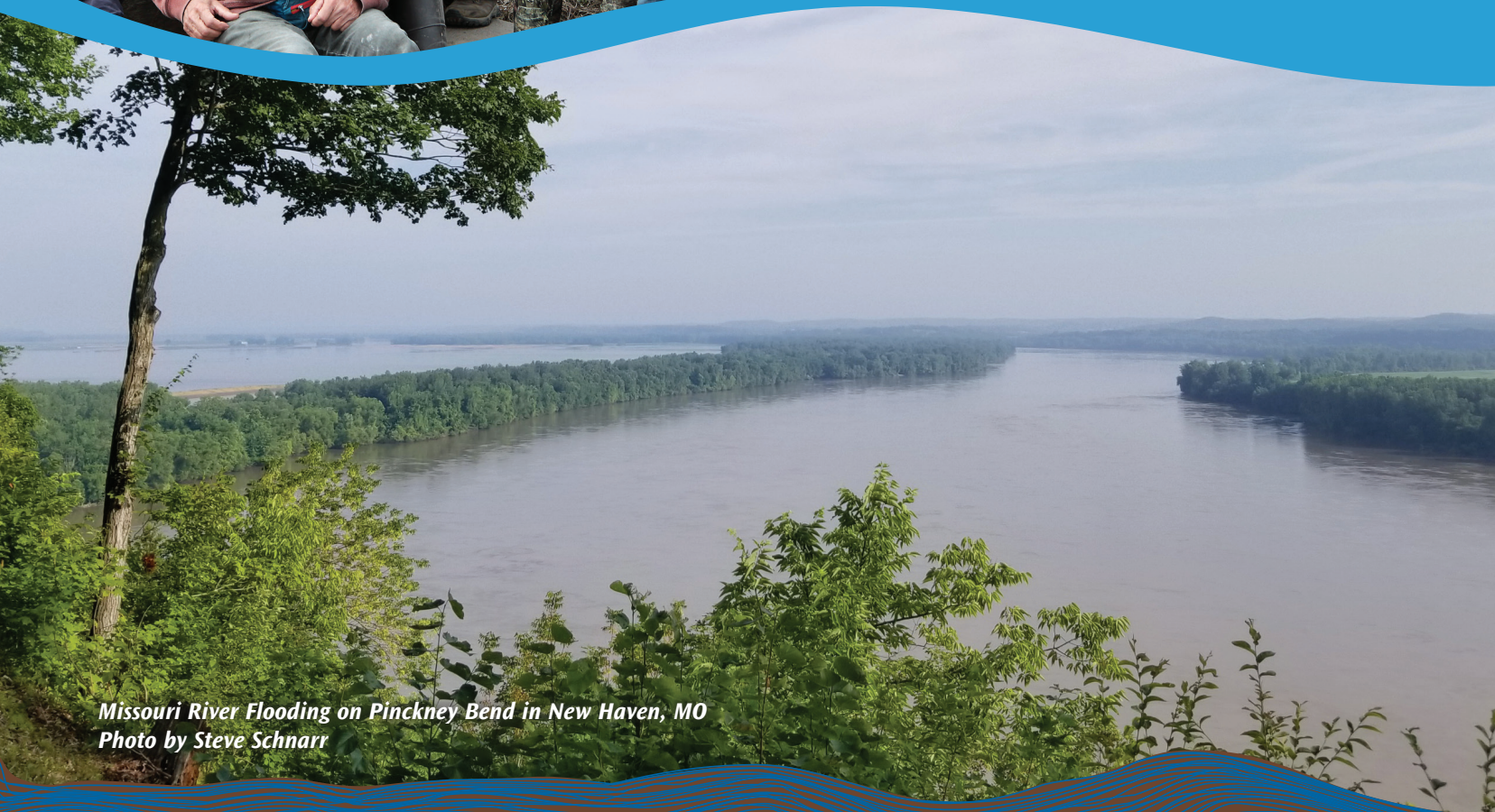
- River Art
- Tasty Food
- A Community

PARTICIPATE

- In a River Race
- At a Speaker Series
- At a Summer Camp

DONATE

- Cash
- Time
- Talent



Missouri River Flooding on Pinckney Bend in New Haven, MO
Photo by Steve Schnarr



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