



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mississippi National River
and Recreation Area

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News Release

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The River Plays Trump

River education trips for Twin Cities' students are re-routed due to high water on the Mississippi River.

High water is preventing the paddleboat *Harriet Bishop* from landing at Fort Snelling State Park during the last two weeks of Big River Journey (BRJ), a river education program coordinated by the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, a local unit of the National Park System. Normally, students would disembark from the bow of the 120 foot vessel, landing on the sandy banks of the historic steamboat landing just below Historic Fort Snelling. But now, those students (1,600 in all) will travel to and from the Padelford Packet Boat Co. dock on Harriet Island.

“It’s disappointing, but not unexpected, that we have to forego landing at the state park because of high water”, says National Park Ranger Kathy Swenson, who co-leads the Big River Journey trips in St. Paul. “We always have to remember that the river holds the trump card.”

Big River Journey is a national award winning educational partnership providing science-based learning that supports river stewardship. The Mississippi River, its science, heritage and care are the subject of year-round learning experiences aimed at 4th -6th grade levels - in the classroom, in local communities and on the river itself. National Park Rangers, naturalists and other educators provide hands-on activities that take kids inside the river’s secret world of aquatic invertebrates, birds, forests, and rocks; and reveal insights to boats, pollution and the river’s history. Teachers attend BRJ workshops and schools reserve this special river trip months in advance. Park Rangers from the MNRRA have coordinated ten years of Big River Journey in St. Paul in partnership with ten organizations, agencies, businesses and tribes.

The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area is the unit of the National Park System that represents America's greatest river, and weaves together the heartland's natural and cultural heritage and economic vitality. One of 390 units in the National Park System, the MNRRA extends 72 miles south from the cities of Dayton and Ramsey, through Minneapolis and St. Paul, ending just south of Hastings. The National Park Service (NPS) works with partners, local governments and tribes to care for the river's nationally significant resources found here, which include the Mississippi's only gorge and waterfall. Visit www.nps.gov/miss, or call the NPS Mississippi River Visitor Center in the Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul, at 651-293-0200. There is no fee for the Visitor Center or for Park Ranger-led programs.

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