

Tips and Tools for Community Engagement on Rivers

Welcome to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Toolkit!

Interested hosting a Wild and Scenic Rivers event? Curious about types of internships on rivers? Stoked to go for a paddle? This toolkit contains a compilation of tips and links to outline resources that all rivers, designated or not, can use for youth engagement, and recreation, river access and stewardship.

These resources are organized to reflect key topics, but are only listen once, even if several topics would apply to one resource.

Goals

- *Inspire the next generation of river stewards and advocates*
- *Increase public access to recreation on America's rivers*
- *Increase partner activity and community support for America's rivers*
- *Increase awareness of rivers and Wild and Scenic Rivers System and protected rivers among all Americans*

How Partners Benefit

- *Engaging new audiences*
 - *Reach youth and connect with more people; by sharing info about the anniversary on social media and using the hashtags: #FindYourWay #MakeYourSplash*
 - *Increasing physical and educational access to rivers for all Americans*
- *Building a strong network of volunteers*
 - *Build an awareness of Wild and Scenic Program, and help folks to recognize that these rivers are worthy of special protection*
 - *Build off the momentum of the 50th anniversary to be used as a kick-off to build a base for long-lived stewardship program*

How Partners Can Get Involved

- *Help spread the word (social media, hashtags, press releases, logos, products)*
- *Host an event (or 2 or 3!)*
- *Tie in the WSR outreach and interpretation with regularly scheduled events*

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Education

1. Before developing new content for classroom education, consider working with local schools and teachers to develop a curriculum that fits the school district's standards and curriculum ladder.
2. In some cases, teachers will want to take the lead. Be prepared to support in whatever way best fits the needs of the classroom.

Infographics: why wild and scenic rivers are important

- [The National System](#)
- [Water Quality](#)
- [Fish, Wildlife, Ecology and Botany](#)
- [Recreation and Economics](#)
- [Geology and Hydrology](#)
- [History, Culture and Paleontology](#)
- [Health and Safety](#)

Infographics: En Español

- [Ríos Silvestres y Escénicos: Sistema nacional](#)
- [Calidad del agua](#)
- [Peces, vida silvestre, ecología y botánica](#)
- [Recreación y economía de los ríos](#)
- [Geología e hidrología](#)
- [Historia, cultura y paleontología](#)
- [Salud y seguridad](#)

Classroom curriculum, lesson plans, and other educational materials

- [Lamprey River](#): This is from the Lamprey River Advisory Committee website. Here you can find examples of books and curriculum materials.
 - [Chick & Dee-Dee's Adventure](#): An illustrated story of Chick and Dee-Dee's exploration of the Wild and Scenic Lamprey River
- [Ozarks](#)
 - [More Than Skin Deep, a Teacher's Guide to Caves and Groundwater](#): This webpage is an abridged version of what is available if the park is contacted. In this two section teacher guide, section 1 provides general backgrounds about caves. Section 2 includes activities.
- [Valley Forge National Historical Park](#)
 - [Sensory Poetry](#): Rivers are not just for scientists to study--rivers and nature transcends disciplines and subjects. In sensory poetry, English and language arts classes can participate in creative studies of rivers. This lesson plan for English, literature and science subjects contains background information, procedure, and activities.
- [Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area curriculum materials](#): There are a multitude of lesson plans available on BISO's website that could be modified to fit your needs.

- [Students for Salmon Curriculum](#): Teacher led and NSEA facilitated curriculum, geared specifically for fourth grade students. Created by the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA), though the Nooksack is not a designated Wild and Scenic River.

Events

- Consider working with local businesses (i.e. bookstores and breweries) to gain community buy in.
- Government employees cannot ask for donations, but non-government partners can.
- Advertise your event on many mediums as different media will reach different audiences.
- Don't be afraid to emphasize the recreation component as well. Especially if it's a new group of volunteers on the river, use this as an opportunity to have them paddle the river. The more they enjoy and appreciate the river, the more likely they are to come back.
- Volunteer incentives can be useful during 1-day events (e.g. breakfast included) and for establishing long-lived volunteer programs (e.g. certificate of recognition, buttons, t-shirts, getting a reward for X criteria).
- Highlight success stories and get the word out via social media or other news outlets. This serves to recognize volunteers' accomplishments and publicize your next event.

Volunteer Events

- [NPS Volunteer](#): Check out stewardship events and resources on the NPS volunteer page.
- [National Public Lands Day](#): National Public Lands Day is held the last Saturday of September and is a way for citizens to both explore and give back to their public lands by volunteering.
- [Crayfish Corp Brochure](#): Information on Crayfish Corp, a volunteer group that catches invasive crayfish Valley Forge National Historical Park. Rusty crayfish are becoming a problem in streams and rivers across the nation,
- [Keeper of the Stream Brochure](#): Information on Keeper of the Stream, a volunteer program that connects and protects water resources at Valley Forge National Historical Park.
- [Weed Warriors Brochure](#): Information on Weed Warriors, a volunteer program that preserve and restore native biodiversity in Valley Forge National Historical Park by teaching volunteers about invasive plants and how to identify those that are prominent in the park.

Internships

- Internship types range from education to science to outreach. These opportunities are mutually beneficial to your organization and to the interns hired; while your organization receives additional help with projects, interns receive critical work experience.
- Outreach is a very common type of internship among Partnership and NPS Wild and Scenic Rivers, where interns deliver educational content to schools, design educational material and activities, lead programs at events, engage with the public to deliver river value messages, update websites, or create social media.

- Training and mentoring is sometimes a limiting factor for hiring interns. Consider hiring interns through existing internship programs such as Americorps, Student Conservation Association, or Greening Youth Foundation to ease this process. See Youth partnering programs for more internship programs.
- Post the job description on [LinkedIn](#) and on river or conservation related job boards such as the [River Management Society Job Board](#), [River Network Career page](#), or the [Conservation Job Board](#).

Existing Internship Programs

Among the existing internship programs, the following are frequently used by parks and Partnership Rivers:

- [NPS youth programs](#): Learn more about existing job and internship opportunities
- [River Trails Conservation Assistance internship program](#): these internships are offered through Conservation Legacy, a non-profit organization that already has a background partnering with land management agencies to hire interns and fellows.
- [Farmington River Stewards](#): This resource outlines some of the training that the Farmington River supplies to its part-time college interns to perform public outreach and general river stewardship task for a summer.
- [OARS summer job opportunities](#): Check out OARS as a non-profit partner. OARS is has several locations and can supply qualified interns.

Junior Ranger

- Create your own Junior *River* Ranger program with a booklet and activities! Consider using the following as a checklist for pages to include in your booklet:
 - Cover
 - This book belongs to/Welcome
 - How to become a Junior River Ranger or Activities Checklist
 - Safety first page(s)
 - What is a National Wild and Scenic River?
 - What Makes Your River Special?
 - Resource-specific Activities pages (Scavenger hunts, word scrambles, puzzles, dances, drawing, etc.)
 - Stewardship (i.e. What can I do? How can I protect this resource?)
 - Congratulations! (how kids can collect their rewards)
 - Want to learn more?
 - Comments, Questions, Concerns
 - Acknowledgements
- Incentives are key to completing the Junior Ranger program so have [Junior Ranger badges](#) or [Wild and Scenic River 50th Anniversary stickers](#) ready for any newly minted Junior River Rangers!
- If leading a program in nature, utilize teachable moments. If a deer grazes by the group of Junior Rangers, take a moment to talk about the food the deer is eating and its relation to riparian corridors. Don't let it be a distraction but rather an opportunity!

Make your own Junior River Ranger Activity

- [Junior River Ranger Booklet Guidelines](#): Extensive guidelines on how to create your own Junior River Ranger booklet.

Junior River Ranger Activities and Books

- [Wild and Scenic Junior River Ranger Special Edition](#) and [En Español](#): A double sided 1-page Wild and Scenic River 50th Anniversary special edition Junior Ranger insert. Can be used in addition to a Junior Ranger booklet or as a separate activity. Includes talking points for program leaders.
- Junior Ranger booklets
 - [Lower Delaware Junior River Ranger Booklet](#)
 - [Sudbury, Assabet and Concord Junior River Ranger Booklet](#)
 - [Upper Farmington Junior River Ranger Booklet](#)
 - [Junior Ranger River Safety](#)
- Junior Ranger Program
 - [Lamprey Junior River Ranger Study Guide and Activity Booklet](#)

Recreation

- Know your audience. Ask about participants experience and knowledge so you can start off on a proper foot. This will help personalize the program and make others feel comfortable!
- If leading a program in nature, use teachable moments effectively. If an animal comes within sight, take a moment to talk about animal's habitat and its relation to riparian corridors. Don't let it be a distraction, but rather an opportunity!
- Prepare well, but always have back up plans.
- For paddling trips, take a course in water safety and rescue. Check out the [American Red Cross](#) and the [American Canoe Association](#) for classes.

Trip Planning and Water Safety

- [NPS Trip Planning Guide](#): Trip planning guide for National Park visitors. Guide discusses what to do before the trip, upon arrival at the park, during and after the trip.
- [NPS Water Vessel Safety resources](#): These resources are to help boaters prepare for their boating adventures safely.
- [National Rivers Project](#) and the [National Wild and Scenic Rivers Map](#) to find a designated river near you
- [Rivers requiring permits list](#): Some rivers require permits before the public can recreate on them. This website contains a list of rivers needing permits.
- [American Canoe Association \(ACA\) Resources](#):
 - [Safety Infographics](#): Listed here are a series of boating safety infographics.
 - [Best Practices Brochure](#): Guidelines for responsible paddling and basic safety practices. Intend for paddlers and paddlesport program, from the American Canoe Association.
 - [Paddlers Safety Checklist](#): A paddler's safety checklist and planning guideline, from the American Canoe Association.
 - [Paddling 101](#)
 - [Know Your Limits](#): A safety publication from the American Canoe Association discussing how to paddle smart.

- [Top 10 Safety Tips](#): 10 tips on paddling safely.
- [Safety Code of American Whitewater](#):
- [Red Cross Swimming Safely Brochure](#): Guidelines for swimming safely in lakes, rivers, and streams.

Signage and Social Media

- Check out the [online press kit](#) for news, story ideas, and trending words surrounding the Wild and Scenic 50th Anniversary.
- Use high quality photos of rivers in any medium (signage, social media, websites, etc.). Check out the [Wild and Scenic River Flickr](#) account for high quality images of rivers.
- Highlight your river events on the [50th Anniversary Rivers Events Map!](#)
- Create a Story Map about your river stories and share it on the [National Wild and Scenic Rivers 50th Anniversary Story Map page!](#)
- Tag and share social media.
- If you have a story you would like to share via social media, reach out to Joni and Kelleen, who may be able to help (joni_gore@partner.nps.gov & kelleen_lanagan@partner.nps.gov)

Stewardship

- River clean-ups are great events to foster stewardship and invoke a sense of pride since the results of these events are tangible.
- [Leave No Trace](#)
- Several states and townships offer subsidies for sustainable landscaping around private homes. Check out if any apply to your area and disseminate that information (i.e. [White Clay Creek Catch the Rain Program](#))