Protecting Land & Restoring Habitat

An important element in FMR's goal of improving the Mississippi River is partnering with landowners to restore, enhance and protect natural areas within its metro area watershed. We assist landowners by developing Natural Resource Management Plans, act as an advisor as they pursue permanent protection for their property, and organize and manage on-the-ground habitat enhancement and restoration activities.

The Natural Resource Management Plans are an important first step in restoring habitat and serve as a guide for restoration activities. In 2011, FMR completed plans for 9 sites, as well as an exotic invasive plant survey and plant inventory maps for several other sites. FMR also managed on-the-ground restoration and enhancement activities at 10 sites, totaling over 250 acres that included prairie, forest and oak savanna ecosystems.

Perhaps the most crucial step in the long-term survival of important natural areas is to permanently protect them, and this takes a varying amount of time, depending on how far along the landowner might be in the decision-making process. In 2011, two projects that FMR played key roles in were completed. Together, these projects added over 100 acres of permanently protected land to the Hastings Sand Coulee Scientific and Natural Area in Dakota County and brought the total acres in this SNA to over 260 acres.

Water Quality & Watershed Protection

FMR is working closely with citizens, government agencies, and nonprofit partners on several longer-term initiatives to promote significant water quality improvements in the Mississippi River watershed. We are playing a strong leadership role in a number of vital water quality projects, programs, and coalitions throughout the state. In 2011, our work in this area included:

- Efforts to ensure that the Mississippi River Sediment Clean Up Plan (TSS TMDL) results in measureable reductions in sediment pollution in the Mississippi River watershed.
- · Chairing the Minnesota Environmental Partnership's Water Cluster, a collective of water-related organizations pooling resources and working together to protect and preserve our State's water resources.
- Growing the Blue Star Award Program, the state's only award program for excellence in stormwater management, which honored its 13th
- · Advocating for the development of strong river nutrient standards for the Mississippi River.

FMR is also actively participating in several major water quality related projects and stakeholder advisory groups working to address major water quality issues, including:

- The Mississippi Makeover Stakeholder Advisory Committee
- Minnesota Minimum Impact Design Standards Work Group
- MPCA Municipal Stormwater Permit Stakeholder Group
- · Environmental Initiative Agricultural Leadership Dialogue Group

In addition, in partnership with the Mississippi National River & Recreation Area, FMR is developing the State of the River Report. This report, due for release in September 2012, will measure the status and trends of key indicators of the health of the Mississippi River in the Twin Cities. The report will increase public awareness about the range of factors affecting river health, and build public support around priorities for action to protect the river and its watershed.

River Corridor Advocacy

In 2011, FMR's advocacy for new riverfront rules had to switch to a defensive strategy. Thanks to strategic lobbying, citizen organizing and Governor Dayton's veto pen, we were able to prevent a repeal of the state's rulemaking authority that FMR and so many others fought to put in place. The repeal would have nullified \$350,000 in Legacy funds that were spent to develop the draft rules in 2010. New rules are critical to protecting the scenic, natural and cultural values of the Mississippi River in the Twin Cities. FMR is in this for the long haul, and we will continue to advocate for rule adoption in 2012 and beyond if necessary.

Much of our local corridor work focused on planning for a major expansion of riverfront parkland. In addition to playing a key role on several park planning task forces and committees, FMR provided extensive input and written comments on two landmark efforts - Saint Paul's "Great River Passage" Master Plan and Minneapolis' "RiverFIRST" vision for the river north of downtown. Both plans call for acquisition and development of extensive and largely continuous parks and trails along 17 miles of river in St. Paul and 5.5 miles in Minneapolis.

2011 also saw Minnesotans become increasingly concerned about Asian Carp. These invasive fish are voracious feeders that can literally starve out native fish and cause major ecosystem disruption. FMR is working with non-governmental organizations, the National Park Service, Minnesota DNR, Minnesota Congressional staff, State and City officials and numerous other parties to develop and implement a plan to stop Asian Carp from wreaking havoc in Minnesota's treasured lakes and rivers as well as the state's billion dollar fishing and recreation economy.

Community Stewardship and Engagement

FMR works with area residents across our program areas, and is expanding the opportunities we offer to engage new communities and bring greater diversity to our education and volunteer activities. New projects that started in 2011 or are in the works for 2012 include community outreach and stewardship sites along the river in north and northeast Minneapolis, the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood in Minneapolis, St. Paul's East Side and south Washington County.

In addition to continuing our robust schedule of events for the general public, we are expanding our work with youth, especially in the East African and Hmong immigrant communities in the urban core, to connect youth to their environment and help them protect it.

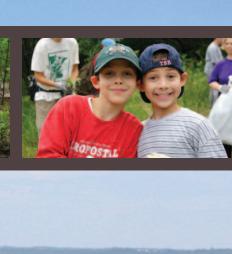
In 2011, FMR engaged 2,560 volunteers who contributed 9,245 hours toward our work! Thank you to all who were part of that effort! In addition, 74.9 people participated in educational and interpretive events to enjoy and learn more about their local river and its watershed.



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Expanding Reac tor a Health

2011 annual report

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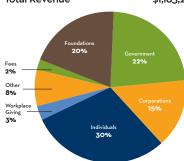
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Foundations Government Corporations Individuals Workplace Giving Other Fees

Total Revenue \$1,183,276



Expenses

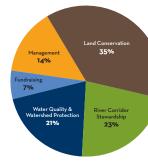
Programs

Land Conservation 426,399 River Corridor Advocacy & Stewardship 283,474

Water Quality & Watershed Protection

256,519 **Fundrasising** 81,957 184,422 Management

Total Expenses \$1,232,771



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177,536

352,622

33,587

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Through an outstanding year, FMR's efforts continued, often with new challenges. Our work owes its success to the dedication of our community of volunteers, supporters and staff who share a passion and vision for this treasured resource. Our work together will

Dear Friends,

with striking successes and dramatic

challenges. We are encouraged by the

enthusiastic support of the community,

evidenced by a growing base of program

participants, volunteers and donors. Over

our programs in 2011 and individual giving

Through our land protection initiatives we

conducted restoration and enhancement

activities on 250 acres and assisted in the

addition of over 100 acres to the Scientific and

Natural Area system. Our water quality work is

active and strong. Community engagement in

riverfronts has inspired enthusiasm for renewal.

invasive Asian Carp species. By the fall of 2011,

species management has begun that will have

re-imagining the St. Paul and Minneapolis

Early in 2011, concerns arose about several

discovery of DNA markers in the region

heightened these concerns. A new era of

broad implications for shaping future use

We were encouraged and heartened by the

December named Friends of the Mississippi

Minnesota environmental community. Their

survey of 178 experts in the field recognizes the

success of our enduring leadership priorities.

ensure a future for the river that is healthy and

scenic both above and below the water line.

recognition of Philanthropedia, which in

River one of the top nonprofits in the

patterns for the river.

increased to a new high.

3,600 members and volunteers participated in

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Sincerely,



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