

Mississippi National River Recreational Area

Background Information:

The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (NRRRA) has been actively incorporating water access and multi-modal programs to connect its visitors and residents to the park and the Mississippi River. Mississippi NRRRA provides access to 72 miles of paddling and water access points for recreational activities through a variety of urban and natural landscapes, from Ramsey at the north end of Twin Cities metro area down to just south of Hastings, Minnesota. Over the past 10 years, Mississippi NRRRA has leveraged millions of dollars of NPS Category 3 funds to implement dozens of alternative transportation projects within and connecting to its boundaries. Table 1 shows the amount of Category 3 funding the park received from the Midwest Regional office from FFY 2017-2021. When allocated to a partner (state, county, park district, city, etc.) project, the partner must provide at least 80 percent of the project total. The park lists potential NPS and partner alternative transportation projects in a Five-Year Alternative Transportation System Implementation Plan (current version covers FFY 2022-2026), which is updated annually. The park then works with the Regional office to fund as many of these projects as possible.

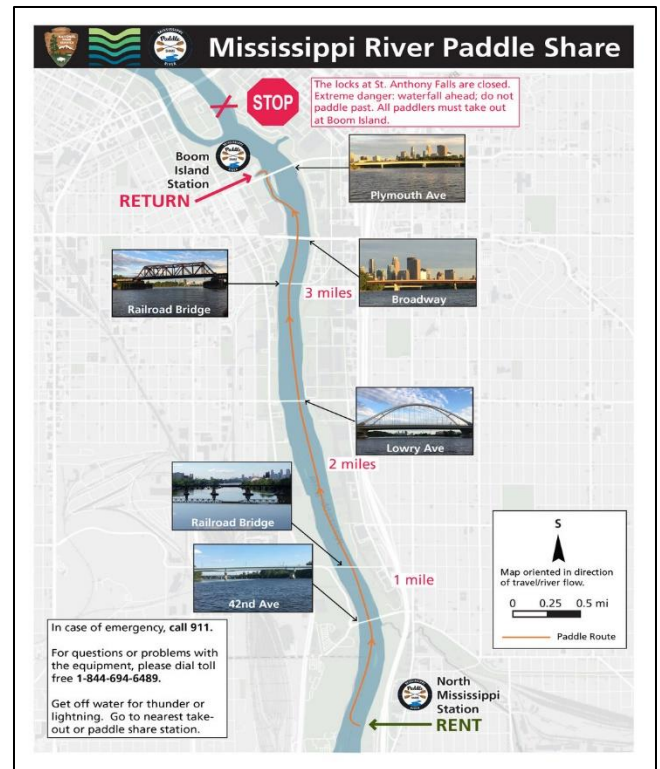


Table 1: NPS Category 3 Funding Received and Leveraged by the Mississippi NRRRA

Federal Fiscal Year	NPS Category 3 Funding	Leveraged Local Funding
2017	\$906,735	\$2,660,000
2018	\$764,851	\$7,767,750
2019	\$404,951	\$1,641,000
2020	\$191,329	\$0*
2021	\$1,000,000	\$0*

* Only 100% NPS projects were funded the 1

Highlights:

Network and Multimodal Connectivity

- The Mississippi NRRRA connects visitors and residents to the river with trails, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, and mass transit in the area. Users can rent a kayak from a pick-up station, paddle down river, return the kayak at one of the four return stations, and take a bus or train, rideshare, or Nice Ride bike share back to the place of origin. Each of the kayak “Paddle Share” stations are near a bike station and urban core of the metro area. Although water trails are within walkable distance from the nearest rail transit stop, rail transit services do not operate on weekends when water access is busiest.

Water Access

- The park’s [Mississippi River Companion](#) is a guide for visitors to accessing and being on the river. The guide divides the river into five map sections with different environments, based on density, accessibility, and water type. Within each section, there are several access points to the water with numerous facilities, such as picnic areas, drinking water, fishing docks, boat access, etc. Access points can be as close as 1.6 miles within one of the sections. The park’s [Water Trail Plan, which covers existing conditions and hazards, future water access projects, hazards and needs, and improvements and recommendations](#), is also organized around the same five sections of the river.

Conclusion:

The multimodal alternative transportation efforts in Mississippi NRRRA integrates their water access initiative with a growing public bicycle and transit network. The different types of public transit and bike share options close to the river allow for a variety of experiences within one trip.