



2020 Action Plan for The Confluence Addendum

Summary of Accomplishments 2000-2010

Today The Confluence is a 200 square mile evolving system of conserved open space, parks, museums, heritage sites, and recreational trails along the Great Rivers of the bi-state St. Louis area. By reconnecting the public to the wealth of natural, historic and recreational resources at the heart of the community, this project contributes significantly to the regional quality of life and economic competitiveness in the 21st century.

Since 1997, The Confluence project has been led by a working partnership of five non-profit organizations which represent distinct missions and geographic areas of the bi-state region. Each brings unique, complementary skills to the project, while continuing their good works in the community as independent organizations. The five core members meet quarterly to voluntarily plan projects and programs throughout the river corridor and facilitate communication with The Confluence Partnership, a broad group of cooperating agencies and stakeholders. These principal public and other not-for-profit colleagues have developed and funded initiatives and facilities particular to their missions, within the broader Confluence context. This has fostered a more comprehensive, complementary approach to land conservation, programming, and facility development as well as increased willingness to commit financial, technical, and staff resources. Over 200 agencies and organizations are now committed to project planning and coordination and over \$150 million has been secured for river programs.

The transformation of the riverfronts is well underway. An impressive set of early achievements encourages community residents and tourists to care and protect the land and water in the Confluence region as they reconnect to America's Great Rivers. A summary of these accomplishments and detailed report follows:

- **Over 13, 000 acres of new public open space** now surrounds the Confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. These lands help protect water quality and provide recreational opportunities for residents and tourists. For the first time in decades, the public has access to the Confluence at points in Missouri and Illinois, including the Columbia Bottom Conservation Area, the Edward "Ted" and Pat Jones-Confluence Point State Park and the Lewis and Clark State Historic Site .
- **More than 93,000 volunteers** from civic, religious and service groups, corporations and interested individuals have participated in river clean-ups, habitat restoration projects, educational events and water quality monitoring thus enhancing our riverfronts and building a constituency committed to the long-term stewardship of the Great Rivers.
- **Diverse year-round programming and special events** such as Eagle Days and the Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing Celebration draw thousands of people to the Great Rivers. These events are promoted through The Confluence Partnership website, print and radio advertising and other e-communications.



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- **Three new interpretive centers** showcase our region's river heritage and provide orientation for visitors to the river corridor.
- **Public art projects have engaged the community** in telling river stories through a series of murals, quilts, photography and poetry projects which have brought new audiences to the river corridor, made connections to neighboring communities and created opportunities for artists to become engaged in this collaborative effort.
- **Joint marketing materials for sites in The Confluence** including *Footsteps of Discovery* and *Family Activity Guide* for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, *Birding in The Confluence*, and *The Confluence Cell Phone Audio Tour* highlight the wealth of resources in the bi-state area.
- **Trails connect people to the power of the Great Rivers** on the historic Eads, Old Chain of Rocks and McKinley Bridges, or as they travel the 100+ miles of bicycle and pedestrian-friendly trails now connecting the Gateway Arch to Pere Marquette State Park and adjacent communities.
- **The Confluence Partnership has expanded to include more than 200 not-for-profit organizations and local, state and federal government agencies.** The Confluence Partnership works by voluntarily coordinating projects and programs in the river corridor.
- Friends of The Confluence and The Confluence Advisory Board provide **civic and corporate leadership** for The Confluence Partnership. Other advisory groups have been formed to provide direction for specific projects such as the Riverfront Trail, public art and the Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing.



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Detailed Report of Accomplishments 2000 – 2010

The Master Plan for The Confluence Greenway represented a shared vision for developing a conservation, heritage and recreational corridor to reconnect people and communities to the Great Rivers. The Master Plan contained a list of implementation initiatives for 2000 - 2010 with an estimated cost of \$110 million. This Detailed Report tracks progress on those and other additional initiatives by the many public agencies and non-profit organizations working on river projects and programs throughout The Confluence. To date, more than \$150 million has been invested in our Great Rivers.

Projects:

- Restoration of Eads Bridge as a bike and pedestrian connection, 2003
- Restoration of the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge and adjacent site improvements, including:
 - National Register of Historic Places designation, 2006
 - Route 66 themed rest area completed & electric added, 2006
 - Schematic design for Toll Booth completed, 2006
 - Pedestrian lighting installed, 2005
 - Route 66 interpretive area opened, 2001
- Developed Master Plan for Chouteau Island in 2002 and Implemented key elements, including:
 - New bike trail funded, 2009
 - Completed 3 mile nature trail, 2007
 - Provided bike/pedestrian lanes over Chain of Rocks Canal Bridge, 2007
 - Secured additional acres for public use 2004-2009
 - Parking area completed, 2004
- Lewis and Clark State Historic Site in Hartford, IL opened 2003
- National Great Rivers Museum at Melvin Price Locks and Dam opened 2003
- Lewis & Clark Boathouse and Nature Center in St. Charles, MO opened 2003
- 12 - mile Riverfront Trail from downtown St. Louis, MO to the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge completed, 2005
- 23 - mile Confluence Bikeway from Granite City, IL to Alton, IL completed, 2001
- Numerous trail connectors planned and completed including:
 - Hartford Trailhead and Bikeway completed, 2006
 - 1.5 mile East Belleville Bikeway completed, 2006
 - 3 mile Fort Belle Fontaine Trail opened, 2004
 - 7.5 mile Metro-East Levee Trail opened, 2003
 - 12.8 mile Glen Carbon Heritage Trail completed, 2003
 - 4 mile MetroBikeLink opened, 2001



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- Portage Des Sioux Nature Area opened, 2005
 - Developed 40 acre nature area with interpretive trails along Mississippi River on '93 Flood buy-out property
- Restoration and expansion of Columbia Bottom Conservation Area
 - Auto tour route and canoe access opened, 2007
 - Wetlands created and bike trail paved, 2006
 - Visitor center and exploration stations opened, 2004
 - Confluence viewing platform, 4.8 hiking/biking trails, boat access opened, 2003
 - Acquired additional 160 acres adjacent to Conservation Area for public use, 2003
- Edward "Ted" and Pat Jones-Confluence Point State Park, 1100 acres of land at the point where the Mississippi and Missouri River join, opened, 2004
- Implemented key projects and programs from the Public Art, Interpretation and Signage Master Plan
 - River View Park built by artist Bob Cassilly at Laclede Power Building, 2009
 - Established a Confluence Arts Advisory Committee, 2009
 - Logos School murals designed and installed at multiple sites on Riverfront Trail 2002-2009
 - *Public Art and Ecology*, cooperative workshops with Washington University's School of Art and internationally recognized environmental artist Jackie Brookner, 2009
 - Art made from debris collected during annual Confluence "Trash Bash", 2009
 - *Confluence Freedom Quilts*, made by teen mothers and led by regionally recognized artist Edna Patterson-Petty exhibited, 2008
 - *Art All Around Us: Landscape & Nature Photography in the Confluence* by St. Louis Artworks exhibited at Grand Center, Scott Joplin House and National Great Rivers Museum, 2007
 - *Salute to Steel*, a six-story tall steel sculpture designed by John Celuch in the McKinley Bridge Roadside Park installed, 2007
 - *Ultragate*, a public art project by James Woodfill on Old Chain of Rocks Bridge installed, 2006
 - Old Chain of Rocks Rest and Art Area opened, 2006
 - One River Mississippi Festival held on Eads Bridge and in six other Mississippi River Communities simultaneously, 2006
 - *Trail of Discovery*, mural on Riverfront Trail painted by Boeing employees, 2006
 - Way-finding signage at 4 key access points: Laclede Power Building, Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing, Old Chain of Rocks Bridge and Chouteau Island installed, 2004
 - *Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing Mural*, painted, 2003
 - *Reflecting on a River*, ceramic mural floodwall art project installed, 2003
 - Imagine Art Here, a public art workshop held on Riverfront Trail, 2002
 - Columbia Bottom Viewing Platform installed, 2002
- McKinley Bridge and Branch Street Trestle renovated with dedicated bike/pedestrian lane, 2008
 - McKinley Bridge Roadside Park opened, 2007
- Completion of The Grand Staircase at the Gateway Arch, 2003



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- Laclede Power Building acquired by Trailnet for major trailhead/visitor center in downtown St. Louis, 2001
- Mounds Heritage Trail planning begun, 2007
 - Sugar Loaf Mound, last remaining prehistoric North American native civilization mound in St. Louis, acquired by Osage Nation, 2009
- Malcolm Martin Memorial Park and River Overlook in East St. Louis opened, 2009

Programs:

- Participated in the 2004 Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Celebration
 - Bicentennial concluded with events throughout the Confluence including final National Event on St. Louis Riverfront, 2006
 - Lewis & Clark Return Celebration held at Scott Joplin House and Fairgrounds Park, 2006
 - *Footsteps of Discovery Family Activity Guide* produced through regional partnership
 - *River Splash* draws thousands to Eads Bridge and St. Louis Riverfront, summer 2004
 - 200th anniversary of Corps of Discovery Encampment on Gabaret Island, 2004
 - Historic markers installed throughout corridor, 2004
 - National Signature Events held in Hartford and St. Charles, 2004
 - *Follow in the Footsteps of Lewis & Clark in the St. Louis Region*, a brochure developed by bi-state area convention and visitors groups to assist visitors in exploring the Corps of Discovery's route in St. Louis area, 2003
- Annual river cleanup programs began in 1999 and expanded throughout the Confluence
 - In March 2010, over 700 volunteers participated in the Confluence wide "Trash Bash" river cleanup with over 41 tons of trash collected.
- Eagle Days at the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, a five day festival of eagle watching and education, began in 1997 and continues to expand
 - In January 2010, over 5500 school children and public attended
 - Eagle watching programs are held at Columbia Bottom Conservation Area, Fort Belle Fontaine, National Great Rivers Museum, Alton Visitor Center and Pere Marquette State Park
- New events and educational programs developed through collaborative partnerships.
 - Numerous annual and special cycling, boating and pedestrian events held throughout the Confluence
 - Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing Underground Railroad Celebration annually 2003 - present
 - *Wings of Spring* Confluence Birding Festival held at Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary, annually 2006 -present
 - St. Louis Route 66 Festival, 2008 -present
 - Segway Tours on Old Chain of Rocks Bridge, National Great Rivers Museum and Lewis & Clark State Historic Site, began 2009



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- Developed and expanded the AmeriCorps trail ranger program
 - National Park Service train Trail Rangers in interpretive planning
 - Program expanded to serve at Columbia Bottom Conservation Area, 2004
 - Native Plant Nursery built on Riverfront Trail, 2001
- National Designations obtained in the Confluence
 - Old Chain of Rocks Bridge added to National Register of Historic Places, 2006
 - Sam Vadalabene Great River Road Bike Trail designated as a National Recreation Trail, 2006
 - Feasibility study for National Heritage Area designation drafted, 2006
 - Confluence Master Plan receives American Institute of Architects Honor Award for Regional & Urban Design, 2004
 - Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing, Missouri's first Underground Railroad Site, dedicated 2001
- Property brought into public ownership through Confluence Land Conservation Program
 - 1400 acres on Cora Island (Missouri River), 2009
 - 84 acres at Arlington Wetlands in Pontoon Beach, 2009
 - 2400 acres of conservation easements in St. Charles Floodplain, 2008
 - 2800 acres Chouteau, Gabaret & Mosenthein Islands (Mississippi River), 2001-2009
 - 9 additional acres at Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, 2007
 - 160 acres added to Columbia Bottom Conservation Area, 2003
 - 122 acres at I-270 & Riverview on Watkins Creek, 2002
 - 1100 acres for the Edward "Ted" and Pat Jones Confluence Point State Park, 2001
- Native plant restoration, wetland conservation, and water quality improvement initiatives implemented through agencies and volunteer stewardship events
 - Riverfront Trail Habitat Restoration has involved thousands of volunteers from school, civic, corporate, and religious groups under leadership of Grace Hill AmeriCorps Trail Rangers
 - Watkins Creek Watershed Initiative, 2007 - present
 - Calvary Cemetery Prairie restoration partnership, 2006 - present
 - Support Stream Teams efforts in water quality monitoring
 - Annual community-based tree planting program at Jones Confluence State Park with St. Louis area school children, 2004 - present
 - Developed and installed environmental education signage at Bales Wetland, Point Du Sable Park, 2001
- Communication systems developed to increase the public's understanding of the river system and promote public stewardship of the rivers' resources
 - Collaborative, interpretive materials produced including *Birding in the Confluence*, *Footsteps of Exploration: Lewis & Clark 2006 Family Activity Guide* and *Confluence Cell Phone Tour*
 - Trails of Confluence map and seasonal Confluence itineraries published on-line, 2007 - present
 - Meeting of the Waters Conference at University of Missouri, St. Louis, 2007
 - Confluence website redesign, National Award winning, 2003
 - On-going Confluence Calendar of Events highlights events by all members of the Confluence Partnership



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Planning

- Confluence Greenway Master Plan developed, 2001
 - Endorsed by East-West Gateway Coordinating Council's Board of Directors, 2001
- Comprehensive geographic information system (GIS) completed
 - Established a comprehensive geospatial data library
 - Created a uniform datum for Confluence utilizing data from Missouri and Illinois.
 - Aerial photography at 1.5 foot per pixel for the entire area
 - Accurate and detailed trails inventory
 - Comprehensive Public Lands geo-database including federal, state and local lands
 - Detailed inventory of cultural and historic features and associated information on 257 sites
 - Way-finding and public comfort facilities mapped for 84 locations
 - Parcel map information for bi-state area encompassing 68,573 parcels
 - GPS point for all points of interest and cultural facilities including detailed mapping at specific sites
- Master Plan of Chouteau Island completed, 2002
- National Great River and Education Center developed to explore important questions about the rivers, the environment, and the impact on the communities and to keep the public informed, 2002
- *Imagine Art Here*, public art plan for Riverfront Trail, completed, 2002
- Audubon Missouri undertakes feasibility study for Center and boat for environmental education in St. Louis area, 2003
- University of Missouri – St. Louis commits staff to assess options for expanding educational and interpretive programming in the river corridor, 2005
- Riverfront Trail Habitat Restoration Plan completed, 2009
- Developed a feasibility study by regional stakeholders for Mounds Heritage Trail, 2009
- 2020 Action Plan for the Confluence Partnership completed, 2010
- Confluence Operating Partners' Organizational Strategic Plan completed, 2010

Partnerships

- Developed strategies for public and private funding
 - Confluence membership program launched, 2009
 - "Friends of the Confluence" major donor group formed, 2004



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- Metropolitan Park & Recreation District taxing district (Great Rivers Greenway) commits \$36 million to implement aspects of Confluence Greenway Master Plan, 2001
- Metropolitan East Park and Recreation District taxing district's long range plan includes \$8 million for Confluence related projects, 2003
- Major funding from McKnight Foundation sustained, 1998 – present
- The Confluence Partnership has grown to include more than 200 nonprofit organizations, local, state and federal agencies, corporations and municipalities.
- Developed systems to facilitate communication among the many stakeholders of the Confluence Partnership
 - Confluence e-newsletter, initiated in 2005, to provide updates on projects and program, reaches 8000+ stakeholders
 - Confluence newsletter started, 2002
 - Project coordination includes convening quarterly Partnership meetings, e -newsletter, website and dedicated Partnership webpage