

Dear River Advocates,

On behalf of World Rivers Day founder and Chair Mark Angelo, I wanted to let you know that events across the globe are now being planned in preparation for **World Rivers Day (WRD) 2022**, set for Sunday, **September 25**. Please let us know of your plans by sending an email to worldriversday.info@gmail.com. More than 100 countries will be participating this year across 6 continents, in what has become one of the planet's biggest environmental celebrations. The events being organized are incredibly diverse and will be either physical or virtual in nature.

This year, COVID-19 related circumstances will have improved in many countries, but we also recognize, there may still be some uncertainty in other parts of the world. Consequently, while many of our partners are formulating plans to organize physical events as usual, some may opt for various digital activities, which have also proved to be very popular.

The types of river-related celebrations and events that can take place are limited only by our imagination and creativity.

On one hand, we hope to see many of our **traditional physical events**, such as stream clean-ups, or stream-side planting and restoration efforts, along with educational outings and community riverside celebrations. There are also many river - related **events of a digital nature** being planned. Among these are school projects, art festivals, the launching of new campaigns, the celebration of milestones (such as the ongoing work of the international year of the salmon), online essays and poems, digital photo galleries, new research projects, online river trivia events, river-related song posts, live-stream panels, and virtual film initiatives such as *Global Environmental Justice* documentary series, that includes a number of films about rivers.

This year's World Rivers Day will once again focus on "the incredible natural, cultural and recreational values of our rivers and streams in our communities". In addition, we'll also be recognizing several **sub-themes for this year's event**. For example, many of our friends in Nigeria, India and New Zealand are hoping to focus on the "**rights of rivers**". This is a timely topic, that's taking hold in a growing number of countries. Rivers ranging from the Whanganui in New Zealand, to the Klamath in California, to the Magpie in Quebec have been declared as having the *rights of legal personhood*. Initiatives like this will be profiled in future updates. — Elsewhere, some groups in the US, among other countries, will be emphasizing the incredibly important **link between rivers and oceans**, while other groups in Canada and Europe will be emphasizing the need to **restore rivers** that have been damaged in the past. — Still others will strive to **engage youth with local rivers**, while some will profile the importance of **river connectivity** to ensure adequate fish passage, which is in line with the good work of our friends at the World Fish Migration Foundation. All of these are positive sub themes to profile.

As a **small sampling of events**, there will be a huge number of **small scale, socially distanced river and stream cleanups** that are being promoted and encouraged around the globe by **World Rivers Day**, from Peru to Mexico to Kenya. Many of these will be organized by families, neighborhoods and communities.

There will also be many activities across all of Canada (from the west coast to east coast to north coast), including **BC Rivers Day** organized by the Outdoor Recreation Council, which will see close to 100 events unfold throughout the province of British Columbia. As just a few examples among these, there will be a streamside planting event by the BC Institute of Technology (as a WRD promotional event), a large scale paddling outing on the Fraser river coordinated by the Hope Mountain Center, and a WRD community celebration organized by the Burnaby Village Museum.

Meanwhile, across the US, there will be a range of activities, a number of which will be spearheaded by **local Riverkeepers affiliated with the Waterkeepers Alliance**. There will also be river clean-ups throughout the US as well as many other events, both virtual and physical in nature. These range from online forums and workshops – to film fests (both virtual and in person) – to river-related art and photo contests – to community riverside celebrations. We will detail a number of these activities in the coming months.

Across the UK and Europe, there will be events and activities celebrating the historical, cultural, natural and recreational values of many great rivers, as well as clean-ups along rivers such as the Thames. There will also be tours, art-related projects, and photo essays. In addition, we want to acknowledge the great work of **River-cleanup.org**.

Across Africa, many events will unfold, including the efforts of the **River Ethiope Basin Institute (REBI)** among others in Nigeria that will focus on the rights of rivers. In Australia, a number of clean-ups are being planned (details to follow).

In Bangladesh, several major events will take place including those organized jointly by the **Bangladesh River Foundation** (a consistent major supporter of WRD for many years), including 20 organizations, and the Ministry of Water Resources in Dhaka. - Similarly, in India, many groups are already planning a host of river related activities.

The Caribbean is also actively preparing for WRD and a very special thanks is once again extended to the **nature Island of Dominica** for playing a great leadership role in the region.

The list goes on and on and many others will be detailed between now and September 25. We'll elaborate on more events and activities in the weeks to come.

We also extend a very special thanks to our WRD sponsors!

We are excited to again be working with the **Sitka Foundation**, a wonderful organization that serves as a catalyst in the protection of the environment and the promotion of biodiversity. As well as the **Pacific Salmon Foundation**, a widely respected organization, that is dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wild Pacific salmon. In addition, we want to thank the **Real Estate Foundation of BC** for their valued support over the last several years. We have also been proud to work over the years with groups such as the International River Foundation based in Brisbane, along with our other valued sponsors/supporters such as the **United Nations University, the International Network on Water, Environment and Health, the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC, River-cleanup.org, Watershed Watch Salmon Society, River Ethiope Basin Institute, and the Hope Mountain Centre for Outdoor Learning**.

We hope to hear from you and please let us know of your plans!

Yours truly,

Tunde Murphy
WRD Communications Manager



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