

RIVER RALLY

2024

The 25th River Rally brought the network together on the banks of the Grand River in Grand Rapids, Michigan; the traditional territory of the Anishinabek, including the Odawa, Ojibwa, and Bodéwadmi peoples.

River Rally 2024 was a whirlwind of energy and inspiration, fueled by the passion and dedication of the local planning committee who infused the unique spirit of Grand Rapids into every corner of the event. From impactful sessions to joyful outdoor celebrations, this local spirit permeated every moment, leaving attendees empowered, connected, and reinvigorated to tackle the work ahead.



RALLY CONNECTED **414** WATER, JUSTICE, AND RIVER ADVOCATES ...



self-identifying as Black, Indigenous, or person of color (BIPOC)



using she/her or non-binary pronouns



receiving scholarships

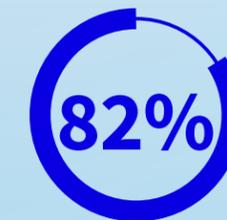
"This was the best conference I have ever been to. It was so energizing to be around people who care so deeply about people, the planet, and the water that connects all of us."

"Learning how other organizations are run and how they approach their work broadened my perspective."

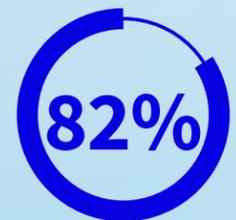
THEIR TIME AT RIVER RALLY RESULTED IN...



feeling that River Rally 2024 was a welcoming, inclusive, and open space for all participants



feeling more connected to peers



of attendees likely to apply their knowledge

THE PROGRAM FEATURED...

81 learning and networking opportunities

3 plenary panels



7 awards, with **4** Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) recipients



2024 LEGACY AWARD WINNER
John Echohawk (Native American Rights Fund)



7 **story LOUNGE** sessions

"[The Story Lounge] was one of the best, most innovative things I have seen at Rally in a long time."



10 field trips hosted by local organizations



3 dedicated affinity spaces for Leaders of Color and LGBTQ+ attendees



No fewer than **3** spontaneous dance parties



RIVER HEROES
Sharee Harrison (Orange HUUB)
Justinn Overton (Coosa Riverkeeper)
Dennis Mabasa (Golden Gate Parks Conservancy)
Jill Ryan (Freshwater Future)
Kirsten Shead (Milwaukee Water Commons)

2024 EMERGING LEADER
Hira Ahmad

...LEADING TO THESE AHA MOMENTS

“Projects like river cleanups, water monitoring, and public art can add up to revolutionary acts of civic engagement. Not only is it good to step away from the day-to-day laptop-facing work of our nonprofit to connect with peers, but it was also good to zoom out and get an eagle-eye view of the long-term goals of our movement.”

“We need more Flow Funders.”

“Flexibility and creativity are as important as expertise and experience when it comes to successful fulfillment of our organization's mission.”

“Equity matters in our work with rivers and water.”

“Translating takes lots of time and effort, but is essential for reaching underserved, vulnerable populations. But translating is not enough! Making sure you are creating trusted, safe spaces.”

“The importance of de-siloing the water and various justice sectors. Generally, I learned the importance of intersectionality for sustainable and real change.”

“I am needed in this climate fight.”

“Persistence is key, no matter what you're doing. Find ways to connect with people where they are.”



river
RALLY
education • inspiration • celebration

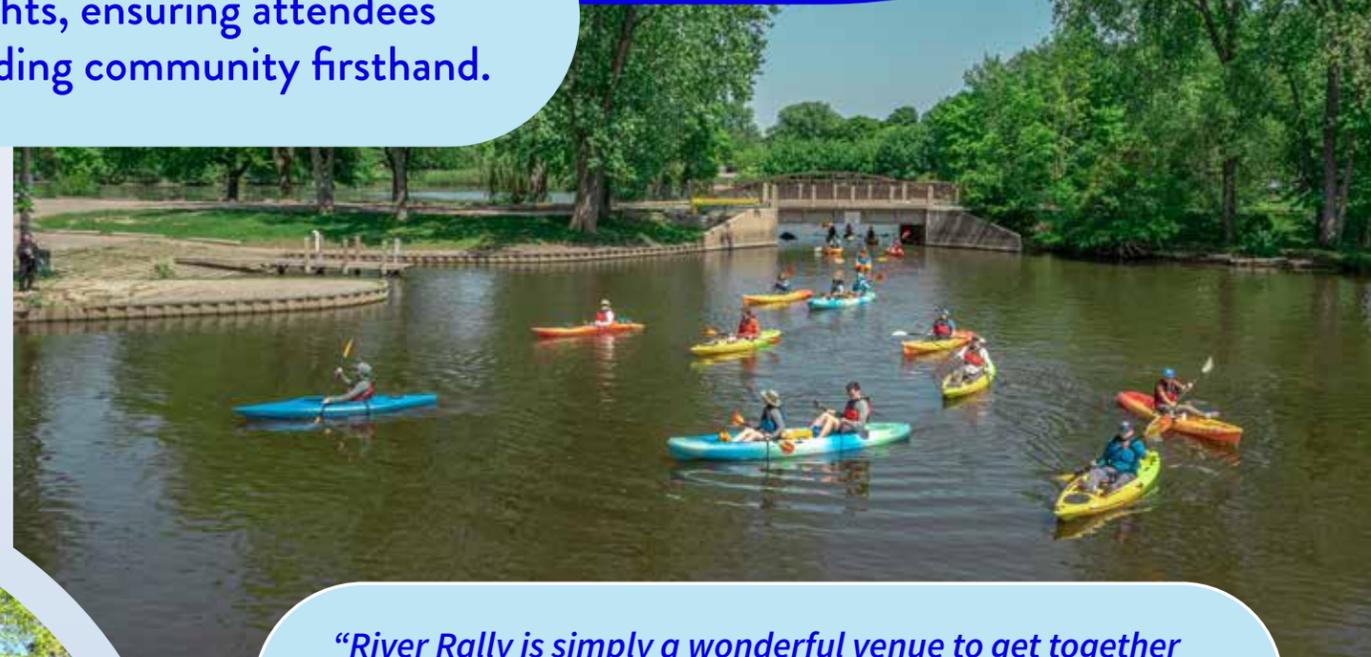
GRAND RAPIDS TAKES CENTER STAGE

6 local leaders compensated for their contributions to the River Rally planning process.

26 local businesses supported as vendors, **38.4%** of them BIPOC-owned.

2 outdoor celebrations held on the banks of the Grand River, connecting attendees to local organizations, artists, vendors, and more.

Lifting up our host city is at the heart of River Rally. Water leaders in Grand Rapids generously shared their insights, ensuring attendees experienced the Grand River and the surrounding community firsthand.



"River Rally is simply a wonderful venue to get together and share. Seeing the diversity of folks as well as rivers is invigorating and gives me hope for the future."



SPONSORSHIP AND SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT IS THE LIFEBLOOD OF RIVER RALLY.

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BOARD MEMBERS

Andrew Fahlund, Bill Brandt, Bob Sproull, John Weiss, Joya Banerjee, Julia Blatt, Julian Gonzalez, Kevin Jeffery, Kim Milligan, Mekayle Houghton, Richard Roos-Collins, Sandra Postel, Scott Miller.

OUR ENTHUSIASTIC LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

Carlos Calderon (West Michigan Environmental Action Council)
Sergio Cira-Reyes (Urban Core Collective)
Robert Cloy (Grand Valley Metropolitan Council)
Yumiko Jakobcic (GVSU's Office of Sustainability Practices)
Andrea Lubberts (Plaster Creek Stewards)
Shanyn Viars (American Rivers)

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Maia Cullwick, Michele Colopy, Paco Ollervides, Cyatharine Alias, Wansoo Im, Olusola Oyewumi, Jamie Ong, Baird Straughan, Alyanna Wilson, Wendy Ogilve, Scott Miller, Quanda Spencer, Oluwatoyin Adekoya, Nancy Morales, Mark Fitzpatrick, Joel Betts, Jessica Swindon, Jenny Mercado, Helen Dumas, George Jones, Destinee Whitaker, Debbie Neustadt, Cara Decker, Anna Kornoelje.