



# Partnership Event in Riverside Park

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On a beautiful, sunny morning in mid-September, Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps, Rethos: Places Reimagined and the Morrison County Historical Society, the Central Minnesota Education Coordinator for Rethos, partnered to host a special by-invitation-only event in one of Central Minnesota's pre-eminent public landscapes, Riverside Park in St. Cloud. The event showcased the park and its significance and featured the work of Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps on one of its New Deal-era structures, a staircase with erosion-control wall and drainage flume built in 1933. Northern Bedrock is an AmericaCorps program that seeks to foster and encourage the preservation trades, training new leaders in the field while at the same time helping to preserve and maintain the nation's assets and infrastructure.

Located along the eastern banks of the Mississippi River, Riverside Park was established in 1910 to take advantage of scenic views of the river. Inspired by Frederick Law Olmsted's Central Park in New York City, the urban landscape-style park experienced a major period of development during the New Deal era of the 1930's and early 40's. Many of its characteristic features were built during this time in the National Park Service Rustic style.

Beautifully integrated into its setting, the staircase, erosion-control wall and drainage flume continues to serve as they were intended, to beautify and protect an important segment of local landscape from further erosion. Normal wear and tear over the lifetime of the 87-year old structure and past repairs using inappropriate techniques and materials were corrected by the six-member Northern Bedrock hitch crew and their local technical specialist for the project, Ray Stenglein of Environmental Associates Inc. The repairs followed the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation. Besides repairing and strengthening a critical piece of community infrastructure, the project was an excellent learning experience for all involved.



ABOVE Attendees engaging in a presentation.



COVER NBHPC Hitch Crew and Ray Stenglein, EAI (Katrina, Adam, Kael, Julia, Kari, Ana) at the staircase built in 1933.

ABOVE The Riverside Park entrance.

LEFT NBHPC Hitch Crew member talking to attendees.

Among those in attendance at the event were state and local representatives for the area – Senator Jerry Relph, District 14; Representative Dan Wolgamott, District 14B; St. Cloud City Councilmember Steve Laraway, 2nd Ward; and St. Cloud City Councilmember At-large, Carol Lewis. Also in attendance were representatives of several highly regarded state and national organizations – The Nature Conservancy, Preservation Action, Great River Greening, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the St. Cloud Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The event included a presentation on the history of the park and the WPA by local historian, Bill Morgan, and an introduction to Northern Bedrock Historic Preservation Corps by Jill Baum, its executive director. Ray Stenglein and the Northern Bedrock hitch crew then described the project individually to small groups of event attendees.

**We lucked out with the weather and, with everyone following pandemic protocols, the event was enjoyed by all.**



## VISIT THE PARK!

If you have not had a chance to visit the park yet, do! Not only does it feature gorgeous views of the Mississippi River and the Beaver Islands, islands named in 1805 by explorer Zebulon Pike, it also contains the well-loved and nationally-known Munsinger and Clemens Gardens. Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the park was recently designated locally as part of the Southeast St. Cloud New Deal-Built Landscapes Historic District. Other sites included in the district are Kilian Boulevard, Selke Field and George W. Fredrick Park.

Image courtesy of Prairie Restorations, Inc.