

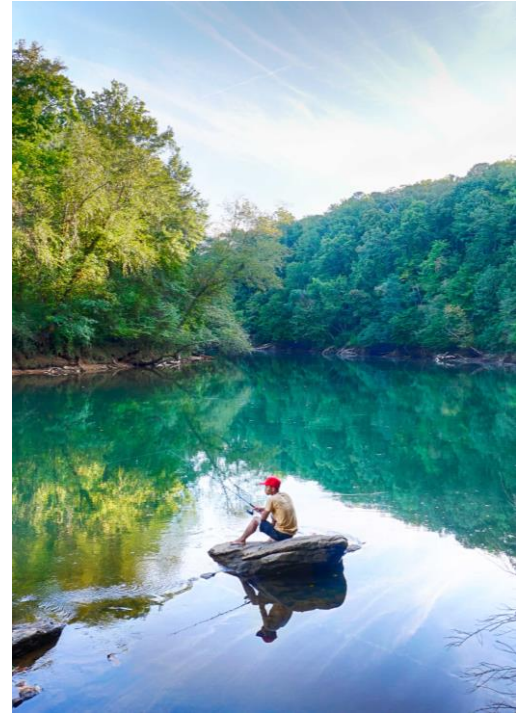
MUSEUM on Main Street



Water is a critical resource. An essential component of life on our planet, water powers the environment's engine, impacting climate and helping to shape and sculpt the landscape.

Water's impact on humans is not just biological and environmental; it serves as a source of peace and contemplation. We cherish our connections to nature, particularly the sights, the sounds, and the sense of place we feel at the water's edge. Many faiths revere water as a sacred symbol. Authors and artists are inspired by the duality of water – a substance that is seemingly soft and graceful that is yet a powerful and nearly unstoppable force.

Water also plays a practical role in American society. The availability of water affected settlement and migration patterns. Access to water and control of water resources have long been a central part of political and economic planning. Human creativity and resourcefulness provide new ways of protecting water resources and renewing respect for the natural environment.



"Anyone who can solve the problems of water will be worthy of two Nobel prizes - one for peace and one for science."

- President John F. Kennedy



A consideration of what water means to people provides a perfect bridge between the humanities and natural science. Efforts to harness the energy and life-giving force of water are an important part of American history. This substance that is central to life is also invested with deep societal meaning. Many of the core questions about the relationship between people and the natural environment can be considered through a look at water.

The Smithsonian's water initiative, *Think Water*, is a national project designed to reach communities, schools, students, and citizens across the country. In partnership with state humanities councils nationwide, the Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) will convene a nationwide conversation about water. The initiative will explore what water means to people and to communities. State-based partnerships with the Smithsonian will provide a platform for addressing important global and local issues and raising awareness about the ways citizens can protect and conserve this vital resource.



As part of the project, host communities will welcome humanities exhibitions, high-profile programs, local story collecting initiatives, educational citizen-science projects, and media programs to convene statewide conversations about water as a critical resource. The project's goals are:

- Raising appreciation for water's role as a vital resource for life
- Educating citizens about critical resource issues
- Inspiring people to conserve and protect water as an important resource

The project will feature two exhibitions:

- A 750-square foot Museum on Main Street exhibition, *Water/Ways*, that will travel to small towns in coordination with state humanities councils. As part of the Museum on Main Street experience, local hosts will develop public programs and educational activities, and develop companion exhibitions that focus on local connections and the meaning of water to the community
- An build-it-yourself exhibition, *H2O Today*, will provide museums in other cities in host states a chance to work with state councils to be part of the statewide conversation on water. Production-ready files will be provided to participating organizations allowing them to fabricate a 2,000 square foot exhibition that explores global water issues. Venues will be able to customize the exhibition to include local content focusing on local water concerns and engage citizens to learn more about local water sources and their importance to the community. SITES will book the build-it-yourself exhibition in states that are hosting the MoMS exhibition. Councils may choose to recruit potential venues for the exhibition or can provide a list of potential partners. SITES will encourage venues to work closely with state humanities councils to foster statewide connections.

Sample Humanities Programs and Local Activities

Host communities can explore a wide array of exhibition and program opportunities. Local content possibilities include: the impact of water on local settlement, work and transportation; discussion of public water policies; exploration of the impact of environmental movements at the local level; water and recreation; the impact of dams and hydroelectric power on communities; and the impact of water on the natural landscape.

Smithsonian Team

Under the leadership of the Smithsonian's Assistant Secretary of Education and Access, the Smithsonian's Water Initiative will be developed in collaboration with a variety of Smithsonian partners, including the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), Anacostia Community Museum, Smithsonian Affiliations, The Smithsonian Associates, Smithsonian Center for Education and Digital Access, Smithsonian Science Education Center, and the Smithsonian Consortium for the American Experience. The project may also include national partners including the American Museum of Natural History.

Funders

Think Water is part of Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and state humanities councils across the nation. Support for Museum on Main Street is provided by the United States Congress.

Availability to State Humanities Councils

Slots are available in 2021.

Contents and Crates

Free-standing exhibition with audio, video, and interactive components, banners, and artifacts mounted in cases. Requires 750 square feet of exhibition space and travels in 20 crates.

Resources Provided to Host States

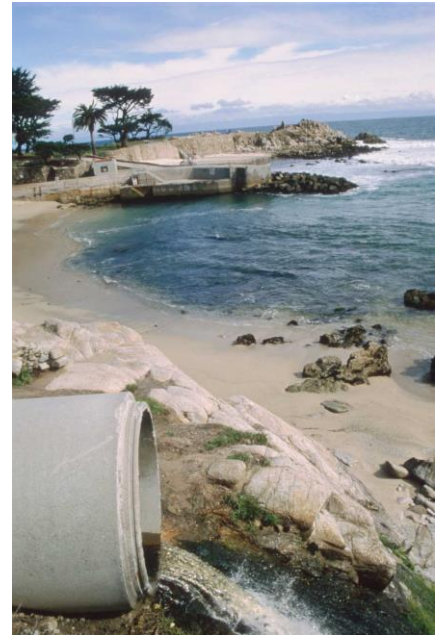
Administrative Resources

- State coordinator manuals featuring program development strategies, sample budgets/contracts and other support materials. Provided in hard copy format and also available online at www.museumonmainstreet.org for easy access and for quick distribution of information;
- Museum on Main Street listserv for state council coordinators and national organizers providing answers to project questions and opportunities for networking and project development;
- The MoMS team provides advice and assistance in all areas of program development and tour coordination.

Workshops and Meetings

A state council MoMS coordinator will attend and/or host the following workshops and meeting.

- National MoMS Orientation Webinar — for state council staff members to meet with Smithsonian project directors to learn more about MoMS in advance of the tour (state council coordinators that have completed a MoMS tour are not required to participate);
- National Meeting — state council staff member to meet with the MoMS team, exhibition curator, and other participating state councils one year in advance of the tour;
- State Program Workshop — Smithsonian personnel co-host a program planning workshop for all in-state participating venues and partners;
- State Installation Workshop — Smithsonian personnel co-host a workshop at the site of the exhibition's tour opening for all in-state participating venues.



Public Relations/Marketing

- Participation in national publicity efforts by the Smithsonian;
- Smithsonian web page, at www.museumonmainstreet.org, featuring each state's rural itinerary and homepage links to each state humanities council;
- Project press kit: digital press images, and news releases for local use;
- One multi-colored outdoor banner featuring state council name;
- Full color poster with state council logo, along with full color postcards for promotional use

Fundraising Resources

- MoMS informational brochure;
- Foundation proposal template;
- Upon request, letters of support from SITES, exhibition curator;
- Opportunities to provide underwriting credit on exhibition's credit panel.

Education Materials

- Educational activities (available on line in PDF format);
- Docent handbook and training materials;
- Local Exhibition Support Manuals featuring program development strategies, local exhibition development guidelines, exhibition script, and installation instructions. Provided in hard copy format and also available on-line (1 per local site and 1 for state coordinator);
- Access to Stories from Main Street, a digital archive of stories about small and rural communities in the United States. Host councils and organizations can contribute local stories, audio clips and videos via the MoMS website at www.museumonmainstreet.org.

