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ACTIVITIES REPORT NARRATIVE

I. Introduction

This grant has made it possible for Save The River to expand its Riverkeeper Monitoring Program, a volunteer based program that empowers citizens to be eyes and ears on the River, watching for wildlife die-offs, pollution issues and other threats to this resource. Through the expansion of this program we have increased our network of volunteers along the River. Below are the products of our work on this project.

II. Methods

We outlined several objectives for the Riverkeeper Monitoring Program for 2009. We held three training sessions for new recruits during the summer with a goal of increasing our volunteer numbers by 60 participants. We also held two separate workshop sessions for volunteers that were previously trained for the program. The workshop sessions served as a way to keep volunteers engaged in the program by providing them with more specific information and giving them a chance to ask any questions that they may have since their initial training the previous year.

Both workshops and new recruit training sessions also served as a way for volunteers to receive their newly designed Riverkeeper Guidebooks. The Guidebooks serve as a take home to assist volunteers with field identification of issues as they patrol the River. Guidebooks were redesigned for the 2009 season and updated to provide volunteers with the most current information possible for the program. Attendees also received volunteer t-shirts, which serve to identify volunteers as they are out on the River, but also as an incentive for participating in the program, please see enclosed shirt sample.

Riverkeeper volunteer report forms were also redesigned to fit in the back of the Riverkeeper Identification Guides. Report forms help volunteers collect complete information allowing staff to follow-up accurately on issues with the appropriate agency.

In addition, a Riverkeeper listserv was created to provide e-news updates to volunteers about reports received from other Riverkeeper Monitoring volunteers. E-news updates also provided volunteers with workshop dates and other training opportunities.

III. Results

This summer, 62 volunteers were trained, exceeding our goals for this project. Guidebooks were given to all the 2009 trainees and most of those volunteers who had been trained previous to this year. T-shirts were also widely distributed and served as an excellent incentive for attending a training session. (See attached photo.)

Of the two workshops held for returning volunteers, both were attended well. Volunteers showed an avid interest in the subjects of both workshops - storm water management and the importance of wetlands. The workshops also served as a means for volunteers to reconnect with staff as well as increase volunteers knowledge on River issues, further engaging their interest in the Riverkeeper Monitoring Program.

An additional goal of the program was to have 75% of reports from volunteers include information which would allow Save The River to take action to either inform community members about positive signs of River health or to follow-up with the appropriate agency to address a River issue of concern whether it be a pollution problem, wildlife die-off, etc. This goal was also met through the program this year. Riverkeeper volunteers submitted over a dozen reports on River issues. Over 80% of them were reports that allowed staff to compile positive signs of River health. An additional 10% allowed us to contact appropriate agencies for follow-up on pollution reports. Since the start of the Riverkeeper Program, there has been an improvement in the reports received by volunteers and community members about River issues. Reports are more detailed which provides much needed information for follow-up on an issue, and reports are more accurate. Volunteers are reporting on issues that are substantial as opposed to issues that are not indicators of River health. This is a direct result of volunteers attending training sessions and utilizing what was taught in the session while they are on the River.

The Riverkeeper Monitor listserv provided e-news updates to volunteers monthly for the summer and will continue to be sent throughout the winter months. The e-news updates allowed volunteers to share their reports with other volunteers. This method of networking volunteers through the e-news and our blog proved to be very effective. Volunteers responded by providing more reports and more detailed reports. To read our Riverkeeper Monitoring blog please visit our website, www.savetheriver.org and click on What We Do, On-the-Water and then Riverkeeper Monitoring Program.

IV. Budget

Of the \$8,553 received for this grant, \$8,553 has been spent to date. A break down of expenditures can be seen below in Table 1. The expense for volunteer t-shirt production was slightly higher than budgeted for this grant. We estimated t-shirt costs at \$1,785, while the actual cost of production was \$1,880.20 as reported in our interim grant report, leaving a difference of \$95.20. This extra expense was covered through additional matching funds from Save The River and is reflected in the matching funds section of the table below. This additional expense will therefore not affect the original amount received for the grant and has not effected the final balance pending. This was the only additional, unanticipated expense

for the project. Additional matching funds are also outlined in the table below to reflect projected overhead and program oversight expenses through the end of the calendar year.

Table 1. Save The River SLRREF grant expenditures to date.

			Budgeted	Actual
GRANT EXPENSES:	05/22/2009	Mailing and office supplies	63.00	57.60
	06/10/2009	Graphic Designer	500.00	500.00
	1/1 - 6/30/09	Staff time Program Manager	2,612.50	2,612.50
	06/03/2009	Printing Guidebooks	980.00	980.00
	05/27/2009	Volunteer t-shirt production	1,785.00	1880.20
	6/31-12/31/09	Staff time Program Manager	2,612.50	2,612.50
		TOTAL	8,553.00	8,642.80
REVENUE RECEIVED:	04/08/2009	New York Power Authority	2,851.00	2,851.00
	08/05/2009	New York Power Authority	2,851.00	2,851.00
BALANCE PENDING:				2,851.00
<i>Additional Information</i>				
MATCHING FUNDS:	1/1 - 6/30/09	Overhead	450.00	450.00
	1/1-6/30/09	Staff time Executive Director	444.00	444.00
	6/31-12/31/09	Overhead	450.00	450.00
	6/31-12/31/09	Staff time Executive Director	444.00	444.00
	05/27/2009	Additional t-shirt production cost	0.00	95.20
		TOTAL	1,788.00	1,883.20
TOTAL EXPENSES:			10,341.00	10,430.80

V. Conclusions

Through this grant opportunity we were able to substantially increase our volunteer base for this program. We now have over 100 volunteers in the Riverkeeper Monitoring Program, a significant number of educated individuals who are now more aware of the River and aware of how to accurately report issues if they arise. We are excited for next year's programming and are looking forward to continuing to grow this program. Thank you for your support.