

Rivers Rock



Mini Fact:

June is
National
Rivers Month.



The Missouri River (the longest river in the U.S., about 2,500 miles long) and the Mississippi (the biggest, with its watershed covering more than a million square miles) are two of the most important rivers in the United States.

Caring for rivers

Here are some ways you can help keep our rivers flowing cleanly:

- Volunteer to help clean up trash along a river.
- Save water. Don't leave the faucet running when you do tasks such as brushing your teeth.
- Ask your parents to use non-polluting, safe products for lawn care. Chemicals flow from your lawn into rivers.
- Join your local watershed group.
- Pick up after your dog. Remember, almost everything that goes on the ground ends up in our rivers.



Resources



On the Web:

- bit.ly/MPrivers
- bit.ly/MPwater

At the library:

- "Rivers" by Claire Llewellyn
- "A Journey Into a River" by Rebecca L. Johnson

Rivers provide us with beauty, recreation, transportation, electricity, wildlife habitat, water for manufacturing and agriculture, and most important, water to drink. What would we do without them?

What is a river?

A river is a naturally flowing body of water. Streams, brooks, creeks and smaller rivers are all part of bigger river systems.

Almost all rivers in the United States flow into the ocean. An exception is the water flowing into the Great Salt Lake in Utah.

Rivers all flow from a high point to the lowest point. Water will always find the easiest way to go downhill.

The importance of water

Most of the Earth's water is in the oceans. But people and most animals can't live by drinking ocean water. It is too salty.

Water that is good to drink is called **freshwater**. About half of the drinking water in the U.S. comes from rivers. But freshwater from rivers and other sources is in short supply.

People have relied on rivers to:

- **Irrigate** crops. In the dry West, about 80 percent of the river water humans use is used to grow food.
- Power machinery that ground wheat into flour or spun plant fiber into cloth.



Crops are watered by irrigation systems.

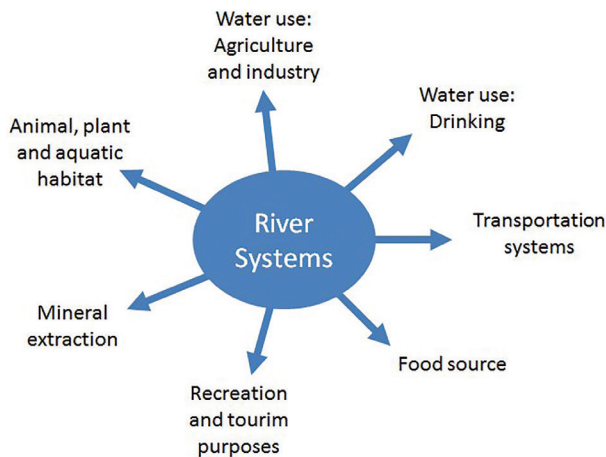


Image courtesy GORC

- Help make virtually all products, from paper to computer chips.
- Make steam to run coal and nuclear power plants and provide water to cool those plants.
- Create electricity. About 10 percent of the electrical power in America is created by dams on rivers.

Although they're not as important to transportation as they once were, rivers still connect cities and help people move goods from one place to another. You might notice when you look at a map that many U.S. cities are built on the banks of major rivers.

The state of our rivers

Experts say only about half of our rivers and streams meet the standards set up by our government to keep our water clean and safe. People are worried about having enough clean water. All over the world, people are working to protect rivers.

Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of rivers are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

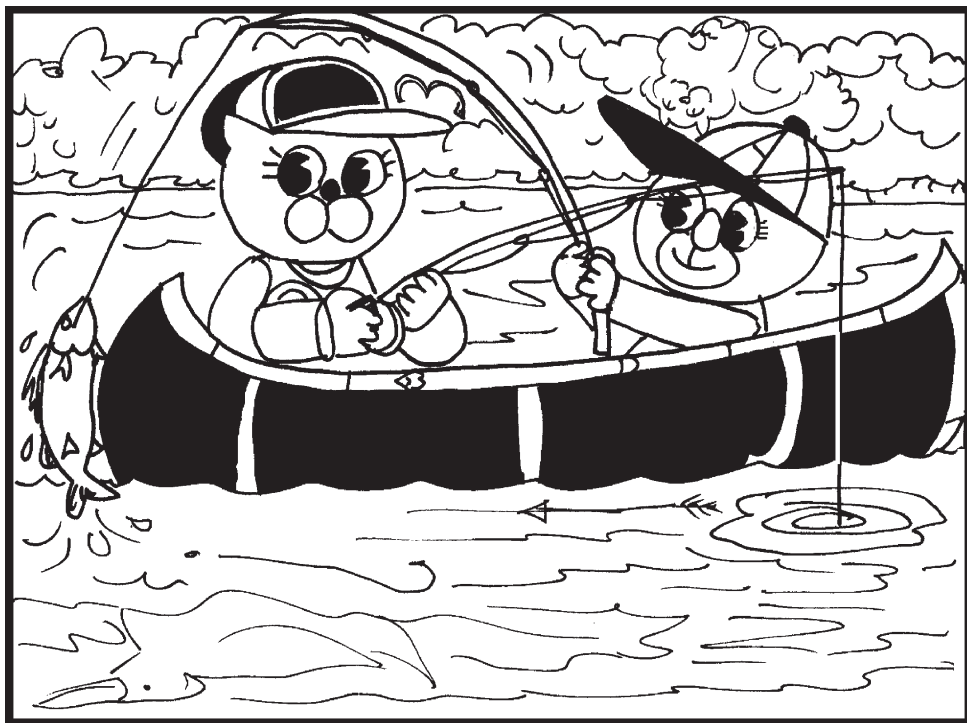
BROOK, CLEAN, CREEK,
DAM, DRAIN, DRINK,
ELECTRICITY, FLOW,
FRESHWATER, HABITAT,
IRRIGATE, OCEAN,
POWER, PROTECT,
RECREATION, RIVER,
SAVE, STEAM, STREAM,
TRASH, WATERSHED,
WILDLIFE.

D T J R N Q E W N R A S K H B
E S T E A M T L T E D T N S B
H E K C E P A R A T R R I A R
S F X R L R G I T A A E R R O
R I D E C O I V I W I A D T O
E L C A W T R E B H N M M N K
T D R T M E R R A S P O W E R
A L E I D C I J H E N A E C O
W I E O Y T I C I R T C E L E
P W K N E V A S Y F W O L F K



Mini Spy Classics

Mini Spy and Dot love to go fishing on the river. See if you can find the hidden pictures. Then color the picture.



Mini Spy Classics appear in the first issue of each month.

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- arrow
- question mark
- number 3
- letter A
- funny face
- mug
- letter D
- duck
- cat
- letter J
- pencil
- word MINI
- letter T

Mini Jokes



Missy: What do you call the little rivers that flow into the Nile?
Mo: Juveniles!

Eco Note



Ponds, lakes, streams and rivers are home to lots of different species that can't live in salty ocean water. There are freshwater ecosystems all over the world. There are many kinds of frogs, fish, insects and microscopic organisms like amoebas. And there are rare species like river dolphins in Asia and South America, otters in North America, beavers in North America and Europe, and platypuses in Australia.

' c' osdc eqnl blll ' sdj ltr-rt ' f nu

Thank You



The Mini Page thanks Andrew Fahlund, senior program officer for the Water Foundation, for help with this issue.

Teachers: For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bit.ly/MPstandards. And follow The Mini Page on Facebook!



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