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Nearly 1,500 sixth-graders set sail for adventure in 24th annual St. Louis River Quest May 9-12

Duluth, Minn. USA (May 2, 2016)—Are you smarter than a sixth-grader? See if you can answer:

- An example of a negative buoyancy object would be a: ☐ rock ☐ ping pong ball ☐ raft, ☐ wood barrel
- To get to the Twin Ports, oceangoing vessels ("salties") must navigate how many sets of locks on the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway? ______
- What river is the hydrologic connection between the Superior National Forest to the estuary that the Duluth-Superior Harbor is part of? ______
- What travels in a storm sewer system? & What travels in a sanitary sewer system? ☐ rain and snowmelt water ☐ house and industrial sewage ☐ bath water ☐ waste water

Busloads of area sixth-graders will converge on the Duluth waterfront on May 9-12 seeking answers to these and more questions about the Duluth-Superior Harbor, learning all they can about the St. Louis River estuary as they move through a dozen Learning Stations on land and on water.

The 24th annual St. Louis River Quest is expected to draw a record 1,495 students from 14 area schools to the waterfront this year. During each morning and afternoon session, small groups of students will move through a total of 12 unique stations—six aboard the Vista Star and six inside Pioneer Hall at the DECC—where students will be introduced to topics ranging from pollution prevention and stopping aquatic invaders to personal water safety and commercial shipping. They all will carry River Quest passports to document their adventures. After the event, students are encouraged to submit essays or poems about their experiences for an annual writing contest.

St. Louis River Quest is a community-based, volunteer organization founded in 1993 to provide area sixth-grade students with hands-on learning experiences that enhance their awareness and understanding about the St. Louis River ecosystem and the interrelated commercial, industrial, and recreational activities in the Duluth-Superior Harbor, part of the Louis River estuary. From its launch, this outreach education program has continued to evolve. Most recently, station sponsors worked directly with educators to align resource materials with Wisconsin and Minnesota science and social studies standards to make the experience an even more effective teaching tool.

Nearly 22,000 students will have participated in River Quest once this year’s group completes the program. “We are able to sustain this kind of momentum year after year, thanks to the longstanding support of generous donors in the Twin Ports,” said Adele Yorde, River Quest program coordinator and Duluth Seaway Port Authority PR director. “River Quest is truly a community outreach program sustained by local businesses, nonprofits and individuals who donate their time, talents and financial resources year after year to engage and educate our youth.”

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2016 River Quest Learning Stations & Sponsor on the Vista Star

Cold Hand Luke (Hypothermia & Water Safety)  US Army Corps of Engineers
What is the Es-chew-air-ee?  Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve
Bringing back the Piping Plover  St. Louis River Alliance (M/T)
Fishy Physics  Great Lakes Aquarium (W/Th)
It floats, you don’t. Wear your life jacket!  Duluth Sail & Power Squadron
Get Habitattitude!  Minnesota Sea Grant Program
Observation Station  St. Louis River Quest

2016 River Quest Learning Stations at the DECC

Bacteria: The Real Workers at WLSSD  Western Lake Superior Sanitary District
What’s the difference between Storm & Sanitary Sewers?  City of Duluth Stormwater (M/T)
Stream Table  USDA Forest Service–Superior Nat’l Forest (W/Th)
Water Power (Hydroelectric)  Minnesota Power (M/T)
Great Lakes Cargo Capital  Duluth Seaway Port Authority (W/Th)
Industrial Water Use: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle  Sappi (M/T)
Sustainable Forestry  Verso Corporation (W/Th)
Oil in the Environment  US Coast Guard & USCG Auxiliary
Break the Grip of the Rip  Twin Ports Rip Currents

2015 River Quest Donors

(Platinum $1,000+)
Duluth Seaway Port Authority, Enbridge, Donald Weesner Foundation, Gerdau-Duluth
Grinding Ball, Hallett Dock Co., ISD 709 Duluth Public Schools, Minnesota Sea Grant Program,
Minnesota’s Lake Superior Coastal Program, Sappi, US Army Corps of Engineers, Vista Fleet

(Gold $500+)
City of Duluth Stormwater, Compass Minerals, CRH US, Graymont (WI) LLC, Ikonics,
Krech Ojard & Associates, Kwik Trip, Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve,
Minnesota Power, USDA Forest Service–Superior National Forest, Verso Corporation,
Western Lake Superior Sanitary District

(Silver $250+)
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David Moeller & Bryce Nixon, Kathy Peterson, Brian & Melissa Resch, Aaron & Shelby Salmela,
Paul Sneide, David & Jane Worley.

For more information about River Quest, to view teacher resource materials
and/or read writing samples, visit www.seagrant.umn.edu/riverquest.