River into a living river system with vegetation, wildlife, and island sandbars.

River Stewardship

Gold: **"San Dieguito River Park," San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority,** San Diego County, CA
This park demonstrates how cooperative public and private efforts can protect a river under threat from development and urban sprawl.

Silver: **"Graffiti Tacoma Green," Citizens for a Healthy Bay,** Tacoma, WA
This project employed high school students during the summer to stencil storm drains and disseminate information on water quality concerns in an effort to raise awareness of the community's impact on the Thea Foss Waterway.

RIVER VIEWS

Wellington E. Webb
Mayor, Denver, Colorado

These remarks were taken from Mayor Webb's address to the National Urban Rivers Symposium on June 12, 1997. Denver's South Platte River Commission won a gold award in the category of Special Partnerships for Sustainable Economic Revitalization.

Occasionally, people ask me to comment on the effects of projects like ours on urban minority communities, and the challenges of engaging these communities in our efforts. My experience has been that our minority communities — and Denver is about 35% African American and Hispanic — want the same things that the rest of our citizens want. They want a healthy job market, safe neighborhoods, and good schools. They want opportunities to meet and gather with their neighbors and those from other communities.

Once a city has made good progress on those issues, citizens' attention turns to acquiring good recreational opportunities for their kids and beautiful parks and natural areas for themselves. I spent my first few years in office trying to make sure that people from all parts of Denver had their basic service needs covered. When we felt we had achieved that, I turned to the development of amenities that appeal to our business community and residents alike. Amenities like a clean-flowing river surrounded by parkland and open space that will ensure Denver remains economically competitive and thus able to provide high-quality basic services to our residents for decades to come.

Like many of you in this room, in order to reach these goals, we assembled a broad coalition of community interests from all parts of our region and from all walks of life. Much of our first several months of existence was spent in reaching out to the community for input as to the mission and structure of the commission that would work to improve the Platte.

First we assembled a core regional coalition of neighborhood groups, environmental organizations, business associations, and local, regional, state, and federal government agencies. Then we spent several months in team building, joining together for raft trips and social activities that would build the bonds we would need to get us over the inevitable rough spots on the road ahead.

We have faced skepticism about our commitment to a collaborative process at many points, and have opened the process at every turn to ensure that our partners' confidence is not misplaced. Ultimately, of course, the answer [is] in slow and careful coalition-building, as you've heard from so many other award winners earlier today. Our partners were willing to listen to the ideas and needs of other groups, as long as their own priorities were accorded the same respect. In the end, the process of balancing all these different goals led to a much stronger project, with a much broader base of support than we might have otherwise enjoyed.

Denver Mayor Wellington E. Webb

Support AHRI: Send a Letter!

At right are letters you can send the White House, your local representative, and both of your senators to show your support for the American Heritage Rivers Initiative. We encourage you to add a personal note letting your elected officials know how you feel about rivers. You may want to include the following information in your note:

- the name of your local river
- how the river is important to you and your community
- how often you visit or use the river
- any concerns you have about threats facing the river
- what you and your community are doing to restore and protect your river.

National River Cleanup Week Gets Big Turnout

The Sixth Annual National River Cleanup Week took place May 10 - 17. More than 38,000 volunteers participated in over 500 cleanups all over the country to pick up trash and debris along the banks of their hometown rivers. American Rivers and America Outdoors were joint sponsors of the program.

The BRITA® Anacostia River Cleanup Day & Educational Fair in Washington, D.C., kicked off the week. More than 300 volunteers built a "trash pyramid" with items not exactly native to rivers, such as a newspaper vending machine, tires, mufflers, and a sink. Many thanks to the event's primary corporate sponsor, BRITA Products Company.

Left to right: David Brown, America Outdoors; Michael Brodie, American Rivers; and Lauren Bliss Kawasaki, BRITA Products Company, congratulate the volunteers who got National River Cleanup Week off to a great start at the BRITA® Anacostia River Kick-off Cleanup in Washington, D.C. on May 10.

These two enthusiastic volunteers were among hundreds of participants who collected a mountain of trash during the Anacostia River Cleanup.

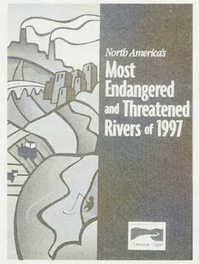
BOOK REVIEW

***Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America*, by John M. Barry**

In 1927, the Mississippi River flooded its banks, submerging more than 27,000 square miles of land along the river. That event, the Great Flood of 1927, was the worst natural disaster in American history. In his new book, *Rising Tide: The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 and How It Changed America*, journalist-historian John M. Barry tells the compelling story of the people and events surrounding the flood. Barry also explores the flood's consequences, which extended far beyond the Mississippi River Valley into the core of American politics and race relations.

Rising Tide draws a fascinating portrait of the river and the web of social and political forces that have influenced our water management policies. It exposes the flaws in human nature that cloud our decisions and challenges our belief that science and engineering can conquer the complex forces of nature. As recent flooding attests, history holds important lessons we have yet to learn.

Order your own copy of **American Rivers' Most Endangered and Threatened Rivers Report of 1997** by calling Judith Rath at 1-800-296-6900.



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