



Smithsonian Institution

MUSEUM on Main Street

Water/Ways **#ThinkWater Initiative**

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 *#ThinkWater* project offers an opportunity to explore water from scientific and cultural perspectives through a variety of programmatic opportunities. This unique project combines two Smithsonian exhibitions with educational activities, engaging speakers, digital story-collection initiatives with the deep programmatic expertise of state humanities councils. The project will offer the Smithsonian's state partners an opportunity to feature not just a traveling exhibition, but also a wide array of programs to maximize interest in water.

The goals for the *#ThinkWater* project are to:

1. Raise appreciation for water as a vital resource for life;
2. Educate citizens and students about critical resource issues;
3. Bring people to an understanding about what water means culturally, socially, spiritually, and to their community;
4. Inspire people to conserve and protect water as an important resource.

#ThinkWater features six initiatives:

- A Museum on Main Street exhibition, *Water/Ways*, designed to reach small town museums, libraries, or other cultural organizations
- A "build-it-yourself" exhibition, *H₂O Today*, designed for larger museums in urban centers, Smithsonian Affiliate museums, mid-size natural history and science museums. Venues for the exhibition will receive construction-ready plans for fabrication
- Educational initiatives with the Anacostia Community Museum, Smithsonian Center for Learning and Digital Access (SCLDA), Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC), Smithsonian Science Education Center (SSEC) that will provide an array of educational opportunities for students in states hosting the *#ThinkWater* exhibitions
- A story collecting and national publicity Initiative in partnership with Blue Legacy International
- A technology initiative focused on collecting and adding local content to interactive stations in communities hosting *#ThinkWater* exhibitions, developed by the Florida Humanities Council
- A program initiative in partnership with The Smithsonian Associates (TSA) and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities to provide Smithsonian scholars to participate in local programs and in radio broadcasts that feature state and local content