

Sample Press Release: PRE-TOUR

Local Contact: [local press contact, phone/email]

State Council Contact: [state council contact, phone/email]

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[date]

Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Exploring Water’s Environmental And Cultural Impact Coming To [Town Name]

From above, Earth appears as a water planet with more than 71 percent of its surface covered with this vital resource for life. Water impacts climate, agriculture, transportation, industry and more. It inspires art and music. The **[insert venue name]**, in cooperation with **[insert name of state humanities council]**, will examine water as an environmental necessity and an important cultural element as it hosts “Water/Ways,” a traveling exhibition from the Smithsonian’s Museum on Main Street (MoMS) program. “Water/Ways” will be on view **[OPENING DATE]** through **[CLOSING DATE]**.

[Insert venue name] and the surrounding community has been expressly chosen by the **[name of state humanities council]** to host “Water/Ways” as part of the Museum on Main Street program—a national/state/local partnership to bring exhibitions and programs to rural cultural organizations. The exhibition will tour **[number]** communities in **[name of state]** from **[start of state tour]** through **[end of state tour]**; an itinerary is attached.

“Water/Ways” explores the endless motion of the water cycle, water’s effect on landscape, settlement and migration, and its impact on culture and spirituality. It looks at how political and economic planning have long been affected by access to water and control of water resources. Human creativity and resourcefulness provide new ways of protecting water resources and renewing respect for the natural environment.

Designed for small-town museums, libraries and cultural organizations, “Water/Ways” will serve as a community meeting place to convene conversations about water’s impact on American culture. With the support and guidance of state humanities councils, these towns will develop complementary exhibits, host public programs and facilitate educational initiatives to raise people’s understanding about what water means culturally, socially and spiritually in their own community.

“Water is an important part of everyone’s life and we are excited to explore what it means culturally, socially and spiritually in our own community,” said **[venue spokesperson’s name, title]**. “We want to convene conversations about water and have developed local exhibitions and public programs to compliment the Smithsonian exhibition.” Such free events include **[insert exhibition highlights and public program highlights here]**.

“Water/Ways” is part of the Smithsonian’s Think Water Initiative to raise awareness of water as a critical resource for life through exhibitions, educational resources and public programs. The public can participated in the conversation on social media at #thinkWater.

“Water/Ways” was inspired by an exhibition organized by the American Museum of Natural History, New York (www.amnh.org), and the Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul (www.smm.org), in collaboration with Great Lakes Science Center, Cleveland; The Field Museum, Chicago; Instituto Sangari, Sao Paulo, Brazil; National Museum of Australia, Canberra; Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada; San Diego Natural History Museum; and Science Centre Singapore with PUB Singapore.

The exhibition is part of Museum on Main Street, a unique collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), state humanities councils across the nation, and local host institutions. To learn more about “Water/Ways” and other Museum on Main Street exhibitions, visit www.museumonmainstreet.org.

Support for MoMS has been provided by the U.S. Congress. **[Insert state/local sponsor information, if applicable]**

SITES has been sharing the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside Washington, D.C., for 65 years. SITES connects Americans to their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of exhibitions about art, science and history, which are shown wherever people live, work and play. For exhibition description and tour schedules, visit www.sites.si.edu.

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[Insert venue information: address, contact number, and hours of operation]

[Insert state council information: address, contact person, phone/email]