



# Great Rivers Greenway Adds Three New Project Managers in an Effort to Accelerate Expansion of the River Ring

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The Great Rivers Greenway District is pleased to announce that the organization recently added three new members to its growing team. Mark Vogl and Megan Riechmann have joined as project managers, while Elizabeth Simons is serving as an assistant project manager. They will work together with other members of Great Rivers Greenway's staff to further expand the River Ring, a planned 600-mile interconnected system of parks, trails and greenways that will encircle the St. Louis region.

As project managers for Great Rivers Greenway, both Vogl and Riechmann will be responsible for overseeing the planning, design and construction of park and greenway projects within the District's master plan.

Vogl, who resides in Webster Groves, Mo., is a registered landscape architect and certified planner with over 20 years of experience, primarily consulting for the HOK Planning Group in St. Louis. While at HOK, he served as either lead planner or project manager on dozens of greenway park and corridor efforts, including several with Great Rivers Greenway. He has been involved in the River Ring Regional Greenway Plan,

Chouteau Greenway and Confluence Greenway, among many others. His background experience has focused on greenway planning, regional planning, corridor design, transit-oriented development, land use planning and community design. Vogl holds a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Kansas State University and has studied architecture and urban design at Washington University in St. Louis.

Riechmann, of Edwardsville, Ill., is a certified planner through the American Institute of Certified Planners, and before coming to Great Rivers Greenway, she worked for seven years at HeartLands Conservancy in Mascoutah, Ill. She has over eight years of experience in assisting local municipalities and clients with geospatial data support, comprehensive conservation and environmental planning, and public outreach initiatives. She has a background in conservation botany, as well as educational and professional experience in environmental and land use planning. Riechmann holds a Master of Science in Biology from Saint Louis University with an emphasis in conservation botany, public policy, communication and education.

As Great Rivers Greenway's new assistant project manager, Simons will aid the District's project managers and staff with greenway development and supporting activities. Prior to joining Great Rivers Greenway, Simons, who lives in Ferguson, Mo., managed the Live Well Ferguson program, where she implemented the City of Ferguson's bicycle and pedestrian plan and enacted citywide programs and policies to prevent obesity. She also has assisted the City of Clayton and the Southwest Garden Neighborhood Association in St. Louis City with streetscape enhancement and multi-modal transportation projects. Simons holds a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Affairs from Saint Louis University.

The hiring of the three new project managers comes as a result of the successful passage of Proposition P in April 2013, which authorized a 3/16<sup>th</sup> of a cent sales tax increase in St. Louis County and St. Louis City. The tax went into effect October 1 and provides additional funds for regional parks and greenways in St. Louis City and St. Louis County, as well as transformational improvements to the Gateway Arch Grounds. The additional funds received from the measure have allowed the District to grow and expand its staff, enabling Great Rivers Greenway to accelerate the expansion of the River Ring and elevate efforts in promoting the conservation of natural resources, wildlife habitats and water quality improvements, and connecting people to the outdoors by providing healthy and active options for area residents and visitors.

"We are thrilled to have these bright individuals join us as we continue work on expanding the River Ring and improving St. Louis' quality of life," said Susan Trautman, executive director of Great Rivers Greenway. "We look forward to an exciting year ahead as we open and break ground on additional trails around the area, and we know their backgrounds will be valuable as we continue to plan for the future."

We are also very thankful to the voters for their support in the spring with the passage of Proposition P, which is now allowing us to grow and invest in a legacy as we make St. Louis a better place for generations to come.”

***About Great Rivers Greenway:***

*The Great Rivers Greenway District was created by a vote of the people in 2000 with the goal of making the St. Louis region a better place to live. The public organization is carrying out this goal by creating community connections with the River Ring, an interconnected system of trails and greenways. The District also works to provide transportation alternatives, preserve nature, improve health and increase the economic vitality of the region. Great Rivers Greenway’s district includes St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County. For more information, visit [www.GreatRiversGreenway.org](http://www.GreatRiversGreenway.org).*