

## The Falls Initiative

Community Conversation 1 - February 15

Zoom Chat Transcript

---

**5:00pm**      **Ricardo Morales:**

Ricardo "Not The Artist" Morales AKA: Rico

**5:01pm**      **Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Thank you all for joining today's event. Please note this meeting is being recorded and will be posted online for public view.

Please remain on mute during the project introduction and panel discussion. We will divide into breakout rooms later and invite participants to join the conversation. The Zoom moderator may manually mute participants prior to that time.

**5:04pm**      **Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Please be courteous when using the chat. The Zoom moderator may remove participants from the meeting for posting disrespectful comments or using inappropriate language.

**5:04pm**      **Ricardo Morales:**

How is this related to the Upper Harbor Terminal Project?

**5:14pm**      **Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Thank you for your question, Ricardo. We invite all to submit questions throughout the project introduction and panel discussion. We will address some in the Q&A section before we divide into breakout rooms, and we will post responses to any we don't have time for online after the event at TheFalls.org

**5:17pm**      **Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Read about each of our panelists here, below the event description: <https://bit.ly/3rPelhx>

**5:18pm**      **Wia Day-Lee:**

hey Rico how you been

**5:18pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Robert Lilligren is President and CEO of NACDI, an appointed member of the Metropolitan Council, and Vice Chair of the Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors (MUID). Robert served for 12 years as the Vice President of the Minneapolis City Council, the first Tribal member elected to public office in the City of Minneapolis. He is enrolled in the White Earth Ojibwe Nation.

**5:19pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Jewell Arcoren is a 'change agent' and community activist. She is currently serving as Executive Director for Wicoie Nandagikendan and is committed to Dakota and Ojibwe language revitalization at the early childhood level. Jewell has a strong interest in behavioral health as it relates to recovering our spirits and transcending intergenerational historical trauma in the American Indian community as well as in the non-Native communities. Jewell is an enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Nation.

**5:20pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Wakinyan Skye LaPointe is Sicangu Lakota, an Indigenous Human Rights advocate, and Co-Convener of the Mni Ki Wakan: Indigenous Water Decade. He centers Lakota knowledge, language, and ways of life in his work across human rights, working in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and youth.

**5:20pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Karen Diver is currently serving as the Senior Advisor to the President for Native American Affairs at the University of Minnesota after previous roles at the University of Arizona and the College of St. Scholastica. Karen was also an appointee of President Obama as the Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs, and she served as Chairwoman of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa from 2007-2015.

**5:21pm Wia Day-Lee: 😊**

**5:21pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Juanita G. Corbine Espinosa is an enrolled member of the Spirit Lake Nation in North Dakota with blood lines that connect to the Ojibwe of Lac Courte Oreilles in Wisconsin and Turtle Mountain Ojibwe in North Dakota. Juanita is a dedicated community organizer, currently working at the University of Minnesota-Department of Medicine Northern Range Satellite Center. She coordinates with 10 institutions across the US focused on American Indian research.

**5:23pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Jewell, Juanita and Wakinyan are members of The Falls Initiative Native Partnership Council. Learn more about the Council and its members here:

<https://thefalls.org/process/#native-partnership-council>

**5:28pm Tedi Grey Owl:**

What historical materials are available for the classroom?

**5:32pm Carrie Day Aspinwall, Facilitator Native Partnership Council:**

Tedi, we will share resources through our website [www.thefalls.org](http://www.thefalls.org)

**5:40pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Feel free to submit questions for the panelists in the chat while you're listening. Thank you!

**5:40pm Ricardo Morales:**

How is the Upper Harbor Terminal affecting this work?

**5:41pm Deborah Schoenholz:**

Is there any plan to restore/rebuild Spirit Island for visiting?

**5:41pm Carrie Day Aspinwall, Facilitator Native Partnership Council:**

Deborah, the purpose of our discussions will be to invite input from all to create a vision which is representative to all our stakeholders

**5:42pm Debra Johnson:**

are there any water ceremonies coming up? I remember going to one at Itasca state park 10 years ago.it was a healing ceremony.

**5:42pm Kjersti Duval, Friends of the Falls:**

Ricardo, the Upper Harbor Terminal is a separate project but is related in that the Upper Lock was built to bring commerce above the Falls to that terminal. The two sites will now be connected by both blue and green trails.

**5:42pm Ricardo Morales:**

Gracias!

**5:43pm Peter Koenig:**

What are Blue and Green Trails?

**5:44pm Carrie Day Aspinwall, Facilitator Native Partnership Council:**

Debra, as we noted, we invite all input, ceremonies are important to us all and will share our progress as we move forward

**5:45pm Kjersti Duval, Friends of the Falls:**

Peter, blue and green trails refer to "trails" that are on the water (moving by boat or kayak) and on land (walking and biking). Thanks for the question!

**5:47pm Inkpa Mani:**

Is there any signs in place today that acknowledge that the Water Falls have been a Dakota and Native site for 20,000 years? If not, why not?

**5:48pm Carrie Day Aspinwall, Facilitator Native Partnership Council:**

Inkpa, in my search across the site, I found no sign at all of our Dakota relatives at this site. It has been stated a number of times to include such an acknowledgement

**5:50pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

After today's event, please share your comments via our online survey:

<https://new.maptionnaire.com/q/3wl7hpa3pdx7>

**5:50pm Pat Nunnally:**

The St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board has begun a process of re-thinking the "Heritage Trail" in the vicinity. Inkpa, that might be a great place to include that knowledge.

**5:51pm Peter Koenig:**

What about signage on the Stone Arch bridge?

**5:51pm Pat Nunnally:**

That's part of the Heritage Board thinking. Thanks, Peter!

**5:52pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

You can also visit our Immersive Exhibit to learn more about this place and the project opportunity: <https://thefalls.org/immersive-exhibit/>

**5:52pm Kjersti Duval, Friends of the Falls:**

These are great ideas that we will bring in to our Native Partnership Council!

**5:53pm Ricardo Morales:**

Please keep considering how the UHT project is a similar and not separate issue.

**5:54pm Carrie Day Aspinwall, Facilitator Native Partnership Council:**

Ricardo, we are all related and anything that happens up river will affect and vice versa. We are happy to keep everyone informed and welcome all voices - especially when mending and reweaving relationships

**5:54pm Ricardo Morales:**

Wonderful!

**5:55pm Peter Koenig:**

Are the only land areas with Native American centered development Federal? is it possible to do the same thing with local (state, county, city, Park Board) land - such as the whole riverfront?

**5:55pm Ricardo Morales:**

Yes!

**5:57pm Carrie Day Aspinwall, Facilitator Native Partnership Council:**

Peter, I admire your vision, possible, maybe but we can only go one step at a time, stay tuned. Powerful place for partnerships

**5:58pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Remember to save the date for upcoming Community Conversations: March 16, April 12, May 21, June 15. <https://thefalls.org/events/>

**6:01pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Share your photos, memories and ideas for the project on social media. Tag @TheFallsMpls and @NACDI.mn (Instagram) / @NACDI.mn (Twitter) and use hashtag #TheFallsMpls

**6:01pm Carrie Day Aspinwall, Facilitator Native Partnership Council:**

Please post your questions for our panel, we are ready!

**6:01pm Ricardo Morales:**

How is the Upper Harbor Terminal project related to this project?

**6:01pm Terry Hokenson:**

Can the chat be saved by guests?

**6:02pm Ricardo Morales:**

For the panelists, please.

**6:02pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Terry - we can include a transcript of the chat in the post-event resources.

**6:03pm Jacob Bernier:**

Is there involvement from the University of Minnesota in the project?

**6:05pm Peter Koenig:**

How can the sacredness of the site be restored and maintained?

**6:05pm Ricardo Morales:**

Colonizers always try to navigate the conversation.

**6:07pm Kjersti Duval, Friends of the Falls:**

We are teeing up your questions for the panel now - thank you everyone! If they cannot get to all of them, please raise them up in the breakout rooms!

**6:07pm Carrie Day Aspinwall, Facilitator Native Partnership Council:**

Great questions

**6:07pm Megan Bartels:**

Wópilatanka panelists!

**6:08pm Ralph Henn:**

Land Tenure Foundation has curricula.

**6:08pm Tedi Grey Owl:**

Miigwech

**6:09pm Ricardo Morales:**

Thursday, 6pm All My Relations Art. Steven Premo.

**6:09pm Carrie Day Aspinwall, Facilitator Native Partnership Council:**

Right on Ralph

**6:10pm Ricardo Morales:**

<http://www.allmyrelationsarts.com/avenues-of-creation/>

**6:11pm Karen Monson:**

Will this entire presentation be available to share. Thank you all for this incredible action.

**6:11pm Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls:**

Karen - Yes, we will post a recording in a few days on TheFalls.org. There will also be a link to it inside the Immersive Exhibit: <https://thefalls.org/immersive-exhibit/>

**6:12pm Denise Mayotte:**

Thank you to all of you! Wonderful conversation!

**6:12pm Ralph Henn:**

Adding to my earlier comment ... curricula on their website <https://iltf.org/>

---

***Chat comments submitted while in Breakout Rooms were not transcribed, but are reflected in our post-event summaries.***