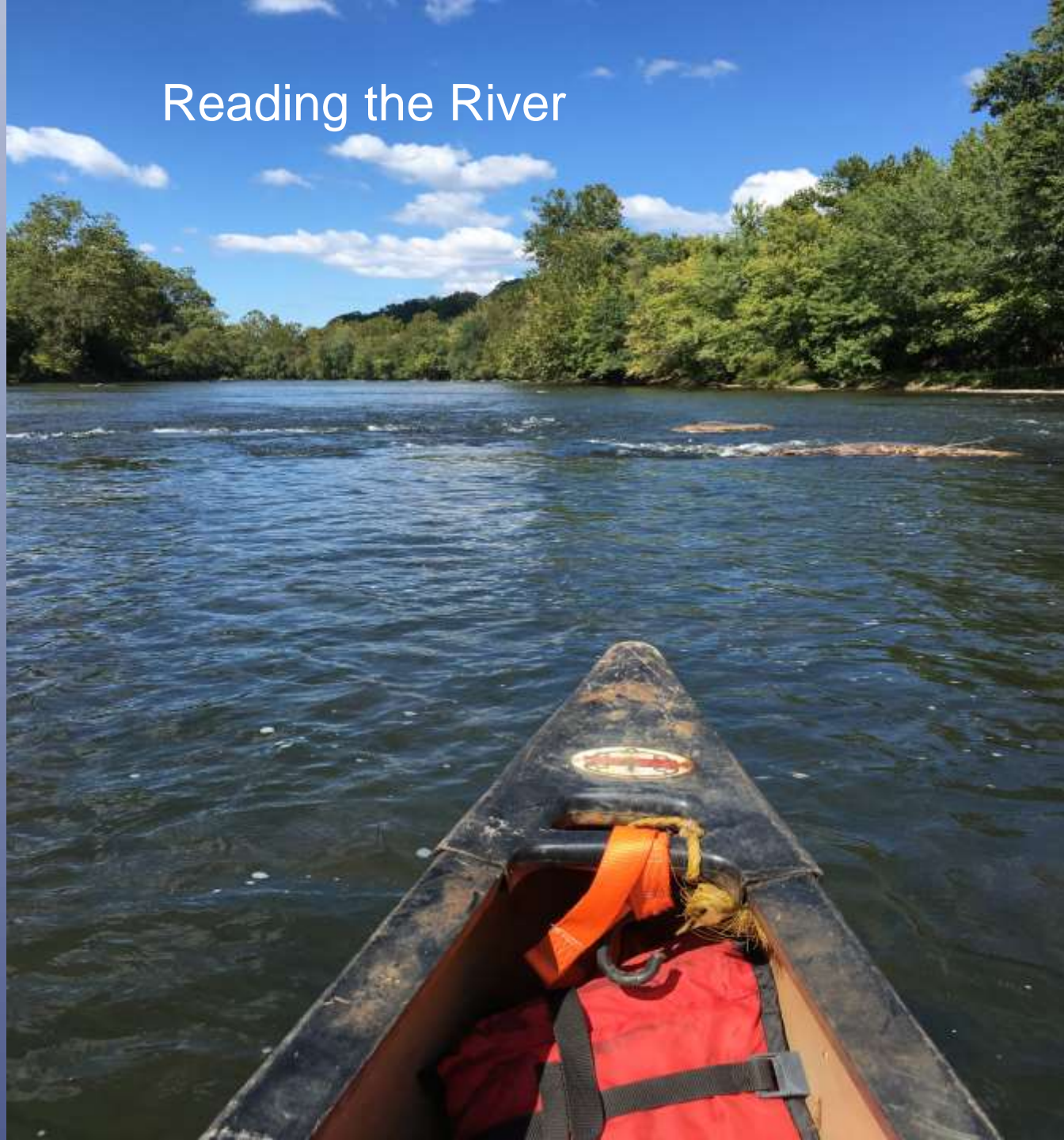


Reading the River





Whanganui River, New Zealand

*A Gathering of
Waters
Source to Sea*

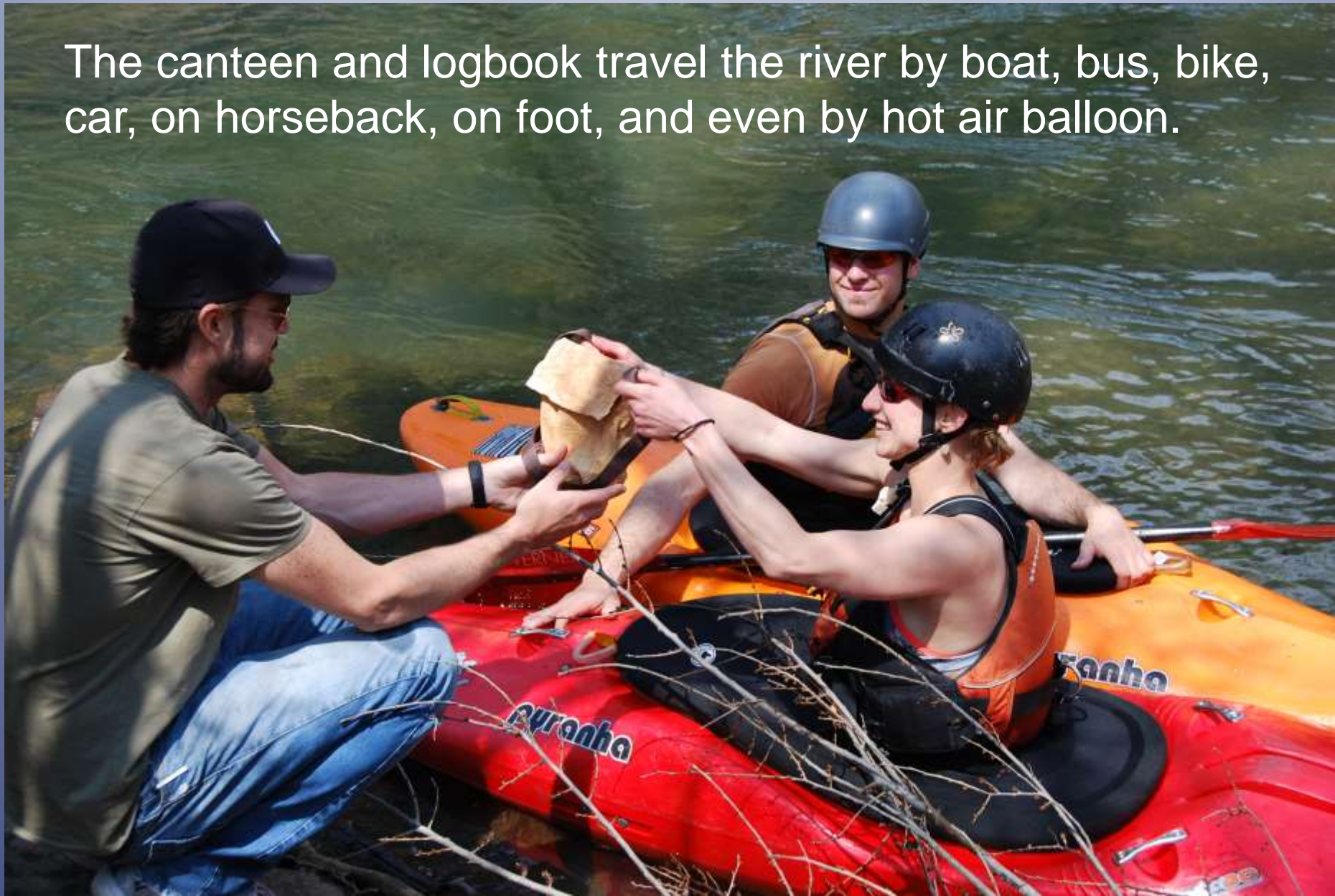
Connecting people along the entire length of a river.

First-hand experiential learning. Establishing networks and partnerships.



Connecting upstream and downstream communities. Understanding complexities.

The canteen and logbook travel the river by boat, bus, bike, car, on horseback, on foot, and even by hot air balloon.





Logging in to the log book.



Santa Fe Indian School Track Team

Creating video documentaries.

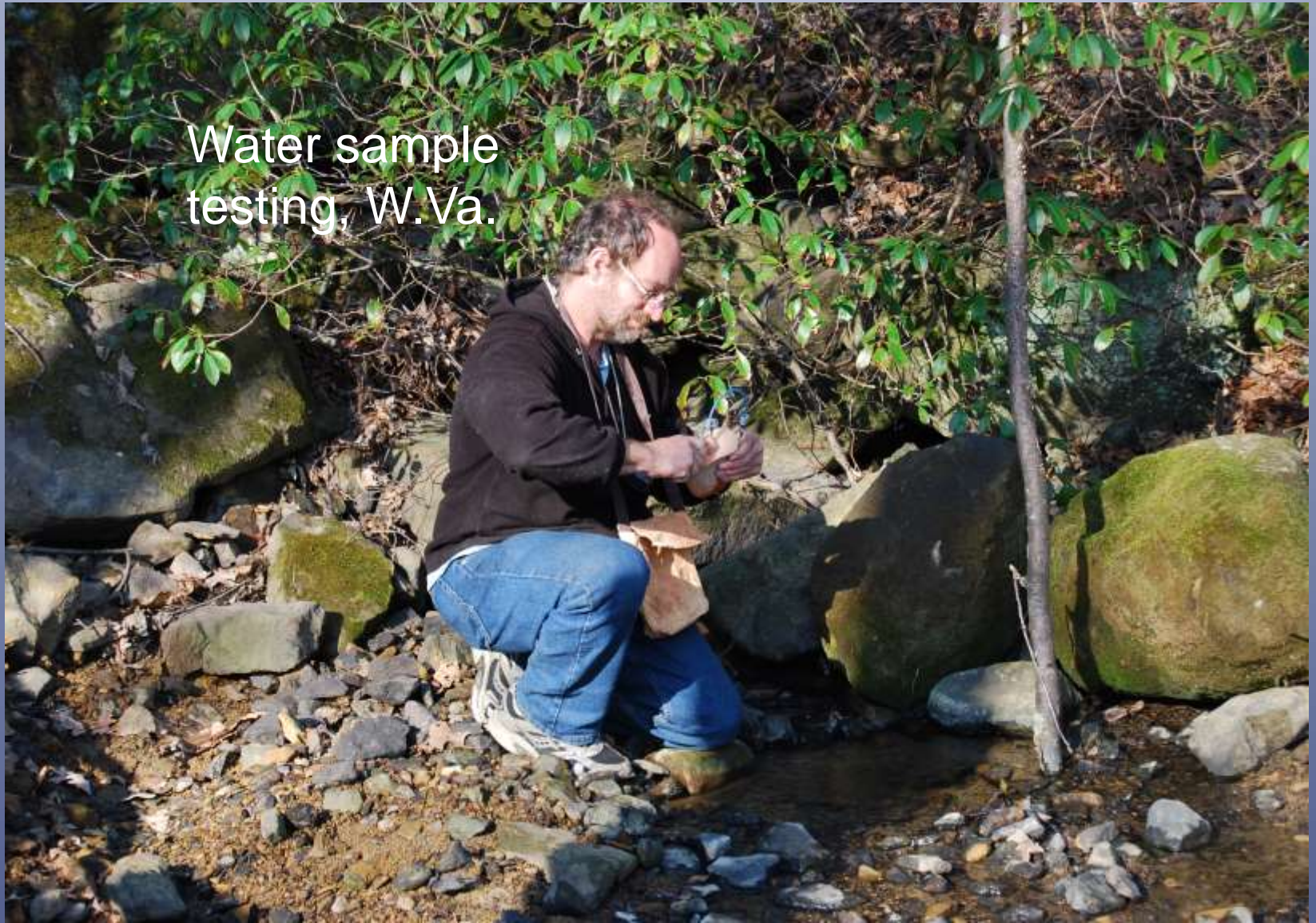


Outflow from water treatment plants provide tributaries to rivers.

Planting trees



Water sample
testing, W.Va.





Acid-mine drainage from abandoned coal mine.



*

*

Backpack/Repositories are created for each Gathering of Waters project.



Río Grande

Each repository holds scientific data, photographs, watershed



maps, clay samples, water tests, canteen, logbook, videos, seeds.



Boulder Creek, Colorado



Nisqually
River,
Washington



Kit for Paddling Through Stars Floating on a Lake. Canada



Seed Repository. Big Wood River, Idaho.



Oconee
River,
Georgia.
Navicula

Apothecary
For Creeks
And Other
Living
Beings.
Ohio





Saskatchewan River Delta, Canada

The image features several dried, pressed plant specimens, likely grasses or sedges, arranged on a light blue, textured background. The specimens are in various stages of drying, with some showing brownish, papery bracts and others appearing more greenish-brown. The text "ICE RECEDING/ BOOKS RESEEDING" is overlaid in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**ICE RECEDING/
BOOKS RESEEDING**

I work closely with stream ecologists and botanists to discover the best seeds for each riparian zone. There is deep community involvement in the entire process, with hundreds of local citizens participating in an educational experience to learn first-hand about their watershed.

A photograph of the Nisqually Glacier on Mount Rainier. The glacier is a large, white, and somewhat turbulent mass of ice and snow, flowing down a rocky, grey mountain slope. The peak of the mountain is visible in the background, covered in snow and partially obscured by a clear blue sky. The foreground shows dark green evergreen trees and a rocky, scree-covered slope. The overall scene is a high-altitude mountain landscape.

Nisqually Glacier
Mt. Rainier



Colorado



New Mexico at dawn



Belgium

The Netherlands



France



Quebec, Canada



Iran



Photo by Shahrnaz Zarkesh

Shoushtar, Khozestan, 2010

Photo by Shahrnaz Zarkesh

Shoushtar, Khozestan, 2010



The seeds form an international ecological language.



Riparian grass seed footnotes





- The importance of plants to riparian zones.
 - Plants sequester carbon,
 - mitigate floods and drought,
 - pollinate other plants,
 - disperse seeds,
 - create soil regeneration and preservation,
 - act as filters for pollutants and debris,
 - supply leaf-litter (for food and habitat),
 - promote aesthetic pleasure,
 - hold the banks in place (to slow erosion),
 - and provide shelter/shade for riverside organisms including humans.

Ephemerality





Ice books displayed in gallery and museum settings.



Ice book melted and left seeds...



...which were then returned to the river to continue the cycle of regeneration.

*WATERBORNE
DISEASES*

I have worked for many years conducting research, and producing art work about waterborne diseases, and have received a grant with the chair of biology at UNM to create a video, “Bilharzia Blues: An Integrated Artistic/Biological Approach to Schistosomiasis in Egypt, Ethiopia and Nepal.” In Nepal I collaborated with parasitologists to research the ecology of the schistosomes, which are infecting, not only the local populous, but also elephants in the Rapti River region.



Nepalese parasitologist, Dr. Prem Budha



Schistosomiasis (bilharzia)

Kathmandu, Nepal



Lake Tana, Source of the
Blue Nile, Ethiopia



RETROSPECTIVE



Retrospective, Museum de Domijnen, Sittard, The Netherlands. Curated by Roel Arkensteijn. This gallery contains “Gathering of Waters” backpack/repositories.







Gallery with framed Ice Book photographs.



Reflecting pool with stepping stones.



Water-borne disease scrolls.



“Below.” Video projection onto museum façade.



7 Contemplation Stations were built for viewing rivers.
Map to locations were found inside museum.





The background of the entire page is a teal color with a subtle, wavy pattern that resembles water ripples. The text is overlaid on this background.

Water Library

BASIA IRLAND

UNIVERSITY OF
NEW MEXICO
PRESS

234 pages

2007



READING THE RIVER

The Ecological Activist Art of Basia Irland

Edited by Museum De Domijnen and Basia Irland

PUBLISHED IN
THE
NETHERLANDS

230 PAGES

2017

National Geographic Blogs

WHAT THE RIVER KNOWS

Written in the first person
from the perspective of the river.

Indigenous water rights.



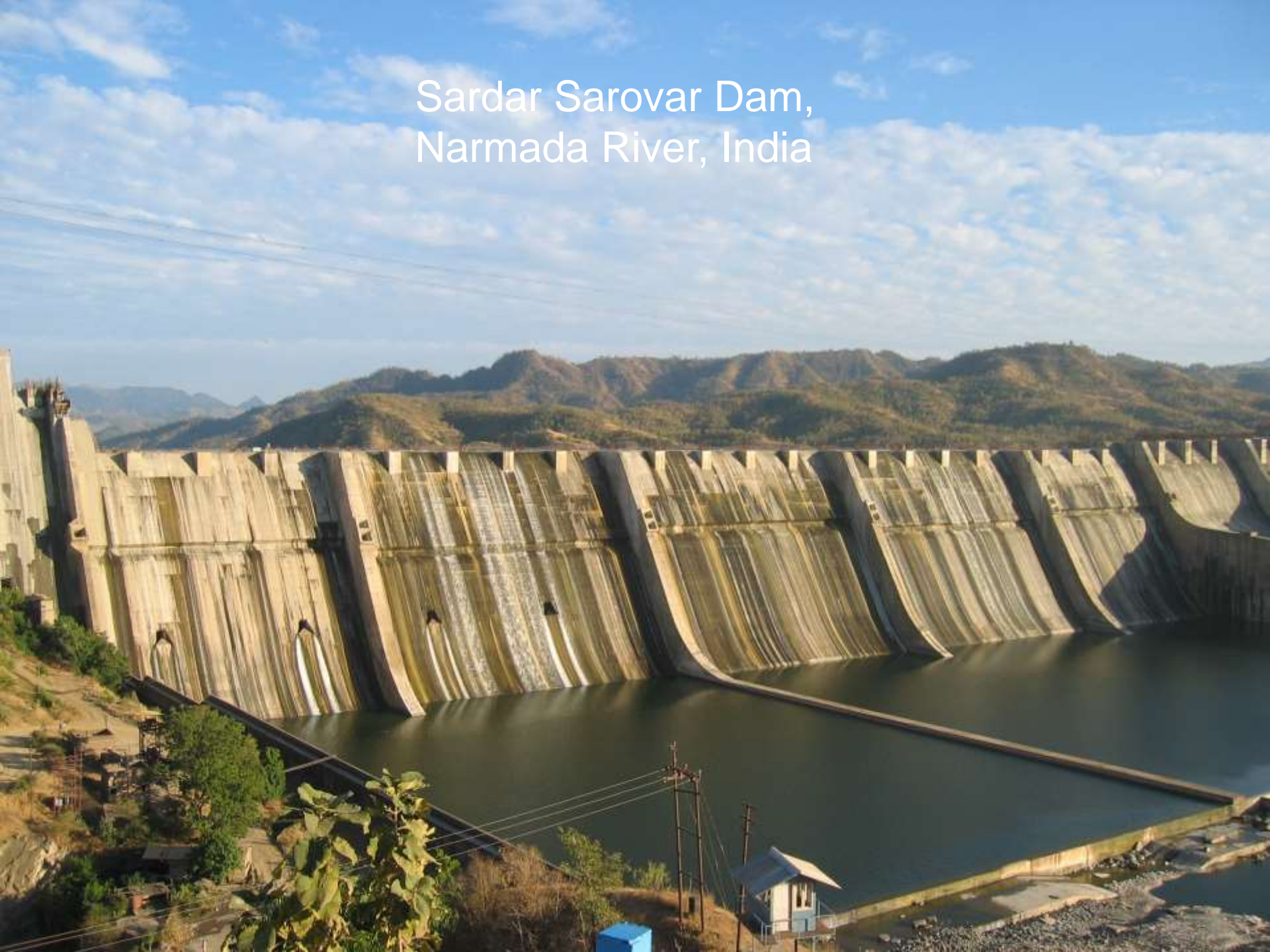
Yaqui River, Mexico





Pilgrims walking along the Narmada River, India

Sardar Sarovar Dam, Narmada River, India



Saskatchewan River Delta, Canada





Swampy Cree tribal members.



In museums and galleries the blogs are heard as audio files with accompanying images and wall text.



Little Red Boat
2013





Desert Fountain. Rainwater harvesting system.



