

Press Release: PRE-TOUR

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Exhibition: December 17, 2019 through February 11, 2020

Special Event: January 18, 2020 at the Fort Towson Historic Site from 10 am thru 3 pm

Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition Exploring Water's Environmental And Cultural Impact Coming To Fort Towson

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 **Fort Towson Historic Site**, in cooperation with **Oklahoma humanities** 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 **December 17** through **February 11**.

Fort Towson and the surrounding community has been expressly chosen by the **Oklahoma humanities** 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 **4** communities in **Oklahoma** from **March 2019** through **April 2020**.

"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 **John Davis Regional Director Oklahoma Historical Society**. “We want to convene conversations about water and have developed local exhibitions and public programs to compliment the Smithsonian exhibition. Join us, at the Fort Towson Historical Site, January 18th from 10 to 3pm for a special event that will incorporate river music, commerce, food and the history of life on the water.

“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.

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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For additional information:

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