



-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

The Horinko Group and The Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities Foundation, Announce a Summit Exploring Topics of Transboundary Water Management

The 2017 Summit will explore the future of transboundary water management with a focus using a humanities lens on cooperation, informed decision-making and the capacity building of local actors.

Washington D.C., October 2, 2017 – The Horinko Group, a leading environmental consulting firm, is proud to announce their 2017 Summit, **The Future of Transboundary Water Management – Cooperation, Informed Decision-Making, and Empowering Local Actors**, to be held on October 12th, 2017 in Washington D.C. The Summit is a partnership with the Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities Foundation, the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, and The National Great Rivers Research & Education Center.

This year's Summit will discuss implications of using big data analysis to reach better-informed decisions on the use of water resources. This method for water management has the potential for improving the human condition from the Jordan River in the conflict-torn Middle East, to the complicated issues of water rights in the Western United States, to the cyclic water pulse events resulting in droughts and destructive flooding along the Mississippi River. Empowering local actors to access and utilize big data with purpose and confidence is an important step in positioning those who govern locally to course correct onto a sustainable path forward.

The Summit will convene an executive group of water resources professionals, key capacity and community-building practitioners, scientists, regulators, attorneys, and policy makers on a national and international scale, well positioned to make immediate and measurable impacts. The Summit intends to generate productive and fruitful executive-level conversations on how the management of water resources can be optimized with the help of technological solutions, such as big data, to prevent further conflicts surrounding issues of transboundary water resources, locally and internationally. Proof of concept projects will be considered for each region, accounting for social indicators and the human dimension of these natural systems.

The first Summit panel, entitled "Water Diplomacy and Cooperation in the Middle East – Big Data and the Road Ahead," chaired by Dr. Clive Lipchin, Director of the Center for Transboundary Water Management at the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, includes Israeli and Palestinian water experts exploring the creation of shared data sets that delineate watersheds by leveraging existing and new technologies. A region as hydrologically complex as it is politically challenging, data analytics could as serve as a trust-building mechanism for establishing water governance bodies to ensure data is collected scientifically, appropriately, and fairly.

As recently stated by Jason Greenblatt, White House Special Representative for International Negotiations (*Jerusalem Post*, September 9, 2017), "The United States will join Israel and the Palestine Authority as part of the peace process, by working to advance a plan that transforms the wastewater treatment and reuse sector in the West Bank and Gaza." Dr. Shaddad Attili, Former Head of the Palestinian Water Authority and Summit Panelist echoed this statement saying, "Palestinians welcome cooperation with Israelis on water technology."

The second Summit panel entitled, "Sustaining Western U.S. Water – How Information and Collaboration Are Improving Water Management," is chaired by Adam Schempp, Director of the Western Water Program at the Environmental Law Institute. The panel will outline water resource challenges in the western United States, with a particular emphasis on the Colorado River basin, and identify ways in which cooperation and an array of technological developments have afforded solutions. "The people and institutions of the western U.S. have made notable strides in their approach to water management over the last couple of decades, but those innovations and collaborations will need to be just a start if we are to meet the significant challenges that lie ahead."

The third Summit panel entitled, "Using Data, Law and GeoHumanities to Improve System and Community Resiliency in the Mississippi River Basin," chaired by Ann Mills, Senior Fellow at The George Washington University

Food Institute and Sustainability Collaborative, will describe community and interstate efforts to address key system and community stressors along the nation's most iconic large river system, the Mississippi. Opportunities to apply big data techniques and data mining will be discussed in a joint effort to better inform watershed-scale environmental, legal, and socio-economic decision-making, while building the adaptive capacity of local actors. Mills says, "Leaders across government, academia, the private sector and civil society increasingly recognize the value of leveraging precision information and technology to advance watershed scale solutions; the challenge is to put these tool in the right hands to ensure resilient ecosystems and economies."

Brendan McGinnis, Summit Organizer with The Horinko Group, sums up the Summit's overall purpose, "Everyone in the water sector benefits from discussions that are hard-focused on results. We are approaching this conversation pragmatically and looking for tangible ways to break down and address nagging problems that demand cooperation, better decisions that work for people and communities, while advancing opportunities to empower local practitioners to realize a path toward resiliency and water security. This cannot be a top-down solution."

McGinnis added, "We are thrilled to have the Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities Foundation as a major partner for this year's Summit. Mannie Jackson is committed to bringing the humanities more squarely into the discussion on how we arrive at and communicate regional and local strategies for water stewardship."

Mannie Jackson agrees, "We need to seize the opportunities we have in tackling complex social challenges to more effectively utilize the expertise and knowledge of our major institutions, government, business, and our universities to solve problems in ways that respect and recharge our people and their communities. The humanities have an important role to play in the 21st century."

For more information on receiving a press pass, please contact: Brendan McGinnis at bmcginnis@thehorinkogroup.org.

About The Horinko Group

The Horinko Group (THG) is an environmental consulting firm based in Washington, DC operating at the intersection of policy, science, and communications. Founded in 2008, the firm has established itself as an innovator and a trusted, third-party convener. THG has a proven track record of addressing complex natural resource challenges, while meeting the needs of the broader community. THG advocates for efficiency, sustainability, and holistic solutions based on cutting-edge science and sound business practice. THG works alongside federal, state, and local governments, NGOs, and the private sector to achieve measurable results for our clients, partners, and the communities and markets in which they operate. There are unique challenges and opportunities given the fiscal and regulatory uncertainty of these times. THG assists all stakeholders in thinking strategically about these opportunities and capitalizing on the business advantages of sustainability.

<http://www.thehorinkogroup.org/>

About The Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities Foundation

The Mannie Jackson Center for the Humanities Foundation (MJCHF), a 501(c)(3), uses the humanities to gain insights into, and to communicate, environmental science research so that others will care about and seek to resolve environmental inequities for communities of disenfranchised people throughout the world. The MJCH engages humanities faculty, working with environmental scientists, to communicate what we know about environmental science and how that impacts people's lives. The humanities can express the urgency to develop research-based policy solutions to current issues more powerfully than research briefs published in scientific journals that are read by other scientists, but not by government, private sector, or the non-governmental organization policy-makers.

<http://www.mjchf.org/>

About The Arava Institute for Environmental Studies

The Arava Institute for Environmental Studies is a leading environmental studies and research program in the Middle East. Arava houses academic programs in partnership with Ben Gurion University, research centers, and international cooperation initiatives focusing on a range of environmental concerns and challenges. With a student body comprised of Jordanians, Palestinians, Israelis, and students from around the world, the Arava Institute offers students an exceptional opportunity to learn from leading professionals while forming friendships and developing skills that enable them to lead the region and the world in solving today's most pressing environmental challenges.

At Arava, the idea that nature knows no political borders is more than a belief; it is a fact, a curriculum, and a way of life.

<http://arava.org/>

About The National Great Rivers Research and Education Center

Founded in 2002 as a collaborative partnership between the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the Illinois Natural History Survey and Lewis and Clark Community College, the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRRECSM) is dedicated to the study of great river systems and the communities that use them. The center aspires to be a leader in scholarly research, education, and outreach related to the interconnectedness of large rivers, their floodplains, watersheds, and their associated communities.

<http://ngrrec.org/>