

# Case Study: NGRREC

**Who:** National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC) hosts an annual Water Festival for hundreds of fifth grade students and their teachers for a fun-filled day of educational activities and interactive demonstrations. Hosted with the help of local partner organizations, the annual Water Festival offers over 30 hands-on activity stations promoting water resource awareness as well as canoe rides and fishing. Participating teachers attend a one-day teacher workshop in advance of the festival, where they are introduced to concepts of water resources management and big river ecology. Teachers also receive free materials and resources to incorporate water conservation education into their classroom sessions to help prepare students for the festival.

**Need:** NGRREC needed many promotional items to make their 2023 event successful. At a prior year's event, students received water bottles as a take-home gift. The water bottles had untethered lids, and organizers found so many lids on the lawn at the end of the day. They also received feedback that the water bottles were not long-lasting. NGRREC is highly committed to reducing plastic use and modeling for all this commitment because of the prevalence of plastics in our ecosystems. Finding a durable, stainless water bottle with an attached lid was critical.

**Solution:** With the help of Eco Promotional Products, NGRREC was able to find the most sustainable items to make their event a success. Participating teachers wore seed branded paper name badges during their one-day teacher workshop in advance of the festival and received a t-shirt to be worn during the Water Festival. The different colored t-shirts easily identified people's roles: blue (teacher), strawberry (exhibitor), and purple (volunteer) so that everyone knew who to seek out for help. The t-shirts also served as a thank you for participating. Additionally, branded silicone wristbands were used to subtly indicate which students had signed photo waivers (blue) and which students could not be photographed (green). Most importantly, Eco Promotional Products helped NGRREC choose a high-quality stainless steel water bottle with a tethered lid so no lids were left behind.

