

# The Otterly Awesome Challenge

North American River Otters are very good swimmers and they have many adaptations that are meant for a life in water. They have webbed feet and toes; a long, flat tail; waterproof fur; and sensitive whiskers to help find food underwater. They are also naturally curious and will investigate most of the small objects, both living and nonliving, that they find in their habitat. Here are otterly awesome ways you can help our North American River Otter friends in Utah!



## Challenge #1

Otters love to eat fish. Though fish consists of most of their diet, they also like to eat frogs, crayfish, birds, bird eggs, clams, snails, and even turtles. Otters are not the only fish eating animal in Utah waterways, humans also love to go fishing. It is important that when we go out to fish that we don't leave anything behind. Wayward hooks, fishing line, nets, and lures can harm other animals that live in the lakes, ponds, and rivers that we fish at. The next time you go fishing, consider some of these challenges to protect otters and other animals:

- Pick up any hooks, bobbers, extra fishing line, and other fishing equipment that you see in areas near water and dispose of them properly.
- If your fishing line gets tangled, try to collect it and dispose of it so animals won't get entangled.

## Challenge #2

Otters are very playful animals. Our three otters at the Loveland Living Planet Aquarium can be seen playing with each other everyday. Wild otters will play with each other and with any object they come across like rocks, leaves, or plastic. Unfortunately, plastic trash has the potential to hurt wild otters if they eat it or get stuck in it. We can protect wild otters and many other Utah animals by following these rules when it comes to plastics:

- Dispose of plastics properly and recycle plastics that can be recycled
- Reuse plastic materials, even if it isn't in the same way they were used before
- Reduce our plastic use. The less plastic we use, the less of a chance it can get into the environment