

Subject: Mississippi Messages — August 2021
From: Friends of the Mississippi River <communications@fmr.org>
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**MISSISSIPPI
MESSAGES**

[Our work takes place on the ancestral homelands of the Dakota.](#) The river — Haha Wakpa, Misi-ziibi, Mississippi — we steward in Minnesota has long been stewarded by Native Nations including the Dakota and the Ojibwe.

FMR Updates



2021 Environmental Stewardship Institute

FMR's third year of ESI, themed Resilient Waters: Building Community and Connection, wrapped up with spectacular projects from our high school-aged fellows — everything from comic books to interactive websites on topics ranging from composting to pollinators.

[See the 2021 ESI fellows' projects >>](#)



'Do you think nature has surrendered to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers?'

A little-known underground wall holds St. Anthony Falls back from a catastrophic collapse that would endanger the Twin Cities' water supply, bridges, and other infrastructure. So why isn't anyone regularly monitoring the wall's condition?

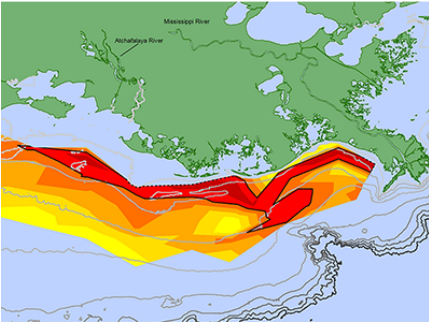
[FMR board member John Anfinson explained the puzzle in the Star Tribune >>](#)



Field days provide a Forever Green respite from this dry summer

This summer has been droughty, leaving some conventional crops in trouble. But there are plenty of green growing fields and exciting developments when it comes to some of FMR's favorite clean-water crops.

[Check out our recap of two field visits that make us hopeful for our state and our river >>](#)



2021 Gulf of Mexico dead zone far bigger than expected

The dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico is three times bigger than it "should" be. Here's what you can do to help restore balance to the Gulf and the Mississippi River.

[Learn more and take action >>](#)



Why it's time for a new federal river program that supports farmers

When it comes to agriculture, the proposed Mississippi River Restoration & Resilience Initiative would help farmers improve soil, enhance water quality, reduce nutrient loss and boost profitability — goals policymakers of all stripes should agree with.

[Find out more about this innovative approach to clean water >>](#)



What's missing from the Upper Harbor Terminal environmental review

We're anticipating several key Minneapolis city council votes on the Upper Harbor Terminal development project this fall. Next up is the project's environmental review.

[Here's what we think is missing from this report and how this important, mile-long riverfront redevelopment in North Minneapolis could be better >>](#)

Mississippi River News

What does the latest U.N. climate report mean for the river and our work?

The United Nations' [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report](#) released in the midst of smoky skies and worsening drought here in Minnesota urges sweeping changes in policy. Because climate change poses a critical threat to the health of the Mississippi River and the communities through which it flows, we're committed to addressing climate impacts across our programs.

[Read more about climate change and FMR >>](#)

NACo becomes 75th group to call for a new federal Mississippi River initiative

The National Association of Counties (NACo) unanimously voted to endorse the proposed Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative Act. ([You can support this federal initiative too.](#)) Roughly 80% of U.S. counties are members of the national association. Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt led the endorsement effort.

[Read more from bill sponsor Rep. McCollum >>](#)

Drought and the Mississippi River

[Drought conditions](#) brought the Mississippi River's flow down low enough to require water restrictions for Minneapolis, St. Paul and other cities this summer. If you're wondering what else you can do, [Mississippi Watershed Management Organization reminds us to take care of parched trees](#), and [MPR News put together a list of how to conserve water at home](#). Here's hoping drought won't still be a news item in the next Mississippi Messages.

Is it safe to swim in the metro Mississippi?

Some river stretches, like the sand flats in Minneapolis, are tempting to swim at. But, should you? Two local publications recently dived into an eternal summer question. We add our two cents about the risk of changing currents, runoff, pollution for animals and for us (and what you can do about it).

[Read more from FMR >>](#)

Upcoming Events



We'll be at [Lower Phalen Creek Project's \(outdoor\) Pollinator Festival at Wakáŋ Tipi/Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary](#) in St. Paul on Saturday, August 21. Come say hello!

Join us to [plant trees at Gores Pool Wildlife Management Area](#) in Hastings on Saturday, September 18.

[See our full events calendar >>](#)

Conservation Corner



How we choose our conservation and restoration sites

Our Land Conservation program has protected or restored more than three dozen sites near the metro Mississippi River. Pine Bend Bluffs SNA in Inver Grove Heights was our first major conservation project in the 1990s. The story of our work there highlights some of the strategies we still use to guide our protection and restoration efforts today.

[Here's how we decide where to focus >>](#)

Supporting FMR



An Evening Celebrating the Mississippi River goes virtual

Given the current COVID situation, we've decided to hold our annual fall celebration online again this year. That means that on September 30, you'll have the chance to sign on from the comfort of your home to hear stories how the river heals, to laugh with our host Miss Shannan Paul, and to celebrate all the ways we've helped heal the river together through this challenging time.

[Sign up to get notified when registration opens >>](#)

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