

Subject: Mississippi Messages — February 2022
From: Friends of the Mississippi River <communications@fmr.org> **To:**
Date Sent: Wednesday, October 25, 2023 5:55:48 PM GMT-05:00
Date Received: Wednesday, October 25, 2023 5:55:49 PM
GMT-05:00



**MISSISSIPPI
MESSAGES**

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

FMR Updates



Celebrating Whitney's 25th year at FMR

Last month, we celebrated an impressive milestone: Executive Director Whitney Clark's 25th anniversary here at FMR! We're grateful for the integrity of his leadership and his tireless, inspiring dedication to the river and to all of us.

[Read Whitney's reflections on working to protect the Mississippi for a quarter-century >>](#)



Rare Maplewood grasslands one step closer to protection

Ramsey County is stepping back from its plans to develop a rare grassland bird haven. We're celebrating this win and advocating for the next logical step: permanent habitat protection. Ramsey County residents — send a note to the county to express support for this special refuge.

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



Climate action, water infrastructure, and clean-water crops at the Capitol

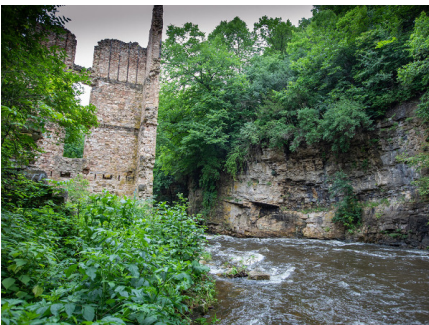
So far on our legislative blog, we've [advocated for the ambitious Climate Action Plan](#) that calls for a big investment in our priorities ([take action today!](#)), [offered our take on Gov. Walz's proposal](#) for water infrastructure, and [celebrated the introduction of a bill](#) that would grow the industry for clean-water crops.



An update on the future of St. Anthony Falls

There's a lot happening around St. Anthony Falls in downtown Minneapolis. Here's the latest on the Army Corps' disposition study, upcoming events about the future of the lock area, and that mysterious underwater wall.

[What's going on around the only waterfall on the Mississippi >>](#)



Where we work: Old Mill Park

Part of a habitat corridor through the heart of Hastings, this 10-acre park is home to the first mill on the banks of the Vermillion River, an important tributary of the Mississippi. Visitors can find the mill ruins there, as well as FMR's pollinator planting, restored oak savanna and woodland.

[Learn more and plan your visit >>](#)



FMR's BIPOC River Stewards program

FMR began holding events created by and for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) last year. Together, we've tended habitat restoration projects, birdwatched in the gorge and snowshoed by the river.

[Here's how the program works >>](#)



Opportunities to work with FMR

As part of our expansion, application periods are still open for a [Grassroots Organizing Coordinator](#) and a [Stewardship & Education Program Associate](#). We also have a [Community Engagement internship opening](#) and a [Request for Qualifications](#) to help develop pathways for more BIPOC youth and young adults to get into environmental careers.

Mississippi River News

Justice for Amir Locke

We are deeply saddened and outraged by the killing of Amir Locke at the hands of the Minneapolis Police this month. Our thoughts are with Amir Locke's family and the community. We support and care deeply for our BIPOC staff, board members, partners, friends and family who are navigating yet another tragic killing of a Black person. And we are in solidarity with those who seek long-overdue justice and effective reform. The link below provides some ways to act, if you're looking, including pushing for legislation addressing no-knock warrants and directly supporting the Amir Locke Memorial Fund.

[Read more from FMR >>](#)

'St. Paul reveals early plans for 1.5-mile river balcony'

As part of the City of St. Paul's Great River Passage Initiative, the River Balcony is a proposed 1.5-mile promenade along downtown St. Paul's river bluff, connecting public spaces, civic landmarks and development sites, providing new connections to the river and sparking economic development along the riverfront. Architects revealed early plans and drawings for the project last week. Sign up as a River Guardian, and we'll let you know about opportunities to weigh in on the planning process as it unfolds this spring.

[Read more from the Star Tribune >>](#)

'Marathon Petroleum supports project to restore blufflands along the Mississippi River'

A new grant will expand our work and partnership with Marathon at their blufflands in St. Paul Park. We'll soon begin work restoring this 175-acre property to the east of the Mississippi River, an area that makes up important natural habitat for more than 300 migratory bird species, vital pollinators and other wildlife. And we're excited about the potential for public access in the future.

[Read more from Marathon >>](#)

'This Unsung Aquatic Hero Could Get a Big Boost From Dam Removals'

As the Twin Cities enters into a phase of [reevaluation of our locks and dams](#), we'll have the opportunity to consider removing some of the infrastructure that's no longer needed. Just like FMR's Land Conservation efforts attempt to connect corridors of land so more wildlife can thrive, dam removal has the potential to reconnect stretches of the river, which could be a boon for aquatic species like freshwater mussels.

[Read more from The Revelator >>](#)

Conservation Corner



Measuring success: recent pollinator surveys at FMR-restored prairies

As pollinator populations drop and habitat fragmentation rises, successful habitat restoration becomes even more vital. The prairie pollinator surveys we did at three restoration sites in 2021 showed high numbers of species present (including sightings of the federally endangered rusty patched bumblebee), some exciting increases, and a few surprises.

[Check out our findings >>](#)

Upcoming Events



James Rice Park Community Meetings

Tuesday, March 1, 2022 at 5 pm

Wednesday, April 6, 2022 at 5 pm

Join FMR and the North Loop Neighborhood Association for an evening imagining the future of the natural areas at James Rice Park. FMR is currently developing a 5-year, volunteer-centric plan to guide the restoration of this park, and we want input from the community.

[Register for either date to get involved >>](#)

Supporting FMR



Become a Sustaining Member with a recurring gift

The Mississippi River is a life-sustaining force that supports a diverse ecosystem of birds, pollinators, mammals, fish, amphibians and more. Like the river, you can sustain FMR's work by becoming a Sustaining Member and signing up for automatic monthly or quarterly contributions. Sustaining Members make up the crucial foundation we rely on to help us realize our vision of clean waters, restored habitat and a river for all to enjoy.

It's easy to become a Sustaining Member! [When you make your donation online](#), select the option "I'd like to become a Sustaining Member by making this donation a recurring gift."

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