

Subject: Mississippi Messages — January 2022
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**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



Meet our new conservation director and data manager

We're thrilled to announce two great hires. FMR ecologist [Alex Roth](#) will now lead our Land Conservation program. And [Gabe Holmes](#) will bring his expertise in systems and communications to our Data Manager position.



Looking ahead: Should we remove dams on the Mississippi River in the Twin Cities?

That question is a major focus for FMR in 2022, and will be for the next few years as the process unfolds. We lay out the details and issues at stake, plus share how you can get involved in this momentous possibility.

[Read our explainer on potential dam removal >>](#)



FMR is growing!

We're kicking off the new year with some exciting news: FMR is growing! Join our team as we expand our capacity to partner with communities, promote clean-water crops, advocate for the river and more.

[Check out all four position descriptions >>](#)



Legislative preview

Minnesota's legislative session kicks off at the end of this month! Here are our top goals this year:

- [Support clean-water crops, invest in Forever Green](#)
- [Grow the industry for clean-water crops and CLC](#)
- [Replace lead service lines for safe drinking water](#)
- [Invest in water infrastructure: #FixThePipesMN](#)
- [Make the clean fuel standard clean](#)

[Read about the upcoming session and sign up as a River Guardian >>](#)



Where we work: Nicollet Island

The industrial uses that once dominated the northern half of Nicollet Island have given way to a mix of homes, trails and a beloved park where we're restoring pockets of prairie and a forest of maples and climate-adapted tree species — vital habitat for the downtown Minneapolis river corridor.

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



Thank you, fall interns!

Our fall interns installed a new pollinator garden with J.J. Hill Montessori school, created a strategic conservation map and database to aid our land protection efforts, and explored more efficient methods for analyzing, comparing and tracking our gifts and grants.

[Find out more about their valuable contributions >>](#)



Stencil storm drains with us this year

If you think you'll be interested in our [storm drain stenciling outings for groups](#) or [DIY storm drain stenciling kits](#) this spring and summer, let us know! We'll be in touch when the snow melts and program reservations open up again.

[Sign up to be notified here >>](#)

Mississippi River News

'Efforts to reintroduce bison to Dakota County park advancing this winter'

Could Minnesota have a self-sustaining bison herd again? Our Dakota County partners are contributing to the possibility by preparing a fenced-in area of prairie at Spring Lake Park Reserve for 15 of its own bison to roam. The bison won't move in until the fall, but when they do, their grazing habits and even hooves will encourage plant growth and diversity, restoring relationships that existed for centuries prior to European colonization.

[Read more from MPR News >>](#)

'Work could begin soon to bring St. Paul's Phalen Creek back to the surface'

Lower Phalen Creek Project is leading the charge to daylight Phalen Creek, essentially unchanneling sections from pipes, allowing parts of the creek to once again meander above-ground on the way to the Mississippi River from Lake Phalen on the east side of St. Paul. The creek was originally sunk underground in the 1920s to make way for development. But creeks provide stormwater management, habitat, cultural and community connection and more — and this one will again.

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

'The Promise of Perennials'

We've got a listening recommendation for you, in case you missed it: an entire podcast devoted to Kernza and perennial grain. The team at Field Work — a program exploring the ins and outs of all things agricultural — brought in FMR's friends Luke Peterson (an organic farmer in western MN) and Tessa Peters (of The Land Institute) to talk about what it's like to grow, market, and eat and drink this earth-friendly grain.

[Listen and read more at FMR >>](#)

Our comments on Minnesota's 2022 Impaired Waters List

We gave feedback on the proposed updates to Minnesota's Impaired Waters List for 2022, along with our partners. We focused on three key pollutants: "forever chemicals," nitrate contamination, and sulfate in wild rice waters. Notably, many wild rice waters in Minnesota have damaging amounts of sulfate, but not all of them made it on the state's list.

[Read more from FMR >>](#)

Conservation Corner



Fall intern helps map out FMR conservation strategy

FMR has permanently protected 45 sites in the greater metro area since 1993. Our fall 2021 Land Conservation intern, Nick Jacobson, created a tool to help us answer the question of where to focus next. Which lands can we most effectively protect, restore and enhance along the Mississippi River for its wildlife and human communities?

[Find out more about Nick's analysis >>](#)

Upcoming Events



Saving St. Anthony Falls

Thursday, January 20, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

A Zoom presentation by FMR board member, historian, and retired Superintendent of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area Dr. John O. Anfinson, hosted by the Linden Hills History Study Group

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 monitoring the wall's condition?

[Find out more at the event! Register here >>](#)

To weigh in on this and other river issues, [sign up as an FMR River Guardian >>](#)

Supporting FMR



Thank you for your support!

Thank you for your support in 2021

As we reflect on our successes in 2021 and look ahead to 2022, we're thankful for all the donors, volunteers and members who help us enhance the Mississippi and its watershed. Because of you, we're moving toward clean waters, restored habitat and a river for all to enjoy.

Still need to make your annual gift? Help us do this important work by renewing your membership or making a donation today.

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