



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 and continues to be stewarded by Dakota and Ojibwe people.

FMR Updates



FMR turns 30! A birthday note from our director

July marks our 30th anniversary of protecting, restoring and enhancing the Mississippi River together. Executive Director Whitney Clark reflects on our beginnings and all we've accomplished since.

[Here's what we're celebrating.](#)



Army Corps study on the future of two metro locks and dams enters new phase

What will the Corps focus on in the yearslong study about the future of two metro locks and dams? The release of the Corps scoping documents gives us a picture of what questions they'll investigate — and what could go unanswered.

[Our take on the scope of the study.](#)



FMR welcomes two new board members

We're excited to introduce Dr. Adriana Alejandro Osorio and Dr. Lynn Broaddus, the newest additions to our board of directors.

[Get to know Adriana and Lynn.](#)



Former cropland now a home for endangered Henslow's sparrows

Summer bird surveys are turning up encouraging signs for our restoration work. Our Land Conservation staff recently observed six Henslow's sparrows at [William H. Houlton Conservation Area](#) — 170 acres of former cropland that we've transformed into native prairie and savanna. The Henslow's sparrow is small and secretive, and classified as endangered in Minnesota.

[Learn more about this special sparrow — and other metro wildlife.](#)



New food and drink products made with clean-water crops

We've updated our list of food and drink products that use clean-water crops — and are available to buy! Recent additions include a honeyed Kernza muffin mix from a Minnesota small business, Sturdiwheat; a flapjack and waffle mix now available nationally from Kodiak Cakes; and a new Kernza beer from St. Paul's Bang Bang Brewing, done in collaboration with Patagonia Provisions.

[Find your next treat \(and help the Mississippi River\).](#)



5 ways you can care for the river while enjoying it

Time on or near the water rejuvenates so many of us, inspiring us to continue the work of protection and restoration. You can protect water and wildlife while you're out in the many beautiful places here in the metro.

[What to keep in mind as you enjoy and explore.](#)



Is the Mississippi River safe to swim in?

This is a question we often get during warm summer stretches when the idea of a quick dip in the river's cool waters seems irresistible. You probably won't be surprised to learn the answer isn't totally straightforward.

[What you should know about swimming in the metro Mississippi.](#)

Mississippi River News

'Carp-ocalypse now'

This session, Minnesota lawmakers allocated only about a tenth of the funds it would take to construct a bio-acoustic fish fence at Lock and Dam 5 upriver of Winona. U of M researcher Dr. Sorenson thinks a deterrent barrier is the last, best defense we have to stop invasive carp from establishing breeding populations — and the ensuing ecological damage — in Minnesota's beloved waterways, including the metro Mississippi, the St. Croix River and the Minnesota River. But the DNR wants to continue netting fish and researching options, instead of taking decisive action. [FMR's position](#) aligns with Dr. Sorenson's warning: We can invest now or we will pay more later.

[Read more from Minnesota Reformer.](#)

'Kernza: The wonder grain still building a grassroots following'

A field of Kernza looks a lot like a bluestem prairie — the tall grasses aboveground match the deep roots below. But this powerful perennial wheatgrass can also provide grain for bread, baked goods, beer, whiskey and more. The Star Tribune reports on Kernza-Con — a recent conference FMR was a part of — at which early-adopter Kernza farmers, researchers and buyers like local Tattersall Distilling gathered to advance this clean-water crop and discuss the challenges we face now: scaling up production and strengthening supply chains. (Recent good news on this front: [St. Paul's Bang Brewing is partnering with Patagonia Provisions to brew Kernza beer.](#))

'On Minneapolis riverfront, "orphan hazard" threatens St. Anthony Falls'

In the most thorough article we've seen yet about the cutoff wall that holds up St. Anthony Falls, MinnPost describes the collapse of the falls that spurred the wall's creation in 1876 — and its worryingly unexamined life since. FMR board member John Anfinson and Land Use and Planning Program Director Colleen O'Connor Toberman explain how we advocated at the Capitol this session for an "MRI of the wall and the geology around it." With \$1 million now allocated from the Legislature, the U of M will be able to examine the wall and create a risk assessment study finalized in the next two years.

[Read more from MinnPost.](#)

'As Mississippi Riverfront development booms, wetlands become crucial to stave off flooding'

A story on Marketplace, NPR's economy and business show, touts the international draw of the Mississippi River and the value of wetlands to make the river more inviting for recreation and smart development. Once thought by developers to be unprofitable, wetlands can buffer the effects of the mighty river's floods. As climate change increases dramatic rainfalls and flooding events, wetlands can help hold excess water, making river communities and developments more resilient. The story focuses on wetland restoration projects near St. Louis, but FMR is doing some of that work here too, like our restoration at [William H. Houlton Conservation Area](#)

[Read more from Star Tribune.](#)

and our new project to [create wetland habitat islands](#) along the Vermillion River.

[Listen at Marketplace.](#)

Upcoming events



Volunteer with us

Join us to lop sumac at [Grey Cloud Dunes SNA on Tuesday, August 15](#). Come to make a difference, stay for the prairie plants in bloom and the spectacular river views.

[See our full events calendar.](#)

Conservation Corner



Where we work: Hastings Sand Coulee SNA

The Hastings Sand Coulee Scientific and Natural Area harbors the largest native prairie remnant in Dakota County — about 100 acres — along with an outstanding diversity of plants and animals, including nine rare species of which four are state-endangered.

[Learn more about this special place and plan your visit.](#)

Supporting FMR



Become a sponsor of our annual fall gala

Join us as an individual or corporate sponsor at our annual fall gala! With your support, we can raise funds to help positively impact the health of the Mississippi River and its watershed. Our sponsorship levels offer exciting benefits and recognition opportunities to show that you value the river and its watershed. To be included on our print invitation, become a sponsor by July 30.

[Learn more about the gala and sponsorship levels here.](#)

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