

Subject: Mississippi Messages — October 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.](#) 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



FMR's fifth water quality mural celebrates community connections to water

Visit Swede Hollow Park in St. Paul to see our latest storm drain mural. Designed by Thomasina Topbear, this mural celebrates connections to the river and water as the lifeblood of our communities.

[Read our interview with the lead artist and see photos >>](#)



New video showcases why habitat corridors are critical

Our latest video gives a bird's eye view of the Vermillion River corridor as it flows into the Mississippi River in Hastings. FMR restores six sites along this stretch in order to connect habitat and protect water quality.

[Watch the video to learn more >>](#)



State announces new pilot program to include climate change in environmental review

In September, thanks in part to FMR River Guardians, the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board approved a pilot project that will — for the first time — assess the climate impacts of some of Minnesota’s largest projects.

[Here’s what this long-overdue decision means for Minnesota’s efforts to address climate impacts on our environment, including the Mississippi River >>](#)



Endangered species found at Maplewood sites under development consideration

When we learned that Ramsey County was considering developing open space that we believe provides essential habitat, FMR requested a natural resources inventory.

[The final report confirms: Endangered and rare birds depend on this grassland for their survival >>](#)



Thank you sponsors, storytellers and donors!

Thank you to the 478 river supporters who joined our livestream for An Evening Celebrating the Mississippi River: Our Healing River on September 30. Together we raised more than \$160,000 to continue restoring the river and healing connections between communities, land and waters.

[Watch and listen to all the stories again >>](#)



From Ramsey to Ravenna, updated riverfront protections come to life

Until recently, the Twin Cities riverfront lacked consistent development standards and environmental protections. After many years of work, FMR is now supporting 25 cities and townships as they finish the final step in a long journey for better riverfront management.

[St. Paul, Hastings and other cities are up next >>](#)



FMR is hiring for two positions

We're looking for a new Conservation Director and Data Manager. Both are full-time positions with benefits. Spread the word or apply by October 22 and November 17, respectively.

[Learn more and apply >>](#)

Mississippi River News

'A recipe for fighting climate change and feeding the world'

A day's drive south, down in Salina, Kansas, are the fields, labs, and greenhouses of The Land Institute, one of the most important institutions leading the movement for perennial farming and the original developer of Kernza grain. The Land Institute and the University of Minnesota's Forever Green Initiative are working hand in hand to perfect this revolutionary new crop, which (as FMR Water Blog readers know) is a centerpiece of FMR's larger push for "continuous living cover" agriculture. In this inspiring article from the Washington Post, reporter Emily Kaplan talks to scientists and farmers to learn about their vision for a better planet.

[Read more from the Washington Post >>](#)

'KARE in the Air: Mississippi River meets the St. Croix'

KARE 11's drone series recently focused on the confluence of the Mississippi and St. Croix rivers in Hastings, giving a rare aerial view of the two rivers coming together. Why the difference in color? By this point, the Mississippi has taken in the impaired Minnesota River, which is polluted with sediments due to runoff from agricultural fields and erosive soils. In contrast, upriver of the confluence, the St. Croix is flanked on both sides by land protected for 252 miles by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. (If you like this aerial series, you can also check out their [drone footage of the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam.](#))

[Watch drone footage of the Hastings confluence at KARE 11 >>](#)

'More damage uncovered from Line 3 construction'

Enbridge has reportedly completed Line 3, the tar sands oil pipeline that cuts through northern Minnesota and crosses the Mississippi River twice. Though construction is finished, we're not done hearing about the permit violations and damage from the process. In January, Enbridge ruptured an aquifer, but the public didn't find out until September.

'Looking at the environmental impact as bag fees return in Minneapolis'

After pausing for the pandemic, Minneapolis will once again charge 5 cents for carryout bags. Our water program director Trevor Russell gave KSTP a tour of plastics found on the Mississippi River to explain the benefits of the ordinance. "About 75% of the trash that we find in and along the Mississippi River is plastic," Trevor explained. "And of the types of

Uncontrolled flow from that puncture continues today. The Minnesota Environmental Partnership, of which FMR is a part, put together fact sheets on Enbridge's 28 drilling mud spills reported so far, the aquifer breach, and more.

[Read more from MEP](#) and take action with [Honor the Earth >>](#)

plastic, we found plastic bags were the fifth most common type of trash in the water." That data is thanks to FMR members and others who tracked plastic through the Plastic Pollution Initiative last spring. Thank you!

[Watch the clip from KSTP >>](#)

Guest blog posts from ESI fellows



Our summer Environmental Stewardship Institute (ESI) fosters a diverse next generation of environmental leaders. Over the next few months, we'll feature some of our 2021 fellows' guest blog posts about their final projects.

Cho Wah (left) created an art piece and presented on the human rights issues and biological and cultural diversity at risk due to the [proposed hydropower Hatgyi Dam](#) on the Salween River in Southeast Asia.

Holly (right) researched the reasons for [biodiversity loss in the Twin Cities](#) and gave solutions for city planners and individuals with environmental justice in mind. She offered Bridal Veil Open Space in Minneapolis as an example of restored biodiversity in an urban area.

Conservation Corner



Where we work: Pine Bend Bluffs Natural Area

Critical for wildlife, this 1,300-acre corridor of protected lands along the dramatic western bluffs of the Mississippi River south of the metro includes Pine Bend Bluffs SNA — our first major conservation project in the 1990s — an award-winning restoration, and one of our favorite places to bird and see the sweep of the river south of the cities.

[Explore Pine Bend Bluffs this fall >>](#)

Supporting FMR



News about the Minnesota Environmental Fund

As a longtime member of the Minnesota Environmental Fund, we're sad to share their plans to close in early 2022, and we're grateful for the many years of support they have provided FMR.

If you donated to FMR through the Minnesota Environmental Fund in your workplace giving, consider making your workplace gift directly to FMR or [becoming a member](#) when the fund sunsets.

[Read the full announcement >>](#)

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