



MISSISSIPPI MESSAGES

[Our work takes place on Dakota homelands.](#) 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



Happy retirement to Senior Ecologist Karen Schik!

After 23 years of service, Karen Schik is retiring. Her hard work helped protect and restore thousands of acres of important river habitat while strengthening community connections. Thank you, Karen!

[Read more about Karen's legacy.](#)



Is Minnesota doing enough to protect our drinking water?

A recent headline in the Star Tribune said it all: "Little action so far on plan to enlist farmers to clean up polluted groundwater in Minnesota." How did we get here? And what do we do about it?

[How the state can move forward on the Groundwater Protection Rule.](#)



Final projects from our 2023 ESI summer intensive fellows

Our summer youth fellows created capstone projects they were passionate about, ranging from a river cleanup volunteer event to a zine about sustainable agriculture.

[Check out their research, interviews, poems and more.](#)



Reflections on the recent youth & climate change ruling

A landmark decision for the first constitutional climate trial in the U.S. is about more than climate change. It's about considering the full impact of our actions today, and the power youth have to fight climate change in the courts — and win.

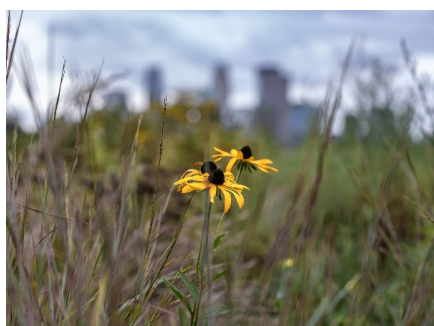
[Our thoughts on this significant decision and its connections to Minnesota.](#)



Rave reviews for Minnesota-made Kernza snacks

"Delicious." "Nutty." "Hearty." This is how consumers have described some of the Kernza products made here in Minnesota and available to buy right now. And as this perennial grain establishes its roots in the market, we all have a role to play in helping it find a place on people's shopping lists.

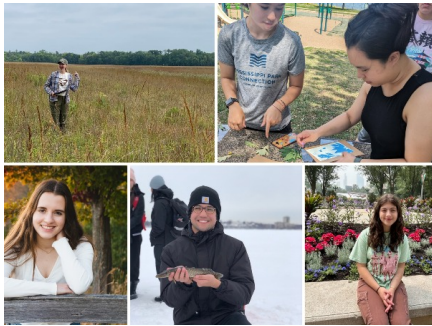
[Learn how you can help make this change happen.](#)



5 ways you can protect habitat and wildlife

Celebrate our 30th anniversary year with us by helping the Mississippi River! Our river corridor's prairies, wetlands and woodlands are home to thousands of wildlife species and you can be a part of protecting their home.

[Here are five ways you can nurture their habitat.](#)



Thank you, summer interns

Our summer interns supported FMR's conservation and education work, from youth program facilitation to bird, plant and monarch surveys.

[Read their reflections and highlights.](#)

Mississippi River News

'Minneapolis cannot proceed with 2040 Plan, court rules'

A Hennepin County judge recently ruled that the city of Minneapolis must stop implementing the residential development portions of its 2040 Plan within the next 60 days. The city has stated it is finally undertaking an environmental assessment of its 2040 Plan to demonstrate that it is indeed good for the environment. This assessment could provide important scientific backing to the city's position and [we urge the city to submit it as quickly as possible](#). Lawsuit plaintiffs have stated their ultimate goal was just to encourage this environmental assessment, not to stop development. We hope the plaintiffs will consider ending their suit once the city reaches this milestone.

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

'Big Farms and Flawless Fries Are Gulping Water in the Land of 10,000 Lakes'

Potato farming during drought in northern Minnesota drained drinking water wells in 2021. How could that happen in a state known for its water abundance? The Pineland Sands region near the headwaters of the Mississippi River has sandy soils that are great for spuds but a poor choice for potato farming. Its aquifer is stressed from overuse. We've written about [potato farming and the problematic lack of environmental review for groundwater permits there before](#). Stories like this New York Times piece and [the MPR News piece that followed](#) underscore our need to support [clean-water crops](#) that are profitable, and help keep our river and drinking waters abundant and healthy.

[Read more from The New York Times.](#)

'St. Paul, Ramsey County stalled over riverfront zoning due to RiversEdge'

We've been eagerly awaiting St. Paul's new riverfront development ordinance, which will include bird-safe building requirements and protections for special scenic areas. (We wrote about [St. Paul's proposed ordinance last January](#).) But the ordinance is many years behind schedule, due in part to the planned RiversEdge project in downtown. FMR's Colleen O'Connor Toberman spoke to the Pioneer Press about why we're concerned and why we hope this stalled process will resume soon.

[Read more from Pioneer Press.](#)

Drought foregrounds why we need to avoid river diversion

MPR recently covered a decision by mayors from 10 Mississippi River states to [support a "Mississippi River Compact."](#) Modeled after the highly successful Great Lakes Compact, it would create a structure to jointly manage water resources in the river. The idea for the compact comes in response to river diversion proposals that aim to pipe Mississippi River water to the desert Southwest. As FMR's Trevor Russell noted in the story, a river diversion project is [impractical and unfeasible](#). Meanwhile, the Star Tribune noted rising concerns about falling water levels in the Mississippi River — [disrupting shipping and navigation](#) as drought takes its toll.

Upcoming events



Volunteer with us

We've got a few more volunteer events before the snow flies! We're especially looking for volunteers to sign up for our [Pine Bend Bluffs brush haul + lunch on Sat, Oct. 28](#).

[Check out our full events calendar.](#)

Conservation Corner



How a little leaf beetle keeps Canada goldenrod in check

Sometimes too much of a good thing can be ... too much. That's the case when Canada goldenrod spreads rapidly in our prairie restorations. But over time we've noticed something small making a big impact on plant diversity.

[Read more about how nature sometimes restores balance itself.](#)

Supporting FMR



Get ready for our auction

Our popular river-themed auction is back! You can bid on exciting experiences and one-of-a-kind items — from a one-week stay in picturesque Vail to a tranquil retreat in coastal Virginia to unique local products and outings. The auction opens Sept. 25, but you can preview items now. More items will be listed in the next week.

[Preview the first few items now.](#)

P.S. There's still time to [purchase tickets](#) for our fall gala. The deadline to register is today, Sept. 19.

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