

**Director, America's Watershed Initiative
POSITION PROFILE**



Organizational Overview:

This is a pivotal time in the development of [America's Watershed Initiative](#) (AWI), a collaboration that began in 2009 and since then has engaged hundreds of business, government, academic, and civic organizations in an equitable manner to address the shared challenges of managing the Mississippi River and the more than 250 rivers that flow into it. Through [regular convenings or summits](#) and the development of the [Mississippi River Basin Report Card](#), AWI has worked to build and implement a shared vision for the vast and complex Mississippi River watershed system based on achieving mutually beneficial outcomes in contrast to single purpose advocacy.

The [AWI Board of Directors](#) is **seeking a strong leader** to help us design and implement our strategy, secure needed financial and human resources, and lead the organization into its second decade. This person will provide leadership, working closely with the Board, in the four strategic focus areas below.

1. **Convene and engage key stakeholders** as an “honest broker” to develop collaborative and equitable approaches to key dilemmas that require a basin-wide, multi-sector perspective to resolve, and which can revitalize the economy and ecology of the Mississippi River watershed for national and global impact.
2. **Publish reports that inform policy choices** to enable a more collaborative, equitable and integrated systems approach to managing the Mississippi River watershed. Publish a basin-level report card every five years to provide transparency on progress across sectors and geographies.
3. **Support a united voice** – basin-level and cross-sector – that calls attention to ways to improve economic and ecological vitality that depends upon the Mississippi River watershed – and the need to act together with equity and urgency. Recognize and support local leaders piloting watershed solutions that #RaiseTheGrade (#RTG).
4. **Recruit, organize and build an organization** that increases capability for collaboration, and improves availability of data and information, to better manage an increasingly complex system for multiple equitable benefits based on goals established with input and participation of diverse, cross-sector stakeholders.

While these areas all require thoughtful, enthusiastic leadership, the AWI Search Committee is open to a variety of approaches – from contractual to full-time employee – and is encouraging creative applications.

Our Mission:

Unite people, land and water across America's watershed.

Our Vision:

Our heartland rivers make up America's watershed – a vital river system that provides drinking water, recreation, habitat, and serves as an economic engine for America.

- America's watershed provides clean drinking water for millions of people and water for farms and ranches that produce \$54 billion of food and goods each year.
- The navigation network in our heartland rivers safely, reliably and efficiently moves hundreds of millions of tons of goods, generating billions in economic value, in an environmentally friendly manner.
- Rivers and wetlands provide wildlife habitat, recreation, drinking water filtration, and flood control & risk reduction for thousands of cities, towns and communities.
- Modern infrastructure resulting in flood protection and a reliable navigation system with a healthy ecosystem works together to provide food, water and energy security.

Hundreds of businesses, government agencies and scientific organizations graded the state of America's watershed a D+ overall using best available data. They also identified opportunities for improvement.

- Pollution from urban and rural sources threatens clean drinking water for millions of Americans.
- Aging levees, locks and dams in need of re-investment weaken America's ability to transport and export food and goods, and reduce flood protection for communities.
- Rising global food and energy demands, and extreme weather events are impacting public safety, water quantity and quality, and wildlife.

We must work together to scale up solutions for improving water quality and quantity, safety, and the health of America's watershed so we don't fall behind in this century.

- We call for \$2 billion a year in new public and private investment to ensure that America's watershed continues to drive our national economy, and protect the livelihoods of future generations.
- We cannot keep doing what we are doing; with greater collaboration and improved information we can better manage an increasingly complex system for multiple benefits. We support integrated and adaptive watershed scale decisions made in a transparent forum based on goals established with input and participation of cross sector partners and stakeholders using comprehensive water use and ecosystem health data.
- We recognize and support local leaders implementing watershed solutions and invite their continuing participation as partners. The longer we wait to invest in raising the grade, the more it will cost our people, the nation, and our children's future.

Our Team:

AWI's growing Board and volunteer organization builds on momentum from our summits and AWI Report Card, and creates shared commitment toward a collaborative, integrated systems approach that will #RaiseTheGrade (#RTG) for America's Watershed: 1) engaging stakeholders in assessing tradeoffs, resolving dilemmas and discovering shared solutions; and 2) providing accurate and transparent reporting on basin-level status and trends.

Our Approach:

As a diverse and inclusive organization, AWI engages business, government, academic and civic organizations, and provides trusted and transparent reporting on status and trends, to advance a more collaborative, integrated systems approach to equitably managing the 31-State Mississippi River watershed. AWI embraces and builds upon strong leadership present in many tributary watersheds, and seeks to link and augment these efforts, thus creating a broader partnership that can serve as a unified voice for the whole system and support the effective resolution of issues that span multiple regions—issues such as energy, transportation, water quality and floodplain management. AWI is committed to the idea that only through working together—coordinated, focused and for the long term—will we make meaningful progress to raise the grade for America's watershed, for our future, and for our children's future. Ultimately, the multiple demands placed on the vast and complex Mississippi watershed system can only be met over the long term by integrating issues, partners and ideas at the full watershed scale.

Job Overview: Director, America's Watershed Initiative

Position activity will include the following essential functions:

- Facilitate and support the AWI Board of Directors, and provide key leadership role in AWI's strategic focus areas, including a) convening stakeholders as an "honest broker" to develop shared solutions; b) publishing reports that inform policy choices; c) supporting a unified voice; and d) building an influential and enduring organization.
- Provide focus and leadership in fundraising, working with the Board to secure sufficient funds to grow the organization and increase its impact.
- Represent the Board of Directors and serve as a spokesperson for AWI in numerous public events and conferences. Act as surrogate or coordinate Director's participation to appropriate venues to improve the visibility of AWI and lead to increased basin participation.
- Use standard not-for-profit mechanisms for organization, end-of-year reporting and assurance of compliance with auditor of finances and proceedings of meetings.

Ideal Candidate Search Image:

Above all, AWI is seeking a strong leader, capable of engaging and inspiring diverse stakeholders and building strategic and durable partnerships. This leader will surely have a deep and abiding love of the Mississippi River watershed, and appreciate the myriad ways our local communities, our nation and our world depend on this system, all of which manifests itself as a passion for a collaborative and integrated approach to its management. S/he will also surely possess a deep curiosity and respect for people, which fuels a desire to learn from others with varied perspectives and experiences. Through combining these passions, this person can play a powerful role in addressing the complex challenges that confront our vision for a healthy and thriving Mississippi River watershed. Below are some of the specific experiences and skills that would further enable this candidate.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- BA/BS degree and five years' experience in not for profit management and/or leadership of transformational initiatives, or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Experience and success in organizational development, with experience raising funds regionally and/or nationally for the Mississippi River watershed preferred.
- Experience directing a major program of strategic importance, including leadership and management of multi-disciplinary teams.
- Experience managing complex or multiple projects, including managing finances and coordinating and facilitating the work of other professionals and partners.
- Experience and success in influencing, developing and implementing policy and plans.
- Experience in partnership development (NGO, community, government, etc.) and working with high-level government and industry contacts, with specific emphasis on the Mississippi River watershed preferred.

PREFERRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- Knowledge of current trends and practices in Integrated River Basin Management and the Mississippi River watershed, and of politics and society with respect to watershed level affairs.
- Development of practical applications of scientific concepts and technical innovations for broad sector engagement purposes, including methods and standards for report card level metrics and information systems.
- Experience conceiving and implementing strategic initiatives, leading and motivating team members via shared goals, often working remotely, and managing projects with deadlines.
- Successful experience in partnership development (partners, community, government, etc.), including extensive networking with high-level government, industry and other contacts; political savvy.
- Proven interpersonal, communication and negotiation skills. Effective communication via clearly written, spoken and other means.

COMPLEXITY/PROBLEM SOLVING:

- Negotiates complex agreements, sometimes in political environments.
- Anticipates, diagnoses and resolves complex problems and identifies creative solutions. Resolves complex issues involving multiple program areas independently.
- Interprets guidelines, evaluates information and modifies processes to adapt to changing circumstances. Manages and prioritizes tasks from multiple sources.
- Designs, implements, and directs complex and diverse projects, encompassing multiple programs and coordinating the work of other professionals, inside and outside the organization. Incorporates cross-disciplinary knowledge to support program objectives.

DISCRETION/LATITUDE/DECISION-MAKING:

- Ensures program accountability and legal compliance.
- Assesses decisions' potential impact on colleagues' or partners' work, public image, scientific credibility and financial and legal standings, in consultation with the board.

- Makes decisions based on incomplete or ambiguous information and accepts associated risks.
- Makes independent strategic decisions based on analysis, experience and judgment, and appropriate board input and approvals.
- Understands that decisions may affect organization's public image.
- Accepts that decisions may have significant financial and/or legal impact on the organization, and coordinates with board appropriately.

RESPONSIBILITY/OVERSIGHT – FINANCIAL AND SUPERVISORY:

- Leads fundraising to support the organization. Engages individuals, corporations and foundations to secure resources. Writes Requests for Proposal (RFPs) for grant/contract funding for program.
- Establishes and maintains optimal performance standards within budget.
- Supervises work inside and outside organization. Demonstrates ability to gain cooperation from outside parties to accomplish program goals.
- Develops long-term strategies and achieves and communicates strategic project goals and objectives. Uses common software applications (e.g.; Word, Excel, Web browsers).

COMMUNICATIONS/INTERPERSONAL CONTACTS:

- Builds cooperative relationships and collaborates with diverse groups, including landowners, cross- sector partners, government officials, donors, Board members and the general public, to recruit support for AWI and publicize efforts.
- Commands attention, changes tactics midstream as necessary, and manages group processes during presentations or discussions.
- May speak with and in front of varied audiences on scientific topics and AWI's mission; interacts and provides input/guidance to senior managers.
- Ability to establish excellent working relationships with outside partners, state/local/federal agencies, land managers, private landowners and the academic community. Leverages constructive and effective relationships inside and outside AWI, it's Directors and partners.

WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL EFFORT:

The Director may work in variable weather conditions, at remote locations, on difficult and hazardous terrain, and under physically demanding circumstances. These conditions may:

- require occasional physical exertion and/or muscular strain;
- present occasional possibility of injury; and
- require periods in isolated settings.

This position may also:

- require frequent travel domestically; and
- require evening and weekend hours.

HOW TO APPLY

Send cover letter & resume to **Margie Daniels** at **mdaniels@umrba.org**. All resumes and **required** cover letters must be submitted by Mar. 1, 2019.

CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS OR REFERRALS

Margie Daniels

Upper Mississippi River Basin Association, Administrative Assistant

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