



**AMERICA'S
WATERSHED
INITIATIVE**

**PARTICIPATE
COLLABORATE
INNOVATE**

America's
WATERSHED Initiative >>



*“YOUR MOUNTAINS
& RIVERS KNOW
THE SECRET. PAY
NO ATTENTION TO
BOUNDARIES.”*

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FUTURE PARTNERS, PLEASE JOIN US

Uniting people, land and water across 31 states.

The waters of the Mississippi River Watershed come from thirty-one states and two provinces in Canada. ***These waters power our country!***

This fourth largest watershed on Earth, the Mississippi River Watershed provides drinking water for millions of people, water for agriculture and industry, and the world's largest inland navigation system. The watershed is a recreational and environmental treasure.

We call it “***America's Watershed***” and it is facing growing challenges and threats.

The demands on water, land resources and the natural and built infrastructure continue to grow.

We believe that collaboration and partnership can effectively meet these challenges and help to ensure the Mississippi River Watershed continues to meet our nation's shared needs.

In the 21st century, clean, abundant, and accessible water will determine the health of the nation, and its communities, economies, and natural systems.

SUPPORT AMERICA'S WATERSHED INITIATIVE TODAY!

We need your time, talent and treasure to help us lead this effort.

- Your voice can help as we meet with key decision makers in Washington DC and in the watershed states.
- Your participation in key meetings with national and regional media, businesses and associations will support decisions to strengthening the watershed and drive future investments.
- Your ideas will help us shape a stronger vision for the future of America's Watershed.
- Your funding support will power the engine that makes this partnership possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

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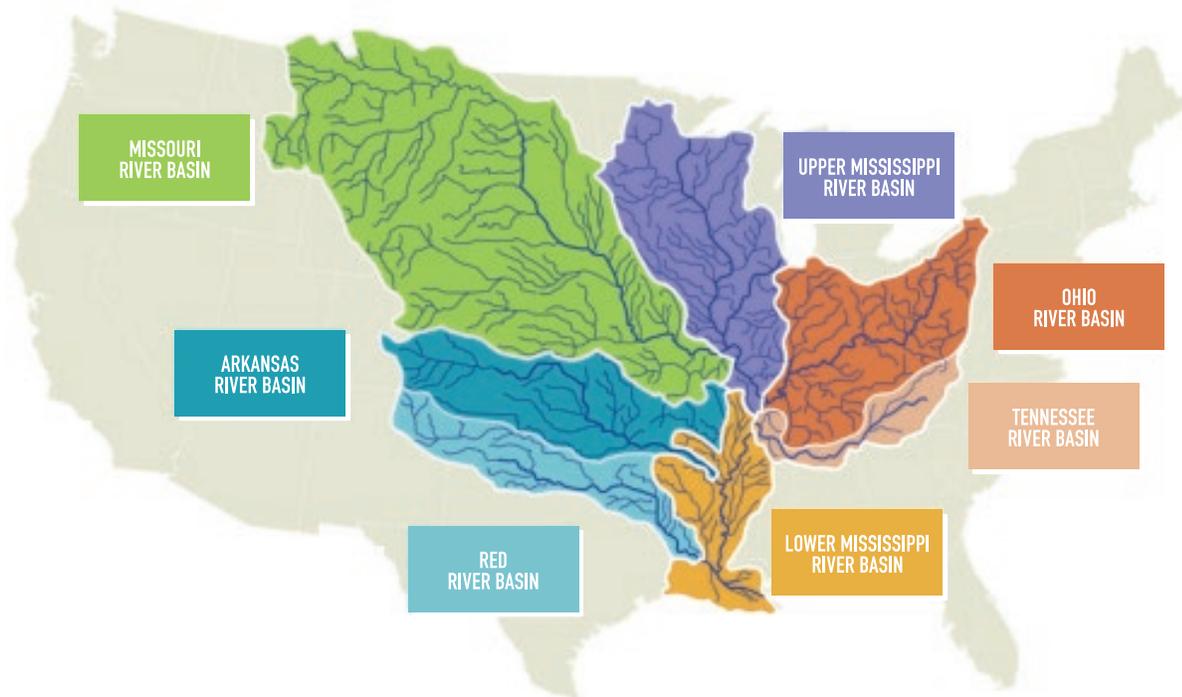
ST. LOUIS, MO
MICHAEL REUTER



THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATERSHED IS AMERICA'S WATERSHED

Stretching from the Rockies across the Minnesota north woods and to the Appalachians, the Mississippi River Watershed connects the headwaters to the iconic river valley, delta wetlands and eventually the Gulf of Mexico. Including parts of 31 states and 2 Canadian provinces, America's Watershed is the fourth largest in the world and benefits millions of people, thousands of communities, and supports our many economic activities while remaining an natural and recreational treasure of global importance.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASINS



- > ***Water flowing in this basin is used to produce more than half of America's goods and services***, including agricultural products worth more than \$50 billion annually, a \$660 million annual fishing industry in the Gulf of Mexico, and much of America's energy production, – nearly 25% of our nation's hydropower.
- > ***The transportation network is the largest inland navigation system in the world*** and moves millions of tons of goods safely, reliably and efficiently, generating billions in economic benefits throughout the watershed.
- > ***The system's rivers and wetlands provide unique wildlife, habitat and recreational opportunities including one of the world's largest bird migrations – connecting the Arctic to South America.***

Despite this, demands and conflicts are growing, our infrastructure is crumbling, and critical habitat is being lost.

CHALLENGES TO AMERICA'S WATERSHED DEMAND A NEW APPROACH

Challenges in the watershed are diverse, complex and growing.



A NEW VISION IS NEEDED

Currently, management in the watershed is divided among many agencies and governments – often without alignment or coordination. The Mississippi Watershed is called an “orphan” because no government agency, program or entity is responsible for its health and productivity. But to make meaningful improvements, we must build a diverse and robust collaboration of different sectors, public and private, looking at the whole system to shape a shared future vision and identify some common priorities.

AWI developed the 2015 Mississippi River Watershed Report card with the input of more than 400 organizations, businesses, agencies and academic institutions, gave the watershed a near-failing grade – a D+ – when it comes to its ability to sustain people and nature into the future. Other large-scale realities, including aging infrastructure and loss of habitat, pollution, expansive Gulf of Mexico hypoxic ‘dead zone,’ and an extremely high rate of coastal wetland loss, support this conclusion.

Meaningful improvements require a diverse collaboration of private and public stakeholders focused on the watershed as a system to craft a common vision and seek collective actions and solutions.

America's Watershed Initiative is the first time such a varied collection of stakeholders from throughout the watershed has come together to benefit the entire Mississippi River Watershed and ensure it will thrive and continue to provide a multitude of benefits for future generations.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATERSHED REPORT CARD

Bringing together leaders from all sectors and basins.

America's Watershed Initiative developed the Mississippi River Report Card to bring together leaders from all sectors and basins to assess the status and trends in the watershed – and from that assessment, help to build a shared vision for collaborative action to raise the grade in the watershed.

Over 2 years, AWI hosted summits, workshops, meetings and webinars to identify the key information needed to evaluate the Mississippi River watershed. Hundreds of

participating stakeholders helped us select indicators to measure, and provided direction on how to evaluate the six AWI watershed goals – transportation, flood control & risk reduction, clean water, ecosystems, recreation, and economic development. Data was collected for each of the five key basins in the watershed and then calculated for the entire watershed. A preliminary report card was circulated for feedback in 2014 and a final Mississippi River Watershed Report card was released in Fall 2015.

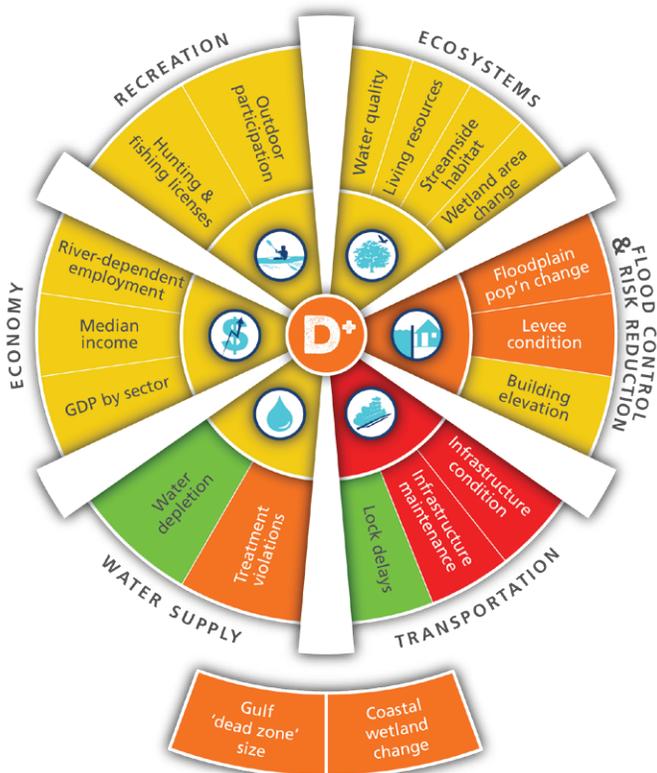
Widespread media coverage of the Report Card in national, regional and local media helped AWI and partners share information on the challenges and opportunities for collaborative action in the watershed. Working with basin and sector leaders, AWI is now using the report card to better identify areas for collaborations and shared priorities to improve the grades.

> *For more information about the AWI Report Card please go to:*

www.americaswatershed.org/reportcard

D+

2015
AMERICA'S
WATERSHED
INITIATIVE
REPORT
CARD



WATERSHED HEALTH INDICATORS

GRADES

- A VERY GOOD
- B GOOD
- C MODERATE
- D POOR
- F VERY POOR
- NO DATA

A BRIDGE FOR INNOVATION

OUR HISTORY

America's Watershed Initiative includes leaders from industry and commerce, local communities, state and federal government, academia, conservation and labor interests, and civil society.

At the 2010 America's Inner Coast Summit more than 100 leaders decided to convene a steering committee to unite diverse stakeholders and craft a shared vision to build local, regional, and national support for the Mississippi River Watershed. The steering committee is this diverse group.

Our supporters are motivated by a shared understanding that the health of our citizens and our economy is directly tied to management of the Mississippi River and its major tributaries — including the Ohio, Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, and Red Rivers.

COLLABORATIVE STRUCTURE

AWI is a collaborative of voluntary leaders from private and public sectors working together to improve the health and decision making in the watershed. For the last five years, AWI has been incubated within The Nature Conservancy, one of the founding members of AWI.

In 2018, the leaders of AWI are taking a big step forward and establishing an independent not-for-profit organization to continue the work. The new structure and commitments from the leaders will help AWI accelerate efforts to convene the watershed, update the Mississippi River Watershed Report Card and “raise the grade” for all sectors.

AND COLLABORATION

OUR UNIQUE ROLE

- > Focus on the entire Mississippi River Watershed, *connecting local leaders* and initiatives on national and global scale. We are the only group with a full watershed focus.
- > Support initiatives and organizations currently active within each sub-basin. We want to connect and *leverage basin projects*.
- > Emphasize *private sector leadership*, recruiting the full diversity of stakeholders dependent upon the watershed. We ARE the only collaboration stretching across the watershed and among the different users.

- > *Engage governments at all levels.* Decisions in the watershed will be made by many different groups – we need to engage governments at all levels.
- > Promote decisions benefiting multiple sectors and basins, encouraging a watershed-based approach to infrastructure for multiple benefits meeting economic and environmental goals.
- > *Drive progress by measuring key environmental and economic outcomes* and objectives. The AWI Report Card is the first set of shared measures for the watershed.

America's
WATERSHED Initiative >>

OUR GOALS

A collaborative approach is essential to solving water management challenges in the 21st century.



**MAINTAIN SUPPLY
OF ABUNDANT,
CLEAN WATER**



**PROVIDE RELIABLE
FLOOD CONTROL
AND RISK
REDUCTION**



**SUPPORT
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
AND SUSTAINABLE
ENERGY
PRODUCTION
FROM DIVERSE
SOURCES**



**PROVIDE
WORLD-CLASS
RECREATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES**



**SUPPORT AND
ENHANCE HEALTHY
AND PRODUCTIVE
ECOSYSTEMS**



**SERVE AS THE
NATION'S MOST
VALUABLE RIVER
TRANSPORTATION
CORRIDOR**

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We've accomplished a lot, but more needs to be done. Much more.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATERSHED REPORT CARD

AWI developed the Report Card with experts from more than 400 businesses, organizations, government agencies, and academic institutions. This tool evaluates transportation, clean water, ecosystems, recreation, flood control and risk reduction and economics and unites leaders from all sectors and basins to build a shared vision for collaborative action to meet challenges.

The Report Card identified shared measurements and we continue to collaborate with government agencies, water resource users and stakeholders to support interagency Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) at the watershed scale. www.americaswatershed.org/reportcard

CONVENING LEADERS

Hundreds of leaders have gathered at major AWI summits in 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2015, including stakeholders from all key sectors and all basins in the watershed. AWI is the only group uniting leaders from across the whole watershed and among the different sectors.

AWI brought together diverse stakeholders in Report Card workshops and meetings in Moline, IL, Cincinnati, OH, Memphis, TN, Nashville, TN, Tulsa, OK, Rapid City, SD, Baton Rouge, LA, Kansas City, MO, and Washington, DC.

UNIFIED VOICE

AWI is a strong voice for the Mississippi River Watershed that builds consensus and is charting an action path for a better future.

The Report Card was discussed in more than 3,000 media outlets including national coverage in the Wall Street Journal, NPR, Washington Post and hundreds of regional and local media.

AWI communicates the key messages with national and watershed leaders throughout the 31 watershed states. AWI has briefed the Mississippi River Congressional Caucus, White House Council on Environmental Quality, USDA Secretary's office, and dozens of organizations, trade and basin associations.



LEADERS GATHER FROM ALL KEY SECTORS AND ALL BASINS IN THE WATERSHED DURING AN AWI SUMMIT.

WITH YOUR HELP **WE CAN...**

In the next 4 years, America's Watershed Initiative will build on our accomplishments and focus on three main actions for the watershed:

RECOGNIZE INNOVATION AND BEST PRACTICES

We will recognize and promote innovation and best practices to meet watershed challenges. There are many good examples at local and basin scales that demonstrate collaborative actions benefiting multiple goals. In this effort, AWI will partner with these groups to generate support and publicity and to create a resource that highlights these best practices for policymakers and other local and national leaders.

RAISE THE GRADE — CREATING A NEW WATERSHED ECONOMY

We will identify and lead efforts to advance solutions to challenges identified in the 2015 Report Card. In this effort, AWI will bring leaders together and support actions in the watershed and nationally that support a

“New Watershed Economy.” AWI will work to lead and support the collective actions of the stakeholders working to “Raise the Grade” by supporting investments that meet multiple goals.

REPORT CARD 2020

We will strengthen the AWI Mississippi River Watershed Report Card and prepare to release a new version in 2020. In addition to updating data to measure progress across the basin, we will also work with stakeholders to better include energy and evaluate the other AWI watershed goals. The Report Card project will also work with stakeholders to highlight the investment gaps and discuss alternatives.



WHAT AMERICA'S WATERSHED INITIATIVE HAS ACCOMPLISHED WITH DONORS OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS...

DIRECT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR AWI ACTIVITIES HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM

- Caterpillar Foundation
- McKnight Foundation
- Ingram Barge Company
- The Nature Conservancy
- National Corn Growers Association
- Viking River Cruises
- St Louis District Carpenters' District Council
- Stantec
- Hanson Professional
- Marshall University
- Ohio River Basin Alliance
- Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
- Waterways Council, Inc.
- AEP River Operations
- AECOM
- Ecology & Environment
- Iowa Soybean Association
- Water Institute of the Gulf
- University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science

KEY ACTIVITIES

- Major Watershed Summits
- America's Inner Coast Summit, 2010 St Louis, MO
- Science Leader Workshop 2011, Kansas City, MO
- AGWI Summit 2012 St Louis, MO
- AWI Summit 2014, Louisville, KY
- AWI Watershed Caucus 2015, St Louis, MO

MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATERSHED REPORT CARD WORKSHOPS

- Moline, IL
- Cincinnati, OH
- Memphis, TN
- Nashville, TN
- Tulsa, OK
- Rapid City, SD
- Kansas City, MO
- Arlington, VA
- Baton Rouge, LA



PRODUCTS PRODUCED

- AWI Report Card 2015
- AWI Report Card Methods and Technical paper
- Preliminary Report Card 2014
- UMR Basin Report Card Newsletter 2014
- Ohio/TN Basin Report Card Newsletter 2014
- LMR Basin Report Card Newsletter 2014
- Arkansas/Red Basin Report Card Newsletter 2014
- MO River Basin Report Card Newsletter 2014
- Watershed Perspective Basin Report Card Newsletter 2014
- Americaswatershed.org Webpage
- AWI Watershed Video 2012
- AWI Report Card Video 2015

MAJOR AWI PRESENTATIONS

- Mississippi River Congressional Caucus
- White House Council on Environmental Quality
- White Office on Science and Technology
- USDA Secretary's office
- Mississippi River Commission
- Upper Mississippi River Basin Association
- Waterways Council Inc.
- National Waterways Conference
- The Nature Conservancy
- Mississippi River Valley Flood Control Association
- Governor's Conference on the Illinois River
- Upper Mississippi Conservation Commission
- USACE Environmental Advisory Board
- National Corn Growers Association
- Commodity Classic
- American Society of Civil Engineers – Iowa
- Willamette Valley Partnership

We invite you to join us and help the Mississippi River watershed — America's Watershed — continue to meet our needs for today AND FOR coming generations. We ask for your financial support and active participation in America's Watershed Initiative.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL NEED

\$300,000 CORE SUPPORT

Staffing, Meetings, Base Communications, Travel

\$50,000 OUTREACH & MARKETING

Communication Materials, Support

\$50,000 RECOGNIZING INNOVATION & BEST PRACTICES

\$50,000 RAISE THE GRADE

\$150,000 REPORT CARD 2020

Data Collection, Stakeholder Engagement, Data Analysis, Material Presentation

> For more information, go to www.americaswatershed.org



“Leaders in business, conservation, navigation, agriculture, basin associations and government all call for integrated management of our water resources to safeguard our collective future and to help us meet the challenges of a dynamic and fluctuating Mississippi River Watershed. Cooperative management and development of America’s Watershed will provide a secure future for our nation and the world.”

*> For more information, go to
www.americaswatershed.org/contact*



ACTION IS NEEDED

The challenges are real and growing. The need for collaboration and shared solutions is evident. How will we respond? Now it's our time to step forward to help shape the future of the Mississippi River Watershed and the future of our communities, our economy and our natural systems. When we bring our voices together, we can make meaningful progress and support America's Watershed Initiative.

Please join us.

