



Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

Strategic Plan Implementation: 2017 Priorities

The Upper Mississippi River Basin Association (UMRBA) 2013-2017 Strategic Plan articulates the states' joint priorities for UMRBA over a period of five years. In order to focus plan implementation in 2017, UMRBA's Board has identified key action items within each of the plan's seven focus areas as described below. In addition to specific work within the focus areas, the Board recognizes the importance of engaging with cross-cutting collaborative efforts and evaluating legislative, budget, and policy proposals that affect multiple issue areas.

Focus Area	Priority Actions for 2017 (and Focus Area Strategies Supported by the Actions)
Aquatic Nuisance Species	<p>Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS): Monitor and disseminate relevant information regarding advancements in the GLMRIS's Brandon Road feasibility report as well as related legislation, and communicate the states' shared perspectives when appropriate. <i>(Strategies 1 and 2)</i></p> <p>Legislation: Track and analyze relevant legislation and provide comment expressing states' shared perspectives. <i>(Strategy 1)</i></p> <p>Collaboration: Collaborate in regional efforts to address aquatic nuisance species (ANS) and provide a venue for information sharing on ANS prevention and control that compliments other regional forums. <i>(Strategies 2 and 3)</i></p>
Commercial Navigation	<p>Advocacy: Communicate the states' joint perspectives regarding navigation-related issues, including lock maintenance, rehabilitation, and modernization as well as channel maintenance and management. <i>(Strategies 1, 2, and 3)</i></p> <p>Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP): Continue to advocate for program funding and participate in the NESP <i>ad hoc</i> coalition, emphasizing the value of NESP's dual-purpose authority. <i>(Strategy 1)</i></p> <p>Watershed Study: Coordinate a regional effort to scope a watershed study that would result in long term strategies for improving channel maintenance and management. [Note: Integrated with the flood risk reduction strategies.] <i>(Strategies 1 and 2)</i></p> <p>Container-On-Barge: Engage shippers, inland ports and barge operators, and ocean carriers in an effort to create marketable solutions for moving containerized goods through Gulf of Mexico ports to and from the Mississippi River. <i>(Strategy 3)</i></p> <p>Navigation Work Group: Staff and support the UMRBA Navigation Work Group, providing a forum for dialogue, information exchange, and coordination on mutual priorities. <i>(Strategy 3)</i></p> <p>M-35 Implementation: Provide support services to the states in their efforts to develop the M-35 Marine Highway corridor. Continue to implement the priority actions of the M-35 Advisory Committee and communicate new information in a timely manner. <i>(Strategy 3)</i></p> <p>Legislation: Track and analyze legislation and provide comment expressing the states' shared perspectives. <i>(Strategies 1 and 2)</i></p>

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Ecosystem Restoration and Monitoring	<p>Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program (UMRR): Advocate for UMRR funding at the program’s full authorization level. Continue to advocate the states’ positions on UMRR policy and programmatic issues. <i>(Strategies 1 and 3)</i></p> <p>NESP: Continue to advocate for program funding and participate in the NESP <i>ad hoc</i> coalition, emphasizing the value of NESP’s dual-purpose authority. <i>(Strategy 1)</i></p> <p>Legislation: Track and analyze relevant legislation and provide comment expressing the states’ shared perspectives when appropriate. <i>(Strategy 2)</i></p> <p>Water Level Management: Foster discussions among key stakeholders regarding the ability to employ more routine, systemic, large-scale water level management. <i>(Strategies 2 and 4)</i></p> <p>Support Services: Provide support services to UMRR, per the terms of contract with USACE. This includes UMRR Coordinating Committee meetings and other special meetings as needed. <i>(Strategy 3)</i></p>
Flood Risk Management	<p>Watershed-Based Planning: Coordinate a regional effort to scope a watershed study that would result in long term strategies for improving flood risk management. [Note: Integrated with the commercial navigation strategies.] <i>(Strategies 1 and 2)</i></p> <p>Coordination and Information Sharing: Continue to facilitate conversations among state floodplain managers as needed. Participate on flood-related interagency groups when appropriate. <i>(Strategies 1, 2, and 3)</i></p>
Hydropower	<p>Ad Hoc Hydropower Group: Continue to staff and support the UMRBA <i>ad hoc</i> Hydropower Group as needed, providing a forum for sharing important updates and facilitating dialog among members. <i>(Strategy 1 and 2)</i></p> <p>Hydropower Project List: Maintain an inventory of existing and proposed UMR hydropower projects. <i>(Strategy 1)</i></p> <p>Broader Energy Development: Continue to share information and facilitate dialog among partners about energy development affecting the Upper Mississippi. <i>(Strategy 2)</i></p>
Spill Response Planning and Mapping	<p>UMR Hazardous Spills Coordination Group: Staff and support the UMR Hazardous Spills Coordination Group; facilitating training and exercises, addressing emerging issues, and developing online tools to aid the Group’s work. <i>(Strategies 1, 5, and 6)</i></p> <p>UMR Spill Response Plan and Resource Manual: Share the <i>UMR Spill Plan and Resource Manual</i> with regional partners, exercise its notification protocol, and update the <i>Plan</i> as needed. <i>(Strategies 2, 4, and 5)</i></p> <p>Regional Planning and Mapping: Conduct regional spill contingency planning and mapping work under contract with USEPA including completion of the Illinois Inland Sensitivity Atlas update and a spill response plan for UMR Pool 9. Complete a spill response plan for the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway under contract with the National Park Service. <i>(Strategy 3)</i></p> <p>Spill Prevention: Explore avenues for UMRBA engagement in efforts to reduce the risk of hazardous spills to the UMR and in its watershed. Includes information sharing to build common understanding of potential spill risks, existing regulatory structures, and prevention approaches. May also include advocating common positions to federal agencies and other decision-makers. <i>(Strategies 6 and 7)</i></p>

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Water Quality	<p>Partner Engagement: Engage with regional partners, including Mississippi River mayors, universities, local, state, and federal agencies, NGOs, industry groups, and water suppliers to identify common goals and collaboration opportunities. With these partners, develop shared messages regarding UMR water quality priorities. <i>(Strategies 2 and 4)</i></p> <p>Advocacy: Communicate the importance of UMR water quality and collaborative water quality protection efforts to USEPA, Congress, and others using messages developed in collaboration with regional partners. <i>(Strategies 2 and 4)</i></p> <p>Enhance Capacity to Support Collaborative Water Quality Work: Identify and pursue staffing /funding mechanisms to better support collaborative UMR water quality work. <i>(Strategy 3)</i></p> <p>Water Quality Work Groups: Continue to support the UMRBA Water Quality Executive Committee and Water Quality Task Force, as well as any sub-groups of these bodies. Engage partners outside of CWA programs in the discussions of these groups as appropriate. Maintain online resources to aid these groups. <i>(Strategy 5)</i></p> <p>Shared CWA Monitoring and Assessment Tools: Continue implementing the UMR CWA monitoring strategy by: 1) supporting pilot project completion in the Minnesota-Wisconsin area, 2) aiding in pilot project data compilation and completion of an associated water quality condition assessment, 3) producing a pilot project evaluation report, and 4) working with states to identify areas where the <i>UMR CWA Recommended Monitoring Plan</i> may next be implemented. Also continue to develop online tools to support UMR monitoring and assessment work, such as the Minnesota-Wisconsin pilot project viewer. <i>(Strategy 6)</i></p> <p>Addressing Nutrients: Compile and share information to aid the UMR states in implementing their nutrient loss reduction strategies. Provide forums for the states to exchange lessons learned in strategy implementation, particularly in regard to conservation practice success stories, TMDL implementation, and outcomes measurement. <i>(Strategy 7)</i></p> <p>Harmful Algal Blooms: Continue to address the issue of harmful algal blooms via the UMR HAB Work Group and support action items it identifies. Maintain the <i>UMR HAB Response Resource Manual</i> and UMR HAB listserv. <i>(Strategies 7 and 8)</i></p>
Cross Cutting	<p>America's Watershed Initiative (AWI): Serve on the AWI Steering Committee, representing the states' interests in this initiative.</p> <p>Interstate Council on Water Policy (ICWP): Maintain active participation in ICWP, representing the UMR states' interests to ICWP and sharing information emerging from ICWP as appropriate with UMRBA Board.</p> <p>Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI): Collaborate with MRCTI on issue areas of common interest to the mayors and the UMR states.</p> <p>Upper Mississippi River Economic Profile: Work with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Economics and other regional partners to develop an economic profile of the entire Upper Mississippi River System.</p>