



April 23, 2025

The Honorable Susan Collins, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate
Appropriations Committee
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510-6025

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair
U.S. House of Representatives
Appropriations Committee
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair
U.S. Senate
Appropriations Committee
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510-6025

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Appropriations Committee
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairs Collins and Cole and Ranking Members Murray and DeLauro:

As Congress develops its Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations priorities for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, I am writing on behalf of the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association (UMRBA) to respectfully request funding for the following programs and projects:

— **\$73 million for the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP)**

This appropriation will fully fund the construction of five project construction contract awards, forest stewardship implementation, and planning and design activities for eleven ecosystem restoration projects, including systemic water level management.

With prior appropriations, NESP continues ongoing construction of a second 1,200-foot lock chamber at L&D 25.

— **\$885,000 to complete renewed flow frequency probabilities and water surface profiles for the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers**

In FY 2026, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will complete the hydraulic routing model and associated flow and climate assessments, employ the analyses, and develop a report of the findings. Flood risk assessments and forecasting capabilities are necessary to reduce damages and loss of life associated with increasingly frequent and major flood events in the Upper Mississippi River. Accurate and accessible information will improve our ability to develop a systemic flood plan and improve management capabilities.

— **\$250,000 for the Upper Mississippi River System Flood Risk Reduction and Resiliency Study**

In FY 2026, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the five Upper Mississippi River states, and UMRBA will develop a scope and schedule for implementing the Upper Mississippi River System Flood Risk Reduction

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and Resiliency Study. This effort will include employing a public participation and engagement strategy to create dialogue among stakeholders.

— **\$55 million for the Upper Mississippi River Restoration (UMRR) Program**

In FY 2026, UMRR will implement 29 habitat projects across five states and three Corps Districts. Of these 29 projects, UMRR will be actively constructing 14 projects and advance planning and design on 15 habitat projects. These projects integrate a broad range of restoration techniques that strive to use or mimic the river's natural processes to enhance and protect important fish and wildlife habitat, restore the river's floodplain structure and function, and counteract the factors degrading the river's ecological health. UMRR will continue its long term resource monitoring and research, providing a much clearer understanding of the complex, dynamic relationships among various ecosystem components and watershed drivers.

— **Full utilization of the Inland Waterways Trust Fund to support inland navigation new construction and major rehabilitation projects**

— **Funding to support full capability of the Upper Mississippi River System 9-foot navigation channel operations and maintenance**

UMRBA is the Governor-established forum for interstate water resource planning and management on the Upper Mississippi River, representing its member states of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin and working collaboratively with the federal agencies as well as the navigation industry, environmental organizations, local communities, and others who work directly to improve the Upper Mississippi River System. UMRBA's member states are strongly committed to the principles of sustainability and multi-use as the foundation of the river's management. The programs and projects listed above collectively help to improve the health and resilience of the navigation system and ecosystem as well as the many river communities of the Upper Mississippi River System.

We appreciate your consideration of this request. Please contact me at 651-224-2880 or kwallace@umrba.org to arrange an opportunity to discuss our request in more detail.

Sincerely,



Kirsten Wallace
Executive Director
Upper Mississippi River Basin Association

cc: Upper Mississippi River Congressional Delegation
Assistant Secretary for the Army of Civil Works
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Headquarters