

# MRRRI

The Mississippi River Restoration & Resilience Initiative



## RESTORING AMERICA'S RIVER

The Mississippi River is essential to our nation's economy, our environment, and our public health. It is a central cultural touchstone running through the heart of our country. But it is also a river at risk on many fronts.



Other treasured, critical waterways—the Great Lakes, Chesapeake Bay, and the South Florida Everglades—have successfully directed federal funding to support local initiatives through the Clean Water Act's Geographic Programs. Now the Mississippi River needs that national coordination effort to restore the Great River and build resilience for the communities that depend on it.

For our communities, wildlife, and economy, we need to fill this clear gap in our nation's regional waterway restoration programs.

## A CRITICAL INVESTMENT

The *Mississippi River Restoration & Resilience Initiative (MRRRI) Act* (H.R. 2977) would provide the framework, funding, and focus to protect America's River.

- MRRRI directs the Environmental Protection Agency to consult and collaborate with other agencies, states, tribal nations, and local governments as well as non-governmental organizations to develop and coordinate the initiative.
- MRRRI provides grants for restoration projects in mainstem river states, cities, townships, and tribal nations. The projects and activities funded by MRRRI would complement and build upon existing federal and state programs to ensure the Mississippi is a healthy working river for generations to come.
- MRRRI's implementation will be guided by a regularly updated action plan, developed with public input, to focus the use of federal funds in order to:
  - **Improve water quality** for drinking water, wildlife, and recreation industries;
  - **Reduce flood and storm risks** and increase community resilience;
  - **Protect and restore wildlife habitat** to benefit hundreds of species; and
  - Reduce and prevent the spread of **aquatic invasive species**
- A network of science centers at the U.S. Geological Survey will inform all this work.

**It's time for a federal initiative to protect, restore, and revitalize the Mississippi River.**

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## THE MIGHTY MISSISSIPPI...

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The Mississippi River flows more than 2,300 miles from its source at Lake Itasca through the center of the continental United States to the Gulf of Mexico.

- The main stem of the Mississippi River flows through 10 States that collectively are home to **56.4 million people** as of 2024.
- The Mississippi River provides **drinking water** to more than 20 million people in 50 cities.
- The Mississippi River and its 30 million acre floodplain provide an **ecological lifeline** for all of North America, supporting more than **780 species of fish and wildlife** and providing a vital migration corridor for 60 percent of all North American birds and 40 percent of the migratory waterfowl in the United States.
- The Mississippi River serves as a **major transportation corridor** for grain and cargo, supporting a \$400 billion annual shipping industry.
- The Mississippi River also drives a **vibrant natural resource and recreation-based economy** that generates nearly \$25 billion a year.
- This commercial, recreation, and resource-based river economy **employs 1.5 million people**.
- Congress has designated the Mississippi River System as a **nationally significant ecosystem and a nationally significant navigation system**. It is the only inland river system to receive both designations.



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## ...A RIVER AT RISK

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Despite its critical value to the United States, the Mississippi River is in a **severe state of ecological decline**, as documented by the United States Geological Survey, the Army Corps of Engineers, and other Federal and State agencies.



- American Rivers named the Mississippi as the **#1 Most Endangered River** in the U.S. for 2025.
- Modifications to the Mississippi River have resulted in the **extensive loss of wetlands and complex river habitats** causing harm to fish and wildlife resources and increasing flood risks.
- Polluted runoff has drastically reduced water quality and created a massive **dead zone** in the Gulf of Mexico, costing U.S. seafood and tourism industries more than \$80 million annually.
- **Invasive aquatic species** threaten the ecological integrity of the Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico, and the fisheries and recreation that rely on a healthy ecosystem.
- Ecological degradation of the Mississippi River has resulted in: **more flooding; less wildlife; fewer jobs; reduced recreational opportunities; and higher costs** for keeping communities safe and ensuring that communities have clean drinking water.

**The MRRRI Act (H.R.2977) is designed to address these ongoing challenges and reverse the decline of the Mississippi River through local investments and federal coordination.**