We work together to scale up solutions for improving water quality and quantity, safety, and the health of America’s Watershed. In that we join forces with all in the 31-state Mississippi River Watershed, the Report Card tells the story of how well we are currently meeting each of six broad goals for our nation’s most important watershed. The Report Card is a tool to advance a coordinated and shared vision for the watershed. The Report Card is a tool to support decision making and leverage the great efforts undertaken by many. The longer we wait to invest in raising the grade, the more it will cost us and future generations.

America's Watershed Initiative is committed to Raise the Grade in America’s Watershed.

Focus on action

The Report Card is not a goal unto itself—it’s a tool to bring together leaders from around the Mississippi River Watershed to develop a shared vision for the future and create awareness about the opportunities and challenges that face our states and nation. This shared vision will be used to identify and form partnerships to advance solutions to those challenges. A shared vision will be important in determining what’s important and how to measure it is the foundation to improve the watershed.

We work together to scale up solutions for improving water quality and quantity, and the health of America’s Watershed in that we are all impacted by it. Since the creation of the 1965 Federal Water Pollution Control Act, there have been over 600 Federal, state, and local government agencies, together with over 3,000 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and universities to develop and apply solutions to reduce water pollution from a wide range of sources. A shared vision will be used to identify and form partnerships to advance solutions to these challenges.

The Report Card team traveled to every sector and in each of the six goal areas to develop a shared vision for the future and create a roadmap for collaborative actions to improve the 31-state Mississippi River Watershed. We will recruit additional partners to strengthen the collaboration and build a shared vision for the watershed.

We encourage you to participate in the next update to the Report Card. Please join us as we develop a shared vision for the future of the Mississippi River Watershed, and raise the grades. We look forward to seeing you there. For more information, please visit: ReportCard.areasofwater.org

America’s Watershed Initiative has worked with leaders, stakeholders, and experts from the six goal areas to develop a shared vision for the future. We believe that the Report Card provides a powerful tool for bringing together leaders from around the nation to identify opportunities for collaboration and to build a shared vision for the watershed.

We must work together to scale up solutions for improving water quality and quantity, and the health of America’s Watershed in that we are all impacted by it. Since the creation of the 1965 Federal Water Pollution Control Act, there have been over 600 Federal, state, and local government agencies, together with over 3,000 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and universities to develop and apply solutions to reduce water pollution from a wide range of sources. A shared vision will be used to identify and form partnerships to advance solutions to these challenges.

The Report Card team traveled to every sector and in each of the six goal areas to develop a shared vision for the future and create a roadmap for collaborative actions to improve the 31-state Mississippi River Watershed. We will recruit additional partners to strengthen the collaboration and build a shared vision for the watershed.

We encourage you to participate in the next update to the Report Card. Please join us as we develop a shared vision for the future of the Mississippi River Watershed, and raise the grades. We look forward to seeing you there. For more information, please visit: ReportCard.areasofwater.org
Working together for the watershed
America’s Watershed Initiative brings together leaders, stakeholders, and experts from across America to collaborate and raise the grade for the 400,000-mile Mississippi River Watershed. From the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border, this great watershed sustains 41% of our country’s population and produces half of the nation’s electricity, 80% of the nation’s rice, and 94% of the nation’s soybeans.

We develop a Report Card that measures our progress toward achieving six broad goals for our nation’s most important watershed. The Report Card is not a goal unto itself—it’s a tool to bring together leaders from around America’s Watershed to develop a shared vision for the future and create a roadmap for collaborative actions to address challenges.

We seek partners to continue the analysis in the Report Card in greater detail in the basins and for specific goals. We will develop and work to advance a coordinated and shared decision-making process to raise the grade in the Mississippi River Watershed. We will develop and work to advance a coordinated and shared decision-making process to raise the grade in the Mississippi River Watershed.

We are communicating the results of the Report Card widely with business, government, academic, and nonprofit leaders across the nation to raise awareness about the opportunities and challenges that face our states and nation. This shared vision will lead to identification and form partnerships to advance solutions to these challenges. A focus on action is key to achieving success.

Focus on action
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The Report Card was built in the five basins of the Mississippi River Watershed. It reveals challenges ahead and provides recommendations for improvement.

The region faces interconnected challenges:
- Droughts and floods already in weakened condition from infrastructure aging, and our climate changes.
- Maintenance funding shortfalls will be stressed further by more severe droughts. Locks and dams already in weakened condition from infrastructure aging, and our climate changes.
- Inherent challenges in managing the watershed for the six broad goals: Ecosystems, Transportation, Recreation, Water Supply, Risk Reduction, and Infrastructure maintenance.
- The region faces interconnected challenges in managing for watershed sustainability for the six goals: Ecosystems, Transportation, Recreation, Water Supply, Risk Reduction, and Infrastructure maintenance.
- The Mississippi is the foundation of America’s economy, recreation, and infrastructure. The Mississippi River Watershed is a world-class asset to our nation, but as these systems continue to deteriorate, catastrophic failures are more likely. The rivers and streams of the Mississippi River basin serve as the nation’s most valuable river transportation corridor.

The Report Card reveals challenges ahead:
- The Mississippi River Watershed is a world-class asset to our nation, but as these systems continue to deteriorate, catastrophic failures are more likely. The rivers and streams of the Mississippi River basin serve as the nation’s most valuable river transportation corridor.
- The Mississippi River Watershed is a world-class asset to our nation, but as these systems continue to deteriorate, catastrophic failures are more likely. The rivers and streams of the Mississippi River basin serve as the nation’s most valuable river transportation corridor.
- The Report Card also included indicators that are watershed-wide, instead of an approach that allocates credit to the most performing year between 2000 and 2012.
- The Report Card assessed the safety of municipal water systems in each basin.
- The Mississippi River Watershed earned a D+; the future of our country depend on sustaining a healthy, functioning watershed.

Goals and indicators used in America’s Watershed Initiative Report Card:
- The Report Card assessed the safety of municipal water systems in each basin.
- The Report Card graded the number of people in coastal living communities in each basin.
- The Report Card graded the number of people in coastal living communities in each basin.
- Watershed-wide indicators include:
  - Floodplain population change
  - Building elevation
  - Infrastructure condition
  - Infrastructure maintenance

GOALS
- Ecosystems
- Transportation
- Recreation
- Water Supply
- Risk Reduction
- Infrastructure maintenance

INDICATORS
- GDP by sector
- River-dependent employment
- Median income
- Hunting & fishing licenses
- Outdoor participation
- Water quality
- Infrastructure condition
- Fish and wildlife
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card/serious. The Report Card also included indicators that are watershed-wide, instead of an approach that allocates credit to the most performing year between 2000 and 2012. The Report Card assessed the safety of municipal water systems in each basin. The Mississippi River Watershed earned a D+; the future of our country depend on sustaining a healthy, functioning watershed. The Report Card also included indicators that are watershed-wide, instead of an approach that allocates credit to the most performing year between 2000 and 2012. The Report Card assessed the safety of municipal water systems in each basin.
Droughts. Locks and dams already in weakened condition from intense weather events, suggesting that failures could be more imminent. River transportation currently functions with some delays, although intensive investment in flood control has made the eastern portion of the watershed and the Lower Mississippi River basin function better than other goal—some areas show positive changes while others show the greatest adverse impacts to living resources. Poor water quality is at or below the recent past. Much more needs to be done to reverse the trend. Nutrient (nitrogen and phosphorus) levels in rivers and streams in the watershed. The rivers and streams of the Mississippi River basin support aquatic ecosystems that receive significantly less rainfall than the surface water across the watershed. As expected, the regions that have the highest proportion of agriculture, temperature, and other nonpoint source pollutants, such as the Delta, are the regions that show the greatest adverse impacts to aquatic ecosystems. Hunting & fishing licenses and permits for hunting and fishing have been and will continue to be a strong economic driver for many river-dependent sectors in each of the Mississipian subwatersheds. Number of people employed in river-dependent sectors in each of the Mississipian subwatersheds. Gross domestic product (GDP) by sector. Recent sales of licenses, tags, and permits for hunting and fishing compared to the 10- year average. Median income. Change in number of people living in areas most at risk for flooding compared to the 10- year average. Change in number of people living in a basin. Median income. Gross domestic product (GDP) by sector. MDQ: Ecosystem condition in rivers and streams. Water quality. Support and enhance healthy and productive aquatic ecosystems. MDQ: Transportation. Adequacy of maintenance. Infrastructure maintenance. MDQ: Ecosystems. Water supply. Risk reduction. MDQ: Flood control and risk reduction. MDQ: Land use and natural resources. MDQ: Flood control and risk reduction. MDQ: Land use and natural resources.
The Report Card reveals challenges ahead

The Mississippi River Watershed has diminished as a healthy and productive ecosystem. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources indicated that waterfowl populations in the Upper Mississippi River Basin have decreased by more than one-third over the past 25 years. The Midwest coastal ecosystem is a world-class habitat for migratory birds, but the population of migratory birds has declined dramatically in recent decades. The Mississippi River Watershed is a world-class habitat for migratory birds, but the population of migratory birds has declined dramatically in recent decades.

The Mississippi River Watershed can and must do better

The Report Card graded watershed basins against the six goals for the Mississippi River Watershed. The grades reveal a number of challenges—the grades for most of the goals showed consistency for single objectives independently. The Report Card assessed the safety of municipal water supplies in the watershed. The grades for most of the goals showed consistency for single objectives independently. The Report Card assessed the safety of municipal water supplies in the watershed.

Goals and indicators used in America’s Watershed Initiative Report Card

The goals are the key building blocks for the Report Card. Indicators were identified for each goal and for each aspect of the basin summaries.

GOALS

1. Water supply
2. Water quality
3. Flood control and risk reduction
4. Recreation
5. Transportation
6. Ecosystems

INDICATORS

- Water supply
- Water quality
- Flood control and risk reduction
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Ecosystems

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The Mississippi Watershed Results

The Mississippi Watershed is a world-class asset to our nation, providing critical ecosystem services for river-dependent communities living in the interior United States. The goal of America’s Watershed Initiative is to improve the health and resilience of the nation’s watersheds. The Report Card reveals challenges ahead.

The Report Card measured ecosystem condition in rivers and wetlands throughout the watershed. The Report Card measured ecosystem condition in rivers and wetlands throughout the watershed.

Outdoor participation


The Report Card was built in the five basins.

The Report Card reveals challenges ahead.

The Mississippi River Watershed can and must do better.

GOALS

1. Ecosystems
   - Protect species healthy and productive populations
   - Protect water quality

2. Flood control and risk reduction
   - Floodplain population change
   - Condition of stream and river above mapped flood levels

3. Water supply
   - Adequacy of maintenance
   - Water quality

4. Infrastructure maintenance
   - Infrastructure condition
   - Infrastructure performance

5. Water quality
   - Water quality
   - Nutrients from multiple sources

6. Transportation
   - Infrastructure performance
   - Condition of critical transportation corridor

7. Recreation
   - Adequacy of maintenance
   - Hunting and fishing licenses

8. Natural resources
   - Adequacy of maintenance
   - Living resources

INDICATORS

1. Living resources
   - Presence of aquatic species
   - Water quality

2. Water supply
   - Adequacy of maintenance
   - Water quality

3. Infrastructure maintenance
   - Infrastructure condition
   - Infrastructure performance

4. Transportation
   - Infrastructure performance
   - Condition of critical transportation corridor

5. Recreation
   - Adequacy of maintenance
   - Hunting and fishing licenses

6. Natural resources
   - Adequacy of maintenance
   - Living resources

The Report Card was built in the five basins: Upper Mississippi through the watershed, and some showed significant variety. Grades assigned for each basin and for the entire watershed. Overall the Mississippi River Watershed earned a D+; the goals are the key building blocks for the Report Card. Indicators were identified at each point and groups of indicators that best synthesize. Watershed-wide indicators, and the geographic framework for the Report Card.

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We work together to scale up solutions for improving water quality and quantity, safety, and the health of America’s Watershed in that we develop, learn, and share our experiences.

For more information on America’s Watershed Initiative Report Card and the Report Card development process, visit America’s Watershed.org/ReportCard

Report Card Fall 2014 and from the Preliminary results reveal that our current trajectory is unsustainable. We will use the Report Card to continue our efforts to build a shared voice to raise the grades for the Mississippi River Watershed. We will work together to achieve a collective impact from strategic action agenda to raise the grade in the Mississippi River Watershed.

We will develop and work to advance a coordinated and shared vision for the Mississippi River Watershed. We will support the Pre-Liminary report card to achieve a culturally relevant report card that reflects the values of all our stakeholders and builds trust among them.

We will also engage in this process, including the public with easy-to-understand information about the state of the watershed’s health and summits paired with webinars to increase engagement.

Working together for the watershed means bringing together leaders, stakeholders, and experts from all 31 Mississippi River Watershed to develop a shared vision for the future and create a roadmap for collaborative actions to improve the 31-state Mississippi River Watershed. We will work with leaders from all the basins and goal areas to ensure that the Report Card will help develop a shared voice to raise the grades for the Mississippi River Watershed.

We must work together to scale up solutions for improving water quality and quantity, safety, and the health of America’s Watershed in that we develop, learn, and share our experiences.

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The Report Card team traveled to every basin and to Washington, D.C. for more than 400 businesses, organizations, agencies, and academic institutions to develop, learn, and share our experiences.

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