

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 29, 2017

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Mulvaney,

We write to express our strong support for efforts to improve inland navigation infrastructure and ecosystem restoration. As you finalize the Administration's Fiscal Year 2019 budget request, we respectfully request that you include \$10 million to continue preconstruction engineering and design (PED) for the Navigation and Ecosystem Restoration Program (NESP). Further, we request that this amount also be included in the Army Corps of Engineers' (the Corps) 2018 Work Plan.

Congress recognized the importance of the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986 by designating it as nationally significant ecosystem and a nationally significant commercial navigation system. In 2007, Congress authorized NESP, which integrates the needs of both navigation infrastructure improvement and ecosystem restoration into a single, dual-purposed program. It is imperative that funding for NESP be included in the Administration's Fiscal Year 2019 budget and the Corps' 2018 Work Plan so that implementation of this crucial program, aimed at creating a sustainable Upper Mississippi River System (UMRS), can continue.

Our nation's inland navigation system provides a key strategic advantage to our nation's agriculture and manufacturing sectors. Unfortunately, the reliability of these locks and dams—constructed in the 1930s—will continue to decrease. Shippers have legitimate concerns about increases in planned and emergency lock outages due to the age and status of this infrastructure. With 60 percent of our nation's grain exports traveling on the UMRS, we cannot afford to let this situation worsen. NESP provides the opportunity to address these reliability issues and protect this infrastructure from catastrophic failure.

NESP will also ensure the UMRS ecosystem thrives for future generations. As a dual-purposed program, NESP will provide comparable investment in restoration measures that are critical for fish and wildlife along the entire Mississippi River. This will include efforts to reconnect floodplain habitat, reconnect side channels and backwaters, and rebuild lost island and shoreline habitat that compliment commercial navigation.

NESP positively impacts multiple states, has the support of industry, labor, and environmental interests, and enjoys wide bipartisan support. Funding NESP will result in both immediate and long term benefits to our communities, the UMRS, and our nation. We therefore urge you to include \$10 million in the President's Fiscal Year 2019 budget and in the Corps' 2018 Work Plan to ensure this project moves forward.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request.



Rodney Davis
Member of Congress

Sincerely,



Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress



Daniel W. Lipinski
Member of Congress



Mike Bost
Member of Congress



Randy Hultgren
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Dave Loebsack
Member of Congress



Sam Graves
Member of Congress



Tim Walz
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Adam Kinzinger
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Ann Wagner
Member of Congress



Steve King
Member of Congress



Bruce Westerman
Member of Congress



Jason Smith
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Rod Blum
Member of Congress



Rick Nolan
Member of Congress



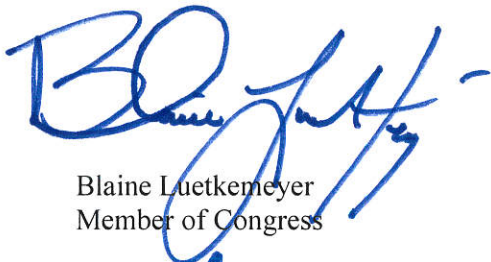
Bill Foster
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress



James Comer
Member of Congress



Blaine Luetkemeyer
Member of Congress



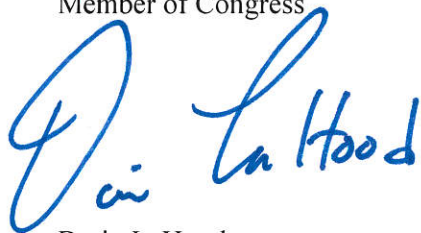
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



John Shimkus
Member of Congress



Brett Guthrie
Member of Congress



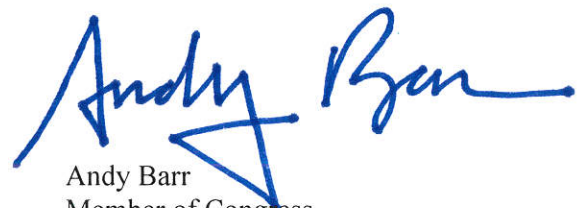
Darin LaHood
Member of Congress



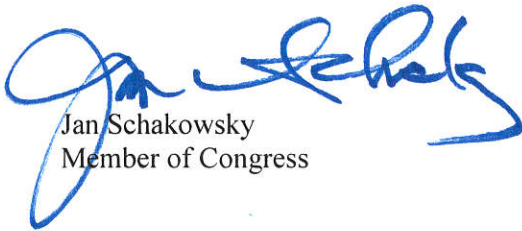
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress



Andy Barr
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



David Kustoff
Member of Congress



Gregg Harper
Member of Congress



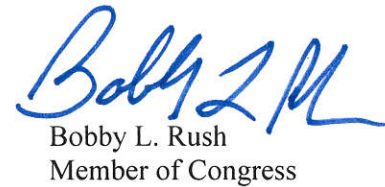
Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Trent Kelly
Member of Congress



Peter Roskam
Member of Congress