



AUGUST 25-27, 2026
MOLINE, ILLINOIS
QUAD CITIES REGION



LOCAL CO-HOST

** Schedule subject to change*

MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2026 (PRE-CONFERENCE)

6:00 PM – 8:30 PM NWC OFFICER AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DINNER
By invitation only

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2026

8:45 AM – 9:45 AM NWC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM SMALL GROUP MOBILE TOUR

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM NWC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

12:00 PM – 6:00 PM REGISTRATION OPEN
Vibrant Center Foyer

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM WELCOME NETWORKING EVENT
Vibrant Center Foyer | Supported by Tributary Partner CDM Smith
An opportunity for attendees to connect before the general session.

1:00 PM – 1:15 PM WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

- **Ms. Julie Minerva**, NWC Chair (Partner, Carpi & Clay)
- **The Honorable Sangeetha Rayapati**, Mayor, City of Moline, Ill. (invited)

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM REGIONAL REALITIES, NATIONAL LESSONS: USACE LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVES FROM THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION

- **TBD**, Commander, Mississippi Valley Division, USACE (invited)
- **Colonel Andrew T. Niewohner**, Commander, Kansas City District, USACE (invited)
- **Colonel Kenneth P. Rockwell**, Commander, Chicago District, USACE (invited)
- **Major Simms**, St. Louis District, USACE (confirmed)
- **Colonel Aaron M. Williams**, Commander, Rock Island District, USACE (invited)

2:00 PM – 2:45 PM WHERE THINGS GET STUCK: DISTRICT AND DIVISION CIVILIAN PERSPECTIVES ON STUDIES, PROJECTS, AND PERMITS
Panel discussion with USACE civilian division and district staff from the areas listed above.

- **Mr. John Peukert**, Deputy for Programs & Project Management, St. Louis District, USACE (confirmed)
- **Mr. Donny Davison**, Acting Director of Engineering and Business, Mississippi Valley Division (confirmed)

2:45 PM – 3:15 PM NETWORKING BREAK
Supported by Watershed Partner Port of Memphis

3:15 PM – 4:30 PM WORLD TABLE TALKS

World Table Talks are interactive, facilitated small-group discussions where federal government speakers rotate from table to table to engage in focused conversations on key water and waterways resource infrastructure issues, challenges, and opportunities. This format promotes cross-pollination of ideas, networking, and actionable insights among attendees, fostering collaboration between industry, government, and stakeholders.

- **Mr. John Peukert**, Deputy for Programs & Project Management, St. Louis District, USACE (confirmed)
- **Mr. Donny Davidson**, Acting Director of Engineering and Business, Mississippi Valley Division (confirmed)
- **Mr. Bill Paape**, Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation
- **Mr. Tim Pickering**, Marine Highway Program Manager, Office of Ports & Waterways Planning, Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation
- Other federal agency staff, TBD

4:45 PM – 9:30 PM TAKE ME TO THE BALLGAME – RECEPTION AND GAME

*Modern Woodmen Park | Quad Cities River Bandits vs. Beloit Sky Carp | First pitch at 6:30 PM
Pre-registration required; included as part of registration*

We're mixing things up for this year's opening night. Join NWC for a baseball game at Modern Woodmen Park as the Quad Cities River Bandits, a Minor League affiliate of the Kansas City Royals, take on the Beloit Sky Carp, a Minor League affiliate of the Miami Marlins. Buses will be provided. Expect a casual evening of baseball, hamburgers, hot dogs, and conversation with old and new friends, and maybe a chance to see the next generation of baseball talent in action.

- 4:45 PM – Shuttle begins loading at the Wyndham; first shuttle departs at 5:00 PM
- 5:15 PM – 6:00 PM – Reception (beverages only; gates open for general attendance at 5:45 PM)
- 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM – Buffet service
- 6:30 PM – 9:30 PM – Game
- 8:45 PM – Return shuttle service to hotel begins

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2026

7:30 AM – 4:30 PM REGISTRATION OPEN

7:30 AM – 8:30 AM CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

Supported by Confluence Partner IMEG

8:30 AM – 8:45 AM WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

8:45 AM – 9:15 AM LOCAL HOST SPOTLIGHT: CORN BELT PORTS AND THE WATER RESOURCES FUTURE OF THE HEARTLAND

A featured session recognizing Corn Belt Ports as NWC's local host and lead annual meeting sponsor. This session will provide attendees with insight into Corn Belt Ports' work, regional partnerships, priorities, and role in supporting economic development and water resources infrastructure in the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Waterway region.

- **Moderator: Mr. Robert Sinkler**, Executive Coordinating Director, Corn Belt Ports
- **Mr. Travis McGlasson**, Chair, Illinois Waterway Ports Commission (or designated representative)(invited)
- **Mr. Douglas H. Aeilts**, Chair, Mid-America Port Commission (or designated representative)(invited)
- **Mr. Jim Irwin**, Chair, Ports of Eastern Iowa Authority (or designated representative)(invited)
- **Mr. Sam Scinta**, CEO, La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce representing the Northern Grain Belt Ports (or designated representative)(invited)

- **Dr. Deb Barnett**, Executive Director, Southern Illinois Now (Representing the Southern Illinois Regional Ports)

9:15 AM – 9:45 AM WHEN RIVER MANAGEMENT CREATES LEGAL RIPPLES: LESSONS FROM IDEKER FARMS

Ideker Farms, Inc. v. United States began with recurring flooding along the Missouri River, but the questions raised by the case reach well beyond flood damage alone. At its core, the case asks what happens when federal water management decisions, made across multiple project purposes and legal obligations, create lasting impacts for private property owners and communities on the ground. This session will provide a plain-English overview of the case and explore its broader implications for water resources infrastructure leaders. The conversation will also look at what the case may mean for agencies, non-federal sponsors, landowners, and others working within complex water systems where every operational decision can create ripple effects.

- **Mr. Scott L. Shapiro**, Partner, Downey Brand LLP (confirmed)

9:45 AM – 10:15 AM NETWORKING BREAK

Supported by Confluence Partners IMEG and Trinity River Authority

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM THE PERMIT THAT ATE THE PROJECT: BEST PRACTICES IN FEDERAL PERMITTING FOR WATER RESOURCES PROJECTS

You planned for two years. The permit took seven. Sound familiar? This session skips the commiseration and gets to work, covering what's actually changed in the federal permitting landscape, what smart project teams are doing differently, and how new tools including AI are helping people stop losing projects to process.

11:00 AM – 11:55 AM WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE CORPS?

A candid conversation with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers headquarters leadership on Civil Works priorities, what's shifting inside the agency, and what it means for the people and projects in this room.

- **Mr. Ryan Fisher**, Deputy to the Deputy Commanding General, Civil Works, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (confirmed)
- **Mr. Wes Coleman**, Chief of Programs Integration Division, Civil Works, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (invited)

11:55 AM – 1:30 PM LUNCH – FIELDS, FREIGHT, FLOODPLAINS, AND THE FUTURE: THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI REGIONAL STORY

The Upper Mississippi region is more than a line on a map. It is a working system of rivers, farms, communities, roads, rail, terminals, waterways, floodplains, ecosystems, and water resources infrastructure that helps move goods from field to market and supports the economic life of the region. This session brings to life the regional voices who experience that system from different angles, including agriculture, freight movement, local government, flood protection, infrastructure operations, ecosystem stewardship, and economic development. Panelists will discuss what it really takes to keep goods moving, communities protected, and the region competitive when high water, low water, aging infrastructure, environmental conditions, and market demands all intersect. Rather than looking at one mission area in isolation, this conversation will explore how the Upper Mississippi works as a connected regional system, where decisions in one place can ripple across farms, communities, supply chains, and the broader water resources landscape.

- **Moderator:** TBD
- **Ms. Rachel Orf**, Board Chair, America's Watershed Initiative (invited)
- **Ms. Ellen Herbert**, Ducks Unlimited (invited)
- **Mr. Todd Main**, Director of Market Development, Illinois Soybean Association
- **Mr. Rodney Weinzierl**, Illinois Corn (invited)
- TBD, Coalition to Protect the Missouri River (invited)
- TBD, Iowa Corn (invited)

1:30 PM – 2:00 PM NETWORKING BREAK

2:00 PM – 2:45 PM WHEN THE SITE HAS A PAST: BROWNFIELD REUSE AND WATER RESOURCES INFRASTRUCTURE

Brownfields and other formerly used sites can create real opportunities for water resources projects, but they also bring added complexity around cleanup, timing, ownership, cost, partnerships, and long-term use. This session will explore how contaminated or potentially contaminated land can be evaluated and incorporated into projects involving ports, flood control, water supply, ecosystem restoration, recreation, and other public infrastructure.

- **Moderator:** TBD
- **Mr. Michael Studer**, Founder, ENTACT (confirmed)
- **Mr. Matt Ward**, CEO, Sustainable Strategies DC (invited)
- **Mr. Cam Rahmn-Spencer**, Director of Government Relations, Port Houston (invited)
- **Mr. Allen Sims**, General Manager, Jefferson County Drainage District #7, Texas (invited)
- TBD, EPA Region 5 (invited)

2:45 PM – 3:30 PM FROM PORT TO CORRIDOR: CONNECTING PIDP AND AMERICA'S MARINE HIGHWAYS

MARAD will provide an update on the Port Infrastructure Development Program and the United States Marine Highway Program, including current priorities, funding opportunities, and lessons from recent projects. The discussion will focus on how port infrastructure investments and marine highway services can complement one another, strengthen connections across the freight system, and support more efficient movement between ports, inland transportation networks, and the communities they serve.

- **Moderator: Mr. Bill Paape**, Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation (confirmed)
- **Mr. Tim Pickering**, Marine Highway Program Manager, Office of Ports & Waterways Planning, Maritime Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation (confirmed)
- TBD

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM IT'S NEVER JUST WATER: REAL STORIES FROM WATER RESOURCE INFRASTRUCTURE LEADERS

Water resources infrastructure rarely fits neatly into one box. A single project or challenge may involve water supply, navigation, flood control, hydropower, water quality, ecosystem restoration, recreation, public safety, funding, public expectations, and state and federal requirements all at once. Outside pressures, including wildfires, drought, storms, power outages, aging infrastructure, and emergency conditions, can quickly change what communities need and what infrastructure leaders are able to deliver. This session will bring together leaders from different regions and sectors to share real stories about the pressures they are navigating, the solutions they are testing, and the lessons learned along the way. The goal is not to showcase perfect projects, but to surface practical ideas and cross-mission thinking that help leaders solve complicated problems in the real world.

- **Mr. Scott Gregowske**, Department of Public Works, Los Angeles County, Calif. (confirmed)
- **Mr. Kyle Spencer**, Chief Resilience Officer, City of Norfolk, Va. (invited)
- TBD, Pacific Northwest Waterways Association (confirmed)
- TBD, Iowa Corn (invited)

4:00 PM – 4:30 PM NWC ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERSHIP

Notice to be sent via email in advance, with proxy

5:30 PM – 7:30 PM CONFERENCE-WIDE RECEPTION

Vibrant Center Foyer

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2026

8:00 AM – 8:30 AM **ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE BOARD**

9:00 AM – 2:00 PM **MOBILE TOUR: THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER STORY UP CLOSE**

Before heading home, join NWC for a special mobile tour and visit to the [National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium](#) in Dubuque, Iowa.

This is not just a museum visit. It is a chance to carry the themes of the NWC Annual Meeting beyond the formal program and into the region itself, where water resources infrastructure, community, commerce, history, and stewardship all come together.

Attendees come from across the country and represent many different parts of the water resources community. This tour will use the Mississippi River region as a case study for issues that matter nationally: navigation, flood risk management, agriculture, water supply, ecosystem restoration, recreation, economic development, and the relationship between federal policy and local experience.

As we travel to and from Dubuque, special speakers and regional storytellers will join us on the bus to help bring the landscape to life. Participants will hear about the people, communities, industries, and decisions that have shaped this part of the river system, while drawing connections to water resources challenges and opportunities across the country.