

The logo consists of a circular emblem. The top-left portion is an orange semi-circle representing a sun. The rest of the circle is a stylized river with a blue upper section and a green lower section, flowing from left to right. The text 'THE BIG RIVER WORKS' is positioned to the left of the emblem.

**THE
BIG RIVER
WORKS**

Healthy. Sustainable.
Mississippi System

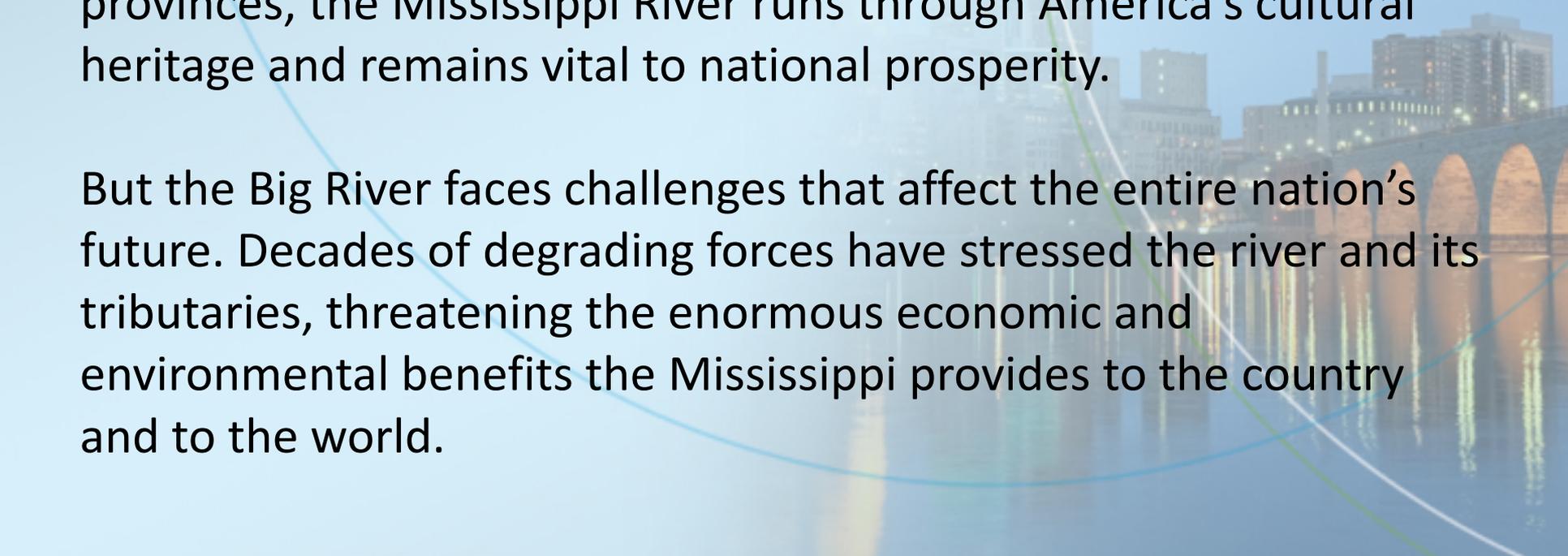


THE BIG RIVER WORKS

Toward a more comprehensive vision for sustainability

With a watershed stretching across 31 states and two Canadian provinces, the Mississippi River runs through America's cultural heritage and remains vital to national prosperity.

But the Big River faces challenges that affect the entire nation's future. Decades of degrading forces have stressed the river and its tributaries, threatening the enormous economic and environmental benefits the Mississippi provides to the country and to the world.





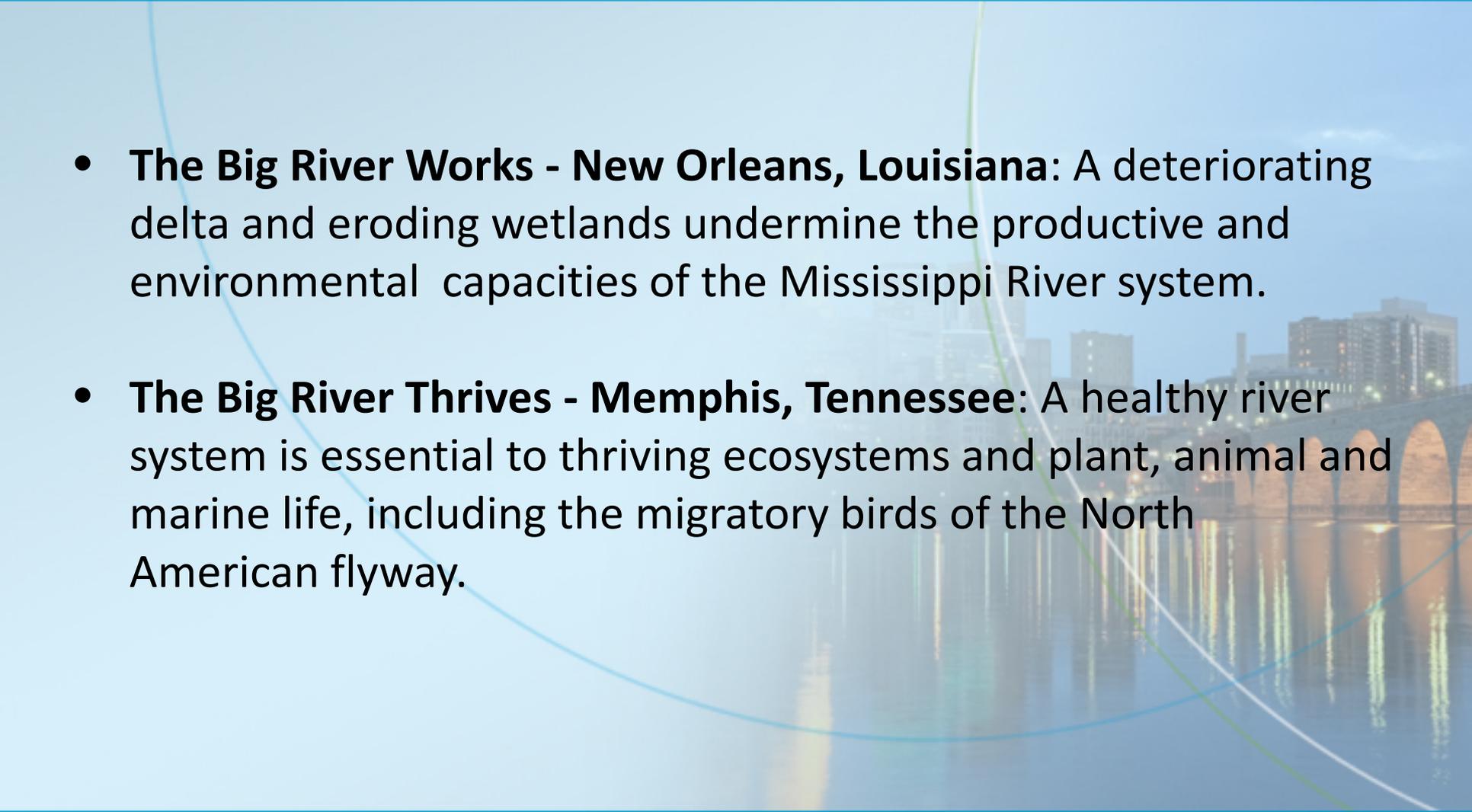
For the past 10 years, America's WETLAND Foundation (AWF) has served as a neutral facilitator for the varied interests with a stake in Gulf Coast sustainability.

Through The Big River Works initiative, the Foundation has convened more than 400 public- and private- sector leaders in five major cities along the Mississippi River to identify opportunities for moving toward a more sustainable future for one of America's most treasured assets.





- **The Big River Works - New Orleans, Louisiana:** A deteriorating delta and eroding wetlands undermine the productive and environmental capacities of the Mississippi River system.
- **The Big River Thrives - Memphis, Tennessee:** A healthy river system is essential to thriving ecosystems and plant, animal and marine life, including the migratory birds of the North American flyway.



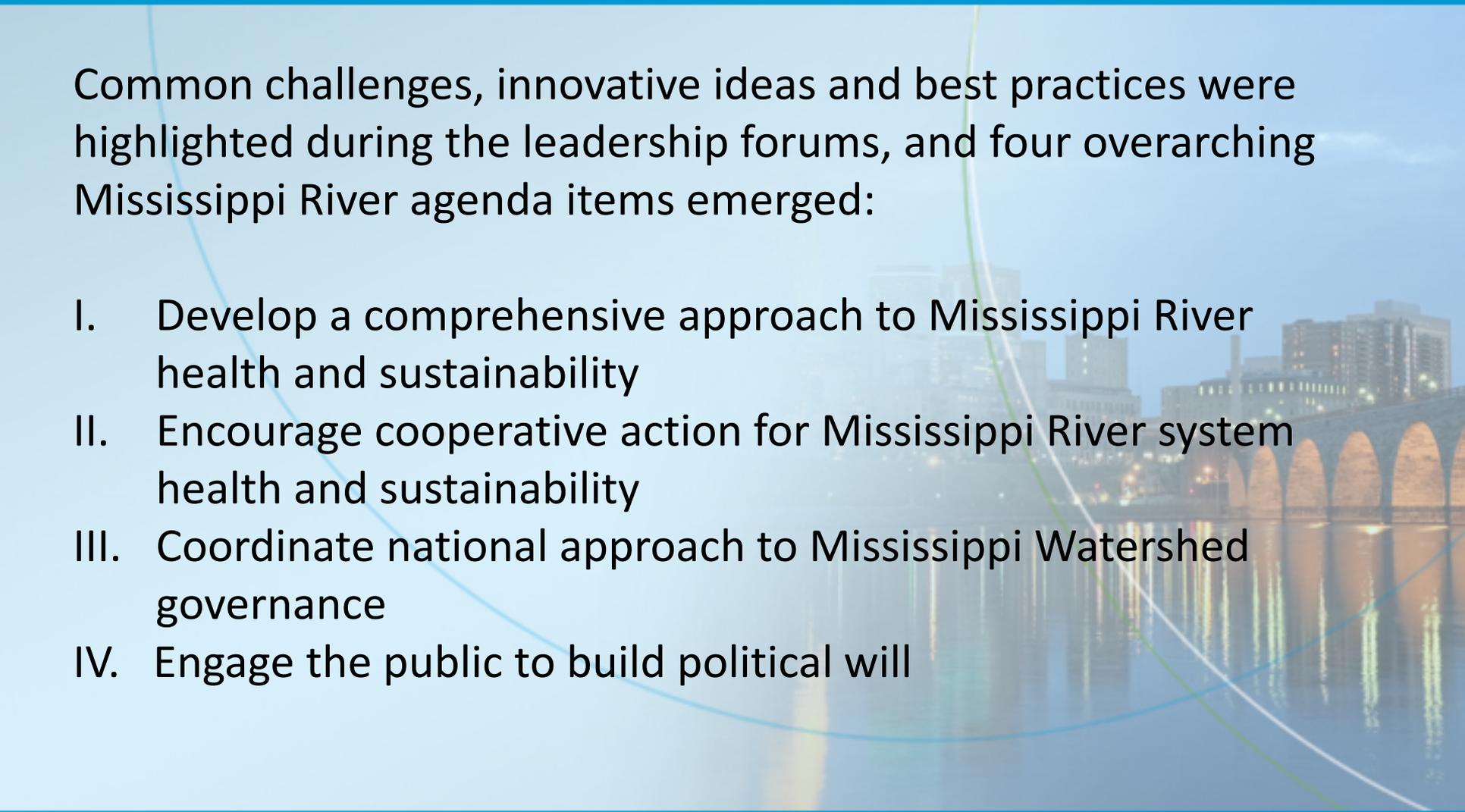


- **The Big River Lives - St. Louis, Missouri:** Comprehensive river management will determine water quality, availability and access as these issues become the nation's prime concern.
- **The Big River Provides - Minneapolis, Minnesota:** The Big River represents the essence of America, providing links to our history, heritage, communities, jobs and sustenance, and ongoing opportunities for tourism and cultural appreciation.
- **The Big River Moves - Chicago, Illinois:** A viable working river system involves a balance among commercial and ecological interests based on an understanding of the tenets of sustainable development and management.



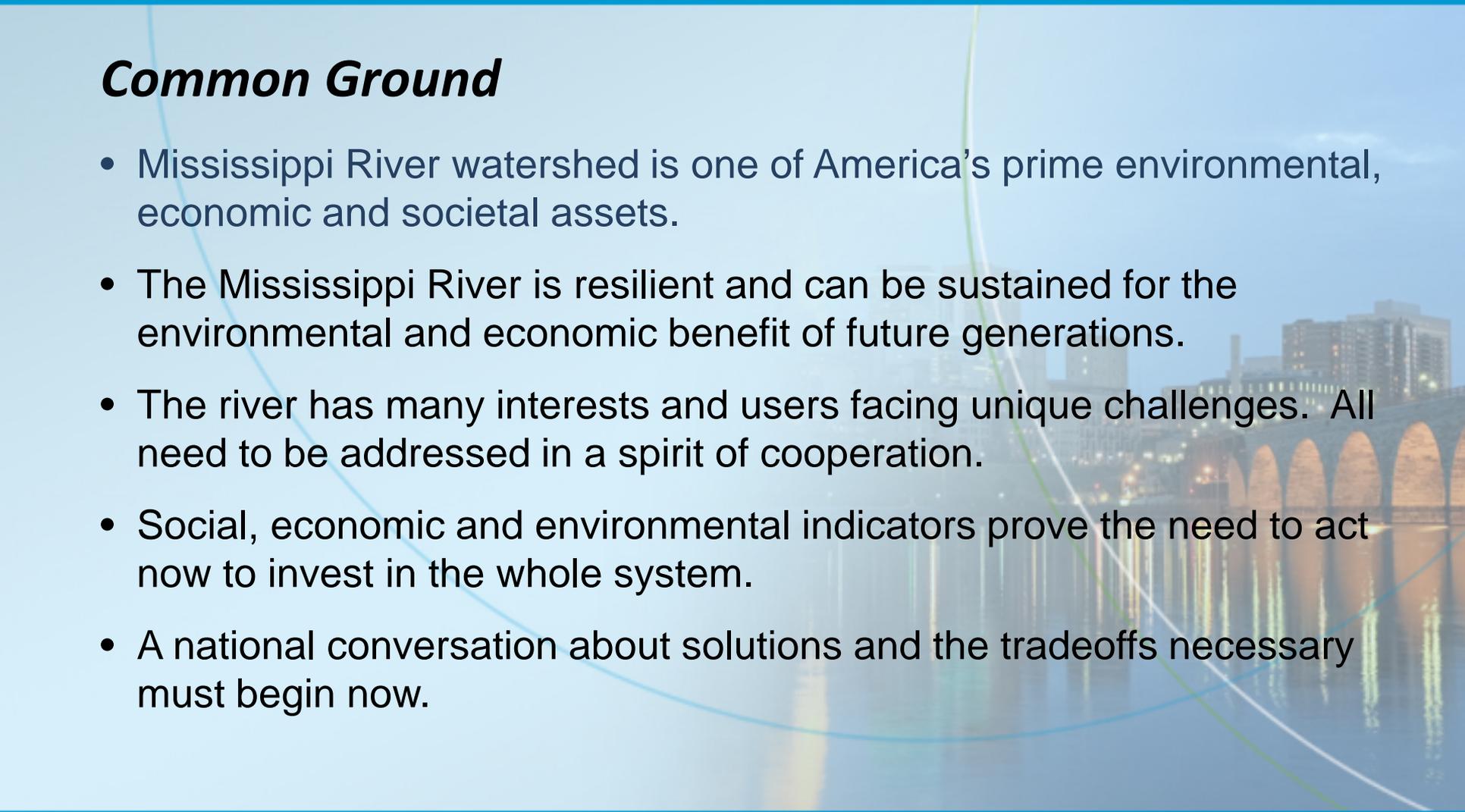


Common challenges, innovative ideas and best practices were highlighted during the leadership forums, and four overarching Mississippi River agenda items emerged:

- I. Develop a comprehensive approach to Mississippi River health and sustainability
 - II. Encourage cooperative action for Mississippi River system health and sustainability
 - III. Coordinate national approach to Mississippi Watershed governance
 - IV. Engage the public to build political will
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Common Ground

- Mississippi River watershed is one of America's prime environmental, economic and societal assets.
 - The Mississippi River is resilient and can be sustained for the environmental and economic benefit of future generations.
 - The river has many interests and users facing unique challenges. All need to be addressed in a spirit of cooperation.
 - Social, economic and environmental indicators prove the need to act now to invest in the whole system.
 - A national conversation about solutions and the tradeoffs necessary must begin now.
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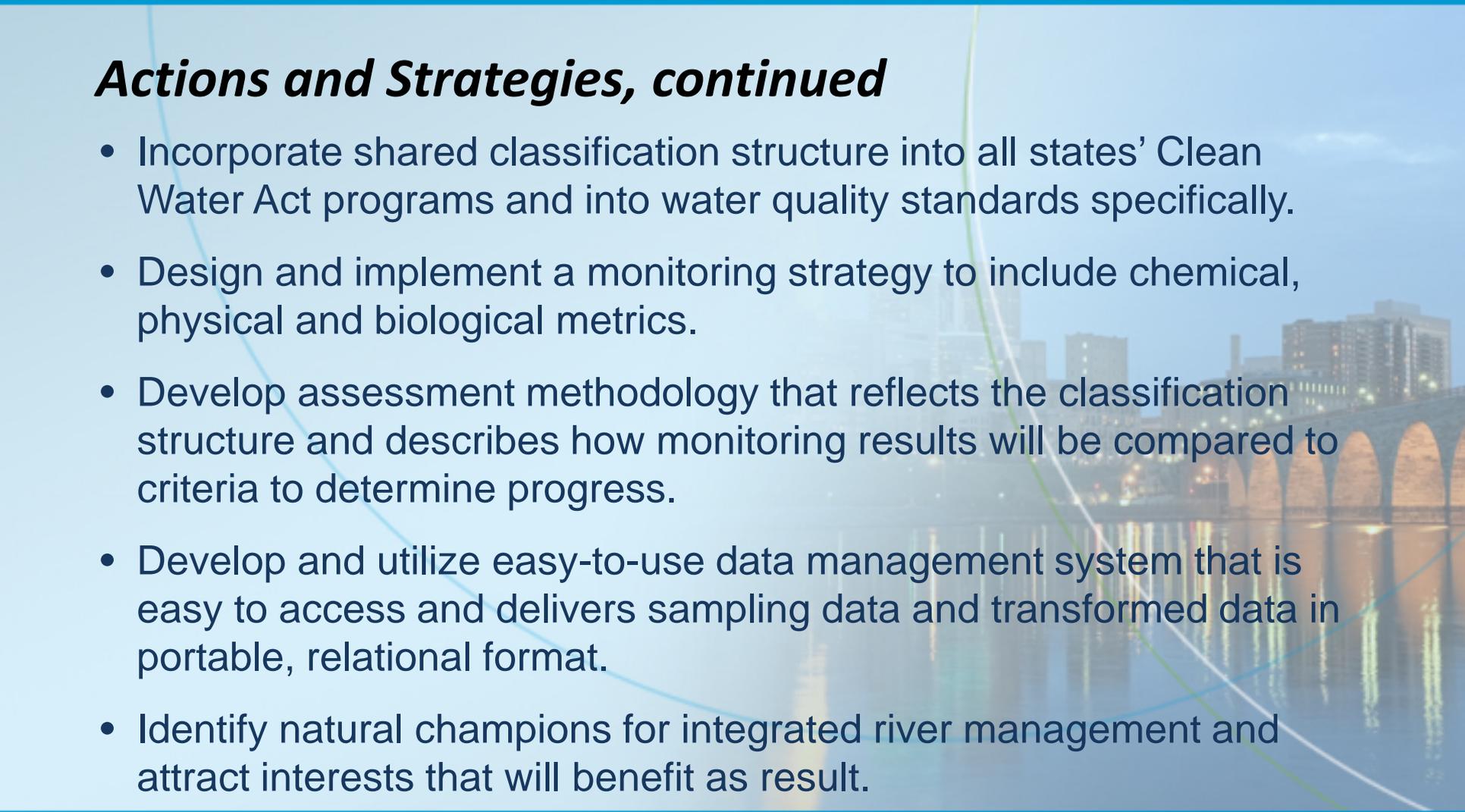


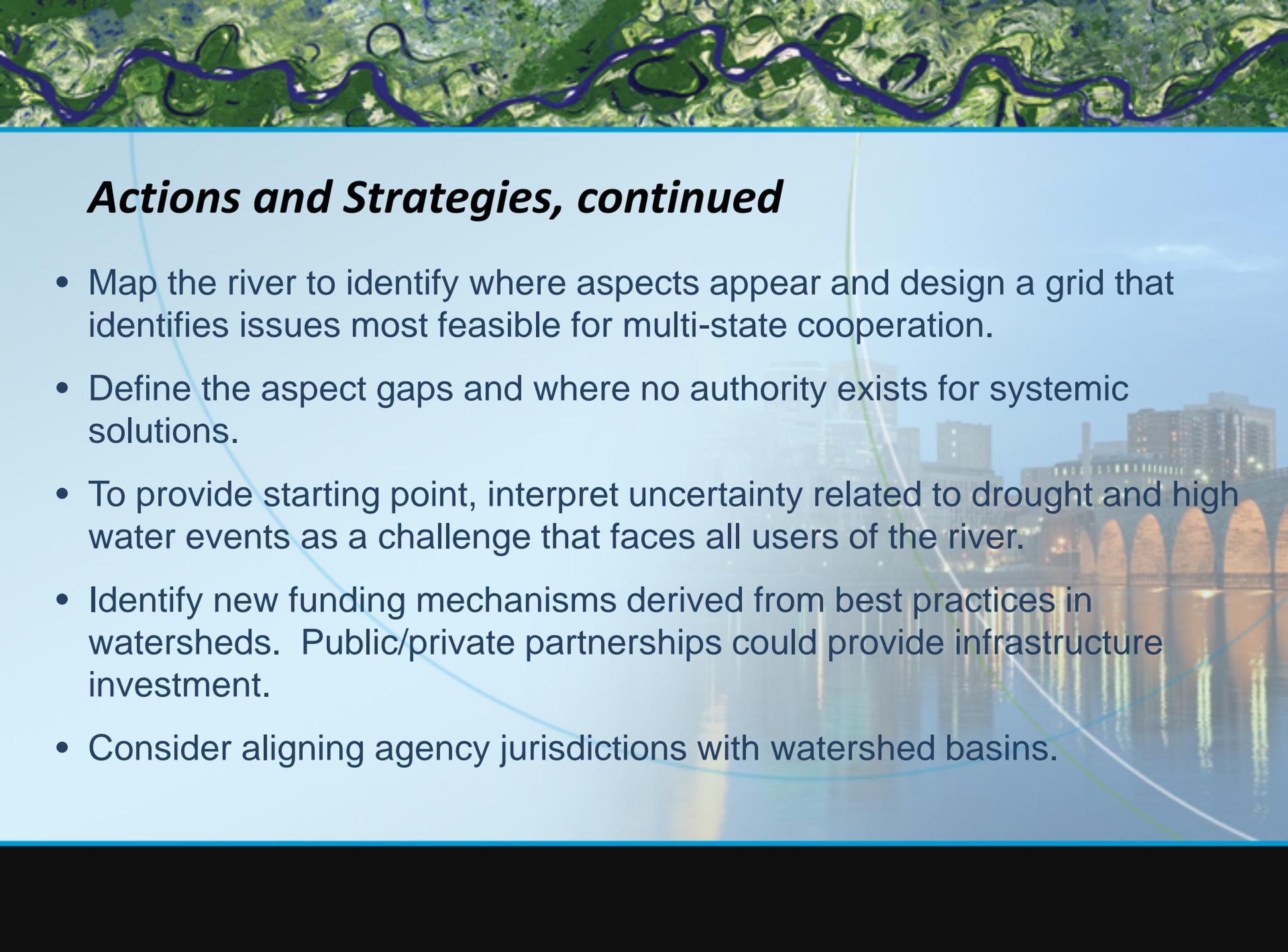
Actions and Strategies

- Build societal and political will for sustainable, resilient, healthy river by increasing public awareness and building popular support.
 - Establish multi-disciplinary demonstrations to show how river management can be achieved that account for interrelated aspects and demands.
 - Create an ecosystem values index that includes both qualified and quantified criteria.
 - Help create a dialogue by putting an assessment of indicators in the public vernacular.
 - Create a transparent inventory of shared information.
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Actions and Strategies, continued

- Incorporate shared classification structure into all states' Clean Water Act programs and into water quality standards specifically.
 - Design and implement a monitoring strategy to include chemical, physical and biological metrics.
 - Develop assessment methodology that reflects the classification structure and describes how monitoring results will be compared to criteria to determine progress.
 - Develop and utilize easy-to-use data management system that is easy to access and delivers sampling data and transformed data in portable, relational format.
 - Identify natural champions for integrated river management and attract interests that will benefit as result.
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Actions and Strategies, continued

- Map the river to identify where aspects appear and design a grid that identifies issues most feasible for multi-state cooperation.
- Define the aspect gaps and where no authority exists for systemic solutions.
- To provide starting point, interpret uncertainty related to drought and high water events as a challenge that faces all users of the river.
- Identify new funding mechanisms derived from best practices in watersheds. Public/private partnerships could provide infrastructure investment.
- Consider aligning agency jurisdictions with watershed basins.

A WAY FORWARD

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GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

allow for the
integration of the
multiple uses of the
river that will create
long term
sustainability



A WAY FORWARD

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SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Implement best management practices on as many acres as possible to minimize nutrient and sediment runoff and help normalize altered hydrology from Agriculture.

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FUNCTIONAL FLOODPLAINS

Create a sound mix of restored floodplains that serve both agriculture and nature while in production and/or flooded, as well as appropriate protection for agricultural land and urban areas.

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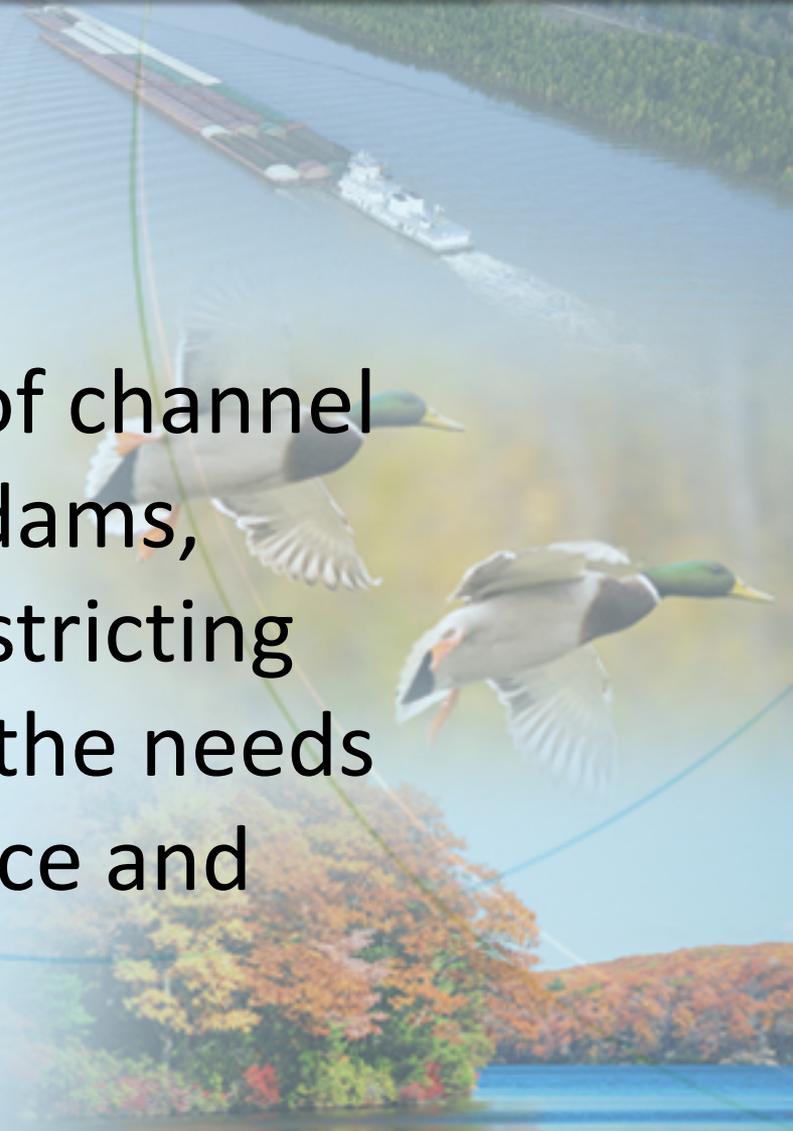


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4

COMPATIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Minimize the impact of channel structures, locks and dams, levees, and other constricting structures to support the needs of channel maintenance and river ecosystems.



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POLITICAL & SOCIETAL WILL

Support emerging coalitions and communicate to the public the necessity for action in the 31 states of the Mississippi River Watershed.

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