



2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Advancing our shared vision of clean waters,
restored habitat and a river for all to enjoy

Interactive maps, full
stories and more at:
[FMR.ORG/AR2021](https://fmr.org/ar2021)

PHOTO: JIM HUDAK

Fellow friends of the river,

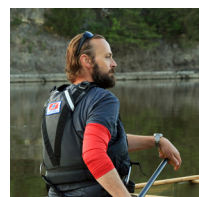
2021 was another busy year for Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) with continued impactful work, important advocacy and vibrant organizational growth, all of which is made possible by you, FMR's members, supporters, volunteers, partners and advocates.

Some highlights of 2021 include the third year of our growing Environmental Stewardship Institute and the first year for both our Cultural Landscapes K-12 curriculum and our partner-based BIPOC River Stewards program. FMR's commitment to meaningful and inclusive community engagement is also reflected in the 35+ development, land use and planning projects we weighed in on over this past year. And our land restoration efforts along the metro river expanded through the addition of five new sites in vital habitat corridors.

On the national level, we celebrated the successful introduction of the Mississippi River Restoration &

Resilience Initiative (MRRRI) Act to the U.S. House of Representatives. The MRRRI Act is one of the most dynamic initiatives FMR has worked on and continues to be a priority focus of ours. When passed, the initiative will provide significant federal funding for protection and restoration to the ten states that border the Mississippi River.

As the pandemic era finally begins to subside, we look forward to gathering again with all of you in person and, hopefully, to seeing you on our river in 2022! Until then, enjoy these highlights of all we accomplished together in 2021.



With gratitude for all you make possible and enthusiasm for where we are headed together,

*Chad Dayton,
Chair of FMR's Board of Directors*

What you made possible



WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

Advancing the Mississippi River Restoration & Resilience Initiative (MRRRI) Act

We celebrated the introduction of the MRRRI Act (HR 4202) in the U.S. House of Representatives in July. We're proud to work toward the first comprehensive federal initiative to protect the Mississippi River from the headwaters to the gulf.



STEWARDSHIP & EDUCATION PROGRAM

Growing support for Forever Green crops

We helped secure \$4 million for crop research and development at the Minnesota Legislature. And in the summer, we cohosted a successful policymaker field day. Getting to clean water requires more continuous living cover crops on our farmlands, and last year, this initiative gained major momentum.



LAND USE & PLANNING PROGRAM

Weighing in on the future of 35+ sites

We participated in more than 35 planning and development projects in 15 metro river corridor cities, engaging hundreds of community members on questions like: What should happen to our locks and dams? How can we ensure bird habitat along the Mississippi Flyway? Could an old riverfront golf course become a public park? What would equitable and environmentally just development look like in North Minneapolis? Our collective engagement shapes healthy and inspiring river communities.



Starting a BIPOC River Stewards

To provide stewardship and affirming and useful for Black prairies, plant trees and go b

ADVOCACY & ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS



1733
VOLUNTEERS



3066
RIVER
GUARDIANS



1129
YOUTH



2521
MEMBER
HOUSEHOLDS

e in 2021:



Deepening our Cultural Landscapes lesson

We piloted our Cultural Landscapes K-12 curriculum module, which explores the history of this land and participants' individual connections to place. Collaborating with Lower Phalen Creek Project and other Indigenous community members, we were able to deepen this lesson, centering Dakota history and contemporary voices.



LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM

101 E. Fifth Street, Suite 2000
 Saint Paul, MN 55101
 651-222-2193
www.fmr.org • info@fmr.org

FMR's work takes place on Dakota homelands. Learn more at fmr.org/Dakota-Homelands.

Mission

Friends of the Mississippi River engages people to protect, restore and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities region.

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Expanding our career pathways program

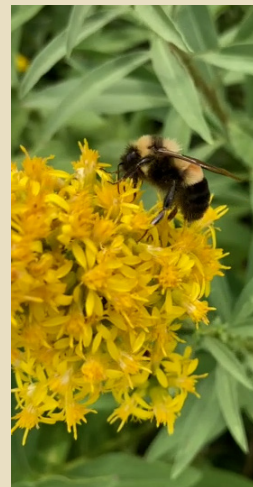
Twelve mentors joined our high school-aged fellows for our summer Environmental Stewardship Institute. In the fall, we hired seven inaugural ESI Advisory Council members to help guide the program and take on group projects during the school year.

Adding five new restoration projects

Totalling 273 acres, our newest restoration sites are located in crucial habitat corridors experiencing development pressure. With the help of supporters and volunteers, we'll turn buckthorn thickets into flourishing oak savanna, abandoned fields into diverse prairies and a degraded grassland into a pollinator haven.

Surveying our restoration sites to find threatened wildlife thriving

In 2021, we found 17 Species of Greatest Conservation Need at our sites including birds, reptiles and pollinators — plus the endangered rusty patched bumblebee.

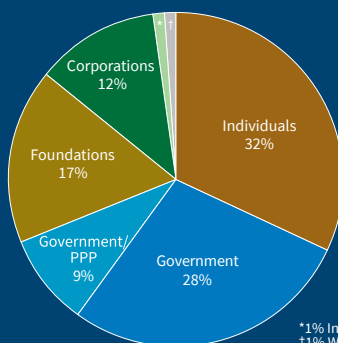


Stewards program

community experiences that feel welcoming, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, we launched the program. We teamed up with partners to tend birding in the Mississippi River gorge.

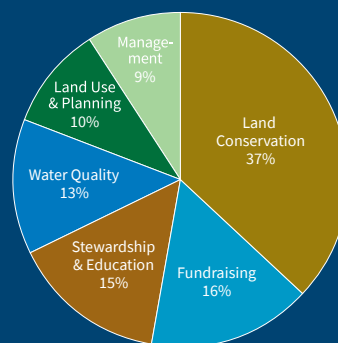
2021 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES*

REVENUES: \$2,572,244



*1% In-Kind/Other
 11% Workplace Giving

EXPENSES: \$2,541,504



*Calendar year 2021 total of unrestricted amounts (unaudited). If you would like to be notified when audited financials become available, please reach out to FMR Member Relations Manager John Briel at jbriel@fmr.org. Note: In 2022, FMR will move to a July-to-June fiscal year calendar.

PHOTO CREDITS: Dodd Demas (Kernza, volunteers, water glass), Adrian Islam (Cultural Landscapes lesson), Tom Reiter (Chad Dayton, egret)



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THANK YOU

for advancing key initiatives to restore the river

All of us at FMR are deeply grateful for our collective of members, donors, advocates and volunteers who have helped us make important strides to protect the river in 2021. Your generosity, passion and voice make our work possible.

Because of our community of river supporters, FMR's work has not slowed — it has accelerated. We're innovating for clean water, advocating for inclusive public decision-making and equitable river access, training and inspiring the next generation of diverse environmental leaders, and protecting and restoring vital places along our stretch of the river. Our commitment to a restored river that fully supports the communities through which it flows has never been stronger.

Inside, check out a snapshot of the impactful work that together we made possible over the past year. And be sure to enjoy the full, interactive version of our annual report as well as our list of generous 2021 donors at [FMR.ORG/AR2021](https://www.fmr.org/AR2021). Thank you for advancing our shared vision of clean waters, restored habitat and a river for all to enjoy.



Clockwise from top left, photos by Dodd Demas, FMR, Mike Durenberger, FMR

FMR.ORG

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Platinum
Transparency
2022

Candid.

