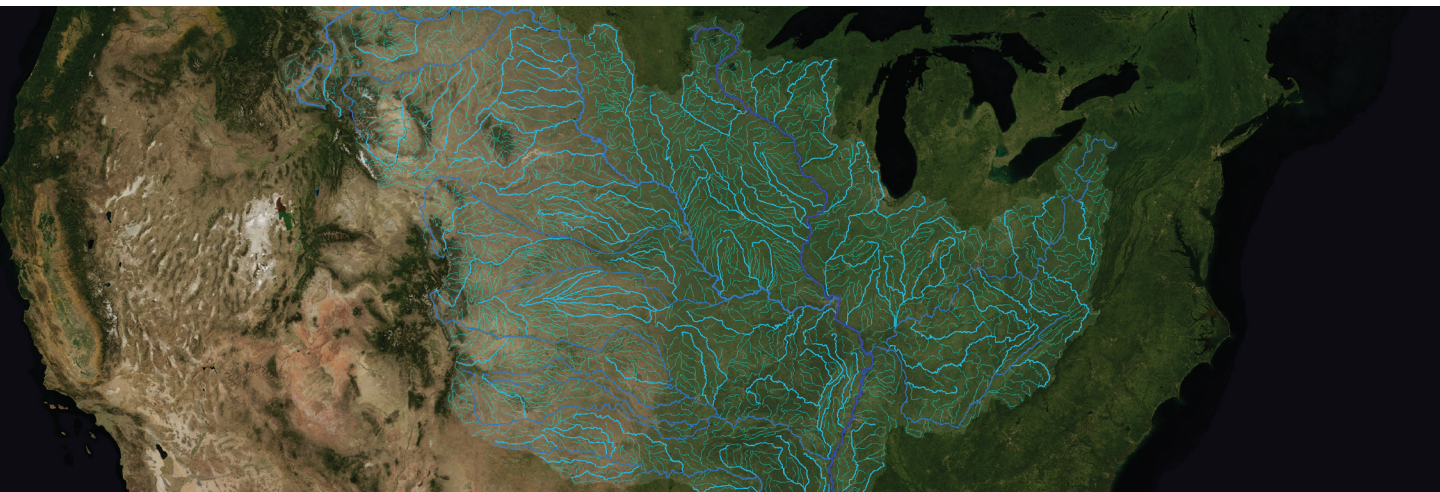


NATURE

STATE NAME

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Consider making caption state-specific (e.g., "Illinois is one of 31 states in the Mississippi River Basin"). © Photo Byline

Restoring America's River

The Mississippi River may be closer to home than you think.

Did you know you live in the Mississippi River Basin? The basin, or watershed, is the vast area of land where rainfall feeds an interconnected system of over 7,000 rivers and streams across 31 states, all flowing into the Mississippi River.

Stretching from the Missouri River in Montana to the Allegheny in Pennsylvania and south to the Atchafalaya in Louisiana, this vast system provides drinking water, nourishes crops and offers critical wildlife habitat. Yet the Mississippi River Basin has been dramatically reshaped over time, and those changes cause serious consequences. Decades of draining wetlands, tilling grasslands, straightening rivers and disconnecting floodplains have increased nutrient pollution, worsened flooding, and led to widespread habitat loss.

"What happens on the land doesn't stay on the land. Every farm field, prairie, forest, city and floodplain in the basin is part of a living system that shapes the

health of the Mississippi River," said Nick Ohde, coordinating director of TNC's Mississippi River Basin program.

By caring for local lands and waters, we improve the entire system. What does this look like? Planting trees and restoring prairies and grasslands to keep roots in the ground. Employing regenerative agriculture practices that mimic natural ecosystems to hold on to nutrients, soil and water. And protecting wetlands that absorb floodwaters and provide wildlife habitat.

Every farm field, prairie, forest, city and floodplain shapes the health of the Mississippi River.

Nick Ohde, Coordinating Director, TNC's Mississippi River Basin program

This is why TNC partners across sectors and state lines to improve water quality, restore habitat and strengthen climate resilience. The work adds up across landscapes to create a healthier river and a more sustainable future.

Mississippi River Basin Facts

— **~7,000**

Rivers and streams in the basin

— **20 million**

People depend on the Mississippi River for drinking water

— **325**

Bird species that migrate through the Mississippi Flyway

Learn more

about the Mississippi River Basin here:

