

# 9th Annual Upper Mississippi River Conference

## ***Raising the Grade***

*October 13-14, 2016  
iWireless Center, Moline, Illinois*



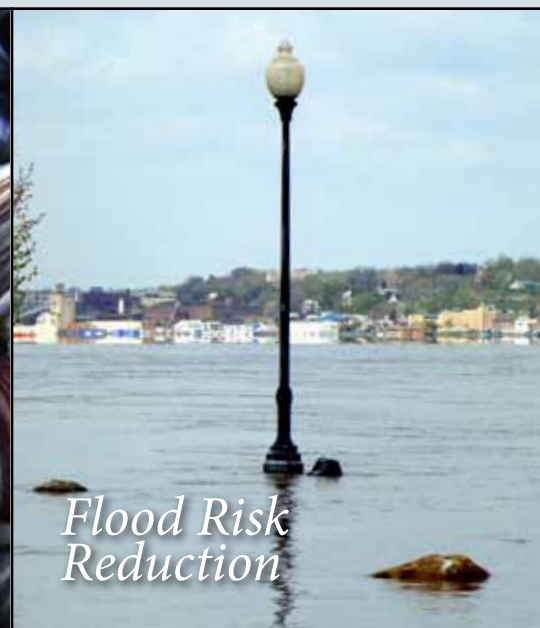
*Energy*



*Recreation*



*Ecosystems*



*Flood Risk  
Reduction*



*Water  
Supply*



*Transportation*



*Coastal  
Wetlands and  
Gulf Hypoxia*



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# Student Summit



## **Dave Murcia**

*Naturalist / Director, Wapsi River Environmental Education Center*

“We are in an age of *awareness*. An *awareness* of our human needs of food, water, shelter, and space. It is an age in which we are reminded that we are not the only species which shares these needs. We are being graded by our *Mother Earth*, and there is much room for improvement. Our most critical of needs is abundant, yet it is not. It surrounds our planet, it runs through us, we consume it as others do; yet there are those who pollute, waste, and take it for granted. Please join me in exploring our shared interest and engaging in a lifestyle in which we all can raise our grade in honor of our *sacred water*.” — Dave Murcia

Mr. Murcia holds a B.S. in Conservation Biology along with supporting certifications, including Certified Interpretive Guide. He has worked in natural resources at each government level, including the US Fish & Wildlife Service as a Supervisory Park Ranger and Refuge Manager, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and now at Scott County Conservation Board as Naturalist / Director of the Wapsi River Environmental Education Center. His life mission places an emphasis on sustainability through stewardship of our natural resources by bringing awareness, education, lifestyle behaviors, and a stewardship to our Mother Earth.

## **Schedule At-a-Glance**

*Thursday, October 13*

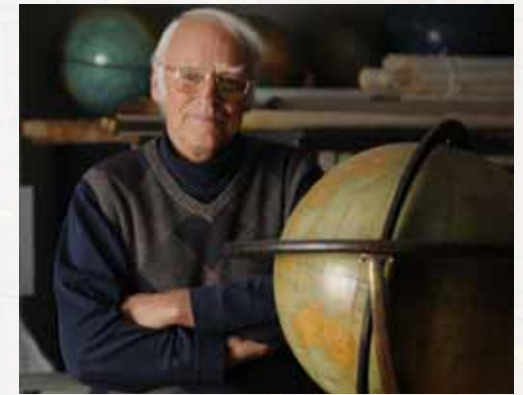
- 3:30 Registration Opens
- 3:50 Welcome Speech
- 4:00 Field Trips
  - A. Kone — Tour of a Platinum Green Building  
*Rodney Blackwell*, Developer  
Financial District Properties, Davenport
  - B. Sustainability Right Before Your Eyes:  
Ten Examples Near Sylvan Island  
*Dr. Norm Moline*, Professor Emeritus,  
Augustana College, Rock Island
- 5:30 Keynote Address – “*Three Percent*” *Dave Murcia*
- 6:30 Catfish Fry and Poster Presentations

The Student Summit acts as a way for students to engage with river stakeholders and to learn about the important issues related to the Mississippi River. On the field trip to

*LEED Platinum Kone Building, located in Moline*



start the evening, students will have the choice of seeing the Kone Building in Moline or a trip to the Sylvan Island Slough, where they will learn about sustainability in urban environments. After the field trip the students will be treated to a keynote speech by local wetlands and wildlife expert and conservationist Dave Murcia, who will be discussing the importance of water to our planet.



*Dr. Norm Moline will lead a trip to the Sylvan Island area*

**New this year**, 18 high school delegates will be chosen by application to attend the UMRC as an extension of the Student Summit. These applications will involve a short 250 word essay and qualifiers will be selected by the Student Summit Committee. Student Delegates will attend the presentations on Thursday and participate in the working sessions on Friday. These students will get to work with the conference-goers to strategize improvements to the rivers ecosystems, flood control and risk reduction, transportation, water supply, economy, recreation, and gulf hypoxia.

## Registration Info

You may also register online at [riveraction.org/umrc](http://riveraction.org/umrc)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Line 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Line 2 \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  Email me conference info

## Registration Type

### Standard (Full conference)

- \$150 (Before Oct. 1)  
 \$225 (After Oct. 1)

### Elected Official (Full conf.)

- \$99 (Before Oct. 1)  
 \$140 (After Oct. 1)

### Student (Full conf.)

- \$25 (Before Oct. 1)  
 \$40 (After Oct. 1)

### Standard One Day Registration

- \$110 (Before Oct. 1)  
 \$150 (After Oct. 1)

### Elected Official One Day Registration

- \$65 (Before Oct. 1)  
 \$100 (After Oct. 1)

### Student One Day Registration

- \$15 (Before Oct. 1)  
 \$25 (After Oct. 1)

## RSVP Info

Luncheon and Catfish Fry are included in the cost of registration

- Luncheon (Thursday)       Guest for Luncheon (\$20)  
 Catfish Fry (Thursday)       Guest for Catfish Fry (\$20)  
 Press Conference (Friday)      Special Meal Requests \_\_\_\_\_

## Payment Method

- Card       Check (to River Action) # \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## Accommodations

Radisson on John Deere Commons, a riverside hotel, is a one-minute walk to the conference center, a three-minute walk from the John Deere Pavilion exhibits and six miles from the Quad City International Airport (MLI).

Call (309) 764-1000 and reference the "Upper Mississippi River Conference" room block, or visit [radisson.com/molineil](http://radisson.com/molineil) and use the booking code "UPPMSS".

Conference sessions are held at the iWireless Center (pictured below) adjacent to the Radisson and the riverfront.

Find more visitor information at:  
[www.visitquadcities.com](http://www.visitquadcities.com)



## Continuing Education Credits

Earn up to 21 professional development hours from more than 130 education sessions. Leading industry experts offer in-depth knowledge of topics and trends transforming the industry.

Certificates of Attendance will be available at the conference registration desk upon request. Check with your professional organization or institution for more information about education credits.

# Conference Information



The seven sectors studied by the AWI Report Card

The ninth annual UMRC is the “Raising the Grade” conference in response to the recently released America’s Watershed Initiative Report Card for the Mississippi River watershed. With a D+ in the overall watershed and a C in the Upper Mississippi basin, the region faces many interconnected challenges.

Conference attendees will advance solutions for the Upper Mississippi and beyond with some of the country’s leading experts in sessions dedicated to key watershed-wide indicators identified in the Report Card. Working seminars will create awareness of opportunities and challenges and will provide a forum to develop a shared vision.

In 2020 the AWI will issue its second report on the Mississippi River watershed.

## Thursday, October 13 Schedule At-a-Glance

- 7:00 Registration Opens
- 7:30 Breakfast
- 8:25 Introductions
- 8:30 Opening Keynote, “Grading the River”  
*Dr. Heath Kelsey*, Program Director  
University of Maryland, Cambridge
- 9:30 River/Watershed Panel  
*Bill Northey*, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture, Des Moines  
EPA State Agency Co-chair Gulf Hypoxia Task Force  
*Maj. Gen Michael Wehr*, Commander  
US Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg  
*Dru Buntin*, Executive Director  
Upper Miss. River Basin Assn., St. Paul
- 11:15 Morning Concurrent Sessions
  - I. Energy  
A representative from Rye Development, Boston  
A representative from Missouri River Energy Services, Sioux Falls, SD  
A representative from Exelon, Cordova, IL
  - II. Flood Control and Risk Reduction  
*Dr. Larry Weber*, Professor of Engineering  
Univ. of Iowa Flood Center, Iowa City  
*Mike Klingner*, Chairman  
Upper Miss., Illinois & Missouri Rivers Assn.  
*Sally McConkey*, P.E., CFM, D.WRE., Section Head  
IL State Water Survey, Prairie Research Inst., Univ. of IL
  - III. Recreation  
*Steven Carlyon*, Director  
La Crosse Parks, Recreation and Forestry Dept., La Crosse  
*Kim Rea*, Recreation Manager  
US Army Corps of Engineers, Alton
- 12:30 Luncheon Speaker  
*Dana Starkell*, Mississippi River Sojourner  
Bettendorf
- 1:45 Early Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

- IV. Ecosystems  
*Gretchen Benjamin*, Assoc. Dir. Water Resources  
Infrastructure at The Nature Conservancy, La Crosse  
*Ken Barr*, Chief of Environmental Analysis Branch  
US Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island
- V. Water Supply  
*Dr. Maria Lemke*, Aquatic Ecologist  
The Nature Conservancy  
*Randy Moore*, President  
Iowa American Water, Davenport
- 2:45 Late Afternoon Concurrent Sessions
- VI. Transportation  
*Mike Cox*, Operations Division Chief  
US Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island  
*Paul Rohde*, Vice President  
Waterways Council Inc, St. Louis  
*Marty Hettel*, Chairman  
Inland Waterways User Board, Chesterfield  
*Scott Sigman*, Transportation Infrastructure Lead  
Illinois Soybean Assn., Bloomington
- VII. Gulf Hypoxia  
*Laura Christianson, Ph. D.*, Asst Prof of Water Quality  
Univ. of Illinois, Urbana  
*Kelly Warner*, Hydrologist  
USGS IL Water Science Center, Urbana  
*Steve Richter*, Dir. of Conservation Programs  
The Nature Conservancy, Wisconsin
- 3:45 Mississippi River Economic Update  
*Colin Wellenkamp*, Executive Director  
Miss. River Cities & Towns Initiative, St. Louis
- 4:00 Raise-the-Grade Challenge  
*Michael Reuter*, North America Water Dir  
The Nature Conservancy, St. Louis  
Founding Member of AWI
- 5:00 Student Poster Session
- 6:30 Catfish Fry

## Dr. Heath Kelsey, University of Maryland



**Dr. Heath Kelsey** is Program Director for the Integration and Application Network, a group of scientists focusing on scientific synthesis and communication, based at the University of Maryland. Heath has developed ecosystem health report cards for numerous coastal and inland aquatic systems globally including Australia's Great Barrier Reef, Coastal India, and Chesapeake Bay. Dr. Kelsey earned his MSPH and PhD in Environmental Health Sciences at the Arnold School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina.

## Dru Buntin, Upper Miss. River Basin Assn.



**Dru Buntin** has a passion for big river systems. He has a great sense of respect for the complexities of balancing all societal uses of these resources. He has developed relationships with many key decision makers in government, the conservation community, agriculture, the navigation industry and other sectors throughout the Midwest.

He has a proven record of motivating and leading staff, developing consensus among a large and diverse set of partners and stakeholders, and creating and managing multi-million dollar projects.

## Colin Wellenkamp, Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative



Focusing on advocating for and advancing the public interest, as Executive Director of MRCTI, **Colin Wellenkamp** works on improving relations between local governments and businesses. He believes sustainability is the future of government oversight and economic development. Ultimately, Wellenkamp wants to help organizations transition to sustainability.

## Friday, October 14 Schedule At-a-Glance

- 7:00 Breakfast / Registration Opens
- 8:15 Working Sessions I
- I. Energy  
*TBD*
  - II. Flood Control and Risk Reduction  
*Kris Johnson Ph.D, Senior Scientist  
The Nature Conservancy, Minneapolis*
  - III. Recreation  
*Joe Taylor, President & CEO  
Quad Cities CVB, Moline*
  - IV. Ecosystems  
*Roger Viadero Ph.D., Professor  
Western Illinois University, Macomb*
  - V. Water Supply  
*Scott Tomkins  
Illinois EPA Bureau of Water*
  - VI. Transportation  
*Dan Mecklenborg, Senior Vice President  
Ingram Barge Company, Nashville*
  - VII. Gulf Hypoxia  
*Rebecca Smith, Program Director  
The Nature Conservancy, Madison*
- 10:15 Break
- 10:30 Working Sessions II
- 12:00 Lunch
- 2:00 Press Conference

At the close of the conference, UMRC representatives will discuss some of the work session outcomes, including action plans for policy and implementation and other ways to raise the grade before the next AWI report, which will be given for the Mississippi River basin in 2020.

## Maj. Gen. Michael Wehr, USACE

**Major General Michael C. Wehr** serves as the senior military officer of the Mississippi Valley Division of the US Army Corps of Engineers, headquartered in Vicksburg. The division is responsible for water resources engineering solutions in a 370,000 square-mile area, from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. The mission of the division is to manage the watersheds and develop collaborative engineering solutions that will reduce risks through the reduction of flood damage potential, maintain and enhance navigation, and protect, restore and enhance environmental ecosystems.



## Michael Reuter, The Nature Conservancy

A founding member of the steering committee for America's Watershed Initiative and the Director of The Nature Conservancy's Water Program in North America, **Michael Reuter** has worked throughout the U.S. and globally for more than two decades to establish and improve water management in support of conservation and the sustainable and equitable use of our vital rivers, lakes and aquifers. He lives in the St. Louis area with his wife and three children.



## Sec. Bill Northey, IA Dept. of Agriculture

**Bill Northey**, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture, is a fourth-generation Iowa farmer. On his farm Northey uses reduced tillage, GPS, and grid soil sampling. Northey ran on a platform of expanding opportunities in renewable energy and promoting science and technology to better conserve our air, soil and water. Northey has traveled around the world to view agricultural operations. He graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in Agricultural Business. Northey received a Masters in Business Administration from Southwest Minnesota State University in 2004.

