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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Mayor Buol Named to Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative Board**

**DUBUQUE, Iowa** – Dubuque Mayor Roy D. Buol was recently selected by more than 40 other mayors from up and down the Mississippi River to serve on the executive board of the Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative (MRCTI).

Mayors from towns and cities along the Mississippi River participated in the inaugural meeting of the Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative (MRCTI), held in St. Louis, September 12-14. The initiative is engaging officials from the EPA, USDA, FEMA, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as state officials and non-government organization stakeholders, on critical federal activities affecting Mississippi River cities and towns.

This mayoral-led effort is being built to bring national attention back to the Mississippi River, America's most critical natural asset, and spearhead a new level of regional cooperation to make it more sustainable. This year's drought, the worst in 50 years, has severely impacted the more than 120 towns and cities along the river and the three million people who live and make a living along the river, the ecological linchpin to the 37-state Mississippi River Basin.

The Mississippi River is responsible for creating \$105 billion worth of U.S. gross domestic product; providing drinking water for more than 18 million; transporting 62 percent of our nation's agricultural output; and annual revenue from recreational uses on the river exceeds \$1.2 billion in the Upper Mississippi River alone.

At their meeting last week, the 41 mayors in attendance decided on the next steps to create solutions to policy problems they say impede the environmental and economic health of river communities:

- Supporting a farm bill to provide help to drought devastated communities and protect the national economy from being stressed by higher food and energy prices.
- Involving the agriculture, recreation and navigation industries in the effort.
- Visiting Capitol Hill in the first quarter of 2013 to advocate for policy changes such as transforming the National Flood Insurance Program to incentivize sustainable development of flood plain areas, reforming the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and Inland Waterways Trust Fund, and focusing on the river's environmental health to ensure that navigation remains viable.

#### **Mayors on the Executive Board**

Francis Slay, St. Louis, MO\*

Paul Winfield, Vicksburg, MS

Roy Buol, Dubuque, IA

Jo Anne Smiley, Clarksville, MO

David Kleis, St. Cloud, MN\*

A.C. Wharton, Memphis, TN

Hiram Copeland, Vidalia, LA

Dickie Kennemore, Osceola, AR

Tom Hoechst, Alton, IL

*\*Chair, Co-Chair*

MRCTI is a local government-led effort empowering the 10 states and over 100 cities that border the Mississippi River to act for its continued prosperity, sustainability, and economic growth. Through MRCTI, mayors and other leaders seek to give new urgency to issues facing the Mississippi River, and new strength to effectively resolve them. For more information on MRCTI, contact Colin Wellenkamp, director, at [cwellenkamp@nemw.org](mailto:cwellenkamp@nemw.org) or 202-464-4010.

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