

# Three Regional Planning Agencies to Join the Corn Belt Ports in 2021

January 4, 2021

## Corn Belt Ports

Tri-State Region (IL, MO & IA)

MEDIA RELEASE #3



Three additional Illinois Regional Planning Agencies have requested to join the Corn Belt Ports. The Blackhawk Hills Regional Council's riverfront counties in Northwest Illinois have applied to join the Mississippi River Ports of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois (MRPEIWI). The riverfront counties in the North Central Illinois Council of Governments' area have requested to be part of the Illinois River and Waterways Ports and Terminals statistical area. And, riverfront counties in the West Central Development Council's area will be affiliated with the Mid-America Port Commission.

The Tri-State (IL, MO, IA) Corn Belt Ports are simply the ports and terminals in the Heart of the Corn Belt above Locks and Dam 26. Approval of these three requests by the Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center is anticipated before July 2021. Collectively, this will enable the Corn Belt Ports to solidly maintain their place as the equivalent of the Top-Ranked Inland Port in the Nation, and individually each Corn Belt Port will become a Top-50 Principal U.S. Port, a category that includes coastal ports. For perspective, in 2020 (2019 data) the top-ranked principal inland port in the U.S. was the 199-mile Port of Huntington (WV, OH, KY) that handled 36.8 million tons of freight. The entire Illinois Waterway handled 34.8 million tons, alone (not including the Upper Mississippi River Ports in the Heart of the Corn Belt).

BJ Murray, the Section Chief of Aviation and Marine Program Planning, Illinois Department of Transportation remarked, "The inclusion of the Regional Planning Agencies serving Northwest Illinois, North Central Illinois, and West Central Illinois will help better integrate waterway segments into the regional multi-modal transportation networks." Daniel Payette, Executive Director of Blackhawk Hills Regional Council (BHRC) stated, "Participation in the Mississippi River Ports of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois deepens my organization's connection with partners on both sides of the Mississippi and supports BHRC's economic development and multi-modal transportation planning efforts in Northwest Illinois." "Expansion of the Illinois Waterway Ports and Terminals Port Statistical Area to include our riverfront counties will more accurately represent the value of our region's multi-modal transportation infrastructure to the state, national, and global economies and make North Central Illinois more attractive and competitive for new investment," said, Kevin Lindeman, Executive Director of the North Central Illinois Council of Governments. "Our riverfront counties ship millions of tons of food and food products on our waterways each year. It is important that West Central Illinois has the recognition of being part of a Top-50 ranked Principal U.S. Port," noted Michael Sherer, Executive Director of the West Central Development Council.

"The importance of the regional planning agencies incorporating waterways into their multi-modal transportation planning activities cannot be understated when it comes to efficiently reaching global markets with our agricultural products," said Jim Tarmann, Managing Director at the Illinois Corn Growers Association. Craig Markley, Systems Planning Bureau Director at the Iowa Department of Transportation pointed out, "These regional additions to the Corn Belt Ports will raise the national and global awareness of the substantial multi-modal transportation infrastructure that underpins our Midwestern Cities and Agricultural areas.

Robert Sinkler; COO Streamside System, Inc.; and Senior Advisor at Dawson & Associates;  
629 State Ave, Hampton, IL 61256; robertsinkler@hotmail.com; 309 230 8790  
Visit the Corn Belt Ports Initiative Website at: [CBP About - Western Illinois University \(wiu.edu\)](http://CBP>About-Western-Illinois-University(wiu.edu))

# Three Regional Planning Agencies to Join the Corn Belt Ports in 2021

January 4, 2021

Blackhawk Hills Regional Council  
(BHRC)



The North Central Illinois Council  
of Governments (NCICG)

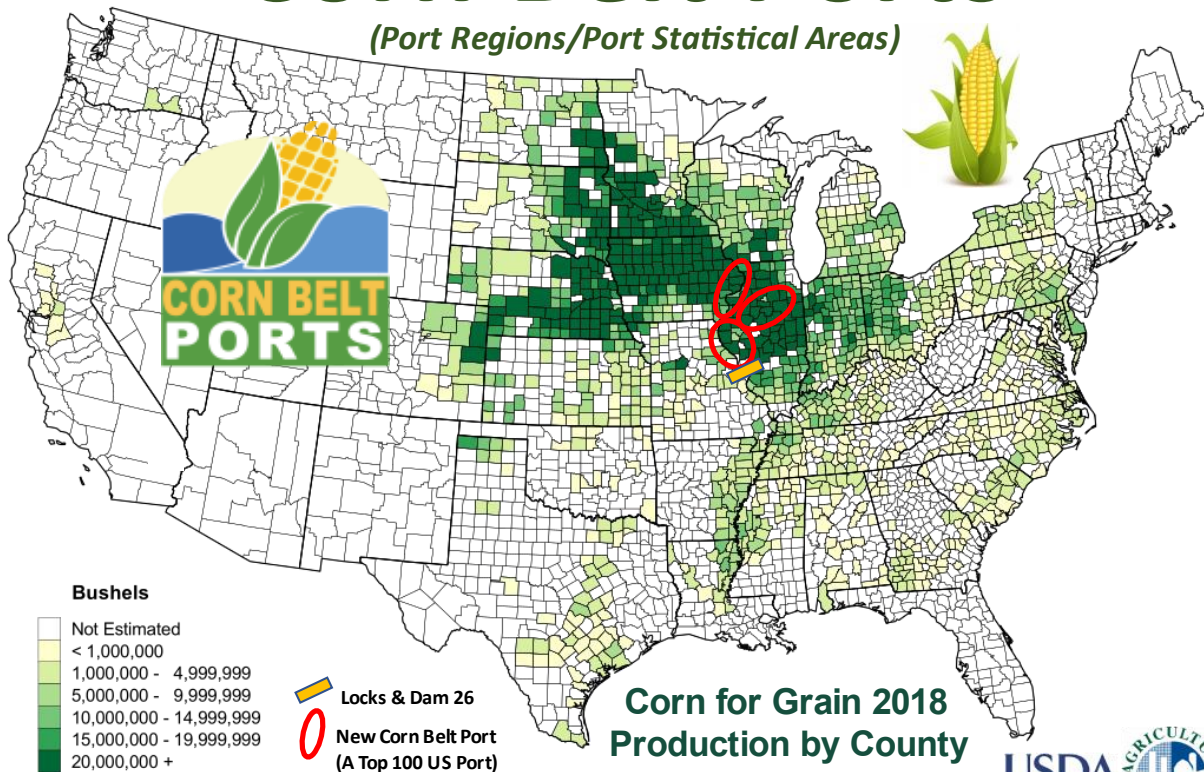


West Central Development Council  
(WCDC)



## Corn Belt Ports

(Port Regions/Port Statistical Areas)



U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service



Robert Sinkler; COO Streamside System, Inc.; and Senior Advisor at Dawson & Associates;  
629 State Ave, Hampton, IL 61256; robertsinkler@hotmail.com; 309 230 8790  
Visit the Corn Belt Ports Initiative Website at: [CBP About - Western Illinois University \(wiu.edu\)](http://CBP>About-Western-Illinois-University(wiu.edu))