



June 24, 2022



Colonel Karl Jansen
Commander
St. Paul District



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
180 5th St. E., Suite 700
St. Paul, MN 55101



SUBJECT: Stakeholder Support for the Creation of the Northern Grain Belt Port Statistical Area



Dear Colonel Jansen,



On behalf of the undersigned Minnesota and Wisconsin agriculture organizations, we write in support of the establishment of the Northern Grain Belt Port Statistical Area (PSA), to collect consolidated data regarding waterway freight terminal volumes and vessel activities.



Creating the Northern Grain Belt Port Statistical Area can aid an inland port region in marketing itself to investors and customers by consolidating port and terminal data under one umbrella. Organizations are working with four counties in Minnesota (Goodhue, Houston, Wabasha and Winona) and seven counties in Wisconsin (Buffalo, Crawford, La Crosse, Pepin, Pierce, Trempealeau and Vernon) to pass resolutions supporting this effort.



We provide this support for the proposed procedure, being advanced by the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC) as the applicant and recognize that support based on as accurate an accounting of traffic activities as is practical for the facilities across defined geography can serve to reinforce and advance economic development more broadly.



Support, for and from communities along the waterways and beyond, will be more able to recognize the important value of the regional and national waterways that serve as origins and destinations for the waterborne freight that is loaded and unloaded throughout the area.



This bi-state section of the Upper Mississippi River has been a functioning regional port system for over 100 years without federal recognition. Wisconsin is currently the only state on the Mississippi River without a federally recognized port. It is also difficult to determine what waterborne commerce activity is taking place in Western Wisconsin and Eastern Minnesota to support bi-state, regional economic development, and transportation planning efforts. The Northern Grain Belt Port Statistical Area initiative corrects that.



The proposed Northern Grain Belt Port Statistical Area (Wisconsin and Minnesota) will be within the 7 riverfront counties of the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission (MRRPC) in Wisconsin, and 4 riverfront counties in Minnesota. The concept is in line with the recently created Mississippi River Ports of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois (MRPEIWI) and the Illinois Waterway Ports and Terminals. Both were federally recognized in 2020 and 2021. The Northern Grain Belt Port Statistical Area will similarly be regional planning agency, and county based.

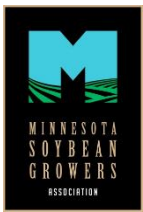


Support, for and from communities along the waterways and beyond, will be more able to recognize the important value of the regional and national waterways that serve as origins and destinations for the waterborne freight that is loaded and unloaded throughout the area.



Sincerely,

Wisconsin Corn Growers Association
Minnesota Corn Growers Association



Midwest Food Products Association
Midwest-SouthEastern Equipment Dealers Association
Minnesota AgriGrowth Council
Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation
Minnesota Famers Union
Minnesota Soybean Growers Association
Wisconsin Agri-Business Association
Wisconsin Association of Professional Agriculture Consultants
Wisconsin Biofuels Association
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation
Wisconsin Soybean Association