



## **2026 Corn Belt Ports & Mid-America Port Commission Annual Meeting**

**Thursday, July 30, 2026**

**Merillat Chapel Recital Hall, Culver-Stockton College, Canton MO**

### **“LEVERAGING PORT INVESTMENT”**

**8:00-9:00** Tour of Lock and Dam 20 (Complementary)

**9:00-9:30** Registration Opens (Lobby)

**9:30-9:35** Welcome – Terry Fretwell, Mayor, Canton, MO (Host)

**9:35-9:40** Welcome and Opening Remarks – Douglas Aeilts, Chair, Mid-America Port Commission (Host)

**9:40-9:50** Robert Sinkler, Executive Coordinating Director, Corn Belt Ports, Rural Regional Partnership Ports Update

### **Regional Port Perspectives**

**9:50-11:00 Leveraging our Port Districts as Rural, Regional Economic Development Engines**

Dr. Chris Merrett, Dean of Innovation and Economic Development and Director of Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs – Moderator

Joe Humes, Western District Commissioner, Clark County Missouri and President of the Governing Board, Northeast Missouri Regional Port Authority

Brian Krull, General Manager, Hendricks River Logistics Port

Ralph Martin, Director, Lewis County Port Authority

Maria Kuhns, Executive Director, Marion-Ralls Regional Port Authority

Mike McLaughlin, Chair, Mid-America Intermodal Authority Port District

Carolyn Wisecarver, Executive Director, Pike-Lincoln County Port

**11:00-11:15 Break**

**11:15-12:00 State DOT Updates (IL, IA, MO) Water and Freight**

Charlie Purcell, Director, Iowa DOT Transportation Development Division

BJ Murry, Section Chief, Aviation & Marine Transportation Program Planning, Illinois Department of Transportation

Levi Woods, Administrator of Freight & Waterways, Missouri Department of Transportation

**12:00-12:45 NETWORKING LUNCH**

**12:45-1:00** Dr. Anshu Singh, Iowa Ports Association, Pool 19 Islands

**Rural Regional Economic Development Outlook**

**1:00-2:00 Tri-State Update and Way Forward,**

Sean Freeman, Executive Director, Tri-State Development Summit – Moderator

Kyle Moore, President, Great River Economic Development Foundation (IL)

Emily Benjamin, President and CEO, Lee County Economic Development Group (IA)

Maria Kuhns, President and CEO, Hannibal Regional Economic Development (MO)

**2:00-2:15 Break**

**2:15-3:15 Corps of Engineers Briefing (Includes Q&A)**

Introduction, Colonel Aaron M. Williams, Commander and District Engineer, Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Mr. Tom Heinold, Chief of Operations Division, MVR Operations Update, Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Marshall Plumley, Regional Program Manager, Upper Mississippi River Restoration Program (UMRR) and the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP), Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

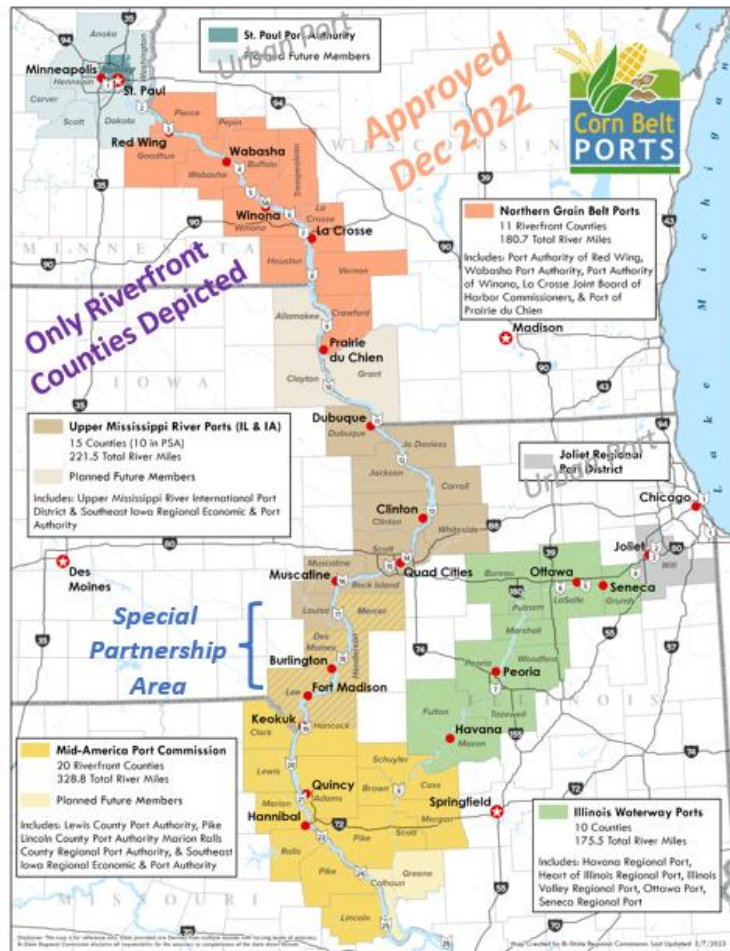
**3:15-3:30** Charles Camillo, Executive Vice President, Midwest Flood Control Association

**3:45** Closing

***Registration fee is \$25.00 per person***

***Registration for Businesses is \$250.00***

***Register on-line to attend at ([LINK](#))***



## MID AMERICA PORT COMMISSION AREA

