

This Article Gave Birth to the Corn Belt Ports

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JOURNAL
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FEATURES

Quad Cities Are Loaded With Port Potential

AUGUST 1, 2019 • BY DAVID MURRAY

<https://www.waterwaysjournal.net/2019/08/01/quad-cities-are-loaded-with-port-potential/>



Quimby's
Inland River Record
2024

THE COMPLETE LISTING OF MARINAS AND LOCKS ON THE INLAND AND GULF INTRACASTAL WATERWAYS

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Trending Now

Work On Coastal Texas Project To Begin

U.S. Inland Barge Fleet Aging Despite Getting Bigger

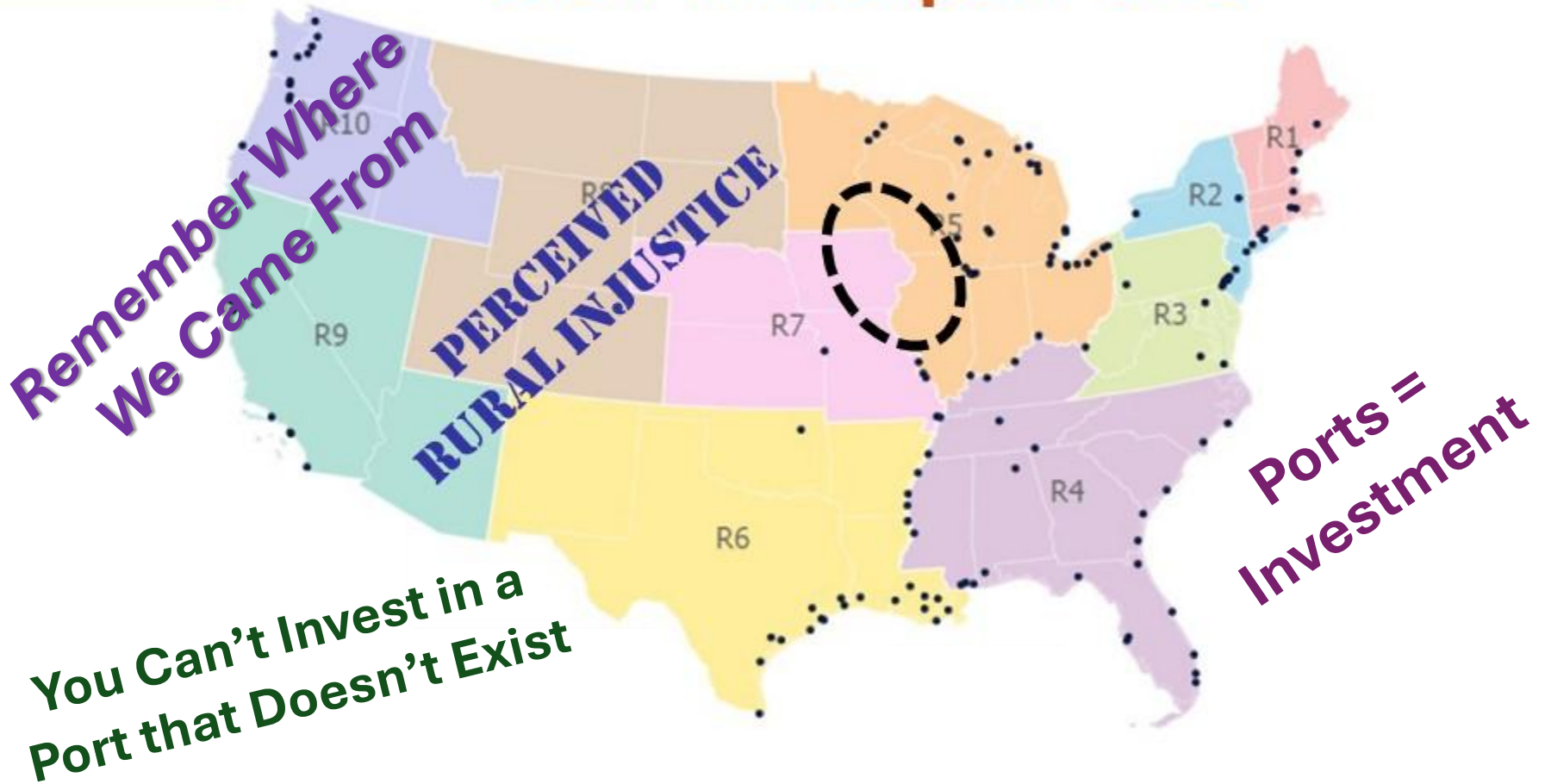
40 Under 40 Awards: Ballard, Benken, Berendes And Blackmon

\$230.5 Million Committed To Port NOLA Projects



Inland Ports Black Hole

U.S. "Principal Ports"



Black Hole Eliminated in 2020

Pre-2020 Map Used by Federal Agencies

2014

St. Louis/Southern Illinois

Labor Tribune

Labor News From Our Region

One of Many
Unexpected Media
Examples Unintentionally
Perpetuating the
Urban Myth

Biden sees Central Port as a lesson to the nation

March 3, 2014

By **CARL GREEN** Illinois Correspondent

Granite City – Just north of downtown St. Louis, at a point where the south end of the Chain of Rocks Canal flows into the Mississippi River, lies America's Central Port, the nation's third largest inland port and the northernmost port on the Mississippi.



CALLING UNION WORKERS the backbone of American industry, Vice President Joe Biden (center, at the podium) visited America's Central Port in Granite City to mark the near completion of its South Harbor project, which was funded in part with \$14.5 million

<https://labortribune.com/biden-sees-central-port-as-a-lesson-to-the-nation/>



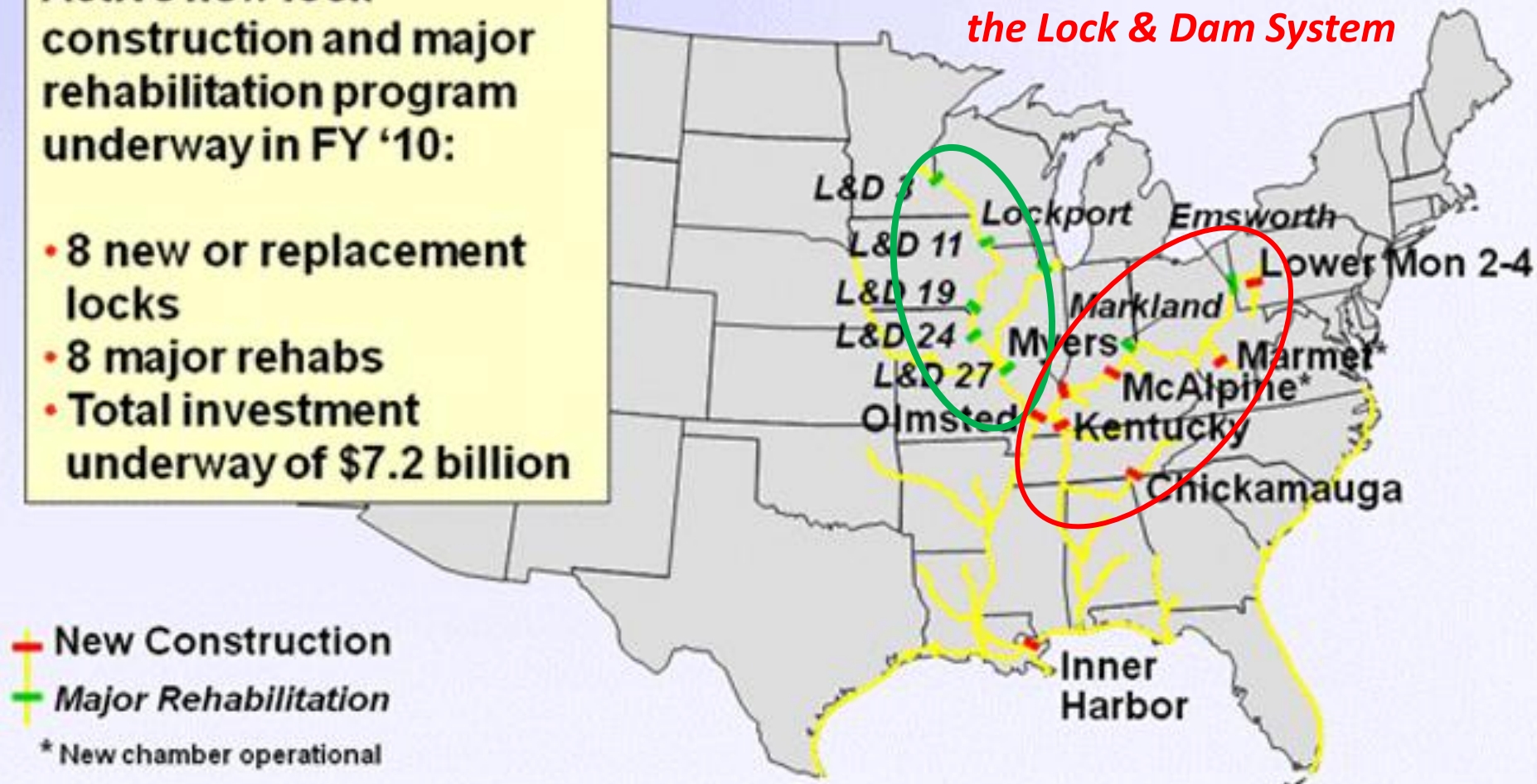
Meeting the Challenge: Major Navigation Projects Underway

As of 2010

Active new lock construction and major rehabilitation program underway in FY '10:

- 8 new or replacement locks
- 8 major rehabs
- Total investment underway of \$7.2 billion

*New Locks Only Went to
Where There Were Ports Inside
the Lock & Dam System*



NO PORTS = NO GRANTS



*The one “INFRA”
grant Dubuque
“received” was
returned.*

- PIDP
- RURAL
- RAISE
- BUILD
- MEGA
- INFRA
- TIGER
- FASTLANE
- MH Grants



Alaska



Hawaii



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Maritime
Administration

Maritime Grant Awards

Source: MARAD Office of Policy and Plans, MARAD Office of Port Infrastructure Development.

Includes awards made through the following U.S. DOT grant programs:
PIDP, INFRA, RAISE, MEGA, RURAL, and the Marine Highway Grant
Program.

FY2010-
2022



Guam and
N. Mariana Islands



Puerto Rico and USVI



American Samoa

Conspicuously Absent 2019

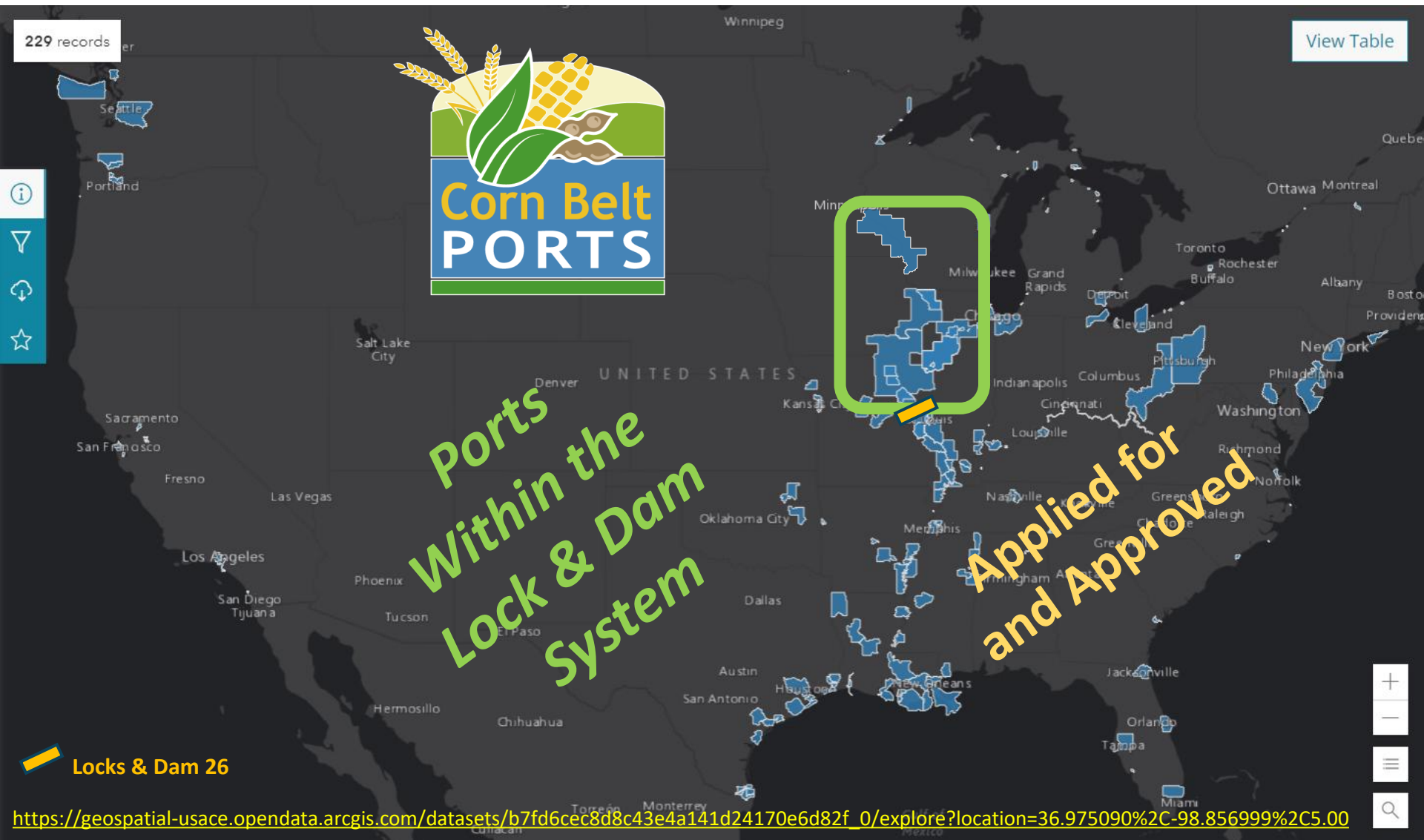
National Ports GIS Database Map



https://geospatial-usace.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/b7fd6cec8d8c43e4a141d24170e6d82f_0/explore?location=36.975090%2C-98.856999%2C5

Corn Belt Ports Today

National Ports GIS Database Map





Corn Belt Ports

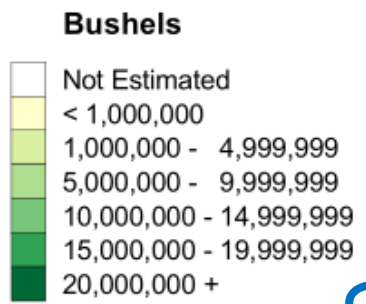
Modern, Sustainable, Rural, Regional,
Multimodal, land Partnership Ports

Ports
Within the
Lock & Dam
System

Aligned with the
Heart of the Corn Belt



Formed
2020-2022



NESP
Enabler

Corn for Grain 2018
Production by County
For Selected States





Corn Belt Ports

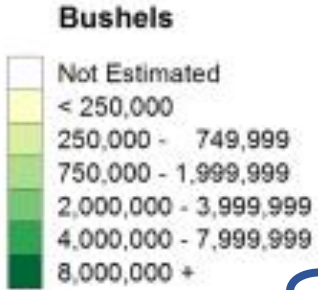
Modern, Sustainable, Rural, Regional,
Multimodal, Inland Partnership Ports

Ports
Within the
Lock & Dam
System

Aligned with
Soybean Production



Formed
2020-2022



- Locks & Dam 26 (Melvin Price)
- Corn Belt Ports Region (GOAL: A Top 50 US Port)
- Coastal Port Access to Global Markets

Soybeans 2018
Production by County
For Selected States



NESP
Enabler





Corn Belt Ports Leadership



Travis McGlasson
Chair,
Illinois
Waterway Ports
Commission



Douglas Aeilts
Chair,
Mid-America Port
Commission



Ashley Harris
Chair,
Rock Island Regional
Port District

Upper Mississippi River Ports (IA & IL)



Jim Irwin
Chair,
Ports of Eastern Iowa
Authority



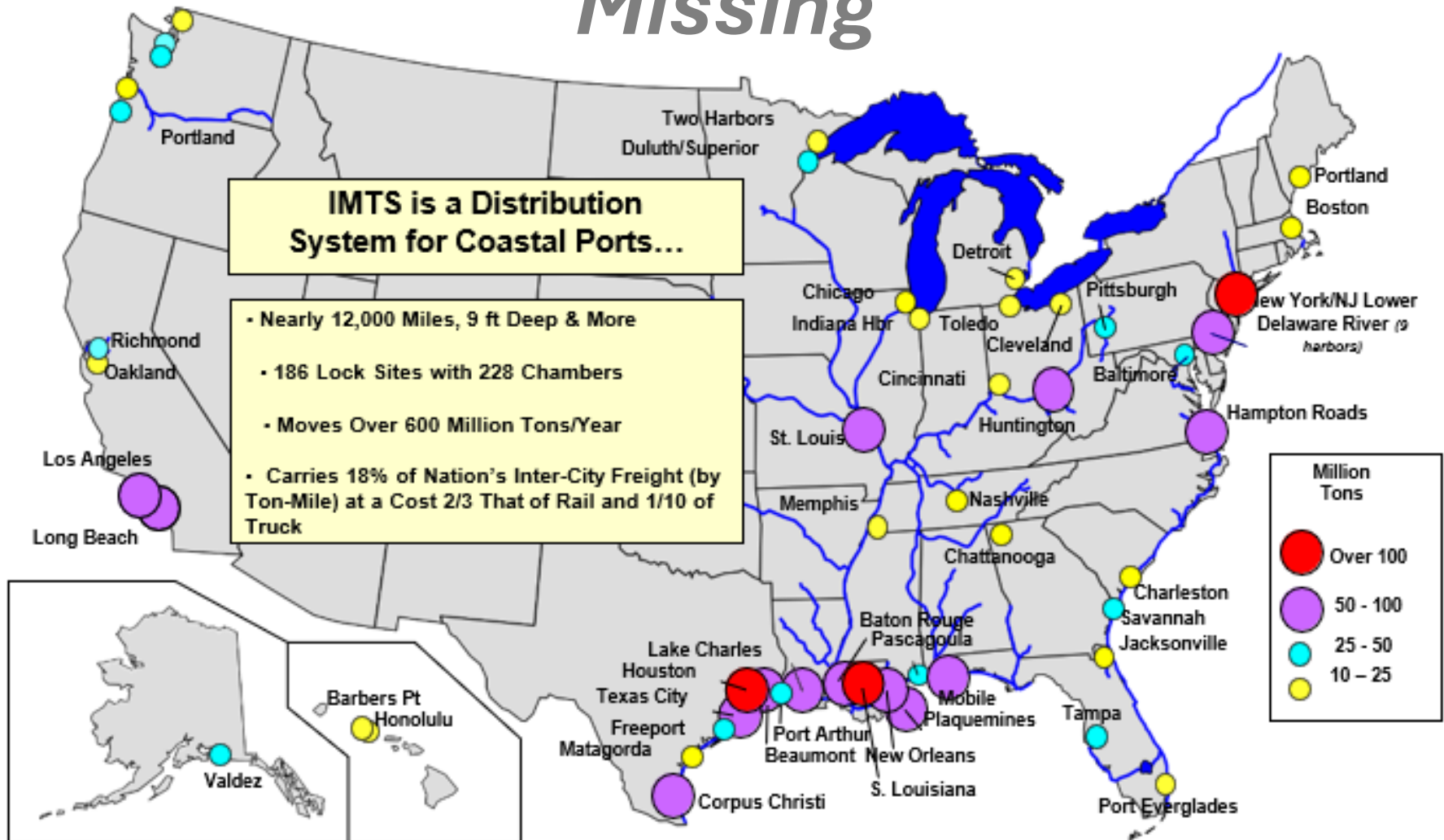
Chad Ubl
Executive Secretary
Port of Winona, MN

Northern Grain
Belt Ports



Corn Belt Ports

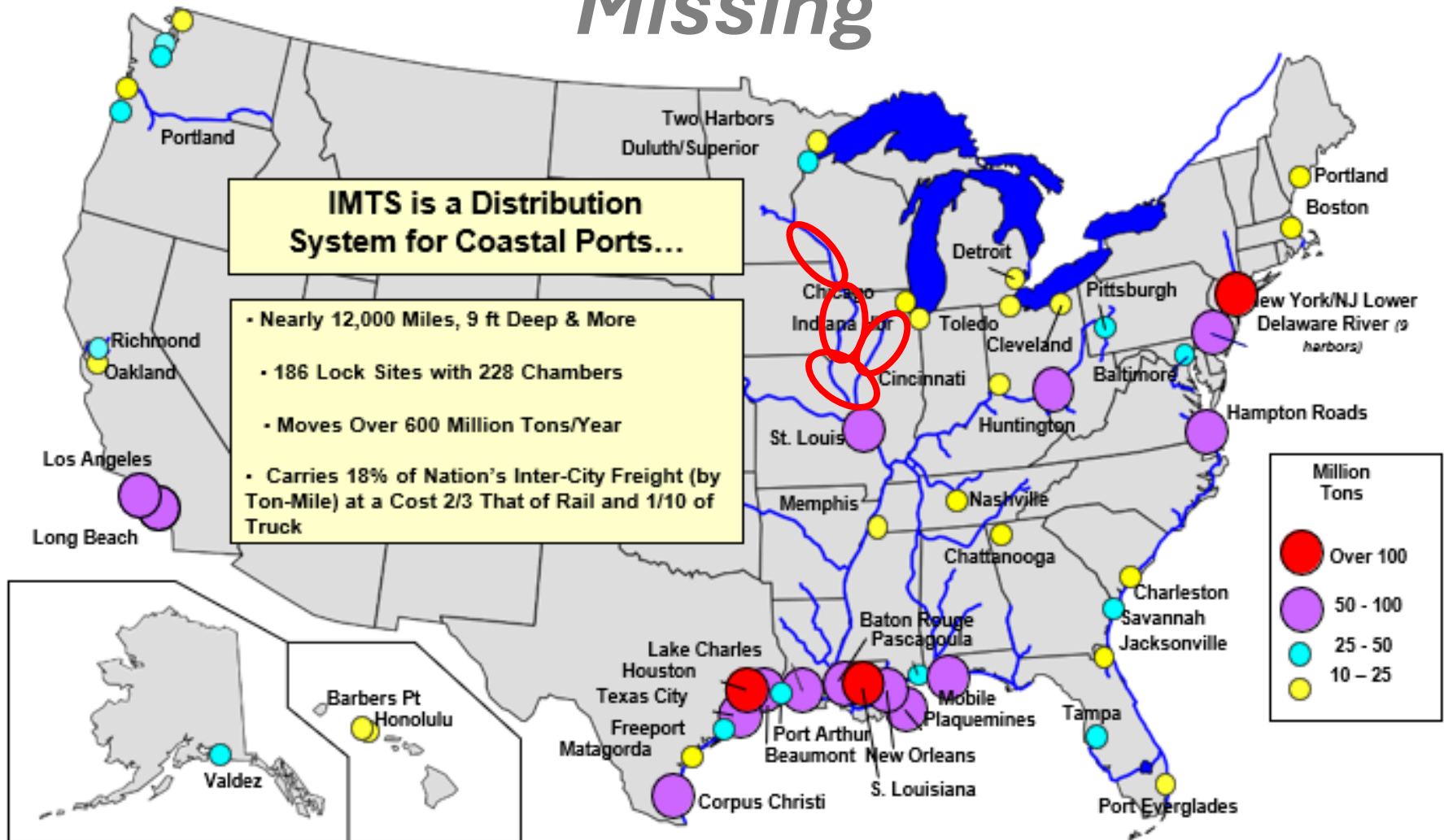
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Used by a Federal Organization in June 2026

Corn Belt Ports

Missing



Used by a Federal Organization in June 2026

Corn Belt Ports

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Used by a Federal Organization in June 2026

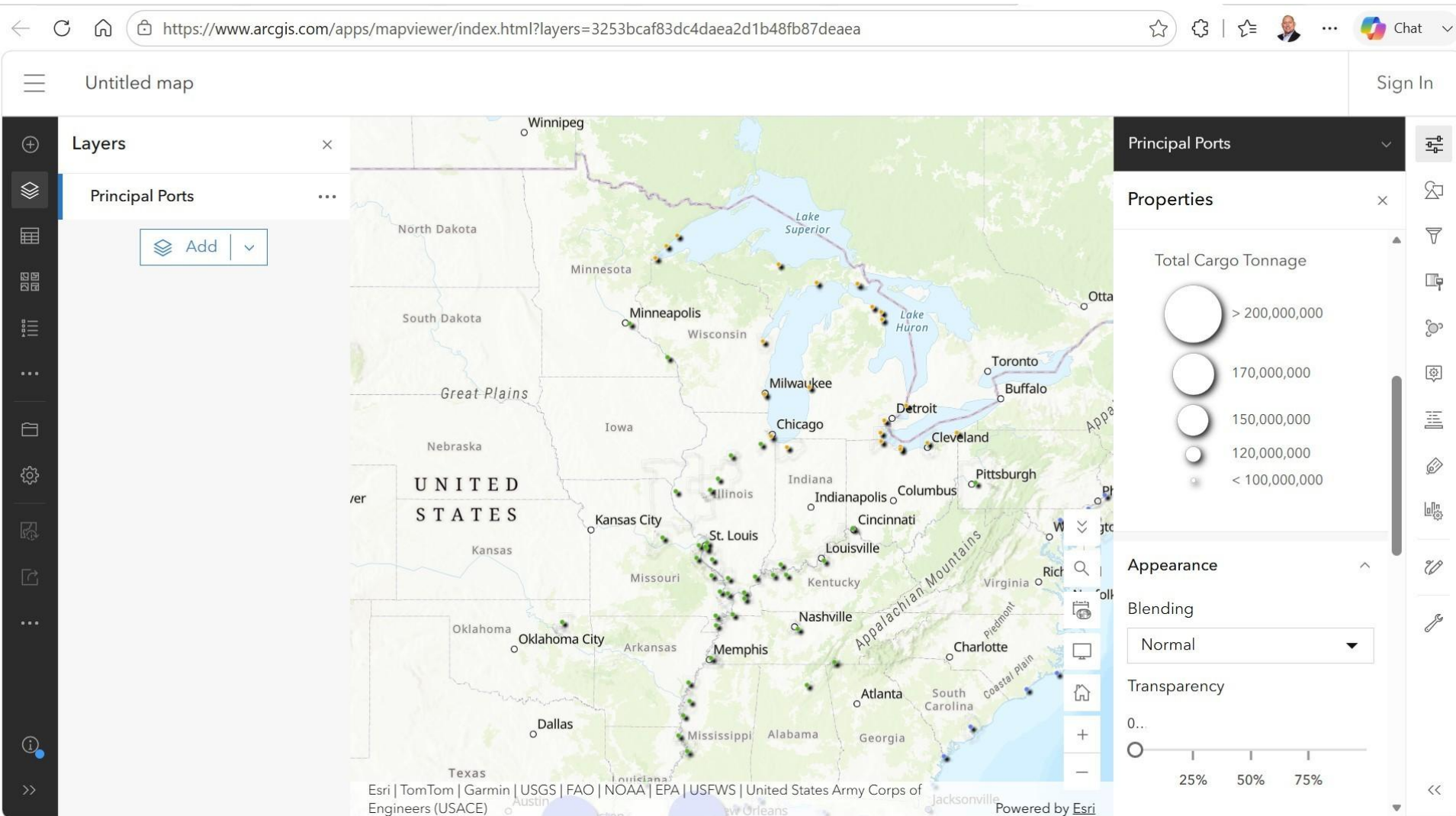
Corn Belt Ports

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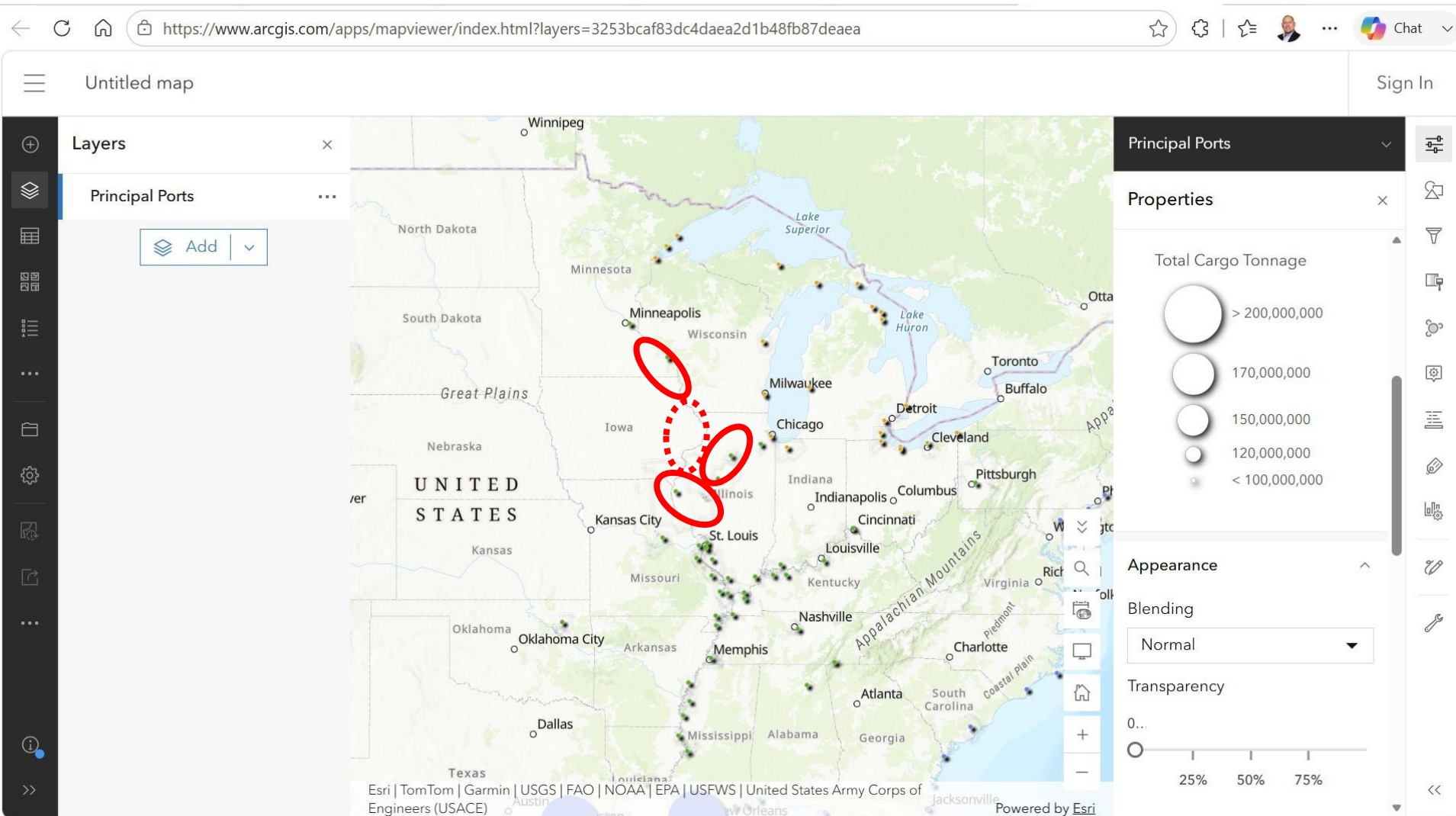
Used by a Federal Organization in June 2026

Corn Belt Ports



<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?layers=3253bcaf83dc4daea2d1b48fb87deaea>

Corn Belt Ports



<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?layers=3253bcaf83dc4daea2d1b48fb87deaea>

Leading U.S. Ports in 2020

(Millions of Short Tons and Percent Change¹ from 2019)

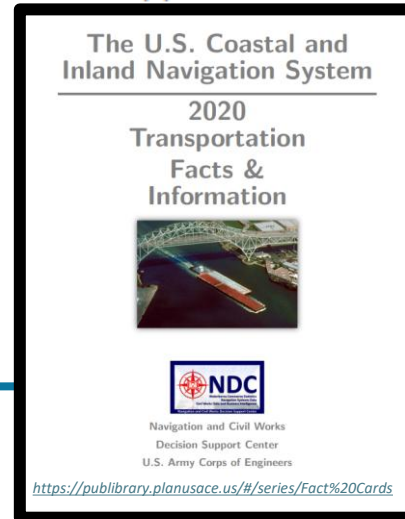
Rank	Type ³	Port	Domestic		Foreign		Total	
			Tons	%	Tons	%	Tons	%
39	I	Pittsburgh, PA Port of (Model)	15.5	-28.7	**	0.0	15.5	-28.7
40	I	New Bourbon Port Authority, MO ²	15.5	24.7	**	0.0	15.5	24.7
41	I	Mid-America Port, IA, IL and MO	15.0	24.5	**	0.0	15.0	24.5
42	I	Illinois Waterway Ports, IL ⁴	14.9	**	**	**	14.9	**
43	L	Two Harbors, MN	11.7	-12.4			13.5	-20.2
44	C	Boston, MA	3.4	-33.7			13.3	-16.7
45	C	Honolulu, O'ahu, HI	11.4	-10.4			12.3	-14.5
46	C	Galveston, TX	5.2	7.3			11.9	9.0
47	C	Port of Longview, WA	1.1	1.3			11.1	14.5
48	C	Port of Vancouver USA, WA	2.6	18.0			10.2	-6.9
49	L	Cleveland-Cuyahoga Port, OH	7.7	-24.4			9.4	-20.5
50	C	San Juan, PR ²	4.6	-0.5			9.3	10.1
51	L	Illinois International Port, IL	7.2	-13.8			9.1	-9.4
52	L	Toledo-Lucas County Port, OH ²	4.3	-21.0			9.0	-1.8
53	I	Memphis-Shelby County Port, TN	8.7	-2.6			8.7	-2.6
54	I	Joliet Regional Port, IL	8.6	-6.7	**	0.0	8.6	-6.7
55	C	PortMiami, FL	0.2	39.9	8.2	-5.5	8.4	-4.8
56	I	Iowa and W Illinois, IA IL	8.4	56.6	**	0.0	8.4	56.6
57	L	Detroit-Wayne County Port, MI	5.7	-44.0	2.4	-19.5	8.2	-38.4
58	C	New Haven, CT	4.8	-17.5	3.3	-5.1	8.1	-12.9
59	I	Louisville-Jefferson Port, KY ²	8.1	-27.6	**	0.0	8.1	-27.6
60	I	Nashville, TN	7.5	8.7	**	0.0	7.5	8.7

Desired Ranking Range

Desired Ranking Range

NATIONALLY RANKED

Goal ↑



<https://publibrary.planusace.us/#/series/Fact%20Cards>

Global Trade

FOR U.S. COMPANIES DOING BUSINESS GLOBALLY



**The Case Against
Manufacturing in Asia**

**THE A-TEAM
OF E-COMM**

*The Tremendous
Importance of the Aerospace
& Defense Supply Chain*

**THE
Top 50
PORTS
OF '22**

**GLOBALLY
SIGNIFICANT**



Top 50 Power Ports

41 Mid-America Port
Commission

Previous year: 44

Total tons: 15 million
(+3 million)

42 Illinois Waterway Ports

Previous year: not ranked

Total tons: 14.9 million

2023 Port Performance Freight Statistics Program: Annual Report to Congress



U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary of Transportation

**TABLE 2-3 List of Top 25 Ports by Dry Bulk Tonnage
(Ranked by short tons)**

1. South Louisiana, LA, Port of	14. Huntington-Tristate, KY, OH, WV
2. New Orleans	15. Kalama
3. Plaquemines Port District	16. New Bourbon Port Authority, MO
4. Virginia, VA, Port of	17. Portland
5. Baton Rouge, LA	18. Mid-America Port, IA, IL and MO
6. Mobile, AL	19. Pittsburgh
7. Mid-Ohio Valley Port, OH and WV	20. Illinois Waterway Ports Terminals
8. Cincinnati-Northern KY, Ports of	21. Two Harbors
9. St. Louis Metro Port, IL and MO	22. Corpus Christi
10. Duluth-Superior, MN and WI	23. Seattle
11. Indiana (Northern District)	24. Longview
12. Houston Port Authority, TX	25. Tampa Port Authority
13. Baltimore	



**CRITICAL PART
OF THE
SUPPLY CHAIN**

LIVE

Picture in picture



Retrofitting
Lock and Dam
25 with a 1200'
Lock was
Funded in the
**Bipartisan
Infrastructure Bill!**

2022
**ACTION &
RESULTS**

PRESIDENT BIDEN SPEAKS IN MENLO

LOCAL 5 abc

3:18

60°

33:36 / 59:54

April 12, 2022: President Joe Biden in Menlo, Iowa

“Through modern locks, we are gonna help farmers get their products to markets faster, more efficiently, lower costs and keep American agriculture globally competitive,”



Corn Belt Ports

*Modern, Sustainable, Rural, Regional,
Multimodal, Inland Partnership Ports*



1200' Locks Authorized for Construction

Mid-America Port Commission

Developing better ways for you to
move freight

*Greatest Infrastructure
Investment Need &
Greatest Infrastructure
Investment Opportunity*





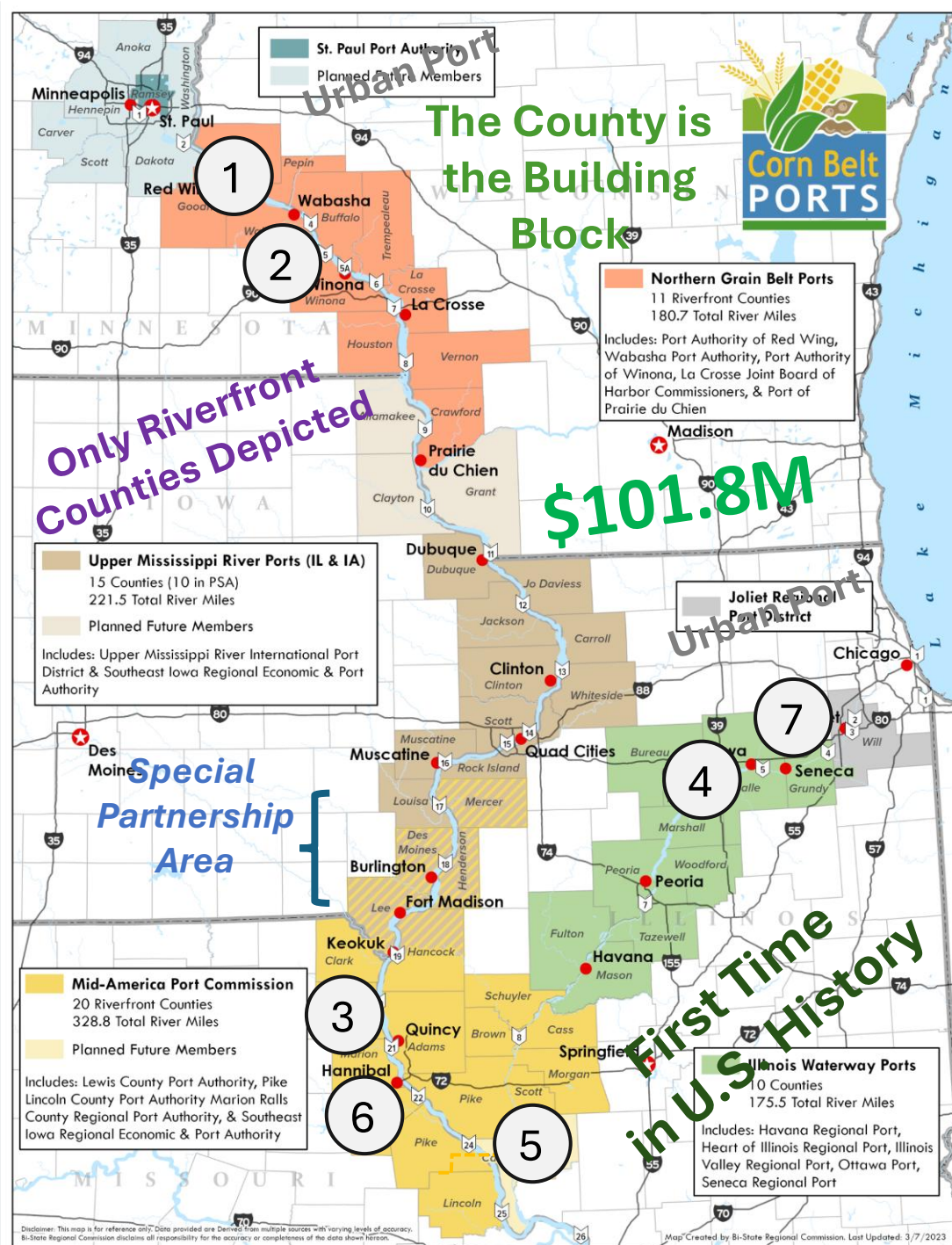
7 November 2023

- 1 Red Wing, MN \$1,989,246
- 2 Wabasha, MN \$2,545,297
- 3 LaGrange, MO \$11,091,844
15 November 2024
- 4 Hennepin, IL \$38,582,711
- 5 Hardin, IL \$9,000,000
22 April 2026
- 6 Hannibal, MO \$27,324,552
- 7 Seneca, IL \$11,221,110

15 November 2024

22 April 2026

2022 and Prior
ZERO



What's
NEXT?



PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

RESTORING AMERICA'S MARITIME DOMINANCE

Executive Orders

April 9, 2025

Sec. 11. Establish Maritime Prosperity Zones. Within 90 days of the date of this order, the Secretary of Commerce, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall deliver a plan to the President through the APNSA for inclusion in the MAP that identifies opportunities to incentivize and facilitate domestic and allied investment in United States maritime industries and waterfront communities through establishment of maritime prosperity zones. The proposal shall: (a) model these maritime prosperity zones on the opportunity zones established pursuant to section 13823 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-97, 131 Stat. 2054), which I signed into law during my first Administration; (b) include stipulations for appropriate regulatory relief in the establishment of such zones; and (c) provide for zones that are outside of traditional coastal shipbuilding and ship repair centers and are geographically diverse, **including river regions as well as the Great Lakes.**

Corn Belt Ports becoming more popular

Kevin Bessler Nov 4, 2024



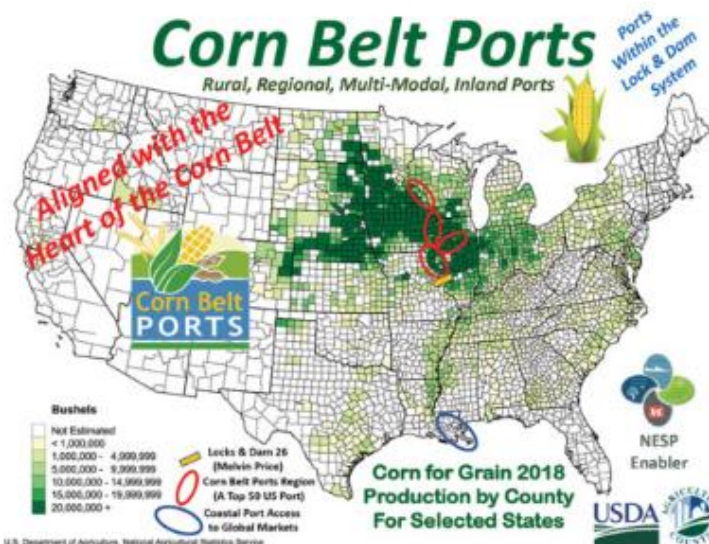
Home » News » Corn Belt Ports help unleash flood of state, federal, local investment

News

Corn Belt Ports help unleash flood of state, federal, local investment

By Kenda Burrows - November 10, 2024

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KENT gets state award for its McKee building project

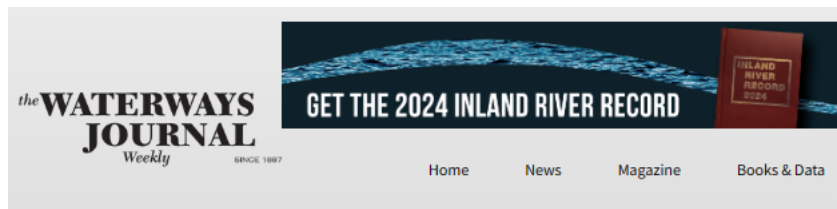
QC restaurateurs named to 40 Women to Watch list



Corn Belt Ports

Logical Counterpart to “America’s Ag Coast”

“a thing that fits another perfectly; something that completes; complements”



NEWS

Corn Belt Ports Expand, Fourth Corn Belt Port Federally Listed

2023

JANUARY 13, 2023 • BY DAVID MURRAY

Regional leaders in the Upper Mississippi River region cheered and welcomed the designation of the Northern Grain Belt Ports, approved by the U.S. Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center and the Navigation and Civil Works Decision Support Center on December 8. The designation means the port district will be listed and ranked on the annual U.S. Leading Ports List. It's the fourth such port statistical district to be organized and recognized in the area since 2019.

Proponents say these designations capture and represent the true value of port and terminal activity inside the designated areas and help focus investment.

The Northern Grain Belt Ports district is centered on the I-90 crossing of the Upper Mississippi River and includes the historic inland port cities of La Crosse and Prairie du Chien in Wisconsin, and the ports of Wabasha, Red Wing and Winona in Minnesota. The port district includes seven counties in Wisconsin and

Upper Miss/ILWW Ports



Monday, March 11, 2024

2017

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Shipbuilding Offshore Coastal/Inland Government Equipment Training Law &

The ‘Ag Coast’ of America

Marine News November 6, 2017



(Image: St. Louis Regional Freightway)



St. Louis Region's Agriculture Freight Network Poised for Growth as Handling Capacity Increases along a 15-mile section of the Mississippi River.

Located in the heartland of America, one 15-mile section of the Mississippi River in the St. Louis, Missouri, region delivers the highest level of grain barge handling capacity anywhere along the Mississippi River. Known as the “Agriculture or Ag Coast” of America in terms of barge transfer facilities for

agricultural products, local stakeholders also know that in order to sustain and grow this impressive market share, ongoing and future infrastructure investment in multimodal interconnectivity is critical.

As production and demand for commodities like corn and soybeans increase, the St. Louis region is strategically positioned to handle a significant portion of the expected increase in freight volume along this waterway. Those findings were revealed during a recent meeting hosted by Bi-State Development, St. Louis Regional Freightway and America's Central Port, further underscoring the positive outlook on the bi-state region's role as a national and global freight hub.

Middle Mississippi Ports

Supply Chain Expeditions



- South Korea has significantly increased its U.S. grain purchases.
- U.S. corn purchase commitments are running at double last year's levels.
- Korean buyers recently added 90 million bushels of U.S. corn to their import portfolio.



Corn Belt Ports

*Modern, Sustainable, Rural, Regional,
Multimodal, Inland Partnership Ports*



**U.S.
Corn Belt**

Aligned with ***Both*** Grain Production &
Rural Ports and Waterways Infrastructure

*Rural Maritime
Prosperity Zones
& Economic
Development
Engines*

● Major Urban Metro Port

▬ Locks & Dam 26
(Melvin Price)

○ Corn Belt Ports Region (X4)
(Goal: A Top 50 US Port)

○ Coastal Port Access
to Global Markets

1 – Illinois Waterway Ports Commission

2 – Mid-America Port Commission

3 – Upper Mississippi River Ports (IA & IL)

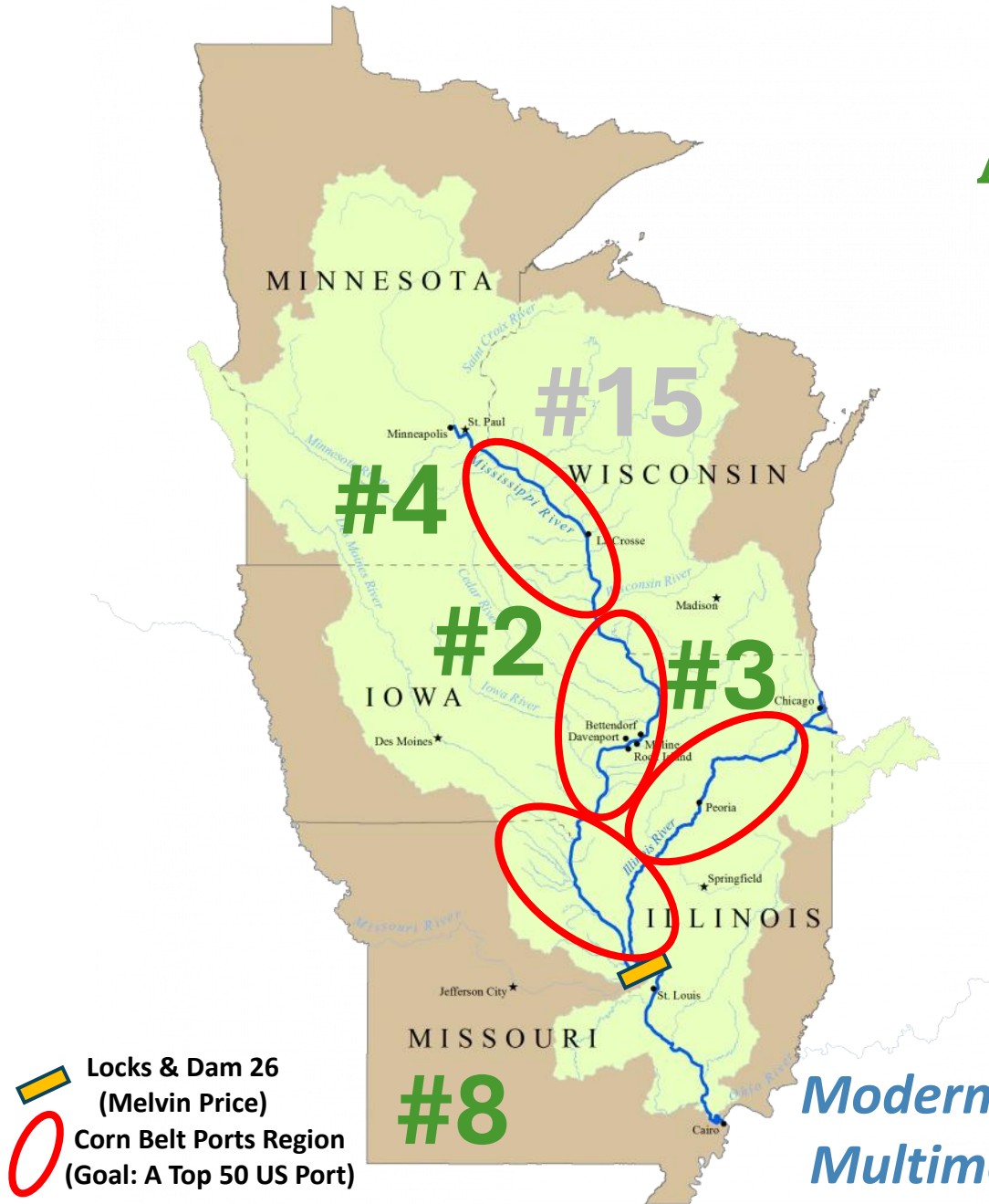
4 – Northern Grain Belt Ports

Top 10 U.S. Agriculture Product Exporting States

(2023)



Modern, Sustainable, Rural, Regional, Multimodal, Inland Partnership Ports

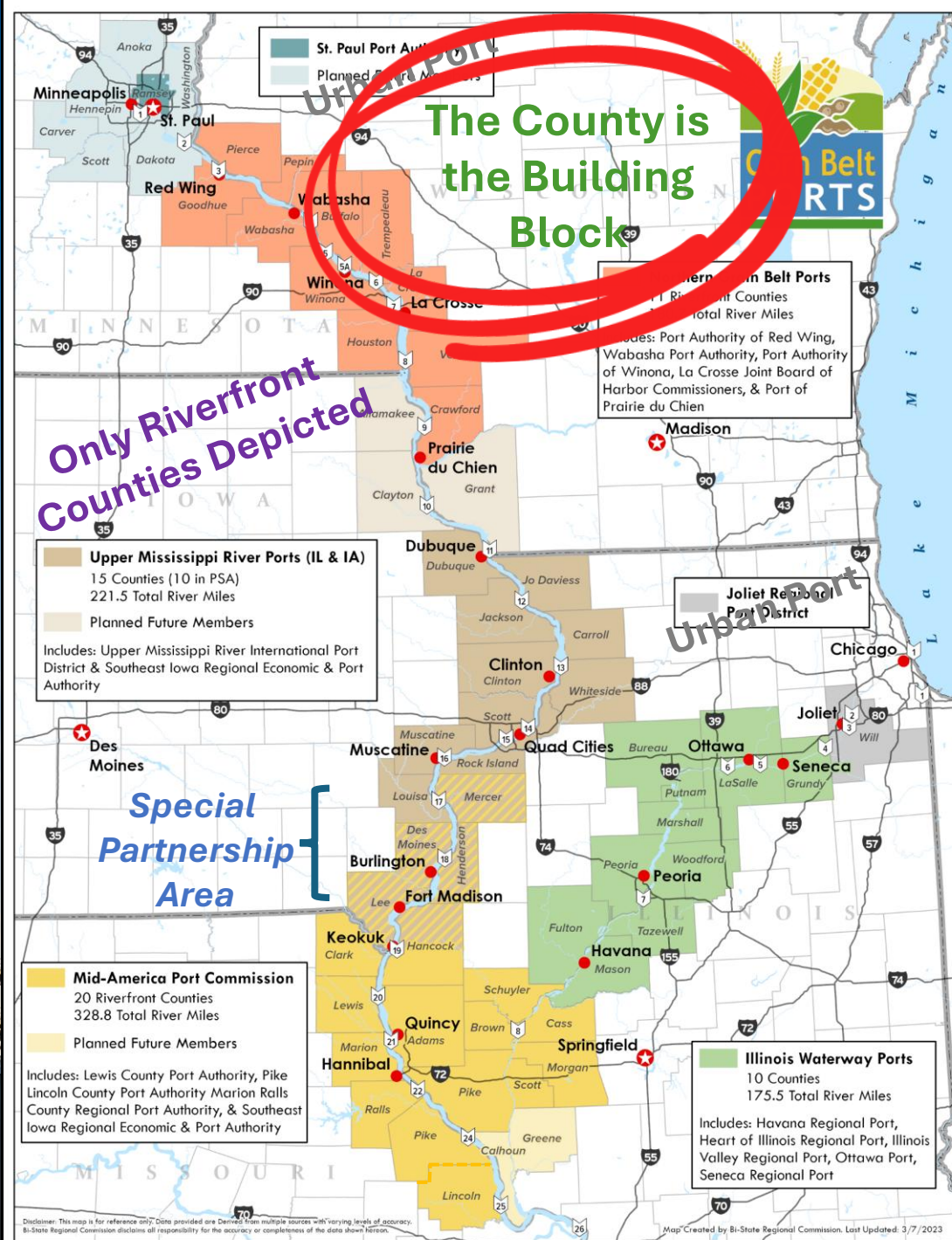




Corn Belt Ports

America's Heartland

Where Rural Communities
Power the Global
Supply Chain





Corn Belt Ports Model

Modern, Sustainable, Rural, Regional, Multimodal,

Inland Partnership Port (X4)

Multimodal Regional Port Commission/Association

Lead Economic Development Organization

Lead Business/Industry Organization

Regional Planning Agencies (MPO Center)

Sustainability & Environmental Working Group

Riverfront Cities and Towns Collaboration

Flood Infrastructure Working Group

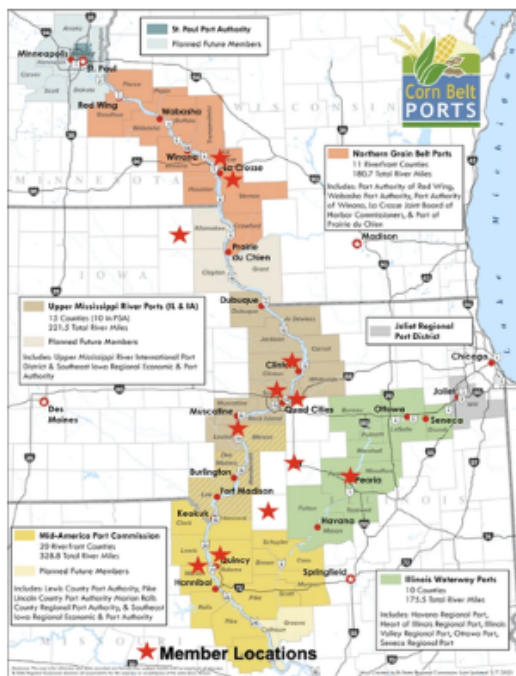
Supply Chain Training and Education Consortium

Defense Manufacturing, Logistics & Supply Chain Corridor



Corn Belt Ports Maritime Consortium Launches to Fill Regional Gap

April 20, 2026



Consortium members. © Western Illinois University

term collaboration supporting the workforce that sustains inland commerce.

The launch of the Consortium comes at a pivotal time as federal efforts intensify to strengthen the United States maritime industry and workforce infrastructure. By leveraging regional partnerships and educational expertise, the initiative positions the Midwest as a leader in developing a skilled workforce to meet growing industry demands.



Western Illinois University announced the formal establishment of the Corn Belt Ports Rural Logistics & Maritime Training & Education Consortium, a multi-state collaboration designed to strengthen the inland maritime workforce and support economic growth across the Midwest.

The Consortium brings together a broad network of institutions of higher education from Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, and Wisconsin, located along the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, including WIU, Black Hawk College, Carl Sandburg College, Culver-Stockton College, Eastern Iowa Community Colleges, Illinois Central College, John Wood Community College, Northeast Iowa Community College, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and Western Technical College.

This newly established partnership aims to expand workforce training, develop clear career pathways, and better align educational programming with employer needs in inland waterways, ports, logistics, and maritime-related industries. Jointly initiated by WIU and Corn Belt Ports, the Consortium represents a first-of-its-kind regional effort to formalize long-

Corn Belt Ports to co-host National Waterway Conference in QC

3-day event offers industry experts, tours and networking

By: QCBJ News Staff | July 29, 2026 | 6 min read

Bookmark



The Quad Cities and the Mississippi River will be the backdrop for next month's National Waterway Conference (NWC), being co-hosted by Corn Belt Ports.

The NWC Annual Meeting, with this year's theme of "Building Bridges. Building Connections." will be from Tuesday to Thursday, Aug. 25-27, at Vibrant Arena at The Mark in downtown Moline. The conference hotel is the nearby Wyndham Moline.

The annual meeting connects water and waterway leaders with federal partners and industry stakeholders. The three-day event will include policy discussions, networking and on-the-water learning along the Upper Mississippi River.



National
Waterways
Conference

2026 Annual Meeting



<https://waterways.org/events-education/annual-meeting/>