

# Where Rivers Meet and History Flows: A Call for Establishing the Great Rivers National Park

The heart of America beats at the confluence of the Mississippi, Missouri, and Illinois rivers. Here, not just water converges, but also history, culture, and natural wonder. This unique landscape forms the foundation for agriculture, commerce, and recreation, shaping the region's past, present, and future. Yet, despite its national significance, this treasured area faces growing threats. It's time to recognize the **Iconic Mississippi River and its confluences with the Missouri and Illinois Rivers** as the **Great Rivers National Park**, ensuring its protection and perpetuation for generations to come.

## A Symphony of Stories

This is where east meets west, north meets south, and languages and cultures interweave. Witness the legacy of the Mississippian civilization at Cahokia Mounds, retrace the steps of Lewis and Clark, and feel the spirit of Miles Davis' music carried on the river breeze. This is where the fight for freedom unfolded - from the printing press of Elijah Lovejoy to the footsteps of countless individuals seeking liberty on the Underground Railroad. The scars of slavery and the triumphs of civil rights marches are etched into the landscape.

## The Wellspring of Life

These rivers aren't just waterways; they're lifelines. They provide drinking water, irrigate crops, and sustain diverse ecosystems. But pollution, invasive species, and unchecked development threaten their health. Fragmentation isolates wildlife, diminishing the ecological symphony. We must safeguard these natural assets, not just for their intrinsic value, but for the communities, economies, and ecologies they sustain.

## A Crossroads in Need of a Compass

The Mississippi River and its two confluences stand at a crossroads. Population growth and development create pressures on its natural resources. Fragmentation, invasive species, and air and water pollution are taking their toll. We need a unified management approach, one that transcends local and state boundaries. Only a National Park designation, with its expertise and commitment to conservation, can provide the vision and resources needed to ensure the future of this Great Rivers region.

## A National Investment, a Local Treasure

Elevating this Great Rivers region to National Park status isn't just about land ownership; it's about recognizing its national significance. It's an investment in our history, our environment, and our economic future. It will boost tourism, generate jobs, and create a sustainable path for development. But most importantly, it will ensure that this irreplaceable treasure remains a source of inspiration, education, and recreation for generations to come.

## Join the Chorus

The fate of the Great Rivers National Park lies in our hands. Let your voice be heard. Support the campaign for National Park status and ensure this symphony of stories continues to echo through the ages. This more than just a place; it's a symbol of our shared history, our natural heritage, and our collective future. Let's protect the **Iconic Mississippi River and its confluences with the Missouri and Illinois Rivers** as the national treasure it truly is.

Send your name, note of support, and/or story about why you like the idea of a National Park to [info@altonworks.us](mailto:info@altonworks.us)



