Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee Resolution Regarding Contaminants of Concern in the Upper Mississippi River Basin

04/29/2025

Whereas the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee (UMRCC) objectives are to promote the preservation and wise utilization of natural and recreational resources of the Upper Mississippi River (UMR);

Whereas the UMRCC is tasked with providing recommendations to governing State bodies in support of the objectives of the UMRCC;

Whereas contaminants of concern include, but are not limited to, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, personal care products, industrial chemicals, and microplastics, which enter the UMR through various pathways such as runoff, groundwater, stormwater or wastewater discharge, and atmospheric deposition;

Whereas many contaminants of concern, including those listed in "UMRCC Contaminants of Concern List," are found in surface water throughout the UMR watershed;

Whereas various contaminants of concern are increasing in concentration and forming complex chemical mixtures that may pose a significant threat to the water quality and ecological health of the UMR basin;

Whereas contaminants of concern pose a threat to the integrity of the Mississippi River's ecosystems and the health of its inhabitants;

Whereas a goal of the UMRCC is to make the public aware of trends in contaminants of concern and the associated impacts and linkages to aquatic life, human health risks, and challenges in water treatment processes;

Whereas there is a growing body of scientific literature (e.g., Moran et al., 2017; Nowell et al., 2024; Schmidt et al., 2022, Oliver et al., 2023, Stepanian et al., 2020) demonstrating that several contaminants of concern have been shown to result in aquatic insect declines and disruption of aquatic community structure;

Whereas contaminants of concern are known to affect many non-target species causing harm to ecosystems;

Whereas limited information exists regarding contaminants of concern in the UMR, creating a need to gather more data and information;

Whereas governmental testing, registration, and regulation of contaminants targets individual compounds, while exposures of aquatic organisms are to chemical mixtures which may have compounding effects, resulting in the underestimation of ecological risks;

Whereas proactive measures are necessary to mitigate the harmful impacts of contaminants of concern and to protect the UMR basin's ecological integrity and public health;

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that UMR water monitoring programs (e.g., Upper Mississippi River Restoration Long Term Resource Monitoring, EPA, State Agencies) should initiate baseline monitoring of contaminants of concern and increase research efforts related to prioritized contaminants of concern and their effects on ecosystem health;

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency should refine the science related to the cumulative effects of chemical mixtures on aquatic ecosystems;

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that the UMRCC Water Quality Tech Section should evaluate, update, and reprioritize the UMRCC Contaminants of Concern List every 4 years;

Therefore, Be it Resolved, UMRCC should recognize the urgent need to address contaminants of concern in the UMR basin with collaborative efforts involving all state and federal agencies, non-government organizations, scientific institutions, and local communities;

Be it Further Resolved, that UMRCC will work collaboratively with state and federal water quality agencies as well as municipalities and private organizations to secure resources needed for monitoring and research along with implementing best management practices and appropriate regulation.

References

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