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## MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY COMMISSION



### QUARTER 3 UPDATE



*Credit: See Quincy*

**SEPTEMBER IS THE PERFECT MONTH TO DRIVE THE  
GREAT RIVER ROAD**

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weeklong excursion or just dreaming about their next road trip—during

[Drive the Great River Road Month](#) in

September, which celebrates this National Scenic Byway and All-American Road. We encourage you to use our toolkit and share

information on what to expect in September when driving your portion of the Great River Road. And think about all of your senses in overdrive with the beautiful fall colors, tasty fresh harvest, countless events, and so many other great ways to experience this sensational All-American Road. View the toolkit [here](#).

Drive the **GREAT  
RIVER ROAD**  
**MONTH**

And as a special offer, visit our [online store](#) during Drive the Great River Road Month and receive 10% off your order.



*Credit: Visit Winona*

## THE 2024 MRPC ANNUAL MEETING IS ALMOST HERE

The final planning is underway for the 2024 Annual Meeting, which will be held September 18-20 in Winona, Minnesota, and includes an agenda full of

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meetings, including keys to effective partnerships for the byway, events that build regional tourism for GRR communities, and the growth of outdoor recreation and its economic impact.

There is still time to register, but do it NOW! Learn more about the meeting and register [here](#).

## CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE AND FISH REFUGE



The 100th anniversary celebration of the [Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge](#) and its recognition as the newest Great River Road Interpretive Center took place on a rainy day in June, but the weather didn't dampen the excitement of celebrating a place that has been a haven for fish and wildlife—as well as 3.7 million visitors annually. The refuge is a great place for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and other recreational pursuits

across 240,000 acres of Mississippi River floodplain and 261 river miles from Wabasha, Minnesota, to Rock Island, Illinois.

Congratulations to Refuge Manager and our ERA committee co-chair, Sabrinia Chandler, as well as the state commissions involved in the event.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR INTERPRETIVE CENTERS (IC)

We are requesting that all ICs update their online information [here](#). This information will be used for promotion (including website, printed map,

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Please take a few moments to review your IC information.

We're asking all states to complete their annual Interpretive Center visit checklists.

## **WE'RE COLLECTING INFORMATION ON ACCESSIBLE VIEWING AREAS**

We want to inventory and share information on accessible viewing areas along the Mississippi River. Share your information [here](#).

## **TOURISM DATABASE COLLECTION**

We are creating a database of tourism organizations along the Great River Road. These can include CVBs, chambers of commerce, and other related tourism organizations. Share your information [here](#).

## **NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM (NSBP) UPDATE**

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved its Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill (THUD) for the 2025 fiscal year and allotted \$20 million in funding for the NSBP, although the final version of the Congressional spending bill signed by the president earlier this year included \$7.5 million for the NSBP. Total funding since FY21 is just under \$50 million, with \$21.8 million already awarded to byway projects.

The next NSBP Grants and Technical Assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity is under development and will be posted [here](#).

## **Q2 MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS**

- 113,329 views on [experiencemississippiriver.com](#)
- Visitors averaged 2 minutes and 42 seconds on [experiencemississippiriver.com](#)

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- Over 1.3 million combined social media paid ad impressions (704,226 people reached, 19,279 engagements, 5,025 link clicks)
- 52,607 opt-in subscribers on our e-newsletter list

## RECENT MEDIA PICKUPS

- [Via Travelers](#)
- [Bring Fido](#)
- [The Points Guy](#)
- [RV Travel](#)
- [World Atlas](#)
- [Roadtrippers](#)

## VIEW RECENT VIDEO SEGMENTS PRODUCED BY OUR STATES

- Iowa – [PBS](#)
- Wisconsin – [Discover Wisconsin](#)

## GREAT RIVER ROAD MEMBERSHIPS ARE FOR EVERYONE

Do you know someone who loves the Great River Road? Remember to share information on the Great River Road Champion program. Membership makes a great gift, too. [Learn more here.](#)

## USE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD CO-OP ADVERTISING PROGRAM

The co-op advertising program allows DMOs, businesses, and other travel partners to buy into content across the Great River Road's online channels to gain valuable exposure through our website, social media platforms, and e-newsletters. [Get started here.](#)

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS

- September 18–20 – National Annual Meeting in Winona, Minnesota

## COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR CONTACT INFORMATION & MEETING DATES

### • CULTURE AND HERITAGE

- John Anfinson: [janfinson@comcast.net](mailto:janfinson@comcast.net)
- Pat Audirsch: [pataud@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pataud@sbcglobal.net)
- Meetings:
  - Sept 19 from 2:30–4:30pm (Annual Meeting)
  - November 19 (10am)

### • ENVIRONMENT, RECREATION & AGRICULTURE

- Sabrina Chandler: [sabrina\\_chandler@fws.gov](mailto:sabrina_chandler@fws.gov)
- Erin Holmes: [erin\\_l\\_holmes@fws.gov](mailto:erin_l_holmes@fws.gov)
- Meetings:
  - Sept 19 from 2:30–4:30pm (Annual Meeting)
  - November 20 (10am)

### • MARKETING

- Sharon Calcote: [scalcote@crt.la.gov](mailto:scalcote@crt.la.gov)
- Kim Williams: [kim.williams@arkansas.gov](mailto:kim.williams@arkansas.gov)
- Meetings:
  - Sept 19 from 2:30–4:30pm (Annual Meeting)
  - November 5 (9am)

### • TRANSPORTATION

- Francis Schelfhout: [Francis.Schelfhout@dot.wi.gov](mailto:Francis.Schelfhout@dot.wi.gov)
- Mike McClanahan: [Michael.McClanahan@tn.gov](mailto:Michael.McClanahan@tn.gov)
- Meetings:
  - Sept 19 from 2:30–4:30pm (Annual Meeting)
  - November 15 (9am)