

[Subscribe](#)

[Past Issues](#)

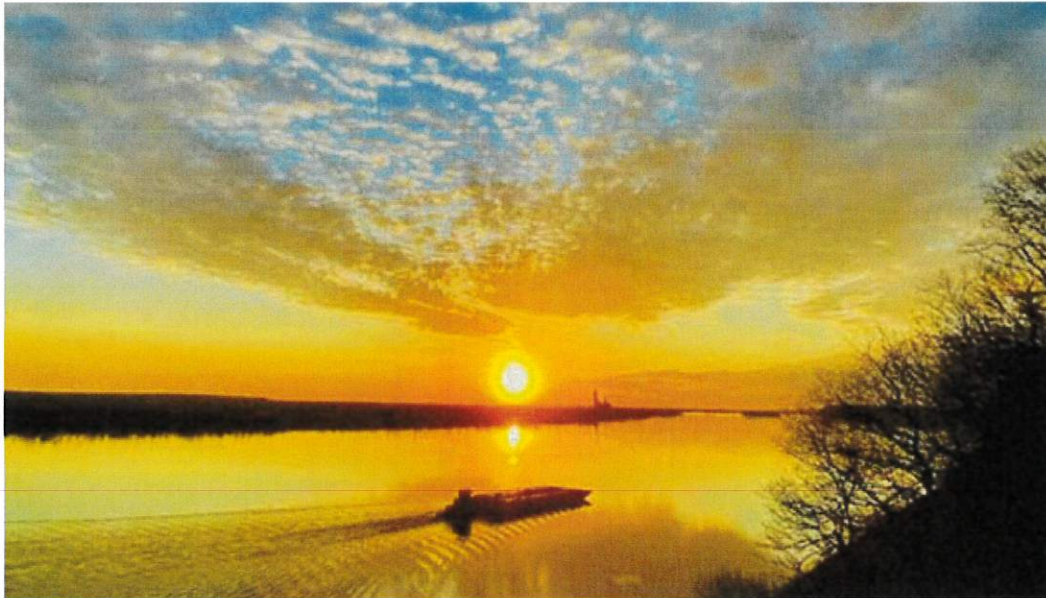
[Translate ▼](#)

[View this email in your browser](#)

MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY COMMISSION



QUARTER 2 UPDATE



Credit: Mississippi River at sunset/Pat Wrischnik

As the sun sets on another week, enjoy your weekend along the Great River Road or wherever you might be!

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

Credit: Visit Winona

SAVE THE DATE - 2024 MRPC ANNUAL MEETING - SEPTEMBER 18-20

Hotel reservations are open for the [2024 MRPC Annual Meeting](#), which will be held Wednesday, September 18, through Friday, September 20, in Winona, Minnesota. Reservations at the Riverport Inn & Suites are available online at riverportinn.com with code "MRPC24" or by calling (507) 452-0606. King rooms are \$139 and double queen rooms are \$149 per night.

There are many suggested transportation options to Winona. Find them [here](#).

We're excited to share that our evening welcome reception on Wednesday, September 18, will take place at one of our Great River Road Interpretive Centers, the [Minnesota Marine Art Museum](#). The evening will include hors d'oeuvres and a tour of the museum and pollinator garden, as well as viewing of the Mississippi River and the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

HAPPY 100TH ANNIVERSARY TO THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE AND FISH REFUGE



Congress created the largest “wild-life preserve” ever in order to save the upper Mississippi River backwaters from being drained and converted to farmland. Since 1924, the [Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge](#) has been a haven for fish and wildlife, as well as 3.7 million visitors annually. Hunting, fishing, observing wildlife, and other recreation across 240,000 acres of Mississippi River floodplain and 261 river miles from Wabasha, Minnesota, to Rock

Island, Illinois, enthrall these visitors.

What might you see?

- 306 species of birds
- 300+ bald eagle nests
- 50% of the world's canvasback ducks
- 20% of eastern U.S. tundra swans
- 51 species of mammals
- 42 species of freshwater mussels
- 119 species of fish



June 7 will be “Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge Day.”

June 22 will be the 100th anniversary celebration and dedication of the refuge visitor center as the newest Great River Road Interpretive Center.

SUMMER FUN ON THE GREAT RIVER ROAD

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

campaign to highlight summer events along the Great River Road from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The Summer Fun on the Great River Road campaign includes a



[searchable event calendar](#), monthly gas card giveaways, and online promotion.

See the campaign [toolkit](#) featuring logos and sample social media posts that you can include in your Great River Road marketing. This serves as a wonderful opportunity to cross-promote events and travel along the Great River Road.

PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS

Our events calendar is open for submissions—you can add your events [here](#). Note that several fields are required, and we encourage you to include a photo of your event if one is available.

Events must take place in the county or parish that includes your state's section of the Great River Road or borders the Mississippi River. Partners from state agencies, state commissions, DMOs, Interpretive Centers, communities and other organizations along the Great River Road are welcome to submit their events at no cost.

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](#).

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

Let's promote National Pollinator Week along the Great River Road again this year.

We developed a toolkit that states, interpretive centers and other organizations can use during this year's

Pollinator Week, June 17-23. The toolkit includes suggestions on how you can promote pollinators in your area, sample social media posts, and resources.

Download the toolkit [here](#).

In 2023, we signed on with the Mississippi River Operation Pollination Partnership. We're continuing to collect public pollinator habitat location information along the Great River Road. This Information will be shared with visitors and used as part of the Mississippi River Operation Pollination. [Share pollinator habitat information](#).

[The State Pollinator Playbook](#), developed by Mike McClanahan and his team, serves as a guide for states. It looks at what programming already exists along the Great River Road, what can be done, and who acts. Pollinators make the Great River Road a better National Scenic Byway, and everyone can play a role in supporting pollinators. Together we are raising awareness of pollinators.

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, newsletters, social media, PR) and is necessary for us to maintain communication. Please take a few moments to review your IC information.

We're asking all states to complete their annual Interpretive Center visit checklists. You can find the online form (and a downloadable version) [here](#).

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

and Heritage committee chairs. We now review applications quarterly, but they must be received a minimum of 30 days prior to a meeting to make the agenda. There are two model applications online for ICs to use as a guide. See examples and fill out the online form [here](#).

Q1 MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS

- 90,368 views on [experiencemississippiriver.com](#)
- Visitors averaged 3 minutes and 5 seconds on [experiencemississippiriver.com](#)
- Over 90,000 Facebook followers
- Over 1.6 million combined social media paid ad impressions, leading to a reach of 904,668, 36,606 engagements, and 9,149 link clicks
- 50,572 opt-in subscribers on our e-newsletter list

MEDIA PICK UPS

- [How to Explore These 4 American Cities on Their Scenic Waterways](#) – Travel & Leisure, February 2
- [Curious Louisiana: The Great River Road](#) – The Advocate, February 16
- [The Best Road Trips Across the US](#) – Detroit Free Press, February 18
- [12 Scenic Road Trips to Take in the United States](#) – msn.com, March 25
- [15 Essential Scenic Drives in the United States](#) – yardbarker.com, April 12
- [9 of the Most Welcoming Towns in Mississippi](#) – WorldAtlas

MORE FUNDS FOR NSBP

For the fourth consecutive year, federal funds have been allocated for the National Scenic Byway Program (NSBP). The Fiscal Year 24 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill, signed by President Biden on March 9, allocates \$7.5 million for NSBP. Now two representatives, including Garrett Graves of Louisiana, will send a bipartisan

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

NSBP in the FY25 THUD appropriations bill.

GREAT RIVER ROAD MEMBERSHIPS ARE FOR ANYONE

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.](#)

SHOP THE GREAT RIVER ROAD

Place your order at the [Great River Road store](#) and proudly wear your Great River Road apparel.

UPCOMING DEADLINES

Please note these upcoming deadlines for applications and nominations:

- [Stewardship Award](#): June 15
- [Honorary Membership Award](#): August 15
- [Interpretive Center Nominations](#): June 16 (for review at July meeting) or August 19 (for review at September meeting)
- [Distinguished Service Award](#): August 15

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- May 17 @ 9am – [Transportation Committee](#) (Zoom)
- May 21 @ 10am – [Culture & Heritage Committee](#) (Zoom)
- June 4 @ 9am – [Marketing Committee](#) (Zoom)
- June 12 @ 10am – [Environment, Recreation and Agriculture Committee](#) (Zoom)
- June 14 @ 9am – [Board of Directors](#) (Zoom)
- September 18-20 – National Annual Meeting in Winona, Minnesota

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR CONTACT INFORMATION & MEETING DATES

• CULTURE AND HERITAGE

- John Anfinson: janfinson@comcast.net
- Pat Audirsch: pataud@sbcglobal.net
- Meetings:
 - May 21 (10am)
 - July 16 (10am)
 - September 19 (Annual Meeting)
 - November 19 (10am)

• ENVIRONMENT, RECREATION & AGRICULTURE

- Sabrina Chandler: sabrina_chandler@fws.gov
- Erin Holmes: erin_l_holmes@fws.gov
- Meetings:
 - June 12 (10am)
 - September 19 (Annual Meeting)
 - November 20 (10am)

• MARKETING

- Sharon Calcote: scalcote@crt.la.gov
- Kim Williams: kim.williams@arkansas.gov
- Meetings:
 - June 4 (9am)
 - September 19 (Annual Meeting)
 - November 5 (9am)

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

◦ Francis Schemmout: Francis.Schemmout@dot.wi.gov

◦ Mike McClanahan: Michael.McClanahan@tn.gov

◦ **Meetings:**

- **May 17 (9am)**
- **July 26 (9am)**
- **September 19 (Annual Meeting)**
- **November 15 (9am)**

Make sure you complete your directory registration to receive all committee and national updates. [Click here to register](#) or [view the directory](#) using the password "MRPC".



Mississippi River Parkway Commission PO Box 7395, Madison, WI 53707-7395

Toll Free: 866-763-8310 Phone: 608-268-0902 Fax: 608-242-8896 Email: MRPC@pilchbarnet.com

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Mississippi River Parkway Commission · PO Box 7395 · Madison, WI 53707-7395 · USA