Iowa
Mississippi River Parkway Commission

2014-2015 Annual Report
September 2015

Edith Reiss Pfeffer, Chair
Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission

2014-2015
Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission

Explore Iowa's Great River Road

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Allamakee County

Lori Wallace
Clayton County

John Goodmann, Chair
Dubuque County

Lori Roling
Jackson County

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Muscatine County

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Debra Jochims, Secretary
Des Moines County

Larry Kruse
Lee County

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission (IAMRPC) was organized to:

- Preserve, promote and enhance the scenic, historic, natural, archaeological, cultural, and recreation resources of the National Scenic Byway (NSB)/Iowa Great River Road (GRR) and the Iowa Mississippi River Valley.
- Foster economic growth of the Mississippi River corridor.
- Develop the National Scenic Byway/Great River Road.

VISION

The Iowa Great River Road will sustain rewarding lifelong experiences for Iowans and visitors from around the world through the support of a cooperative network of partners and stakeholder, each of which invest in and benefit from the conservation, development, promotion, interpretation and management of the diverse intrinsic resources of the Iowa Mississippi River Valley.

(Adopted December 15, 2014).

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Assist in coordinating the increase of investment and awareness of the National Scenic Byway/Iowa Great River Road and its amenities with roadside parks, scenic overlooks, educational experiences and opportunities and historic information.
- Continue the identification, documentation and protection of the intrinsic resources of the Great River Road.
- Expand the local citizen awareness of the resources and importance of the Great River Road in Iowa and the adjoining states.
- Provide new travel experiences through effective interpretation and promotion of the Great River Road.
- Increase information services to residents and organizations along the Great River Road.
- Identify economic development opportunities based on the sensitive use of the Road's intrinsic resources.
- Sustain existing alliances with other organizations that are interested in the future of the Great River Road and develop new partnerships where needed.
- Identify volunteer opportunities for individuals and organizations along the Great River Road.
- Assist in coordinating the increase of investment and awareness of the Great River Road and its resources with development of a variety of amenities and delivery of programs for public awareness, interpretation and promotion.
- Increase the awareness for Great River Road stakeholders of availability of public and private funding for resource conservation, transportation enhancement, interpretation and promotion.
- Develop communication opportunities to tell the stories of the National Scenic Byway/Great River Road.
  Arrange community involvement meetings and workshops pertaining to a variety of Great River Road related topics...
  Advocate for the Great River Road Interpretative Centers.
- Advocate for the Great River Road research, planning, and development studies. Advocate for transportation related projects in the Great River Road Corridor that incorporate the principles of context sensitive design.
- Advocate for the use of sustainable design principles such as L.E.E.D. (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), native plant community restoration, multi-functional streets, etc.
- Conserve, develop, promote and interpret, and manage the Iowa Great River Road.

(Adopted December 15, 2014).

A major factor in achieving these goals and objectives is partnering with area and national groups and associations that have similar goals and interests. By networking with other organizations, we can best utilize all our assets, including financial, contacts, and personnel.

IOWA MRPC COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Iowa MRPC met on four separate occasions in the past year. November 7, 2014 in Guttenberg, Iowa. December 15, 2014 at the Putnam Museum in Davenport, Iowa. March 24, 2015 at the Putnam Museum in Davenport, Iowa. April 23, 2015 at the Best Western Kelly Inn Restaurant, St. Cloud, MN at our National MRPC semi-annual meeting. Minutes of these meetings are included as a part of this report.
(See Section 2)

IOWA MRPC STRUCTURE

The Iowa Commission consists of ten commissioners appointed by the Governor of Iowa representing the ten counties that border the Mississippi River. The commission by Iowa statue is gender and politically balanced. In addition, there are five technical members representing: Iowa Department of Transportation, Department of Economic Development, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Office of Tourism, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The commission has received verbal commitments from the Iowa Department of Economic Development to appoint new technical advisor but as of the date of this report no formal appointment has been completed.

An updated Iowa MRPC commission list is attached. (See Section 3)

IOWA MRPC BUDGET

The FY2014-2015 budget for the Iowa MRPC was approved by the Iowa DOT for $40,000.00. The budget includes 2014 National MRPC dues, Iowa Byways Coalition Membership, Eastern Iowa Tourism Dues, Marketing expenses, National Scenic Byway Grants matching funds, MRPC conferences and Iowa Commission meetings and travel expenses, and Administrative expenses.

Figure 1: Iowa MRPC State Fiscal Year Budget

	Budget Item	Budget	Expenses	Balance
1	10-State MRPC dues	$15,000.00	$15,000.00	$0.00
2	Travel to Annual Meeting-Memphis, TN	$4,600.00	$4,156.22	$443.78
3	Travel to semi-annual Meeting- St. Cloud, MN	$4,500.00	$4,184.52	$315.48
4	Iowa MRPC meetings/ travel/meals	$2,215.00	$1,340.47	$874.53
5	Iowa Byways Coalition Membership	$750.00	$750.00	$0.00
6	Eastern Iowa Tourism Dues	$135.00	$135.00	$0.00
7	Administration	$300.00	$0.00	$300.00
8	Marketing (web, maps, newsletter, guides)	$500.00	$1,679.39	-$1,179.39
9	CMP preparation (NSB match)	$12,000.00	$12,754.40	-$754.40
10				
11				
		$40,000.00	$40,000.00	$0.00

IOWA ACTIVITIES AND WORK PLAN

Iowa MRPC Website Development

The Iowa MRP website continues to evolve. www.iowagreatriverroad.com

Our site is now hosted by the Iowa Department of Tourism at www.traveliowa.com and then clicking on the Great River Road Link. By linking with Iowa Tourism, we have leveraged web site traffic with over a million viewers who annually navigate the Iowa Tourism web pages. Many corridor attractions are also featured in companion byways and communities' links.

Features of our web site include:

- Fantastic photography and panoramic photos of the Mississippi River.
- Schedule of events that can be sorted by date, location, type, etc.
- Mapping ability and ability to zoom in on maps and select location links.
- An itinerary or trip planner that prints an agenda – by city, type of event, etc.
- Ability to feature links with maps and icons and print a route with mileage.
- Community pages for each city and town along the route where events and dates can be posted and amended by the CVB's. Events and an on-line calendar of the same are also included.
- Inspirational content with beautiful views from a number of scenic overlooks.

Interpretive Centers along the route are each described in detail including directions to them and hours of operation.

Iowa's Byway Collection also has an Iowa Byways web site that also points to the Iowa Great River Road site (www.iowabyways.org).

Travel Iowa staff have tracked the web activity for this site since adopting the dormant web content a year ago. It is performing at or above the standards expected or set by the web team.

- 5,070 user sessions.
- 72% were new users.
- Bounce rate is only 34%. (Bounce rates can be as high as 90%...goal is below 50 %.)
- Visiting 2.94 minutes per visitor. Generally goal is 2.5 minutes.
- Travel Iowa has seen traffic grow from 1 million to 1.5 million in a year.
- Highest users on Travel Iowa are women 55-65.

Travel Iowa buys search engine marketing words that are seasonally changed including scenic drive, fall colors and other GRR assisting terms.

In addition, Interpretative Centers and CVB's have been encouraged to use experiencemississippiriver.com. Interpretative Centers using this website have found it

has dramatically increased visitors this past year. The centers are using the calendar to list events.

Visitors to this site can also click a link to “Get a Printable Guide” on demand.
http://www.traveliowa.com/UserDocs/getinspired/GRR_printable_map.pdf

Figure 2: www.Iowa Great River Road.com

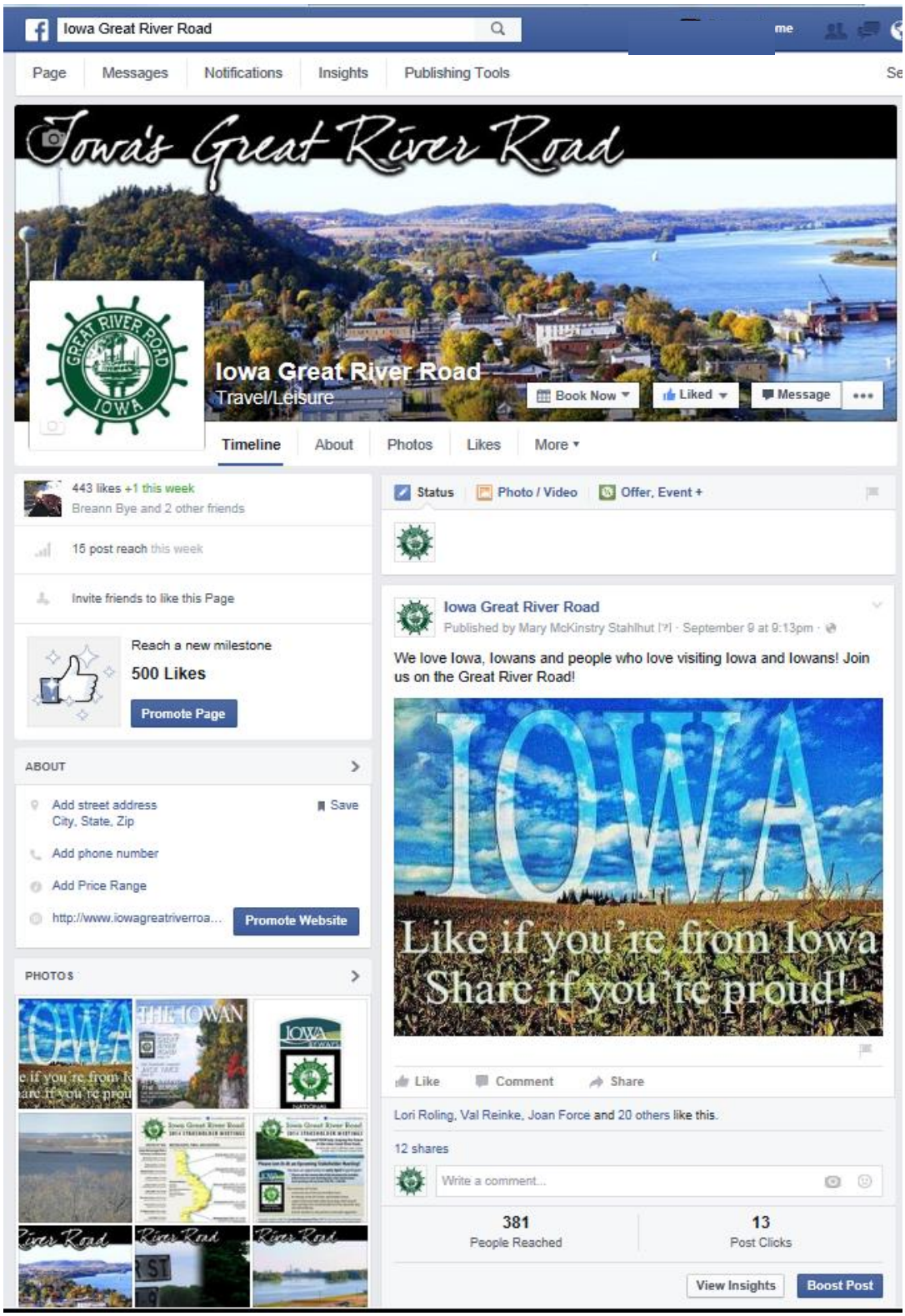
Iowa MRPC Social Media and Communications

No Iowa MRPC newsletters were produced this fiscal year.

We do have a Facebook page and will be using Constant Contact ® to email important updates to our GRR stakeholders.

https://www.facebook.com/IowaGreatRiverRoad?ref=aymt_homepage_panel

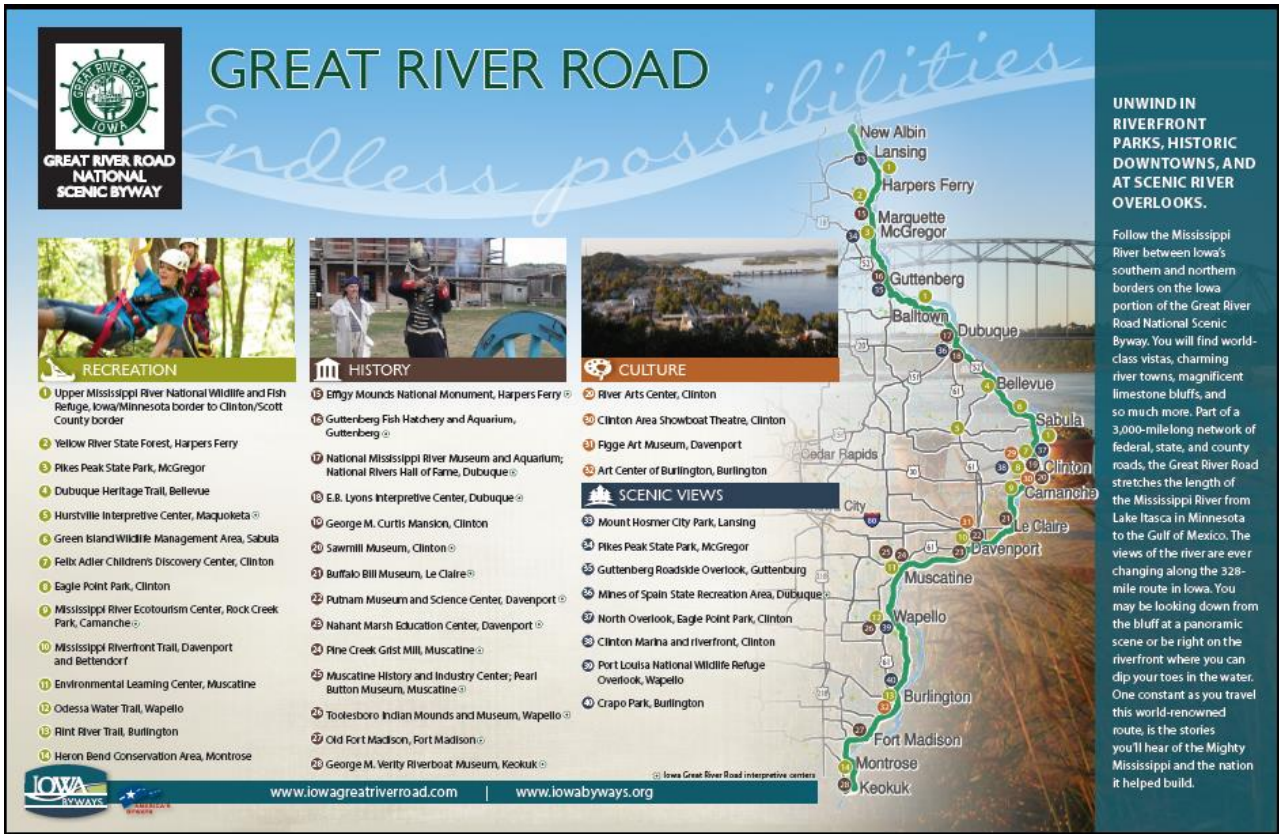
Figure 3: Iowa GRR Facebook



Iowa Great River Road Traveler Map

The Iowa MRPC approved and developed a new colorful tear-off byway map to include the updated Interpretive Centers. A copy is included in this report. (See Section 6) The 11X 17 map has been distributed to our welcome centers, interpretive centers, CVB and other tourist attractions along the byway. The colorful map was developed in a tear-off format for the convenience of travelers and users. The new format was produced by the Iowa DOT and allows for easy updating in the years ahead.

Figure 4: Iowa Great River Road Traveler map



http://www.traveliowa.com/UserDocs/getinspired/GRR_printable_map.pdf

Iowa Byways Travel Guide

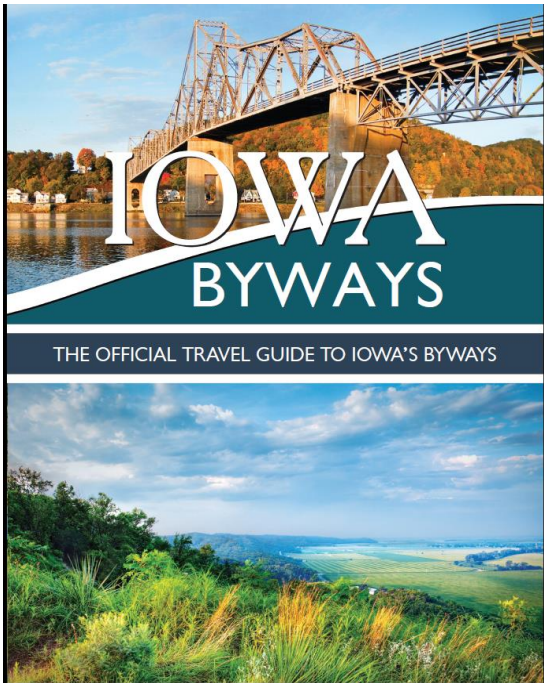


Figure 5: Iowa Byways Travel Guide

The Iowa MRPC in cooperation with Iowa's other designated byways and the Iowa Department of Transportation re-printed the high quality travel guide showcasing the Iowa Great River Road in four pages and the other ten designated Iowa scenic byways printed in May 2014. This visitor friendly guide invites travelers to extend their Iowa visits and experience more of Iowa's nearby attractions that complement the GRR experience. The guide is free and can be viewed and ordered at www.iowasbyway.org. Commission members have worked hard to distribute this guide to the welcome and interpretative centers, CVB'S and other tourist attractions in their counties.

Iowa MRPC Corridor Management Plan

As reported in our last three annual updates, the Iowa MRPC received a $260,000 National Scenic Byway Grant for the purpose of rewriting and modernizing the CMP for the Iowa Great River Road. The Iowa MRPC hired David Dahlquist and Associates as consultant to construct this new CMP. The project was completed as of June 30, 2015.

A new reference library of the Corridor Management Plan, development reports and supporting materials related to the Iowa Great River Road can be accessed at: http://www.iowadot.gov/iowasbyways/IAGRR-CMP.html. A list of the primary sections is found on the following page. A final report on the public roll-out events and input was added and additional GIS and other data-rich files are also a part of the resources produced.

The consultant began the year developing the Conceptual Framework for the Corridor Management Plan, evaluation of financial considerations for undertaking management Actions, adoption of vision, goals and overall interpretive theme for the Iowa Great River Road and presentations of the adopted 2015 Corridor Management Plan to public organizations along the Iowa Great River Road.

The Core Management Directions describe the four broad, goal-oriented, mainstays that will continually support the effective sustenance, development, promotion and administration of the Iowa Great River Road. Each commissioner was tasked to come up with six "Actions" which are the expression of projects, programs, and day-to-day activities undertaken by the Iowa MRPC and its partners and stakeholders from each county to support the Great River Road. Each county was to have at least one action in each of the four Core Management Directions - Intrinsic Resource Conservation, Physical Improvements, Promotion & Interpretation, and Administrative Operations. Many Commissioners held special meetings with their stakeholders to gather information for the "Actions."

At our March 24, 2015 meeting, the overall organization of the CMP document as Place, People, Principles and Pathways to the Future was adopted. It was determined a sixteen page Executive Summary 2015 Corridor Management Plan document would be created with a one page summary. (See Sections 4 & 5)

To distribute this information, three "2015 Public Meetings" were held in Burlington, Davenport and Guttenberg in late May. Stakeholders (advocates and leaders) of the Great River Road were invited to these meetings and the above documents were distributed.

Figure 6:

The 2015 Corridor Management Plan Library for the Iowa Great River Road

A comprehensive collection of data, research findings, reports, maps, and presentations which provide additional detail and support for the 2015 Corridor Management Plan of the Iowa Great River Road. Each document is referenced with a lettered icon and title.
Document files can be downloaded at www.iowadot.gov/iowasbyways/IAGRR-CMP.html and www.ddaforum.com/DocumentLibrary.aspx.

A — Iowa Great River Road Designated Route Update
Map atlases for the ten Iowa Great River Road counties illustrating the routing of the Byway.

B — Summary Report of Representative Intrinsic Qualities and Resources, Tabulation and Map Sets
Report, tabulations and map county atlases of the intrinsic resources of the Iowa Great River Road.

C — Condition of the Road Report
A review of the existing conditions associated with the Iowa Great Road using 14 key topics recommended by the Federal Highway Administration.

D — Iowa Great River Road Route Traffic Data and Safety Report
A tabular presentation of traffic data and safety indicators for segments of the Iowa Great River Road prepared by the Iowa Department of Transportation.

E — Iowa Great River Road Document Library
An extensive listing of a wide variety of reference documents pertaining to the Mississippi River as well as the National and Iowa Great River Road.

F — Report of Spring 2012 Stakeholder Meetings
A complete report of the production, results, and public direction provided during the Spring 2012 Stakeholder Meetings.

G — The 2013 Iowa Great River Road Visitor Survey
Summary report, detailed result tabulation, and survey instrument for the 2013 Iowa Great River Road Visitor Survey.

H — The 2013 Iowa Great River Road Resident Survey
Summary report, detailed result tabulation, and survey instrument for the 2013 Iowa Great River Road Resident Survey.

I — Report of Spring 2014 Stakeholder Meetings
A complete report of the production, results, and public direction provided during the Spring 2014 Stakeholder Meetings.

J — Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission Stakeholder List
A tabular presentation of the contact listing for the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission current as of January 2015. (Available upon request to the Commission)

K — Core Management Directions, Actions, and Financial Considerations
Detailed background and descriptions of Actions and financial considerations supporting the Core Management Directions of the Iowa Great River Road.

L — Great River Road Interpretive Plan and Tool Kit
A comprehensive guide for themes and stories for interpreting the entire Great River Road.

Great River Road Interpretive Centers

Visits were made to each of the fifteen Interpretive Centers in the State of Iowa. Local commissioners visited each interpretive center in their county. The checklist was completed. In addition, commissioners distributed our Great River Road tear sheets, Iowa Byways Travel Guide, the MRPC National Maps and the Cultural Traveler. The Interpretive Center was encouraged to list their center and weekly activities on our new Iowa Tourism website – www.iowatourism.com/greatriverroad. The Interpretive Centers were also encouraged to list events on experiencemississippiriver.com. In addition, Commissioners contacted centers regarding the National Geographic GEO Tourism project. Each center was encouraged to attend the meeting held in Moline, Ill by Jim Dion and Terry Eastlin March 9th and 10th and to enter their center at mississippiriver.natgeotourism.com website.

Iowa Participation in Meetings and Events

The Iowa Chair and or his proxy participated in all National MRPC Board meetings and Executive Board meetings, as well as the Semi-Annual and Annual Meetings. The majority of Iowa Commissioners also participated in the National MRPC meetings.

The MRPC has been representative at the monthly meetings of the Iowa Byways by our Vice-President. Up-dates on projects have been provided to commission members as all Iowa Byways work together to promote the great State of Iowa.

The Iowa Commission participated in September Drive the Great River Road Month activities. Several commissioners appeared on local radio talk shows promoting the Great River Road. In addition, commissioners attended local city council meetings and county board of supervisors meetings gathering and reading proclamations declaring September Drive the Great River Road Month. Press Releases have been distributed.

In November, Jane Regan, Marketing Committee Chair, represented the commission at the Mississippi River Connections Collaborative Meeting in Alton, Illinois regarding the National Geographic GEO Tourism Website. March 9th & 10th, three members of the commission and three support staff members along with representatives from interpretative centers and towns attended the National Geographic GEO Tourism meeting in Moline. Commission members have worked hard encouraging our interpretative centers and welcome centers to enter information about their attraction. In addition, we have contacted other tourist attractions and businesses in our counties to enter their information on to this county wide website.

MRPC Annual and Semi-Annual Meeting

The National MRPC Annual meeting was held Memphis, Tennessee with five participating from the Iowa membership. Six Commissioners and support staff from Iowa DOT attended the Semi-Annual Meeting in St. Cloud, Minnesota in April.

Iowa MRPC Stakeholder Meetings

MRPC stakeholder meetings took place twice this past year. The purpose of the first meeting was to request information and input from folks up and down the river on setting priorities in each county and identifying how the MRPC can further help to manage the priorities of our stakeholders. A wish list of projects was developed for each county. A second round of meeting was held in June of 2015 at three separate locations and a total of over 60 people attended these gatherings. At this meeting, the Executive Summary 2015 Corridor Management Plan for the Iowa Great River Road was distributed and discussed. A one page summary: "What does the 20215 Corridor Management Plan Offer?" was also distributed. A copy of these reports is included in this document. (Sections 4 & 5) In addition, the eighty page 2015 Corridor Management Plan for the Iowa Great River Road was distributed.

Iowa Awards

The Iowa Great River Road received the 2015 Annual Community Attraction Tourism Award given by the Clinton, Iowa Convention and Business Bureau in April.

Commissioner and General Activities

The commission members were involved in a number of activities over and above our regular meetings and stakeholder meetings. The Iowa MRPC partnered with Byways of Iowa and participated in Iowa Tourism Legislative Show Case on January 24th at the Knapp Building located on the Iowa State Fair Grounds. Three commissioners and our consultant attended and shared the story of the Iowa Great River Road with our legislators. Each legislator was given a pilot's wheel pin and invited to visit Iowa's Eastern Gold Coast when the session was completed. Materials were packed up and displayed the next day at Transportation Day in the Iowa Capitol Rotunda. These two venues provided an opportunity to tell the story of the Great River Road to our State Senators and State Representatives as well as State elected officials. We also made contact with fellow Iowans who were visiting the state capitol that day.

February 2015 found us partnering with Fort Madison, Iowa and Nauvoo, Illinois providing promotional materials to be taken to the State of Utah for three trade shows.

On March 27th, three members of the commission attended the annual Henry Farnham Dinner held this year in Rock Island, Illinois. Our booth showcased our banners and the Iowa Great River Road attractions. MRPC key rings, Great River Road Tear sheets and the Iowa Byways brochure were distributed. Many day trips were planned to Iowa's Interpretive Centers that evening. This venue also provided a great opportunity to tell the story of the Great River Road, its many attractions and opportunities for day trips.

Individually commissioners have been telling the Great River Road story in their individual counties including Scott Tunnicliff on The Channel Cat Boat between Moline and Davenport and Edith Pfeffer at the National Lumber Jack Festival in Clinton. Jane Regan has appeared on radio stations and at the Great River Rumble telling the story of the Iowa Great River Road. She has also been busy raising funds for the new Interpretative Center at Lansing, Iowa. In addition, our President John Goodman has been doing newspaper interviews including the Cedar Rapids Gazette. "Community Attractions"

Figure 7:

We look forward to the Iowa DOT implementing the new Iowa GRR pilot's wheel signs and incorporating them into the new Iowa Byway Signage project in the coming year. Commission members have been busy assisting the IDOT identifying locations in their respective counties for the new byway signs.

Condition of the Great River Road Concerns

Two portions of the Iowa Great River Road have serious infrastructure challenges. Both are in Iowa towns.

BURLINGTON

In Burlington's bluff top Crapo Park, the bridge spanning Cascade Ravine has been closed to motor and pedestrian traffic. The bridge built in 1896 connects downtown Burlington with Crapo Park via South Main Street and is the recognized route for the Iowa Great River Road. It is now showing its age. Burlington stopped letting vehicles travel across Cascade Bridge in 2008, but does currently allow pedestrian traffic. A preliminary study has been completed and the City of Burlington has this on their list of bridges to be replaced. There is currently no timeline or funding available.

Figure 8:

MONTROSE

MONTROSE – A portion of River Road near Montrose is closed to through traffic until further notice. Heavy downpours have eroded the hillside and roadway.

- Michael Hoenig and Police Chief Jordan Maag deemed the road unsafe for travel, as the lane on the bluff side has sunk at least 4 to 5 feet. Some motorists chose to drive around the barricades, so Hoenig placed a large pile of gravel in the intact lane to prevent traffic from traveling in the washed-out area.
- The city has made temporary repairs to River Road several times since it first washed out in 2010, according to Hoenig. He's seen the road sink as far as 8 feet in the past. He estimates the washed-out area stretches about 100 feet long and 30 feet wide this time. We need a permanent fix.
- The city faces several obstacles to financial assistance for repairs.
    - Homeowners in the Bluff Park housing development that sits above River Road own the ravine that extends to the city right-of-way, as well as the bluff area between the road and Burlington Northern Santa Fe's right-of-way.
    - The Federal Emergency Management Agency doesn't fund recovery projects for privately-owned property, according to Reid.
    - Jordon Moser has determined that Montrose doesn't qualify for Federal Emergency Management Agency assistance for this project for several reasons.
    - The road first washed out in 2010. The city qualified for funding in 2010 and 2013, but declined because it did not believe it could afford the grant matches.
    - According to Moser, River Road is exempt from additional funding offers because of pre-existing damage.
- The affected area of River Road is under the jurisdiction of the Federal Highway Administration. Roadways that are considered major collectors are not eligible for FEMA funds.

Figure 9:

May 2013

June 2015

Appendix

Iowa MRPC Commission and Technical Members

COMMISSIONERS	IOWA MRPC OFFICE/NAT'L COMMITTEE	ELECTRONIC ADDRESS & PHONE NUMBER	TERM EXPIRES
ALLAMAKEE COUNTY			
Jane M. Regan P.O. Box 34 Harpers Ferry, IA 52146-0034	**Iowa MRPC Treasurer** **Nat'l Marketing** **Bylaws Committee**	jregan@leschenskyins.com PH: 563-568-6347 Cell: 563-380-3635	6/30/2017
CLAYTON COUNTY			
Lori Wallace 308 South River Park Drive PO Box 826 Guttenberg, IA 52052	**Nat'l Culture & Heritage**	huknorth@yahoo.com PH: 319-551-6171	6/30/2017
CLINTON COUNTY			
Edith Pfeffer 524 Mill Ridge Road Clinton, IA 52732	**Iowa MRPC Vice Chair** **Nat'l Culture & Heritage**	edithrpfeffer@gmail.com PH: 563-243-7751 Cell: 563-357-3681 FAX: 563-243-7751	6/30/2015
DES MOINES COUNTY			
Debra Jochims 10976 Wildlife Lakes Dr. West Burlington, IA 52655-8565	**Iowa MRPC Secretary** **Nat'l Marketing**	debjochims@aol.com PH: 319-752-4455 (H) Cell: 319-759-3039	6/30/2015
DUBUQUE COUNTY			
John A. Goodmann 2744 University Avenue Dubuque , IA 52001	**Iowa MRPC Chair** **Nat'l Transportation**	jgoodmann@real-good.com Work: 563-556-3232 Cell: 563-599-4350 Toll Free: 800- 498-4518	6/30/2015
JACKSON COUNTY			
Lori Roling 40320 150th Street Bellevue, IA 52031	**CMP Committee**	tlroling@yahoo.com Day: 563-542-1243 Evening: 563-872-3299 CELL: 563-542-1243	6/30/2015
LEE COUNTY			
Larry Kruse 1243 170th Ave. Donnellson, IA 52625-9306	**CMP Committee** **Bylaws Committee**	kruselw@hotmail.com Day: 319-469-2018 Cell: 319-537-1046	6/30/2015

LOUISA COUNTY			
Jay Schweitzer P.O. Box 112 Columbus Junction, IA 52738	**Nat'l Transportation By laws Committee**	jayts@yahoo.com Work: 319-728-2219 Home: 319-728-3180 FAX: 319-728-8449	6/30/2017
MUSCATINE COUNTY			
Daniel Petersen 3289 150th St. Muscatine, IA 52761	**Nat'l Enviro, Rec &Ag**	srpeters@hotmail.com (Shirley) Home: 563-263-3527 Cell: 563-571-8009	6/30/2017
SCOTT County			
Scott Tunnicliff 718 Holmes Street Bettendorf, IA 52722		hcvscott@gmail.com Work: 563 322 8293 Cell: 563 370 2098	6/30/2017

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Iowa Department of Transportation			
Mary Stahlhut Iowa DOT, Systems Planning 800 Lincoln Way Ames, IA 50010	**Iowa MRPC Bd Administrator Nat'l Transp/Marketing**	mary.stahlhut@dot.iowa.gov PH: 515-239-1369 FAX: 515-233-7857	
Department of Natural Resources			
Margo Underwood 609 S. Shore Drive Clear Lake, IA 50428-2546	**Iowa MRPC Advisory Nat'l Enviro, Rec &Ag**	Margo.Underwood@dnr.iowa.gov 641-420-3896	
Economic Development Authority			
Shawna Lode East Grand Office Park 200 East Grand Avenue Des Moines, IA 50309	**Iowa MRPC Advisory Nat'l Marketing**	Shawna.Lode@iowa.gov 515-725-3090	
US Army Corps of Engineers			
Ron Deiss Clock Tower Bldg. Box 2004 Rock Island, IL 60204	**Iowa MRPC Advisory Nat'l Enviro, Rec &Ag**	Ronald.w.deiss@usace.army.mil 309-794-5185	

IOWA DOT OFFICE OF SYSTEMS PLANNING:	**Policy and Agency Support**	
Deb Arp	**Grant Team Leader**	debra.arp@dot.iowa.gov 515-239-1681
Craig Markley	**Office Director**	craig.markley@dot.iowa.gov 515-239-1027
Peggy Riecken	**Secretary/Claims**	peggy.riecken@dot.iowa.gov 515- 239-1664

2014-2015 Iowa MRPC Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission are always public record. Public notices and meeting minutes are also posted here:
http://www.iowadot.gov/iowasbyways/mississippi_river.htm

IOWA MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY COMMISSION
April 23, 2015
Best Western Kelly Inn restaurant, 100 4th Avenue S, St. Cloud, MN

ROLL CALL

- Commissioners Present: John Goodmann, Deb Jochims, Edith Pfeffer, Jane Regan, Jay Schweizer, and Scott Tunnicliff
- Technical Committee Members Present: Mary Stahlhut of IDOT

WELCOME

- John Goodman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:10.

APPROVAL OF March 23, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

- Edith Pfeffer moved and Jane Regan seconded to approve the March 23, 2015 minutes. Approved.

TREASURER REPORT AND APPROVAL

- Budget Review
  - Mary Stahlhut passed out the 4/20/15 Iowa MRPC Annual Budget Expense Report SF (Attachment 1). The total paid to date is $20,095.87. Scott Tunnicliff moved and Jay Schweizer seconded to approve the report. Approved.
  - RC&D contacted the organization of convenient stores in NE Iowa to include all the convenient stores along the byways and the GRR was included. In SE Iowa there is only one other byway and it does not connect with the GRR.

REPORTS

- Executive Board Workshop
  - John relayed they did a lot of long term planning and it will be shared today to a certain extent, but more so at the annual meeting.
  - They visited about NatGeo. They still have not had a vote. John thinks the board will be split. He thinks the site will be built, but whether we pay for it or not, is uncertain.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Edith invited commissioners next week to 2015 Annual Tourism Awards sponsored by Clinton CV&B. It will be Wednesday 4/29 from 5:30 – 7:30 at the Tuscany Special Events Center at Rastrelli's, 238 Main Ave, Clinton. IGRR is getting an honor.
- Mary brought samples of business cards (Attachment 2). We do not want our addresses on them. Mary sent an e-mail regarding the last example discussing "point, point, point". She will follow up with us. DOT will internally print 250 of them. She will confirm before printing to make sure the information is correct for each commissioner. She will also include the national website.
- Next meeting
  - Mary said Shawna suggested a speaker from the Iowa Economic Commission for our next meeting. We will meet Tuesday, July 7th in the Quad Cities at 10:00 am. Scott will arrange a meeting location. Mary will contact Shawna and they might have a location suggestion.
- Jane mentioned we have two counties who don't attend meetings. We should politely suggest to them to resign if they can't attend. Or we could do a weekend meeting and call it a retreat.

CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN (CMP)

- Publication and Promotion Plan Update
  - Attachment 3 "Injury Crashes along the GRR Scenic Byway Des Moines County, IA 2004-2013". Mary said this is something for each county that will be in the CMP.
- Spring 2015 Public Meeting Schedule
  - Meetings are to be held in Guttenberg, Davenport and Burlington progressing from South to North. Suggestions of key people to invite are the county engineer, a key council member or mayor, CVB, IC, transportation person (DOT), Bi-states regional planning commission, and/or the city planner. Pick people who are leaders who will talk about this. Follow up with the invitees to see if they can attend. "We've been working on this for three years and this is a big deal, so please attend."

Edith moved and Jay seconded to adjourn. Approved. Adjourned at 8:14.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Jochims, Recording Secretary

IOWA MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY COMMISSION
March 24, 2015
Putnam Museum, 1717 W. 12th Street, Davenport, Iowa

ROLL CALL

- Commissioners Present: John Goodmann, Deb Jochims, Larry Kruse, Dan Peterson, Edith Pfeffer, Jane Regan, Scott Tunnicliff, and Lori Rolling
- Technical Committee Members Present: Mary Stahlhut of IDOT, Sam Shea of Cedar Rapids IDOT office

Guests Present: David Dahlquist and Breanne Bye.

WELCOME

- John Goodman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:09.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 15, 2014 MEETING MINUTES

- Edith Pfeffer moved and Jane Regan seconded to approve the December 15, 2014 minutes. Approved.

TREASURER REPORT AND APPROVAL

- Mary Stahlhut passed out the 3/19/25 Iowa MRPC Annual Budget Expense Report SF (Attachment 1). The total paid to date is $19,882.30. Scott Tunnicliff moved and Larry Kruse seconded to approve the report. Approved.
- Jane's report of Income and Expense Account 2014 shows an ending balance of $4,550.48 (Attachment 2). Larry moved and Lori Rolling seconded to approve. Approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Budget Review
  - Mary disbursed the Iowa MRPC Budget (Attachment3). Our next payment of $4,540.61 is due from our account managed by Jane Regan.
  - At the next CMP presentations we should ask for donations.
- The semi-annual MRPC Meeting will be April 22-24 in St. Paul, Minnesota.
- Byways of Iowa Foundation Membership
  - Our budget has $750 budgeted for byways, but last year we did not pay anything.
  - An example of the byways brochure was passed around.
  - Edith moved and Dan Petersen seconded to join the byways for $750 this year as budgeted. Approved.

REPORTS

- Great River Road Tear Sheet
  - Mary showed an example of the tear sheet. She wants to get this done and out, but she has a few changes including more pictures and less text plus having both the Iowa and National logos. She'll e-mail this and have it approved by e-mail vote. Edith moved and Jane seconded to approve the tear sheet.
- National Geographic Ecotourism Meeting Report
  - Scott, Edith, Jane, Shawna Lode and Sam Shea were at the recent meeting.
  - Edith said people from Clinton have lots of questions and the questions basically revolve around paying for it.
  - Scott voiced concern about who will maintain the sites. He didn't get a sense of who was overseeing the entire project.
  - John is concerned about the price of $40,000 from our organization and all the volunteer effort of input. Then after 18 months, NatGeo is gone. Jane said there will be an ongoing fee of $5,000 payable to NatGeo. Both John and Jane are against the NatGeo project.

- Edith said they were very clever and they will go ahead and do this. They made an impression on all the groups, but later the groups had questions.
- Sam said that for a privately owned business, only the business is able to enter the information. We would have to have them enter the information if we felt it was important.
- Shawna Lode relayed to Mary that she is not in favor of this project.
- Jane moved and Larry seconded that Iowa not support the NatGeo project at the next National meeting. This was unanimously approved with one abstention.
- Jane needs to address at the National level the concern that the website only lets us enter four locations from each state.
- John will make some contacts with other states regarding their thoughts about this project.

CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN (CMP) – David Dahlquist and Breanne Bye

- Committee Report
- CMP Documents, Library Questions, and Discussion
  - **Attachment 4A -** a copy of an e-mail he sent dated March 6, 2015
  - **Attachment 4B -** a sample map
  - **Attachment 4C –** a copy of an e-mail dated March 22, 2015 with comments he received
  - **Attachment 4D -** a draft of the Executive Summary of the 2015 CMP
  - **Attachment 4E -** David's draft for a possible resolution
  - **Attachment 4F -** Thoughts on "2015 Public Meetings – Recommended Approach"
  - **Attachment 5A - "**2015 CMP The Iowa Great River Road"
    - We will get a bound hard copy of this final report.
  - **Attachment 5B** – "IMRPC SUMMARY REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVE INTRINSIC QUALITIES AND RESOURCES, TABLATIONS AND MAP SETS".
    - On page 25 there is a map. There will be maps of each county and will be part of the overall CMP Library.
    - On page 23 there is a table that summarizes by county the number of sites that meet different intrinsic qualities. There is also a column listing the number of Interpretive Centers in each county plus six other column headings. This represents an expansion of the previous CMP.
    - On pages 28 – 62 there is an incredible amount of information and it is available to anyone. In addition to this report, we will have the excel spreadsheet files and the GIS shape file. We need to build awareness in our counties of this information availability.
  - **Attachment 5C –** "IMRPC Condition of the Road Report"
    - Edith said this is impossible to read especially because it is printed in gray. David and Bre will make it easier to read.
    - Its purpose is to give a broad description of the 14 points of the CMP. They really had to cut out even more information. It is a background report that sets the stage for the CMP. Future commissions can also use this to compare with future areas of concern.
    - Mary will send the document name to Edith regarding additions to page 11 (Clinton County) under "1. Iowa Great River Road Route". Jane also had a question about her route that needs to be addressed by IDOT. Larry also had questions about ownership of a part of the road in Lee County.
    - Updates are usually done in a 5-10 year range.

- **Attachment 5D** - IMRPC Core Management Directions, Actions and Financial Considerations.
    - David didn't want to roll all this information into the CMP, but it is in the Library for reference. Nothing is really new in this document, but they did roll in some information about projects that we submitted previously with budget ranges.

- Document Approval
    - Condition of the Road Report
    - Intrinsic Resource Inventory Report and Map Atlases
    - CMP Report
        - The overall organization of the CMP document is Place, People, Principles and Pathways to the Future.
        - There is also a description of our job as commissioners.
        - They've since added more icons to the information.
        - On page three there are 10 points about what the CMP is to do and does. This is not included in the main document, but it was suggested to include this in the main document. They will add it.
        - Dan moved and Scott seconded to adopt David's draft resolution **(Attachment 4E)** except for various recommendations/changes submitted by 4/17. The vote was unanimous except for one vote. Final recommendations/changes are due to David on 4/17.
    - Summary of CMP
        - It will be 16 pages and will be printed on 11" x 17" paper, but folded to 8½" x 11". He wants to reduce the text and increase photos.
        - The first chapter is entitled "Place".
        - The second chapter is entitled "People" and it is what we have heard from summaries, stakeholders, etc.
        - The third chapter is entitled "Principles" and it deals with core management directions that support the actions.
        - The fourth chapter is entitled "Pathways". Think of it as a road map to bring the commission along a journey to destinations along the way. With level one being "home" or our core responsibilities, then level two is what we've heard about building effectiveness of management and making our jobs more effective or more administrative support. Level three is a greater investment for marketing and telling stories. Level 4 is about capital investments where we can move to a level of greater financial support.
        - On page 15 there needs to be an introduction or making the case to clarify that if we want to get value from this plan, we need funding. Or move this to the beginning of the Summary. He wants this to be a call to action – a work of value and it needs attention/financing.
        - We'll share this before July with the Governor, legislators, etc.

Adjourned for lunch at 12:11.
Reconvened at 12:44.

CMP (continued)

- Publication and Promotion Plan Discussion
- Spring 2015 Public Meeting Schedule Printing and Distribution
    - Commissioners will at the very least present the Summary. Anyone at the meetings will have access to the full report. The entire library will be available through some

online arrangement. Mary suggested having one set of the library looking like chapters in a book. They will also prepare a power point of the Executive Summary.

- **Attachment 4F -** "2015 Public Meetings – Recommended Approach"
    - The idea is now to have three forums/training sessions with a key group of people (2-4) invited by each commissioner to attend this meeting. Spend a couple of hours to bring people through this to engage them. From that comes more training. Attendees should feel that they are competent to tell others at home. Give them many copies of the Summary, flash point. They will be advocates for us. The idea is to have three meetings so we can invite more people, yet keep it a small group.
- These will be conducted late early June. Can you help us bring this to the attention of the Governor, legislators, etc.?
- Can we condense these to two hours and have it early in the day?
- Suggestions of people to invite: one member of the Board of Supervisors, the City Council, the Conservation Board, Directors of our ICs, ***people who have been on our discussion boards***. Invite whoever you deal well with. Build with the locals first, then build up to the state people for presentations. We're looking for advocates, not decision makers.
- They will get back to us about dates. They'll help us with invitations.
- Mary suggested having a one-page elevator version. John would also like something like this for his state report.

MRPC MEETING(S) SCHEDULE

- Our next meeting will be Thursday morning in St. Cloud for our State Meeting/Gathering.
- Mary has MRPC business cards with some real information on them. We said we would use them.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Edith requested another banner from DOT. Mary will check on this.
- Edith wants a formal motion for Farmers and Edibles. This is not necessary as we had a consensus in an e-mail.
- Scott mentioned that the Channel Cat is asking for public speakers talking about the areas up and down the river. He will do this and incorporate information about MRPC.
- In regards to he sign project, Mary says they are still working with the engineers.
- Louisa County has taken out their trees. Later in the summer, it should go forward
- Edith went to a by-ways meeting. There will be a new doctorate program in the state on historic preservation. Attachment 6

Dan moved and Scott seconded to adjourn. Approved. Adjourned at 1:56

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Jochims, Recording Secretary

IOWA MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY COMMISSION
December 15, 2014
Putnam Museum in Davenport, Iowa

ROLL CALL

- Commissioners Present: John Goodmann, Deb Jochims, Larry Kruse, Edith Pfeffer, Jane Regan, Jay Schweitzer, and Scott Tunnicliff
- Technical Committee Members Present:
- Guests Present: David Dahlquist and Bre Bye. Joe Taylor, President and CEO, Quad Cities CVB, representing the Mississippi River Geotourism project. Doug Schorpp of the Quad Cities Times.

WELCOME

- Edith called the meeting to order at 10:12 at the Putnam Museum in Davenport, IA.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 7th MEETING MINUTES

- Jay moved and Jane seconded to approve the November 7th minutes. Approved.

TREASURER REPORT AND APPROVAL

- Jane reported that there were no disbursements or revenues. Placed on file.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Edith reported on the Iowa Travel Federation in the Knapp Center at the State Fair Grounds to be held Tuesday evening Jan 27th. We previously voted to get a table and we may have three people there. Edith and John will attend. Bre could help. Jane will try to get there. Earlier from 9-11 there will be a meeting regarding similar panels for all byways. Lunch at noon until 2:00 p.m. Then we will set up at the fair grounds. They have rows of tables with different groups that hand out food. The byways will distribute cheese curds with either crackers or wine. Legislators come and visit with you from 5-8. We will have our two maps that are prepared. There will be three tables representing byways. The following day is Transportation Day at the Capitol beginning at 9:00 at the Wallace Office Building. The following day we will set up a display at the Capitol. Then members visit legislators.
- John spoke about the National Board meeting held recently. The bulk of the discussion was on the Mississippi River Geotourism project. No decision was made because they still don't feel enough information was given.
- Edith attended the Thursday byway meeting. Edith said that the IGRR will be featured in the June edition of *Edible Iowa*, a magazine. By April 23rd we must have the information in. They will feature unique food experiences along the Iowa Great River Road. They want restaurants and several recipes from each. Edith will organize this.
- Edith mentioned a federal grant for outdoor artwork that has a deadline of Wednesday for requests. Montrose has a project that we agreed could be an applicant. (Attachment 2)

CMP – David Dahlquist and Bre Bye

- Work Session Agenda (Attachment 3)
- Bre spoke about Summaries of Local Project and State/Federal Agency Program and Project Suggestions (Attachment 4)
- Larry moved and Jay seconded that we supply information with our panelists and stakeholders. Approved. (Attachment 5) David will distribute this information.
- (Attachment 6) 2014 Stakeholder Panelist Follow-up Interviews of Fall 2014. Interest is very high among these people.

- (Attachment 7) Overview Narrative. Larry moved and Edith seconded to approve this attachment as amended/edited. Approved.
- (Attachment 8) A Complete Management Approach. David wants the approval of the structure of the four core management areas with each having a list of actions. Edith moved and Jane seconded that we approve the Complete Management Approach. Approved

Broke for lunch at 11:45.
Reconvened at 12:18

CMP (Continued)

- (Attachment 9) Financial Options for Investing in the Iowa Great River Road
  David asked us to consider the options that we could use to get these projects completed.
- (Attachment 10) Conceptual Framework for an Iowa Great River Road Conservation, Development and Promotion (CDP) Grant Program
- (Attachment 11) Iowa Great River Road corridor Management Plan Format
- (Attachment 12) Tear off sheet meant for public distribution

CMP SPRING SCHEDULE REVIEW/INPUT

- Dave hopes to do three separate meetings in each county where we go to their meetings

David introduced Joe Taylor, President and CEO, Quad Cities Convention and Tourism Bureau

NatGeo Geotourism Project*

- Joe Taylor spoke to inform us regarding upcoming activities pertaining to the Mississippi River Geotourism Project.
- (Attachment 13) This is a meeting where people should attend to learn about this big effort.
- Save the date information: March 9th 1-5 pm and 10th 9 – 1 pm to meet with Mississippi River Geotourism in the Quad Cities
- On the 10th they will discuss how local businesses can understand how this process works. This is open to anyone.
- There is no cost. They have enough money to start out and to sustain it for a while.
- We have to invite people if we think they should be involved. Invite local organizations stating that we have been asked to join Mississippi River Geotourism and we would like the input of their organizations. Please let them know we haven't made a decision yet. Bre will send this out to our constant contact list

* *See earlier discussions/"National MRPC process" discussed in previous Iowa MRPC meetings*

CMP (Continued) Dave

- (Attachment 12) The cost proposal for the tear-off map is $3,960.00. There is $9,000 that we have not allocated for anything yet which is in our CMP money so David could amend his contract to include this work. Then the cost to the commission would be $790.00 (80/20 split). Or we might want to make more Executive Copies using this money. Our contract is silent on this, but usually 10-15 copies are made in normal contracts.

Our next meeting will be February 7th. Scott will try to get The Putnam again.
Jay moved and Scott seconded to adjourn. Approved. Adjourned at 2:25.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Jochims, Recording Secretary

IOWA MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY COMMISSION
November 7, 2014
Guttenberg, Iowa

ROLL CALL

- Commissioners Present: John Goodmann, Deb Jochims, Larry Kruse, Daniel Petersen, Edith Pfeffer, Jane Regan, Lori Roling and Lori Wallace
- Technical Committee Members Present: Mary Stahlhut from IDOT, Shawna Lode from the IA Tourism Office and Margo Underwood from Department of Natural Resources
- Guests Present: David Dahlquist and his wife Mary, Andy Kimmel with MS River (speaker), and Mayor Loven (speaker)

WELCOME

- John Goodman called the meeting to order at 10:30 at the Guttenberg, Iowa River Park Place Conference Center

APPROVAL OF JUNE 12 MEETING MINUTES

- Larry moved and Dan seconded to approve the June 12th minutes as changed. See Attachment 1. (On page 2 under Attachment 11/"How To Develop a Scenic Overlook". Change the next sentence to read "This is the only byways category the current FHWA grant program funds. The DOT website has more information on this subject. http://www.iowadot.gov/pol leg services/funding guide.htm". Approved.

TREASURER REPORT AND APPROVAL

- Current Budget (Attachment 2-Iowa MRPC Annual Budget/Expense Report) –Mary Dan moved and Larry seconded to accept the Expense Report. Approved.
- (Attachment 3-Waukon State Bank)-Jane. There is a bill in the amount of $1,296.25 for a lawyer's work regarding our lapsed 501C4 status. Dan moved and Larry seconded that we pay this. Approved. Larry moved and Dan seconded that we accept the treasurer's report by Jane. Approved.
- Budget Request for FY 2016 and 2017 – John Goodman (Attachment 4-IOWA MRPC BUDGET) *Corrections: State FY 2015 Item 3 $3,265.25 should be moved to Item 2; State FYs 2016-2017 Item 2 should read "Natchez" instead of "New Orleans"*. Jane moved and Edith seconded to use in-kind first. Approved. For the 2016 budget we should advocate with the governor's office for it's passage.

OLD BUSINESS

- Tear Sheet and Iowa Byways Travel Guide Publications
  All the tear sheets were distributed in Maquoketa, so we're out. (Attachment 5-explore Iowa's Great River Road).
  - We think our tear sheet is too busy. We would like it in color and we need to have the new signage on them. Look at the IA byway brochure (There is a 6th section just on interpretive centers), TN tear sheet and the Grant Wood brochure. Other byways have theirs in 11 x 17 not legal size and in slick paper. Then the locals pay for them and they also have rack cards. These tear sheets have less information on them, but they also have QR codes.
  - Once the tear sheet is prepared, DOT will do the printing for free. If it is upgraded to shiny paper, we have to pay. If it is an adobe product, DOT can make changes and use it. We could run bids thru Shawna's Department, but we would have to use

their Des Moines bidder and they charge $100/hr. Another option is that Bre could do this.
    - National wants us to buy the GRR foldout map for 35 cents each, then give these to Interpretive Centers where they can sell them for $4.95. Shawna will try to get 1,000 free from National since they put in $15.000 also.
    - Larry moved and Jane seconded to give John and Mary authority to find a new colored design and to find a vendor. Approved.
    - David said that in the CMP grant there is money that is not allocated so it could be used for the redesign or towards marketing in the future. We will get map done and ready for spring stakeholders' meetings, then we'll consider this unallocated money. If the allocation from the State is increased than we will have more leeway.
    - Mary has given files to the mapping people who are developing a GRS layer that might be given to people driving.

TECHNICAL MEMBER REPORTS

- Travel Iowa website – Shawna Lode
    - (Attachment 6-Scenic Byways) Shawna has two pages dedicated to the scenic byways and two ways designed to get to the state historic route. 100,000 are printed per year. Please check this for changes.
    - (Attachment 7-iowagreatriverroad.com/Analtyics) 376 users and our bounce rate is good – we want to keep it below 50%. Referrals mainly came from traveliowa.com. She buys ad words from Google and Bing. We can update this quarterly or as often as Amy can do this. We should change to Eagle watch not the fall color drive. We should send winter pictures of our communities to Amy.
- Great River Road Signage Project– Mary Stahlhut
    - She has approval to do the consultant process where she gets someone to manage the whole process. This is Mary's priority to get this going. We are going to order extra of these signs.

ADJOURN FOR LUNCH

Mayor Loven of Guttenberg, speaker. He gave us an update on the Mayor's Initiative along the Mississippi River

- The Initiative consists of about 60 Mayors from Bemidji to New Orleans. Each state has 2 members on the Executive board. It has one paid employee.
- The annual meeting is divided between the North and South. Next year it will be in Dubuque.
- Walton and NW Foundations fund it.
- The big issues are environmental (in the lower gulf), shipping (wanting M55 to Chicago and M35 to Minneapolis for future to transfer grain), tourism. It is also important to educate children about the importance of the River. Jane brought a Corps of Engineers curriculum on the river for us to take to county conservation people and/or to one school per county (5th and 6th grade curriculum). It's also on line. The Corps will train them. The Mayor said the DNR is doing similar things in his area. The economic profile of each county will be done soon in the north. This is done by the Mississippi River Conservation Committee and is a great tool.

RECONVENE

Andy Kimmel of Mississippi River Network and 1 Mississippi, speaker

- (Attachment 8-MISSISSIPPI RIVER NETWORK and 9-1 MISSISSIPPI)
- Dubuque Museum is one partner in Iowa for the Mississippi River Network. It also has several mayors. It does policy issues.
- One MS reaches out to individual. There is a part-time employee (Jessica Zimmerman, Group Services Coordinator 563-57-9545, 350 E 3rd St, Dubuque 52001 jzimmerman@rivermuseum.com) at the Dubuque Museum who will come out to give presentations on 1 MS.
- Our CMP has several areas that overlap with his group's areas.
- One characteristic of his group is involving youth.

CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN – David Dahlquist

- He wants to devote sometime to the CMP within the next 45 days. He will bring treats!
- (Attachment 10-A DISCUSSION PAPER, October 30, 2014 IGRR CMP **Preliminary Completion Schedule**, Conceptual Framework for an IGRR CDP Grant Program and July 13, 2014 IGRR **Preliminary Financial Considerations**)
    - This booklet/paper is what he emailed out previously so discard that one because this one is updated
        - Page 4. He added items 1-14 that need to be addressed in the CMP.
        - Page 9. He and Bre spent a lot of time coming up with fulfillment partners. He lists 47 partners.
    - Preliminary Schedule for Completion
        - Instead of Stakeholder Meetings like in the past, David and Bre will visit City Councils, County Conservation Boards, etc.
        - Monday Dec 15th they will meet in the Quad Cities to work on the CMP. Scott will be asked to find us a place. The snow day will be the 16th.
    - Preliminary Financial Considerations and Principle Fulfillment Partners
        - (PFC) The dollar figures are not a new appropriation level, but rather new investments (an increase in what is now spent). If there is nothing in the box, it should be kept going at the same level.
        - (PFC) IA GRR Conservation, Development and Promotion Grant Program (Item H under Administrative Operations) - We need a new revenue stream. Then make this available to local entities so that decisions can be made at this level.
    - Conceptual Framework for an IAGRR Conservation, Development and Promotion Grant Program
        - Roles for the Commission – We represent the one state wide organization that collectively has a handle on the River and its needs
    - He wants to go back to the panelists from the last stakeholder meeting and have telephone interviews. We should take this report locally to people to see if it makes any sense.
- Attachment 11-PROJECT SUGGESTION FORM
    - Each commissioner is to come up with six projects from our county to support GRR. We should ask various groups in our county for ideas. – Dave will do this for panelists from the stakeholder meetings and vet them through us.
    - Every county should have one project in each of the following categories: Intrinsic Resource Conservation, Physical Improvements, Promotion & Interpretation, and Administrative Operations. Bring this back to the next meeting in December.
    - This will give us an idea of priorities

SCHEDULE FY 2015 COMMISSION MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS

- John will send out a calendar for February so we can offer suggestions for a meeting date.
- We will meet in Minnesota on April 22-24 for the semi-annual meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- Sustainability; Edible Iowa Project – Edith Pfeffer
  - Attachment 12-*Edible Iowa River Valley* (and possibly *Edible Omaha*)
  - Iowa Byways wants to do an article in Edible Iowa magazine.
  - They charge $100 per story. Usually the person who it is being written about pays the $100 fee. Who would we suggest?
- Edith would like the DOT to make banners for a meeting at the end of January. She wants pictures of each Interpretive Center on the banner(s).

COUNTY REPORTS

- Jane's Interpretive Center that we helped fund is going to happen.

ANNUAL MEETING REPORTS

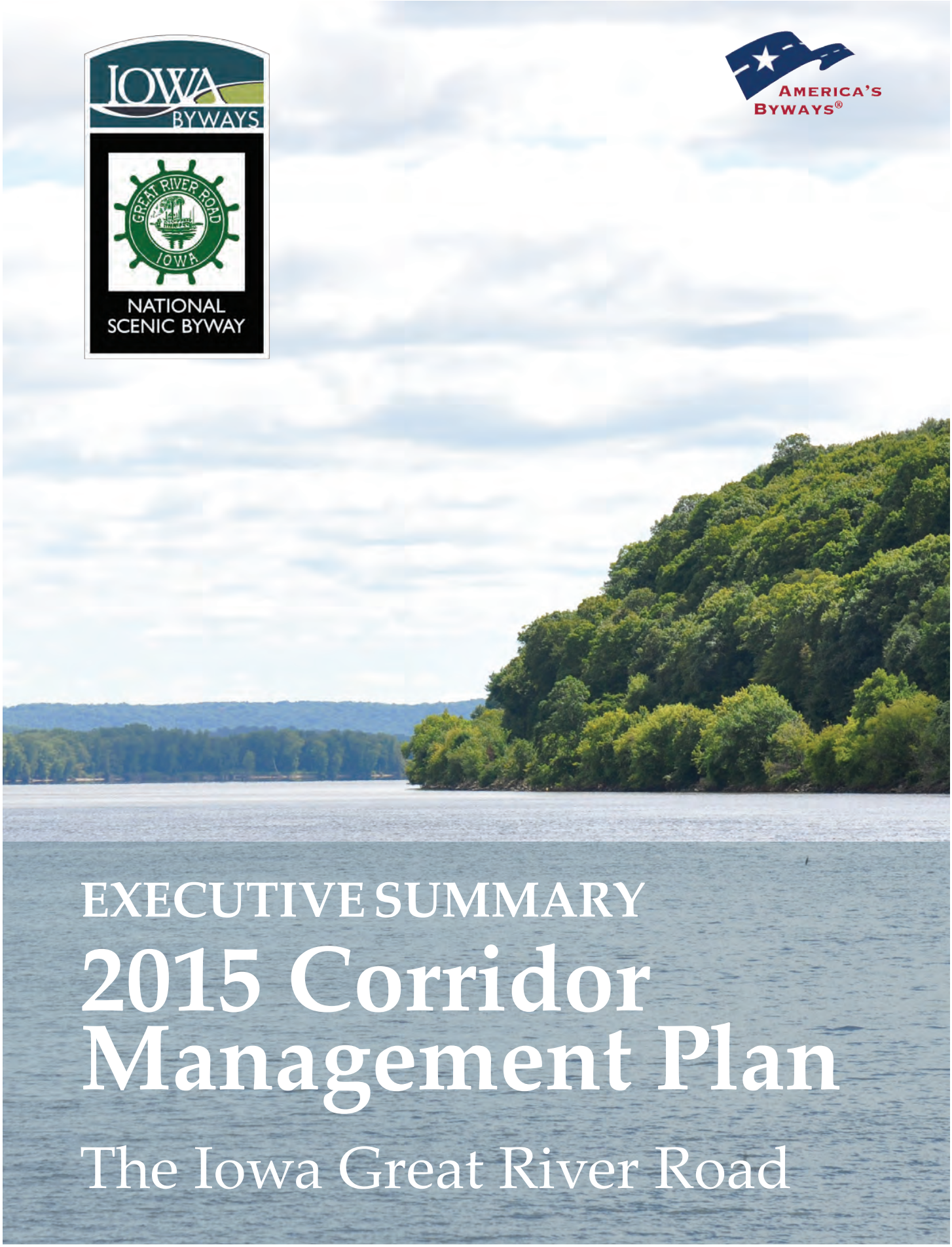
- Culture and Heritage Committee-Edith
  - Each state should provide a picture of each Interpretive Center so each commissioner should get or take pictures of each Interpretive Center in their county. Mary will put a power point together. John will add this to his e-mail. You should identify which theme it goes into. Deb will send this e-mail from Ruth to the technical members and David. This will be put on a jump drive so each Interpretive Center can learn more about the Great River Road.
  - There is a Travel Federation Showcase on 1/27/15 (Attachment 13-Re: Events Needing Byway Representation). We participated in this last year. Edith moved and Dan seconded that we participate in the Travel Federation Showcase on 1/27 with a snow-day of February 3. Approved.
- Marketing Committee–Jane
  - It was mainly about NatGeo. She also explained her recent meeting in St. Charles about NatGeo.
  - The February 24th meeting discussion should be put on our agenda for the December meeting.
- Transportation Committee
- Environment, Recreation, and Agricultural Committee-Dan
  - They want to give awards to things that are environmentally important, i.e. tearing down a coal plant and turning it into green space. Think of recipients and bring to the next meeting.

ADJOURN

- Larry moved and Dan seconded to adjourn at 3:12.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Jochims, Secretary



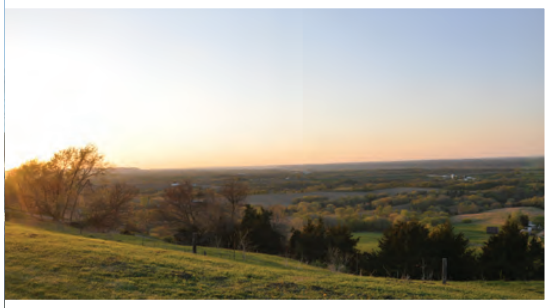
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2015 Corridor Management Plan

The Iowa Great River Road

The Iowa Great River Road...

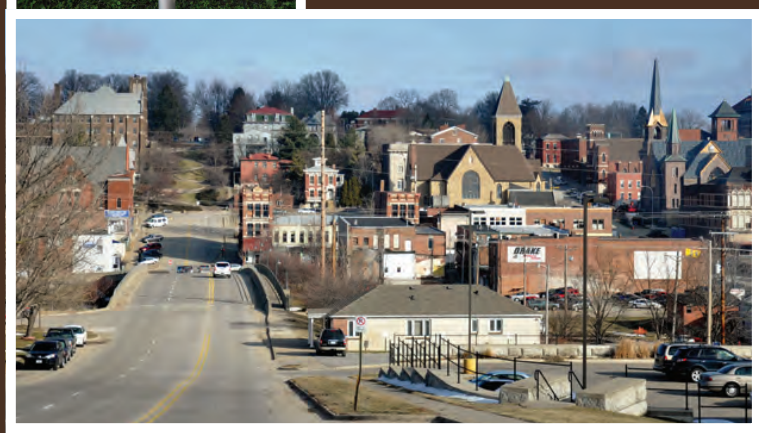
...the way the world travels to our Mississippi River



Welcome to the 2015 Corridor Management Plan for the Iowa Great River Road! As a summary of the Plan, you will find information about this National Scenic Byway and the resources which make it a national and international travel destination. After reviewing its contents, you are encouraged to explore the full Plan and the associated documents which support it. The Plan satisfies the requirements set forth by the Federal Highway Administration and the Iowa Department of Transportation.

The Iowa Mississippi River Valley and its companion parkway—the Iowa Great River Road—form **Iowa's richest travel corridor** with scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archaeological and recreation assets known across the world. These lands were significant highlands for North American Indians, these waterways provided the course of early European continental exploration, this corridor serves as a flyway for the birds of the western hemisphere, and its early settlements have grown into today's vibrant River towns and cities. This is a river of commerce, transportation and pure recreation integrated with a byway that connects ten states and provides rewarding experiences for today and every day into the future.

The Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission is privileged to have the public responsibilities for understanding the **PLACE** of the River, respecting the **PEOPLE** who rely on the Great River Road, ascribing to solid **PRINCIPLES** for stewarding this National Scenic Byway, and forging new **PATHWAYS** for its future.



To download the 2015 Corridor Management Plan, please visit **www.iowadot.gov/iowasbyways/IAGRR-CMP.html**

Since its waters first carved channels across this continent, the Mississippi River has evoked awe, respect, love, and fear, and brought wealth, death, loss and gain, struggles and the unexpected. For nearly 100 years, the National Great River Road has provided the world a way to travel the Mississippi River Valley - to feel connected to and learn from the past, enjoy the present, and wonder about the future of this spectacular place.

As you have come to open the pages of this document, you likely hold more than a casual interest in the Mississippi River and the Iowa Great River Road. And hopefully, **the Plan will serve your needs and interests as a stakeholder, a partner, a steward and an advocate** for all that the Iowa Great River Road has, does and will continue to mean for Iowa and America.

The 2015 Corridor Management Plan for the Iowa Great River Road is a plan—*your plan*—for **conserving, developing, promoting and interpreting, and managing** the rich, diverse and unique resources we treasure. And while we all have so much to gain from dedicating our efforts to the resources of the Iowa Mississippi River Valley, we also understand that much is at stake if we fail to act. Degradation of the authentic character of the corridor; undeveloped access and unsafe conditions, ineffective communication and visitor information services, and inadequate public and private investment threatens the long-term potential of the Iowa Great River Road as well as the day-to-day economic livelihood and quality of life for tens of thousands of Iowans who live within this corridor.

The Plan builds on the long history of thoughtful consideration by the Iowa Mississippi Parkway Commission; the respect for more than a 1,000 Iowans who expressed their values, needs, expectations and dreams; the support provided by the National and Iowa Scenic Byways Programs; and the dedication of State of Iowa departments and staff, many partner organizations in eastern Iowa, and the citizens all along this 341-mile treasured route.

Look for these colors and section headings to guide your journey as you explore the 2015 Corridor Management Plan for the Iowa Great River Road.

PATHWAYS ← Principles + Place + People

Pathways

In December of 2011, the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission initiated a multi-year planning project to update the Corridor Management Plan for the Iowa Great River Road. The Plan identifies objectives, strategies, and actions to assure that the Iowa Great River Road and its corridor of intrinsic resources provide the environment and experience that citizens and visitors seek and expect from one of Iowa's greatest treasures. The degree to which this plan can be implemented rests with its stakeholders -- the citizens, communities, businesses, organizations, and agencies -- who have a vested interest in protecting and sharing its resources.

Pathways to the Future

Pathways to the Future, the concluding chapter of the Plan, provides an approach for the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission and Iowa Great River Road stakeholders to work in progressive steps—"Levels"—toward accomplishing the Core Management Directions for the Iowa Great River Road.

There are numerous indicators pointing to the overall conclusion that conserving, developing, promoting and interpreting, and managing a resource as significant as the Iowa Great River Road is, at present, substantially underfunded. The "Pathways" approach relies on undertaking and building Levels 2, 3, and 4 one at a time over a number of years. Moving from Level 1 to Level 2, as outlined on the following page, should be funded and implemented successfully before Level 3 is undertaken. Similarly, Level 4 should occur following the successful implementation of Level 3.

A New Companion Leadership Team—The Iowa Great River Road Leadership Group

Leadership for the future of the Iowa Great River Road needs to expand beyond the present enthusiasm and capabilities of Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission and its technical advisors. An immediate priority should be establishing **a companion group of dedicated, local and diversely talented leaders** who would bring additional proven experience and skills at mobilizing human and financial resources from the private sector to focus on the Iowa Great River Road.

The Iowa Great River Road Leadership Group would be composed of **highly effective leaders in the areas of economic and rural development; regional tourism growth; environmental conservation and sustainability, education; agriculture; community foundations; and politics**. This group would focus on mobilizing the private as well as political sectors to support the conservation, development, promotion and interpretation, and administration of the Byway. Securing much–needed financial support for the Core Management Directions and Actions from both public and private sources would be a primary objective for the Iowa Great River Road Leadership Group.

Elevated Effectiveness Levels —The Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission

The Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission is presently limited in its ability to effectively manage the future of the Iowa Great River Road in several ways.

First, due to the inherent nature of Governor-appointed commissions, Commissioners are restricted in their operational capacities despite their personal desires and professional effectiveness. The Commission has no power to determine or direct public funds for programs related to the Iowa Great River Road. There is **no dedicated State of Iowa source of revenue to support the legislatively mandated mission of the Commission**. It has no authority to regulate any activity. It has no direct ability to influence the activities of any particular state department. These realities constrain the ability for the Commission to facilitate significant advancements for the Great River Road.

Secondly, Commissioners receive no compensation for their time in service to the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission and only receive per diem reimbursements for travel, meals, and lodging. Therefore, despite their personal levels of dedication, Commissioners are encumbered by state administrative rules and inadequate funding to fully cover their direct out–of–pocket expenses.

Finally, for the most part, the Commission is very limited in its capacity to effectively and repetitively raise funding for its operations from other governmental or private sources.

The next page presents summary points for each Level of *Pathways to the Future*.

Level 1
Existing Level of Appropriation

- Financial support for Corridor Management Plan implementation is limited to the Commission's $40,000 annual appropriation, much of which is earmarked for National Mississippi River Parkway Commission dues and travel expenses.
- **Performance is limited to Commissioners engaging with local stakeholders and partners.**
- State of Iowa departments and federal agencies will need to increase the sharing of information with local stakeholders, since the Commission, at its present Level 1, does not have the capabilities to fulfill that function.

Level 2
Administration and Communications

- Elevate the operations of the Commission so consistent, competent and reliable **communication services** can be provided - **newsletters; regular stakeholder meetings; presentations to stakeholder organizations; information sharing with State and local agencies and organizations; representation of the Commission at meetings and events**.
- Increase awareness of the Iowa Great River Road and the Commission; improve collaboration among stakeholders and partners; and increase the effectiveness of the Commission in addressing policy issues and supporting Plan implementation by other parties.
- Level 2 objectives require employing an **experienced director** at a half– to full–time level. Ideally, this person will perform their duties from an Iowa Great River Road community. Options for administering the management functions of Level 2 could be assumed by an existing stakeholder organization.
- Estimated annual budget for fulfilling Level 2: $160,000 - $180,000.

Level 3
Promotion and Interpretation

- **Achieve increased visitation and travel party expenditures in all Iowa Great River Road communities**.
- Prepare and implement a Market Development and Promotion Plan and an integrated Interpretive Management Plan; produce and distribute well-planned promotional media and travel planning information; coordinate and collaborate with various state, eastern Iowa, multi-county and municipal convention and visitors bureaus; design and produce interpretive exhibits and materials; facilitate annual training sessions for frontline staff and volunteers at visitor and interpretive centers.
- **Requires collaborative engagement** of various organizations and agencies including federal lands management agencies; the Iowa Tourism Office; Eastern Iowa Tourism; Iowa Department of Natural Resources; Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs; County Conservation Boards; designated interpretive centers; municipal and multi-county convention and visitors bureaus.
- Estimated annual budget for fulfilling Level 3: $325,000 - $525,000.

Level 4
Facilitator for Capital Investment

- Recognize the need to establish one or several sources of public and private **funding** – state and local – **dedicated to new locally-conceived projects and programs** associated with the Core Management Directions: **Conservation of Intrinsic Resources** and **Physical Improvements**. Scope of financial investment likely between $100 million to $500 million or more.
- Funding options range from increasing/targeting existing budgets of state/local governments; a conservation, development and promotion grant program; to a multifaceted Iowa Great River Road investment initiative involving an accelerated program to meet infrastructure, innovation, beautification, and interpretation development needs and opportunities.

Principles

To respect the incredible ***place*** that is the Iowa Great River Road corridor and the input of the ***people*** involved in developing this plan, specific ***principles*** have been adopted by the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission to offer a framework for implementation.

Input Leads to Management Directions

Core Management Directions and Actions

The Iowa Great River Road, the National Scenic Byway that connects people and their communities with Iowa's most important scenic, historic, cultural, natural, and recreation corridor, deserves thoughtful, comprehensive and long range planning and management. Conserving intrinsic resources, building physical improvements, promoting and interpreting, and effectively administering this dynamic resource are the four pillars for supporting the ongoing, new and long range investment of human talents and financial resources.

"**Core Management Directions**" describe the four broad, goal-oriented, mainstays that will continually support the effective sustenance, development, promotion and administration of the Iowa Great River Road. These are constants which can guide and direct as well as account for and evaluate the investments of human and financial resources made on behalf of the Iowa Great River Road.

"**Actions**" are the expression of projects, programs and even day-to-day activities undertaken by the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission and its broad range of partners and stakeholders—"fulfillment partners"-- which are dedicated to and require the effective management of Iowa Great River Road. The dynamics that come with time will and should bring the Commission and each engaged partner to regularly consider the effectiveness of their fulfillment of specific actions.

Intrinsic resources are what make the Byway special. The places, the stories, the people that are scenic, cultural, historic, natural, recreational or archaeological make the Iowa Great River Road unique. Conserving, enhancing and reducing threats to these qualities certainly requires thoughtful choices and actions.

Intrinsic Resource Conservation

Physical Improvements

Physical improvements to the built environment create access for and encourage use and enjoyment of the Iowa Great River Road and its intrinsic resources. Several types of improvements are necessary to ensure the traveling safety of visitors and residents. Capital investment decisions are necessary before residents and visitors can realize the rewards of the Iowa Great River Road.

If we aren't made aware of something good, we will never experience its new and rewarding benefits. The stories, the beauty, the richness, the adventure, in short, the whole experience of the Iowa Great River Road, even if its resources are well-conserved and the infrastructure is fully built, will not be appreciated without continual encouragement through effective promotion and engaging interpretation.

Promotion and Interpretation

Administrative Operations

A variety of administrative services—funding, responsibility assignment, duties and others—are needed to identify, leverage, magnify and reward the allocation of human and financial resources.

Core Management Directions and Actions

Intrinsic Resource Conservation

Roadside/ROW Management - Manage the roadsides and rights-of-way of the Iowa Great River Road for visual and environmental sustainability purposes.

Viewshed Management - Recognize and enhance authentic scenic qualities that can be seen from the roadway of the Iowa Great River Road.

Protect Historical and Cultural Resources - Identify, protect and communicate the intrinsic qualities of historical and cultural personalities, events, sites, artifacts, photographs, art, crafts, livelihoods, and oral histories of the Mississippi River and Iowa Great River Road region.

Trash and Litter Removal - Remove and recycle trash, litter and debris from along the Iowa Great River Road roadway.

Community Development and Appearance - Recognize, conserve, and enhance the appearance and compatible development of the communities along the Iowa Great River Road.

Mississippi River Qualities - Recognize, conserve, and enhance the appearance, water quality and compatibility of the multiple uses of the Mississippi River and its shoreline.

Botanical and Biological Resources - Recognize, conserve, and enhance the quality and quantity of botanical and biological resources of the corridor related to the Iowa Great River Road and the water tributaries leading to the Mississippi River.

Outdoor Advertising Control - Regulate the erection of new outdoor advertising signs in accordance with federal, state and local laws, policies and ordinances.

Physical Improvements

Wayshowing Components - Install and maintain, according to IDOT policy, new Iowa Great River Road Byway route guide signs; Byway entrance and exit markers; directional signage for Byway attractions; and attraction identification signage. Prepare and distribute printed and digital Byway maps and construct Byway orientation stops at key locations.

Scenic Overlooks - In all ten Iowa Great River Road counties, create and enhance scenic overlooks at key locations on or near the Iowa Great River Road to provide public access and parking for travelers to view the Mississippi River; rare geological and water features, agricultural landscapes, historic sites, city views, etc.

Parking Areas and Access Points - At key locations along the Iowa Great River Road, maintain, improve and, where needed, construct public parking areas for automobiles, recreation vehicles, motorcycles and bicycles and pedestrian access to trails; public boat launches and water bodies; federal, state, county and municipal parks; historic sites, museums, and interpretive centers; and other public assets and attractions associated with the Iowa Great River Road.

Public Amenities - Maintain, improve and, where needed, construct public amenities including restrooms, drinking water stations, rest areas, shelters, and trash receptacles. Provide accessibility during reasonable times of the day and incorporate universal design features.

Mississippi River Trail - Implement the routing of the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) from Minnesota to Missouri to provide a continuous bicycle path and connections to public amenities, parking areas, and attractions within the corridor of the Iowa Great River Road.

Roadside Vegetation - Plant, rehabilitate and maintain ground covers, trees and shrubs in the roadsides of the Iowa Great River Road which are consistent with the principles of the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund and community aesthetics and remove overgrown vegetation which otherwise blocks views of the Mississippi River and scenic vistas of the Byway.

Sensitive Road Repair, Upgrades and Replacements - Undertake routine maintenance, repair and replacement of roadway infrastructure -pavement, traffic control devices, drainage structures, bridges, fencing, etc.-in ways that are sensitive to and support a positive driving experience and visual appearance for the Iowa Great River Road.

Community Entries - Implement and maintain high quality and locally authentic community entrances for each town and city along the Iowa Great River Road and encourage expressions of the community's connection to the Iowa Great River Road and the Mississippi River.

Livable Streetscapes - Encourage communities to implement and maintain street and sidewalk improvements which will enhance the overall livability and usefulness (complete streets, green streets, quiet streets) of urban portions of the Iowa Great River Road.

(continued on the next page)

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Promotion and Interpretation

A National Treasure - Emphasize in all promotion and interpretation related to the Iowa Great River Road, that it provides the link to America's greatest river and a corridor of international importance.

Interpretive Sites, Stories, and Venues - Expand the offering of interpretive experience opportunities to build on the presently identified Interpretive Centers by including additional types of sites, interpretive programs, tours, and itineraries using a variety of authentic themes, messages, stories and media.

Iowa Great River Road Website - Redevelop, activate, and maintain an up-to-date website for the Iowa Great River Road and support it with widespread promotion and public awareness.

Integrated Information and Promotional Material Design, produce, print, upload and distribute a variety of promotion and information media developed to serve the various needs and desires individuals and travel groups have in the pre-visit, visit and post-visit stages of experiencing the route.

Iowa Great River Road/Upper Mississippi River Discovery Guide - Facilitate a well-known travel author to write, produce and market a top level, commercially produced travel discovery guide (book) focused on the varied intrinsic resources associated with the Iowa Great River Road region and the upper Mississippi River Valley.

Hospitality Training - Deliver training, information and support materials pertaining to the Iowa Great River Road for the diverse audience of 'front-line' hospitality personnel in the public and private sectors who provide information to the public.

Community Events and Celebrations - Emphasize, promote and strengthen the effectiveness of local community events and celebrations by linking them with being part of the Iowa Great River Road and the Upper Mississippi River valley.

Niche Markets - Emphasize connecting niche travel market groups—agri-tourism, culinary tourism, ecotourism, geo-tourism, recreation tourism, art tourism, motorcycle groups, vintage or special car clubs, bicycle tour groups, etc.-with the Iowa Great River Road.

Loops and Side Routes - Identify and inform travelers of highway, road and street segments that provide them with loops, spurs and alternative routes of the travel in exploring the GRR region in Iowa and the adjoining states.

International Market Development - Participate in programs intended to develop travel to the Iowa Great River Road by international travel markets through targeted promotion and group tour support. Translate promotional and interpretive media into additional languages.

Formal Learning Resources - Facilitate and support education-focused groups (school districts, colleges and universities, home school associations) to promote and use the intrinsic resources of the Iowa Great River Road as a rich teaching and learning resource.

Merchandise - Develop a licensing program to encourage the creation of product and merchandise lines that emphasize the Iowa Great River Road and its many resources.

Administrative Operations

Regional Stakeholder Communications - Conduct regular communications with a full range of local, regional, state, Great River Road states and national stakeholders.

Regional Planning Forums - Periodically facilitate regional planning forums which bring together a variety of public and private interest organizations to address issues, challenges and opportunities which effect a larger area of influence than what is covered by any single organization or agency along the Iowa Great River Road.

Key Indicators - Identify, measure and report key indicators related to the Iowa Great River Road including visitor and resident opinions about the Byway and its management; measures of intrinsic resource conservation; economic impacts of the Iowa Great River Road and associated features; and economic impact and influence of the Iowa Great River Road corridor.

Local Enterprise Support - Identify, emphasize and support local business enterprises, locally produced food, art and crafts, etc. through public relations activities, collaborative programs and facilitate the availability of start-up and investment funding.

National Mississippi River Parkway Commission Participate in multi-state programs and projects of the ten-state national Mississippi River Parkway Commission which offer distinct benefits for the Iowa portion of the Great River Road.

Iowa Byways Program - Integrate the multi-faceted program activities of the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission and the Iowa Great River Road with the activities and projects of the Iowa Byways Program offered by the State of Iowa and the Iowa Byways Foundation.

Commission Support - Undertake routine maintenance, repair and replacement of roadway infrastructure -pavement, traffic control devices, drainage structures, bridges, fencing, etc.-in ways that are sensitive to and support a positive driving experience and visual appearance for the Iowa Great River Road.

Project and Program Funding - Secure long-term dedicated funding to support direct operations of the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission. In addition, secure funding to develop a competitive grant program for local governments and eligible private organizations in the 10 Iowa Great River Road counties to support projects and programs which fulfill resource conservation, facility development and maintenance, and promotion related to the Iowa Great River Road.

Federal and State Agency Engagement - Expand and recognize the effectiveness and financial commitments of federal and state agencies with roles and responsibilities for resource conservation, facility development and maintenance, and promotion related to the Iowa Great River Road.

County and Municipal Agency Engagement - Expand and recognize the effectiveness and financial commitments of county and municipal agencies with roles and responsibilities for resource conservation, facility development and maintenance, and interpretation at the local level related to the Iowa Great River Road.

Non-profit and Corporate Engagement - Identify and support cooperative agreements with non-profit organizations and corporations in the fulfillment of resource conservation, facility development and maintenance, and promotion related to the Iowa Great River Road.

Point of Public Contact - Establish, promote and operate a single point of information contact and administrative operations for all public, stakeholder and organization communications regarding the Iowa Great River Road.

Non-profit Foundation - Expand and elevate the effectiveness of the existing non-profit organization representing the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission and the Iowa Great River Road in securing donations from individuals and corporations as well as funding from other foundations for broad program support and targeted projects which support the Iowa Great River Road.

Friends Group - Establish a membership-based "friends" group for Iowa Great River Road enthusiasts and supporters by securing membership at the national, state and local levels and providing information, events and other member benefits.

Who is responsible for implementing this plan? You!

Conserving, developing, interpreting and promoting, and administering the Iowa Great River Road will inherently need to be shared by **a broad range of local to national entities**. No single agency or organization has the authority, resources or experience to do it all. Listed here are nearly 50 of the **principle fulfillment partners** which can play important roles in the future of the Iowa Great River Road.

Local Entities

- Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission
- Iowa Great River Road Interpretive Sites
- Private Property Owners
- Family and Corporate Farm Operators
- Local Businesses
- Local Travel Attractions
- River—and Great River Road Corridor—based Industrial and Commercial Operations
- County Conservation Boards
- County Boards of Supervisors and related Departments and Boards
- Municipal Governments and related Departments, Boards and Commissions
- Local Chambers of Commerce/Convention and Visitors Bureaus
- Local Charitable Foundations
- Local Civic and Community Organizations
- Local Historical Societies
- Local Main Street Iowa Programs
- Roadside Beautification Groups, Adopt-a-Highway sponsors, Keep Iowa Beautiful, etc.
- K-12 Education (Public, private and homeschooling, etc.)

State-wide Agencies

- Iowa Governor's Office
- Iowa Legislature and State Legislators
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
- Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, State Historical Society
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- Iowa Department of Transportation
- Iowa Department of Transportation - Iowa Byways Program, the Byways of Iowa Coalition, and the Byways of Iowa Foundation
- Iowa Economic Development Authority
- Iowa Economic Development Authority--Travel Iowa
- Iowa U.S. Congressional Delegation
- Land Trust Organizations (i.e. Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, County Conservation Foundations, etc.)
- Travel Writer/Publisher/Digital Production Company

Regional Entities in Multiple Counties

- Eastern Iowa Tourism
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Rural Planning Agencies
- Resource, Conservation, and Development Councils
- Agricultural Interest Groups
- Leisure Travel and Activity Groups (Outdoor recreation, vintage cars, wildlife viewing, boating, bicycling, arts, antiques, wine, food, etc.)
- River Cruise Operators
- College and University Programs
- Dubuque Community Foundation--Mississippi River Parkway Commission Non-profit

National and Federal Agencies

- National Mississippi River Parkway Commission/ Mississippi River Country
- National Park Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Department of Agriculture
- Federal Highway Administration - National Scenic Byways Program
- Dedicated River Interest Organizations (1Mississippi, Mississippi River Collaborative, River Action, etc.)
- National Travel Promotion Organizations (Brand USA, U.S. Travel Association, etc.)

How can you contribute to and benefit from the Iowa Great River Road?

1. Get to **know the corridor** more and better.
2. Use the phrase: ***Iowa Great River Road***
3. Communicate that you are **located on or near** the Iowa Great River Road.
4. **Share your experiences** with your Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission representative, legislators, local public officials.
5. **Ask for more support - give more support**.

Place

Managing and stewarding the Iowa Great River Road is most effectively accomplished by understanding the **PLACE**—the context, the geography, and the essence—of the corridor and its intrinsic qualities which make the Byway rewarding for both visitors and residents.

What is the Iowa Great River Road?

The Iowa Great River Road is a 341-mile route that parallels the west bank of the Mississippi River in eastern Iowa between the Missouri and Minnesota state borders. The Byway passes through 10 Iowa counties, numerous towns, and several urban centers. Travelers along the route experience a variety of settings including magnificent vistas of the River; upland woodlands and floodplain forests; various parks, preserves and conservation areas; agricultural, small farms and rural countryside; small-town main streets; diverse and distinctive architecture; metropolitan centers and, most importantly, river life.

The entire route is paved two-lane and four-lane roadway. Approximately 188 miles (55%) are under the jurisdiction of the Iowa Department of Transportation. Approximately 153 miles (45%) are under county and municipal jurisdiction.

The route functions in a number of different capacities including: through traffic, local service, commercial use and recreational traffic. All portions of the route are maintained for year round use. The entire route is signed as the "Great River Road".

What makes the Iowa Great River Road so special?

Intrinsic qualities and resources associated with the Iowa Great River Road National Scenic Byway are the visible and tangible resources that make this corridor special, unique and highly desirable to visit and experience.

Authentic intrinsic qualities are a condition of securing the Byway's designation by the State of Iowa and the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. Conserving intrinsic resources is a requirement for maintaining the state and federal Byway designations. Perhaps most importantly, telling the stories associated with the intrinsic resources of the Byway offers the most effective means to attract visitors and provides authentic and rewarding visitor and resident experiences.

Six intrinsic qualities—**scenic, natural, historic, archaeological, cultural, and recreational**—are valued qualities used to describe and categorize a byway's special sense of place and meaning to local residents and byway travelers alike. Identifying these six intrinsic qualities aid byway stakeholders and managers conserve, develop, interpret and promote the local, regional, and national significance of each individual site, event, and the stories they contribute to the visitor experiences. In short, intrinsic qualities and resources are representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctive characteristics of the Iowa Great River Road corridor.

What sites share the story of the Great River Road?

The National Mississippi River Parkway Commission designates **interpretive centers** as part of its Great River Road Network of Museums and Interpretive Centers. Seventy-two facilities have received designation as official Great River Road Interpretive Centers along the 10-state route. Iowa contributes an impressive fifteen of these (indicated on the maps on the following pages), more than any other state.

Signs marking all 15 designated Great River Road Interpretive Centers along the 10-state route

Scenic Intrinsic Quality (Sc)

- The Mississippi River itself
- Dramatic bluff land views and vistas
- Rock outcroppings
- Agricultural fields, farmsteads
- Distinctive architecture
- Small town main streets
- Vegetation of the fall and spring seasons
- Winter scenes with fresh snow
- Upland and floodplain forests
- Tributary rivers and streams, wetlands and backwaters
- Diverse topography
- Narrow channel and wide channel diversity

Natural Intrinsic Quality (Na)

- Geology, landforms and river hydrology
- Diverse wildlife including bald eagles
- Caves and natural springs
- Mississippi River tributary crossings and river level fluctuations
- Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
- Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge
- Protected wildlife management properties, state preserves
- State, county and city parks
- Nature centers, interpretation programs and watchable wildlife programs and opportunities

Historic Intrinsic Quality (Hi)

- National Register of Historic Districts
- National Register of Historic Places
- Historic vehicle and railroad bridges
- Century Farms and classic farm buildings
- Railroad routing, depots and structures
- Locks and Dams of the Mississippi
- River adjoining Iowa
- Historic cemeteries
- City and county historical museums
- Historic factory buildings, docks, commercial buildings, brewery buildings
- Country schools and small town school buildings
- Churches
- Riverfront parks
- Mormon Trail route
- Pedestrian walkways, stairs and elevators set in the bluff faces of towns and cities
- Historic markers

Archaeological Intrinsic Quality (Ar)

- Effigy Mounds National Monument
- Toolesboro Indian Mounds National Historic Landmark
- Various officially identified and protected archaeological sites
- Protected native American sites
- Museums and artifacts

Cultural Intrinsic Quality (Cu)

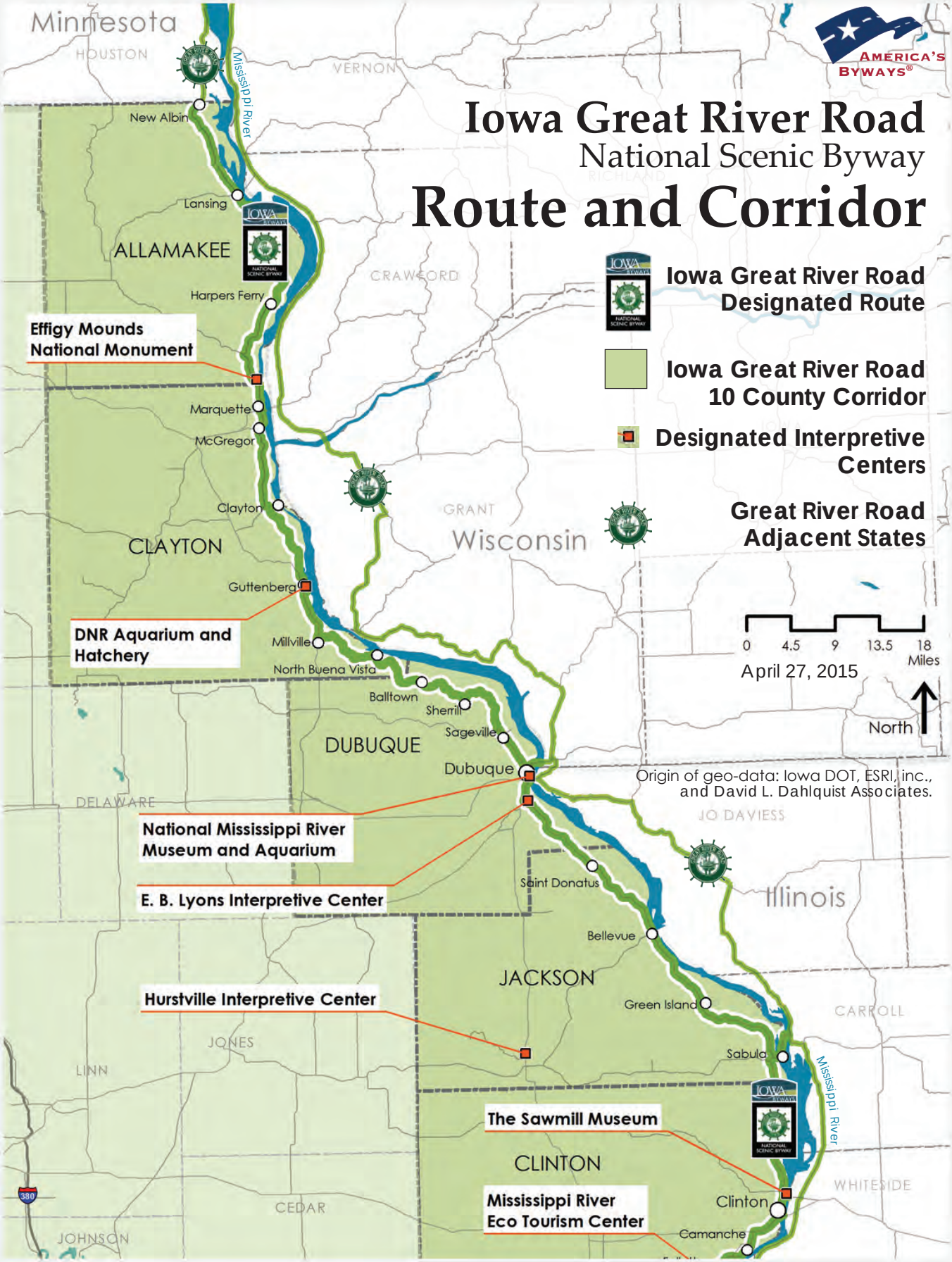
- All towns and cities along the Iowa Great River Road
- Various ethnic and community festivals and events
- Farmers markets
- Iowa Main Street Program districts
- Art galleries
- Music performance venues featuring locally–based artists
- Wineries
- Restaurants featuring locally-grown food and immigrant/ethnic food
- Mississippi River commercial barge and recreational boat traffic particularly associated with all locks and dams

Recreational Intrinsic Quality (Re)

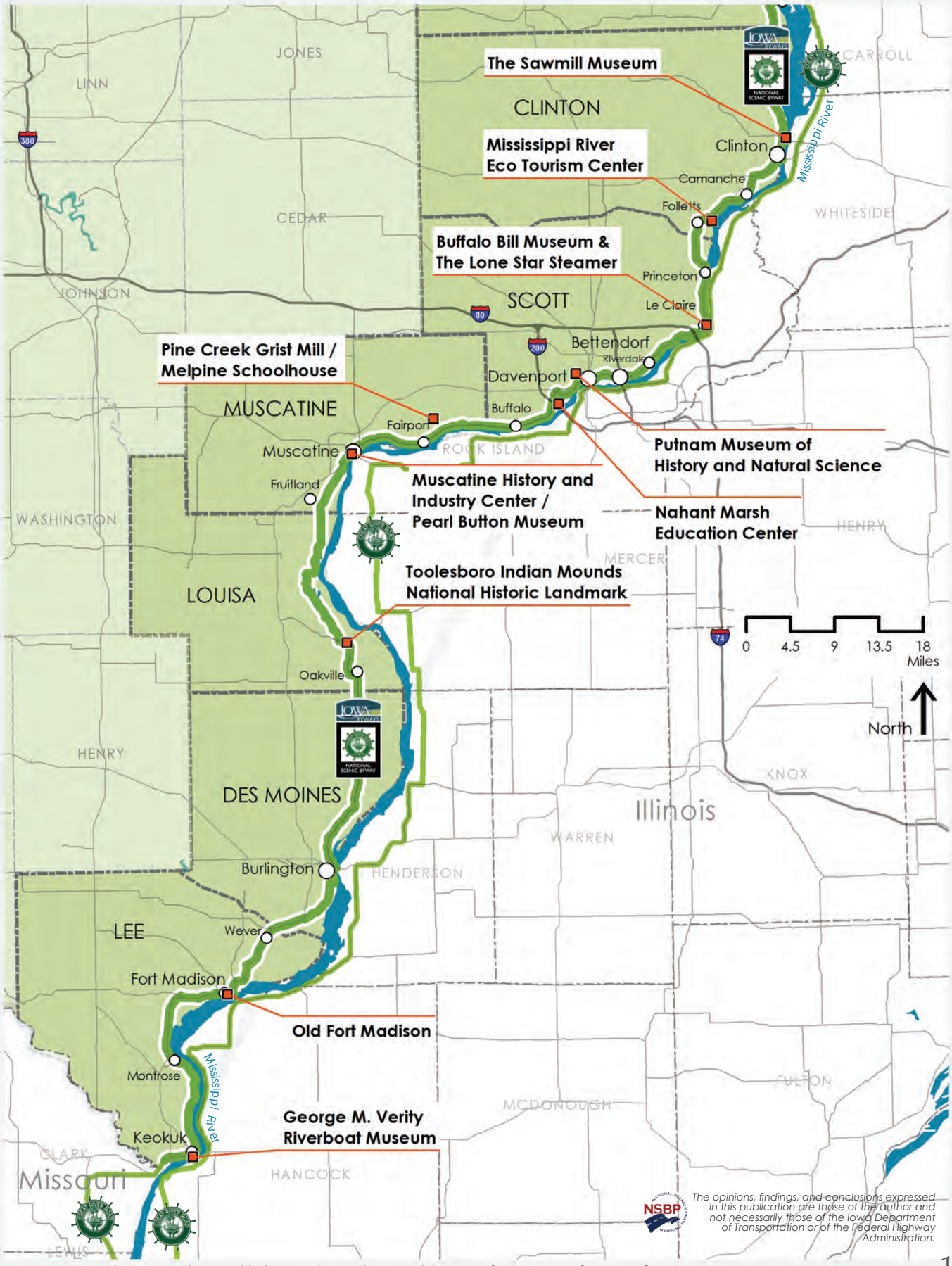
- Water-based recreation opportunities for boating, fishing, hunting
- Developed recreation access areas of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, the Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Protected wildlife management properties, state preserves
- State, county and city parks
- Nature centers
- Many types of hiking and bicycling trails including the Mississippi River Trail
- Primitive and modern campgrounds
- Wildlife viewing
- Antique and art shopping
- Performing arts and cultural events
- Art museums

Iowa Great River Road Counties	Iowa Great River Road Intrinsic Resource Locations by County						TOTAL RESOURCE SITES BY COUNTY	Number of Designated National Great River Road Interpretive Centers	Number of Facilities which provide Interpretive Communication	Number of Facilities which provide Visitor Information	Mississippi River can be reached or seen from this Location	Supplemental Attractions or Points of Interest	Attractions included in 2014 Iowa Tourism Office Inventory	Number of locations included in 2000 IA GRR CMP list of Intrinsic Resources
	Scenic	Natural	Historical	Archeo-logical	Cultural	Recrea-tional								
Allamakee	13	7	8	1	8	23	**60**	1	5	4	18	6	10	6
Clayton	14	5	16	1	10	20	**66**	2	9	5	14	8	24	8
Dubuque	10	7	22	1	16	21	**77**	2	10	3	16	26	50	13
Jackson	7	8	8	0	5	21	**49**	1	3	2	3	11	22	7
Clinton	6	7	10	0	6	30	**59**	2	9	2	19	20	21	7
Scott	3	3	16	0	17	16	**55**	3	9	2	15	16	35	10
Muscatine	5	3	7	0	4	10	**29**	2	6	1	9	8	16	6
Louisa	7	15	4	1	1	23	**51**	1	3	0	17	1	13	3
Des Moines	19	6	16	1	8	18	**68**	0	13	2	20	13	23	3
Lee	11	0	21	0	6	19	**57**	2	3	4	20	8	20	6
TOTALS	**95**	**61**	**128**	**5**	**81**	**201**	**571**	**15**	**70**	**25**	**151**	**117**	**234**	**69**

Summary Table of the Intrinsic Resources of the Iowa Great River Road



To download the 2015 Corridor Management Plan, please visit **www.iowadot.gov/iowasbyways/IAGRR-CMP.html**



The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Iowa Department of Transportation or of the Federal Highway Administration.

People

Why is public input important?

Continuing to engage byway partners and stakeholders in implementing the vision laid out in this 2015 Corridor Management Plan for the Iowa Great River Road is necessary for success. Throughout planning process that led to the adoption of the Plan by the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission, organizational and agency representatives, governmental officials, business owners, and corridor residents have demonstrated their strong commitment to the Iowa Great River Road and its future and their desire to maintain involvement or deepen their support.

How were stakeholders engaged in the planning process?

The planning process that influenced the 2015 Corridor Management Plan involved numerous input opportunities for the general public and representatives of stakeholder organizations such as municipal and county governments and elected officials; state and federal agencies; non-profit interest groups; and private organizations.

In the spring of 2012, eleven public stakeholder meetings were conducted in six communities along the Iowa Great River Road. Approximately 175 attendees participated in these hour and halt long meetings.

Two years later, in April of 2014, six stakeholder meetings were again conducted in the communities which hosted the 2012 meetings. Approximately 200 attendees participated in these two-hour meetings.

Visitor and Resident Surveys

The primary goal of the 2013 Iowa Great River Road Survey was to gather and report indicators of the needs, desires and perceptions of Iowa Great River Road travelers and area residents. The survey findings will assist the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission and its stakeholder organizations to provide more effective information, services and facilities for people to experience the Iowa Great River Road.

Tourism's Impact on the Local and State Economy

Travel and tourism is vital to the eastern Iowa economy. **Travel expenditures in the 10 counties** which comprise the Iowa Great River Road account for 18% (**$1.4 billion**) of total travel expenditures in the state though these counties represent only 16% of the state's population. Five Iowa Great River Road counties rank in the top twenty of total travel expenditures per capita.

Information about Iowa Great River Road VISITORS...

50% of visitors plan to spend **2-3 days** along the Mississippi River

26% of visitors plan to spend **4 days** or longer along the Mississippi River

42% of Visitors report their trip ***exceeded*** expectations

55% of Visitors report their trip ***met*** expectations

3% of Visitors report their trip ***was less than what they expected***

From the **24% of Visitors** and **55% of Residents** who felt additional tourism services or visitor amenities were needed, the following were most requested:

- Guide signs and Attractions Signs
- Bicycle trails and paths
- Expanded advertising and marketing of local attractions
- Maps
- Public restroom facilities

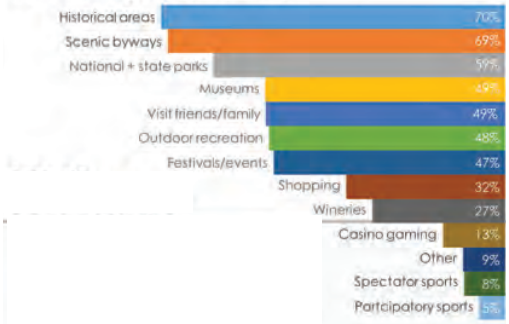
70% of visitors are **repeat visitors**

40% of repeat visitors have been visiting the area for **25+** years

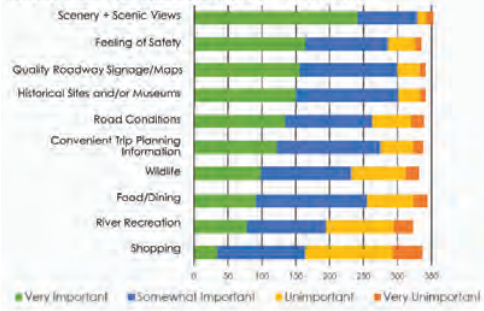
67% of repeat visitors feel the area has ***changed for the better***. Only 1% feel it has changed for the worse.

1/3 plan to ***visit again*** specifically to experience the Iowa Great River Road

When traveling for pleasure, Visitors selected the following areas of interest:



Visitors ranked the importance of various factors in their decision to visit the area



Byway signs, Maps, and Word of Mouth... ...are the ways 75% of **Visitors** became aware of the Iowa Great River Road

65% ...of **Visitors** are either "**Somewhat**" or "**Very Much Aware**" of the Iowa Great River Road. 20% of Visitors report they are "**Not Aware**" of the Iowa Great River Road

76% of **Visitors** say ***no*** *additional tourism services or visitor amenities are needed in the area*

Information about Iowa Great River Road RESIDENTS...

73% of residents feel the area has ***changed for the better***. 4.3% feel it has changed for the worse.

78% of residents feel tourism is either **Very Important** or **Extremely Important** to the local area economy

57% of residents feel the Iowa Great River Road **Contributes to a Great Extent** or **Contributes Significantly** to local area tourism

82% ...of **Residents** are either "**Somewhat**" or "**Very Much Aware**" of the Iowa Great River Road. 10% of Residents report they are "**Not Aware**" of the Iowa Great River Road

55% of **Residents** say ***additional*** *tourism services or visitor amenities are needed in the area*

The above diagrams represent summary results of a self-administered survey completed by 430 self-identified visitors and 428 self-identified residents of the Iowa Great River Road region from June to October 2013.

What is a Corridor Management Plan and **why** has it been updated?

The 2015 Corridor Management Plan is a written document which outlines the vision for the Iowa Great River Road and guides a wide range of activities for conserving, developing, interpreting and promoting, and administering the unique resources of the area. It outlines key goals and objectives and implementation strategies.

A 341 mile-long National Scenic Byway, the Iowa Great River Road connects and supports a diverse array of stakeholders. The 2015 Corridor Management Plan can help all stakeholders and partners perform more effectively, work together, and join forces on related projects.

Ready for more information?

To download the complete 2015 Iowa Great River Road Corridor Management Plan and supplemental documents, please visit:

www.iowadot.gov/iowasbyways/IAGRR-CMP.html.

For travel information about the Iowa Great River Road, please visit:

www.iowagreatriverroad.com.

For information about the ten-state Great River Road, please visit:

www.experiencemississippiriver.com.

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The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Iowa Department of Transportation or of the Federal Highway Administration.

The document was prepared with financial support provided by the Federal Highway Administration with a National Scenic Byways Program Grant as well as financial and in-kind assistance provided by the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission.

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2015 Corridor Management Plan

The Iowa Great River Road
National Scenic Byway

What does the 2015 Corridor Management Plan offer?

1. Describes the **341-mile route through Iowa's 10 eastern counties** along the Mississippi River and more than 500 sites which provide the **authentic qualities of scenery, nature, history, archaeology, culture, and recreation**.

2. Presents the case that this American Byway is **Iowa's most significant leisure and community–based corridor** with untapped potential for sustainable and compatible growth.

3. Summarizes the **values, preferences and suggestions of a sample of more than 800 visitors and residents**: in 2013 these views were expressed for the Iowa Great River Road and the Mississippi River with strength, **highly positive perspectives**, and a **clear need for conserving and expanding visitor services, development of access, and protection of tangible resources**.

4. Identifies that **significant new benefits** to the state of Iowa and Eastern Iowa **are only feasible when substantially greater investment is made** by all levels of government, nonprofit, and private sector to conserve, develop, promote and interpret the Iowa Great River Road corridor.

5. Confirms that the current unjustifiably **low legislative financial support** for the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission – – the Governor-appointed Commission with legislated responsibilities for promoting and protecting the Iowa Great River Road -- **limits its ability to make any real accomplishments** toward meeting its responsibilities.

6. Presents four **Core Management Directions along with more than 40 targeted Actions for conserving, developing, promoting and interpreting, and administering** the Iowa Great River Road which address the conditions for maintaining National Scenic Byway Designation and, much more importantly, offer an accountable framework to compel all partners, public agencies, private stakeholders, and local citizens to be part of the "village" needed to steward this national resource.

7. Calls for the **formation of a new Iowa Great River Road Leadership Group** composed of highly effective leaders to step up and fill a void in the coordinated and lasting commitment to adding real value for Iowa and the Midwest from the Iowa Great River Road.

8. Provides an **extensive library of information and data** that will be valuable to public and private decision-makers in eastern Iowa, the State of Iowa, and the other nine states which support the entire 3,000-mile Great River Road from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.

9. Points to the **unlimited opportunities for appropriate entrepreneurial ideas, development and growth** along the Iowa Great River Road, particularly focused on the authenticity of small Mississippi River towns and cities.

10. Provides **"pathways"** for the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission and their partners to take actions **so the reliance, the values, the needs and the dreams** all Iowans have for the Mississippi River and the Iowa Great River Road **can finally and ultimately be realized**.

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