



Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
4th Quarter Meeting
November 10, 2016 • 2:30 – 5:00 p.m.
State Office Building Basement Hearing Room
DRAFT AGENDA

- 2:30 p.m. Welcome & Introductions** S. Johnson
- Welcome New Member Amanda MacDonald
Grand Rapids to Brainerd Region
- 2:35 p.m. Approve Today's Agenda & Minutes from 8/11/16** S. Johnson/All
- 2:40 p.m. Commission Business**
- Budget Report Miller
- Regional Meetings/Elections Update Zoff/Miller
- Executive Committee Confirmation and Initial Tasks S. Johnson/Miller
- Confirm 2017 Quarterly Meeting Dates All
- 3:10 p.m. National MRPC Updates**
- 2016 Annual Meeting – Natchez, MS, Sept. 14 – 16 Samp/Lewis
- Great River Road Interpretive Centers – MN Additions Lewis/Miller
- Drive the Great River Road Month Report Lewis
- MRPC Marketing Committee Update Lewis
- 3:35 p.m. Old Business**
- Plan Your Project/Plan Your Trip Interactive Maps Zoff
- Mississippi River Geotourism Website Launch Anfinson/Miller
- Mississippi River Trail (MRT) Update Miller
- 3:50 p.m. New Business**
- Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium Conference – Speaker Request All
- MN Great River Road Map Project Miller/All
- Letters of Support - Transportation Alternatives Applications Zoff/Miller
- Crown Hydro Proposal - Consider MN-MRPC Role Pierson/All
- 4:20 p.m. Agency and Regional Updates**
- Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids Salminen
- Grand Rapids to Brainerd MacDonald
- Brainerd to Elk River Samp
- Elk River to Hastings Pierson
- Hastings to Iowa Border Mulry
- Agriculture Hugunin
- Explore MN Tourism A. Johnson
- Historical Society Kajer/Kelliher
- Natural Resources Parker/Bonsignore
- Transportation Bradley/Zoff
- National Park Service/MISS Anfinson
- 4:50 p.m. Other Business**
- 5:00 p.m. Wrap Up and Adjourn**



**Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
3rd Quarter Meeting – August 11, 2016
State Office Building, St. Paul MN
MINUTES – Draft**

Commissioners Present

Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River
Anne Lewis – Grand Rapids to Brainerd
Rep. Sheldon Johnson – Chair
Scott Bradley – Transportation Appointee
Keith Parker – DNR Appointee
Sheronne Mulry – Hastings to Iowa Border
Adam Johnson – Explore Minnesota Appointee

Technical Advisors & Staff Present

Carol Zoff – Transportation
Gina Bonsignore – DNR
David Kelliher – Historical Society
John Anfinson – National Park Service
Greg Hubinger - LCC

Diane Henry-Wangenstein – LCC
Chris Miller – Staff

Commissioners & Technical Advisors

Absent

Paul Hugunin – Agriculture Appointee
Sen. Patricia Torres-Ray
Sen. David Senjem
Nancy Salminen – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids
Andrea Kajer – Historical Society Appointee
Cordelia Pierson – Elk River to Hastings

Guests Present

David Larson, MnDOT

The meeting was called to order at 2:35 by Chair Johnson, followed by introductions. A quorum was present.

Review of Agenda and Minutes from 5/19/16 Meeting

The draft agenda was reviewed along with draft minutes from the 5/19/16 meeting. Motion by Karl Samp and seconded by Anne Lewis to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried. Motion by Keith Parker and seconded by Scott Bradley to approve the 5/19/16 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Commission Business

Budget Updates – FY'16 Final Report and FY '17 Allocation: Chris Miller provided information on reports included in the meeting packet. The FY '16 budget is soon to be finalized and carry over will roll forward into the FY '17 budget. Motion by Sheronne Mulry and seconded by Karl Samp to approve the budget reports as presented. Motion carried.

At Large Member Election: Chair Johnson announced the vacancy due to the resignation of Mark Anderson and called for nominations from Commission members. Karl Samp nominated Anne Lewis for the At-Large Member position. Anne is currently a Regional Member representing the Grand Rapids to Brainerd Region but will be moving to the Twin Cities. She has represented the Commission well at both the state and national levels. Chair Johnson called for additional nominations from the floor. None were received and so a vote was called by the Chair. Anne Lewis was elected as the At-Large Member and will resign her regional position. She expressed thanks to the Commission for their votes and confidence.

Regional Elections Update: Bluffs and Metro Regional Meetings/Elections will be held this fall. The Bluffs Regional Meeting will be held on September 23 in Red Wing, and the Metro Meeting is yet to be scheduled. Options are being explored to align the Metro Meeting with another meeting involving a similar audience.

Executive Committee and Commission Bylaws/Rules: Members reviewed the draft committee description included in the packet. This description will be included in bylaws when developed. Several edits were made to the Executive Committee description. The Commission approved of the draft as edited and asked that interest in serving on the committee be solicited via email. The Commission would then appoint/elect the Executive Committee at a future meeting, potentially on November 10.

Member Recognition: Two proposed recognition resolutions were distributed to Commission members for review. Chair Johnson referenced Mark Anderson's service to the Commission as At-Large Member and read a draft resolution of appreciation from the Commission. Motion by Anne Lewis and seconded by Sheronne Mulry to approve the resolution of recognition for Mark Anderson. Motion carried. Karl Samp provided background on his recommendation to recognize Carol Zoff in lieu of a nomination for a National MRPC Distinguished Service Award, which she is ineligible for since she has received it in the past. Karl noted Carol's dedication and commitment, with additional comments of support shared by David Larson and Scott Bradley. Karl read a resolution of appreciation for Carol. Motion by Karl Samp and seconded by Scott Bradley to approve the resolution of recognition for Carol Zoff. Motion carried.

Corridor Management Plan

Grant Closeout: Both CMP grants had end dates of June 30, 2016. Final reports are being prepared and grant accounts are being closed out. Full printed copies of the CMP were sent to members of the Project Advisory Team and materials posted on the website have been finalized, checked and revised for ADA compliance. A suggestion was made to send a print copy of the CMP to the National MRPC office. Chris Miller noted that this is the last time the CMP will be a separate agenda item. Specific projects will now be listed on the agenda as they are being implemented.

Initial Implementation Projects – Status & Needs: Carol Zoff reviewed the four initial implementation projects. They are – Wayfinding Signage; Plan Your Project Interactive Mapping Tool; Plan Your Trip Interactive Mapping Tool; and Great River Road Ambassador Development. Work is needed on the Plan Your Project Tool prior to signage being addressed since it will include sign locations and other information for project management. MnDOT is in the process of determining how to move forward with Plan Your Project – whether as a separate program or within regular processes. As it moves forward, Carol will need a GIS/database contact from each MN-MRPC member state agency to ensure coordination and appropriate use of data. She will be in touch with MN-MRPC members individually regarding this request. Plan Your Trip will be implemented after Plan Your Project is up and running. NPS www.rivertripplanner.org is being looked at as an example. The two online mapping tools will provide tools for Ambassador Development. One of the first ambassador tasks may be vetting the information in the traveler resources database (Plan Your Trip).

Karl Samp mentioned Blandin Community Broadband Grants as a potential source of funding, possibly as a community of interest or linear community project including virtual meetings involving towns along the river. These opportunities might exclude the Twin Cities and St. Cloud areas.

Explore Minnesota Marketing Grant Application/MN GRR Map Project: Chris Miller referenced the project overview sheet in the meeting packet. The MN-MRPC's supply of Minnesota Great River Road Map/Travel Planners is nearly depleted and requests continue to be received. The CMP includes a recommendation for a drivable map – both in print and online. Explore Minnesota is currently accepting applications for marketing grants. Matching funds would be required from non-state sources. MN-MRPC project management and coverage of distribution costs and tax would also be necessary. Motion by Scott Bradley and seconded by Anne Lewis to move forward with seeking funds for a map project as defined on the overview sheet including a grant application to EMT if required match is secured. Motion carried. Karl Samp will share the need for match funds with initiative foundations. Other potential sources of funding were discussed for consideration if an application to EMT is not feasible.

National Advisory Council and Travel & Tourism Infrastructure: Anne Lewis provided a summary of past discussions regarding the FAST Act and the Travel & Tourism Advisory Council to be developed, including a phone discussion with staff from Sen. Klobuchar's office regarding Great River Road representation on the council. In early July, information was received on a notice posted in the Federal Register seeking applications for membership on the council. The MRPC submitted an application for Diana Threadgill of Tennessee. MnDOT submitted an application for Commissioner Zelle. Status of applications/acceptance should be known sometime in fall 2016.

National MRPC Updates

2016 Annual Meeting - Natchez, MS: Restrictions on travel to Mississippi and North Carolina for state agencies/commissions remain in effect. Karl Samp will attend the Natchez meeting as National Pilot, and Anne Lewis plans to attend as part of a personal trip.

GRR Interpretive Center Nominations: Nominations were submitted to the National MRPC Office this week for the Oliver Kelley Farm and Charles A. Lindbergh Historic Site. Special thanks to Andrea Kajer, John Crippen, Lindsey Dyer, Ann Olson Bercher and Melissa Peterson at MNHS for their work. The nominations will be considered for approval at the MRPC Annual Meeting in September.

Drive the Great River Road Month: September is annual Drive the Great River Road Month. All were asked to watch for information on the sweepstakes and promotional efforts, and to help spread the word.

Old Business

Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Rule Comments: Chris Miller referenced the letter in the meeting packets, regarding resubmission of MN-MRPC comments. Special thanks to the subcommittee of David Kelliher, Cordelia Pierson and Carol Zoff for their work reviewing the proposed rules and providing a comparison to the MN-MRPC's comments.

Agency and Regional Updates

Grand Rapids to Brainerd: Anne Lewis reported on upcoming events including the KAXE Mississippi River Music Festival on July 16 and the Grand Rapids Library hosting speakers about the river. On August 8, a travel writer/paddler will begin travel from Lake Itasca to the Louisiana. The Aitkin Chamber of Commerce reports little activity on the river this year, since the local riverboat/showboat is currently being repaired. Celebrations will take place when the repairs are completed. Grand Rapids is waiting on a possible special session for a decision on \$750,000 included in the bonding bill for a pedestrian bridge over the Mississippi River.

Brainerd to Elk River: Karl Samp reminded everyone of the 2017 Governor's Fishing Opener in the St. Cloud/Sartell/Sauk Rapids area. He also reported on the MRT Kiosk dedication event held on July 12 in conjunction with the 2nd Annual Headwaters to Hills Ride (see handout in packet). The Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area is planning for expansion of trails and has funding included in the bonding bill currently on hold. 12 new businesses have opened in Crosby since the mountain bike trails were created including a resort for riders. ATV trail projects are continuing in the region. Shore Excursions will be taking a group of American Queen travelers from St. Cloud to Itasca State Park in August and Karl will be serving as a guide. Discussions are also taking place on possible future Great River Road excursions. The Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation has approved the 2nd (of up to 3) year of funding for the Brainerd Riverfront Project. Current priority is the "Three Bridges Project" including possibilities such as a raised trail and sculpture park.

Hastings to Iowa Border: Sheronne Mulry mentioned a new business in Lake City – Eagle Hang Gliding. The National Eagle Center in Wabasha recently received a new resident eagle from Washington State. Dredging is underway near Reads Landing and Minneiska, and road/bridge construction projects continue at Red Wing, Winona and Dresbach.

Explore Minnesota Tourism: Adam Johnson expressed congratulations to Anne Lewis on her election to the Commission's at-large position. He also reported on a travel blogger exchange conference being held along the Mississippi River in Saint Paul featuring the NPS Centennial; preparations for 2,000 European visitors to Saint Paul during the Ryder Cup September 27 – October 2; and French American Lines bringing a new boat up the Mississippi on October 8. Visit Saint Paul is working with partners to improve the visitor experience in the boat docking area.

Historical Society: David Kelliher provided an update regarding activities at Fort Snelling and noted thanks to the Commission for their letter of support for funding. Regardless of whether there is a special

session and the outcome of that session, MNHS will continue to work with stakeholders to develop more programs representing new perspectives at Fort Snelling. The Pioneer Press did a special June insert on Historic Fort Snelling. Activities to revitalize the Upper Post continue as overseen by a Joint Powers Group. Construction on the new visitor center at the Oliver Kelley Farm continues and is going well; completion is scheduled for mid-fall followed by winter preparation for a spring opening. The MN-MRPC was invited to consider holding a meeting at the new facility.

Natural Resources: Keith Parker described the DNR's role in Fort Snelling activities, including partnering on work to restore and reuse 26 Upper Post buildings. NPS is helping to facilitate this work. The 2017 Governors Fishing Opener will be in the DNR Central Region and there is great enthusiasm for the event. An internal DNR Mississippi River Team continues to work on habitat improvement out of the Lake City office. An aquatic habitat restoration project is occurring at Weaver Bottoms to restore depth and appropriately dispose of sediment. DNR collaborates with the USACOE on such efforts. Minnesota will be hosting the Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee Conference in March of 2017 and recommendations for host sites along the river are welcome. Gina Bonsignore reported on record use of state parks during this 125th anniversary year. Fort Snelling State Park is taking on the role of Gateway Park along with Itasca State Park, and Whitewater State Park is hosting a recreation "try it" event. A tour was recently provided for a group of planning professionals at the Warner Road site with discussion focused on how to engage youth and diverse populations. Planning is taking place for a "Bike to Nature" ½ day tour of river parks, just prior to National Public Lands Day. 800 people participated in the annual "Take a Day OFF" event at Stearns County Mississippi River Park. The Blufflands State Trail is in planning stages with a master plan likely to be complete in a few months.

Transportation: Scott Bradley reported on a June meeting within MnDOT regarding byways and byway organizations and how to continue this work with reduced/different funding and support structures. There is a commitment at MnDOT to find \$1.5 million annually to support Minnesota Byways including flexibility for projects beyond infrastructure. The Minnesota Scenic Byway Commission has updated the Memorandum of Understanding between member agencies and is working on strategic planning. DEED and MnDOT are working on a potential solicitation for economic development/transportation funds. Objectives, applications and scoring are being discussed. Carol Zoff mentioned an open funding solicitation for tribal transportation grants through FHWA. Also, the next Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) program funding solicitation will be released soon. Kimley-Horn Associates, CMP project consultants, will be doing a presentation/mobile workshop at the MN APA Conference, late September in St. Cloud. Carol will be serving as one of the presenters.

National Park Service: John Anfinson announced that August 25 is NPS Founders Day, being celebrated as part of the 2016 NPS Centennial. The Centennial activities continue throughout the year and are resulting in attention and press coverage. The Paddle Share Program had a pilot soft open which went very well, to be followed by a grand opening during the week of August 25. The MNRRA Visitor Center in the Science Museum of Minnesota has been closed for remodeling and is scheduled to reopen by the end of the month. The St. Anthony Falls Visitor Center has seen increases in visitor numbers – from 2,000 in past seasons to 12,000 this year after NPS began handling operations. Expanded activities will be planned for future years. The Minneapolis Institute of Art has installed 19 "frame stations" along the river as part of their Seeing Nature program. People can take photos and post them to social media them using #seenature or #parkconnection. The Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership has extended this year's Mississippi Minute Film Festival to include all 72 miles of the MNRRA corridor, in recognition of the NPS Centennial. John noted that the Administrative Law Judge's comments on the proposed Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area Rules were just released, and the DNR will now review. There were questions from the group on next steps and timelines and also whether the ALC comments are available online. DNR staff will review and incorporate ALJ comments. Keith Parker will check on the process and timeline for finalization, release and implementation of the rules. John expressed thanks to the MN-MRPC for their letter and comments on this important topic.

Other Business

Geotourism Program Rollout Events: Karl Samp described the plan for rollout of the National Geographic Mississippi River Geotourism Website. The formal launch will be on September 14 in Natchez, Mississippi in conjunction with the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative Meeting and Mississippi

River Parkway Commission Annual Meeting. A series of regional rollout events will then follow. An event is planned for October 12 in the Quad Cities. A question was raised about a Twin Cities event and how that would be planned. John Anfinson mentioned that he and Sabrina Chandler of USFWS have been listed as possible contacts for a Twin Cities event. Karl reported that the Mississippi River Connections Collaborative (umbrella partnership handling the geotourism project along with other project collaborations) recently updated their Memorandum of Understanding for signature by all partners, including the MRPC.

Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative: Karl Samp mentioned that Anne Lewis had a conversation with a representative of Saint Paul Mayor Coleman's office regarding the potential for partnership between the MRPC and MRCTI. This will be further explored at the National Office level, and Karl will follow up when both groups meet in Natchez.

U.S. Bicycle Route 41: Liz Walton provided an email update about development of US Bicycle Route 41. USBR 41 will link the MRT/USBR 45 to Grand Portage/Canada. MRT shows up on the general planning and public engagement materials and is clearly noted as a connection on the "about" page: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/usbr41/about.html>. If MN-MRPC members are interested in seeing how the two routes connect and would like to vote on a USBR 41 name, their input is welcome. The survey can be found here: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/usbr41/index.html> at bottom of home page--or directly here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/USBR41>.

2017 Governor's Fishing Opener: This event will be held on the Mississippi River hosted by the St. Cloud-Sartell-Sauk Rapids communities, May 11 – 14, 2017. There is a community picnic planned for Friday, May 12, 4:00 – 8:00 p.m. at Lake George that may be an opportunity for MN-MRPC/Great River Road involvement. Commission members recommended exploring options for this.

Next Meeting

Thursday, November 10, 2016
2:30 – 5:00 p.m.
State Office Building Basement Hearing Room

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

MN-MRPC FY '17 Budget
11/2/16

MN-MRPC FY '17 Operating Budget						
Obj Code	Description	FY '17 Budget	Spent	Pending	Remaining	Comments
41070	Other Benefits (Per Diem)	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 220.00		\$ 3,780.00	Commissioner Per Diem. MN-MRPC quarterly mtgs, MRPC Annual Mtg & Semi-Annual Mtg, committee mtgs, commission representation at meetings and events, CMP project
41100	Space Rental	\$ -	\$ 100.00		\$ (100.00)	
41110	Printing & Advertising	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 46.39		\$ 3,453.61	Commission meeting copies, materials
41130	Prof/Tech Services	\$ 38,461.20	\$ 9,735.00	\$ 2,530.00	\$ 26,196.20	Admin contract, website design services, additional staff time for projects, other services as needed
41150	Computer & System Services	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 834.97		\$ 165.03	Website hosting, stats and email
41155	Communications	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 284.75	\$ 64.47	\$ 1,150.78	Postage/deliveries, MN MRPC phone line and conference calls, shipping costs, Constant Contact email marketing service
41160	In-State Travel	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 691.42	\$ 81.54	\$ 3,727.04	Commissioners/Advisors/Staff, quarterly mtgs, committees, events, CMP project
41170	Out-State Travel	\$ 6,000.00	\$ -		\$ 6,000.00	MRPC 2017 Semi-Annual Meeting - Paducah, Kentucky
41180	Employee Development	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -		\$ 1,500.00	Meeting and conference registration fees, including MRPC Annual and Semi-Annual Meetings
41300	Office Supplies		\$ (66.00)		\$ 66.00	General office supplies for Commission projects. Donations for GRR maps are placed in this line item.
43000	Other Costs (MRPC Dues)	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -		\$ 15,000.00	MRPC 2017 Dues
TOTAL		\$ 75,461.20	\$ 11,846.53	\$ 2,676.01	\$ 60,938.66	

Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MN-MRPC)

Full Commission

- Comprised of 15 voting members as defined in [Minnesota Statute 161.1419](#), along with staff from agencies (also known as technical members).
- Quorum is achieved by attendance of 8 voting members (50% of members plus one). If vacancies exist on the Commission roster, the number of attendees to achieve quorum will adjust accordingly.
- The Commission meets quarterly at a minimum. Generally each meeting is 2.5 hours in length.
- State Commission meetings are open to the public, to the extent required by Minnesota Statute Chapter 13D, and audiotapes are posted online following the meetings.
- Meeting agendas, packets, minutes and audio are available at <http://www.commissions.leg.state.mn.us/mrpc/mrpc.html>.
- Staffing support provided by MN-MRPC Director, MnDOT Great River Road Program Manager, and Legislative Coordinating Commission.
- The Commission is a member of the ten-state national Mississippi River Parkway Commission.

Executive Committee

- Comprised of five members as authorized by the MN-MRPC. Membership to include the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary/Treasurer. Two additional members will be selected by the MN-MRPC. Overall composition of the Executive Committee should include one House or Senate member, one agency representative and one regional representative. Membership term is two years, with the committee membership elected by the MN-MRPC every other spring.
- Quorum is achieved by attendance of 3 voting members.
- Executive Committee meetings are open to the public, to the extent required by Minnesota Statute Chapter 13D, and audiotapes are posted online following the meeting.
- Meeting agendas, packets, minutes and audio are available at <http://www.commissions.leg.state.mn.us/mrpc/mrpc.html>.
- Staffing support provided by MN-MRPC Director, MnDOT Great River Road Program Manager, and Legislative Coordinating Commission.
- Generally meets twice per year (such as at the change of the fiscal year, and prior to the Legislative Session) and as needed between full Commission meetings.
- Maintains Commission membership – appointment/election process, recruitment, orientation. The full Commission elects the at-large member.
- Maintains affiliation with National MRPC including staying current on dues payments, ensuring National Meeting and National Committee representation from MN-MRPC.
- Monitors Corridor Management Plan implementation progress and leverages resource needs.
- Facilitates coordination with House and Senate.

Approved by MN-MRPC
8/11/16

2016 Drive the Great River Road Month - Minnesota Promotion Fall Road Trip Minnesota: 10 "Glimpses of America" via the Great River Road

Goals

To raise awareness of Great River Road and its ability to connect the public to events and places in Minnesota's history that reflect the state's connection to the building of the United States. Get people to drive the Great River Road for even just a few of the stops that may be nearest them and to plan a trip for the future.

MN-MRPC Member Agency Promotion

Requested promotion assistance from MN-MRPC member agencies. Special thanks to the agencies for their help!!

- EMT Express Online Industry Newsletter
- Featured on EMT Website under "Travel Ideas" - <http://www.exploreminnesota.com/travel-ideas/10-glimpses-of-america-via-the-great-river-road/>
- MNHS Social Media
- MnDOT Facebook Post (4,180 people reached, 28 reactions, comments or shares)
- MnDOT Newsline Article to 5,000 MnDOT employees

Governor's Proclamation

Requested and received, posted during the month at www.mnmississippiriver.com.

MN GRR Social Media

Facebook (Great River Road MN): Posted weekly about 2-3 of the featured sites. Promoted 10 state contest.

Twitter (@GreatRiverRdMN) – Promoted 10 state contest. 4 tweets during September

- 12 Facebook posts from September 1 to September 29 (ten featured sites, two sweepstakes posts)
- Total Facebook reach - 789 (compared to 328 and 411 the two months prior, which were also high months)
- Top Facebook posts – MNRRA, Savanna Portage, Weisman Museum, sweepstakes "final chance"
- Posts/shares included (both Facebook & Twitter) - Red Wing VCB, Visit Grand Rapids, St. Cloud Times, Cathy Wurzer (MPR)

MN Great River Road Website

General information was posted on September 1 about the promotion and GRR, along with links to National GRR contest and Governor's Proclamation. Added weekly posts, photos and links to featured sites.

- 124,830 website hits from September 4 – 30
- 1,335 MN Great River Road Map/Travel Planners downloaded from September 4 – 30
- Top referral sites – Google, MnDOT, Bing, [experiencemississippiriver](http://www.experiencemississippiriver.com), [Explore MN](http://www.exploremn.com)
- Numbers relatively consistent with other months

Feature Schedule

- Week of Sept 6 - Great Dakota Gathering; Mississippi National River & Recreation Area
- Week of Sept 12 - Forest History Center; Historic Fort Snelling; Savanna Portage
- Week of Sept 19 - Charles A Lindbergh Historic Site; Mill City Museum
- Week of Sept 26 - National Eagle Center; Federal Dam; Weisman Art Museum "Silver River" Exhibit

News Release

General: Provided draft release to featured sites along with request for photos. Sent release week after Labor Day to media list and distribution partners (CVBs/Chambers, State Parks, Interpretive Centers, Welcome Centers, etc.).

Localized Media: Third week of September, sent release with specific customized message and photo to local community papers of featured sites.

- Articles - Red Wing Republican Eagle Editorial, Grand Rapids Herald Review Article
- Increased communication with partners/featured sites and receipt of photos/comments

Print Materials

10-State Great River Road Maps were provided to Interpretive Centers as needed to replenish their supplies. 10-State and Minnesota Maps also provided in bulk to partners upon request.


- Total shipped during September - 2,750 10-State Maps, 400 MN GRR Maps

Lessons Learned/Plans for Next Year

- Set up Google Alert to pick up more news stories
- Start planning concepts in May at MN-MRPC Quarterly Meeting
- More and earlier interaction with CVBs

Minnesota Drive the Great River Road Month 2016





STATE of MINNESOTA

Proclamation

WHEREAS: The Great River Road is America's greatest drive, encompassing 3,000 miles of interconnected roads that follow the Mississippi River through 10 states, from Lake Itasca in Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico, and

WHEREAS: The Great River Road has been designated a National Scenic Byway for its historical, cultural, recreational, natural, and scenic treasures; and

WHEREAS: The Great River Road connects hundreds of vibrant cities and unique river towns; and

WHEREAS: The Great River Road is the ideal way to discover and experience the rich culture of the Mississippi River region and the heart of America; and

WHEREAS: Minnesota boasts 565 miles of the Great River Road National Scenic Byway, linking travelers in Minnesota with all the riches of the Mississippi River region; and

WHEREAS: Minnesota is the proud home of the Headwaters of the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS: There is no scenic drive in America quite like the Great River Road.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MARK DAYTON, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim the month of September, 2016, as:

DRIVE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD MONTH

in the State of Minnesota.



Mark Dayton
GOVERNOR

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota to be affixed at the State Capitol this 11th day of August.

Steve Pimmon
SECRETARY OF STATE



Editorial: Ride a great road

By Mind Wing Newsroom on Sep 10, 2016 at 2:09 p.m.



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Fall Road Trip Moments: 10 "Glimpses of America" via the Great River Road

St. Paul, MN September 1, 2016 There is nothing more beautiful than the view of the Mississippi River winding through the heart of Minnesota. The river has been a lifeline for the state since the first European explorers arrived in the 17th century. Today, the river continues to provide a sense of history and adventure for travelers who take the scenic drive along the Great River Road. This year, the Minnesota Department of Transportation has selected 10 historic sites along the road to celebrate the month of September. These sites are: 1. The Weisman Art Museum in Minneapolis, MN. 2. The Pillsbury House in Minneapolis, MN. 3. The Grand Rapids in Grand Rapids, MN. 4. The Redwood State Park in Redwood Falls, MN. 5. The Lake Umbagog State Park in Lake Umbagog, MN. 6. The Lake Umbagog State Park in Lake Umbagog, MN. 7. The Lake Umbagog State Park in Lake Umbagog, MN. 8. The Lake Umbagog State Park in Lake Umbagog, MN. 9. The Lake Umbagog State Park in Lake Umbagog, MN. 10. The Lake Umbagog State Park in Lake Umbagog, MN.



September is designated as the month to celebrate Minnesota's Great River Road

By Judy Jacobs



Minnesota's Great River Road stretches 565 miles and includes federal interstates, state, county and local roads. *Photo courtesy of the Office of Environmental Stewardship.*

On Aug. 11, Gov. Mark Dayton issued a proclamation that September would be designated as "Drive the Great River Road Month" in all 10 of the Mississippi River states from Lake Itasca to the Gulf of Mexico. In Minnesota, the Great River Road stretches 565 miles and includes federal interstates, state, county and local roads. The road features 10 interpretive centers, 20 counties and 43 communities, each with a story of their own to tell.

"It's become an annual tradition for many people to check out the fall colors in Minnesota," said Carol Zoff, Great River Road program manager, Office of Environmental Stewardship. "The 'Drive the Great River Road' campaign encourages travelers to consider the Mississippi River as their trip destination. By following the Great River Road (the network of roadways that abut the Mississippi River) you not only get to some of the state's pristine out-of-the-way places, you gain a perspective on Minnesota's role in the development of the nation."

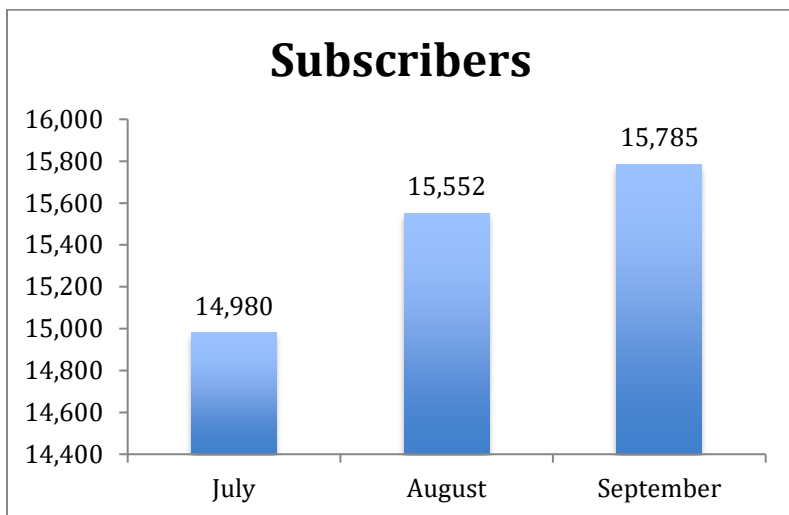
MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY COMMISSION

3RD QUARTER MARKETING REPORT

July-September, 2016



E-NEWSLETTERS



Subscribers – Tourism list

- Average subscriber rate: 50 per month
- Average open rate: 32% (industry average: 18%)
- Average click rate: 11% (industry average: 3%)

Drive the Great River Road Month Sweepstakes



Tourism e-newsletter 9/1

- Subject line: Win \$500 for your next Great River Road trip!
- Topics: Giveaway info
- Open rate: 32%
- Click rate: 12%

MRPC Member e-newsletters

- 7/27 – Annual Meeting reminder, nomination deadlines, Bike the Great River Road Giveaway and Drive the Great River Road Month.
- 8/22 – Annual Meeting, lodging reminder, nomination deadlines – final reminder, tool-kit for Drive the Great River Road Month

[View this email in your browser](#)

Early-bird registration deadlines are approaching!

The 2016 MRPC Annual Meeting will be held September 14-16 in beautiful Natchez, MS. Save on your registration fees when you sign up by **Thursday, September 1**. The early-bird registration rate is now \$175 – after September 1, registration increases to \$210. Click [here](#) to register.

We'll meet and stay at the Natchez Grand Hotel & Suites, a beautiful hotel overlooking the Mississippi River. A special guestroom rate of \$119/night is now available for a single/double deluxe city view room. **Call 1-866-488-0898** and ask for the **MRPC group rate**. To get this special rate, reserve your room by **Wednesday, August 24**.

Nomination deadlines

Annual nomination deadlines are approaching. Nominations for the Distinguished Service Award, Honorary Membership and Interpretive Centers are all due **September 1**. The nomination forms can be found on mrpmembers.com/forms-resources. (scroll down to find the appropriate forms).

Bike the Great River Road Giveaway

The [Bike the Great River Road Giveaway](#), ends Friday July 29. The winner will receive a \$250 prepaid credit card and Great River Road merchandise to use on a biking getaway. The promotion has been a great way to inspire bikers to tour the Great River Road on two wheels.

Drive the Great River Road Month

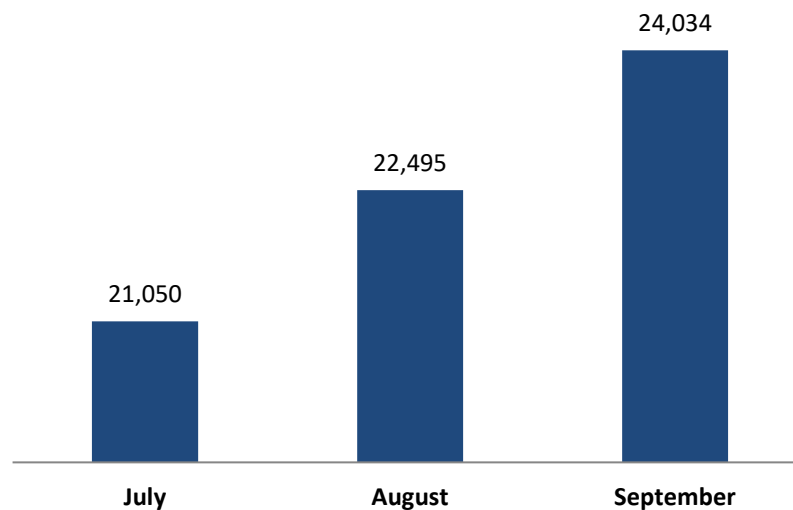
We will again celebrate Drive the Great River Road Month this September. It's a perfect time to encourage people to travel our beautiful route. We've had a lot of success promoting this month in past years. Watch for an email the week of August 8 that will include an updated toolkit to help promote states, counties and cities along the Great River Road.

Follow us: [f](#) [p](#) [v](#)

701 E. Washington Ave. Suite 202
Madison, WI 53703
Phone: 608-793-8310
Fax: 608-242-8896

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

Facebook Fan Growth



July

Facebook fans		New Facebook fans		Facebook updates	
21,050		2,010		12	
Pinterest followers	New Pinterest followers	Pinterest pins	Pinterest repins	Pinterest boards	
526	13	869	60	15	

Facebook Top Posts

- 7/26 (“Holy cow! Great shot of the Mississippi River in southwestern Illinois!” w/photo of sunset)
 - 6,696 people reached, 377 reactions, 13 comments, 0 shares, 242 post clicks
- 7/7 (“Throwback Thursday: A paddlewheeler cruises on the Mississippi River near Alton, Illinois” w/photo of boat in front of bridge):
 - 8,607 people reached, 317 reactions, 14 comments, 42 shares, 191 post clicks

August

Facebook fans		New Facebook fans		Facebook updates	
22,495		1,455		17	
Pinterest followers	New Pinterest followers	Pinterest pins	Pinterest repins	Pinterest boards	
542	16	893	112	15	

Facebook Top Posts

- 8/22 (“Planning a trip along the Great River Road? Check out some of our sample itineraries!” w/link to itineraries)
 - 8,985 people reached, 243 reactions, 9 comments, 74 shares, 541 post clicks
- 8/18 (“The more you know...” w/link to blog about 6 things you might not know about the Mississippi River):
 - 7,853 people reached, 219 reactions, 11 comments, 69 shares, 454 post clicks

September

Facebook fans		New Facebook fans		Facebook updates	
24,034		1,539		16	
Pinterest followers	New Pinterest followers	Pinterest pins	Pinterest repins	Pinterest boards	
558	16	917	44	15	

Facebook Top Posts

- 9/9 (“Photo Friday! The unique Black Hawk Bridge in Lansing, Iowa, was completed in 1931 and spans the Mississippi River between Iowa and Wisconsin.” w/photo)
 - 35,060 people reached, 1,878 reactions, 165 comments, 233 shares, 2,013 post clicks
- 9/1 (“It’s September, so you know that that means: it’s Drive the Great River Road Month! We’re encouraging folks to explore the nation’s oldest and longest National Scenic Byway all September long. Plus, we’re giving away \$500 in our Drive the Great River Road Month Sweepstakes!” w/link to website):
 - 23,213 people reached, 794 reactions, 37 comments, 207 shares, 1,253 post clicks

Facebook Advertising

General Page Likes Ad

- Impressions: 172,133
- Clicks: 4,753
- Click-through rate: 2.76%
- Fans added: 3,825

Facebook Audience

- Fan profile
 - Fans of page: 71% women (51% are ages 45-65+), 28% men (19% are ages 45+)
 - Engaged fans (those who are liking, commenting and sharing our material): 77% women (63% are 45+), 23% men (18% are 45+)
 - Top engaged cities (in order): Waukon, IA, Dubuque, IA, Lansing, IA, St. Louis, MO, Granite City, IL

Takeaways

- Scenic photos continue to be the most popular and engaging posts
- Posts and links to articles about road trips along the Mississippi River are always well-received

PROMOTIONS

BIKE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD SWEEPSTAKES

Run dates

- 6/6/16-7/31/16

Overview

The Bike the Great River Road Sweepstakes is a simple sweepstakes tied to an increased effort to promote biking as a recreational activity along the Great River Road.



To enter, fans will have to like the Great River Road Facebook page, provide basic contact information (name, e-mail address, city/state) and tell us where they heard about the giveaway.

During the promotion period, we will use the Great River Road’s social media channels and blogs to post about the giveaway, the best places/routes to bike along the Great River Road, information about the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) and more.

Goals

- To promote biking options along the Great River Road, especially the Mississippi River Trail (MRT)
- To increase interaction and fan numbers on the Great River Road’s social media channels

Prizes

- \$250 pre-paid credit card
- (1) Men’s or Women’s Great River Road jacket from the Great River Road online shop (\$75)
- A copy of the Great River Road 10-state map

Total Entries

- 1,144

Means of advertising

- Social media posts (Facebook, Pinterest, blog)
- Facebook ads
- E-newsletters
- Press releases
- Pop-up on experiencemississippiriver.com
- Social media toolkit available to state MRPC organizations

How entrants heard about the contest (in order)

- Facebook page
- Other (E-newsletter, Wisconsin Travel Best Bets appearance on WEAU in Eau Claire, WI, sweepstakes site, Twitter)
- Facebook ads
- Interpretive centers

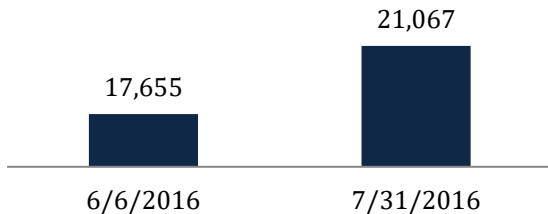
Winner

- Rob Memphis, TN

What kind of biking events/activities are you interested in? (in order of most popular response) (Entrants could select multiple responses)

- Casual rides (998)
- Guided tours/rides (390)
- Mountain biking opportunities (236)
- Races (68)
- Other (self-guided, motorcycle, etc) (66)

Facebook Fan Growth - Contest Timeframe



Contest Start (6/6/2016)	Contest End (7/31/2016)	Growth Percentage
17,655	21,067	19.32%

E-news Subscribers - Contest Timeframe



Contest Start (6/6/2016)	Contest End (7/31/16)	Growth Percentage
11,232	14,440	28.6%

Public Relations

- Press releases distributed at beginning and end of promotion
- Promoted during a live interview on WEAU (Eau Claire, WI) discussing biking opportunities during Bike Month (June)

Takeaways

- The number of e-newsletter signups grew by an impressive 28% during the promotion – people who are interested in the Great River Road and open to being marketed to. Take advantage of this warm market in the future with more regular e-newsletters encouraging travel.
- We asked entrants what kind of biking events and activities they were interested in along the Great River Road and while the vast majority responded with “casual rides,” a substantial number indicated an interested in guided bike tours along the byway. Thought should be given to providing this as an offering in bike-friendly communities along the road.
- Judging by the success of the promotion, biking opportunities along the Great River Road should be incorporated more regularly into the marketing materials (social media, e-newsletters, etc.).

DRIVE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD SWEEPSTAKES

Run dates

- 9/1/16-9/30/16

Overview: The Drive the Great River Road Month Sweepstakes is a simple sweepstakes designed to promote September as Drive the Great River Road Month, the fourth annual iteration of this celebration.

Goals:

- Promote fall travel along the Great River Road and Drive the Great River Road Month
- Increase fan numbers and interaction on the Great River Road Facebook page
- Increase visits to the experiencemississippiriver.com website
- Increase downloads of the Drive the Great River Road mobile app

Prizes

- \$500 pre-paid credit card

Total Entries

- 1,799

Means of advertising

- Social media posts (Facebook, Pinterest, blog)
- Facebook ads
- E-newsletters
- Press releases
- [Experiencemississippiriver.com](http://experiencemississippiriver.com) pop-up
- Social media toolkit available to state MRPC organizations

The image shows a promotional graphic for the 'Drive the Great River Road Month Sweepstakes'. On the left, there is a circular logo with 'GREAT RIVER ROAD' and 'MINNESOTA TO GULF'. The main text reads: 'Drive the GREAT RIVER ROAD MONTH SWEEPSTAKES'. Below this, it says 'WANT TO EXPLORE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD? ENTER TO WIN \$500!' and provides a brief description of the Great River Road. A call to action says 'Start your Great River Road adventure today! (Need some help planning your trip? [Order a free 10-state map](#) or [download our free app.](#))'. On the right, there is a registration form titled 'STEP 1: LIKE US ON FACEBOOK' showing a Facebook page for 'The Great River Road' with 23,192 likes. Below that is 'STEP 2: ENTER FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN!' with fields for Name (First and Last), Email, and City/State. A question asks 'How did you hear about the Drive the Great River Road Month Sweepstakes?' with radio button options: 'Great River Road Facebook page', 'Facebook advertising', 'E-mail', and 'Other'. A 'SUBMIT' button is at the bottom right. A small disclaimer at the bottom states: 'By entering, you agree to the [official rules](#) and [privacy policy](#) and you acknowledge that the Mississippi River Parkway Commission may contact you via e-mail.'

How entrants heard about the contest (in order)

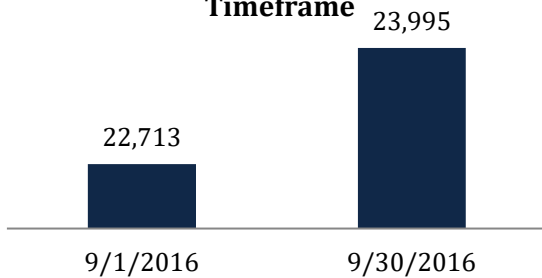
- E-mail (by far the most popular method of reaching people)
- Facebook page
- Other (Website, friends, web search, Instagram, newspaper article, online ad, etc.)
- Facebook ads

Winner

- Not confirmed at the time of this report

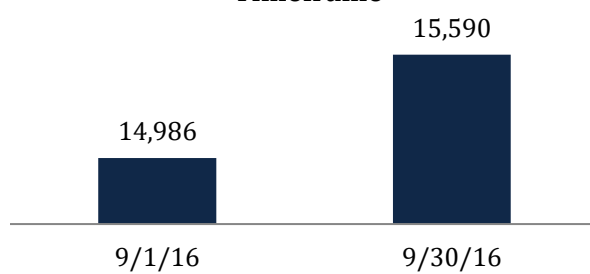
Facebook

Facebook Fan Growth - Contest Timeframe



Contest Start (9/1/2016)	Contest End (9/30/2016)	Growth Percentage
22,713	23,995	5.6%

E-news Subscribers - Contest Timeframe



Contest Start (9/1/2016)	Contest End (9/30/16)	Growth Percentage
14,986	15,590	4.0%

Promotion advertising (9/1/16-9/30/16)

Post Engagement Ad

Impressions: 51,615

Clicks: 174

Click-through rate: 0.34%

Post engagements: 5,494

Public Relations

- Press releases distributed at beginning and end of promotion
- See PR/Publicity next section for media pickups

Takeaways

- The Great River Road Facebook page gained almost 1,300 new fans during the promotion, with a total of approximately 1,800 entries. This indicates an influx of new fans, rather than only reaching current ones.
- The promotion gathered approximately 600 new e-newsletter signups – a large pool of new potential travelers to market to moving forward.
- The e-newsletter was, by far, the most popular method people listed for learning about the contest. Incorporation of regular e-newsletters would be a great way to reach this warm market and encourage them to travel the Great River Road.

PR/PUBLICITY

- Wrote/distributed release announcing Drive the Great River Road Sweepstakes
- Picked up by
 - Marion Evening Times (Arkansas) (<http://www.theeveningtimes.com/site/2016/09/05/fall-in-love-with-the-mississippi-river-drive-the-great-river-road-month-returns/>)
 - Wilton-Durant Advocate News (Iowa) (http://www.northscottpress.com/wdadvocateneews/news/briefs/article_c0ecec30-75eb-11e6-9898-936f1f8ee300.html)
 - Hastings Star Gazette (Minnesota) (<http://www.hastingsstargazette.com/news/4125172-september-drive-great-river-road-month>)
 - La Crosse Tribune (Wisconsin) (http://lacrossetribune.com/drive-the-great-river-road-month-returns/article_561faec5-9888-573d-a52f-a69ffa2b141c.html)



November 4, 2016

Chris Miller, Director
MN Mississippi River Parkway Commission
300 33rd Ave S, Suite 101
Waite Park, MN 56387

Dear Ms. Miller,

As the Chairperson for the 27th Annual MN GIS/LIS Consortium's Conference to be held in Bemidji, MN October 4th – 6th of 2017, it is my duty to research potential keynote speakers for the event. The keynote presentation will be held on Thursday morning, October 5th, at 9am. Speakers generally present for approximately 45-60 minutes.

I recently read an article that appeared in the Lake Time Magazine written by Anne Lewis regarding The Great River Road and immediately thought this would be a perfect topic for our opening session. Not only would it capture the history of this remarkable pathway, but it would also bring the modern exploration and tourism of this amazing waterway to our attendees. As a person who resides just a few miles from the Mississippi Headwaters, I'm aware of the vast amount of rich history this area has to offer and I share your passion to educate individuals about it and encourage them to experience it in some way. Your topic would also fit very well with our closing speakers for the conference who will be presenting information on the History of the Leech Lake/Red Lake Trail.

Conference attendance ranges from 600-700 people and is comprised of a wide variety of professionals who utilize Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and other Land Information Systems (LIS) in their work. Attendees include GIS users in local, state and federal government agencies; business and industry; and educational institutions throughout Minnesota and neighboring states. Should your organization decide to present at the conference, we could also provide you with a complementary booth in our vendor hall during the conference to display information and promote tourism of this great historic landmark.



The mission of the MN GIS/LIS Consortium is to develop and support the GIS professional in MN for the benefit of our state and its citizens. The Consortium is a forum for communicating information to, and improving cooperation among, those interested in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Land Information Systems (LIS) in the State of Minnesota and is also an official 501c3 non-profit organization.

Thank you for considering my request. If you have any further questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Jane Mueller, Conference Chairperson
Beltrami County GIS/Mapping
701 Minnesota Ave NW, Suite 219
Bemidji, MN 56601
Work: 218-333-8457
Cell: 218-616-0011
jane.mueller@co.beltrami.mn.us

FL&D

October 20, 2016

Friends of the Lock & Dam
900 North Third St.
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Re: Comments on the Crown Hydro Project EA

Dear Friends,

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission recently issued an Environmental Assessment (“EA”), a key step toward approving a hydroelectric project at the Corps of Engineers’ Lock at the Upper St. Anthony Falls. This is to alert you to the opportunity to comment on the EA by November 2, and we urge you to examine the EA and oppose the Crown Project. FL&D seeks to re-purpose the Lock to promote public access to the riverfront and the cultural and recreational opportunities it represents. “The Falls,” a project that would afford public access, meeting and event space, and park facilities, is designed to occupy the land to which Crown would be a barrier.

Your comments can help persuade FERC about the deficiencies in its draft EA and encourage a more complete environmental review. The EA should be replaced by a full Environmental Impact Statement for the following reasons:

- **THE IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT ARE POORLY UNDERSTOOD.** An EA is the lowest level of environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act, and FERC seems prepared to give Crown a license on this basis, despite the Project’s adverse impacts on potential development, cultural and aesthetic resources, and recreation on the central Minneapolis riverfront, which is increasingly the home of more citizens and businesses.
- **THE LICENSEE’S FAILURES.** Crown has not started (in some cases) or completed (in virtually all cases) consultation with historical preservation agencies, federal and state park authorities, the Corps, and a variety of groups and agencies from which it needs permission. These consultations provide information that FERC should consider in deciding whether the Project significantly affects the area. The Corps is more than a year away from deciding on the disposition of the Lock. Crown’s ability to develop its Project, which was first approved more than 17 years ago, is unclear yet it blocks the site for other purposes.
- **INNOVATION ON THE RIVERFRONT.** The Crown Project would be a serious, if not insurmountable, barrier to re-purposing the Lock. FL&D’s Intervention and Protest tells regulators that they cannot lawfully approve the Crown Project without more information about the threat it poses to public-purpose urban developments on the riverfront that did not exist when the Project was approved in 1999. The circumstances that supported Crown’s original 1999 license have changed.
- **THE FALLS PROJECT.** FL&D is spearheading an effort to develop “The Falls,” a comprehensive plan to re-purpose the Lock. The Falls enhances the City’s access to the Lock and Dam, and brings the riverfront back into the cultural and aesthetic life of Minneapolis. It is only the latest of many ideas and complaints surrounding the Crown Project that FERC has not analyzed or fully appreciated.

FERC will take guidance from public comment. Anyone may [comment](#) on the EA (FERC P-11175-025). The public should urge FERC to seek better quality information and make a better decision about the Project. If the Crown Project is built, we will forfeit a key piece of the City’s riverfront for up to 50 years.

Sincere regards,

Paul Reyelts
Friends of the Lock and Dam
paulreyelts@gmail.com

MINNESOTA SCENIC BYWAY WORKSHOP

Best Western Plus
2100 E. Hwy. 12, Willmar, MN 56501
November 29th & 30th, 2016

(DRAFT) AGENDA **Tuesday, November 29th**

Welcome & Introduction <i>Holly Slagle, Scenic Byway Coord./Tim Campbell, Explore MN, NE Reg. Mgr.</i>	1:00-1:15PM
Pollinators & Vegetation Mgmt. Plans <i>Tina Markeson, Office of Environmental Stewardship</i>	1:15-2:00PM
Minnesota Scenic Byway Listening Session <i>Scott Bradley, Chair, MN Dept. of Transportation</i> <i>John Edman, Explore MN Tourism</i> <i>Audrey Mularie, MN Dept. of Natural Resources</i> <i>Introduction of new Commission member David Kelliher, MN Historical Society</i>	2:00-2:30PM
BREAK	2:30-2:45PM
Opportunities to Engage our Connected Diversified Consumers <i>Prof. Ingrid Schneider, Univ. of MN College of Food, Agricultural & Natural Resources</i>	2:45-3:15PM
Economic Impact of Biking in Minnesota <i>Brigid Tuck, Senior Economic Impact Analyst, Univ. of MN Extension</i>	3:25-4:00PM
DINNER	6:00-7:00PM
Glacial Ridge Event	7:00

Wednesday, November 30th **COMPLIMENTARY BREAKFAST FOR REGISTERED GUESTS**

Federal Funding Updates <i>Lynnette Roshell, Office of State Aid</i>	8:00-8:30AM
Statewide Mapping <i>Carol Zoff/Holly Slagle, Office of Environmental Stewardship</i>	8:30-9:00AM
Billboards <i>Scott Robinson, MnDOT Office of Environmental Services</i>	9:00-9:30AM

Wayside Restoration/Improve ADA Accessibility **9:30-10:00AM**
Bryan Anderson, Planning Director, MnDOT-Duluth

**Update on Minnesota's Transportation & Economic
Development Program** **10:00-10:30AM**
Ken Buckeye, MnDOT

Round Robin **10:30-11:15AM**
(Corridor Management Plan Implementation Etc.)

Tribal Partnerships **11:15-11:45AM**
Ed Fairbanks, MnDOT Tribal Liaison

Closing Comments **11:45-NOON**