



**Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
1st Quarter Meeting
February 6, 2020 • 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Minnesota Senate Building Room 1100**

DRAFT AGENDA

2:00 p.m.	Welcome & Introductions	Senjem
2:05 p.m.	Approve Today's Agenda & Minutes from 11/21/19	Senjem/All
2:10 p.m.	Informational Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none">- City of Brooklyn Park – River Park Redevelopment- Electric Vehicle Charging Stations/VW Grant Process	Jody Yungers Representative from MN PCA
2:40 p.m.	Commission Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Budget Report- Commission Staffing Contract	Handout/Miller Senjem/All
2:50 P.M.	All American Road Designation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Process & Timeline for MN GRR Application	Zoff/All
3:10 p.m.	National MRPC <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 2020 Semi-Annual Meeting, Baton Rouge, LA- 2020 Annual Meeting, Bemidji, MN- Interpretive Center Nominations- Committee Updates<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Communications & Marketing▪ Culture & Heritage▪ Environment, Recreation & Agriculture▪ Transportation	Senjem/Miller Miller/Planning Team Christianson/Samp/All Committee Members
3:30 p.m.	Commission Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none">- MN GRR Website- MN GRR Print Map- Ambassador Development	Project Team Zoff/Miller Zoff/Miller
3:50 p.m.	Old Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mississippi Multimedia Gallery Welcome Ctr Pilot	Zoff/Packet
4:00 p.m.	Commission Member Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Refer to Written Updates in Packet- Brief Highlights or Action Requests	All All
4:25 p.m.	Other Business	
4:30 p.m.	Wrap Up and Adjourn	



**Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
4th Quarter Meeting – November 21, 2019
State Office Building, St. Paul MN
MINUTES – Draft**

Commissioners Present

Megan Christianson – Grand Rapids to Brainerd
Cordelia Pierson – Elk River to Hastings
Sen. David Senjem
Sen. Patricia Torres Ray
Rep. Anne Claflin
Rep. Tony Jurgens
Lisa Havelka – Tourism Appointee
Grant Wilson – Natural Resources Appointee
Anne Lewis – At Large Member

Technical Advisors/Staff Present

Gina Bonsignore – Natural Resources
Carol Zoff – Transportation
John Anfinson – National Park Service
Diane Henry Wangenstein – LCC
Chris Miller – Staff

Commissioners/Technical Advisors Absent

Sally Fineday – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids
Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River
Sheronne Mulry – Hastings to Iowa Border
Paul Hugunin – Agriculture Appointee
Scott Bradley – Transportation Appointee
David Kelliher – Historical Society

Speakers & Guests Present

Mary deLaittre – Great River Passage
Conservancy
Katie Nyberg – Mississippi Park Connection
Suzy Scotty - MnDOT

Meeting called to order at 2:10 p.m. by Chair Senjem. Welcome was extended to new member Grant Wilson of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. A quorum was present at 2:45.

Mississippi River Learning Center Project: John Anfinson introduced Mary deLaittre of the Great River Passage Conservancy and Katie Nyberg of Mississippi Park Connection, who shared information about the Mississippi River Learning Center Project. The vision is to create a river learning center and new headquarters for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA) on land owned by the City of St. Paul. MNRRA is the only National Park unit whose focus is the Mississippi River. The National Park Service would be a tenant in the facility. Next steps for the project include execution of an agreement between the City of St. Paul and National Park Service, fundraising, schematic design, and programming. The goal is to secure \$600,000 for schematic design by March 1 through philanthropic fundraising. The MN-MRPC was asked to consider how this project could help further the goals for the Great River Road. There was discussion about programming and interpretation to represent the full length of the Mississippi River. Future plans for the marina, linking to experiences at other sites up and down river, and addressing needs for camping facilities were also discussed. The MN-MRPC looks forward to updates as the project proceeds.

Approve Minutes from 8/15/19 Meeting: Motion by Cordelia Pierson and seconded by Anne Lewis to approve the minutes from the 8/15/19 meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Budget Report: Anne Lewis referenced the budget report in the meeting packet with additional background provided by Chris Miller. Questions included timing of the invoice for National MRPC dues. That invoice will be received and paid early in 2020. Actual expenditures versus estimates will be evaluated throughout the fiscal year and line item adjustments will be made as needed including to address planning costs for the 2020 MRPC Annual Meeting.

Regional Meetings: MN-MRPC regional meetings and elections were held in Brainerd on November 6 (Brainerd to Elk River Region) and Grand Rapids on November 7 (Grand Rapids to Brainerd Region). Karl Samp and Megan Christianson were re-elected as Regional Commissioners for two year terms. There was participation from a variety of stakeholders at both meetings and useful feedback was received. Megan Christianson noted that as a result of the regional meeting, she recently gave a presentation at the NE MN Parks and Trails Meeting and there will be continued communication. The Brainerd meeting garnered local news coverage for the Great River Road.

2019 MRPC Annual Meeting – La Crosse, WI: Sen. Senjem reported on the meeting overall including expressing appreciation to the National MRPC Pilot for her work. Anne Lewis shared marketing ideas from the meeting including a Bicycling Itinerary/Passport from Iowa and discussions on use of podcasts to tell stories of people and places.

All American Road Designation – Possible Process for GRR: Carol Zoff reported on discussions that took place in La Crosse regarding pursuit of All American Road designation. There was consensus recommending application when the National Scenic Byways Program opens up the process soon, after legislation was recently passed in Washington. The Federal Highway Administration anticipates guidelines will be available later in November or December. Each Great River Road state would need to apply individually and there must be a second intrinsic resource identified for the byway. (The Great River Road achieved National Scenic Byway status with historic as its primary intrinsic resource for all ten states). The other National Scenic Byway intrinsic resources are archaeological, cultural, natural, recreational and scenic. Interest in pursuing cultural for the All American Road designation was expressed at the ten state meeting. All ten states would need to complete the application with the same secondary intrinsic resource, and cultural fits with the Great River Road from north to south, allowing localities to highlight their unique features. There will likely be a six month application window, the Corridor Management Plan will be of help in completing the application, and Carol Zoff would likely be able to coordinate and submit. Review and feedback would be requested from MN-MRPC members prior to submission. Benefits of All American Road designation were discussed. At one time the designation gave priority for National Scenic Byway funding applications and although those funds are not currently available, All American Road designation would place the Great River Road in a more elite group of the premier routes in the nation.

Motion by Anne Lewis, seconded by Megan Christianson to join with the other MRPC states in pursuing All American Road Designation with culture as the second intrinsic resource. Motion carried.

2020 MRPC Annual Meeting – Bemidji, MN: Minnesota will be hosting the ten state MRPC Annual Meeting September 15 – 17, 2020 in Bemidji and members were asked to mark their calendars. The Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI) will also be meeting in Bemidji on those dates and the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators is considering a presence as well. There are likely to be two joint activities of the MRPC and MRCTI. A planning team will be convened soon to begin work on the MRPC agenda – special thanks were noted to Sally Fineday, Gina Bonsignore, David Kelliher, Carol Zoff and Anne Lewis for their willingness to participate. All MN-MRPC members will be asked for feedback and assistance as the process continues. Megan Christianson recommended inviting Destination Marketing Organizations in GRR communities to attend the 2020 Annual Meeting.

Drive the Great River Road Month: This annual promotion of the National MRPC took place in September. A report on Minnesota activities was included in the packet and comments were shared by Anne Lewis including distribution of a mention recently included in AARP magazine.

MRPC Committee Updates: Carol Zoff reported that the Transportation Committee continues to work on assessment of mapping and wayshowing in the ten states; and that Interpretive Center rack cards organized by theme were recently developed by the Culture and Heritage Committee. John Anfinson reported that two new Interpretive Centers were recommended for inclusion in the network by the Culture and Heritage Committee, with final review pending by the MRPC Board.

National GRR Interpretive Centers: Sen. Senjem asked members about possible new Interpretive Center nominations from Minnesota. Nominations are accepted annually and are due to the National Office by September 1. Megan Christianson shared that potential nominees from her region include the community of Aitkin, along with the Itasca County Historical Society. The Grand Rapids Area Library was also mentioned. The Forest History Center holds Interpretive Center designation but now has reduced hours in winter months and the community is interested in looking at nomination of an additional site. John Anfinson mentioned the Mississippi River Learning Center as a nominee when open, and Anne Lewis noted the Lock and Dam Visitor Center as another option. Sen. Senjem suggested consideration of the "Mayos and the Mississippi" exhibit at the Mayo Clinic and Rep. Jurgens suggested future consideration of the Hudson Manufacturing Building in Hastings which is being redeveloped. Questions were asked about requirements for nomination. The nomination form will be sent via email to members for review.

MN GRR Print Map Review: Carol Zoff and Suzy Scotty shared the current version of the new print map design. Thanks were expressed to members for the feedback that has been provided during the development process. Interpretive Centers are featured and have recently been asked for final review and confirmation of photographs to be used. Chris Miller provided background on the plan for printing and distribution – proposals for printing/shipping/storage will be sought and a vendor selected, with printing and shipping of half the quantity planned for early spring and shipping of the remaining quantity in spring of 2021. Maps are provided to distribution partner sites along the MN GRR including community tourism offices, state and national parks, interpretive centers, and welcome centers. Estimated total quantity is 70,000 pieces. Anne Lewis recommended seeking quotes for larger quantities as well.

MN GRR Website Project: Chris Miller provided background on the process to define the project and select a vendor, and thanks were expressed to the Legislative Coordinating Commission and the project team of Lisa Havelka, Megan Christianson and Carol Zoff. A project kick off meeting was held on November 12 and work will be continuing with a projected launch date of mid to late January. Feedback will be requested from Commission members at certain points in the process. Lisa Havelka shared information about the approach to the project. This project provides a great opportunity to focus on the visitor experience, and get main sections of a new, streamlined website in place as Phase I of a project that can be built upon over time. Content from the current site will be archived for future use and reference. Member discussion followed including highlighting the importance of social media and the overall impact of digital “visitors” in addition to in-person byway travelers.

Ambassador Development: Carol Zoff reviewed the two year launch plan which will focus on providing training on how to use the new GRR information tools (website, online mapping and guides, print maps) and also gathering feedback on needs. The first round of Ambassador Development training meetings will take place in the first half of 2020 and will focus on the twelve MN GRR Interpretive Centers. The GRR toolkit will then be refined and another round of meetings will be conducted in FY 21 with visits back to the Interpretive Centers along with additional meetings organized via CVBs and Chambers. Strategies for long term implementation and maintenance will be needed including ways to connect with the 700+ sites included within the Plan Your Trip online mapping.

Mississippi Headwaters Board Conference: The Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB) Biannual Conference was held on November 1. The agenda was included in the meeting packet. Chris Miller and Megan Christianson attended to represent the MN-MRPC and Carol Zoff has been assisting the MHB with review of their projects related to the GRR when requested. Projects impacting the GRR include an easement program which identifies priority areas along the river and works with willing sellers; and a sign project to provide information about access points along the river, where located, and paddle time to the next access point. A pilot has been conducted in Aitkin County and work is now underway on possible sign placements in the Grand Rapids area due to local interest. There was discussion on how the water access signage project coordinates with DNR activities.

2020 Quarterly Meeting Dates: A listing of potential dates was provided in the meeting packet. February 6 was recommended as the first quarter date. Members were asked to review the other dates options and notify the MN-MRPC office of preferences/conflicts. Dates will then be confirmed via email.

Consider Transportation Alternatives Projects Letters of Support: Members reviewed and discussed a list of projects for potential MN-MRPC letters of support. The listed projects were identified as benefitting the Great River Road/Byway Travelers after letters of interest were recently received by MnDOT for potential application for Transportation Alternatives funding. Transportation Alternatives provides funding for some activities previously funded by National Scenic Byway Grants and the MN-MRPC has a history of reviewing project lists and supporting those that positively impact the byway. Letters have focused on the MN-MRPC mission, Corridor Management Plan and byway intrinsic resources. Carol Zoff provided background on the program and described her approach to identifying byway related projects. These are all projects in Greater Minnesota as the Met Council has a separate solicitation process. There was discussion including a recommendation that a statement be added to any letters regarding the support being subject to environmental reviews and approvals.

Motion by Anne Lewis and seconded by Megan Christianson to authorize letters of support for all eight of the listed projects with the addition of language regarding environmental reviews and approvals.

Discussion included Cordelia Pierson noting appreciation for this effort. There was also general discussion on the matching funds requirement and whether these projects will also seek capital investment funds. Motion carried.

Commission Member Updates: Updates were included in the meeting packet. Additional updates were shared. Cordelia Pierson reported on a stewardship project she has been working with in Minneapolis, resulting in over 1000 hours of volunteer time. She also noted plans to report at the next meeting on Alternative Transportation projects in the MNRRA corridor. Rep. Jurgens reported that the House Capital Investment Committee has visited several Mississippi River communities. Continued observance of extremely high water levels was reported by several members and John Anfinson shared that the Quad Cities have recorded a record season of high water for 90+ days.

After discussion on a possible GRR Day at the Capitol which would not likely take place until early 2021, Sen. Senjem suggested offering GRR/MN-MRPC informational presentations to Senate Committees early in the 2020 session. Rep. Jurgens offered to assist with similar arrangements in the House. Topics could include the new website and highlights of online mapping now available, print maps and MRPC and MRCTI meetings coming up in Bemidji, along with the possible involvement of NCEL in those Bemidji meetings.

Other Business: Sen. Senjem commented that the MN PCA plans to add electric vehicle charging stations, with some funding available due to the VW settlement, and asked members whether it might be appropriate to encourage placement of charging stations at GRR Interpretive Centers. Response was positive and Rep. Clafin offered to arrange a presentation and/or information sharing about the process to request placement of new stations.

Next Meeting – February 6, 2020, 2:00 – 4:30 p.m., location to be determined

Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:35 p.m.

MN-MRPC FY20 Activity/Project Budget

1-29-20

<u>Activity/Item</u>	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>Spent 1/9/2020</u>	<u>Pending</u>	<u>Remaining</u>	<u>% Spent</u>
MN-MRPC Operating Budget					
Quarterly Meetings (4 @ up to \$1,650 each)	\$6,600.00	\$1,119.60		\$5,480.40	17%
Special Meeting and/or other Commissioner meetings travel & per diem	\$2,000.00	\$410.44		\$1,589.56	21%
Executive Committee Meetings (2 @ \$300)	\$600.00	\$0.00		\$600.00	0%
MRPC Dues	\$15,000.00	\$0.00		\$15,000.00	0%
Admin Contract	\$26,400.00	\$11,000.00	\$2,200.00	\$13,200.00	50%
Website & phone basic costs (incl. 800 website + 300 phone + 204 Constant Contact)	\$1,600.00	\$674.99	\$162.42	\$762.59	52%
National Meetings	\$8,700.00	\$803.42		\$7,896.58	9%
Regional Meetings/Elections	\$900.00	\$899.98		\$0.02	100%
Mailing/Shipping Maps (10 State and MN GRR Maps)	\$500.00	\$46.00		\$454.00	9%
Additional Staff Hours for CMP Implementation Activities (incl. regional mtgs, ambassador program mgmt, letters of support/comment, investment inventory)	\$15,000.00	\$6,325.00		\$8,675.00	42%
Website Programming Changes - Minimal	\$500.00	\$89.10		\$410.90	18%
General Material Printing & Supplies	\$200.00	\$0.00		\$200.00	0%
Total Operating Budget	\$78,000.00	\$21,368.53	\$2,362.42	\$54,269.05	
Special Projects - Funding for implementation during FY20 and FY21					
Website Updates for Map Tools, Mobile Devices	\$20,000.00	\$440.00	\$11,275.00	\$8,285.00	59%
Ambassador Development	\$28,000.00			\$29,000.00	100%
New Print Map	\$34,000.00		\$67.50	\$33,932.50	100%
Total Special Projects	\$82,000.00	\$440.00	\$11,342.50	\$71,217.50	14%
Estimated Total Expenses	\$160,000.00				
Total FY 20 Allocation	\$149,860.00				
LCC Funds for Website	\$10,140.00				
Total Funds Available	\$160,000.00				
Amount Remaining	\$0.00				



Mississippi River Parkway Commission
701 East Washington Avenue, Suite 202
Madison, WI 53703



**Mississippi River Parkway Commission
Transportation Committee Teleconference Meeting
February 5 | 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

AGENDA

- I. Introductions**
- II. Approve 2019 Annual Meeting and Oct. Teleconference Minutes**
- III. Transportation Committee Chair election – Francis Schelfhout**
- IV. Transportation Committee Vice-Chair solicitation of interest**
- V. All American Road Designation** To receive an All-American Road designation, a road must possess multiple intrinsic qualities that are nationally significant and contain one-of-a-kind features that do not exist elsewhere. The road or highway must also be considered a "destination unto itself." That is, it must provide an exceptional traveling experience so recognized by travelers that they would make a drive along the highway a primary reason for their trip.
 - a. February 13 the FHWA NSB/AAR application portal will open at https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/nominations/. There will be two webinars on the application process. One for FHWA division offices and second for State Coordinators. Try to participate to learn firsthand what is required.
 - b. May 15 is the deadline for applications, State DOTs may have earlier deadlines
 - c. Confirm which states are intending to seek AAR
 - d. Each state to find and review their GRR NSB application as a basis to apply per https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/nominations/2020_nsb_omination_application_questions.pdf
 - e. Review original Historic sites highlighted in NSB application, update if needed to meet national significance requirement (up to 8)
 - f. Identify Cultural intrinsic sites/resources that meet national significance requirement (up to 8)
 - g. Common application content: one-of-a-kind features must relate to the Mississippi River
 - h. Primary photo – each state – meeting high resolution requirement.
 - i. Statement of qualification – National Significance (All-American Road) – explain and justify what is special, significant or unique about your byway in relation to the two (2) primary Intrinsic Qualities, and why the road is considered a destination unto itself.
 - j. Route information – Length, Description, Federal Lands, Route Map, and Continuity. Update national nomination.



Mississippi River Parkway Commission

701 East Washington Avenue, Suite 202
Madison, WI 53703



- k. Route conditions – Vehicle Accommodations, Travel Restrictions, Seasons, and Safety. Update as needed from the national nomination
- l. Travel experience – Getting to the byway, Traveler services, Intrinsic qualities, Storytelling. Update as needed from the national nomination
- m. Planning/Sustainability – Community support, CMP, Byway Organization. Include AAR meetings, letters of support from communities, US Senators and Congressmen along the GRR.
- n. Corridor Management Plan –state CMP and the 10-state CMP. Note: use updated 10-state CMP which includes a strategy to apply for All-American Road designation.
- o. Additional Requirements for All-American Road Nomination Submissions
 - i. A narrative on how the All-American Road would be promoted, interpreted, and marketed in order to attract travelers, especially those from other countries. The agencies responsible for these activities should be identified.
 - ii. A plan to encourage the accommodation of increased tourism, if this is projected. Some demonstration that the roadway, lodging and dining facilities, roadside rest areas, and other tourist necessities will be adequate for the number of visitors induced by the byway's designation as an All-American Road.
 - iii. A plan for addressing multi-lingual information needs.
 - iv. A demonstration of the extent to which enforcement mechanisms are being implemented in accordance with the corridor management plan.
- p. Coordination with MRPC Standing Committees and BOD

VI. Great River Road Ten-State Corridor Management Plan

- a. Revision on Page 13, **7. Great River Road Organization – Mississippi River Parkway Commission** Revised to add: **G. If FHWA opens nominations, the MRPC will seek All American Road designation in all ten states.**
- b. **GRR alignment and GRR wayshowing:** tabled due to AAR application priority



Mississippi River Parkway Commission Semi-Annual Meeting

April 21-23, 2020 | Baton Rouge, LA



Join us in Baton Rouge!

The 2020 MRPC Semi-Annual Meeting will take place April 21-23, 2020, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana's charming capital city. Centrally located just an hour from New Orleans and Lafayette, Baton Rouge is the perfect example of Louisiana's eclectic heritage, showcasing an enchanting mix of history, cuisine and culture.

The meeting will offer a chance to explore some of the area's great attractions, including Houmas House, the new Great River Road Museum and Interpretive Center and historic downtown Baton Rouge.

Make plans to attend the Semi-Annual Meeting—register today!



Louisiana State Capitol



Louisiana's Old State Capitol

Registration

Delegates (all sessions & meals included):

- Early bird (before March 31): \$225
- After March 31: \$250

Spouse/Guest of Delegate:

- Early bird (before March 31): \$150
- After March 31: \$175

One-day Registration (one day of sessions and meals included):

- \$125

Register at mrpcmembers.com

Hotel Reservations

TownePlace Suites
\$89/night | (225) 387-5100

La Quinta Port Allen
\$87/night | (225) 960-7787

Both hotels are conveniently located, sharing a parking lot with the West Baton Rouge Convention & Visitors Center. The room block is available until March 31. Be sure to mention **Mississippi River Parkway Commission** when making your reservation.



Mississippi River Parkway Commission Semi-Annual Meeting

April 21-23, 2020 | Baton Rouge, LA

Agenda (Subject to change)

Tuesday, April 21

- 3:00-5:00pm **Board of Directors Meeting**
- 6:00-7:30pm **Welcome Reception at West Baton Rouge Museum**

Wednesday, April 22

- Breakfast at hotel**
- 8am **Load bus to Houmas House**
(meetings and lunch will take place at Houmas House)
- 9am-noon **Tour Great River Road Museum and Levee Overlook**
- Noon **Lunch at Café Burnside – buffet at Houmas House**
- 2-4pm **Technical Committee Sessions**
- 4:15pm **Board bus for hotel**
Drive River Road from Houmas House to Hotel
(return over Sunshine Bridge)
- 6 pm **Board bus for dinner**
- 6:30pm **Dinner at Hot Tails in New Roads**
- 8-8:30pm **Return to hotel**

Thursday, April 23

- Breakfast at hotel**
- 8:30 am **Load bus for tour of downtown Baton Rouge**
 - State Capitol
 - State Museum
 - Old State Capitol
 - Old Governor's Mansion
- 1pm **Return to West Baton Rouge Welcome Center**
Welcome from Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser
- 1:30-3pm **Catered Lunch and State Reports at West Baton Rouge Welcome Center**
- 3-4 pm **Technical Committee Reports**

Transportation

Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport (10 miles from convention center)

Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport is the second-largest commercial airport in the state and offers frequent flights to major hubs like Atlanta, Dallas and Houston on American, Delta and United.

Mobile Sessions



Houmas House & Great River Road Interpretive Center

Houmas House is one of the top historic attractions in Louisiana. The restored antebellum home features rare and period artwork and artifacts and is surrounded by an expansive garden. The estate is also home to the new Great River Road Museum and Interpretive Center, which highlights the history of the lower Mississippi River and features a pedestrian bridge that leads to a levee overlook.

Downtown Baton Rouge

Discover the city's history at unique architectural attractions like the **state Capitol, the Louisiana State Museum, the Old State Capitol and the Old Governor's Mansion.**

Cancellation Policy

Cancellations made on or prior to **Tuesday, March 31**, will receive a full registration fee refund minus a \$20 processing fee.

Cancellations made after Tuesday, March 31, will **not** be eligible for a refund.

Title: Summary Report for St. Croix TIC/Welcome Center, 14100 I-94 West Lakeland Township MN 55082 regarding *Mississippi Multimedia Gallery™* created by Hamline University's Center for Global Environmental Education (CGEE), St Paul Minnesota.

Executive Summary: With thanks to Julie Ramer/Explore Minnesota (EMT) and Rob Williams/Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for facilitating sponsorship of a pilot installation of a 55" touchscreen multimedia table at the St Croix Welcome Center from June 27 2019 - January 6 2020. Explore MN videos and photographs, and a non-community water video were incorporated into the program content. EMT and MnDOT logos were added to the attraction/home screen. This user metric summary represents the six months July - December 2019. During this period there were 184 days of touchscreen user data. **A total of 5635 media elements** (videos, photo galleries, panoramas etc) **were accessed for an average of 31 elements per day. There were almost 150 total hours of interaction by an estimated 7492 visitors** (estimate an average of 2 people per user session). **The three most popular media elements were the videos: *Explore MN Introduction, One Minute Raindrop, and Non-community Water.***

Summary Data:

Over the six months, a total of 5635 media elements (videos, photo galleries, panoramas etc) were accessed for an average of 31 elements per day. (Note that the program does not have the capability to capture the map exploration, a popular feature of CGEE's Multimedia Galleries. Therefore actual media element calculations are under-represented.) The three most popular media elements were the videos ***Explore MN Introduction, One Minute Raindrop, and Non-community Water.*** **The EMT media elements and Non-community Water video were very popular being viewed 3044 times representing 54% of total elements accessed.**

User interaction averaged about 50 minutes per day for a total of almost 150 hours of public engagement. A total of 82 unique media elements were accessed representing a thorough exploration of content. Average time spent per user session was almost two and a half minutes which is comparable to other interactive exhibits in public spaces.

EMT visitor door numbers for September, October and November were used to estimate the percentage of total visitors engaging with the multimedia touchscreen. Approximately 2% of visitors interacted with the touchscreen.

Additional observations about the pilot:

Operation: The unit ran without incident 21 hours each day for 184 days.

Location: Moving the touchscreen table to a location close to the main entrance on Sept 17 resulted in an increase in percentage of visitors engaging from 0.8% to 1.7%.

Signage: On November 13 a 22.25" X 26.25" sign on a floor stand was added next to the multimedia table. The sign did not result in a measurable increase in visitor interaction which remained about 2%.

Time of Day: To determine whether time of day impacted the percentage of visitors interacting, night hour visitors (after 5pm) and user session times were compared. Surprisingly, there was no drop off of interaction after 5pm. Metric log data demonstrated that 236 (39%) of November user sessions occurred after 5pm. However after 10pm there were only 6 user sessions.

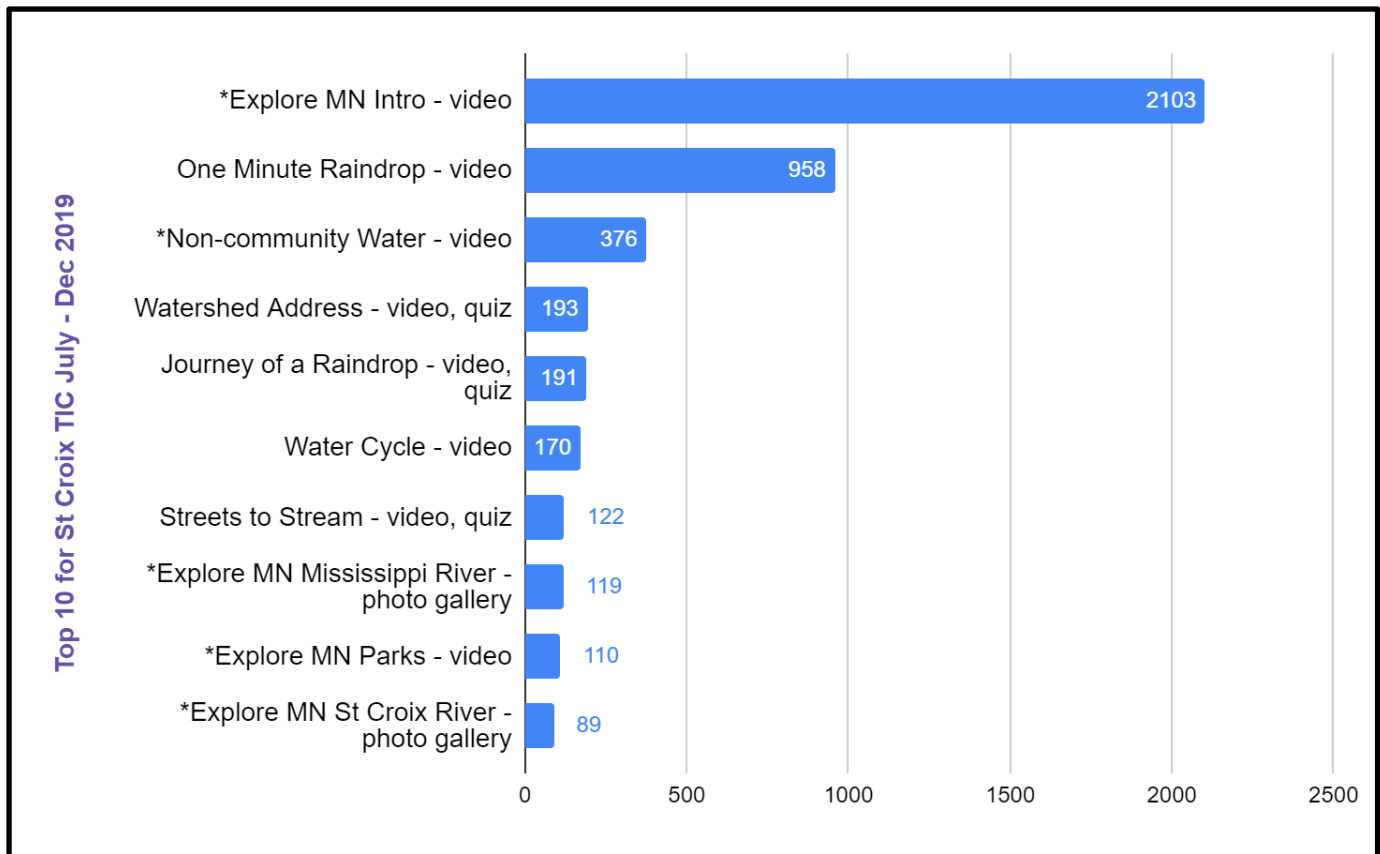
Staff feedback: This is a sampling of input received via a short survey with Welcome Center staff: *“All I heard were positive comments about the content and ease of use.”; “I think the content was quite good, very interesting, very well edited, put together and laid out.”; “People are always coming in with questions concerning the Mississippi River so the kiosk is very helpful in that regard.”* A suggested opportunity area was: *“It would be wonderful to have content such as MN State Parks, Historic Sites, Scenic Byways, biking trails, activities and events in St. Paul/Minneapolis.”*

Table 1: User metrics data table

	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
Days of data	31	31	30	31	30	31	184
Hours of engagement (hh:mm:ss)	27:43:15	25:26:58	19:45:38	30:05:58	23:02:00	23:11:35	149:15:24
User Sessions	679	650	507	728	608	574	3,746
Average User Sessions/day	22	21	17	23	20	19	20
Estimated Users/day*	44	42	34	47	41	37	41
Estimated Total Users*	1358	1300	1014	1456	1216	1148	7492
Total Elements Accessed	1188	1266	684	1038	749	710	5635
Unique Elements	58	52	68	57	47	43	
Average time/User Session (hh:mm:ss)	0:02:27	0:02:21	0:02:20	0:02:29	0:02:16	0:02:25	0:02:23
Average Elements/day	38	41	23	33	25	23	31
Average Elements/User Sessions	1.7	1.9	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.5
Usage time/day (hh:mm:ss)	0:53:39	0:49:15	0:39:31	0:58:15	0:46:04	0:44:53	0:48:36
% of visitors engaging			1.20%	2.0%	2.2%		
Number of visitors			83959	74593	54334		

* Estimate of 2 viewers per session

Chart 1: Top 10 for St Croix Welcome Center July - December 2019



* EMT content + Non-community water video

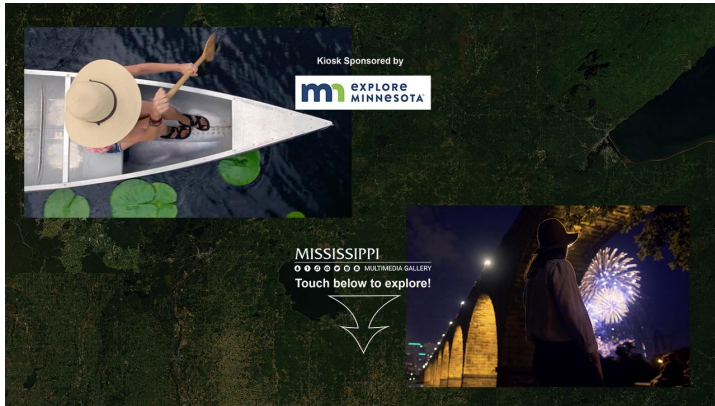
Table 2: Totals for EMT and Non-community Water views

Total views	
Explore MN Intro - video	2103
Non-community Water - video	376
Explore MN Mississippi River - photo gallery	119
Explore MN Parks - video	110
Explore MN St Croix River - photo gallery	89
Explore MN Families - video	77
Explore MN Concerts - video	75
Explore MN Winter - video	55
Explore MN Arts - video	40
Totals	3044

Exhibit: *Description of the touchscreen display*

- *Unit:* 55" UHD touch screen in a drafting table position on a stationary stand, in single screen/person user mode.

- **Operation:** The program auto-started at 4am and auto-shut down at 1am, i.e. table was running 21 hours/day. There were no incidents of malfunction and no indication of tampering or mischief.
- **The Program:** *Mississippi Multimedia Gallery* program, has over 60 videos, immersive 360-degree panoramas, photo galleries and interactive maps - that enable users to explore the Mississippi River from the Itasca Headwaters to the Delta. It can be customized with additional content and focus.



Report provided by Ann Erickson with Hamline CGEE, ann.erickson75@gmail.com
January 14, 2020



Member Update to MN Mississippi River Parkway Commission

Commissioner: Megan Christianson

Representing: Grand Rapids to Brainerd

Quarter: 1st Qtr 2020

Minnesota

MN Great River Road Corridor Management Plan Implementation Support

I have been meeting with Aitkin River Trails Committee for a little over a year now. I proposed the Great River Road Interpretive Center nomination as an opportunity for their community to promote and market the River more. This group is very active. They held two events last year around paddling the river and one river clean-up. They take a lot of pride in being a Mississippi River town. Since then they have reached out to Big Sandy Lake Reserve, Palisade City Hall, Jacobson Community Center and Aitkin Chamber to all submit to be Great River Road Interpretive Centers. Aitkin County has funds available to help pay for the signs, and they are also going to seek a Blandin Foundation matching grant for signs and hosting community celebration around the grand opening of the Interpretive Centers. This group has a lot of energy and meet once a month. The Cuyuna Lakes Chamber was present at the last Aitkin River Trails meeting, and they are interested in submitting to be an Interpretive Center as well. They have requested a meeting with myself and Karl Samp.

Working with Itasca County Historical Society (located right on the Mississippi River) to submit an application to be a Great River Road Interpretive Center as well, since the Forest History Center (current Great River Road Interpretive Center) is only open for events from Labor Day to beginning of June.



Member Update to MN Mississippi River Parkway Commission

Commissioner: Carol Zoff, Technical Member

Representing: MnDOT

Quarter: 2020 1st Quarter

Minnesota

MN Great River Road Corridor Management Plan Implementation Support

Served on www.mnmississippiriver.com redesign committee, on track to replace current site prior to loss of service.

Worked with Suzy Scotty to design new MnGRR print map, currently out for bid.

Working with Suzy to develop a series instructional videos for Plan Your Trip, for use by consumers and Ambassadors

State-wide Issue, Project, Event or Partner

Begin working with MnMRPC to prepare an application for All American Road designation to submit to MnDOT on May 14, 2020.

Visual Impact Assessment training steering committee, will help address scenic intrinsic quality protection.

Regional

MN Great River Road Corridor Management Plan Implementation Support

Reviewed print map content with 12 ICs to confirm content.

Regional Issue, Project, Event or Partner

Providing edit assistance to Mississippi River Headwaters Board project to sign river access with information related to paddling

MRPC – Ten-State

Ten-state Corridor Management Plan Implementation Support

Worked with Transportation Committee and BOD to revise the ten-state CMP to add at strategy as follows “G. If FHWA opens nominations, the MRPC will seek All American Road designation in all ten states.”

Working with MRPC committees and BOD to prepare the ten states to apply for All American Road designation.

Ten-State Issue, Project, Event or Partner

Provided coordination with Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative, city of Bemidji and MRPC National Office to plan the MRPC 2020 Annual Meeting to be collocated in Bemidji in Sept 2020

Panelist for NCHRP 08-132: *Accessing America's Great Outdoors: Forecasting Recreational Travel Demand*