



**Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
1st Quarter Meeting – February 26, 2015
State Office Building, St. Paul MN
MINUTES – Draft**

Commissioners Present

Scott Bradley – Transportation Appointee
Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River
Anne Lewis – Grand Rapids to Brainerd
Mark Anderson – At Large Member
Nancy Salminen – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids
Sheronne Mulry – Hastings to Iowa Border
Keith Parker – DNR Appointee
Andrea Kajer – Historical Society Appointee
Cordelia Pierson – Elk River to Hastings

Technical Advisors & Staff Present

Bill Von Bank – Explore Minnesota
Cynthia Wheeler – DNR
David Kelliher – Historical Society
John Anfinson – National Park Service
Carol Zoff – Transportation
Diane Henry-Wangenstein – LCC
Chris Miller – Staff

Commissioners & Technical Advisors

Absent

Paul Huginin – Agriculture Appointee
Adam Johnson – Explore Minnesota Appointee
Rep. Sheldon Johnson
Sen. David Senjem
Sen. Patricia Torres Ray

Guests/Speakers Present

Liz Walton – MnDOT
Barb Huberty – Legislative Water Commission

The meeting was called to order at 3:25 by Vice Chair Sherron Mulry, followed by introductions. A quorum was present.

Review of Minutes from 11/20/14 Meeting

Motion by Andrea Kajer and seconded by Scott Bradley to approve the November 20 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Agency and Regional Updates

Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids: Nancy Salminen reported on Enbridge Energy public meetings held recently regarding the Sandpiper Pipeline Project. Two routes are being considered, both of which could impact the Mississippi River. Meetings were well attended. Stay tuned for more information. The Lady Slipper Scenic Byway has decided to delay a grant application for a pedestrian bridge until the project is reflected in the Leech Lake Band's transportation plan. Estimated cost of the project is \$703,000 and matching funds could be difficult to secure. A meeting was held in Bemidji recently on bike friendly transportation and planning bike routes.

Grand Rapids to Brainerd: Anne Lewis reported that the Grand Rapids Convention and Visitors Bureau has completed a study of tourism in the area and now will work with the findings. A marketing advisory committee has been formed and Anne will serve on the committee and share information.

Brainerd to Elk River: Karl Samp noted that the Brainerd Riverfront Planning Group continues work. They now have the second phase of preliminary design and are seeking funding to implement their plan. Details are available electronically for those interested. The Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area has a plan for trail expansion to create a three day riding experience that would be near the river. They are working on a cooperative agreement with mining companies to preserve the mountain bike trails.

Elk River to Hastings: Cordelia Pierson referenced updates included in the meeting packet. More information from the region will be shared during the National Park Service report. The Metropolitan Council just completed regional solicitation for grant projects. Funding decisions have not yet been made.

Hastings to Iowa Border: Sheronne Mulry reported that Houston County will be voting next week on a possible ban of silica sand mining. Other counties in the region will be watching the results.

Explore Minnesota: Bill Von Bank commented about the references to biking earlier in the meeting and announced the 2015 Pedal MN Conference, May 4 – 5 in Minneapolis. Details are available at www.pedalmn.com. Viking Cruises have announced that they will begin Mississippi River cruises. Saint Paul is a likely stop. Red Wing and Stillwater have also expressed interest in being ports. The Ryder Cup is coming to the Twin Cities in 2016 and will be used to leverage Minnesota marketing in Europe. 250,000 guests are expected for this major event at Hazeltine National, bringing huge economic impact in a shoulder tourism season. Mississippi River Country (ten state partner organization of the MRPC) is completing projects funded by a Department of Commerce grant, including development of an app featuring the Great River Road in all ten states. The app for mobile devices will feature information on interpretive centers, agri-tourism, scenic overlooks, and locks/dams along with Great River Road mapping.

Historical Society: Andrea Kajer reported on improvements underway at the Oliver Kelley Farm Visitor Center. MNHS is currently seeking funds for improvements at Historic Fort Snelling, a Great River Road Interpretive Center. \$4.4 is being requested for predesign and design work for repurposing of existing buildings. Funds would then also be needed to carry out the project, with a goal of completion by 2020, the Fort Snelling Bicentennial. The Minnesota Humanities Council will be hosting a Smithsonian exhibit focused on water. Several communities will be selected to showcase the traveling exhibit and host dialogue. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

Natural Resources: Cynthia Wheeler shared information on the Governor's Pheasant Summit and feedback received regarding buffer laws. A DNR roundtable was held in January and the Governor announced that he will propose a fifty foot buffer on all public waters in Minnesota. A framework is being developed with partner organizations. The existing statute covers 30% of waters in the state. Changes could cover more waters, with a 1 – 4 year phase in period. Plans are still very preliminary but a bill could be coming in March. Keith Parker reported on the DNR's involvement with the Fort Snelling Upper Post, including work with partners to identify future re-uses of the barracks. The DNR's internal Mississippi River Team has been working with other partners including the Corps of Engineers on handling of dredge spoils to ensure they are not harmful to people or animals. Work continues in three Groundwater Management Areas, to manage aquifers for long term sustainability. A question was raised about deforestation in Hubbard County. The DNR is aware of the situation and is now involved. The DNR's 10-Year Strategic Plan for 2015-25 was recently released. Copies were distributed to Commission members. A question was raised regarding status of the Mississippi Corridor Critical Area Rules. Response was that a full draft is expected to be released during the first quarter of 2015. Comments have been received and considered.

Transportation: Carol Zoff reported that DOT has offered assistance to byways to ensure that all have updated Corridor Management Plans. Since the Great River Road has a planning effort underway, an investment inventory is being developed by the Region 5 Development Commission which will be an attachment to the Corridor Management Plan, providing a compilation of specific projects underway or planned along the Great River Road. Region 5 will also provide a recommendation on how to update this document in the future. Scott Bradley provided a summary on the transition for Minnesota Scenic Byways into the new Transportation Alternatives/Map-21 funding structure. The transition process is in the second year. Two processes are simultaneously underway – 1) a centralized process providing funds for byway infrastructure projects with \$1.5 million on funding available, and 2) a regional process for Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) regional solicitations with \$7 million in funding available. The centralized process is temporary while byways develop relationships and begin to work under the ATP regional process. Two Great River Road projects were funded under the last centralized solicitation – Leech Lake Band/Cass County Bike Trail; and Mississippi River Regional Trail/Rosemount East. The next solicitation for centralized scenic byway grants will be released in May, and regional solicitations for FY '20 projects will be released in the fall.

National Park Service: John Anfinson shared information on the upcoming campaign, beginning in April, to promote the 2016 National Park Service Centennial. Upper St. Anthony Falls locks will reopen on June 10, then will close. 50 – 60 paddling groups per year will need to portage after the locks are closed.

Organizations are meeting to discuss the best options for portage locations. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is reaching out to partners to discuss how to use the St. Anthony Falls Lock Visitor Center in the future. The Corps would still be responsible for maintaining the flood control structure but any interested partners would need to fund use of the visitor center if it is to remain open. MNHS, DNR, NPS and the City of Minneapolis have been involved in preliminary discussions. If the center is kept open it could provide opportunities to share information about the Great River Road and teach people about the river. April 9 is the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War. At 2:15 Central Time, communities are being asked to ring their bells to mark this occasion.

Commission Business

FY '15 Budget Status: Mark Anderson provided an overview of the budget report and Chris Miller responded to questions. The interpretive panel grant project is now complete. There was discussion regarding possible details of a MN Great River Road map reprint, future budgets and legislation including the MN-MRPC sunset date.

National MRPC Updates

2015 Semi-Annual Meeting: Karl Samp, planning team chair, reported on status. The 2015 MRPC Semi-Annual Meeting will be held April 22 – 24 in St. Cloud at the Rivers Edge Convention Center and Kelly Inn. The full agenda (in the meeting packet) was referenced. Board strategic planning will take place on April 22 followed by the MRPC meeting April 23-24. Staff at the St. Cloud Convention and Visitors Bureau have been outstanding to work with and their efforts and assistance are greatly appreciated. A goal is to involve additional stakeholders including CVBs, planners, etc. The theme for the meeting is "Planning on the River" designed to showcase and share current efforts in the state and facilitate future collaboration. A suggestion was made to promote the Semi-Annual Meeting at the upcoming Geotourism Project Meeting. MN-MRPC members were asked to notify staff if they plan to attend. The hope is to have a strong MN-MRPC presence for this national meeting held in state. Help will be needed including volunteers for session introductions, items for welcome bags and hosting evening activities. Details will be shared via email.

Old Business

MRT Update: Liz Walton provided an update on Mississippi River Trail activities. Signs for Elk River to Lake Itasca are being fabricated, a pre-construction meeting is set for late March prior to installation, and installation from Elk River to Lake Itasca should be complete by July 1. The first ever Mississippi River Bike Ride is being planned for August 26 – September 2. The ride will cover 500 miles beginning at Itasca State Park, following the Paul Bunyan Trail, and ending at the Iowa border. Partners on the event include Explore Minnesota, Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota and Wahoo Adventures. Liz invited a speaker from the MN-MRPC to participate in the ribbon cutting event to be held at Itasca State Park on August 27. DNR, MnDOT and the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota will also have speakers. Adventure Cycling may participate and promote the event as well. A celebration will also be held in the Metro area when the tour moves through on August 31. New MRT maps will soon be posted on the MnDOT website. Three Rivers Park District is undertaking a master plan to develop off-road trails along the Crow River and Mississippi River.

MN Great River Road Map Reprint: Chris Miller reported that an inquiry was sent out to our map distribution partners regarding interest in receiving maps for the upcoming travel season and quantity desired. Significant response was received, preliminary pricing has been obtained and the current year budget could sustain the cost. The reprint would be a limited quantity, one-time shipment to sites with some kept in reserve at the MN-MRPC office. Purpose would be to provide materials in the short term, as the Corridor Management Plan is completed which will then help determine future direction. There was member discussion on whether information could be changed or added. Motion by Keith Parker and seconded by Sheronne Mulry to proceed with a reprint of the current Minnesota Great River Road Map/Travel Planner without design changes, for the upcoming spring - fall travel season. Motion carried.

National Geographic Geotourism Project: A brief overview of the project was provided by Karl Samp. A coalition of partners is working with National Geographic geotourism website for the Mississippi River. The National MRPC is a partner on the project and encourages members to attend and promote a

series of upcoming planning meetings. Details on the March 11 – 12 Twin Cities meeting are included in today's meeting packet.

New Business

Proposed Process for Letters of Support: A process for considering and providing letters of support was provided for MN-MRPC member consideration. The Commission often receives requests, and timelines do not always align well with regularly scheduled MN-MRPC meeting. The proposed process provides steps to be followed if a timeline allows for discussion at a regular meeting, and also steps to be followed if the timelines does not align with a regular meeting. After review, motion by Karl Samp and seconded by Nancy Salminen to adopt the process as presented. A copy of the process is attached.

National Scenic Byway Foundation – Action Alert: The National Scenic Byways Foundation recently sent out an action alert requesting assistance from all byways in asking for clarification of language in the federal transportation bill to specifically mention Scenic Byways as eligible for funding under the Transportation Alternatives Program. After discussion, motion by Karl Samp and seconded by Scott Bradley to provide the letters to Congress from the MN-MRPC as requested in the action alert. Motion carried.

Great River Gathering – May 14: The Annual Saint Paul Great River Gathering is scheduled for May 14, with exhibits from 5:00 – 6:30 and dinner/program from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. The MN-MRPC has sent representatives in the past. Members were asked to confirm interest with MN-MRPC staff, for consideration by the Chair.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, June 11, 2015
1:00 – 3:00 MN-MRPC Corridor Management Plan Workshop
3:15 – 5:00 MN-MRPC Quarterly Meeting
State Office Building Room 500 North

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.



Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota Agency & Regional Updates February 2015

Elk River to Hastings – Commissioner Cordelia Pierson

Three Rivers Park District (Park District) will soon be kicking off two master plans for recreational facilities - existing and planned - along the Great River Road/MNRRRA.

1) **Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park Master Plan** (Hennepin County side)

This master plan has recently begun and is slated to be ongoing through this summer with submission to Met Council next Spring 2016. Coon Rapids Dam RP is scheduled to receive pavement funding to improve the park's access and circulation. This pavement reconstruction project provided an avenue to review the park in its entirety to ensure that the facility is best serving the region's users – and if there are deficits, the master plan is intended to flush those issues out into a clear plan for future improvements. A consultant is being considered to conduct an extensive public engagement process, which is proposed to be coordinated with the Mississippi River Regional Trail Master Plan (below).

2) **Mississippi River Regional Trail Master Plan** (Hennepin County side)

The Park District has hired HKGi to lead this master plan which is slated for formal kick off mid-March. The intent of the master plan is to propose a regional trail route (off-road) from North Mississippi Regional Park in Brooklyn Center, along the Mississippi River, to the confluence of the Crow River in Dayton. The consultant will examine existing off-road trail segments that are currently in place (several MRT segments) and analyze gaps to propose a continuous off-road regional trail route. The consultant is also cognoscente of the NPS's Water Trail Plan effort that is also taking place within MNRRRA and is expected to coordinate (to the extent possible) touch points to the Mississippi River etc. A significant community outreach program is proposed this summer, many events in conjunction with the Coon Rapids Dam RP Master Plan outreach. A Fall/Winter 2015 timeframe is proposed for submission to the Met Council for review.



Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota

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Members of the House: Sheldon Johnson (DFL – 67B) – Chair **Members of the Senate:** David Senjem (R – 29); Patricia Torres Ray (DFL – 62) **State Agency Appointees:** Paul Hugunin – Agriculture, Scott Bradley – Transportation, Adam Johnson – Explore Minnesota Tourism, Keith Parker – Natural Resources, Andrea Kajer – Historical Society **Regional Appointees:** Nancy Salminen – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids, Anne Lewis – Grand Rapids to Brainerd, Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River, Cordelia Pierson – Elk River to Hastings, Sheronne Mulry – Hastings to Iowa Border **Member at Large:** Mark Anderson

Process for Letters of Support (Approved 2/26/15)

The following actions will be taken after a request for a letter of support is received.

- 1) If the timeline allows for discussion at a regular quarterly meeting –
 - The topic will be placed on the agenda with information sent out to members in advance for review and consideration.
 - Discussion will take place at the meeting and action will be taken.
 - Staff will follow up with letter requestor as directed by the Commission.
- 2) If the timeline does not allow for discussion at a regular quarterly meeting –
 - The request and any background information will be emailed to MN-MRPC members asking if there is support.
 - If no concerns are raised, the letter will be provided as requested.
 - If concerns are noted, a phone meeting of the MN-MRPC will be scheduled at the discretion of the Chair.
 - A meeting notice will be posted on the Legislative Coordinating Commission website, and a room will be available at the State Office Building to allow for members of the public to attend. MN-MRPC members may participate by phone or in person.
 - Discussion will take place and a decision will be made on how to proceed.
 - Staff will follow up with letter requestor as directed by the Commission.

MN-MRPC FY '15 Budget Status 6/4/15

MN-MRPC FY '15 Operating Budget (includes FY '14 carry over)							
Obj Code	Description	FY '15 Budget	Spent 6/1/15	Pending	Remaining	Rough Estimate to Yr End	Comments
41070	Other Benefits (Per Diem)	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 1,815.00		\$ 3,685.00	\$ 700.00	Commissioner Per Diems: MN-MRPC quarterly mtgs, MRPC Annual Mtg & Semi-Annual Mtg, committee mtgs, commission representation at meetings and events, CMP project
41110	Printing & Advertising	\$ 3,445.08	\$ 6,308.29		\$ (2,863.21)		Commission meeting copies, materials, GRR map reprint
41130	Prof/Tech Services	\$ 38,000.00	\$ 28,804.58	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 6,995.42	\$ 3,000.00	Admin contract, website design services, additional staff time for projects, other services as needed
41150	Computer & System Services	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 829.17	\$ 44.85	\$ 125.98	\$ 100.00	Website hosting, stats and email
41155	Communications	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 378.79	\$ 57.05	\$ 564.16	\$ 750.00	Postage/deliveries, MN MRPC phone line and conference calls, shipping costs, Constant Contact marketing service
41160	In-State Travel	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 2,733.80		\$ 4,266.22	\$ 1,200.00	Commissioners/Advisors/Staff: quarterly mtgs, work groups, events, CMP project, 2015 Semi-Annual Mtg
41170	Out-State Travel	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,550.18		\$ 449.82		MRPC 2014 Annual Meeting - Memphis
41180	Employee Development	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 2,655.00	\$ 66.00	\$ (1,221.00)		Meeting and conference registration fees, including MRPC Semi-Annual meeting registrations for MN-MRPC members and invited speakers
41300	Office Supplies	\$ 500.00	\$ (219.83)		\$ 719.83		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 dues for 2015, potential partial dues for 2016
TOTAL		\$ 75,945.08	\$ 60,854.98	\$ 2,367.90	\$ 12,722.22	\$ 5,750.00	
MN-MRPC Grants							
	Interpretive Panels	\$ 26,664.03	\$ 21,505.83		\$ -		Sign frames for MRT community kiosks (7). All completed and grant closed February 2015.
	CMP - National Scenic Byways	\$ 469,569.90	\$ 294,103.85	\$ 29,908.38	\$ 145,557.67	\$ 30,000.00	CMP project contract, MRT sign costs, MN-MRPC CMP costs
	CMP - National Park Service	\$ 44,812.64	\$ 32,650.43	\$ 3,681.09	\$ 8,481.12		MRT Final Phase II sign installation cost, MRT Phase III sign fabrication and installation

Great River Road Network of Interpretive Centers Visit Checklist

State commissioner visits annually or bi-annually by making an appointment with the I.C. Director or other appropriate personnel.

The goal is to develop a stronger relationship between the Interpretive Centers (I.C.) and the MRPC.

During the visit, the commissioner will review the checklist and share new or ongoing information about the MRPC. These talking points should include benefits of being an I.C. (e.g., featured on website, printed maps, social media, itineraries and more.)

Comments

What other Interpretive Centers do you communicate with regarding Great River Road activities?

Name of interpretive center

Visiting commissioner's name

Date of visit

Name, title, email and telephone number of I.C. personnel interviewed

What are your regular hours?

What is your admission pricing?

How many visitors do you see annually?

Does I.C. have a website?

Please provide the url link.

Do you have a button on your website with the Great River Road logo and link to the experiencemississippiriver.com website?

Please provide url link to page where it is located. If not, when will you be adding logo and link?

Does your I.C. have a Facebook page?

Please provide url link.

Do you carry GRR maps or rack cards for sale, ☐ Yes ☐ No distribution or on display?

Do you display a Great River Road banner or other signage? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are your frontline personnel knowledgeable of the Great River Road? Do they receive any formal training? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have photos or video of your I.C. to share for promotional use? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please send photos, video or other media to the National Office.

Commissioner's Signature

I.C. Personnel Signature



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



Mississippi River Geotourism Program

Join us in participating!

Overview

- The Mississippi River Parkway Commission is pleased to participate in a National Geographic-branded initiative focused on promotion of Mississippi River geotourism aiming to "sustain or enhance the geographical character of the river – its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and the well-being of its residents."
- The effort is led by the Mississippi River Geotourism Council and Mississippi River Connections Collaborative which includes the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Mississippi River Trail, Inc.. A website is being developed by the National Geographic Maps Division.
- Geotourism encompasses a range of travel opportunities including culture, heritage, history, food, nature, the outdoors, water, music and arts.
- The Mississippi River Geotourism Program seeks to promote the culture, heritage and ecological diversity of the people and places that are connected to the Mississippi River through the voices and stories of the people that live along its shores. The National Geographic Society and its partners are working with local organizations, businesses and residents to map travel experiences, stories and businesses along the Mississippi River. All are invited to recommend historic, cultural and natural landmarks; events, attractions and activities; businesses, artisans and storytellers, and local legends who capture the river's unique character, heritage and beauty.

Great River Road/Mississippi River Parkway Commission Involvement

- The National Ten-State Mississippi River Parkway Commission is a Mississippi River Geotourism Program partner.
- The Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota is nominating the Minnesota Great River Road for inclusion in the Mississippi River Geotourism Website, and will help spread the word to partners up and down the river encouraging local communities and representatives to nominate their unique and special attractions. We want to make sure Minnesota is well represented, as the Headwaters State, and home of 575 miles of Great River Road! We will also follow up with nominators regarding ways our byway corridor management plan can help facilitate our mutual success.

Invitation to Participate and Spread the Word

- This project is looking for nominations on what is unique and authentic about the Mississippi River region. Please consider nominating your favorite sites and stories to the website. Nominating is free of charge.
- The scope of the Mississippi River Geotourism Program includes the people and places within every county that touches the river along its entire length.
- For more information about the project and to nominate visit MississippiRiver.NatGeoTourism.com.
- The website is user friendly and your nomination shouldn't take long, probably less than an hour in many cases, especially if you have a description and photographs ready to go. You'll be asked to set up an account and then enter text, media (at least one of the following - photos, video, sound, and/or pdf file), contact information and identify your location on a map.
- Nomination guidelines are attached.
- We hope you'll nominate your site by October 1, 2015 and share with others who may be interested.
- If you have questions or would like more information, please contact: Chris Miller, Mississippi River Parkway Commission of MN, info@mnmississippiriver.com, or 651-341-4196.



Nomination Guidelines

Mississippi River Geotourism Program

10 States, 12 Million People, 1 River

Nomination Guidelines

The Mississippi River Geotourism Council is working with the National Geographic Society to create a Geotourism website MapGuide. National Geographic defines Geotourism as *“Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place – its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and the well-being of its residents.”*

An Opportunity for You!

Residents, visitors, community organizations, tourism stakeholders and local businesses are asked to nominate sites for potential inclusion in a co-branded National Geographic Society website MapGuide, of the Mississippi River.

Complete an online or print *Nomination Form* and help identify destinations and experiences most distinctive to the people, places and things that capture the region’s unique character and beauty. These nominations will provide the basis for a website that will tell the story of the region and its attractions.

What are the Guidelines for a Geotourism Site?

A test for inclusion on the MapGuide: Is the spot, attraction, business, activity or experience distinctive to our town, area or region, and is it authentic to the Mississippi River? Examples may include:

- Remarkable natural areas and geologic features such as creeks, lakes, bluffs, beaches, wetlands, bayous and forests, rivers or wetlands
- Distinctive wildlife habitats and notable species of birds, mammals, flowers or trees
- Places featuring local cuisine or agricultural products: farmers markets, shops and restaurants, agri-tourism sites
- Events, ceremonies, festivals that highlight the community’s heritage, food, music and traditions
- Cultural experiences: heritage sites, museums, theaters, music, literature and performing arts
- Artist studios and galleries, craft workshop, shops featuring handmade items from the region
- Outdoor experiences such as rafting, hiking, biking, hunting, horseback riding, beaches, swamp tours, water activities and parks, or heritage areas
- Historic places such as trails, plantation homes, civil war sites, civil rights sites, distinctive local architecture or Native American sites
- Scenic routes including hiking trails, bike routes, water ways, birding trails and scenic byways
- Community stewardship projects, land trusts, conservation or restoration initiatives
- Locally owned and family businesses like a café, pub, craft shop, winery, unique lodging
- Local artist or artisan, storyteller, outdoor guide or historian
- Legends, stories or other unique aspects of the region

Once you identify a potential site, consider what makes the site unique:

- What story does this site or experience help tell?
- Are there significant historic, cultural or natural features associated with the site?
- Is it under-appreciated by local residents and visitors, or is it already crowded or at capacity?
- Does the site offer a unique experience? Is there local awareness and pride in this place?
- Do the community and local businesses benefit from and support visitation at the site?
- Is interpretative or educational information available at the site?

Nominating a Site

To nominate a site online, fill out an electronic site nomination form at:

<http://edit.mississippiriver.geoconsensus.com/8080/>

To nominate a site offline, fill out a printed nomination form and submit via mail to the contact listed on the form:

Mississippi River Geotourism Program
858 N. Jackson, Fayetteville, AR 72701

For more information contact:

Terry Eastin
terryeastin@att.net
Tel: 479-236-0938

The National Geographic Society will work closely with the Mississippi River Geotourism Council to select the sites and themes that will appear on the map. The National Geographic Society will make the final determination on wording and site selection.

###

Project Managers

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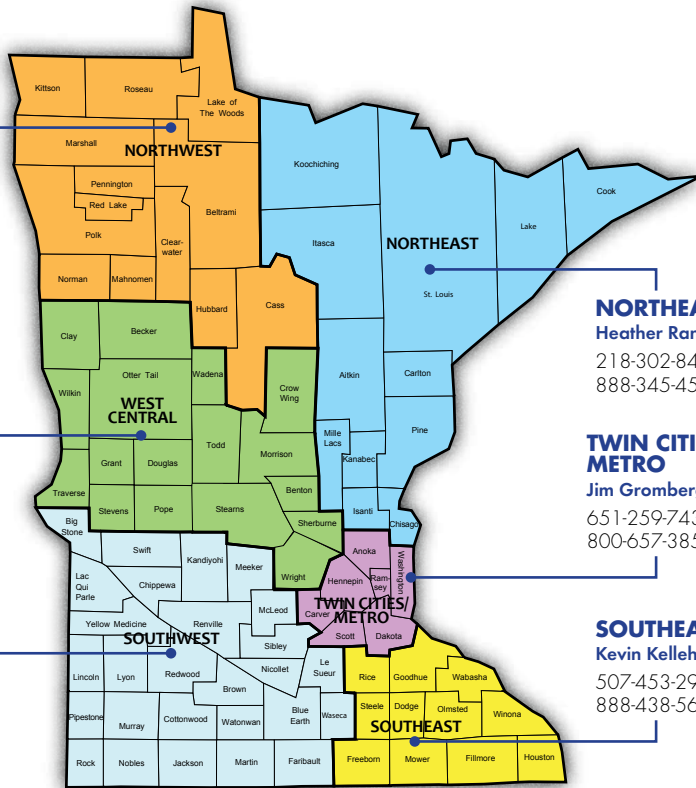
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The Business First Stop Team

Commissioners of nine state agencies provide coordinated leadership and appoint experienced, lead staff to work across agencies to focus problem-solving as needed to address the economic, environmental and community concerns common to innovative or complex projects today.

Lead staff meet with agency commissioners to coordinate assistance for projects ranging from multi-million dollar expansions to innovative clean energy, water quality or green chemistry projects.



Team Partners

Expertise and experience in each of these state agencies are available to help your business succeed. Minnesota Business First Stop agencies:

- Department of Employment and Economic Development (Lead Agency)
- Department of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Labor and Industry
- Department of Revenue
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- Department of Agriculture
- Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board



Testimonials

Potlatch

Potlatch, a forest products company with 1.4 million acres of timberland in three states, including Minnesota, planned to expand production at its Bemidji lumber-manufacturing facility by adding a new wood-drying kiln.

“We used the Minnesota Business First Stop team to expedite part of our expansion process. From the beginning of the process, we knew where to go and that we were talking with the right people.”

—Pete Aube, manager Bemidji Potlatch plant

EarthClean Corporation

For a new company, getting information about Minnesota Business First Stop is crucial. When you start a business, many people don't know what to do or who to talk to. Minnesota Business First Stop helps your get in front of the right people.”

—EarthClean President, Scott Bocklund



Startups Welcome!

Although First Stop's focus is on projects that need input from multiple state agencies to best succeed, the state has programs and connections to resources for new businesses as well – and the First Stop Team can connect you to them.