

THE ROAD TRIP AROUND THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER REFUGES

NORTH-SOUTH ROUTE STARTING AT MINNESOTA 61 SOUTH AT CHIPPEWA FLOWAGE OVERLOOK

The north-south route begins at the Chippewa River overlook on Minnesota Highway 61 south. The overlook is a large unmarked turnout. It follows the highway south on the Minnesota and Iowa side of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges to the Fred Swengel Bridge (I-80) below Le Claire, Iowa. The south-north route follows the highways north along the Illinois and Wisconsin side of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges, from the I-80 Bridge to the Chippewa River in Wisconsin.

Miles shown are actual driving distances. The towns and cities are the “posts” on the road trip. The mileage for each town is the distance from the start of the trip at the Chippewa overlook to the northern city limits of the towns on the north-south route. The mileages for the towns on the south-north route are the distance from the Fred Swengel Bridge to the southern city limits. The town initials with mileages give the distance a feature is from the city limits of the last town or post.

Side trips have their own initials before the mileage figures. Miles are actual driving distances. Example: the mileages for the Lower Sand Prairie side trip are indicated by LSP (Lower Sand Prairie).

ROAD TRIP LOG

CO 0.0 The Chippewa Overlook is the starting point for the Upper Mississippi River Road Trip. It is the unmarked overlook just above Reads Landing on the river side of Mn Hwy 61. Lake Pepin can be seen up river to the left; the view across to the Wisconsin side and down river is the delta of the Chippewa River which comes in from the glaciated area to the north and east. The northern boundary of the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge (NW&FR) begins on the south bank of the Chippewa River. The view is into the Nelson-Trevino Bottoms. This area is closed to migratory bird hunting and to all hunting and trapping during the state duck hunting season. It can be accessed by boat or limited hiking during the closed period, but disturbing the migratory birds by driving them out of the closed area puts them at risk.

Eagles in large numbers gather here in the winter and spring to take advantage of the upwelling open water and the dead fish it disgorges. The advent of nesting eagles in the Refuge means that they can be seen almost any time of the year. They congregate in large numbers here in the late fall and winter. They can be seen floating in the air above the river (below you) or around the bluffs above, taking advantage of the thermals. They line the edges of the ice like their human ice fishing counterparts (or is it the other way around?).

The Mississippi River, for some 250 river miles, follows the western edge of the unglaciated area of Southeastern Minnesota, Southwestern Wisconsin, and parts of Illinois and Eastern Iowa. The floodwaters from glacial melt eroded the hard dolomite plateau, which before the glaciers was a flat sedimentary rock plain over what is now the gorge of the Upper Mississippi River, leaving the magnificent bluffs along this “unglaciated” stretch of the River. The Mississippi flows between the sand terraces on the riverbanks also left behind by the glacial floodwaters as far south as the fourteen miles of rapids starting (they are gone now, to make commercial river transportation easier) at Le Claire, Iowa and Rapids City, Illinois.

The Upper Mississippi River NW&FR covers virtually this same expanse, running 261 river miles from where the Chippewa River joins the Mississippi to where the “Driftless” (absent of piles of glacial drift or outwash plains) or unglaciated portion of the river ends south of Savanna, Illinois. The beauty and attraction of the Refuge is owed in large part to the fact that it covers this geologically and environmentally unique portion of the Upper Mississippi.

WINONA DISTRICT – UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE AND FISH REFUGE (POOLS 4, 5, 5a & 6)

The Winona District refuge contains 32,000 acres of land. About half is owned by the District in fee title; the remainder is managed by the District under a cooperative agreement with the Corps. The land is in and around the pools formed by Lock and Dam 4 at Alma, Lock and Dam 5, Lock and Dam 5A at Winona on the Wisconsin side (below Fountain City) and Lock and Dam 6 at Trempealeau (see Trempealeau for details of the town and access).

The Winona District, along with La Crosse, the next District downriver, is famous for its primitive camping on the many islands formed by sand deposited along the main channel of the river from the Chippewa and other rivers flowing into the Mississippi and by dredge spoil left from maintaining the nine-foot channel. The boats are moored side-by-side on these islands, with swimming, fishing, bird watching and evening campfires the main activities. The marinas serving river boaters are busy all summer in this section of the Refuge. State, county and city parks within the District provide riverside camping.

Boaters take advantage of the many sloughs throughout the Winona District to fish, bird watch, canoe or kayak in the quiet backwaters. Duck hunting and fishing are widespread in the backwater areas. Trapping permits are available for the taking of muskrat, beaver, and other furbearers. The areas closed to hunting in the fall provide excellent bird watching as the ducks, geese, mergansers, coots and tundra swans quickly learn where they can rest without being hunted.

The Winona District, like all the Refuges along the river, has habitat rehabilitation and enhancement projects going. Cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, state, local and not-for-profit associations is extensive. These include projects to keep the backwaters moving through the sloughs in a way that maintains and enhances the growth of plants and the support of wildlife. Some involve drawing down the water in the pool to a level low enough to encourage the growth of submerged and emergent vegetation from long dormant seeds. There are also fisheries enhancements, dredge-spoil

reclamation (past practice was to deposit spoil in the nearest backwater), and island protection. The District also has ongoing projects of replanting crop land into prairie ponds for ducks and birds, and for reforestation of areas of the bottoms with native trees.

CO 1.0 Reads Landing city limits.

READ'S LANDING – MILE 1.0

The Reads Landing School House Museum is at Reads Landing, but there is no boat access to the Mississippi. Directly across the river is a huge pile of sand which has been dredged out of the river to keep the channel the required 9-feet deep. Dredging is a constant task in this area and the upper reaches of Pool 4. The sand coming down the Chippewa was originally deposited by the melting, receding glaciers. It blocked the flow of the Mississippi at this point, creating Lake Pepin. The Sand Prairie area below Wabasha, the original island of Winona, the terraces at Prairie du Chien, the sand dunes at Lost Mound Refuge and the terraces at Savanna are all creations of the glacial melt waters. The tributary rivers continue to bring sand and sediment into the Mississippi and fill up the channel. There are large deposits of “spoil” all up and down the river.

A delta of prairies and islands was created wherever the tributary rivers emptied into the mainstream of the Mississippi. These became prairies and bottomland forests, the rich abode of bison, elk, deer, turkeys and many other creatures. Humans have chosen these same delta areas, as well as the terraces, for village sites, burial grounds and landings in the river transportation system over the ages. They have become modern town sites, on the ancient terraces left forty feet or more above the modern river bed or areas walled off from the river's influence by levees.

RE 1.1 City limits of Wabasha, Minnesota.

WABASHA, MINNESOTA – MILE 2.1

The city of Wabasha sits on the river's edge opposite the Nelson-Trevino Bottoms. Stop for a meal at Slippery's, the home of the movies “Grumpy Old Men” and “Grumpier Old Men.” You can watch the movies – they play continuously in the restaurant-and the eagles across the main channel in the bottoms across the river. Wabasha sits at the head of Wabasha prairie; several square miles of sand dunes deposited by the departing glaciers over the millennium.

WA 0.2 Dredge spoils on left side of road. These huge sand piles are found all along this part of the Refuge. They result from the need to continually dredge the main channel. The Corps of Engineers is responsible for keeping it 9 feet deep so that the Upper Mississippi River is navigable for towboats and barges, which also helps out the pleasure craft owners who use the river in large numbers.

WA 0.9 Wabasha County 30 enters from the right, continuing on into Wabasha.

SIDE TRIP: WABASHA AND THE NATIONAL EAGLE CENTER (W)

NATIONAL EAGLE CENTER

You can meet Harriet, Angel and Columbia, three permanently disabled eagles who are resident at the Center. The National Eagle Center occupies a temporary visitor's center at 152 Main Street. There is a viewing platform at the river. The Center has been identified as one of the interpretive centers along the Great River Road. They have also been named "Best of Road" by the editors of Rand McNally.

American Bald Eagles are observable during the entire road trip around the Upper Mississippi River Refuges. The National Eagle Center is a good place to stop, early in your trip, to learn more about our national symbol—and meet them face-to-face! The return of the Bald Eagles is a success story for the Refuge. In 1972 there was only one nesting pair. Today, over 120 pairs call the Refuge home. Banning the use of DDT is probably the reason; plus the Refuges provides 50,000 acres of bottomland forest to stake out a nest.

W 3.0 Take Wabasha Cty 30 into Wabasha.

W 4.0 Wabasha Cty 60 at four-way stop. Turn left on Pembroke Avenue to the river.

W 4.4 Eagle Watch platform. Observe and photograph from the car or on the deck. Volunteers are on deck from Mid-November through March.

W 4.5 Turn around and return one block to Main Street. Turn right on Main Street to Eagle Center's temporary quarters. There are three live but disabled Bald Eagles in the Center. There are volunteers here to answer questions year round. There is a display giving the background on the resurgence of the Eagles, as well as pamphlets, books and various eagle-type souvenirs.

W 5.0 Take two left turns around the block turning right (south) on to Pembroke and return to junction of highways 30 and 60 at four-way stop.

W 5.6 Return to Mn Hwy 61 South.

RETURN TO HWY 61 SOUTH LOG

SIDE TRIP: UPPER SAND PRAIRIE AREA (USP)

These sand prairie areas up and down the river are terrace remnants of when the floodplain was some fifty feet higher than it is today. These shelves above the current backwaters created their own unique, drier, environment. These are part of the Mankato Terrace running from south of the Minneapolis through Hastings, Red Wing, and Wabasha and all the way to Prairie du Chien.

UPS 0.0 Turn left on Hwy 30 at the four-way stop with Hwy 60.

UPS 2.9 Turn left on Hwy 24. Birding is good in spring and fall along this road.

USP 3.8 Prairie and pond restoration by the Winona District Refuge on right. This area has been converted from a farm field back to natural prairie. It has been planted to native

wildflowers after new ponds were dug for nesting ducks and amphibians. This is an excellent birding and hiking area.

USP 4.0 Wilcox Landing on the left is maintained by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). There is boating access to the river through the slough.

USP 5.0. Hwy 76 to Teepeeota Point to the left. This is a residential area along the river. There is no public access to the river and viewing is difficult between the houses.

USP 6.0 Peterson Lake boat landing provides viewing and access to this closed to hunting area. Tundra swans and diving ducks are plentiful here in the fall. Cars and trailers can be parked above the boat landing with connecting short stairs.

USP 6.8 Pioneer Campsite is a private facility serving the area.

USP 7.0 Stay left, turning off of Hwy 24, and follow river access signs.

USP 7.3 Access to the Lock and Dam #4 dike from this small parking lot on the left. There is a short, steep, graveled trail down to the levee. You can walk across to the dam with Peterson Lake open to your left and the Finger Lakes to the right. Peterson Lake is closed to duck hunting so large numbers of migratory waterfowl congregate in this area in the fall.

USP 7.6 Finger Lakes Pioneer Access is a complete boat launching area with facilities. It provides access to the boating, birding and hunting below L & D 4.

USP 8.2 Turn back towards Hwy 24, bearing left at Pioneer Camping to intersection with Hwy 24. Turn left on Hwy 24.

USP 10.8 Turn left at intersection with Hwy 30, going south.

USP 11.5 End at intersection with Mn Hwy 61 South. Continue on Hwy 61 south.

RETURN TO HWY 61 SOUTH LOG

LOCK AND DAM 4 – WISCONSIN SIDE

WA 1.8 Coffee Mill Ski area on right. Cty 60 East and West cross Mn 61 south.

WA 5.9 County Road 81 on the right.

WA 6.9 City limits of Kellogg, Minnesota.

KELLOGG, MINNESOTA – 9.0

The area along the River from Wabasha to La Crescent, near the Iowa border, is one of bluffs which look like huge battleships moored along the Mississippi. At places they recede back into the distance like a series of paper cutouts. In the spring they are pastels of bursting buds; in the summer they are green with oaks and maples and birch; in the fall they are russet ridges of piled leaves, with bright red sumac harkening to the holidays; in winter they stand like bristles on the back of a porcupine. Add the boats on the river, the people camped on the sandbars, the tows with barges being pushed up or down the river and you have a classic view of the Mississippi River.

KE 0.0 The community of Kellogg is on the left. There is a rest stop on the right. Lark Toys is also to the right and then a left along 61 on a service road. Lark Toys is the result of a creative genius artist. It has grown over the years from a small carving shop, with

shipping world wide, into a complex which during full operation during the summer months, includes an ice cream parlor, a sandwich shop, a shop with old fashioned toys, a miniature golf course with large rocks spewing colored water, and a carousel with fantastical hand carved creatures. The carousel can be ridden by adults as well as children. The shops are all together with the carousel in a small, enclosed mall.

KE 0.7 Cty 42 on left.

SIDE TRIP: LOWER SAND PRAIRIE (LSP)

LSP 0.0 Cty 48 on left off of Mn 61 South.

LSP 0.2 Right on Cty 84

LSP 3.7 Army Corps of Engineers dredge spoils rehabilitation site. It has been planted in native prairie. No trespassing.

LSP 4.7 Kellogg-Weaver Dunes access on right. There is a very small gravel parking area. The entire area is open for non-motorized use. Sand prairie dominates with some small clusters of trees.

LSP 4.8 McCarthy Lake State Wildlife Management Area access road. It is an excellent area to observe prairie plants and wildlife throughout the year.

LSP 6.5 Entrance to the Weaver Dunes Preserve of the Nature Conservancy. There is a resident manager just up the driveway on the left. Hiking, birding and observation of special prairie plants is excellent at this site.

WEAVER DUNES SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL AREA

The Weaver Dunes, according to the American Museum of Natural History, is an important breeding place for the endangered Blanding's turtle. In June, the females travel from wetland breeding grounds to the preserve's sand prairie areas to lay their eggs. The Minnesota DNR has posted warnings on the roads to minimize the number of turtles killed by passing cars

In this area where the sand dunes top 30 feet, grow plants such as little bluestem and junegrass, sea-beach needlegrass, purple sand-grass, beach-heather, sand milkweed, wild indigo, goat's rue and cliff goldenrod. The preserve is one of the few places where the rare rough-seeded flamethrower can be viewed. It opens for only three hours a day beginning in the late afternoon.

These sand covered terraces contain large areas of blowouts and deflation basins created by the winds blowing off of the retreating glaciers some 10,000+ years ago. The area combines a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Scientific and Natural Area, a Nature Conservancy refuge of some 600-plus acres, an Army Corps of Engineers reclamation area with portions of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR.

The gray clay deposits found at various depths in these terraces is from Glacial Lake Agassiz and the red clay has been washed out from Glacial Lake Duluth.

LSP 6.8 Fish and Wildlife access to Half Moon Lake on the Mississippi River is on the left for motorboats and canoes. There is also a fishing platform.

LSP 7.6 Water access to McCarthy Lake on the right. The lake area is open to hunting in season.

LSP 8.3 Retrieving water dog training area (private) on the left, including several small ponds.

LSP 8.5 End at intersection with Mn 61 South.

RETURN TO MN 61 SOUTH LOG

KE 0.7 Continuing on Mn 61 South at Hwy 42.

KE 3.7 Snake Creek Trail access turn off on right. There are two sections. In the first section there is a grassy hiking trail which goes up and around the bluffs on the west side of Hwy 61. It is used for cross-country skiing in the winter and is open for hunting of large and small game in the appropriate season. The second section, a mile or so down the road on the left, has a large graveled parking area, picnic tables and toilet. There is fishing access to Snake Creek, a trout stream managed by the Minnesota DNR. There are grassy hiking trails which take you into the surrounding bluff lands.

KE 4.2 A section of the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest is on the right. Watch for the small caramel signs. These lands are open for hiking, birding, fishing and hunting. The Forest covers large portions of Southern Minnesota. A map from the Minnesota DNR is available to locate and access these various tracts (check e-mail addresses at the end of the book).

KE 5.6 Hwy 14 on left. Sand Prairie access road.

KE 6.6 Weaver Bottoms on the left. Watch for varieties of waterfowl along here.

KE 7.1 Fish and Wildlife boat access to Weaver Bottoms is on the left across the railroad tracks. Boat launching and parking is available here with tables and toilets. The hunting and trapping area is north from the landing. A major portion of the Weaver Bottoms to the right is closed to hunting ducks during the duck hunting season.

KE 7.2 Highway 74 to the right goes to the Whitewater State Wildlife Management area. There are ponds along the Whitewater River for waterfowl, upland trails to hike, a visitors center with regular programming, a camping and swimming area and cabins to rent.

KE 7.7 Whitewater River.

KE 8.0 Trout Valley Trail access. There is hiking, birding, trout fishing and cross country skiing. This area is open to hunting.

KE 10.4 Minneiska city limits.

MINNEISKA, MINNESOTA – 19.4

MI 0.0 The small community of Minneiska. There is a mural depicting the river and its wildlife on the retaining wall on the right.

MI 0.4 There is river access to the right. Small boats can be launched into the creek which flows under the highway and under the railroad tracks.

MI 2.6 John A. Latsch State Park on the right. There is an unimproved hiking trail up to the top of the bluff. There are picnic tables in the park. The terrain is very rough outside the picnic area.

MI 3.1 Another section of John A. Latsch State Park on the right. There is a road to turn off into and then it turns into an unimproved hiking trail into the surrounding bluffs.

LOCK AND DAM 5

MI 4.3 The entrance to Lock and Dam 5 is to the left across the highway. The Lock is open to the public for observing the towboats and barges as they lock through.

MI 4.7 Bass Camp is to the left. There is a traffic island left turn. This is a famous walleye and sauger fishing camp.

MI 9.4 Minnesota City turn on left.

SIDE TRIP: PRAIRIE ISLAND , WINONA DISTRICT OFFICE AND UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE AND FISH REFUGE COMPLEX OFFICES (PI)

PI 0.0 Turn left at Minnesota City sign from center turn island onto Bridge Street.

PI 0.6 Turn left on Wenonah Road.

PI 1.0 Left on Harbor Drive, otherwise called the Prairie Island Dike Road.

PI 1.3 The gravel parking on the left on the curve is Refuge property. There is walking access to the bottoms on a rough trail. Harbor Drive continues along the major dike protecting Winona from floodwaters. Note the high water marker on the left. This is an excellent place for bird watching. Park the car along the side of the road and walk, or spot from the car.

PI 1.9 Minnesota City Boat Club on the left.

PI 2.4 Verchota Landing, Winona District Refuge, is on the left. The landing provides boat and canoe access to Straight Slough. An 11.2 mile canoe and kayak trail is planned for the summer of 2005. There is also boat access to the Polander Lake Closed Area (during duck hunting). Hunting and fishing is allowed south of the Thorpe Wildlife Management Area maintained by the Minnesota DNR at the head of Straight Slough below Bass Camp.

LOCK AND DAM 5A – WISCONSIN SIDE

PI 4.3 McNally Landing on the left provides access to the Polander Lake area as well. The lake is being rehabilitated. New islands have been built and planted with trees and prairie grasses.

PI 4.4 There is prairie restoration on the right and left. Birding, dog walking, cross-country skiing is permitted in the area. Motorized vehicles and hunting are prohibited. The Winona District and City of Winona cooperate in managing this area.

PI 4.5 Prairie Island Public Boat Ramp, City of Winona. The ramp, on the left, provides access to the back channel below the spillway draining Polander Lake. It

provides access to Blackbird Slough across the channel and below the lake. There is a large area for parking trucks and trailers, children's play area, shelter and picnic area.

PI 4.8 Prairie Island Campground on left. The campground is leased from the City of Winona. Campsites are along the back channel of the river.

PI 4.9 Prairie Island Park on right. There is a Deer Park with white tailed deer and turkeys, a mile long nature trail (excellent for spring warblers), picnic tables and playground, operated by the City of Winona.

PI 6.1 Turn left at Riverview Drive where the Prairie Island dike road meets the main dike road leading into Winona. The road passes through a major grain loading and barge fleeting area constituting the Port of Winona. A major maritime museum including a retired Corps of Engineers dredge is planned for this area within the next year. There are boathouses on the left just beyond the grain terminal. There are others across the river under the Wisconsin bridge. The bridge to Wisconsin is immediately ahead (and almost overhead) down river.

PI 7.6 Riverview Drive bears right and becomes Huff Street where it leaves the dike and turns toward the bluffs.

OFFICES OF THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE AND FISH REFUGE (HEADQUARTERS AND WINONA DISTRICT)

PI 7.8 4th street to the left goes to the Wisconsin bridge approach. Three blocks on the left is the Winona County Historical Society in the old Armory Building. There are excellent photos and displays of the lumber and milling which dominated the river near the turn of the 20th century. Five blocks along 4th street is the Exchange Building on the corner of 4th and Center. The Headquarters of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR is on the first floor. The offices of the Winona District of the Refuge are on the second floor. Visitor's information and trapping permits are available in these two offices.

PI 8.1 Winona State University is on the left. All of the seventy-some species of trees found in Minnesota have been planted on the campus grounds. Check with the main campus office in Somson Hall for an illustrated book and a campus tour. Winona State has a Center for Mississippi River Studies (interdisciplinary), a Large Rivers Study Center (biology), and a Great River Review (English). The library, which serves the region, has an elaborate symbolization of the Mississippi River inlaid in its entrance floor. The lobby of the library contains a large display case of Mississippi River pearl jewelry.

PI 8.6 Causeway over Lake Winona.

PI 8.8 Winona Visitor's Center on left at end of causeway, which is open May-October. There is information on biking and hiking trails, bird watching and other local activities. The paved walking trail around Lake Winona, used for walking, bicycling, roller blading and fishing access, is about five miles long. Dogs can be walked on the smaller lake. There are pavilions, benches, picnic tables and a range of other facilities in the park.

PI 8.9 Mn 61 south at the stop light. Turn left, going down river.

RETURN TO MN 61 SOUTH LOG

MI 10.0 Cty 23 to Bronk Tract recreation area on right. There is hiking, hill climbing with bikes and ATVs, and hunting.

MI 11.3 City of Goodview, Minnesota.

MI 14.0 Winona, Minnesota city limits. Jct with Hwy 14 to Rochester, Minnesota.

WINONA, MINNESOTA – 33.4

WI 0.0 City limits.

As cities go along this stretch of the river, Winona, with its sister city, Minnesota City, is a metropolis. It's built on what was once an island. Lake Winona, just to the left off of highway 61, is actually the old back channel around the island. The Winona District Office and Headquarters of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR are located downtown in the Exchange Building. Pool maps, birding trail maps, canoe routes, access landings and much more information is available at these two offices. Cross the causeway and drive down to the riverfront; walk around the reconstructed Wilke Riverboat on the Levee. If you want access to the bottoms, cross over the bridge towards Wisconsin or drive a little up river to Prairie Island where there is a public campground on the back channel as well as both a city and a Refuge boat landing. There is canoe and boat access to Blackbird slough and the main channel. Across the road are a birding trail and a deer park. Access points to the Mississippi River, the bottoms and the bluffs abound in and around Winona.

The **Bob Pohl** chapter of Friends of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges is located here. Headquarters or District staff can put you in contact with the local president and officers. The chapter sponsors an annual photo contest, a Kids Fishing Day, an International Migratory Bird Day celebration and a Swan Watch. Local members participate in prairie replanting, island tree planting, landing clean-ups, bird banding, seed collection and many other activities which help maintain and develop the Refuge.

WI 2.2 Huff Street at the causeway over Lake Winona. Lake Winona, the Visitors Center and downtown Winona are to the left at the stop light. Garvin Heights Road is accessible by taking a right and then a left onto Lake Boulevard and then a right on Garvin Heights to the overlook. Turn left at the top of the bluff and follow the road out to the overlook parking lot. It is a short walk on a paved sidewalk to a view from over 500 feet up. There is a stunning view of the community of Winona, Lake Winona, the Mississippi River, the back waters and the bluffs across the river in Wisconsin. In the fall, hawks and eagles glide past observers stationed on Garvin Heights.

WI 3.8 Hwy 43 to I-90 on right at traffic light. The towering bluff remnant on the right above is Sugarloaf, a Winona landmark. It's odd shape is the result of rock quarrying early in Winona's history. Its top, as it now stands, is almost 700 feet above the Mississippi.

WI 6.8 Homer, Minnesota City limits.

HOMER, MINNESOTA – 40.2

HO 0.0 Homer, Minnesota and the Bunnell House on the right. The house is the earliest built in the Winona area; it is run by the Winona County Historical Society. Tours are by request at the Historical Society offices in the Armory Building in downtown Winona.

HO 0.5 Turn left across highway and railroad tracks to Homer Landing. The access to the river is between two homes along the riverbank. There are excellent views of the sand islands along the main channel in this stretch. These islands are covered with boats and people on warm summer days.

HO 2.3 Eagles' nest on left on island.

HO 2.4 A view of Trempealeau Mountain, adjacent to Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge, south across the river. The mountain is in Perrot State Park.

HO 2.9 Winona KOA and Riverside Park.

HO 4.7 There is a Fish and Wildlife Interpretive sign on the left across the median. General information is provided about the formation of the Upper Mississippi River. The view across and up the river is of Trempealeau Mountain in Perrot State Park. The bluffs at Trempealeau, directly across the river, are an excellent example of Jordan Sandstone. It is composed of medium to coarse-grained quartz, turned to yellow, brown or orange by oxidation. It can be up to 175 feet thick along this stretch of the Mississippi.

HO 5.2 La Moille, means "the mill" in French. The Pickwick Historic Mill is to the right on County 7 about five miles. The restored mill illustrates how the "fall line" of streams created by the bluffs was used to grind wheat in the early settlement days. This was a typical means of generating power all over the world at one time. Rock shelters were discovered in this area dating back to the Hopewell Culture 2,000 years ago. Details of the glyphs of birds, buffalo, fish and other symbols can be seen in the Winona County Historical Museum in Winona.

HO 5.6 Trout Creek on right.

HO 6.4 Lock and Dam #6 dike across highway. There is no access due to the restrictions on crossing the Canadian Pacific Railroad tracks.

LOCK & DAM 6 – WISCONSIN SIDE

LA CROSSE DISTRICT – UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE AND FISH REFUGE (POOLS 7 & 8)

The La Crosse District of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR manages 42,000 acres in pools 7 and 8, and receives over one million visitors per year. The attraction is the scenic river area with its broad pools, islands and braided channels, lined by bluffs several hundred feet high. The deltas of the Black and Root rivers join the Mississippi providing abundant habitat for large numbers of canvasback ducks and other waterfowl, tundra swans, songbirds and raptors.

The seven-person staff, located in one of the largest metropolitan areas along the Refuge, works hand-in-hand with a wide variety of local, state and federal government organizations, along with many private organizations to protect and preserve one of America's premier fish and wildlife areas. The staff works to provide interpretation, environmental education and wildlife-dependent recreational public use opportunities. Included are hiking, boating, camping, hunting, trapping, fishing (commercial and

recreational), and environmental education. The District maintains four observation decks, several landings and two canoe trails. The office in Onalaska (see directions in the La Crosse side trip log) has wildlife displays, visitor information, and a bookstore.

There are a number of major habitat improvement projects in the District such as using pumps to bring water from the River to keep backwaters habitat suitable for fish and wildlife throughout the year. Pool 8 has been the subject of a major island rehabilitation and enhancement project. Island acreage in Pool 8 had been reduced by 80% since the building of the 9-foot channel in 1939. Thirty-three acres in two islands were restored by 1989 and twenty-six acres across from Stoddard, Wisconsin by 1999. These islands, plus additional seed islands, help protect large habitat areas on the river.

Upper Halfway Creek was converted from farmland to actively managed wildlife land when the lock and dam system was built. The Upper Halfway Creek Project, in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Geological Survey, is being monitored to determine the factors which make the biological activity of wetlands effective for the retention and recycling of nutrients and sediments.

HO 7.8 Scenic overlook on right. Richmond and Pigeon Islands are below and downriver respectively. The view across is into the Long Lakes area which has the Long Lakes Canoe Trail (accessible from the opposite shore).

HO 8.0 Right turn off of Hwy 61 to the Great River Bluffs State Park. The park has hiking, cross country skiing, camping and picnicking on the bluff tops. The overlook just off the picnic grounds is the tallest on the Upper Mississippi at 631 feet above the surface of the Mississippi. There is habitat for the rare Henslow sparrow.

HO 11.0 There is an exit on the right to a State of Minnesota Bicycle Park. The park is a camping site for cyclists using Hwy 61. Great River Bluffs State Park is a great place to pull off the road and view the expanse of the river. There are excellent hiking trails along the tops of the bluffs and with a view across to Lock and Dam 6, Trempealeau village and Big Marsh Lake.

HO 12.9 Right hand exit to Dakota. Dakota Landing is along the river. This is also the second exit for the Great River Bluffs State Park. This exit also goes to I-90 West.

HO 13.6 Merge with I-90 E.

HO 15.4 Right side exit A to Dresbach. There is a park along the river with a boat landing and swimming beach.

HO 15.8 Right side exit B to Dresbach.

LOCK AND DAM 7

HO 18.2 Take exit on right to La Crescent on Hwys 14 and 61. I-90 continues east across the river with exits to Onalaska and La Crosse, Wisconsin. There is no access to Lock and Dam 7 going south on I-90. Access to the Lock and Dam, the Minnesota Information Center, Corps of Engineers Museum, the Bill Pohl Fishing Float, bank fishing by the Lock, and the Upper and Lower I-90 Boat Landings, is by turning around in La Crescent, returning north on Hwy 61. Hwy 61 will take you back under I-90. Then turn right at the stop sign into the Lock and Dam area.

HO 19.4 Shoe tree on left.

HO 20.2 La Crescent

LA CRESCENT, MINNESOTA – 62.5

La Crescent is the apple capital of this part of the river. Take scenic Hiawatha Apple Blossom Drive and view Lake Onalaska from the top of the second highest bluff along the river at just over 600 feet. Stop and purchase local produce from roadside stands. You leave highway 61 for 26 south at this point, continuing on down the west side of the Mississippi.

Below La Crescent, Hwy 26 allows for views of the backwaters of the river. In season the sloughs are filled with ducks, mergansers, tundra swans and eagles. There are several turn-outs along this stretch, some with platforms for viewing the wildlife. Here the road will run under the wall or palisades of the bluffs on both sides of the narrowed river bottom.

LA 0.4 Turn right here if you intend to take the Hiawatha Apple Blossom Trail. The Trail provides a tour of the apple orchards for which La Crescent is famous.

LA 0.7 Hwys 14, 61 and 16 E go to La Crosse at this intersection. Stay on Hwy 16 W.

LA 3.1 Take Hwy 26 S on the left from the center turn lane. Hwy 16 goes west here; up the Root River to Hokah, Houston, Rushford and Lanesboro. The Root River State Trail begins in Houston, which also has a delightful nature center where the trail starts (or ends) with picnic tables and bicycle trail-oriented sculpture. The trail goes all the way up the Root River past Lanesboro, branching off down to Harmony, in Amish Country.

These are paved trails following old railroad lines (for the most part), and do not involve biking highway edges. Bike rentals are available in Rushford and Lanesboro as well as other places along the trail.

LA 4.2 Crossing the Root River which drains a very large area of Southeastern Minnesota and Northeastern Iowa. The Oneota Indians moved off the river and up into this area with the early pressures from Eastern tribes as European immigrants pushed west. The river was a transportation highway for the early farmers who plowed and planted the prairies. The Root River has formed the bottomlands you see as you go down the river. The large stick and mud piles are beaver houses; the smaller ones are muskrat houses.

LA 8.0 Turnout on left for overview.

LA 8.6 Lawrence Lake Marina and Boat Landing on the left. Large piles of sand dredged from the channel to keep it at the minimum 9 feet can be seen across the channel.

LA 9.5 Overview on left across the highway.

LA 10.1 Brownsville, Minnesota

BROWNSVILLE, MINNESOTA – 72.6

Brownsville is nicely positioned in the middle of pool 8. The boat landing at Wildcat Park provides access to the middle of pool. Boaters have a run of several miles up or down the main channel without having to lock through into another pool. There is also ample off-channel boating, including access to the La Crosse, Wisconsin parks, marinas and other attractions, the Goose Island County Park Complex across the river, Stoddard's boat landing and the harbor at Genoa. Fishing is excellent year around, with

Lawrence Lake a popular ice fishing area. Thousands of Tundra Swans have been laying over on this section of the river in the fall, making it an attractive viewing area.

BR 0.8 Wildcat Park and Lower Wildcat Landing are to the left on the river.

BR 3.7 Turn to a section of the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest on the right.

BR 4.7 On the left is the Brownsville Overlook. The view is into the 6,461 acres of the Wisconsin Islands closed area. There are binoculars and a viewing platform. The area is full of waterfowl during the spring and fall migrations. There is a kiosk with information on the Upper Mississippi River NF&WR. Look for eagles overhead or perched in trees or on stumps near the water.

BR 5.5 Turnout on left. No improvements.

BR 6.7 Reno Landing and Walk down. Access is to the Reno Bottoms Research Natural Area. These are areas in the Refuge which have been left, as much as possible, without active intervention in their ecology.

BR 6.8 Reno, Minnesota city limits.

RENO, MINNESOTA – 79.4

RE 0.2 Reno Recreation Area. The state forest is on the right.

LOCK AND DAM 8 – WISCONSIN SIDE

MCGREGOR DISTRICT-UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE & FISH REFUGE (POOLS 9, 10 & 11)

The McGregor District of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR covers 97 miles and 78,224 acres on the Mississippi River between Genoa, Wisconsin and Dubuque, Iowa. It is a unique part of the Refuge because large parts of it are not accessible by road. The purpose of the Refuge is to preserve and restore the river floodplain for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people. It also provides opportunities for hunting, fishing, boating, picnicking, canoeing, wildlife observation and hiking. Nearly half of the Canvasback Duck population of the North American continent passes through the Refuge during spring and fall migrations. Tundra Swans stop and replenish their energy reserves in the fall before continuing on to their Chesapeake Bay wintering area. There are more than 70 active eagle nests in the District.

The Visitor's Center and District Office is located between McGregor, Iowa and Marquette, Iowa.

DRIFTLESS AREA REFUGE-UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE & FISH REFUGE

The uniqueness of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR is its location in the so called "Driftless" area of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois and Iowa. This special area, the remnant of sedimentary lake deposits over millions of years, not covered by the last

glaciers (hence the term “driftless” or an area without the sand and other debris off the melting glaciers), also left behind the cold air slopes containing a tiny rare Pleistocene snail and a flower, the Northern monkshood. The Driftless Area Refuge has the responsibility of conserving these rare remnants, along with some balsam fir and yellow birch which normally appear much farther north on the continent. There are 775 acres spread around four counties in the northeast corner of Iowa. Visits to these scattered sites can be arranged at the Visitor’s Center in McGregor. There is an excellent exhibit of these rare habitats at the Center. Other cold air slopes accessible to the public can be found at Bixby State Preserve in Clayton County, Iowa, and along the Riverside Trail below the bluffs of Phelps Park in Decorah, Iowa.

RE 4.7 Millstone Landing turn on the left with boat access to a large bottomlands area, including Ice Haul Slough.

RE 5.8 Visgers Boat Landing. There is a accessible pier. The area just south of the landing is the 1.112-acre Pool Slough which is closed to all access during waterfowl hunting season.

RE 7.0 Overlook on left with information kiosk for the McGregor District.

RE 7.3 New Albin, Iowa city limits.

NEW ALBIN, IOWA – 86.7

NE 0.0 New Albin, Iowa. There is a turnout on the right to an historical marker describing the area.

NE 0.2 There is a small rest area on the north end of New Albin with a covered shelter and facilities.

NE 0.4 New Albin Landing is to the left through town. It is two miles through the bottoms to the landing. To the left, or north, is the Pool Slough Closed Area. This is a good road for birding. The landing on the river has an accessible fishing pier and facilities.

NE 0.9 Eitzen and Caledonia are on Hwy 76 to the right.

NE 2.5 Upper Iowa River. There is parking and a canoe launch on the south side of the river.

NE 3.5 Artesian well on the right in barnyard.

NE 4.0 Fish Farm Mounds State Preserve on the right. There is a parking lot with facilities and tables. There is a short trail up to the Indian mounds.

NE 7.1 Gravel turnout on the right.

NE 9.2 Turnout on the left.

NE 10.5 Lansing, Iowa city limits.

LANSING, IOWA – 97.2

Crossing the border into Iowa brings you into “Little Switzerland”. The river fills the space between the bluffs, which jut steeply up from the highway and the railroad tracks. The Reno Bottoms are a great duck hunting and bird watching area. It is rivaled by the many first class trout streams running into the river and the effigy mounds created by the Native Americans. Lansing is a truly picturesque old river town with beautifully

restored limestone homes and some active B&Bs. A drive to the park and a short walk to the overlook at the top of Mt. Hosmer, at 380 feet, provides a view of the bridge and the backwaters. Continue on south on scenic highway X52 as the road leaves the river and climbs to the top of the bluffs before dropping back down to Harper's Ferry. There is a small river history museum along the river on the way out of Lansing. There are houseboats to rent at S&S at the edge of town for those curious folks who want to see what it all looks like from the river!

If you want to return up the river or change sides, the Black Hawk Bridge and causeway at Lansing will do the trick. It goes down through the bottoms to the Wisconsin side. There are good viewing sites just across the bridge where you can pull off the road and watch wildlife.

LA 0.0 Lansing, Iowa city limits.

LA 0.5 Lansing Marina and boat landing.

LA 0.8 Black Hawk bridge to Wisconsin to the left on Hwy 82.

SIDE TRIP: BLACK HAWK BRIDGE THROUGH BOTTOMS TO WISCONSIN (BB)

BB 0.0 Left turn onto Hwy 82 and Black Hawk bridge to Wisconsin.

BB 0.4 Dredge spoils on bank at right side across bridge.

BB 0.5 Big Slough Landing on right with parking lot. There is an accessible boat transfer station, i.e., handicapped persons can be helped into a boat.

BB 2.3 Winneshiek Slough Landing on left.

BB 2.5 Junction Hwy 35 north and 82 east.

RETURN TO HIGHWAY

LA 1.0 Continue to the left at Main street, following Hwy 26. Go one block and turn right on Front Street going south to X42 and X52. Hwy 9 is to the right at Main Street, going west to Churchtown and Waukon. Hosmer Park and overlook are also to the right. Go about four blocks and follow the sign to the right and up the street. The road to the top is very steep with sharp curves. There is a vehicle turnout and overlook on the right about two-thirds of the way up. There is a park on the top of the bluff with a picnic shelter, tables, facilities and an overlook with binoculars. The park is named for a sculptress who won a race to the top of the bluff from a steamboat docked at Lansing in 1851. The view is of the Lansing Marina, the Black Hawk Bridge, the main channel, Big Slough directly below, Winneshiek Slough across, Lake Winneshiek down river and Lansing Big Lake up river.

LA 1.1 Red Geranium Gifts is lodged in an old mill on the left side of the street. Some of the working equipment of the mill can be seen inside the store. Next to it is a small river museum, but its hours are uncertain. Lansing has restaurants, art shops with local artists, an iron works, second hand shops and what used to be called a "dime store" to peruse. Park and walk along Main street. Check out the Mississippi River Explorer River Tours which dock next to The River's Edge restaurant.

LA 1.3 A small strip park with tables is on the left side of the road, along the river.

LA 1.7 S & S Rentals is on the left. Houseboats for river trips are available. To the right on X42 two tenths of a mile is the Village Creek Boat Landing maintained by the McGregor District of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR. There are three ramps into the creek, a large parking lot and an information kiosk where you can learn about fishing with the appropriate bait.

LA 1.9 Stay on X52 heading south to Heytman's Landing and Harper's Ferry.

LA 4.4 Alliant Power Plant to the left. There is a public access area with parking just to the left as you turn in towards the plant. At this point X52 leaves the river, and like several sections of the road from here south, takes a long, winding road to the top and then down again to the river.

LA 7.0 Heytman's Landing to the left. This will take you back down to the river. It is primarily a grain loading area. There is boat access to the river.

LA 9.4 Historic Wexford Church and cemetery.

LOCK AND DAM 9 – WISCONSIN SIDE OF MISSISSIPPI RIVER

LA 12.4 X52 drops back down to the river valley at Lock and Dam 9. Red Oak Road is to the left and provides access to the dike. There is a small graveled parking lot just off the road to the left. From there you can walk across to the lock and dam which is on the Wisconsin side of the river. This is another great birding area. This is also the beginning of Pool 10 (the waters backed up by Lock and Dam 10).

LA 12.5 Mohn Fish Market on right. Catfish and other local species can be purchased.

LA 14.7 Entering Harper's Ferry.

HARPER'S FERRY, IOWA – 111.9

HA 0.0 Harper's Ferry, Iowa city limits.

HA 0.5 Stop sign. X52 skirts the north edge of Harper's Ferry. Harper's Ferry Landing, Boardman's Marina, Delphey Brothers Marina and End of the Line Marina are to the left on Harper's Slough. Change to Hwy 364 at the four-way stop.

HA 0.6 Rest stop with facilities and a covered picnic area on the right. From the shelter you look up to the beginning of the beautiful limestone palisades which line the highway to the top of the bluff.

HA 2.5 Harper's Slough to the left. There is a public use area with an Iowa State fishing access.

HA 3.8 Noble's Island Public Use area on the left. It has facilities on the small island with grassy open area. There is a boat landing as well as a dike and river's edge to hike.

HA 4.1 Waukon Junction. Continue up Hwy 364 to the top of the bluff.

HA 5.7 Luster Heights Facility is a bluff top Wildlife Management Area. It is one of the units of the Yellow River State Forest Wildlife Management Area under the supervision of the State of Iowa. There are several inland units accessible from Harper's Ferry or along Hwy 364. The trip to the bluff tops is through heavily grazed hillsides.

Luster Heights provides a view of the distant river gorge off to the left. Farms stretch to the horizon over rolling hills to the right. As the road descends again to the river valley it runs through maple forest with clear understory – no brush.

HA 6.8 Junction with Hwy 76 north and south. Turn to the left on Hwy 76 south. There is a wild game farm on the right.

HA 7.4 Scenic View Ranch on the right. The view from the top of the bluffs, or prairies, is spectacular.

HA 10.0 Effigy Mounds National Monument Visitor's Center on the left.

EFFIGY MOUNDS NATIONAL MONUMENT

Indian mounds abound in this part of the Upper Mississippi. Thousands of conical, linear and effigy mounds are found in the surrounding counties. The conical and linear mounds are believed to have been built in the Hopewell period some 2,000 years ago. The effigy mounds are more recent; they are thought to have been built between 600 and 1300 A.D. Effigy Mounds National Monument, with some of the largest effigy mounds in the Midwest, is worth a visit. There is no admission fee. There is a small replica of the mounds area in the Visitor's Center. The bookstore has an excellent selection of books about the Native Americans who lived in the area for centuries. There is a display area and a small theater. Regularly scheduled guided tours by Effigy Mounds staff are an outstanding feature. The tours involve walking a long, sloping, gravel trail with switch backs to the top of the bluff to view the mounds. The Mississippi River, islands, backwaters and Prairie du Chien in Wisconsin can be viewed from the 409 foot high lookout. There is a shorter trail across the highway leading to the March Bear Mounds. The Sny Magill unit is several miles down the road. That area along the river, has literally hundreds of small mounds. Continue on Hwy 76 south.

HA 10.4 Yellow River Boat Access on the left.

HA 10.5 Marching Bear Trail. There is a small parking lot, or the trail can be reached via a wooden walk way from the Visitor's Center.

HA 11.1 Yellow River Boat Access. There is access to the Effigy Mounds South Unit and the Marching Bear Effigies. There are tables along the river.

HA 11.4 Historical Marker at far end of park. There are tables and a small shelter.

HA 13.3 Marquette, Iowa.

MARQUETTE, IOWA – 125.2

At Marquette, another bridge over the Mississippi leads to Prairie du Chien on the Wisconsin side. Stop at the Isle of Capri if you are in the mood for a little riverboat gambling.

MA 0.0 Marquette, Iowa city limits.

MA 0.1 Stop sign in Marquette. Turn left on First Street. Go straight to McGregor on Hwy 18. The Marquette City Ramp and the Bridgeview Marina are on the left along the river.

MA 0.2 The road passes under the bridge to Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. The Sturgeon Slough Canoe Launch and the Sturgeon Slough Hiking Trail are accessible from Hwy 18 through the bottoms to the Wisconsin side of the river.

MA 0.3 Isle of Capri riverboat casino on the right The road here is closely wedged between the railroad tracks along the river on the left and the palisades of the bluffs on the right.

MA 0.6 McGregor city limits

MCGREGOR, IOWA – 125.8

McGregor is a great place to look for antiques in the little shops along its restored main street. Otherwise drive over to Spook Cave and take a two-mile boat trip on an underground river.

MC 0.0 McGregor, Iowa city limits.

MC 0.4 McGregor District and Driftless Area NWR Offices and Visitor's Center are on the right. The space for the parking lot and the buildings are literally carved out of the wall of the bluff at the edge of the highway. Slow down to enter.

There is a viewing platform adjacent to the parking lot. There is also a bat cave in the side of the solid rock bluff.

MC 0.9 Turn to the right up Main Street in McGregor.

MC 1.1 Continue on up Main street as it changes to 3rd Street.

MC 1.5 Go left on X56 at the junction with Hwy18. 3rd Street stops at the steps of the church. You must turn left or right.

MC 1.6 Go one block left and then right up the narrow coulee to the top of the bluff on X56.

MC 3.3 At the top of the bluff there is a Pike's Peak Park Trail and administrative site of the Iowa DNR. There is parking, facilities and a hiking trail.

MC 3.4 Pike's Peak is to the left. The Iowa State Park is another in the bluff top parks, over 500 feet, which line the Mississippi River. It is an excellent place to walk around, enjoy the view of the confluence of the Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers, have lunch or a snack and glass the surrounding area. There are some short hiking trails. Stay on X56 to Guttenberg.

MC 5.1 Pioneer Lutheran church on the left.

MC 5.7 Another old church on the right.

MC 7.4 Sny Magill Boat Access and river bottom unit of the Effigy Mounds National Monument to the left on an unmarked gravel road. The turn is just before the bridge.

SIDE TRIP: SNY MAGIL BOAT ACCESS AND EFFIGY MOUNDS (SN)

The boat landing is a cooperative venture with Iowa DNR and Effigy Mounds National Monument. There are 106 mounds located north of the boat ramp parking lot. There are perhaps six effigy mounds in the complex; the rest are round or linear mounds. The area is open to the public from sunrise to sunset year round. The developed trail is gated, with a walkthrough along the fence at the gate for public access (north) to the mounds. There is access to the Wyalusing Canoe Trail from the boat landing. The trail is 9.4 miles long (see Wyalusing Park for complete information).

SN 0.0 Turn left on unmarked gravel road before the bridge and Paradise Camp sign.

SN 0.3 The Sny Magill unit has an information kiosk which provides a description of the Refuge.. There is a fishing dock and a boat ramp. The landing connects to the Wyalusing State Park Canoe Trail. There is access to Methodist and Norwegian Lakes and the main channel.

RETURN TO HIGHWAY

MC 7.4 Cross bridge with gravel pit and Keystone Road on the right.

MC 9.9 Junction with C17. Must turn right or left. Go left on X56 south to Clayton and Guttenberg on Great River Road.

MC 10.9 Clayton is to the left on the river about 1 mile. There is a boat landing and marina. There is access to the main channel of the river.

MC 16.8 Frenchtown Park is to the left 1 mile. There is a boat landing with access to Frenchtown Lake. The road leads to a residential development on a terrace along the river. Island marina has a boat landing that can be used to access McMillen Island and the main channel. Continue straight into Guttenberg on X56.

MC 18.1 Guttenberg, Iowa city limits.

GUTTENBERG, IOWA – 143.9

LOCK AND DAM 10

Lock and Dam 10 is right at eye level as you drive through this artistic little river town. The Iowa DNR Fishery Management Station, Fish Hatchery and Aquarium, located 5 blocks east of highway 52 on River Park Drive (May to October) has a display of native species of fish and freshwater mussels. There is a park and promenade along the dike overlooking the lock and dam.

The Lock Master's House is now a museum. In addition to the fascinating period items and books about the local area, there is a series of photos of the building of lock 10. These photos show the structure and process involved, including the installment of the "roller dams" a German invention utilized by the Corps of Engineers.

The downtown area includes several quaint old buildings, the Visitor's Information Center (on the left), the Lock and Dam 10 on the left, the Café Mississippi with binoculars for eagle viewing, the Guttenberg boat landing and the Landing Inn and Marina. You can access the fishing float across the channel by calling for the boat at the boat dock at the Landing Inn and Marina.

GU 0.0 Guttenberg, Iowa city limits.

GU 0.4 Turn left towards river at the Marina and boat launch. You can park and walk the dike to Lock and Dam 10 along the old main street of the town.

GU 1.0 Cross the railroad tracks.

GU 1.1 Stop sign on Third Street. Turn right on Second Street.

GU 1.3 Left on Broadway and then a right on First Street along the river and the Dike.

GU 1.5 Angle right on River Park Drive.

GU 2.2 The downtown area of Guttenberg.

GU 2.7 Guttenberg and Lock and Dam 10 boat landings. There are facilities and a large parking ramp. Maintained by The Corps of Engineers and McGregor District

GU 3.0 Bear to the right on River Park Drive. It becomes Dekalb. Stop sign at the railroad tracks.

GU 3.1 Stop sign at junction with Hwy 52 south. Take a left on Hwy 52.

GU 3.4 Junction with C7X Garber Road. Continue on Hwy 52 south.

GU 5.0 A modest overlook, at 297 feet, on the left. Twelve-Mile Island Waterfowl Hunting Closed Areas can be seen both up and down the river. There is a total of over 2,000 acres. The Twelve-Mile Island Research Natural Area overlaps the closed area on the south end. Local honey is sold at the overlook during the summer.

GU 9.1 Turkey River Mounds State Preserve to the left.

GU 10.1 Millville, Iowa.

GU 10.3 Turn left on C9Y to Turkey River. Following C9Y instead of Hwy 52 south takes you through a series of small towns, then up across the Balltown Ridge. There are outstanding views from the road down over rolling prairies to the Mississippi with the bluffs on the Wisconsin and beyond. The ridge itself is a geological wonder and well worth the time to stop at highway cuts and look for fossils in the rocks.

GU 13.0 Road to Turkey River Ferry on the left. The ferry is open June – Labor Day.

GU 18.2 North Buena Vista city limits.

NORTH BUENA VISTA, IOWA – 162.1

Take 52 south to Millville. Then follow the scenic highway County C9Y to the Ferry landing on 360th Street. If you want to cross the river and return north, take the Ferry. It will take you across the river to Cassville, Wisconsin. From there you can drive back up the Wisconsin side to Prairie du Chien. Otherwise follow the scenic route south to North Buena Vista, Balltown and Sherrill. Before you reach Dubuque, Iowa you will find yourself on a ridge with views across the expanse of the river bottoms and the farmlands of the former prairie. These little towns are largely unknown with very little change in population over the years (although there is a lot of new building going on).

NO 0.0 North Buena Vista, Iowa city limits.

NO 0.3 Junction with Y13 on the right.

NO 1.1 Holy Cross to right.

NO 5.3 Junction with C63 on right.

NO 7.2 Balltown, Iowa city limits.

BALLTOWN, IOWA – 169.3

BA 0.0 Balltown, Iowa city limits.

BA 0.1 The Balltown overlook. There is a turnout on the left with stationary binoculars.

BA 0.2 The oldest bar in Iowa is located in this little town. It is also a restaurant, Breitbachs, simply crammed with antiques. There is a famous Grant Wood print on the wall next to the men's restroom.

BA 0.9 Passing through Old Balltown. Farmsteads, in the scattered, new world pattern, dot the escarpment from the ridge down to the river's edge. It's like viewing a miniature rural landscape.

BA 3.1 Fossils in roadside cut on right.

BA 4.8 A right turn will take you to one-half mile to Sherrill Mound.

BA 5.7 Left to Finley's Landing (3 miles).

BA 6.2 Sherrill, Iowa city limits.

SHERRILL, IOWA – 175.5

SH 0.0 City limits of Sherrill, Iowa.

SH 0.4 Stop sign in Sherrill. Turn to the left, continuing on C9Y.

SH 4.6 Sageville, Iowa.

SH 4.8 Stop sign. Turn left. Junction with Hwy 52 south. Follow 52 through Dubuque.

SH 5.1 Junction Hwy 52 south and Hwy 3. Continue on Hwy 52 south. Little Maquoketa River.

SH 5.5 Little Maquoketa River Mounds State Preserve to the right.

SH 5.9 Heritage Trail to the right, with parking.

SH 6.9 Stop sign. Jct Y35 and Hwy 32 south. Central Avenue through Dubuque.

SH 7.4 Dubuque, Iowa city limits.

LOCK AND DAM 11

SAVANNA DISTRICT- UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE AND FISH REFUGE (POOLS 12, 13 & 14)

The Savanna District extends approximately 90 river miles from Dubuque, Iowa to Rock Island, Illinois. The District manages nearly 53,000 acres of U.S. Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land along the Mississippi River. Refuge lands protect unique habitat for fish, waterfowl, and other migratory birds, game birds and mammals. The Savanna District contains upland hardwood forests and grasslands, as well as bottomland islands, peninsulas and shoreline. There are five wetland management units totaling over 11,000 acres. Wetland dependent species are the primary management concern. 360 species of waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and song birds migrate through the area. Hundreds of thousands of migratory waterfowl provide spectacular viewing in the fall, winter and spring. Many species of migrating songbirds can be seen during their spring and fall migrations. Shorebirds and wading birds can be seen daily in the spring, summer and fall. Fall, winter and spring are excellent times to view the large number of eagles along the Mississippi. There are Rookeries containing great blue herons (over 2,000 nests), double crested cormorants and great egrets.

More than 50 species of mammals make their home in the District including deer, raccoon, muskrat, red and gray fox, coyote, weasel, mink, beaver, badger, skunk and river otter. There are over 37 species of amphibians and reptiles documented in the Refuge. These include the American Toad, chorus frog, eastern gray tree frog, Copes gray tree frog, leopard frog, spring peeper, cricket frog, green frog and bullfrog.

The District has a wide range of public use activities including hiking, wildlife observation, boating, hunting, trapping, camping, and fishing. The Ingersoll Wetlands Learning Center is housed in the Visitor Center on Riverview Road north of Thomson, Illinois. Named after two young men with muscular dystrophy, the Center provides extensive environmental education to all ages in the Savanna area.

DUBUQUE, IOWA – 182.9

The early settlers of Dubuque made their fortunes on the lead mines in the area and the lumber industry generated by the cutting of the temperate zone forests in the Upper Mississippi River Basin. A guided tour is a necessity in this city. There is a story behind each of the old, refurbished downtown establishments as well as the grand old houses on the bluff. Try the little tram line from lower to upper town. Don't forget the excellent National River Museum and Aquarium in the Port Area . If you lost money at Marquette, you can try for revenge at the riverboat casino next to the museum. To the west on the former prairie are motels, shopping centers and anything else you need to continue your travels around the Upper Mississippi River Refuges.

NATIONAL MISSISSIPPI RIVER MUSEUM AND AQUARIUM

A major attraction in Dubuque and a source of increased knowledge of the workings of the Mississippi River, the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium is not to be missed. Affiliated with the Smithsonian Museum in Washington D.C., it has a level of sophistication found in few other places; not the least of which is the variety of programs and exhibits. The museum staff has worked closely with the Fish and Wildlife Service to integrate aspects of the Upper Mississippi Refuges into the exhibits.

The Steamboat William M. Black, formerly a working dredge on the Missouri River, is open to both tours and over nights stays as a "Boat and Breakfast". The Woodward Wetlands is a place to explore the natural habitat of the Mississippi without having to put on your hip boots or mosquito dope. You can meet and hear the stories of the various people who used the river in by gone days: Native Americans, fur traders, fishermen, clammers, refuge managers and early pioneers.

The Boatyard is where over 500 boats and barges were built. Tour a tugboat and view steamboat artifacts. The Fred W. Woodward Riverboat Museum tells of the story of life on the Mississippi as Mark Twain wrote about it. The National Rivers Hall of Fame introduces you to pathfinders like Louis Jolliet and Jacques Marquette, river people like Diamond Jo Reynolds and Captain John Streckfus, builders like Robert Fulton and artists and entertainers like Louis Armstrong and John James Audubon.

The heart of the museum is the William Woodward Discovery Center. Here five large fresh water aquariums, live animals, wet labs, towboat simulators and hands on activities will keep the children moving excitedly from one exhibit to the next. The entire National Mississippi River Museum experience brings the complexity both "on" and "in" the river to life. Stop in the book store for great background information and follow up reading on the Mississippi. Grab coffee or lunch in the restored Depot Café.

DU 0.7 Stop light. Eagle Point District is to the left. Eagle Point Park has a 277 foot overlook on the bluff which provides a panoramic view of Lock and Dam 11. Sunfish Lake Landing allows access to the area below the lock and dam. It is accessible from the Wisconsin side of the river off of Hwy 61. The area below the lock and dam is closed to fishing from December 1 to March 15.

DU 2.5 Dubuque City Hall is on the right. Merge with Hwy 61 and Hwy 151 south. The downtown area, below the bluffs, is filled with old buildings from Dubuque's heyday. Many of these have been restored for commercial use, such as insurance companies. Tours of the city are offered at regular intervals each day. Inquire at the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium.

DU 3.2 The Port of Dubuque and Hwy 20 are to the right. To get to the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium turn right onto Fourth Street, go one block to Main Street; Turn left onto Main Street, go one block to Third Street; Turn left on Third Street, until you come to a "T" intersection. Turn right at the intersection, turn right again into the museum parking lot. The Museum is on the left hand side; enter by the large red paddlewheel.

DU 5.9 Get in left lane at stop light on the top of the bluff. Leave Hwy 61 and Hwy 151 and follow Hwy 52 south to the left.

DU 6.0 E.B. Lyon Interpretive Center and the Mines of Spain State Recreation Area may be accessed by taking an immediate left across Hwy 52. The Interpretive Center and Mines of Spain is a "must see" for experiencing the Upper Mississippi River. (See box below)

E.B. LYON INTERPRETIVE CENTER AND MINES OF SPAIN STATE RECREATION AREA

The Interpretive Center and the Mines of Spain are rich in the resources necessary for a better understanding and a broader experience of the Upper Mississippi River. The Mines of Spain Recreation Area celebrates Julien Dubuque, the first European to settle in the Dubuque area, in 1788. He married Potosa, daughter of the Mesquakie Indian Chief, Peosta. He died March 24, 1810 and was buried with honors beneath a log mausoleum. His grave is marked with the Julien Dubuque Monument, built in 1897. The site provides a scenic vista of the 1380-acre Mines of Spain area, the City of Dubuque, the Mississippi River Valley and Illinois. The Mines of Spain State Recreation Area was created in 1981 with a trust set up by Dubuque businessman Edwin B. Lyons. The trust was used to purchase the Otto Junkermann farm which had occupied the site.

The Governor of Spain granted the land to Dubuque in 1796. Its value was the lead ore that could be mined in the area. American Indians had worked the mines before the Europeans came. The wealth from the lead mines at this site and in the surrounding area contributed to the growth and development of Dubuque.

The area is unique in that it includes evidence of prehistoric Native American cultures, with mounds, village sites, rock shelters, trading post sites and campsites. In addition there are 4 miles of cross country ski trails and 12 miles of hiking trails. There are five individual nature walks within the park. The E.B. Lyon Interpretive Center includes the Betty Hauptli Bird and Butterfly Garden, native prairies and woodland flower gardens. Dogwood and arrowwood shrubs, as well as blazing star, wild bergamot

and purple coneflowers, are found along the trails and in the prairies. Some of the trails are steep, leading to the floodplain at river level. Access depends upon the water level in Lock and Dam Pool 12. The facility is open year around.

DU 7.4 Mines of Spain point may be accessed to the left on Olde Massey Road.

DU 7.8 Crystal Lake Cave to the left, 0.25 miles. A fairly typical cave created by the action of water seeping through the limestone formation over millions of years. It is one of the longest caves in Iowa and is still in the process of formation.

DU 10.3 Massey Marina Park, Dubuque County, on the left. There is a boat landing and the Massey Station. It is approximately 2.2 miles.

DU 11.9 St. Catherine's Church is on the left.

DU 15.8 City limits of St. Donatus, Iowa.

ST. DONATUS, IOWA – 198.7

The Iowa town with a little bit of Luxembourg in it. It has been preserved as a historic Luxembourg village; it is a registered historic district. The Gehlen house was constructed in Quereinhaus style by Luxembourg immigrant Peter Gehlen in 1847. The house was replastered and repainted by a crew from Luxembourg in 1997.

ST 3.1 Jct La Motte on D65 on left. It has an historic narrow gauge train depot.

ST 6.0 John Henry Park on right. There are tables, a shelter and facilities.

ST 7.0 Fritz Chapel Historic Site 2.0 miles on the left. Another Luxembourg immigrant, thankful for surviving the ocean passage from Europe, built a chapel. It is maintained by a family foundation. Tours are only by appointment.

ST 8.0 Spruce Creek County Park to the left. There is a boat landing.

ST 8.8 Bellevue, Iowa city limits.

BELLEVUE, IOWA – 207.5

Bellevue and surrounding Jackson County, has a long history. Woodland Indian Mounds have been found throughout the area, indicating a long history of settlement. Europeans came in 1833. These early European settlers brought their own architecture with them. Consequently there are many historic buildings in Bellevue and the surrounding area. It is the site of the first lending library and the oldest standing frame mill in Iowa. Information on the many historic buildings and sites is available at the tourist information center in Bellevue.

The road south from Bellevue wends its way through the bottoms of the Mississippi. About 4 miles south along 52 is the Pleasant Creek Recreation Area run by the Corps of Engineers. There is a boat landing and camping. Just south of it is the Pleasant Creek Unit run by the Savanna District of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR. There is a parking lot off the road, but it is not well marked. There are five lakes in the unit and a bottomland gravel hiking trail which is an excellent birding site.

Eight miles south is the 3,500 acre Green Island State Wildlife Management Area. Canoeist, bird watchers and wildlife photographers will love this relatively remote area of the Mississippi River backwaters formed by an extensive levee system.

LOCK AND DAM 12

Lock and Dam 12 has restricted fishing in the tail water from December 1 through March 15. Bellevue Municipal Landing is located just below the dam in the center of Bellevue. There are no facilities.

BE 0.8 The large Victorian-looking house on the far right of Bellevue as you enter town is formally called “Mont Rest”. It was built by a local businessman in 1893. It was immediately dubbed “the Castle” by locals. This is also a very luxurious bed and breakfast.

BE 1.3 One of the great attractions of these Mississippi River Towns adjacent to a lock and dam like Bellevue, are the levee parks which line the river through the towns. Bellevue is no exception. Stroll along the levee through Riverside Park which is handicap accessible. The stores line the opposite side of the street. The activities of the lock and dam and the marina are along the Mississippi just below the strollers. The park continues along the levee to the south edge of town.

BE 1.5 The Young House Museum, on a corner overlooking the Mississippi River, is a good representation of the types of limestone buildings erected by the early settlers.

There is a china collection, muzzle loading rifle and other mementoes of an earlier time.

BE 1.7 Tourist Information has schedules and fees for the various historic buildings in the district. Access to Lock and Dam 12 is on the left.

BE 2.1 End of park. Access to River Bottom Boat Landing. There are cabins on the river. There is a right turn to the historic Potter’s Mill B&B which can be seen to the SW against the bluff.

BE 2.5 Bellevue State Park on the right with a 248 foot high overlook. It provides a view across the Mississippi to the backwaters of the former Savanna Army Depot which now includes the Lost Mound Unit of the Savanna District of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR. There is fishing access and a boat landing. There is a south unit farther down along the river. Camping is available.

BE 2.8 Bellevue Public Use Park on the left. Mill Creek Boat Landing is located here.

BE 4.3 South Unit of Bellevue State Park on right.

BE 5.7 Pleasant Creek Recreation Area of the Army Corps of Engineers. It is a class C recreation area with camping, fishing and direct access to the Mississippi River.

BE 6.7 Preston, Iowa is to the right, 10 miles on Z34.

BE 8.4 The Pleasant Creek Unit, managed by the Savanna District of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR, is on the left. There is a 2,603-acre Waterfowl Hunting Closed Area where waterfowl concentrate, making them easier to see (but not more approachable). There is a circular gravel trail for hiking or cross-country skiing . It is an excellent area for bird watching. There is a parking lot but no facilities.

BE 10.1 Hwy 52 south crosses the Maquoketa River.

BE 10.2 There are dike roads to the left and to the right along the river. The road on the left goes to the 4th Ditch Boat Ramp and Green Island.

BE 10.6 The road to the left, 143rd Street, or the Green Island Bottoms Road, goes to Baker's Lake Ramp and the 4th Ditch Boat Ramp. They provide access to Upper and Lower Brown's Lake Large Mouth Bass Catch and Release area. There are 700 acres in the restricted area. It also provides access to the Green Island State Wildlife Management Area, the Fish Lake Boat Landing and Blake's Lake.

BE 15.4 A left turn on 207th avenue goes to Esmay Slough Boat Landing.

BE 21.8 Sabula, Iowa is to the left at the stop sign. Make a right turn on Hwys 64 and 67. Clinton, Iowa on the Great River Road is to the right. There is a Jackson County Welcome Center to the right.

SABULA, IOWA -229.3

Sabula, founded in 1835 as a steamboat landing, is the only town in Iowa built on an island. An extensive system of levees, causeways and lakes surround the small town. This is the all-purpose river town with riverside parks to watch birds, campgrounds, a boat launch and marina. Just over 700 residents are served by several taverns, restaurants and a grocery store. Sabula, meaning "sandy soil" has an island park halfway across the causeway. The town provides access to two boat landings. Several old stone homes face the river. The Castle B&B looks out upon the Mississippi River. The town's leaders boast that Sabula has never been flooded, although the river has come close. Continue south on Hwy 67.

The Savanna District's Ingersol Wetlands Learning Center is to the right across the river in Savanna, Illinois. See the Thomson and Savanna descriptions.

SA 0.5 Take Hwy 67 south to the left to Clinton. Follow the Great River Road.

SA 7.0 E50 to Andover, Iowa on the right.

SA 10.5 Bulger's Hollow Recreation Area on left (170th Street). The turn is by the large gravel pit onto a gravel road. There are sites for RVs and tents, but no electricity. There is water, a sewer dump station, a boat ramp, playground, picnic sites, a picnic shelter, and a small boat launch. Bulger's is a class C recreation area.

SA 12.3 Clinton, Iowa city limits.

CLINTON, IOWA – 241.6

Clinton, at almost 30,000 people, is just the right size for a prolonged visit. It is almost nine miles long; another creation of the extensive system of levees and causeways built by the Corps of Engineers over the years to preserve farms and towns in the face of large and variable flooding. There are period homes and churches here. There is Bickelhaupt Arboretum with native plants, a clown museum and the Eagle Point Park and Nature Center. You can enjoy Summer Stock Theatre at the restored steamboat in the park. Pick up a brochure on the many festivals and celebrations held in this active town. Hwy 136 crosses the river at the North Bridge to Fulton, Illinois.

LOCK AND DAM 13

There is an extensive network of resources and activities at Lock and Dam 13. They are accessible from the Illinois side. There is a tail water fishing restriction from December 1st through March 15th. See Fulton, Illinois description.

CL 0.9 Eagle Point Park to the left. Stay on Hwy 67 south. The view from the top of the bluff at Eagle Point Park encompasses the river activity at Lock and Dam 13.

CL 1.9 30th Avenue Boat Ramp to the left.

CL 2.4 25th Avenue Boat Ramp to the left.

CL 3.0 North Bridge to Fulton, Illinois to the right.

CL 4.0 9th Avenue boat ramp to the left. The Riverfront District is also to the left. The steamboat casino on the left.

CL 4.2 Riverview City Park on the left.

CL 4.4 The Franciscan University of the Prairie to the right.

CL 4.6 Downtown Clinton, Iowa.

CL 5.0 Jct Hwy 67 south and Hwy 30. Left turn to the Mill Creek Bridge to Illinois. Bear right on 67 south.

CL 5.2 Follow Hwy 67 south to the left.

CL 5.3 Clinton Community College to the right. Entering Camanche, Iowa.

CAMANCHE, IOWA – 246.9

Camanche, Iowa is another old river town; incorporated before the state of Iowa was created. It has a library right on the river with a dock out into the river. It is a heavily industrial suburb of Clinton. The riverfront has a boat harbor, boat landings at 5th, 6th and 8th avenues, and municipal ramp just down the river.

CA 0.4 Turn left on Hwys 67 south and 30.

CA 1.4 Chancy Park on the right.

CA 2.0 Stop light. Beaver Channel Parkway to the left. Continue on 67/30.

CA 3.2 Continue south on Hwy 67. Hwy 30 goes to the right.

CA 4.4 Hwy 67 south goes to the right.

CA 10.2 Clinton County Rock Creek Park. Turn left on 291st Street at Wedling Quarries. There is camping, a boat ramp and sight seeing on Schricker Slough.

CA 11.2 Follett's Park on right. A family park with a frisbie course. Bear left on Hwy 67 south.

CA 12.8 Wapsinicon River.

CA 15.0 Buffalo Bill Cody homestead to the right.

CA 16.1 Princeton Boat Landing. Princeton Wildlife Management Area – State of Iowa.

CA 16.6 Princeton, Iowa city limits.

PRINCETON, IOWA – 263.5

The Mississippi River at this lower end of pool 14 is open and free of islands. Highways and railroad tracks line both sides of the river. Houses are built either along the river beside the railroad tracks or across the highway. Many of them have gracious

lawns running down to the highway or the river. The last of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR is just north of Princeton.

PR 0.6 Small park and shelter on the river to the left. The Princeton Boat ramp is located in the same area.

PR 4.6 Le Claire city limits.

LE CLAIRE, IOWA – 268.1

Visit the information and interpretive center for information and exhibits about the surrounding area. Before the fourteen miles of rapids were tamed by the Corps of Engineers this was what is called a “break-in-bulk” point on the river. Goods needing to be transported around the rapids were stored in warehouses, which are still standing. There is a Buffalo Bill museum; his home is just outside the city.

Le 1.2 Le Claire municipal boat ramp, park and Buffalo Bill Museum to the left along the river. There are also steamboat rides.

Le 2.4 There is a Primary Iowa Welcome Center to the right. The Center serves motorists coming across the I-80 bridge from Illinois.

Le 2.9 The I-80 Fred Swengel Memorial Bridge across the Mississippi River to Illinois. Take the ramp to the right and cross the river.

Le 4.3 Take right exit immediately after crossing the river.

Le 4.7 Turn north on Hwy 84 and the Great River Road.

SOUTHERN TERMINUS OF ROAD TRIP – 272.8

The I-80 bridge is the southern terminus of the trip. At this point the route turns north and heads up through Illinois and Wisconsin to the Chippewa River opposite the Minnesota overlook on Hwy 61 where the trip began.

LOCK AND DAM 14

Lock and Dam 14 is the official southern end of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. A very worthwhile side trip is to continue on south on Hwy 67 under the I-80 bridge to Lock and Dam 14. There is a large parking area and boat ramp below the Dam. The grounds at the Dam provide an excellent resting place for road trippers. There is a paved parking lot. There is a fenced walkway across the end of the one of the locks to a large, grassy area. There is a covered picnic area right along the river. You can watch towboats and barges being locked through, or watch them repairing equipment in another area of the Lock (off limits but observable). There is a small island with a nature trail above the Lock, along the shoreline. There is fishing, bird watching and a small prairie to observe along the path. The most modern Corps of Engineers recreation area on the river, Fisherman’s Corner, is located across the Mississippi on the Illinois side. There are 50 sites with electrical outlets and 6 for tent camping. All facilities are handicapped accessible. It is linked to other recreation areas by the Great River Bike Trail which begins in East Moline, Illinois, just down river from the Lock and

Dam. The Trail also connects with the extensive bike paths in the Quad Cities to the south. The Trail can also be ridden north to its current terminus just outside of Savanna, Illinois at the Savanna District's Ingersol Wetlands Learning Center of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR. It passes by or through several wildlife areas as well as Lock and Dam recreation areas (see below).