

THE ROAD TRIP AROUND THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER REFUGES

SOUTH-NORTH ROUTE STARTING AT THE FRED SWENDEL I-80 BRIDGE

The south-north route begins at the Fred Swengel Bridge (I-80) over the Mississippi River just above Rock Island, Illinois. This part of the Upper Mississippi is below the “driftless area”. Both banks of the Mississippi River are lined with housing and lawns extending to the river’s edge. The south-north route follows the highways (and much of the Great River Road) north along the Illinois and the Wisconsin side of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges to its terminus at the Chippewa River in Wisconsin, a distance of just over 313.6 miles.

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 Fred Swengel Bridge to the southern city limits of each city or town. The town initials are followed by the distance a feature is from the southern city limits, continuing on until the southern city limits of the next town, where the mileage count starts over. Side trips have their own initials before the mileage figures.

ROAD TRIP LOG

Le 0.0 Take Hwy 84 north following the Great River Road.

Le 0.1 Pass under the I-80 Fred Swengel Bridge on Hwy 84 north.

Le 0.5 Rapids City, Illinois city limits.

RAPIDS CITY, ILLINOIS – 0.5

The name for the town comes from the fact that it is located right in the middle of what was a fifteen mile stretch of rapids between Rock Island and Le Claire. The Corps of Engineers blasted a channel through the rocks, which had limited boat movement up the river during all but high water periods.

RC 0.7 Boat ramp and city park with a shelter on the left.

PORT BYRON – 2.2

Port Byron is the first of several small riverside towns along this section of the Mississippi River. It celebrated its 175th anniversary in 2003. Home owners in this village have the option of mounting a plaque on their building showing the date of

construction. The road parallels the railroad and the river along this stretch, with homes down to the river's edge. There is a cross-river Tug Fest between LeClaire, Iowa and Port Byron, Illinois during the middle of August. All traffic on the Mississippi River is stopped for two hours while a 2,400 foot, 680 pound rope is stretched across the river between the two towns. Eleven teams from each side pull against each other to determine which one rules the Mighty Miss!

PB 0.9 Boat ramp, city hall and city park on the river's edge to the left.

PB 3.8 There is a boat ramp at Camp Hauberg, a public camp, on the left.

CORDOVA, ILLINOIS – 8.1

If you were taking this trip by boat, you could tie up at Cordova and walk up the bank to your pre-Victorian B&B. Don't forget to haul your bikes up too, as there are some 65 miles of parks, trails and overlooks to be visited on your two-wheeler. There are four boat ramps at Cordova: the 2nd, 5th, and 10th street ramp, and the private Cordova Boat Club ramp.

ALBANY, ILLINOIS – 17.3

A comfortable Mississippi river village, Albany is near the Albany Indian Mounds. The Albany Mounds are in a 205 acre park at the south end of the city. Access is from Cherry Street. There is a picnic area and access to hiking trails. There are eagles to watch, bike trails to ride and antique shops. Beaver Island in the Upper Mississippi River NW&FW, dominates the view of the western shore.

The landscape along both sides of the Upper Mississippi is much more characteristic of the lower reaches. There are large sections of flat bottom lands which have been turned into agriculture fields. They run up the Illinois side of the Mississippi to the Palisades just to the north of Savanna.

AL 0.0 Boat ramp on left.

AL 0.3 Historic site marker.

AL 0.6 Municipal boat ramp on the left.

AL 0.7 Folk Art shop on left.

AL 2.3 Van's Landing on left.

AL 5.6 Catfish landing and Cattail Recreation Area, Corps of Engineers, on the left.

AL 6.1 Hwy 30 to the left crosses the river to Clinton, Iowa. Continue on Hwy 84 north.

FULTON, ILLINOIS – 25.0

Thirty-five to forty percent of the residents of Fulton (population 3,500) are of Dutch descent. There is an authentic Dutch windmill located at Fulton, brought over from the Netherlands. The annual Dutch Days Festival is held in the first weekend in May. There are Dutch dances, customs, food, arts and crafts and a parade. Heritage

Canyon Historic Village is a 12-acre site in an old quarry. There are more than 20 businesses, homes and other buildings from the 19th century at the Village. Fulton was founded in 1835 as Baker's Ferry, but changed its name to Fulton in honor of the inventor of the steamboat. Visit Schafer's Fish Market and see the processing of mussels and catfish from the Mississippi.

Lock and Dam 13 is just up the road. Turn off of 84 onto Lock Road. It has the widest pool, at four miles, on the river. The road skirts the lower end of Potter's Marsh. There are several parking areas with tables and one with toilets. The structures up the marsh are not giant beaver houses, but duck blinds. There are forty-nine of them at the lower end of the marsh which are allocated by lottery. The Savanna District Refuge is the only one on the river which requires duck hunters to hunt from permanent blinds or from boats outfitted with duck blinds.

Visit the new observation deck to the left at the Lock and Dam. Bald Eagles congregate here in large numbers in the late fall and winter. The Palisades chapter of the Friends of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges sponsors an Eagle Watch in January. You can watch the tows lock through until late November. The boat landing is to the right. You can walk out along the landing to watch the Eagles or observe the migratory birds. Since this area of the marsh is open for hunting, birds make themselves scarce in October and November.

There is a gravel road running north parallel to 84. Turn north on it just before the highway and follow the Great River Bike Trail through the prairie of the Thomson Natural Research Area. Continue on for a mile or two and park if you want to walk or bike through the Thomson Prairie part of the Savanna District Refuge. Song birds and deer inhabit this area.

Access to Thomson Prairie and the bike trail can also be made by driving further up 84 to the Thomson Causeway Recreation Area, maintained by the Corps of Engineers. Turn left at Main Avenue. There are campsites, parking, tables, toilets and access to the river. There are places where you can fish Potter's Marsh from the shore. Great for the kids and no boat required. If you drive through to the parking area there is a road which will take you south to a small graveled parking lot. Park your car there and hike around what is called "Duck Foot Marsh" because of the shape of the area. There is a total of three miles to bike or hike, with the trail making a large circle around a perched wetland full of birds and other wildlife. Watch for scarlet tanagers in this area. Hunting is allowed in this area in season.

Remember, you could be biking the Great River Bike Trail from the Quad Cities all along here. The bike trail doesn't actually end at the Ingersoll Wetlands Learning Center which is just off 84 at Sloane Marsh, but there is a shelter is behind the Visitors Center with a parking lot for walkers and bikers.

FU 0.0 There is a four-way stop with a left turn on Hwy 136 into Fulton and across the bridge to Clinton, Iowa. A left turn also takes you to the Boat Harbor.

FU 0.2 The turn to the Dutch Windmill and Heritage Canyon is to the left.

FU 2.9 Lock and Dam 13 is to the left. This is the road to Potter's Marsh and the nature trail. There is ample parking with a platform to watch the tows. This is an excellent eagle watch area in the winter. Over 200 eagles were sighted during the Eagle Watch held last winter.

LOCK AND DAM 13

THOMSON, ILLINOIS – 31.6

You can camp over night at the Thomson Causeway, the location of the largest Corps of Engineers recreational facility on the Mississippi. Visit the Railroad Depot Museum for a look at the bygone era of local train service.

The sand dunes in this area cover the remains of terracing created when the Mississippi floodplain was some sixty feet higher. These terraces are the longest along the Upper Mississippi not covered by loess. They are only about ten feet above the floodplain at their extremity down river. They are mainly sand, rather than the loess soil blown off the glaciers that are typical of most of the other terraces along the Mississippi.

Both this area of the Savanna District Refuge and the Sand Prairie area below Wabasha, Minnesota, have plants such as prickly pear cactus that are unique to the dry sandy terraces left by the glacial flood.

TH 0.5 The Thomson Causeway Recreation Area is run in cooperation with the Corps of Engineers and the Savanna District of the Upper Miss. Refuge. There is camping, hiking, bird watching, biking, fishing and hunting in this area.

TH 3.6 Camping to the left.

TH 4.6 Big Slough Recreation Area to the left.

TH 6.0 Savanna District Visitors Center, the Ingersoll Wetlands Learning Center, is one-half mile to the left on Riverview Road. The Sloane Marsh overlook is just across the road from the Visitor's Center. . The Ingersoll Wetlands Learning Center, attached to the Savanna District Refuge office, has a number of displays of animals and birds found in the wetlands along with maps and information about the viewing opportunities in the area. Regular classes are held for various groups to educate them about the wetlands. Across the road from the office is a parking lot with an observation platform looking out over Sloane Marsh. The marsh must be observed from perimeter platforms from October 1 through the end of the duck hunting season, as this area is closed to hunting. Consequently, if you want to see ducks and geese during the hunting season, this is the time and place! The birds come here to feed and to escape the hunters.

If you continue on towards Savanna on Hwy 84 another mile or two you will see the Spring Lake Unit. When the area is open, you can hike or bike around the gravel levees for prime birding and aesthetic viewing of the marsh area, with lotus flowers in abundance. When the area is closed (October 1st through the end of the Illinois duck hunting season annually) you can view wildlife from two platforms near the parking area or walk/bike down to the corner where there is another observation deck. With all the birds trying to take refuge in Spring Lake, there will be lots of action. There is a fishing deck here as well, and though the small inlet does not look promising, it is full of hungry fish.

Just north on Hwy 84 is Frog Pond with accessible fishing. It was created to compensate for wetland loss when the bridge into Savanna was redone. The fishing pier was built with the cooperation of a local Boy Scout working on his Eagle Badge.

The Spring Lake area began as a drainage project for local farmers prior to the advent of the current Lock and Dam system, completed in 1940. The water level in the

pool rose too high for drainage and it was turned into wetlands again. The water in the upper part of Spring Lake, above the east-west levee, is controlled by pumps. In the lower area, the water level varies depending upon the depth of the water in pool 13.

The biking and walking trail resumes just north of Airport Road. It runs from there into Savanna proper across a newly built \$1.2 million dollar biking/hiking bridge. Leave your car and bike on up the river to Savanna on the Great River Trail. Or retrace your steps back down to the Quad Cities. Watch out for prickly pear cactus along this trail! Stop out at the Heritage Canyon Historical Village and see the recreation of 19th century community life.

TH 8.2 The Spring Lake ramp and the wildlife viewing area, with access to the lake, are on the left.

TH 8.4 Access to Frog Pond on left. There is fishing and bird watching. The small pond is handicapped accessible.

TH 9.0 Hwy 84 crosses the Plum river.

SAVANNA, ILLINOIS – 40.7

Visit the historic mansions overlooking the Mississippi River from the top of the first and the second bluff levels. First settled in 1828 at the mouth of the Plum river, Savanna was, until recently, a railroad “hub” with several different railroads converging on the Savanna shops. Up to 1,000 railroad workers would overnight daily in Savanna. The U.S. Army’s Savanna Ordinance Depot was 8 miles to the north. Today the Depot is being redeveloped for a variety of civilian uses including a new Lost Mound Unit of the Savanna District of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR. Savanna offers a direct link with the Mississippi River at the municipal boat ramp and city park. The North and South units of Palisades State Park are just to the north of the city.

PALISADES CHAPTER – FRIENDS OF THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER REFUGES

Savanna is the home of the Palisades Chapter of the Friends of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges. They sponsor, completely or in part, Kids Fishing Day, an International Migratory Bird Day, National Refuge Week, an Eagle Watch and other interpretive programs. The District office is located on the Refuge south of town. The gift shop located in the Ingersoll Wetlands Learning Center is operated by the Palisades chapter of Friends. All proceeds support refuge programs. Many unique educational gifts can be purchased.

SA 0.9 Junction Hwy 52 north, Hwy 84 north and Hwy 6. Turn left and continue north through Savanna’s business district.

SA 2.5 The city park is on the left.

SA 2.8 City park entrance to the left with a boat ramp. There is parking for boats and trailers and facilities. There are covered shelters in the park along the river.

SA 3.0 Bridge to Sabula and the Iowa side of the Mississippi. Hwys 52 and 62 cross here. Continue north on Hwy 84.

SA 4.6 Mississippi Palisades State Park, South Entrance. There are five trails in the southern unit. These are strenuous trails, narrow and close to the edge of the bluff.

SA 5.9 Mississippi Palisades State Park, North Entrance. There are five trails in the northern unit as well. These are longer but less strenuous. Ozzie's Point, Louis' Point and Lookout Point are accessible with a short walk. Oak Point offers a surface trail and is handicap accessible. The park is closed during a three-day firearms season in the fall. Camping sites are available in the North unit.

SA 7.0 Camping available.

SA 9.8 Lost Mound Unit of the Savanna District is to the left into the Savanna Army Depot complex. See directions below.

SA 11.7 Falling Down Prairie is to the right, four miles.

LOST MOUND UNIT

North out of Savanna about eight miles is a new addition to the Upper Mississippi River Refuges: the Lost Mound Unit. It consists of 9,857 acres of the former Savanna Army Depot. It is a cooperative partnership between the Fish and wildlife Service and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Although it is a little disconcerting to be driving into what is now a decommissioned ammunition dump, it is worth the effort. The Unit includes 5,500 acres of floodplain forest and over 4,000 acres of sand prairie/savanna habitat (left by the glacier flood). The infrastructure, igloos and magazines on the Unit allow you to see part of the history of American military operations after World War I through World War II, the Korean War and the war in Vietnam. Drive straight in from the highway, continuing on across the railroad tracks to McIntyre Road. Take a right turn and then immediately pull into the parking lot at the Visitor's Center. Inside there is an excellent display of mussels found along the river, including a history of the button industry and the current threats by the zebra mussel. There are also mounted hawks, owls and eagles, all courtesy of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Continue on past the center through a section of sand prairie to the first intersection. Take a left and drive to the river, then a right following the road along the longest river dunes in Illinois: 7.5 miles. You can observe from your car or drive to the lookout at the end of the road (the red gate), park, and enjoy the overlook.

In February and March of 2004 over 600 eagles were counted along this stretch of the river. There were five nesting pairs in the unit.

HANOVER, ILLINOIS – 56.1

Turn on to route 70 from 84 north of Savanna if you want to visit the Mallard Capital of the world. Hanover raises and ships over 200,000 mallards all over the world. Stop at their place of business in the center of town for a look at operations or to purchase everything from duck pins to duck manure. The city also hosts the world's only Mallard Festival. Blanding's Landing Recreational Area is just north of the city, with access to the Refuge. Continue north on Hwy 84.

The highway leaves the river before it reaches the Lost Mound turn off. It feels like driving across the top of the world. The Mississippi River channel is far down to the left. The view is out across the high rolling hills of northwest Illinois.

HA 1.1 Hwy 84 crosses the Apple River.

HA 1.1 Blanding's Landing is 7 miles to the left. This is a Corps of Engineers Recreation Area. Boat access is to a large backwater area used for hunting and fishing. There are tent and trailer sites, a shower building, flush toilets and interpretive programs and activities on the week-ends between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

HA 1.3 Chestnut Mountain Ski Area is 8 miles to the left.

HA 4.1 Hwy 20 joins 84 continuing north to Galena.

HA 6.8 Long Hollow Scenic Overlook Rest Area is on the right. There is a large parking lot, heated facilities, and a kiosk showing the Great River Road and Fire Watch Tower overlook. There is a description of Galena, Illinois and some material on the town leadership and U.S. Grant's part in it all. The Tower is climbable, providing an extraordinary view of the surrounding countryside. The tower is built on a steep ridge, adding to the sense of great height at the top of the tower.

HA 8.8 Tapley Woods Natural Area is on both sides of the road. Hunting is allowed in the fall.

HA 9.1 Picnic tables for Tapley Woods on the right. There are no facilities.

HA 12.0 Camping to the left.

GALENA, ILLINOIS – 72.6

Continue north across the high hills bordering the Mississippi, connecting with Galena via route 20. U.S. Grant was born here. The deposits of lead in the surrounding area were responsible for the birth of Galena, as the name implies. Native Americans mined the lead for years before settler's turned the area into highly productive mines. By 1870 the production had declined and people moved on to other prizes. Tour Grant's home and several other mansions from the pre-Civil War days. The Desoto House, the site of Grant's national campaign headquarters, has been refurbished and is open to tours. A visit to the old main street of Galena will take you back in time. There are several museums in the town, including one about U.S. Grant and another about lead mining. Several miles to the east is Charles Mound, at 1235 feet, the highest point in Illinois!

GA 0.9 President Grant's home on the right.

GA 1.3 Turn right to the Stage Coach Trail and the business district.

GA 4.6 Junction of Hwy 20 and 84. Follow Hwy 20 to the left on the Great River Road. The Vinegar Hill Lead Mine is 4 miles straight north on Hwy 84.

GA 13.0 Frenress Lake Marina on the left.

EAST DUBUQUE, ILLINOIS – 86.8

The highway left the Mississippi north of Savanna. It touches it again in East Dubuque but then again moves inland. After a brief run through the hills to Dickeyville and Tennyson, it returns to the river to run up and down the coulees of the Driftless area,

i.e., the unglaciated part of Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. The fertility of these Mississippi highlands is due to the thin soils which blew or washed off the glaciers. The limestone sands of the pre-glacial lakes were ground like wheat into a fine loess soil. It is full of minerals and tends to dry forming a thin crust which seals moisture in the soil. Once the road starts down into Potosi, it goes up and down like a yoyo from the bottom of the coulees to the tops of the inland highland farm country. The coulees from this point north to Prairie du Chien are often better described as canyons, with the road running along the bottom.

ED 0.6 Boat ramp and tourist information to the left.

ED 0.8 Leave Hwy 20 (which crosses the Mississippi to Dubuque) and take Hwy 35 to the right into East Dubuque.

ED 0.9 Make a right turn at the stop sign (the sign says to La Crosse, Wisconsin). To the left under the viaduct is the public boat landing.

ED 3.0 Cross the Wisconsin State Line.

ED 3.8 Junction of Hwy 35 north and 11 east. Continue on north on Hwy 35.

ED 4.2 Junction of Hwy 35 north with Hwys 61 and 151 on a four-lane split highway. Continue on north with all three Hwys.

ED 11.5 The three Hwys split at Dickeyville. Hwy 151 goes east as a two-lane; Hwy 61 goes north along with 35 into Dickeyville. Stay on Hwys 35 and 61 until you reach Hwy 133 and the Potosi turn-off.

LOCK AND DAM 11

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

DICKEYVILLE, WISCONSIN – 98.3

The small town of Dickeyville (population 1,043) sits atop the highlands overlooking Iowa and the Mississippi River Bottoms. Almost two-thirds of the population is of German ancestry. The Dickeyville Grotto in the middle of the town is worth a short stop. It was built by Mathius Wernerus, the local German-born priest. It celebrates both religious faith and patriotism with its dedication to Christopher Columbus, a statue of whom stands in an arch of abalone shells and blue glass.

DV 0.4 Follow the junction to the left on Hwys 35 and 61 through town.

DV 0.6 The grotto and church built of local materials on the left. There is a small gift shop at the back with a parking area.

DV 3.5 The highway crosses the Platte river bridge.

DV 5.8 There is a wayside rest on the left with facilities, tables and shelters.

TENNYSON, WISCONSIN – 105.2

TE 0.2 Left to Potosi on Hwy 133 north, following the Great River Road. Hwy 61 goes right and continues on inland and north.

POTOSI, WISCONSIN – 106.0

Potosi, you may recall in the description of the Mines of Spain south of Dubuque, is the name of the Indian chief's daughter who married Dubuque, the early French founder of the city that bears his name. Potosi, like many of the old river towns, lived off the shipping trade. Lead mined in the surrounding area, as well as logs from farther inland, were the basis of economic life for this river town. The Passage Thru Time Museum revisits these earlier activities. It now bills itself as the "Catfish Capital of Wisconsin". Check for the annual Catfish Festival in July or August of each year. Follow Hwy133 down to the river's edge and then along the river to Cassville.

PO 1.0 Stop sign in downtown Potosi.

PO 1.3 Old Church along main street on the right. Old mine entrance on the left with tour times available.

PO 1.9 National Brewery Museum being organized in the old brewery building.

PO 2.9 Turn right on Hwy 133 to Cassville at the Mississippi. A left turn goes to the Grant River Recreation Area. Grant River, managed by the Corps of Engineers, is a class A campsite. There are regular activities and programs on week-ends during the summer months. Hwy 133 is situated between the Mississippi on the left and the bluffs on the right.

PO 7.5 Lynn Hollow Landing on the left. It is a small boat access site managed by the McGregor District of the Refuge.

PO 9.0 McCartney Lake Access and Recreation Area.

PO 14.8 Bertom Lake Access on the left is managed by the McGregor District of the Refuge. The bluffs of Iowa across the Mississippi can be viewed from here. The area is well known for its pan fishing. The Bertom-McCartney Closed area encompasses some 2,415 acres.

CASSVILLE, WISCONSIN – 123.9

At Cassville you can catch the ferry in Riverside Park across the river to the Turkey River Landing in Iowa, south of Guttenberg. Wander the main street along the river. You can see a reconstruction of life in the 1800's at Stonefield Village in Nelson Dewey State Park just up the river. There are two ways up river to Prairie du Chien. Take 133 back out across the bluffs away from the river to Bloomington and then follow 35/18 to Prairie du Chien. If you want to stay on the river, take VV north past Stonefield Village. You can turn on V to Glen Haven. At Glen Haven take Dugway Road through the bottoms to A which takes you into Bagley. But since the Dugway Road is gravel, the recommended route is to continue on VV north to A and then into Bagley.

CA 0.7 Riverside Park and Boat Landing to the left with facilities and a shelter. To Nelson Dewey State Park and Dewey Heights Prairie to the right; Stonefield Village Historical Site to the left.

Nelson Dewey was Wisconsin's first territorial governor. He bought the 2,000 acre estate he called Stonefield when he was a wealthy and successful businessman. The estate now shows a 1900 rural farm village with candy shop, saloon, livery stable, newspaper office and a rebuilt Dewey farmhouse. The former sheep barn houses the State Agricultural Museum with dioramas and exhibits of Wisconsin agriculture. It is only open in the summer. Check for times.

The Dewey Heights Prairie in the Nelson Dewey State Park is located at over 324 feet on the bluff above the Mississippi. It has many rare prairie grasses, flowers, birds, butterflies and snakes. These include big and little blue-stem, side-oats grama, hairy grama, June grass, Indian grass, needle grass, pasque flowers, wood betony and shooting star, butterfly weed, compass plants, asters and goldenrods, marble-seed, golden alexander, false toadflax, smooth cliff brake germander, false boneset, prairie Indian plantain, cliff goldenrod, lark sparrow, field sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, prairie ring-necked snake, Ottoe skipper and columbine dusky-wing butterflies.

CA 1.0 The ferry to Turkey River Landing is to the left on Wall Street.

CA 1.7 Junction of Hwy 133 with count VV. Turn left along the Mississippi.

CA 2.0 Cassville Field Station of the Upper Miss. Refuge to the left. Visits by appointment. Alliant Energy Power Plant on the left.

CA 2.9 Stonefield Village is on the left. The turn to Nelson Dewey State Park is on the right. Continue on Wisconsin county VV.

CA 10.6 Junction of county V and county VV. Turn to the right on VV and V, following the Great River Road. The turn to the left on county V goes to Glen Haven and the boat launch. If you choose to go to Glen Haven you can take Dugway Road, a gravel road through the river bottoms to Bagley.

CA 11.4 Junction of county VV and county V. Take county VV to the left to Bagley following the Great River Road.

CA 14.9 Junction with county A. Take county A to the left towards Bagley.

CA 18.0 Jay's Lake Landing on the left.

CA 18.8 River of Lakes Marina and Landing. There is public camping.

BAGLEY, WISCONSIN – 143.4

There are two campgrounds in Bagley-one at each end of town. Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park and Campgrounds is located here. The highway follows the coulees down from the fields and prairie above, running along between the Mississippi and the Palisades. The unglaciated area of this part of Wisconsin is very wild and rugged. Each turn in the road opens another startling vista. The cold, spring-fed streams and rivers make excellent trout fishing. The larger rivers provide excellent canoeing and kayaking, with some white water.

Follow county X north to Wyalusing with its sandy beach on the river. Continue on to Wyalusing State Park and the Wisconsin River where Fr. James Marquette and Louis Joliet first looked upon the Mighty Mississippi. Take advantage of cross country hiking and ski trails, picnic areas, shelters and mountain bike trails. Take in the

confluence of the Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers from 500 feet above them. Continue on through the park to Hwy 35 north.

BA 0.3 County A ends at stop sign. Turn right on county X through town.

BA 1.4 Bagley Bottoms on the left with small boat access provided by the Upper Miss. Refuge.

BA 1.5 Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park on the left.

BA 2.8 Gravel turnout on the left.

WYALUSING, WISCONSIN – 146.8

WY 0.4 Wyalusing Public Boat Landing on the left. There is a shelter, facilities, parking and the boat launch.

WY 0.9 There is a large outcrop on the left side of the road containing fossils.

WY 3.0 The entrance to Wyalusing State Park is on the left. This is one of the best parks along the Refuge.

WYALUSING STATE PARK

It is just a short walk to view the confluence of the Mississippi River and the Wisconsin River from the top of the 358 foot bluff. There is a campground with excellent facilities, an interpretive center and historical markers. There are round mounds typical of the Hopewell Culture as well as mounds in animal shapes from the regional Effigy Mound Culture. Covering 2, 628 acres, Wyalusing provides ample opportunity for bird and other wildlife observation all seasons of the year. There is a canoe trail on the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR which is accessible from the Park. Rental canoes are available. The 24 miles of trails include hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing and nature trails. There is a trail for people with disabilities as well. There are several Indian mounds in the park.

The Upper Mississippi River NW&FR parallels Wyalusing at the east edge of the Mississippi. The Refuge lands in the Mississippi River are part of the extension of the delta of the Wisconsin River. A 9.4 mile canoe trail goes north through the delta almost to the Wisconsin River, turns and goes down river on two routes: one stays on the Wisconsin side of the main channel. The other crosses the main channel and goes through the backwaters through Methodist Lake to the Sny Magil Access on the Iowa side of the Mississippi. It passes by the hundreds of Indian mounds at Sny Magil before returning up river to the dock at Wyalusing. Canoe and kayak trails such as this open up the wonders of the backwater areas. Fish and wildlife are closer to the observer than normal in the Refuge. Progression along the trail opens up scene after scene of natural beauty. Birds and wildflowers vary throughout the season and provide an incentive to study the landscape.

WY 3.9 Junction with county C. Take a left on county C, part of Great River Road.

WY 4.0 Wyalusing Wilderness Scientific Area access is to the left.

WY 7.1 Junction with Hwys 18 and 35. Turn left towards Prairie du Chien. There is a public boat landing straight ahead (across 18 and 35) about five miles.

WY 7.5 There is a Wisconsin DNR boat landing where the highway crosses the Wisconsin river on the left.

WY 7.6 Bridge over the Wisconsin river.

WY 8.4 Junction with Hwy 60. Continue on Hwys 35 and 18.

WY 12.1 Prairie du Chien city limits.

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN, WISCONSIN – 170.9

Prairie du Chien (population 6,018) is the second oldest city in Wisconsin. It has a number of attractions including a restored Victorian mansion, Villa Louis, on St. Feriole Island. The remains of the American Fort Crawford are located just behind the Villa. The fort was built, then burned by the British and then rebuilt. It was later rebuilt on higher ground. The Prairie Villa Rendezvous is held here every Father's Day. Don't miss the world of stuffed mammals and fish at Cabela's at the north end of town.

A tour of Villa Louis provides an insight into how well the 19th century businessmen of the fur trade lived. The museum on the grounds of the Villa is one of the best for documenting the fur trade in the Upper Midwest. The terrace – abandoned floodplain - created when the Mississippi was about fifty feet higher, and the delta created by the confluence of the Wisconsin and Mississippi rivers, have long been used by human beings as residence, trading station, agriculture and access to river transportation and trade. These terraces are found all along the Upper Mississippi River.

Follow 35 north along the river to Genoa for one of the more pleasant segments of the trip. The river is visible all the way with opportunities to stop at the little towns of Lynxville, Ferryville, DeSoto and Victory. They provide ample opportunity for a stretch and to grab a snack. You get a clear view of Lock and Dam 9.

PR 2.0 Junction with Hwys 18 and 60 going west across the bridge on E. Black Hawk avenue to McGregor and Effigy Mounds on the Iowa side. Hwy 27 goes right and east across the ridges of the unglaciated area. Stay on Hwy 35 north.

PR 2.4 Take a left to Villa Louis and the river front park on Feriole Island.

PR 3.4 Cabela's is on the left. Cabela's is a large retail outlet for all kinds of outdoor life and hunting gear. What makes the store so interesting is the wide range of mounted wild animals on display, including the major species of trout and salmon. It is well worth the time to stop and walk through the store.

PR 9.0 Frenchman's Landing with public camping.

PR 10.3 Turn out on the left. Hwy 35 runs right next to the wall of the bluff on the right with the railroad tracks and river on the left. There is a retaining wall to try to stop rock slides from blocking the highway. The Mississippi is in a narrows here, with bluffs on both sides holding it in.

PR 12.6 Gordon's Bay Boat Landing. There is parking and facilities.

LOCK AND DAM 9

PR 14.0 Lock and Dam 9. Hubbard's Fishing Float is across the river. There is a bucket you raise on a pool to signal the Fishing Float that you would like to be picked up and

taken to the float. There is a charge for fishing. They will also provide the tackle and bait for fishing for walleyes, sauger and sunfish.

PR 14.4 Gravel turn out on the left. There are no facilities.

PR 15.3 Wayside rest with facilities and a historical marker describing log rafts on the Upper Mississippi river on the right. There is a shelter.

PR 16.6 City limits of Lynxville, Wisconsin.

LYNXVILLE, WISCONSIN – 187.5

LY 0.1 Whitney's campground is on the right. The Blackhawk boat harbor is on the left.

LY 2.2 Turn out on left. Lynxville boat landing on the left.

LY 2.8 Accessible fishing pier on the left.

LY 3.2 Cold Spring Landing on the left with turnout. It is maintained by the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR.

LY 5.7 Junction with Hwy 171 on the right. Continue north on Hwy 35.

LY 7.6 Road to Sugar Creek Camp Park on right.

LY 8.0 City limits of Ferryville.

FERRYVILLE, WISCONSIN – 195.5

FE 0.3 Observation Deck on the left. On any given November day you may see 100,000 waterfowl resting and feeding on this stretch of the Mississippi.

FE 0.6 Ferryville Boat Landing on the left.

FE 3.0 Olde Tyme Quilt Shop three miles to the right.

FE 3.6 Rush Creek State Natural Area on the right. There is a parking lot. Hunting is permitted in season.

FE 4.9 Turn out on the left.

FE 5.6 Junction with Hwy 82 west. Hwy 82 crosses the river to Lansing, Iowa via the Black Hawk B

ridge. There are boat landings along Hwy 82 in the river bottom (see Lansing description). Continue north on Hwy 35.

FE 7.7 De Soto, Wisconsin (population 366) city limits with Boat Landing on left.

DE SOTO, WISCONSIN – 203.2

DE 0.7 Wisconsin State Historical Society marker on the right with a large turnout. The first Winnebago Chief, Win-no-Shik was buried near here. He fought with the British against the Americans in the War of 1812. The town of De Soto was built over an Indian burial ground.

DE 0.9 Junction where Hwy 82 leaves Hwy 35 to Red Mound and West Prairie.

DE 1.8 Artesian well on the right.

DE 2.8 Mississippi Sports and Recreation Landing. There is a Wisconsin historical marker on the left turnout describing the Battle of Bad Axe in the Black Hawk Wars. Members of Black Hawks band tried to swim the river to Iowa at this point. Many men, women and children were killed by their pursuers.

DE 3.4 Black Hawk Landing is to the left along the river, with Black Hawk Park, Green Lake, Peck Lake and Battle Island. There is a county landing, the Black Hawk Upper Landing, Black Hawk Park Main and South, a Corps of Engineers Recreation Area Campground and a handicapped accessible fishing pier.

DE 3.9 Victory Landing

VICTORY, WISCONSIN – 207.1

VI 2.8 Wisconsin historical marker on the left with a turnout. It marks the site of Red Bird's village, the first Battle of Bad Axe in 1827.

VI 3.3 Bad Axe Landing on the left.

VI 3.4 Bad Axe River.

VI 3.6 Genoa National Fish Hatchery.

VI 6.2 Dairyland Power Plant, Genoa Generating Station #3. There are peregrine falcon nest boxes on the smoke stack.

VI 7.1 Lock and Dam 8 on the left. Clements Fishing Float is across the channel. A signal from the Wisconsin shore will bring a boat for transportation to the float. A fee is charged for fishing and for equipment and bait.

VI 7.3 Genoa city limits.

LOCK AND DAM 8

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

GENOA, WISCONSIN – 214.4

An easily accessible viewer platform at Lock and Dam 8 is a good reason to stop a while in Genoa. Watch the tows and boats lock through. A fishing and picnicking area is located next to the river. You can visit a commercial fishing barge for as little as \$6 here—one of only four in the Refuge (a fifth is outside the Refuge at Alma and does not require crossing the River). The fishing barges provide access to fishing in the main channel of the river below the lock and dam. Check out the local fish market.

GE 0.0 Genoa Boat Landing on the left at the harbor. Engh's Boat Livery provides service and rentals.

GE 2.6 Turn to Old Settler's Overlook on the right. There is an impressive view of three states from this 449 foot overlook which is just a short walk from the parking lot. There are picnic tables and facilities. **There is a steep drive to the bluff top. Note the dates for when the road is open.**

GE 3.7 Scenic Overlook on right. Coon Creek delta is on the left. There are waterfowl, shore birds and eagles in this area in the spring and the fall.

GE 5.7 Town of Stoddard.

STODDARD, WISCONSIN – 220.1

Located just a few miles south of La Crosse, this little town is all that remains of the farming and fishing community that existed here before the lock and dam at Genoa flooded 18,000 acres of Mississippi River bottoms. Stoddard is an excellent place for bird watching, camping or sightseeing. Several islands above Stoddard have been augmented under the Environmental Management Program (EMP). The EMP is a Federal-state partnership designed to restore, protect, and monitor the natural resources of the river. Building new islands is a major part of that program. The islands provide feeding, resting and breeding habitat for fish as well as areas where aquatic plants can take root and thrive. Ducks and other wildlife thrive on the resulting new wetlands. The islands built at Stoddard replace those lost by earlier flooding and wave action.

ST 0.4 Stoddard Park and Boat Landing to the left through town. The landing has been created in cooperation between the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR and the town of Stoddard.

ST 0.6 Water's Edge Motel Landing on the left on the north end of Stoddard.

ST 1.3 Viewing turnout on left. No facilities. There are rafts of ducks and flocks of swans along this stretch of the river during spring and fall. The river is closely confined between the bluffs on either side of the river.

ST 2.3 Turnout on left. No facilities.

ST 2.9 Turnout on left. There is a display panel describing the Upper Mississippi River Refuges.

ST 3.2 Shady Maple Walk Down and turnout on left.

ST 3.9 Turnout on left.

ST 5.2 Goose Island County Park. Goose Island County Park has more than 400 campsites, plus canoe and boat rentals and nature trails. There are several boat landings. The lower half of the Island is closed to hunting. There is a Goose Island Canoe trail which is signed clockwise around the island. It is 6 miles long and takes an average canoeist about 4 hours to complete. It can be accessed from any of the three landings. Goose Island has long been a favorite place for warm season camping. Records indicate the mound building Woodland Indians (500 B.C.-1100 A.D.) used the western edge of the island as a summer campsite. The Island was also used by the Oneota (A.D. 1100-1600) and the Ho Chunk when they were displaced from eastern Wisconsin in the early 1800s. The interpretive trail starts at the flagpole on the island. It has cattails, geese, logs and nests, trees, including the Wisconsin Champion River Birch, ducks, an artesian well, an overlook deck and lots of fungi. It also has big bluestem (prairie grass), a pond, meadow and oaks and maples. It is open all year round. It is an excellent introduction to the variety of bottomland habitat along the Upper Mississippi River.

ST 6.5 La Crosse, Wisconsin.

LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN – 226.6

La Crosse (population 51,818) is the largest city on the upper Mississippi River between the Quad Cities and Minneapolis-St. Paul. There is a schedule-filling range of activities. Stop down at Riverside Park and take a trip on a paddleboat. Visit the

Riverside Museum for local history and area wildlife. Reflecting the German heritage of the area, there is an Oktoberfest held each year. Drive to the top of Grandad's Bluff for a panoramic view of the city. Valley View Mall and the associated strip malls provide hours of shopping.

The terraces along the Mississippi River at La Crosse have been the center of Native American activity for centuries. They were based upon the highly renewable resources of the Mississippi River bottoms, including fish, mussels, turtles, waterfowl, deer, buffalo, elk and other game animals. Corn, squash and beans were planted on the terraces and on the sand islands in the summer.

LA 0.4 Junction of Hwy 35 and Hwys 14 and 61 east. Continue on Hwy 35 north. The route turns into Mormon Coulee Road as it passes through the east side of La Crosse.

LA 3.7 Stay on Hwy 35 north. Angle right at West Avenue South. Hwys 14 and 61 go to the left at this junction.

SIDE TRIP: LA CROSSE WATERFRONT PARKS AND LANDINGS (LC)

LC 0.0 Stay to the left on Hwys 33, 14 west and 61 north where they meet Hwy 35 north.

LC 0.5 Gunderson Lutheran Hospital and Clinic.

LC 0.6 Hwy 33 east turns right. Stay on Hwys 14 and 61. A full left at the lights takes you to the Green Island Landing and the Municipal Boat Harbor.

LC 1.5 Hwy 53 north begins here. Follow it through down town La Crosse. Hwys 16 and 61 north split off to the left across the bridge.

LC 1.8 Continue on Hwy 53 north. A left turn on State Street takes you to Riverfront Park. There are steamboat rides on the La Crosse Queen.

LC 3.5 Continue on Hwy 53 north. A left turn takes you to Logan Park and Logan Park Landing. **LC 3.8** Continue on Hwy 53 north. A left on Clinton Street takes you to the Clinton Street Landing, and the Clinton Street Landing West, Panke's Boat Livery and across to French Island with several more marinas and a boat landing.

LC 4.0 Continue on Hwy 53 north. A left takes you to Black River Beach Park.

LC 4.6 Black's Cove Marina on left.

LC 5.1 Hwy 35 joins Hwy 53. Continue north on Hwy 35.

RETURN TO HWY 35 NORTH

LA 4.4 Hwy 33 east and Hwy 33 west cross Hwy 35 north. Stay on Hwy 35 north.

LA 5.1 Take a right to drive to the top of Grandad's Bluff. It is just a short walk out to the overlook for a view of the entire La Crosse area. The Bluffs along the La Crosse area and behind the lookout are the highest along the Upper Mississippi, some at more than 700 feet. The Bluffs in this area are composed of Jordan Sandstone. These large beds of quartz have oxidized into brown, yellow and orange. The formation is up to 175 feet tall in this area.

Take a left turn to visit the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, for the most complete background on the Native Americans of the Upper Mississippi.

LA 6.3 Wisconsin River Trail for biking and hiking. It is an asphalt trail.

LA 8.5 Junction of Hwy 35 north and Hwy 53 north and south. Stay on 35.

LA 8.8 Junction with I-90 east and west. Continue on north on Hwy 35.

ONALASKA, WISCONSIN – 235.4

There are a number of boat ramps in Onalaska which provide access to either the Black River or Lake Onalaska, part of the backwaters of the Mississippi. There is the Upper Mississippi Environmental Science Center (UMESC) near the airport which has major responsibilities for research and monitoring of the river. The La Crosse District Office of the Upper Mississippi River NWFR is located just west of Valley View Mall. There is information about this section of the river and displays of the fish and wildlife in the area.

LA CROSSE DISTRICT OFFICE - UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE AND FISH REFUGE

SIDE TRIP: LA CROSSE DISTRICT OFFICE (LDO)

LDO 0.0 Turn right onto I-90 East.

LDO 1.4 Right turn off of interstate at Exit 4, Hwy 53 & 157, turning right on 157 E.

LDO 2.2 Left turn at traffic lights on Hwy 16 E.

LDO 2.5 Left turn on Braund Street.

LDO 2.7 Right turn on PH Street.

LDO 2.8 Left turn on Lester Street at stop sign.

LDO 3.0 The La Crosse District office and visitor's center is at 555 Lester on your right. Return to Hwy 35 north by reversing your route and exiting I-90 west at Hwy 35 north.

RETURN TO HWY 35 NORTH

COULEE REGION CHAPTER FRIENDS OF THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER REFUGES

The Coulee Region chapter of the Friends of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges is located here. They have been involved in a number of conservation projects in the area, including the Upper Halfway Creek Marsh Project. The project's goals include reduction of sediment reach Halfway Creek Marsh, to restore wetlands and to increase opportunities for wildlife observation, environmental education and interpretation.

ON 0.0 Continue north on Hwy 35 at I-90.

ON 1.3 Fisherman's Road landing on left.

- ON 1.4** Hwy 17 east on the right.
- ON 2.2** Turnout on left. There is an overview of the Refuge with Bell Island at the end of the La Crosse Airport runway.
- ON 2.6** Turnout on left. There is an overview of the Refuge with Rosebud Island.
- ON 3.8** County hwy Z goes to Bryce Prairie on the left. (See Brice Prairie Side Trip below).

SIDE TRIP: BRICE PRAIRIE (BP)

- BP 0.0** Junction of Hwy 35 north with Z on left.
- BP 0.1** Bear left on Z. There is a Great River Road State Trail access point. Upper and Lower Halfway Creek Marsh is on both sides of the road.
- BP 0.6** Railroad crossing.
- BP 1.8** Junction of Z with ZB. Turn to the left.
- BP 3.4** Upper Brice Prairie Boat Landing. There is a large parking lot, with boat ramps and facilities. The Landing is cooperatively sponsored by the Town on Onalaska, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, La Crosse County, the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR and the Brice Prairie Conservation Association.
- BP 3.6** Junction ZB and ZN. Turn left on ZB and continue on. This is an area of residential housing along the river, interspersed with boat landings which give access to the Lake Onalaska Closed Area (2,356 acres).
- BP 4.4** Right turn (no stop) on ZB.
- BP 5.2** Left on Z.
- BP 6.0** Right turn to Lytle's Landing. This is an unmarked turn. There is an association lodge on the northeast corner at the intersection. There is parking with access to the Black River, the delta area and the bike trail.
- BP 6.2** Lytle's Road crosses railroad tracks.
- BP 6.2** Cross the bike trail and turn left to parking lot.
- BP 6.3** Lytle's Canoe Landing.
- BP 6.6** Return to Z. Turn left.
- BP 7.7** Keep going straight on Z. Do not turn off to the right on ZB.
- BP 8.5** Keep going straight on Z. Do not turn off on ZZ.
- BP 10.1** The Halfway Creek Reclamation project is to the left on ZN. There is an observation deck, handicap accessible, and a dike to walk around on.
- BP 11.7** Go straight on Z.
- BP 12.3** Turn left on ZM to Hwy 35 north. Cross the bike trail. Go right or left on Z to Hwy 35 north.

RETURN TO HWY 35 NORTH LOG

- ON 5.6** Cross Hwy 53 south.
- ON 5.9** Merge left on to Hwys 35 and 53 north to Trempealeau.
- ON 8.1** New Amsterdam exit at McHugh Road to the right.
- ON 9.9** Take exit to Hwy 35 to Trempealeau on the right, then turn left under Hwy 53.
- ON 11.3** County hwy XX to New Amsterdam on the left.
- ON 12.3** Tank Creek boat landing on left.

ON 17.2 Trempealeau city limits.

TREMPEALEAU, WISCONSIN – 252.6

The presence of Lock and Dam 6 just in front of the old Trempealeau Hotel is one of the real attractions of this little river town. You can lunch on the porch and watch the towboats lock through. Visit the shops near the hotel or walk the street along the river front. Just up river from the town is Sullivan's supper club. Built at the edge of the river, it is accessible by car or tie up your boat and walk up to the restaurant for an excellent dinner with a touch of Old Ireland. Perrot State Park which starts just beyond Sullivan's, has Indian mounds and historical sites dating back to the earliest explorers on the river. Mound builders from the Woodland culture left their unique structures. Some excavations have found artifacts from the Hopewell Culture of 2,000 years ago.

Visitors can climb to the top of Trempealeau Mountain on well groomed trails through one of the famous "goat prairies". The Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge, located just up the river from Perrot State Park is one of the most accessible refuges along the river. The refuge offers many opportunities to view wildlife by car, bike or on foot. It has a self-guided wildlife auto tour, an observation deck, hiking trails and gravel dikes that are great for biking. A side trip through the Refuge is well worth it anytime of the year. It is most spectacular during the spring and fall when waterfowl migration is at its peak.

TR 0.4 Lock and Dam 6 to the left.

SIDE TRIP: LONG LAKE CANOE TRAIL AND ROUND LAKE LANDING (LL)

The Long Lake Canoe Trail, and others like it up and down the river in the Refuge, provides an excellent opportunity to observe the birds, animals, aquatic and plant life of the backwaters. The Refuge is the primary habitat on the Mississippi Flyway. In the spring and in the fall, literally hundreds of species of birds and butterflies come through the bottoms. A canoe provides a quiet means of getting a glimpse of this abundance of wildlife. The summer residents of this area include warblers, egrets and herons, black terns, Virginia rails, a variety of ducks, eagles and red-shouldered hawks. A large variety of woodpeckers including the woodland giant, the Pileated, are here year around. There are also turtles in several varieties, deer, raccoons, beaver and muskrats.

LL 0.0 Turn left on Fremont Street towards Lock and Dam 6.

LL 0.2 Cross the railroad tracks. A right turn takes you to the observation deck at Lock and Dam 6. If you turn right at the Lock and then left down a dirt road and into an open yard by an old fishing shack you can get a boat ride across to the fishing float across the channel. The cost is \$10. If you turn to the left on Lake Road you continue on through an area of cabins, marinas and restaurants to the Long Lake Landing and Long Lake Canoe Trail head.

LL 1.3 A left turn takes you to the Trempealeau Lakes Complex. There are several landings on small lakes maintained by the Wisconsin DNR and the La Crosse District of the Upper Mississippi River NW&FR.

LL 1.5 Take a right turn into the parking lot of the Long Lake Landing. There is one ramp, an information kiosk, but no facilities. The canoe trail is a cooperative venture between the Refuge, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The trail is 4.5 miles long and takes about 3 hours for an average trip. Trail markers are posted for counter-clockwise travel. Every major intersection of waterways has a canoe trail sign. The map can be used to tell where you are along the route. Water levels vary according to season. Return to Hwy 35 into Trempealeau.

RETURN TO HWY 35 NORTH LOG

TR 0.9 Junction of Hwy 35 north in the center of town. Hwy 35 goes to the right to Centerville, following the Great River Road. If you want to visit the town or go into Perrot State Part, turn left towards the Mississippi (2 blocks) to visit the famous Trempealeau Hotel, walk about the Mississippi above the Lock and Dam or visit the art shops along the street. Turn right at the River to Perrot State Park. Follow the River north. Sullivan's Restaurant on the left. The view from the restaurant is excellent. There is a boat landing for customers coming in off the river. Enter Perrot State Park. It is the site of the fort built by Perrot and company, early French explorers and fur traders through this area. Park Visitor's entrance. There is a required fee if you drive into the park. There is an Indian mound with a parking lot just past the Visitor's entrance on the left. There is an overlook on the left with a display of the different species of fish in the river. Trempealeau Mountain is on the left across the slough. The trail along the river is an excellent site for spring viewing of the 35 or more species of Warblers that nest or migrate through the area. There is camping, facilities, a nature trail, hiking (steep dirt trail) up the 524 foot Brady's Bluff, canoeing and fishing. Turn right on Hwy 35.

TR 5.5 Four-way stop at Centerville where Hwy 35 meets Hwys 54 and 93 East.

TR 8.7 Turn left on West Prairie Road to go to the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge.

TR 9.9 Entrance to Trempealeau Refuge on the right. The end/beginning of the Great River State Bike Trail (GRSBT) is in this small parking lot (no facilities). You can drive into the Trempealeau Refuge and begin the bike trail from there. There is only one entrance to the Refuge, so you will return to the West Prairie Road entrance when you complete the circle tour. Return back down West Prairie Road to Hwy 35.

TR 11.1 West Prairie Road meets Hwy 35. Turn left on the Great River Road.

TREMPEALEAU NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

The 6,200 acre Refuge lies within the Mississippi Flyway. It's southern boundary is the railroad dike constructed along the refuge's southern boundary. Three miles of dikes and four water control structures have been constructed to allow manipulation of water levels. The result is an isolated backwater and sand prairie area, providing resting and feeding areas for waterfowl and other birds. Native grasses have been restored.

Beetles have been introduced to control purple loosestrife. Invasive alien plants like black locust trees and buckthorn are cut out.

The Trempealeau Refuge is a visitor's joy. There is a driving loop for the observation of prairie habitat and the birds attracted to it. There is a viewing deck for observation of waterfowl. There is a visitor's center with a mock-up of the Refuge and information on its wildlife. Although the GRSBT literally begins and ends at the entrance to the Refuge, it can be continued through the refuge, coming out at Marshland (see Log below). Eventually it will connect with the Winona, Minnesota system of trails. Several miles of dikes can be walked to observe birds and mammals and amphibians. There are hiking trails through the bottom lands. The Refuge is used extensively for environmental education of school children and for celebrations of International Migratory Bird Day in the spring, with education, entertainment and bird banding.

Several EMP projects carried out by the Army Corps of Engineers have enhanced the effectiveness of the Refuge as a resting and nesting place for migratory birds. The water control structures control the water levels in the ponds, making it possible to create optimal conditions for wildlife.

SIDE TRIP: TREMPEALEAU NATIONAL WILDLIFE AND REFUGE (TN)

TN 0.0 Take a right here into the Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge. This is also the terminus of the GRSBT. The trail actually comes to life again if you turn into the Refuge, follow the trail on through and out to Hwy 35 north again at Marshland.

TN 0.3 On your right, you will find an information kiosk. There is a display map showing Refuge roads, trails, and other points of interest, as well as Refuge brochures. The guide booklet for the wildlife auto tour is available at this location. The one-way gravel road to the right is the start of the wildlife auto tour and the continuation of the Great River State Bike Trail. It will take you to the Prairie View hiking trail, Refuge office and the observation deck.

TN 1.0 From the paved road, the first road to your left takes you to Kieps Island, the boat landing, and Kieps dike which accesses two of the main pools on the Refuge. This area is an excellent bird watching spot for waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds and eagles.

TN 1.1 The Refuge maintenance buildings are on the right.

TN 1.2 The Refuge office and Visitor's Center, which is only open days during the week, is on the left beyond the parking lot. There is information on the Refuge as well as a topographic replica showing the driving and walking trails. There are books and t-shirts for sale. Wildlife Drive comes in from the right.

TN 1.3 Observation Deck with parking and facilities. There is a telescope for viewing wildlife. Bird identification panels are on display at the deck to assist you in recognizing the birds you might see. To the right of the observation deck, a gentle, self-guided woodlands trail (1.5 miles) takes you through the forest. Brief interpretive panels provide the hiker with information about forest ecology. A spur trail leading to Pine Creek dike rewards spring time bird watchers with an opportunity to catch a glimpse of migrant warblers and other songbirds using the Mississippi River corridor. You can follow Wildlife Drive around to where it comes out at the information kiosk, or return to the Refuge entrance the way you came.

RETURN TO HWY 35 NORTH LOG

- TR 11.1** Intersection with Hwy 35 north. Turn left on the Great River Road.
- TR 12.7** Crossing the Trempealeau River. The Nathan Wolfe Wildlife Memorial Area is adjacent to the river with a boat access.
- TR 13.1** Marshland Road access to the Trempealeau Refuge on left. The Refuge portion of the GRSBT comes out here. There is a small parking lot just past the residence on the right. The road is a gravel dike. Hikers and bikers can access the Delta Point area from this road. Like many other areas on the Refuge, Delta Point offers visitors a chance to enjoy the solitude and sounds of nature on the Refuge. There is a locked gate here which keeps vehicles out. It is only unlocked when the main entrance to the Refuge is under water.
- TR 13.3** Crossing railroad tracks. County P to Dodge on right.
- TR 15.5** Wayside on the right. Facilities are available but it is closed in fall and winter.
- TR 16.1** Eagle's nest through the trees on the left. There is a view across the bottoms and the river to Sugarloaf on the horizon on the south.
- TR 17.3** River Bottoms Road access to the Refuge is on the left. Access is by foot or bike only. A display map shows the Refuge roads, trails and other points of interest. The Bob Drieslein Hardwood Forest adjacent to the parking area was recently replanted (and named) with 300 swamp white oak seedlings.
- TR 17.7** Town of Buffalo on right.
- TR 20.3** Przybylski access on the left. There is a small gravel parking area. You may be able to follow the dike across on foot to the Old Stone Bridge sometime in the future. Right now it is illegal to cross the railroad tracks. Eventually the trail will provide access to Winona's Aghaming Park and Latsch Island. Two Refuges and a bottomland park come together here, providing a bird watcher's paradise.
- TR 20.9** Hwy 25 to Winona across the bridge.

SIDE TRIP: LATSCH ISLAND (LI)

- LI 0.0** Turn left on Hwy 25 to Winona.
- LI 0.6** Mertes' Slough Landing. There is access to the slough from a paved parking lot. Only non-motorized or electric trolling motors are to be used in the slough. There is access to both open and closed areas for hunting and/or birding (closed during duck hunting season). There is fishing from the dock in the slough or along the back channel. There is a special driving access area for the handicapped. A permit and a key from the Winona District Office permits vehicles to drive down to a small parking lot and fishing point. Anglers can walk down to the area as well.
- LI 0.7** Crossing the back channel.
- LI 0.9** Dick's Marine turn on the right. There is a public boat launch area and a marina. This is also the turn for Latsch Island. There are houseboats, a swimming beach, beach walking, views of Winona and Sugarloaf and the Old Wagon Wheel Bridge, now restored as the John Latch Memorial Bridge which gives access to Aghaming Park. The Park is a large, undeveloped backwater area which can be used for hiking, boating, hunting, fishing and bird watching. Watch for poison ivy. The area is generally flooded in the

spring. The bridge connects to the dike trail to the Przybyiski access on the Wisconsin side.

LI 1.0 Foot of bridge over Mississippi to Winona.

LI 1.5 Fourth Street in Winona. See description of Winona, above. Left turn to Winona District and Upper Mississippi River NW&FR office.

RETURN TO WISCONSIN HWY 35 LOG

TR 23.7 Breezy Point Marina on left.

TR 25.3 Dam Saloon Fishing Float and Lock and Dam 5A on the left. The Fishing Float is easily accessed here. There are complete fishing supplies available. The Fishing Float is a great place for an introduction to walleye and sauger fishing below the dam. A fee is charged.

There is no access or overview at the Lock and Dam.

TR 29.9 South boundary of Fountain City.

FOUNTAIN CITY, WISCONSIN – 282.5

Fountain City is a river town in which you can walk the streets past the old buildings, many of which have been lovingly restored. Visit wood carving shops or buy some newly chipped arrowheads or spear points. Visit the old cemetery and check the names and dates. There are several places to eat including the fully restored Monarch Tavern.

FO 1.6 Wisconsin Hwy 95 to Arcadia on the right. The highway goes up to the top of the rounded hills and inland bluffs which are such a beautiful part of the Driftless area, i.e., the part of the Upper Midwest which was not over run by the last several glaciers. This is a drive for some breathtaking views of the surrounding farmlands.

FO 2.0 Fountain City Service Base of the Army Corps of Engineers on the left next to the road. The dredge and other equipment to keep the river open and the Lock and Dams working, is located here.

FO 2.1 Northern edge of Fountain City. The roads run under steep, south-facing bluffs covered with juniper.

FO 4.5 Merrick State Park is on the left. There are two units here. There is camping right along the slough. Use the State of Wisconsin state park reservation system. Day trippers can park and walk around the area. A fee is required.

FO 6.4 Hwy 88 to Gilmanton on the right.

FO 7.5 Prairie Moon Garden and Museum on the left. It contains local native sculpture.

SIDE TRIP: PRAIRIE MOON PARK AND BUFFALO CITY (BC)

BC 0.0 Left turn off of Hwy 35 onto Prairie Moon Road.

BC 0.4 Prairie Moon Park and Museum. There are a number of “primitive art” sculptures in the park, with picnic tables. They are the creation of a local farmer who got into the work late in life.

BC 0.6 Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railroad tracks.

BC 2.2 Prairie Moon Road meets County 00. Turn left and follow OO through Buffalo City.

BC 3.8 Left turn to Upper Spring Lake Landing.

BC 4.8 County OO meets County O. Stay on County OO Buffalo City landing on the left.

BC 5.0 Buffalo City is situated right along a rather large slough or back channel. Homes are on one side of the road and docks and houseboats on the other. This is an area of relaxed, river side living with large lots, old cabins, new housing and converted cabins. Mixed blood Native Americans report in family biographies that when they were forced to relocate from along the river near Red Wing, that they went back down river, caught Steamboats and immigrated to the Buffalo County area under German names.

BC 7.0 Left into parking lot for Belvidere Slough Landing.

BC 7.8 Return to Hwy 35, passing through Lizzy Paul's Ponds. These Refuge lands are good for watching ducks and other birds and wildlife. Hunting is permitted in season so care must be taken.

RETURN TO WISCONSIN HWY 35 LOG

FO 9.5 Private wetland restoration on the left.

FO 10.2 Cochrane City, Wisconsin city limits.

COCHRANE CITY, WISCONSIN -2.7

CO 0.1 Buffalo City to the left and the Buffalo City Landing.

CO 1.7 Junction County N on right. To the left is Belvidere Slough Landing.

CO 3.3 Wayside rest on the left.

CO 3.8 County OO to Belvidere Landing and to Buffalo City.

CO 4.4 Great River Harbor Landing on the left. There is a marina with private camping and houseboats for rent.

CO 7.4 Alma, Wisconsin city limits.

ALMA, WISCONSIN - 300.1

Visit the Alma Marina and Beach for boat launching or swimming. There is a commercial fishing dock at Alma where you can buy breakfast or lunch. Rieck's Lake Park has a large concentration of tundra swans as they migrate through in the fall of the year. Follow the signs in town to Buena Vista Park. The view from the 540 foot bluff is spectacular, overlooking the town, Lock and Dam 4 and the Finger Lakes area. You can look down on the eagles riding the thermals from this vantage point.

AL 0.0 Alma, Wisconsin.

AL 0.1 Boat Landing below dam.

AL 0.2 Buena Vista Park turn to the right. Lock and Dam 4 to the left. There is an observation platform, a boat landing and the Alma Fishing Float across the Mississippi.

LOCK AND DAM 4

AL 2.0 Alma Marine and Boat Rental on the right, with the Tank Pond Landing. Note the large pile of sand from the river.

AL 2.8 Hwy 37 to Mondovi on the right.

AL 3.4 Rieck's Lakeside Park on the right, with an observation deck to watch tundra swans and other waterfowl in season. There are full facilities with camp sites.

AL 3.6 Buffalo River Landing on the left. Peterson Lake is an area closed to hunting.

AL 4.0 Beef Slough historical marker on the left. There is approximately six miles of open lake along this stretch of Hwy 35.

AL 8.7 Nelson, Wisconsin city limits.

NELSON, WISCONSIN – 308.8

Nelson, Wisconsin (population 395) at one time was called Nelson's Landing or Buttsville, and was a warehouse for raftsmen. Stop at the Nelson Cheese Factory on the edge of town. Not only Wisconsin's namesake product, but ice cream, maple syrup and other snacks are available as well.

NE 0.6 The Nelson Cheese Factory. This is a must stop for Wisconsin cheese, ice cream, cheese curds, maple syrup and a host of other goodies. They have added a small seating area recently. There is seating outside when the weather permits.

NE 0.7 Route 25 to Wabasha through the Chippewa Bottoms with boat access to Big Lake and to the Nelson-Trevino Research Natural Area at Beef Slough Landing, Pontoon Slough Landing and Indian Slough Landing. Cross to Minnesota here to return to the Road Trip starting point at the Chippewa Overlook above Reads Landing.

NE 2.1 Turn to the right and continue on Hwy 25 and 35.

NE 3.7 Gravel access to Tiffany Bottoms on the right.

NE 4.6 Gravel access to Tiffany Bottoms on the left.

NE 4.7 Gravel Access to Nelson-Trevino Research Natural Area and Chippewa Bottoms National Natural Landmark. The narrow gravel trail begins in the Tiffany Bottoms and leads to the Nelson-Trevino area on the south side of the BNSF railroad tracks. There is a small, graveled parking area here with no facilities or maps.

NE 4.8 Chippewa River bridge. There is camping to the right with a boat launch and hiking trails. There is some 10,000 acres in the Tiffany Bottoms, owned and managed by the Wisconsin DNR. At least one writer of Mississippi River history reports that this is an area sacred to the Lakota Sioux and that the area is still used for the gathering of sacred plants and for traditional ceremonies. It is high on the list of possible burial grounds for the famous chiefs in the Wapasha lineage.

CHIPPEWA RIVER – 313.6

The Chippewa River is the terminus of the Road Trip around the Upper Mississippi River Refuges. An annotated bibliography follows which can provide additional information and understanding about this unique and fascinating part of U.S. natural history and culture.