***All-American Road designation – talking points***

**National Scenic Byways**

* National Scenic Byways program – voluntary, community-based program administered by Federal Highway Administration
* Goal is “to recognize, protect and promote America’s most outstanding roads”
* All MRPC states have National Scenic Byway designation for some portions of the Great River Road
* National Scenic Byways must meet criteria for regional significance within one of six “intrinsic qualities”: scenic, natural, historic, recreational, archaeological, or cultural
* Byway must also demonstration strong community support and develop a corridor management plan that describes in detail the preservation, marketing, and improvement strategies for the byway
* As of 2006, there are 126 roads from 44 states that are designated as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads

**All-American Road designation**

* Higher level of distinction than National Scenic Byway designation – fewer All-American Roads that have received this designation
* Must meet the same criteria as a National Scenic Byway but possess multiple intrinsic qualities that are of national significance
* Byway also must be considered a destination and reason for travel unto itself
* 8 of 10 Great River Road states have applied for All-American Road designation – each state applied separately under a multi-jurisdiction nomination
* The Great River Road is a key economic driver of the region, bringing in millions in tourism dollars to Mississippi River states every year
* All-American Road status brings new attention to the Great River Road and will attract more visitors to cities and towns along the route

**About the Great River Road**

* National Scenic Byway that follows the Mississippi River for 3,000 miles through 10 states, from northern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico
* The Great River Road allows visitors to experience the rich history, culture, and natural beauty of the Mississippi River region in each of these states
* Network of more than 80 Interpretive Centers (museums, historical sites and more) along the river that tell the stories of the river’s ecology, people, and notable places
* Visitors can also discover historic sites, locks & dams, and scenic overlooks along the way