



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge
51 E. Fourth Street - Room 101
Winona, Minnesota 55987

April 23, 2020

Wisconsin Mississippi River Parkway Commission
PO Box 171
De Soto, WI 53624

Re: Great River Road All-American Road Designation

Chairwoman Sherry Quamme and Commission Members,

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is pleased to provide our support for designation of the Great River Road as an All-American Road by the Federal Highway Administration. The Great River Road is absolutely deserving of this designation. Since 1938 the ten-state national Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MRPC) has worked to preserve, promote and enhance the Great River Road National Scenic Byway benefitting communities and travelers along the Mississippi River. The Great River Road meets All-American Road designation criteria, because it facilitates our access to numerous areas of National Significance such as National Wildlife Refuges and other places of beauty and cultural and historic importance. We are pleased that all ten Great River Road states are seeking All-American Road designation from the Federal Highway Administration and we support Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri and the other partner states in this endeavor.

The Great River Road has great importance all along the river benefitting both visitors and residents. In the States of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri, the Great River Road brings visitors to National Wildlife Refuges where we welcome them to enjoy the Mississippi River up close and personal. Without the Great River Road many of our visitors wouldn't even know we exist. At our many visitor contact stations along the river, we meet people everyday who say they found us only because they were traveling the Great River Road. We also value the fact that in Wisconsin one of the Great River Road Visitor Centers is located on the Genoa National Fish Hatchery and nearby the Upper Mississippi River National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. Through the partnership with the MRPC and Great River Road we are able to educate visitors about the Mississippi River and its rich natural resources and history.

The Service appreciates the efforts of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri, and its other partner states, to have the Great River Road designated as an All-American Road by the Federal Highway Administration. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Refuge Area Supervisor, Sabrina Chandler at 507-494-6218 or via email at sabrina_chandler@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Baird
Regional Refuge Chief