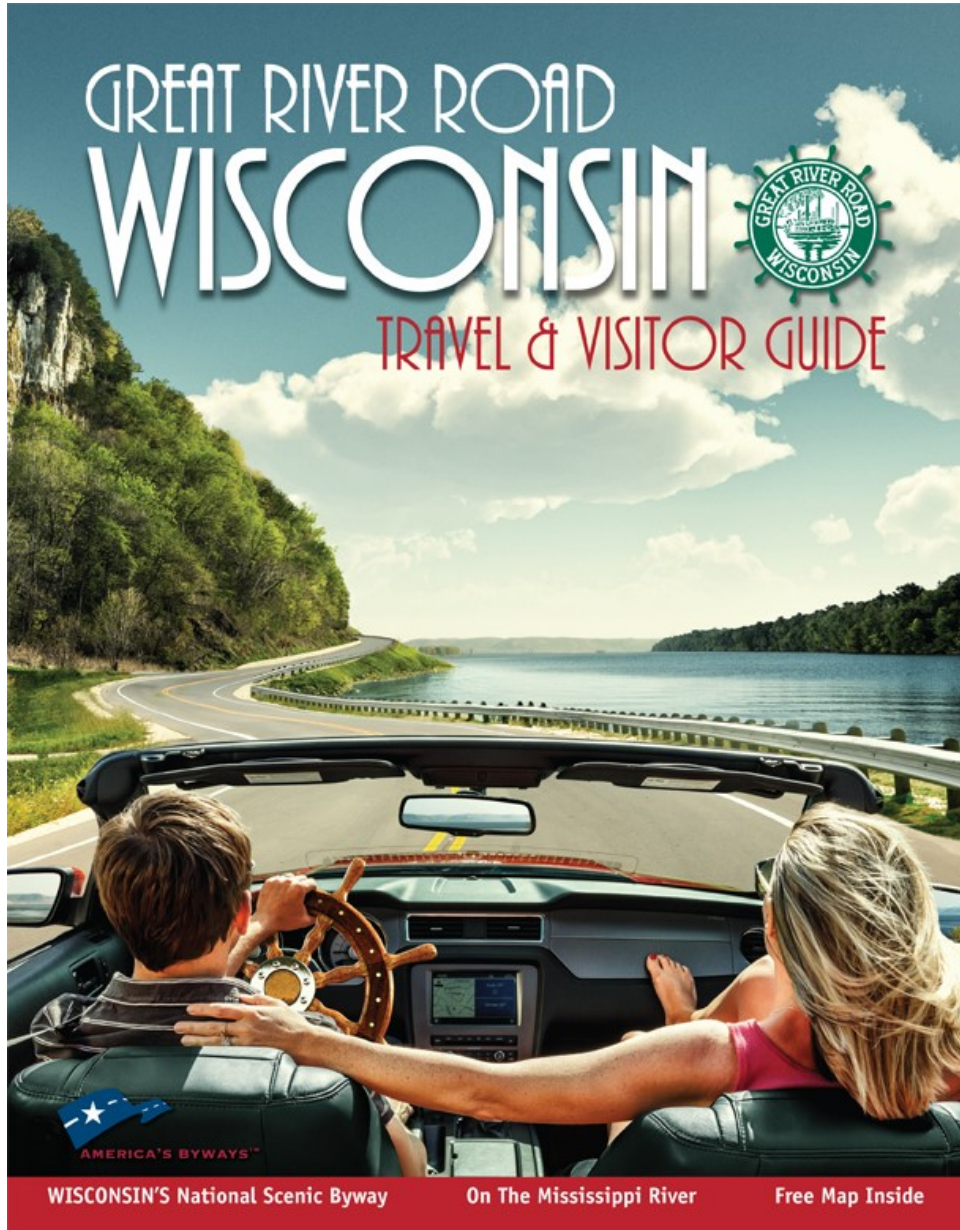


# ANNUAL REPORT

2014-15 Fiscal Year



## WISCONSIN Mississippi River Parkway Commission



*Voted Prettiest Drive: Ultimate Summer Road Trip In The United States*



# **2014-2015 Annual Report**

## **Wisconsin Mississippi River Parkway Commission**

**Reporting Period: July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015**

### **ABOUT THE COVER PAGE:**

The picture on the cover is the iconic image of traveling the Wisconsin Great River Road and is the cover page for the 50,000 copies of the 2015 WIGRRNSB Travel Visitor Guide. It is emblematic of the partnership of Wisconsin Department of Tourism and the Wisconsin Mississippi River Parkway Commission. This image was produced by the Wisconsin Department of Tourism as their paid advertising promotion/marketing the Wisconsin Great River Road in the U.S. and Canada. These promotions appeared in the May/June and August/September Big River Magazines, Midwest Living and other publications.

### **WIMRPC Membership, Committees:**

#### **Membership**

The WIMRPC operates under Wisconsin State Statute 14.86 which specifies membership to consist of one representative appointed by the Governor from each of the eight counties bordering the Mississippi River along with two State Senators and two State Representatives. The Statute provides ex officio membership of the State Departments of Transportation, Natural Resources, Tourism, Commerce and State Historical Society.

Sherry Quamme (Commissioner from Crawford County) was elected for a two year term as WIMRPC Chairperson. Other elected officers are: Jean Galasinski (Trempealeau County) Vice Chair, Alan Lorenz (La Crosse County), Secretary, Bob Miller (Buffalo County), Treasurer.

A roster of Commissioners, Marketing and Promotion Committee and Technical Committee members is

#### **Committees**

The following Committees serve the WIMRPC:

- Promotion & Marketing Committee
- Technical Committee
- Executive Committee of the WIMRPC - Officers
- Ad Hoc Committees
  - Outreach & Partnership
  - Finance & Sustainability
  - Education

#### **Meeting Minutes**

WIMRPC convened four quarterly meeting during this reporting period. Minutes of the meetings are appended to this report. They are also provided routinely to the National MRPC office and to 75 other parties.

**Budget**

The source of funds for the WIMRPC is derived primarily from contributions from the 8 represented counties, Department of Transportation, Department of Tourism and From National Scenic Byways Grants. There are also contributions from some Tourism Councils of the region. Expenditures are primarily for Marketing and Promotion of the Wisconsin Great River Road National Scenic Byway, Sustainability/financial support, Partnership & Outreach.

2015 Budget

<b>Income</b>	<b>Amount</b>		<b>Comments</b>
8 Counties, Tourism Councils and organizations	12,100		
Promotion Committee	46,870		Visitor Guide Ads sales & other sources
<b>Expense</b>		<b>Amount</b>	
Partnership & Outreach		1,150	
Promotion/Marketing		47,296	Grants cover
Building/Maintaining NSB		400	1950 of Reserve Funds mayl be used in 2015
Financial Stability		200	
Long Term Sustainability		200	
MRPC Annual Dues		15,000	Paid by WI DOT
MRC Annual Dues		15,000	Paid by Wis. Dept. of Tourism

**Accomplishments:**

**Partnership and Outreach**

- Initiated steps to found a Friends of the Wisconsin Great River Road National Scenic Byway by securing the services of an attorney to assist with filing for 501 c 3 IRS status
- Drafted Bylaws for the Wisconsin Friends of the GRRNSB
- Connected with 68 Adopt a Highway groups of the Wisconsin GRRNSB to support highway clean up twice per year, with assistance of the WI DOT.
- Held discussions with the Mississippi River Regional Plan Commission staff regarding assistance to the WIMRPC, working on Tourism as economic development. Also researching Grant options, ideas, potential new funding sources.
- Exhibit at State Capitol Rotunda June 2-9 for education regarding Wi GRRNSB which coincided with June Dairy Month and promotion of Agri Tourism.
- Created a calendar and Work plan for 2015 to schedule and conduct meetings with Legislators, education regarding WIMRPC, WI GRRNSB. Meetings to begin October 2015 into 2016.

### **Financial Stability/Long Term Sustainability**

- Recommendations presented at August 2015 WIMRPC meeting included meeting with Legislative Commission members after the vacant seat of Senator D. Schultz is filled.
- Schedule meeting with partner Mississippi River Regional Plan Commission to identify potential Grants that could be considered, applied for by WIMRPC to support the work plan.
- Determine means for funding a paid staff person to facilitate the WIMRPC
- Explore feasibility of updating SS 14.86 to identify current State Agencies who are to support the WIMRPC and determine what other options there are for added State Funding such as a line item in the Bi-Annual State Budget

### **Building and Maintaining a Sustainable Organization/NSB**

- Research done on models for Friends Groups to support the Mission of the WIMRPC/WGGNSB
- Education Session for WIMRPC on Corridor Management Plan
- Provided testimony to the Buffalo County Board on the Importance of the WIGRRNSB to the local and regional economy – February 2015. The later passed an ordinance creating an Overlay District to protect portions of the WIGRRNSB in their County from Frac Sand Mining and heavy truck transport of the Frac Sand.
- Provided information to WIDOT on scenic easement infractions on the WIGRRNSB which resulted in actions to address these issues.
- Participated in the ongoing development of the Geo-Tourism Website as part of the MRPC agenda.

### **Promotion and Marketing**

- Publication of the 2015 Wisconsin GRRNSB Visitor Guide and distribution of 50,000 copies across the region.
- Exhibit at the Minneapolis Home & Garden Show
- Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism – Sponsor
- Milwaukee Wheel & Sprocket Bike Show – with Onalaska Tourism Office
- June Dairy Breakfast exhibits – 8 Counties
- Stockholm Art Fair, Stockholm, WI – Booth
- Wisconsin State Fair (With Wisconsin Dept. of Tourism)
- September – Drive the Great River Road Month – promotion
- Great River Road Festival – Stonefield Historic Site – Cassville, WI
- AgriTourism Promotion

### **History/Education**

- Completed inventory at all Interpretive Centers
- Distributed 32 copies of the Corp of Engineers publication "Our Mississippi", to elementary and middle schools of the region. This is a continuing effort which was started in 2014.

### **Technical**

- Provided assistance to the Partnership and Outreach Committee regarding Friends of the WI GRRNSB design and implementation