

**Great River Road Network of Museums and Interpretive Centers Nomination Form**

Name of organization: The Louisiana Great River Road Interpretive Center and Museum \_

Address: 40100 Highway 942 (River Road) \_

Darrow, LA 70725

Phone: 225/473-9380

Contact Person: Kevin Kelly \_ Email address: kk@houmashouse.com \_

Title: Owner \_ Website: www.greatriverroadmuseum.org

**Introduction:** This is a network of museums and interpretive centers about the Mississippi River along the Great River Road. It is not our intent to select every museum or interpretive center along the Mississippi River, even though we recognize there are hundreds of museums that are doing excellent work. Our goal is to have a network of premier institutions that are willing to work together to further the interpretive and marketing goals for the Great River Road.

**Section 1- Qualifications**

The institution must interpret the Mississippi River or some significant aspect or relationship to the river with a high level of quality and be open to the public on a published, regular basis.

1. What story does your institution tell about the Mississippi River as part of its regular daily visitor experience? How does it relate to the themes for interpretation which are attached? Why do you feel that this significant aspect or relationship to the river is presented at a high level of quality? Describe the quality of the visit your guests receive.

On the grounds of Houmas House Estate and Gardens, located directly on the Louisiana Great River Road, is the Great River Road Museum and Interpretive Center, a premier museum and interpretive center presenting the history and influence of the lower Mississippi River on transportation, commerce, music, and the folklife and folklore of river life. It is also referred to as Great River Road Steamboat Museum because it was designed to appear like the visitor is on a steamboat while viewing the displays, exhibits and artifacts. Exhibits and artifacts, displayed in the 35,000-square-foot museum, highlight the history, and chronicles the people and families who helped build Louisiana’s most lucrative corridor while creating the unique culture which is Louisiana. **See attached description.**

1. What is the length of stay for the typical visitor experience at your institution? Please provide what you consider an average time, what you consider a short stay and what you consider a long stay for regular attendance.

1.5 hours to 2 hours or longer depending upon interest

What educational or interpretive programs beyond exhibits do you conduct that interpret the Mississippi River or some significant aspect or relationship to the river?

Tours of the museum can be guided or self-guided. There is a Mississippi River Overlook with a bridge over the Louisiana Great River Road to the Mississippi River levee for wondrous views of the great bend in the river. Here on the levee top, small receptions and gatherings can be scheduled.

There are three restaurants on the grounds of Houmas House, the Turtle Bar and visitors have the option to overnight in a luxury cabin.

1. What are your published and regular hours? Please describe hours for various seasons.

10 am – 4 pm daily

1. What is the annual attendance for regular museum hours at your site, exclusive of special events? What is the admission fee?

Several thousands of visitors tour the Louisiana Great River Road Interpretive Center and Museum. This number will increase as Houmas House and the Interpretive Center and Museum are one of the stops of the Mississippi cruise ships. The admission is $20, extra if a tour of Houmas House is requested.

Visitors include travelers, wedding parties, and individuals having lunch or dinner at the estate’s three restaurants, as well retreat and meeting attendees.

1. What is your proximity to the Great River Road?

Directly on the Louisiana Great River Road

1. Did you enclose a letter of endorsement from your state Mississippi River Parkway Commissioner?

Yes

**Section II- Duties and Obligations:**

1. Members of the network must have a Great River Road map at their site, for reference, but preferably for distribution to visitors. One map will be provided as will an order form for additional maps, per availability by state.

Agree

1. Members of the network must ensure that front line personnel who have contact with the public are knowledgeable of and will promote the Great River Road and the museums and interpretive centers in the region. Describe how you will ensure that your front line personnel will be trained, briefed and monitored.

Houmas House Estates and Gardens is directly on the Louisiana Great River Road. The Great River Road Museum explores exclusively the influence of the Mississippi River upon the lifestyle, customs, agriculture, folkways of the people who reside along the river. This is entirely the purpose of the museum as a Great River Road Interpretive Center.

Houmas House and the Great River Road Interpretive Center and Museum are stops for tour buses and river cruises. It has a well-trained staff who can accommodate individual travelers or groups.

1. Are you willing to display signage at your center showing that you are a member of the Great River Road Network? This may be inside or outside signage, but must be prominently displayed. Where will you display the Interpretive Center sign?

Yes. It will be placed outside of the front doors to the Louisiana River Road Musuem.

1. Are you willing to secure the needed funds to have an officially approved Great River Road Interpretive Center sign erected at your site?

Yes

1. Are you willing to use and incorporate the Great River Road network language and logo on all future marketing and promotional materials (i.e. radio, newsprint, social media, websites, maps, rackcards and brochures, etc.)? *Sample language: [Name of Interpretive Center] is an Interpretive Center of the Great River Road – Mississippi River Parkway Commission National Scenic Byway.*

Yes

**Section Ill - Capacity:**

The following questions are asked primarily for information purposes and will not be major factors in determination of inclusion in the network.

1. Do you have access to the internet? If your facility has a website, what is the address? Do you have the ability to post the [www.experiencemississippiriver.com](http://www.experiencemississippiriver.com/) website on our website?

Yes

1. Do you have traveling exhibit space? If so, what size is it in square footage? Would you be willing or interested in hosting a traveling exhibit?

This is a 35,000-foot facility. There is space for a traveling exhibit. Hosting a traveling exhibit would depend upon the exhibit itself.

*Please send photos of your interpretive center, both inside and outside, to 701 E. Washington Ave. Suite 202 Madison WI 53703. Call 866-763-8310 if you have questions.*

**PROCESS**

Nominations may be sent simultaneously to the chair of your state Mississippi River Parkway Commission and/or directly to the National Mississippi River Parkway Commission Office, 701 E. Washington Ave. Suite 202 Madison, WI 53703.

Nominations must be received by September 1 to be eligible for consideration at the Annual Mississippi River Parkway Commission meeting each year. Please include a letter of endorsement by your state Mississippi River Parkway Commission Commissioner. This is extremely important.

Nominations are reviewed by the Heritage and Culture Committee of the National Mississippi River Parkway Commission. This committee has representation from all 10 states of the Mississippi River. Nominations are then also approved by the Board of Directors of the National Mississippi River Parkway Commission.

To date, there are over 75 centers in the Great River Road Network that interpret the stories of the Mississippi River. These centers reside along the 10-state stretch of the river and range from museums, parks, nature centers, aquariums, historic and prehistoric sites.

Benefits to Network members include: a listing on the Great River Road map distributed nationally, listing and link on the MRPC website, and inclusion in social media mentions.

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