

Take a field trip along the Great River Road

No need to spend a fortune or even fill up the tank, there are scenic, cultural and historic sights for your children to enjoy this summer on the road outside your door. Do your grandchildren realize that Native Americans were the first people to call this river and bluff their home?

In this issue, the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission is proud to promote two of eleven sights along the Great River Road Network of museums and interpretive centers, which preserve Native American history and prehistoric burial mounds.

Effigy Mounds National Monument is located north of Marquette in Allamakee County. This National Park Service site contains 195 mounds. Built by Eastern Woodland Native Americans about 500 BC, mounds are constructed in the shape of bears, birds and reptiles. The site is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with extended hours Memorial Day to Labor Day and on weekends in October. The park includes eleven miles of trails for hiking and a fascinating visitors center and gift shop.



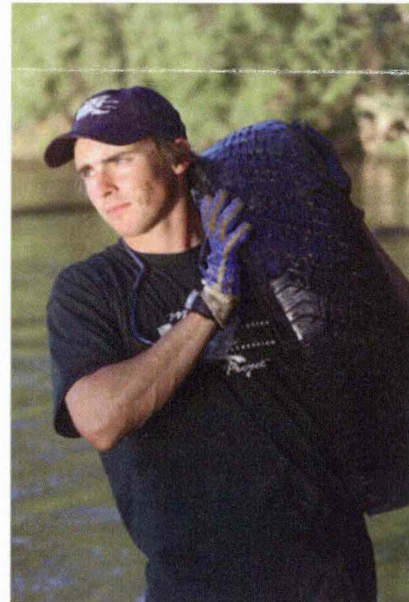
Effigy Mounds photo copy written by National Park Service.

The Toolesboro Mounds near Wapello in Louisa County consist of seven existing burial mounds on a bluff overlooking the Iowa River near where it joins the Mississippi River. The conical mounds were constructed between 100 B.C. and A.D. 200 by local Hopewell Native Americans. Be sure to take your hiking shoes on this field trip. This site features eleven miles of trails, which includes spectacular views of the Mississippi River Valley.

**THE RIVER DELIGHTS TO LIFT US FREE, IF ONLY WE DARE TO LET GO.
OUR TRUE WORK IS THIS VOYAGE, THIS ADVENTURE.** RICHARD BACH.

MRPC ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD TO CHAD PEGRACKE

Iowa MRPC Commissioner John Oberhaus presented Living Lands and Waters founder Chad Pegracke with the National Mississippi River Parkway Commission Environmental Stewardship Award during the organization's semi-annual meeting on April 22 in St. Paul, Minnesota.



Chad Pegracke

While working as a commercial diver and fisherman during college, Chad noticed the rivers' environmental condition was worsening due to trash on the shorelines. In 1997, he set out to clean up the river one piece of garbage at a time, and founded Living Lands and Waters the following year.

Today from his headquarters in East Moline, Illinois, he supervises ten paid staff members and a fleet of several barges and workboats. Thousands of volunteers have cooperated to help with countless community cleanups, Riverbottom Forest Restoration and Adopt-a-Mississippi River Mile programs. In June of 2002, Chad accepted the Jefferson Award for Public Service in the United States Supreme Court.

The Iowa MRPC is proud to nominate Chad for his environmental stewardship and congratulates him on the MRPC award.

**State Library Of Iowa
State Documents Center
Miller Building
Des Moines, Iowa**

IS YOUR GROUP WRITING A GRANT?

Whether you are writing a local gaming grant or applying to the Community Attractions and Tourism (CAT) Program in Iowa, be sure to consider referencing The Great River Road Corridor Management Plan in your application.

The Corridor Management Plan was prepared in 2000, and will be updated this year. The plan was prepared to provide a broad understanding of the resources of the Great River Road in Iowa and to present a broad vision for the management of this national treasure. The Iowa MRPC and the Iowa Department of Transportation prepared the plan to provide guidance and support for stakeholders. The plan has no regulatory function, but rather describes actions to maintain the strong scenic, natural, historic, and recreation resources and character of the Iowa Great River Road.



The view of a Mississippi River backwater from the GRR.

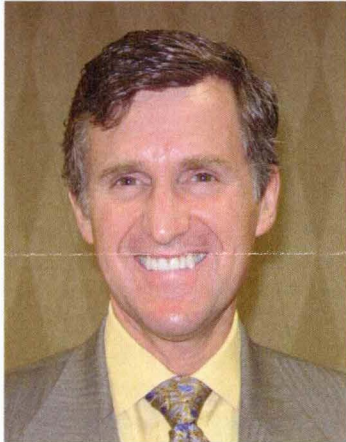
The overall vision for the Great River Road (GRR) National Scenic Byway concerns protecting and promoting the resources of the Mississippi River so that the quality of life enjoyed by Iowans and all Midwesterners can be sustained and a unique destination can be provided for travelers from across the world. If your community project is located on the Great River Road and fits within this vision, it is in keeping with the Corridor Management Plan. For a copy of the plan, contact your county commissioner (see page 3).

GREAT RIVER ROAD MAPS REDESIGNED

The Iowa Great River Road map, featuring the eleven Great River Road museums and interpretive centers in Iowa will be available for distribution in June. To obtain copies for your welcome center or tourist information office, send your request your county commissioner (see page 3).

MEET MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION LEADER

Rip Rapson, president of the McKnight Foundation since 1999, addressed the national MRPC meeting in St. Paul this spring. William L. McKnight, an early leader of the 3M Company, and his wife, Maude McKnight, established the foundation in 1953. The foundation is Minnesota's largest, with assets of \$1.6 billion.



Rip Rapson, President, The McKnight Foundation

Rapson talked about the foundation's belief in bedrock values. The organization is committed to revitalizing urban spaces, elevating the importance of water quality and ecological balance and promoting public access to natural resources where barriers have occurred. Rapson identified the Mississippi River as "running deep through our cultural identity." He said, "Consider that for the 18 million people living near the river, our bodies are made up of 70% Mississippi River water. It runs 2,000 miles down the center of the country and is the drainage basin for 31 states. Over 40% of American songbirds use the river flyway annually." Rapson urged river advocates and community leaders to consider McKnight a partner in initiatives that decrease pollution and promote restorative river management.



In the future, McKnight will support projects, which represent integrated solutions, broad connections, and partnerships which protect and communicate the river's treasures. For more information, visit: www.mcknight.org.

YOUR IOWA MRPC COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



The Iowa Mississippi Parkway Commission at the National MRPC Meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota April 21-23. Front left:

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Elaine Baxter, Des Moines County

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LOOKING FOR ALLAMAKEE COMMISSIONER

Due to the resignation of former Allamakee County Commissioner Denise Strudthoff, the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway commission needs an energetic citizen who loves the river to represent the interests of this northern county which is home to Lansing and Harper's Ferry. Gender and political party balance are considered in commission appointments. If you are interested in serving, write to:

Chair Patsy Ramacitti (Email: BettPLR@aol.com)

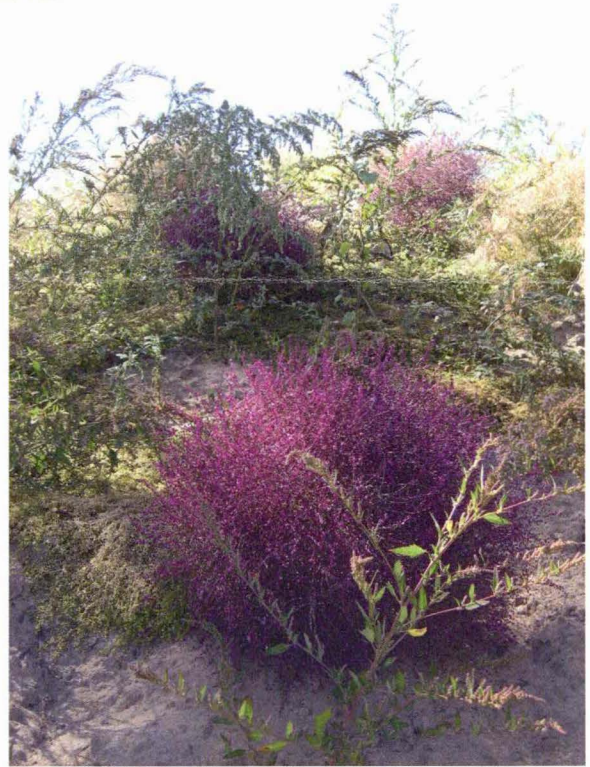
4674 Kynnelworth Drive

Bettendorf, Iowa 52722

WHAT MRPC COMMISSIONERS DO FOR YOU

Your Iowa Mississippi River County Commissioner is appointed by the Governor and serves the Mississippi River, the Great River Road and Iowa citizens by:

- Being available to speak to community groups about the Great River Road National Scenic Byway
- Helping organizations access and use the Great River Road Corridor Management Plan for grant writing purposes
- Assisting tourism and hospitality officials with supplies of the Great River Road map
- Promoting the Great River Road network of eleven museums and interpretive centers in Iowa
- Encouraging dialog between all river advocacy groups; balancing historical, cultural, environmental, agricultural, economic development and tourism interests
- Communicating funding opportunities for river projects to all stakeholders, including participation in periodical regional stakeholder meetings
- Working with organizations to support projects which enhance the intrinsic qualities of the Great River Road, including writing letters of support for locally funded initiatives.



A Mississippi River sandbar in late summer bloom

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS PLANNED

Watch your mailbox for your personal invitation to regional Great River Road stakeholder meetings planned for June. These meetings will be held in Dubuque, Bettendorf and Burlington for citizens and organizations to learn about National Scenic Byway grants and other funding opportunities. In the recent past, Dubuque's National Mississippi River Museum and Guttenberg's Historic Overlook have been awarded federal grants.

Plan ahead! What is your community doing right now to protect, preserve and enhance the resources along the Great River Road?



Iowa Great River Road/National Scenic Byway
Iowa DOT – Office of Systems Planning
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010



The lotus in bloom in the backwater of the Mississippi River

The Federal Highway Administration funds this newsletter. Send submissions and comments to editor at mjsmith@alpinecom.net

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