



# River Bluffs Scenic Byway

Corridor Management Plan

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# Section **One**

Introduction to the River Bluffs Scenic Byway

# Introduction

*Bypass traffic and experience a “scenic” change of pace by traveling along Iowa’s scenic byways. Iowa’s eight state-designated and two nationally-designated scenic byways are a great way to experience Iowa’s natural beauty, history and culture.*

## 1.1 Byway Description

Twisting its way through an area of Northeast Iowa known as “Little Switzerland,” the River Bluffs Scenic Byway (RBSB) encompasses 109-miles of roadway within Fayette and Clayton County. Features of this byway include breathtaking bluffs, panoramic hillsides, manicured farmland, secluded caves and rushing streams. Visitors of this byway are treated to spectacular rock formations and rugged limestone outcroppings that hug the road. This same stone, mined from rich quarries, also lends a unique character to the historic barns, homes and churches found in the quaint rural towns and landscape that make up the byway’s corridor. Playing hide and seek with numerous waterways, the route crosses their path at times, and provides distant views of the rushing streams and rivers that line the roadway at other times.

Travelers of this byway will drop down into river valleys that have carved out this landscape, including the Volga and Turkey River Valleys, and then climb to elevations that yield spectacular views of the rich countryside. Nestled within this scenery are 13 small, historic communities that provide wonderful opportunities to experience local foods, entertainment and shopping. It is within these towns that travelers have the ability to experience festivals, events, sites and reenactments that provide insight to the regions heritage, as do the dozens of unique antique shops and historic tours that serve as great reminders of what used to be.

Communities along the byway are also rich in natural resources and abundant in outdoor recreation that have helped shape each town’s character and charm. The natural qualities along this route are abundant, and provide ample opportunities to canoe water trails, fish for trout, look for morel mushrooms, hunt for world-class whitetail deer, explore miles of land trails or experience the quiet and solitude of wooded campsites. The RBSB is a place where the regions historic past and recreational opportunities merge, resulting in a unique blend of adventures and stories awaiting those who visit.



Historic Sites & Museums



Small Agricultural Communities



Rich with Natural Resources & Wildlife

## 1.2 Background

With so many things to see and do, the RBSB became a designated route in August of 1998 after the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) determined the roadway allowed the touring public to view some of Iowa's most aesthetically appealing natural and scenic attractions. Between 1998 and 2008, the byway was marked with signage and information about the route and appeared on Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) state maps; however, no supportive agency was ever developed. Visitors found information about what there was to see and do along the byway to be limited. There were also few identified or marked sites and virtually no facilities or amenities offered to enhance the byway traveler's experience.

Then in May of 2008, funding was secured through the Iowa Byways Sustainability Project (IBSP) for Resource Conservation & Development Councils across Iowa to work collaboratively with the Iowa DOT to preserve, protect, interpret and promote all of Iowa's byways. As part of this statewide initiative, Northeast Iowa RC&D aligned with residents from byway communities, along with agency partners at the local, regional, state and federal level, to chart a course for the future of the RBSB. In an effort to achieve the goals and realize the visions as set forth by the River Bluffs Scenic Byway Board, Northeast Iowa RC&D secured a grant from the Federal Highway Administration's America's Byways Program to create and implement this Corridor

## 1.3 Purpose of a CMP?

The overall purpose of this Corridor Management Plan (CMP) is to, "protect, preserve, interpret and develop the natural, historical, recreational and cultural resources of the corridor while balancing the preservation of these assets with the economic development of the region." This CMP is not a document of new laws, regulations, or ordinances. Instead, this plan draws on existing land use plans plus

recommendations by property owners and stakeholders to assist in protection and promotion of the byway. It is a working document, which will be reviewed annually and revised with new information as needed.

Completion of this plan is intended to result in several key benefits for the byway. First, this plan can be used to help identify and rank community improvement projects within the corridor. Second, the plan will help stakeholders strategize plans for how to implement these projects and identify available funding sources. Third, the CMP will be a helpful tool to reference when pursuing grant funds for projects related to the byway. Additional benefits yielded from the development of this CMP is that it is intended to:

- Articulate a public vision and goals for the byway.
- Qualify the byway for national and state funding sources that require a plan.
- Build partnership and "buy-in" with and between disparate public and private interests so the byway functions as a singular tourism attraction and economic development engine.
- Educate stakeholders about the byway's intrinsic qualities that define its character and give it a sense of place.
- Identify desires for how the byway's intrinsic resources should be preserved and enhanced.
- Analyze the safety conditions of the byway roads, amenities and sites.
- Guide local decisions for how to allocate scarce financial and volunteer resources for the byway.
- Recognize the need to promote the byway and increase coordination of tourism and marketing efforts between byway communities.
- Provide a marketing communications plan and a "brand" for the byway.
- Define the current economic impact of the byway and identify strategies for how to increase its economic benefits to area communities.



Spectacular Views



Abundant Outdoor Recreation

## 1.4 What is a Scenic Byway?

To properly yield each potential benefit related to CMP development, it is important one has a basic understanding as to what a scenic byway is. By definition, a scenic byway is more than just a section of pavement leading from one place to another. Rather, a scenic byway offers visitors access to authentic experiences in treasured places. Whether that experience is magnificent scenery, the ability to see and visit fascinating historic sites, or to learn about the natural and historical features of the landscape, scenic byways are more than transportation routes because they introduce the visitor to places and riches of an area that may otherwise be passed by. Certainly, a road itself and the transportation it allows is the primary reason for why any road exists, but there are many stories and significant places beyond the asphalt that may be of interest to travelers. Being able to provide access to these extraordinary places considered to be representative, unique and distinctly characteristic of an area is what makes scenic byways special.

Scenic byways come in all shapes and sizes. Some are quite small in terms of length of the roadway itself and the corridor around it, while others cover parts of several states. These designated routes may be rural, suburban or urban. They might also be categorized in different ways, often being referred to as – heritage routes, rustic roads, historic highways, or trails. No matter the location or how the route is named, a road may be considered a scenic byway as long as a community or local organization believes a road corridor conveys special qualities about the region through which that road passes and the road has been designated by the state or some other official declaration for its intrinsic qualities. These intrinsic qualities typically include places of scenic, natural, recreational, historical, cultural and archaeological significance.








## 1.5 Iowa's Scenic Byway Program

Realizing the potential impact byways could have on the state of Iowa, the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) implemented the Iowa Scenic Byways Program. Although a pilot Iowa Scenic Byway Program dates back to 1987 legislation, the Iowa Scenic Byway Program was not officially initiated until 1998. This legislation provided Iowa with an opportunity to boost tourism through recognition and celebration of the state's most scenic travel resources. Administered through the Iowa DOT, the Iowa Scenic Byways Program was established to recognize routes that provide the touring public with access to some of Iowa's most aesthetically appealing natural, scenic and human features. The Iowa DOT also required these features to be uniformly displayed along the entire route so that travelers continuously sense the corridor's visual quality and character.

The criteria used to objectively evaluate a roadway's potential for inclusion in the program ascribed to the same seven elements that were used to evaluate the pilot program include: 1) What a person sees along the route, 2) Quality of the view, 3) How long one sees a view, 4) Quality of presentation, 5) Type of activity along the route, 6) Visual character of the road, and 7) Monotony versus variety. The Iowa Scenic Byways Program also requires an inventory and evaluation of designation routes to determine continuing eligibility in the program every four years. State Scenic Byways may be removed from the Iowa Scenic Byway system if undesired development or deterioration has occurred to damage the route's original scenic or heritage qualities. The four-year re-evaluation encourages the sponsors to provide for the protection and preservation of the route's scenic and heritage qualities on an ongoing basis. The methodology used for the re-evaluations is outlined in a DOT report, "Project Memorandum Report \_ Reevaluation of Scenic/Heritage Byways," published by Decision Data Inc., January 2002. It requires a driving inventory, in both

directions be made along each byway, as well as a review of maps and graphs. Eight states in the Midwest utilize the same inventory methods.

Utilizing these byway evaluation methods, seven routes were designated into the Iowa Scenic Byway system in 1998 when the program was initiated. The seven routes designated as Iowa Scenic Byways included:

-  River Bluffs Scenic Byway
-  Grant Wood Scenic Byway
-  Iowa Valley Scenic Byway
-  Western Skies Scenic Byway
-  Historic Hills Scenic Byway/ Woodland
-  Loess Hills Scenic Byway – designated as a National Byway in June of 2000
-  Iowa Great River Road Scenic Byway – designated as a National Byway in June 2000

Three additional routes were designated as Iowa Scenic Byways in 2000 including the following:

-  Driftless Area Scenic Byway
-  Delaware Crossing Scenic Byway
-  Old O'Brien Glacial Scenic Byway

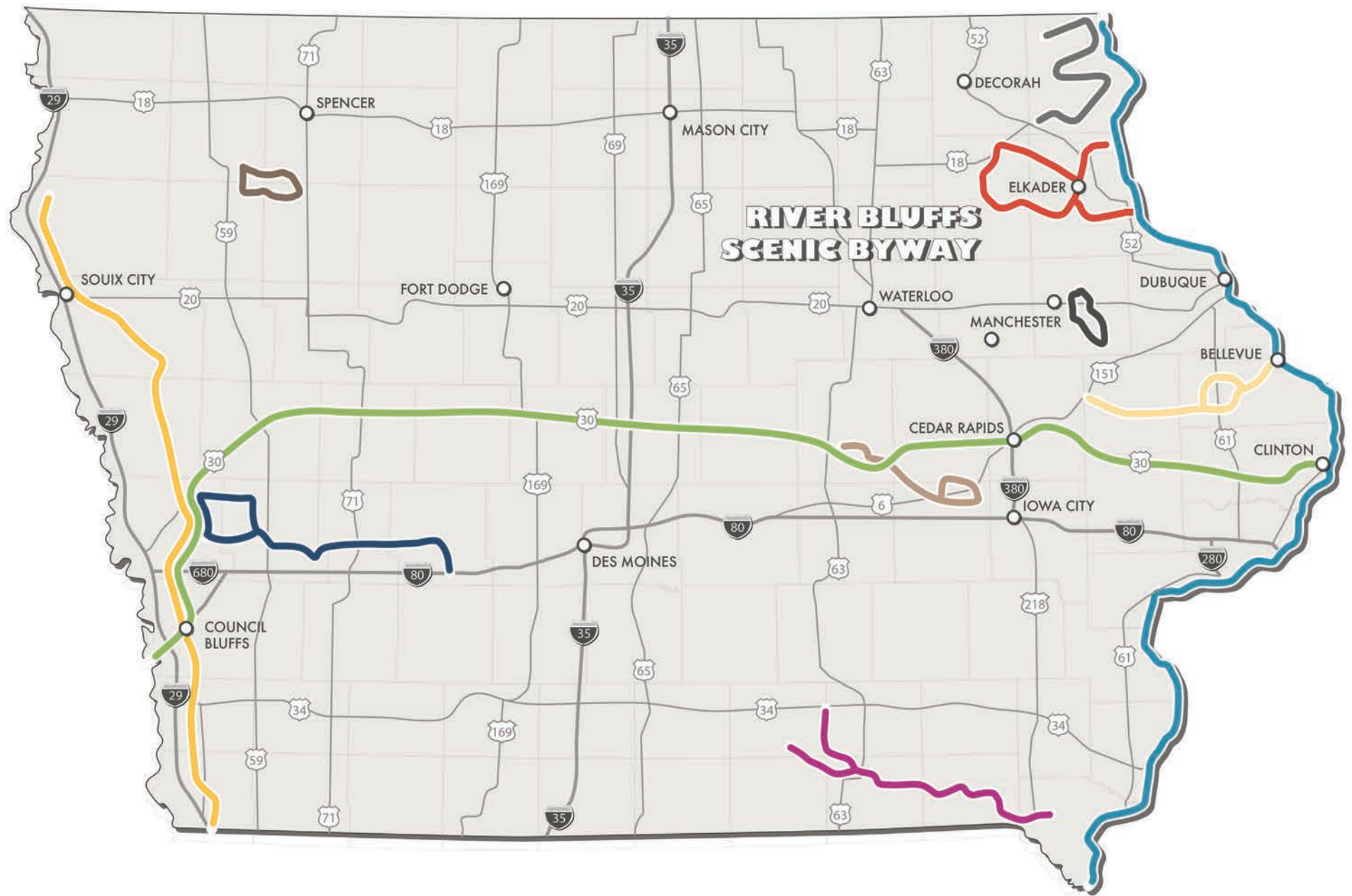
The Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway was designated a state byway in 2006:

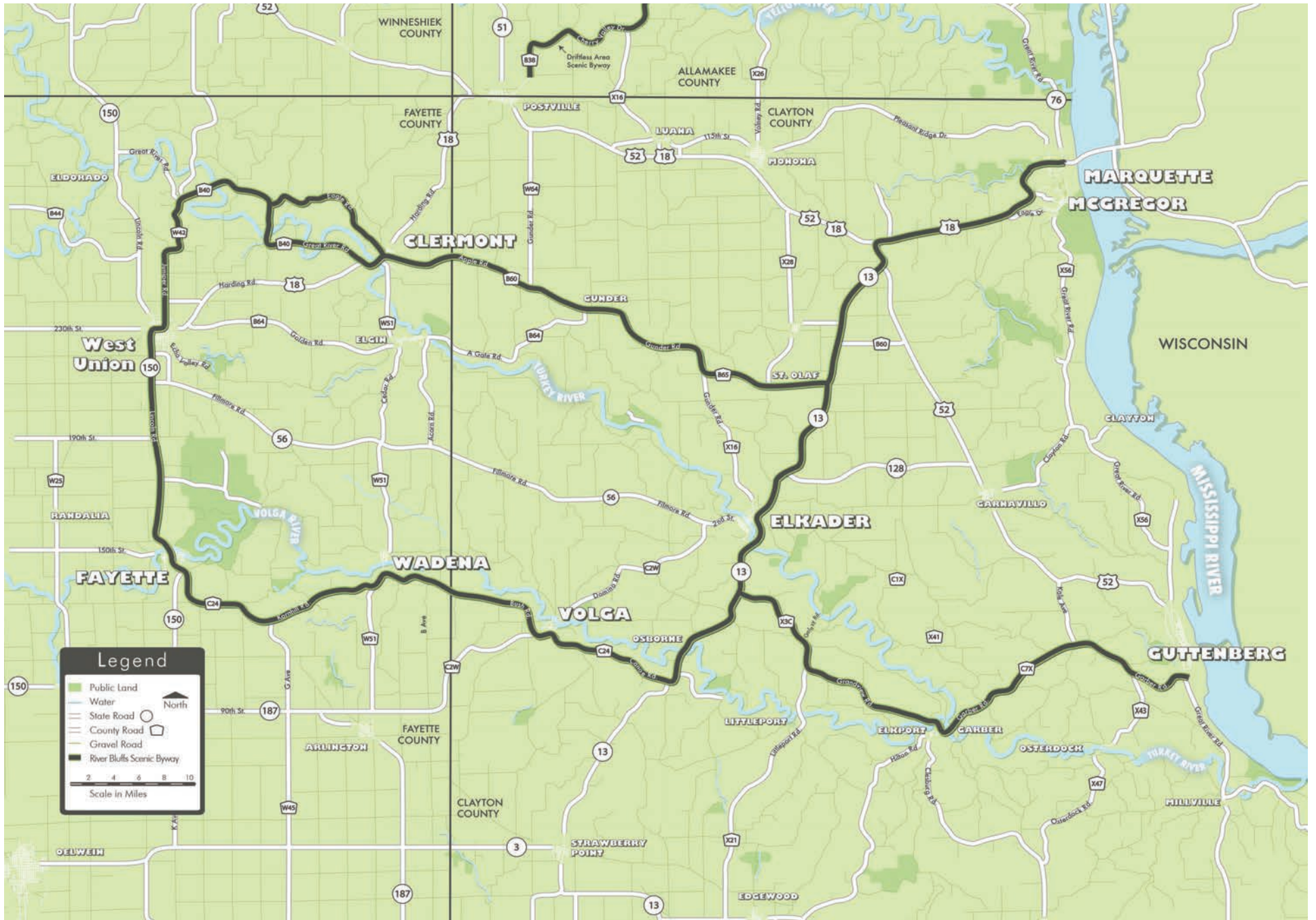
-  Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway

## 1.6 River Bluffs Scenic Byway Designation

In regards to the RBSB, the roadway was officially designated under the scenic category of the Iowa Scenic Byway system after the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) determined the route allowed the touring public to view some of Iowa's most aesthetically appealing natural and scenic attractions. In fact, independent ratings collected from all Iowa's state byways determined the RBSB is one of the most "scenic" byways in the state, ranking second overall. A discussion about the route and the evaluation results from the preliminary study of the River Bluffs Scenic







Byway can be reviewed in the reports entitled, "Iowa – Scenic Byway Evaluation", November 1995 and "Corridor Resource Mapping – Iowa Scenic Byways," December 1999. Decision Data Inc. prepared the reports for the Iowa DOT. As a part of the initial inventory, evaluations were made regarding the scenic rating of all Iowa's byways and then numerical ratings were assigned to each byway. A numerical rating of four or higher was used to indicate visual or heritage quality sufficient enough to qualify under the state scenic byway program. Next, the consistency of the route's visual quality expressed in part by the percent of the route rated at or above four was evaluated. During the process of initially rating the River Bluffs Scenic Byway, the evaluation process showed that the byway maintained a scenic rating of 5.35 in the scenic category with a maximum scenic rating of 15 near the community of Elkader. The report also noted that the River Bluffs Scenic Byway had a uniformity of high visual ratings, with a rating at or greater than four 72% of the time.

Recognition of these exceptional views date back to the beginning of the Iowa Scenic Byways Program when the RBSB was selected as a 'pilot' scenic byway route by the State of Iowa. Note, as stated in section 1.4, an Iowa legislative directive passed in 1987 asked the Iowa DOT to, "Identify four pilot scenic highway routes across two or more counties to participate in the state's trial selection process for byway development." As the emphasis of the pilot project was on "trail promotion in the state's tourism marketing program," representatives from the Tourism Division of the Iowa Department of Economic Development met with the Iowa DOT to select four pilot scenic byway routes for designation and promotion. The criteria used to objectively evaluate a roadway's potential for inclusion in the pilot program included seven elements: 1) What a person sees along the route 2) Quality of the view 3) How long one sees a view 4) Quality of presentation 5) Type of activity along the route 6) Visual character of the road and 7) Monotony versus variety. After an extensive evaluation

was completed for all of the proposed pilot scenic highway routes, it was found that the River Bluffs Scenic Byway had received the highest "seven elements" score and was officially designated as an Iowa Scenic Byway in 1998.

### **1.7 Benefits of Byway Designation**

Like all of Iowa's Scenic Byways, the designation of the RBSB as a state byway has opened the door for communities along the route to benefit in many ways. Designation has provided the region a chance to develop a roadmap for the future, or a way for stakeholders to determine what they like about their community and begin to plan for ways to preserve, maintain, protect and enhance these resources while utilizing the byway to spark economic development and tourism. Additional benefits of scenic byway designation are summarized below:

- Strengthens community pride.
- Supports economic development and tourism in towns along the byway.
- Leads to the creation of unique signs, literature, maps, markers and other ongoing promotional efforts that can enhance a community's marketability.
- Promotes partnerships between businesses, local governments, public groups and community leaders.
- Serves to protect & promote the area's intrinsic resources.

Combined, all of these benefits can result in the development of shared community visions, civic pride and shaping towns along the RBSB into an even more attractive place to live, work and visit.

### **1.8 Route Description**

Citing an excerpt found within the Iowa Department of Transportation's Scenic Byways of Iowa Travel Guide, the River Bluffs Scenic Byway's route can be described as follows: "The RBSB is found in Northeast Iowa and encompasses 109-miles of roadway within Clayton and Fayette County. A 20-mile branch of the route in Clayton County begins south of Elkader on County Road X-3C and winds eastward through Elkport and Garber. From there the byway continues easterly

on County Road C-7X ending in Guttenberg on the Mississippi River. The balance of the approximate 109-mile River Bluffs Scenic Byway forms the shape of an old-fashioned ladle. The end of the handle, or beginning of the route, starts in McGregor on the Mississippi River in Clayton County. The route continues southwesterly along U.S. 18 and Iowa 13 to Elkader. Helping to form the ladle's cup, the route continues on Clayton and Fayette County Road C-24 through the cities of Volga, Wadena and Fayette. The route then switches to the north following Iowa 150 through West Union, and continues north on Fayette County Road W-42 to the intersection with County Road B-40. Taking County Road B-40, the route continues to Clermont. From there it winds on County Road B-60 through Gunder and St. Olaf ending at Iowa 13 just east of Elkader in Clayton County."

### **1.9 Byway Corridor**

According to the Federal Highway Administration's interim policy for the National Scenic Byways Program, a corridor is defined as "a roadway or highway right-of-way and the adjacent area that is visible from and extending along the highway. The distance the corridor extends from the highway could vary with the different intrinsic qualities." For the purpose of this Corridor Management Plan, the RBSB Board has identified their primary corridor to be an extension of one mile beyond the edge of the byway and each community along its route. However, Board members wish for the corridor to comply with federal interim policy to prevent exclusion of significant resources, towns and sites that are not directly located on the byway from being recognized. Therefore, the RBSB has expanded their corridor to also include the following:

- Views from the byway.  
The geographical region inside the loop portion of the byway, or section of roadway that passes through Clermont, West Union, Fayette, Wadena, Volga, Elkader, St. Olaf and Gunder.

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## 1.10 Types of Scenic Byways

There are several tiers of byway designations that build on each other and convey the level of significance for any given byway.

**The first level of designation** is given by a state, a “State Byway,” which can either be a Scenic Byway or a Heritage Byway. As of May of 2016, Iowa has 8 State Scenic Byways as well as one designated State Heritage Byway.

**The second level of designation** is as a “National Scenic Byway.” Iowa has two National Scenic Byways, the Great River Road and the Loess Hills Scenic Byway. A roadway must first be designated as a State Scenic Byway before it will be considered for designation as a National Scenic Byway.

**The third level of designation** is an “All American Road.” Iowa has one All American Road, the Loess Hills Scenic Byway. A roadway must first be designated as a National Scenic Byway before it will be considered for designation as an All American Road.

According to the National Scenic Byway Program (NSBP), “The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. Established in Title 23, Section 162 of the United States Code under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 and reauthorized and expanded significantly in 1998 under TEA-21 and again under SAFETEA-LU in 2005, the program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. FHWA’s May 18, 1995 interim policy provides the criteria for the National Scenic Byways Program. This policy sets forth the procedures for the designation by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation of certain roads as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads based

on their archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic qualities. Up until the NSBP’s demise in 2012, the program provided millions of dollars for small communities, counties and other public partners to develop overlooks, wayside parks, directional signage, interpretive centers, rest areas, wayside exhibits and many other infrastructure projects and amenities in the hope that it would encourage visitors to travel on scenic routes, and ultimately increase tourism throughout rural America.”

The NSBP was the first federal legislation to provide programs and funds to do more than construct or maintain highways. The legislation not only recognized specific transportation corridors as significant, but it also enabled communities to seek funding to enhance highway corridors through planning, interpretation and infrastructure projects that looked to improve the byway visitor’s experience. “There are 150 such designated byways in 46 states. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) promotes the collection as America’s Byways®.” Although the NSBP no longer receives federal funding, National Scenic Byways and All American Roads are still considered federally designated roadways of national significance. However, because the National Scenic Byways Program is no longer funded, FHWA is no longer soliciting grant applications. Without funding for the Program, FHWA will not be moving forward with another round of designations of America’s Byways®.

In response to the loss of federal funding for the National Scenic Byway Program, the Byways of Iowa Foundation was formed and officially received 501c3 nonprofit status in 2016. The mission of the Byways of Iowa Foundation, also known as BIF, is to protect, enhance and promote cultural, natural and scenic resources along Iowa’s byways, fostering authentic experiences with byway partners and communities to increase visitor-related economic development. In 2016 BIF stated its priorities as follows.

### Protect and enhance the resources inherent to each of Iowa’s byways:

- Endorse programs and/or projects that preserve scenic, natural, cultural and historic resources
- Expand native roadside vegetation and beautification efforts

### Increase byway-related tourism & economic development revenue in Iowa:

- Support development of outreach marketing materials
- Expand out-of-state advertising strategies
- Conduct or support required research

### Provide authentic experiences for byway travelers:

- Promote year-round byway experiences and events across all four seasons
- Provide interpretation that interests all age levels, ability levels and learning styles
- Expand opportunities to experience authentic local art, culture, history, music and food
- Share “untold stories” about the places, people, features and resources that are unique to each byway

### Develop and improve traveler infrastructure:

- Develop a unified and cohesive wayfinding system to help byway visitors navigate to and from attractions
- Expand multi-modal transportation options along each byway
- Provide grant funding for scenic overlooks and pullouts for safe viewing of Iowa’s scenic resources

### Educate partners and research opportunities:

- Implement programs that meet the training and education needs of businesses, communities and partnering organizations
- Complete research that improves service and quality of experience



**490 State Scenic Byways in 46 States**



**120 National Scenic Byways in 46 States**



**31 All-American Roads in 46 States**



# Section **T**wo

Planning Process & Public Participation

# Public Participation

*Public participation seeks and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision. This can be in relation to individuals, governments, institutions, companies or any other entities that affect public interests. The principle of public participation holds that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process. Public participation implies that the public's contribution will influence the decision*



**RBSB Board Chair, Rod Marlatt**



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## 2.1 Introduction

The Planning Process for development of the River Bluffs Scenic Byway (RBSB) Corridor Management Plan included both organized and organic input and public participation. City and county officials and employees participated, as did private individuals and community leaders from local private organizations and businesses. Citizens from every community and citizens that could represent the county for specific issues or in overall planning were invited to be active on boards and committees. The general public was encouraged to participate in many ways including larger open meetings and on committees. Overall, the public assisted with research, writing, prioritization and decision-making related to specific topics and ultimately, through the RBSB Board, in the adoption of the final draft of each section of the document. More information about the different types of public input are provided below.

## 2.2 Leadership

The River Bluffs Scenic Byway Board provides leadership for the RBSB. The RBSB Board is comprised of a group of volunteer leaders that represent the interests of RBSB towns, the county, private and public RBSB organizations and businesses, and RBSB property owners. These board members serve as the voice for RBSB stakeholders, which are comprised of citizens from communities and rural areas along the byway. The RBSB Board was formed when potential board members were invited from each RBSB community and from relevant county positions. After establishment, RBSB Board, “New board member policy” was developed to guide the RBSB Board in adding or replacing members. At the present time, new board members can be self or community nominated. However, candidates for the RBSB Board must be approved by a majority of the existing RBSB Board members.

Many RBSB Board members serve on several boards and committees that make decisions that impact the RBSB or that influenced the contents of this CMP. The 2014 RBSB Board members and their primary affiliations are as follows:

**Fayette County: Rod Marlatt** (Currently Serving) is the Fayette County Conservation Director/RBSB Chair and serves on the Northeast Iowa Regional Enhancement Committee, Turkey River Watershed Management Authority, Turkey River Watershed Management Alliance, Solid Waste Commission, Fayette County Pheasants Forever, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board, Turkey River Rocks! Committee & many others. **Vicki Rowland** (Currently Serving) is a Fayette County Supervisor and serves on the Northeast Iowa Community Action Board, Northland Agency on Aging committee, Juvenile Detention Board, Fayette County Housing Trust Fund, Solid Waste Commission, Heartland Insurance Risk Pool Board of Trustees, Turkey River Recreation Corridor Board, Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission (plus Executive Board and Transportation Policy Board), Resource Conservation and Development Board, SMART Comprehensive Planning Board, Country Heritage Community (Elgin Corn Maize), Clermont Historical Commission, Clermont Historical Society and Clermont Visioning Committee.

**Clayton County: Tim Engelhardt** (Past Member) was the Clayton County Conservation Director and served on the Regional Transportation Enhancement Committee, Clayton County REAP Committee, Clayton County Law Enforcement Association, Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards District VI, Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards Employees, Knights of Columbus-Financial Secretary, Turkey River Recreational Corridor and Motor Mill Foundation of Clayton County. **Darla Kelchen** (Currently Serving) is the Clayton County Development Group Director and serves on the Backbone Lake Friends committee, Enterprise Zone Commission, Clayton County Foundation for the Future, Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission, Revolving Loan Fund, Northeast Iowa Business Network, Travel Federation, Transportation Enhancement Committee, Northeast Iowa Tourism Association, Regional Housing Trust Fund

and Turkey River Recreation. **Jenna Pollock** (Currently Serving) is the Clayton County Conservation Director and served on the, Enhancement Committee UERPC, Clayton County Economic Development & Tourism Group, Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards District 6 Group, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board, Motor Mill Foundation, Clayton County Young Professionals and Great River Road Interpretive Center Committee.

**Marquette: Alicia Mullarkey** (Currently Serving) is the Driftless Area Wetland Centre Executive Director. **Roger Halvorson** (Past Member) was owner of Eagles Landing Winery. He also served on the Marquette Historical Society and Emma Big Bear Foundation.

**Volga: Elaine Follon** (Currently Serving) serves on the Volga City Council, Mayor Pro-Tem, Volga City Visioning Committee, Volga City Library Board and several offices in her church both locally and statewide

**McGregor: Lynette Sander** (Past Member) is the City Administrator in McGregor and serves on the McGregor Historical Society, McGregor Clan Lions Club and McGregor Historic Preservation Commission

**West Union: Carrie Davis** (Currently Serving) is the Fayette County ED Marketing & Communications Manager and NEITA member. **Lynn Kelck** (Currently Serving) is the owner of the Barrel Drive In and serves on the West Union Planning & Zoning Board and West Union Lions Club.

**Guttenberg: Mary Willett** (Currently Serving) is the Guttenberg City Administrator and **Emily Moser** (Currently Serving) is the Guttenberg Development & Tourism Executive Director.

**Elkader: Larry Stone** (Currently Serving) serves on the Clayton County Conservation Board, Clayton County Conservation Awareness Network & Motor Mill Foundation.

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### 2.3 Administration & Coordination

The RBSB Board has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) that outlines their agreement to work closely with one another to plan, manage and administrate RBSB business. Both the RBSB and RC&D Boards of Directors meet quarterly, or more frequently as needed, to discuss, plan and implement initiatives for and along the RBSB. Through this partnership, Northeast Iowa RC&D offers technical assistance to the RBSB Board by providing the services of a part-time RBSB Coordinator who is funded through the Iowa DOT's Iowa Byway Sustainability Project. Northeast Iowa RC&D also provides administrative, accounting, grant writing, graphic design services and other technical and financial assistance to the RBSB Board as agreed upon between the parties. The development of this CMP is another example of this partnership. Northeast Iowa RC&D secured funding from the National Scenic Byway Program to assist local leaders with development of the RBSB CMP. The Board of Directors and other volunteers provided their time as match for the grant. This partnership allowed the local leaders to be very involved in the development of a professional CMP at a time when they had extremely limited financial capital.

The RBSB Coordinator provides assistance to RBSB Board members in completing all tasks and deliverables as outlined in grants secured on behalf of the RBSB by Northeast Iowa RC&D to preserve, protect, interpret and promote the RBSB. This includes funding and resources provided through the Iowa Byways Sustainability Project, the National Scenic Byway Program, the Byways of Iowa Coalition, the Byways of Iowa Foundation, and other local and regional public and private partners including businesses and communities. Other Northeast Iowa RC&D staff members provide assistance as funding allows. Northeast Iowa RC&D staff engaged in byway activities include the following:

- **Jared Nielsen:** RBSB Coordinator duties including board assistance, marketing, fundraising, event coordination, public outreach and stakeholder communications. CMP development including publication and marketing research, cartography, graph development, marketing, research, writing, overall layout and design.
- **Lora Friest:** CMP project oversight, research, development, small and large group facilitation, photography and writing.
- **Ross Evelsizer:** GIS analysis, GPS training and volunteer oversight, visual assessment and mapping, additional assistance to public partners as related to RBSB GIS and visual assessment.
- **Paul Berland:** CMP research, development & writing.
- **Amanda Streeper:** Administrative management.
- **Josh Dansdill:** Cartography and writing.
- **Eden Ehm:** Writing.
- **Mallory Marlatt:** Editing and small group facilitation.

### 2.4 Public Input

The RBSB Board members and Northeast Iowa RC&D staff worked together to develop strategies for public involvement to ensure the CMP planning process resulted in the completion of a comprehensive, multi-faceted and community-supported plan. Several different strategies were used to obtain public input and the process included involvement of and collection of input from people, businesses and organizations that represent a variety of interests and backgrounds. The RBSB Board and Northeast Iowa RC&D staff worked directly with federal, state and local governmental agencies and councils, as well as a variety of local organizations and businesses. The methods of working with these partners varied from one group to another.

Some partner organizations have a representative on the RBSB Board of Directors. One example of

a partner with representation is the Clayton County Development Group (CCDG), who is represented on the RBSB Board by the CCDG Executive Director. The CCDG Executive Director worked with RC&D personnel to develop and test various types of RBSB marketing materials such as informational cards, maps and tear-sheet maps. Other partner organizations that do not have representation on the RBSB Board also work on projects with RBSB Board members and/or RC&D staff. One example of this would be the Clermont Historical Society (CHS). Although, no one from the CHS serves on the RBSB board, the CHS President donated time and the CHS donated funding to help the RBSB Board research, develop and pilot a historic walking trail brochure to determine if the RBSB traveler would be receptive to that type of marketing and information. The complexity of partnerships and the dedication of the partners strengthen the RBSB board and their work, creating a web of public and private interests that are stronger because they are interconnected and informed.

Specific meetings, sub-groups and committees, as well as research and small group outreach, provide structured input. Groups and efforts included the following:

**1. RBSB Board:** RBSB Board members met throughout the CMP planning process as needed to conduct business, share information, and make decisions. A portion of each of their meetings was dedicated to CMP learning, discussion, planning, prioritization and approval of actual written sections. Part of the learning they engaged in involved the development and implementation of strategic pilot projects. The development, implementation and results of these pilot projects were discussed and those that they felt were successful were included in this plan.



Northeast Iowa RC&D



**Stakeholders**

**2. Stakeholders:** Stakeholders participated in CMP planning sessions, which were organized and conducted as open public meetings in various RBSB communities. These public meetings were publicized in local newspapers, RBSB and partner newsletters, through e-invitations and by word-of-mouth. These meetings provided an opportunity for RC&D staff and RBSB Board members to educate attendees about the RBSB and to explain the purpose and importance of the RBSB CMP. Attendees were also asked to identify, locate and describe meaningful intrinsic qualities within the byway corridor, participate in committee discussion, discuss methods to disseminate and gather information and to provide input about history, art, recreation, interpretation, marketing, branding, culinary tourism and other specific topics.



**CMP Committees**

**3. CMP Committees:** CMP committees were formed to gather information related to recreation, art, history, culinary tourism, interpretation, marketing and other specific topics. Committee members were invited or volunteered based on specific areas of expertise or interest. For example, the heads of city and county historical societies and local historians were invited to participate in the historic committee. Each CMP committee consisted of 4-8 members who met monthly for four months or according to schedules determined by the committee members themselves. Committee members helped inventory resources, develop strategies for promotion and interpretation, prioritize projects, obtain cost estimates, collect photographs, assisted with writing for specific sections and provided other more topic specific input needed for development of this CMP.



**Small Group Partners**

**4. Small Group Partners:** RC&D staff organized or attended outside organizational meetings to obtain information or develop partnerships that would help with development of specific sections of the CMP or with projects that had the potential to be considered CMP projects. Meetings included sessions with conservation boards, tourism associations, county engineers, city council members, community visioning groups, county supervisors, city chamber of commerce, historical societies, the Regional Transportation Enhancement Committee, Regional Technical Committee, community betterment organizations, Byways of Iowa Coalition, Byways of Iowa Foundation, Iowa Byway Sustainability Project meetings and other meetings where the majority of the attending participants were invited rather than attending in response to public announcements.



**Private & Public Business Partners**

**5. Private & Public Businesses and Partner Groups:** RBSB Coordinator, Jared Nielsen, worked to update the byway stakeholder list, which was previously dominated by USPS mailing information rather than email addresses. The updated list provided contact information for art studios & galleries, quilt shops, bars & taverns, restaurants, bed & breakfasts, cabins & guest houses, campgrounds, hotels & motels, city council members, committee & club members, economic development & tourism staff, historical society members, Iowa byway coordinators, byway community residents, outfitters, antique and thrift shops, local producers, gift shops, gas stations and public libraries along the RBSB. This list was used to prepare for CMP planning sessions and invite these businesses and groups to provide plan input.



**Byway Ambassadors**

**6. RBSB Ambassadors:** RBSB Board members relied on direct assistance from several community leaders that volunteered to be RBSB Ambassadors, and as such, to conduct one-on-one outreach to businesses and other community organizations in specific RBSB communities. The Byway Ambassadors worked with the RBSB Coordinator and RBSB Board members to develop, distribute and test marketing and promotional materials. Byway Ambassadors also helped educate local business owners about the byway and how it benefits their business. RBSB advocates participated directly in CMP development as well. Byway Ambassadors were active in the following RBSB communities: Clermont, Elgin, Elkader, Fayette, Wadena, Gunder/St. Olaf, Guttenberg, Marquette, Volga and West Union.



**Business & Consumer Survey Groups**

**7. Business & Consumer Survey Groups:** RC&D staff distributed surveys to byway businesses, partners and organizations to identify consumer awareness of the RBSB and gather input for various sections of the CMP. For example, businesses were asked to review, test and provide input on various types of marketing material such as what they preferred to distribute, changes they would recommend and the public's response to test market materials.

The combination of input from all these stakeholders was invaluable to the development of this CMP, as they will also be the entities and individuals responsible for implementation and for updates to this CMP over time.



# Section Three

Mission, Vision and Goals

# Byway Goals

*A goal is a desired result that a person or a system envisions, plans and commits to achieve: a personal or organizational desired end-point in some sort of assumed development. Many people endeavor to reach goals within a finite time by setting deadlines.*

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### 3.1 Introduction

The RBSB has the capacity to provide benefits for travelers, as well as the rural residents who live and work in the RBSB corridor and communities. However, the RBSB Board believes those benefits are best realized through a measured approach that protects the intrinsic qualities of the RBSB. The RBSB Board has developed this Corridor Management Plan (CMP) to convey how they feel the RBSB can be used as a tool to attract visitors, spur economic growth, and improve the livability of the RBSB counties, while protecting the natural, scenic, historic, cultural and other intrinsic qualities. The RBSB Board has a Vision Statement for how their Board of Directors functions as well as a Vision Statement for the RBSB Byway that they feel conveys this balance of ideas. They also have a Mission Statement for their Board and a Mission Statement for this Corridor Management Plan.

### 3.2 Vision Statements

The RBSB CMP Vision Statement addresses the RBSB Board’s vision for how their Board of Directors will function during and after development of this CMP. The RBSB Board Vision Statement is an expression of how the RBSB Board views the RBSB 5 to 10 years from now based on the current status of the RBSB, input from stakeholders, and successful implementation of the projects they propose in this plan. Both are defined below:

- **RBSB CMP Vision Statement:** The RBSB Board of Directors was formed and will act collectively to enhance the experience of visitors, the quality of life for residents, and the economic vitality of the byway community by preserving and improving the corridor’s resources and offering extraordinary experiences.
- **RBSB Board Vision Statement:** The RBSB is a highly sought out scenic byway that balances the promotion and enjoyment of high quality natural, historic, recreational, cultural resources with the protection, interpretation and enhancement of those resources for the benefit of RBSB residents, businesses, communities and the overall economic vitality of the region.

### 3.3 Mission Statements

The RBSB Board’s Mission Statement and the RBSB CMP Mission Statement collectively define the purpose for this planning process and provide for future oversight of the RBSB Board.

- **RBSB CMP Mission Statement:** To guide the development of the corridor management plan and oversee its implementation through expanded outreach, education, marketing and enhancement of the byway corridor, to and for stakeholders and visitors.
- **RBSB Board Mission Statement:** To protect, preserve, interpret and develop the natural, historical, recreational and cultural resources of the corridor while balancing the preservation of these assets with the economic development of the region.

The RBSB Board has identified goals and objectives that support their Vision and Mission. These goals and objectives are more specific than the mission and vision statements. Goals and objectives will be achieved through projects and actions that have been developed by the RBSB Board with input from Stakeholders. They are identified in Section 18 of this CMP, titled “Proposed Projects.”

### 3.4 Goals & Objectives

#### GOAL 1: Provide Organizational Support for the Byway

- Partner with local, state and federal public and private partners to increase technical and financial support for the RBSB Board, including but not limited to, the assistance of a full-time Byway Coordinator through Northeast Iowa RC&D and funding for implementation of fundamentally necessary organizational projects as recommended by the RBSB Board.
- Foster an atmosphere of collective planning and implementation that includes technical and financial partnership with and between the RBSB Board and local, state and federal, private and public entities so as to encourage strong collaboration and partnership during CMP project implementation and to eliminate or minimize duplication of effort and power struggles between the RBSB Board and its members and partners.
- Select and secure RBSB Board members that individually and collectively represent RBSB cities, counties and businesses so as to ensure a wide-range of expertise and support for the RBSB Byway, RBSB Board, RBSB staff and activities.
- Maintain a regular schedule for well-planned and productive RBSB Board meetings and work individually and collectively to ensure participation in those board meetings by a majority of the RBSB Board members.

#### GOAL 2: Revitalize Individual Community Downtowns & Business Districts

- Encourage representatives from each byway community to serve on the RBSB Board of Directors and the Byways of Iowa Coalition so they can provide specific input and ideas for promotion of the byway and byway communities.
- Develop a system of communication and relationships with and between the RBSB Board and RBSB community leaders and business owners to ensure swift and quality communication between the RBSB Board and Business Districts.
- Work with RBSB communities individually and collectively to identify, promote and enhance their distinct character, attractions and services within the larger context of the RBSB Brand.
- Work with public and private, local and state, partners to develop opportunities for multi-community and multi-byway partnerships that collectively promote the RBSB communities as part of the RBSB or Iowa Byways experience.
- Identify, develop and implement projects that benefit multiple business districts by encouraging travelers to explore or visit multiple communities or byways.



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### GOAL 3: Foster Community Participation

- Seek out and involve public and private stakeholders in all aspects of the CMP implementation through small and large group public meetings and input sessions, public or private committee or service group meetings and presentations, project and community meetings, and one-on-one meetings.
- Invite both public employees and private business owners to serve on the RBSB Board.
- Develop and maintain a web presence through social media and other social connection options that keep the public informed and engaged and provide opportunities for public input at the local level and at a broader scale that includes the traveling public.
- Provide opportunities for feedback, input and for new ideas to be brought to the RBSB Board's attention so that the CMP is a living document that is owned and influenced by the public over time.
- Seek out and foster local partnerships for implementation of art, history, cultural, recreational and other infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects as identified in this CMP.
- Develop and implement programs that build support for the RBSB within and between RBSB communities.

### GOAL 4: Create an Easy-To-Navigate Byway Experience

- Develop and distribute updated wayfinding tools to ensure travelers have access to the most current travel information at a variety of locations.
- Work with and empower the RBSB stakeholders about how to work with public and private partner entities that inform travel decisions, route planning and selection and wayfinding at the local, state and national level.
- Conduct an annual byway signage inventory and work with cities, counties and the Iowa DOT to replace or repair byway signage as needed.
- Work with local partners to ensure that local wayfinding to RBSB attractions is implemented at the highest standards through a coordinated effort.

### GOAL 5: Maximize Opportunities for Byway Partnership on Projects and Initiatives

- Conduct a review and assessment of proposed and ongoing byway projects and initiatives annually and present it to the RBSB Board of Directors for review, consideration, and action.
- Update the RBSB CMP projects chapter as needed to motivate partners and stakeholders. Conduct regular public meetings and interactive byway stakeholder events
- that encourage the exchange of ideas and provide opportunities for project updates, planning and visioning.
- Develop and prioritize projects that involve multiple partners, communities and/or byways.

### GOAL 6: Protect & Enhance the RBSB Viewshed & Enhance the Traveler's Scenic Experiences

- Inform and provide the highest quality technical resources for county and city planning and zoning committees, city councils and county boards of supervisors regarding decision making associated with the RBSB corridor and its viewshed.
- Provide information to local public and private entities and policy makers about the advertising and billboard restrictions and other state and federal restrictions and/or regulations as they related to Iowa's Scenic Byways and corridors.
- Work with public and private partners to secure easements or public ownerships of critical viewshed properties adjacent and near to the RBSB as identified by the RBSB Viewshed Analysis.
- Work with public and private partners to restore native vegetation, to control invasive species and weeds, document native plant communities, and manage roadsides and adjacent lands in a manner consistent with the Iowa Integrated Vegetation Management Program in the RBSB right-of-way or in key locations adjacent to the RBSB.
- Partner with public and private entities to control and remove litter and stop illegal dumping along the RBSB.
- Encourage public and private entities to work together to improve or remove visually intrusive or environmentally hazardous sites along the RBSB.
- Work with local, state and national private and public partners to expand and enhance opportunities for travelers to enjoy the scenery and views along the RBSB and in the RBSB corridor.

### GOAL 7: Provide Technical and Financial Support for High Quality Marketing of the RBSB at the Local, State, National and International Level

- Educate the RBSB stakeholders and partners about the demographics of the byway traveler in general and specific targeted subgroups of byway travelers so they can target their resources appropriately.
- Consider all traveler demographics including "home comers," or vacationing past residents and the connections they have to food, activities and other attractions.
- Develop, print and distribute publications that educate the traveler about the byway, promote and cross market the byway's intrinsic qualities, small businesses, events and visitor amenities collectively or as part of the RBSB experience.
- Develop, conduct and market programs, events and other RBSB "experiences" through social media, conferences, mass media and other venues that maximize visual interaction and one-on-one outreach to targeted byway social groups.
- Develop & utilize high-quality accurate maps for RBSB Board and partner publications.
- Identify and secure partnerships, grants and contributions for the RBSB Board and partners to fund development and distribution of marketing materials that reach audiences of all ages and demographics.

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### GOAL 8: Protect, Preserve and Expand Byway Historic, Cultural, Archaeological, Natural Resources and the Local Quality of Life Along the Byway

- Work with local partners and stakeholders to secure technical and financial assistance for the restoration and protection of historic sites regardless National Register for Historic Places status.
- Work with local partners and stakeholders to to secure technical and financial assistance for the re-creation of significant historic sites and structures in a historically accurate manner.
- Work with local partners and stakeholders to restore and preserve historic collections.
- Develop interpretation, recreational opportunities and other public interactions, opportunities and projects to engage the visitor in a manner that protects the RBSB's resources from overuse, public damage and/or destruction.
- Create high quality interpretive materials for historic sites and tours of individual sites, communities and of the byway, in a manner that recognizes the individuality of the sites and communities while encouraging the collective value of the sites.
- Develop and expand improved universal access to historic, cultural, archeological and natural resources along the RBSB.
- Identify and maximize opportunities to tell the stories of Native American life, culture and history, both where archaeological evidence remains and where historic accounts and stories are our only connections.
- Recognize the inherent right of rural and community RBSB residents to privacy and autonomy and educate the visitor about private land versus public land ownership, use and rights.
- Educate the traveler about ways to minimize their impact on historic, cultural, archaeological and natural resources along the byway.

### GOAL 9: Identify and Share Byway Stories with the Visitor

- Develop a theme, sub-themes, primary interpretative objectives, and story lines for the RBSB.
- Develop specific interpretive objectives for the main attractions along the byway.
- Incorporate the interpretive theme into marketing and interpretation as its developed.
- Interpret the byways intrinsic qualities through stories, places and features that make the byway corridor unique.
- Develop interpretive and educational opportunities for residents and visitors through theme-consistent informational signs, kiosks, audio tours, interpretive panels, wayside exhibits, art, information hubs, plaques and place markers etc.
- Record and use oral histories as part of interpretive displays, downloadable files or CDs, and on social media, so tourist may access them before, during or after their visit.

### GOAL 10: Establish a Recognizable Byway Brand

- Maximize use of the distinct RBSB logo consistently on all RBSB signage, promotional brochures, maps, kiosks, website, interpretive and other materials accessed by the public.
- Utilize the RBSB and Iowa Byways logos, their styles, and the connection they have to other Iowa byways, in a manner that is consistent with the Iowa Byway Program guidelines and opportunities as defined by the Iowa DOT and encourage others and partnering organizations to do so when appropriate.
- Identify themes, imagery and colors that align with the RBSB and Iowa Byways logo and use them to create materials that invoke feelings and perceptions of excitement, adventure, natural exploration and having fun while participating in the activities along the RBSB.
- Build relationships with tourists through story telling and development of activities that create a positive association with, and of, the RBSB brand and capitalize on those relationships to create a larger network of recognition.
- Create and adopt a slogan to develop a strong association between the brand and what the RBSB wants the brand to represent such as "Iowa's Outdoor Playground."
- Identify opportunities to encourage local and state public and private entities to use the RBSB slogan, logo, map and images whenever possible.
- Place RBSB signs/banners/literature in public and private strategic locations to increase awareness of the brand and capture the public's attention, such as parks, landmarks, historical sites, on business windows etc.
- Create/expand online presence/awareness of brand through use of website, social media, e-newsletters, apps etc.

### GOAL 11: Support Improvements to Traveler Safety

- Educate travelers about the risks associated with gravel sections of the byway and provide alternative paved routes or close gravel routes when the risk is greater than the benefits to the traveler.
- Work with local county engineers and city personnel to identify and construct pull-outs and overlooks in high risk scenic portions of the RBSB where visitors are slowing or stopping to enjoy the view at increased risk to residents and visitors.
- Periodically evaluate traffic safety and accident information and then educate officials and inform city and county policy regarding traffic control and safety measures.
- Repair and replace aging road and bridge infrastructure along the RBSB to ensure a high quality experience.



**Protect, Preserve and Expand Natural Resources**

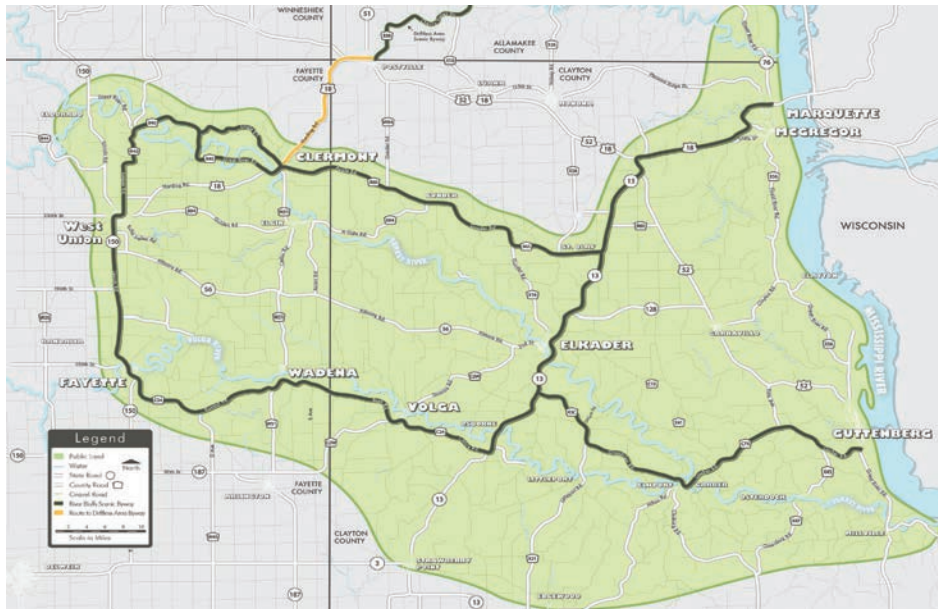


# Section **Four**

Byway Corridor & Communities

# Community Outreach

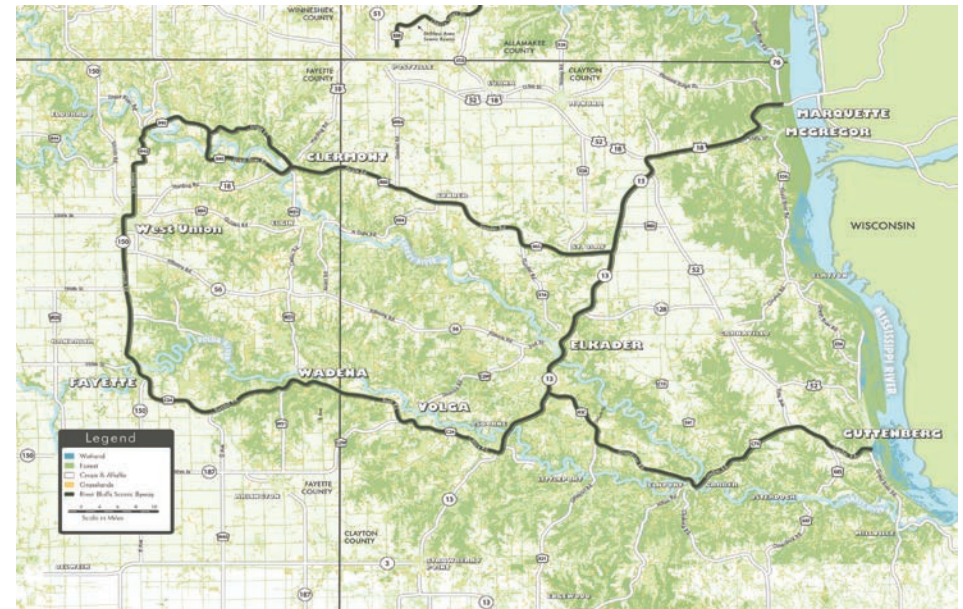
*Community Outreach is an activity of providing services to any populations who might not otherwise have access to those services. A key component of outreach is that the groups providing it are not stationary, but mobile; in other words they are meeting those in need of outreach services at the locations where those in need are.*



River Bluffs Scenic Byway Corridor Map

#### 4.1 Byway Corridor

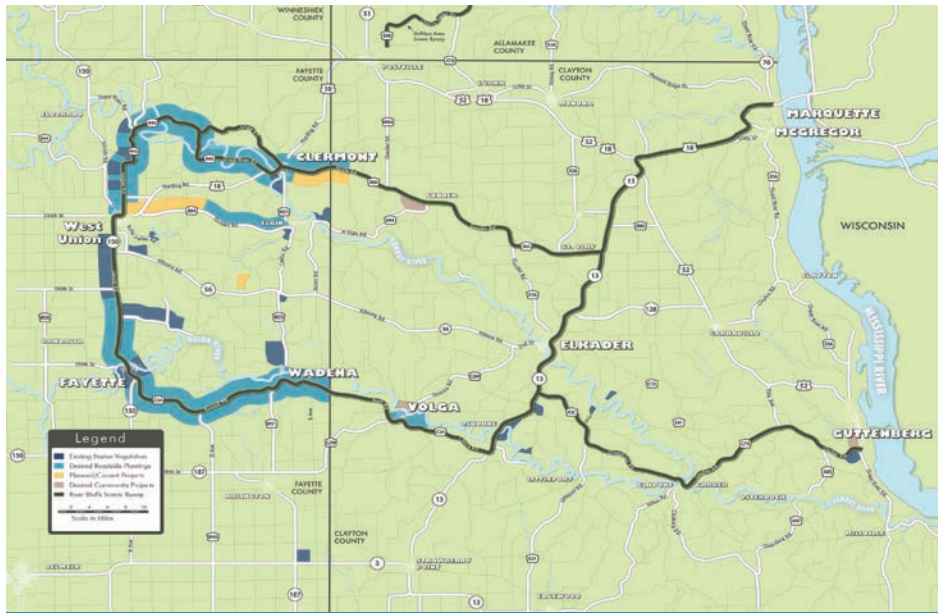
The RBSB Corridor is an area of land directly adjacent to the RBSB that encompasses and reflects the intrinsic qualities of the region that originally influenced the designation of the RBSB. The RBSB Board considers the features and qualities of the RBSB Corridor when making decisions about marketing, interpretation, scenic overlook development, economic development projects, historic restoration projects and countless other decisions. This section provides basic information about the RBSB Corridor, including the area that has been delineated by the RBSB Board as the “RBSB Corridor” and basic descriptions of the corridor communities and villages. This section provides context for many of the other sections in the CMP. The RBSB Corridor encompasses portions of two Northeast Iowa counties, Clayton and Fayette, and 16 communities. It has fluid borders that extend to include significant intrinsic qualities, including natural areas and scenic overlooks. It includes large portions of the Turkey River Recreational Corridor and the Volga River Corridor. The RBSB Corridor is closely tied to the identity of the RBSB, as a “river and bluffs” byway, but also to the nature of the landscape that is featured by the RBSB. Travelers can expect dramatic hilltop views, winding river valleys, limestone outcroppings, diverse landscapes and changing elevations throughout the RBSB Corridor.



River Bluffs Scenic Byway Land Use Map

#### 4.2 Land Uses

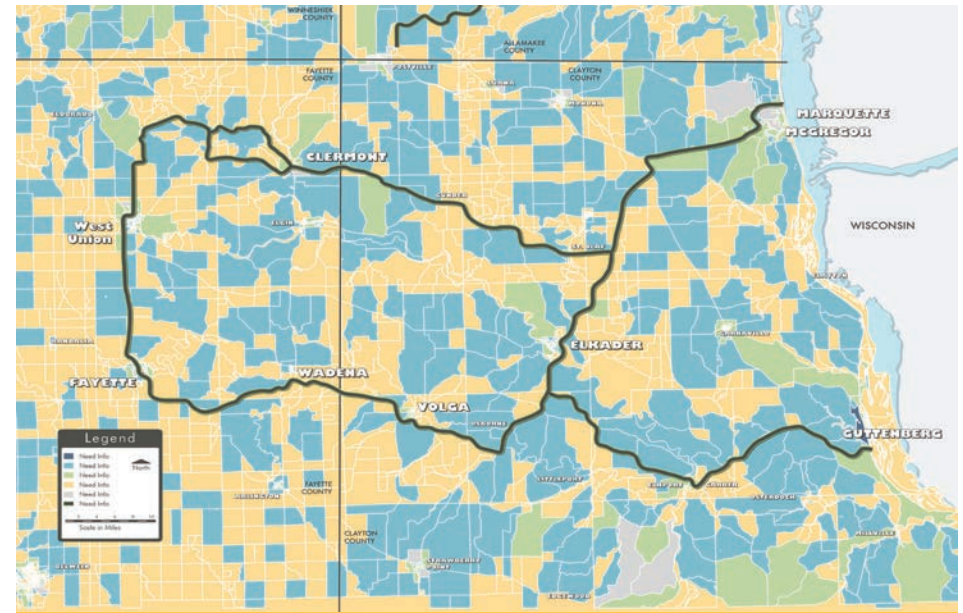
The soils, topography, landuse, natural ecosystems, flora and fauna within the RBSB Corridor are some of the most diverse, rugged, and well-developed in Iowa, creating a scenic beauty, recreational opportunities and a rich historical context that is unique to the area. Because the area has undergone limited landscape change due to glacial ice, the terrain is dominated by gently sloping to rolling summits with steeper valley walls that join small to very large flood plains. Diverse scenic landscapes are characteristic in the RBSB Corridor, which boasts deep valleys, abundant rock outcropping, forested hillsides and rocky bluffs, caves, crevices, trout streams, winding rivers and sinkholes. Stream valleys in the corridor are deep, narrow and V-shaped, with steep irregular slopes and steep cliffs. Streams and rivers meander through the landscape taking abrupt, sharp-angled turns. Elevation ranges from 660 feet (200 meters) on the valley floors to 1,310 feet (400 meters) on the highest ridges. Local relief is mainly 10 to 20 feet (3 to 6 meters), but it is as much as 50 to 100 feet (15 to 30 meters) on valley walls along the major streams and is as much as 250 feet (75 meters) on the Mississippi River bluffs above the river valley floor. Due in part to the rugged terrain, the land use in the corridor is dominated by hardwood forests, pasture and conservation practices, which are detailed more in Section 5 of this CMP, which discusses natural resources and major land uses.



**River Bluffs Scenic Byway Roadside Vegetation Map**

### 4.3 Roadside Vegetation

Vegetation in the RBSB Corridor road right-of-way, the land area directly adjacent to the RBSB road, immediately impacts the visitor’s experience and also impacts the quality of life for RBSB residents. This right-of-way is publically owned and/or managed by several different entities including cities, two counties and the Iowa DOT. The greatest percentage of the road right-of-way is managed by county personnel. Fayette County Conservation Board has a Roadside Vegetation Manager on staff. They also have one of the oldest and most respected Roadside Vegetation Management Programs in Iowa. Through this program, they have completed native vegetation planting, restoration and management on large segments of the RBSB. They are supportive of accelerated native vegetation management and enhancement in the RBSB Corridor as funding and time allows. They have completed a non-electronic roadside inventory but have proposed a digital roadside vegetation inventory with GIS mapping to help them better articulate the existing conditions of the roadside vegetation and prioritize future native vegetation plantings along the RBSB. Clayton County does not have an active roadside program; however, their County Engineering Department does have an employee who spends 5% of their time managing weeds and roadside vegetation. They have never completed a roadside inventory of vegetation but have expressed support for native plantings where road projects are scheduled to disturb existing vegetation and reseeding will be required.



**River Bluffs Scenic Byway Dispersed Populations Map**

### 4.4 Corridor Communities

The Corridor is a very rural area with a dispersed population as can be seen in the map of census blocks for the area. The largest community along the RBSB is West Union, with just less than 2,500 people. There are a total of 11 incorporated cities: Clermont, Elkader, Fayette, Garber, Guttenberg, Marquette, McGregor, St. Olaf, Volga, Wadena and West Union and 5 unincorporated villages: Elkport, Froelich, Gunder, Giard and Osborne, on or directly adjacent to the RBSB, with another five towns and villages in the RBSB Corridor as it is defined by the RBSB Board of Directors. The communities, like the byway itself, are steeped in natural beauty and each has its own rich history. The location, demographics, economic information and other factoids about each are noted in section 4.5. These and other factors are given consideration by the RBSB Board for planning, decision making and project prioritization.





#### 4.5 RBSB Anchor Community: Clermont

Clermont was incorporated in Fayette County in 1875 and has a population of approximately 632. It is located where County Roads B40, B60 and W51 intersect with the RBSB on US Highway 18. The number one industry at 18% is Construction, with Manufacturing at 16%, Wholesale trade at 15% and Retail trade tied at 13% with Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting. The estimated median household income in Clermont is \$39,549. Known by the locals as The Brick City, Clermont was home to a thriving brick making industry between 1855 and 1942 when it produced millions of red and white brick, hollow tile and concrete block, making the brickyards one of the most important employers in the region. Clermont brick, manufactured using clay from the river that flows through town, went into buildings all over Northeast Iowa and remain visible in structures located on Mill Street in downtown Clermont. Today the community is fostering natural resource and scenic tourism tied to the Turkey River and the RBSB. Both the river and the byway travel through the center of this community. Clermont is one of three communities in the Turkey River Recreational Corridor (TRRC) developing and promoting land and water trails. The TRRC is a major RBSB attraction. The community fosters historic tourism in all its forms including restoration, preservation and interpretation of historic sites, historic story telling and reenactments, celebration of historic persons that helped form the community and both self-guided and guided tours of historic sites. One of the most prominent historical figures in Clermont was William Larrabee, who served both in Iowa's State Senate and as Iowa's Governor from 1885 to 1890. Some of the most significant historical sites in Clermont are those either put into service by the Larrabee family, such as the Larrabee Schoolhouse and Library, or those which became the residence for the Larrabees, such as the Montauk house, which was built for the family in 1874. With all of these historic sites, Clermont has become a treasure trove of genealogical records and historical information



World's Largest Pneumatic Kimbal Pipe Organ



Statues at Montauk



Montauk Historic Governor's Mansion



## RBSB Anchor Community: Elgin

Elgin, which was incorporated in the early 1900's, has approximately 700 residents. The median household income in Elgin is \$36,800. Retail trade is the dominant industry in Elgin at 25%. The next closest industry is Manufacturing at 15%. Their slogan is "Little Switzerland of Iowa" because of the hills and valleys surrounding the town. Elgin is located at the mouth of Otter Creek where Otter Creek joins the Turkey River and is one of the three communities in the Turkey River Recreational Corridor. Its presence in the river valley is enhanced by the forested bluffs surrounding the town. This small town is not a "pass through" community; visitors must choose to travel to Elgin since it is not on-the-way to anywhere else. To that end, the community has fostered natural resource based tourism associated with land and water trails and the RBSB. Approximately 4 miles from Clermont, Elgin is connected to Clermont and the RBSB by Canoe Road, as well as by a land trail and by the Turkey River Water Trail. The County Conservation Board manages one of the most active county parks in the region, Gilbertson Conservation Education Area, just across the Turkey River from Elgin and accessible via vehicle or a pedestrian bridge across the river. This park has riverside camping, horseback riding trails, bike trails, water trail access, historic collections, touchable wildlife, natural history collections, a petting zoo, fishing pond, maize maze and many other visitor amenities. Gilbertson is a destination for travelers from around the world. Elgin also offers many choices in regards to the multitude of locations one can dine at, such as Dotzy's Saloon, Elgin Tap, and The Irish Shanti. Many of these buildings, and the surrounding structures, have kept their original structure since they were first constructed. A note-worthy landmark of this "Little Switzerland" is the single clock tower located on the main street. The clock is situated in a small park, which includes several shelters and a performance stage, where community organizations can perform.



Turkey River Recreational Corridor Trail



Gilbertson Conservation Education Area



Downtown Elgin



## RBSB Anchor Community: Elkader

Founded very early on, the first permanent residents arrived in Elkader in 1836. Today this Clayton County community has expanded to a population of approximately 1,273. The RBSB travels along State Highway 13 along the edge of Elkader and passes intersections with County Road X16 in town and State Highway 56 just south of town. The estimated median household income Elkader is \$51,632. Although it was settled primarily by German and Irish immigrants, the community was named after a young Algerian hero Abd el-Kader and currently serves as the County Seat for Clayton County. The Turkey River flows through the center of this community, which is one of three communities in the Turkey River Recreational Corridor working to develop land and water trails, and the first to develop a Whitewater Park on the Turkey River. The recently constructed Whitewater Park offers opportunities for kayaking, boogie boarding, tubing and fishing. Forested hillsides cover the area surrounding the town, providing excellent opportunities for hiking and birdwatching, especially with Elkader's close proximity the Turkey River. Elkader has a thriving historic downtown district with shops, restaurants and services. The downtown features notable historic structures including the Keystone Bridge, a 346-foot limestone bridge built in 1889, the Courthouse Clock Tower, built in 1868, and the Elkader Opera House, which became a central part of Elkader's culture in the early twentieth century. The community of Elkader is also known for their antique shopping, parks and natural areas, diverse ethnic food options, and for having one of the last family bakeries operating in the region; Pedretti's Bakery. Industries in the community are distributed fairly evenly across several sectors including construction (13%), education (11%), manufacturing (10%), retail trade (9%) and wholesale trade (8%). The community has invested in their downtown buildings and facades, city parks and campgrounds, and land and water trails.



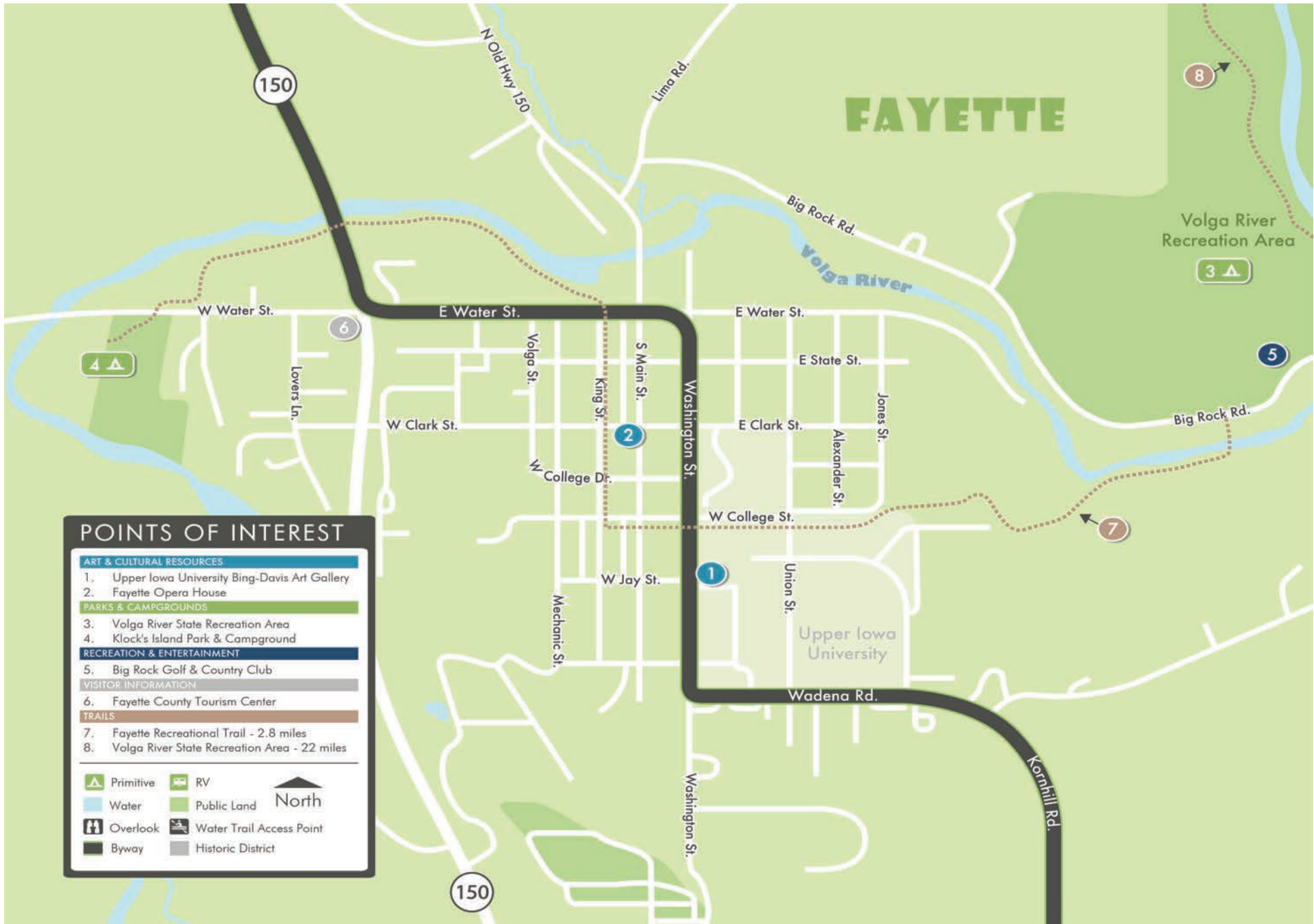
Founders Park & Whitewater Course



Downtown Elkader



Keystone Bridge & Elkader Clock Tower



## RBSB Anchor Community: Fayette

Fayette was originally incorporated into Fayette County in 1874, and today the population of this thriving community is approximately 1,338. It lies in the Volga River Valley surrounded by forested hills, at the intersection of State Highways 93 and 150, as well as county Road C24. The estimated median household income in this community is \$37,258. Fayette is most well known for Upper Iowa University, which is their dominant business, providing educational, cultural and other opportunities that many other small Iowa communities lack. Educational Services is their primary industry (29%) with accommodations and food services second (13%) and retail trade third (11%). Upper Iowa University also introduces opportunities for many cultural activities and sporting events. The Volga River, a major tributary to the Turkey River, flows through the community. Volga River State Recreation Area is located three miles north of town along the RBSB and has numerous visitor amenities including Frog Hollow Lake, boat access, a fishing jetty, picnic area, skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, an extensive trail system, playground, camping and excellent shoreline fishing access. Fayette is in the process of a major downtown streetscape project, which has a “Nature” theme. Downtown also holds many tantalizing restaurant options, such as Cabo Blue, DT’s Pub and Shiners Bar and Grill. They have worked over the past several years with public and private partners to develop a system of multi-use trails, parks, camping and other outdoor recreation opportunities. Their community connects through a trail to Volga Lake Recreation Area and proposes to connect by trail to other private and public multi-use trails, natural areas and nearby communities. Fayette also boasts several community wide events, such as the Fayette Car Show & Shine, in which classic cars are parked downtown to be available for public viewing, and Watermelon Days, the town’s yearly celebration involving public games, live music and other community-wide activities.



Volga River State Recreation Area



Upper Iowa University



Volga River





## RBSB Anchor Community: Guttenberg

Guttenberg is tucked between the Mississippi River and the limestone bluffs adjacent to the river near Lock and Dam #10 in eastern Clayton County, with portions of the community on top of the bluffs. The city was incorporated in 1857, and today has a population of approximately 1,919. The median household income in this community is \$36,701. Retail trade is the second dominant industry (20%) in Guttenberg, just behind manufacturing (23%). The RBSB begins in Guttenberg at the intersection of US Highway 52 and County Road C7X. The Great River Road National Scenic Byway also travels through Guttenberg, where it intersects with the RBSB. In 1924, the US Fish and Wildlife Service established the Upper Mississippi River National Fish and Wildlife Refuge along the length of this community. The community prides itself on providing high quality access, including universal access to and from the Mississippi River. The City of Guttenberg and the State of Iowa have invested extensively in natural resource based tourism in this community, including development of byway overlooks, trails and rest areas, interpretation of cultural and historic sites, wayfinding from major thoroughfares, development of visitor services and an information center and hosting natural resource based events including Eagle Watch. They have purchased land for parks and updated overlooks on the northern edge of town and to the south of the community. They developed a community marina near their historic downtown and have one of the longest riverfront trails, with viewing scopes and interpretation in all of Iowa. Guttenberg boasts more historic sites per capita than any community in the region, many of them being significant limestone structures. Others, such as the last remaining Lockmasters House on the Upper Mississippi and the Historic Lakeside Ballroom, are as culturally significant as they are historic. The Iowa DNR manages a Fish Aquarium and Hatchery in Guttenberg. The community is recognized as a fishing, hunting and wildlife watching public point of entry for the world renown Mississippi River and its backwaters.



Downtown Guttenberg



Guttenberg Front Street NRHP



Guttenberg Marina



## RBSB Anchor Community: Marquette

Marquette is located between the Mississippi River and the Mississippi River bluffs in extreme northeastern Clayton County. This river and historic railroad community is located at a key point of entry to Iowa from Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. It was incorporated in 1874 and currently has approximately 375 residents. Manufacturing dominated the industries in Marquette (29%), with arts, entertainment, and recreation at 13% and retail trade at 6% and accommodations and food service at 6%. The northwest arm of the RBSB begins in Marquette at the intersection of US Highway 18 and State Highway 76. The RBSB intersects with the Great River Road National Scenic Byway as it follows the river through Marquette. The median household income is \$27,511. The City, private business owners and partners have invested in Mississippi River and byway tourism infrastructure, including development of a historic railroad depot as a visitors center, development of one of Iowa's first visitor friendly wineries, construction of lodging on the river and adjacent to the bluffs, development of a scenic overlook and a Mississippi River board walk with interpretive signage, and construction of a new Driftless Area Wetland Center. The community relies on tourism as a major economic driver that is also greatly influenced by the Isle of Capri and Lady Luck Casino, which draw thousands of visitors annually. Marquette is very close to Pikes Peak State Park, which provides miles of hiking trails and fantastic views of the Mississippi River. Effigy Mounds National Monument, a nationally significant cultural site is located just a few miles north of town and Sny Magill Creek and Sny Magill Wildlife Management Area are just west of town. Sny Magill Creek is a tributary to the Mississippi River and regarded as one of the best trout streams in Iowa. Marquette and its sister city, McGregor, are also known for their flea markets and festivals. Marquette truly isn't exaggerating when it says that it is "Iowa's Best Kept Secret."



Eagle's Landing Winery



Lady Luck Casino



Mississippi River Boardwalk



## RBSB Anchor Community: McGregor

The City of McGregor is located between the Mississippi River and the Mississippi River bluffs just south of Marquette in extreme northeastern Clayton County. The city was incorporated in 1859 and today has an estimated population of 871 with a median household income of \$26,732. The RBSB begins in the City of Marquette at the intersection of US Highway 18 and State Highway 76, less than one mile to the north of McGregor. The two communities are connected by the Mississippi River, the Great River Road, the RBSB and the Upper Mississippi River National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. They also share history, river culture and visitors, who flow between the communities as if they were one. Retail trade is the dominant industry (21%) in McGregor. It boasts small unique businesses in its historic downtown, including historic lodging, one-of-a-kind gift shops and the McGregor-Marquette Center for the Arts, where visitors can participate in classes and workshops or purchase local art. McGregor and its sister city, Marquette, are also known for their flea markets and festivals. The community is also known for its historic sites, for which the community has developed an extensive self-guided tour, and a delightful small local museum. The town itself is situated between two world-class parks, where avid hikers can ramble through lush woods and natural prairie to their heart's content. Located right next door to McGregor is Pikes Peak State Park, which draws crowds from all over the country for its stunning views of the Mississippi River. On the flip side, Effigy Mounds National Monument is located just five miles north of McGregor, and was established in order to preserve and protect 206 ancient Native American burial mounds. McGregor also offers many recreational opportunities to those with a passion for boating, fishing or simply sight-seeing. Its public and private access to the Mississippi River is diverse and includes guided riverboat tours, opportunities to dine on the river, and lodging overlooking 'The Big Muddy.'



Effigy Mounds National Monument



McGregor's Art Festival



Pikes Peak State Park

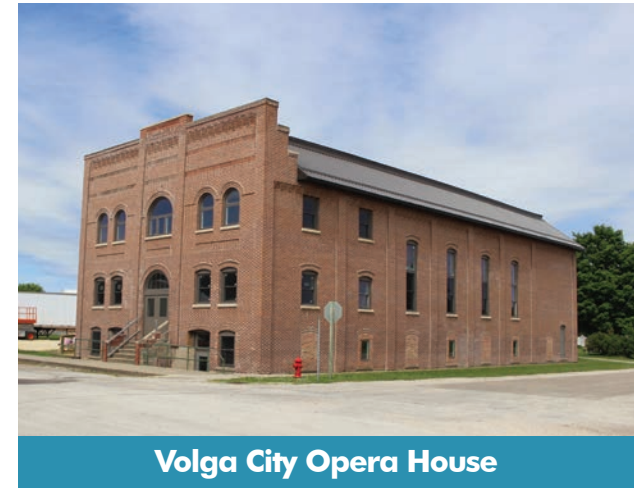


## RBSB Anchor Community: Volga

Volga is nestled in the Volga River Valley in Clayton County. The city was incorporated in 1895 and has approximately 208 residents. The RBSB travels through Volga on County Road C24, which also intersects with County Road C2W in town. The median household income is \$37,150. The most common industry is construction (33%) but agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting is a close second at 24%. The community is known for its access to the Volga River, the Volga City Park, the historic Volga City Opera House, which is in the process of being restored, and the Volga City Truck Cruise, which is one of the largest truck cruises in the nation. The event features trucks, rat-rods, and full size monster trucks from across the country, which will take part in a short 'cruise' around the area of Volga. Following the drive, many more activities take place, such as donut and figure eight competitions, 'Tug-a-Truck', and fireworks. The profits from the Truck Cruise go directly towards the restoration of the Volga City Opera House. The town of Volga is just downstream on the Volga River from Iowa's largest natural white pine grove. The community invested in community services, downtown betterment projects, and floodplain restoration after sustaining major damage to the business district and community buildings during repeated flood events. Volga also offers a campground to travelers, with both primitive and full-hookup sites available.



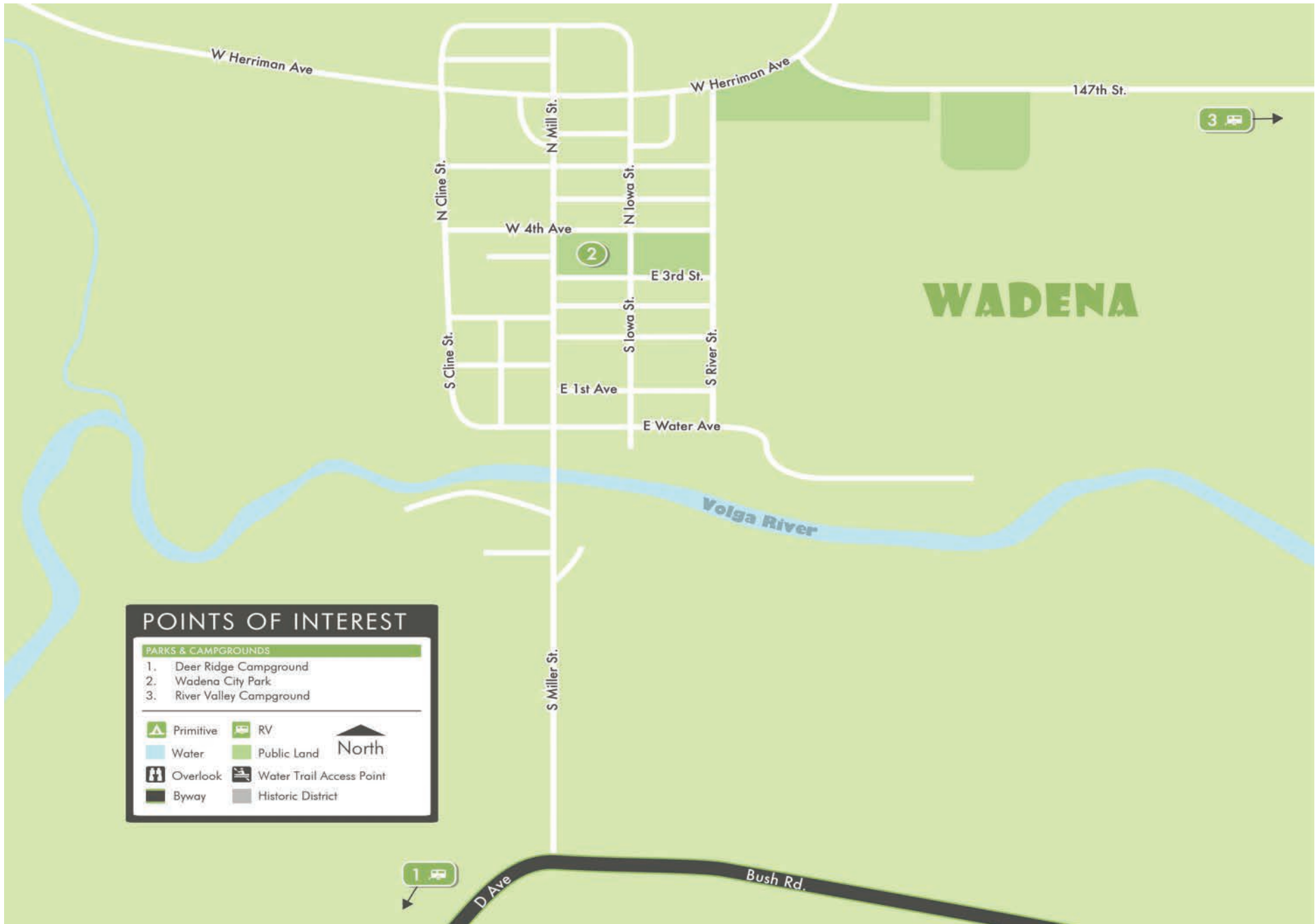
Volga City Park



Volga City Opera House



Volga City Truck Cruise





## RBSB Anchor Community: Wadena

Wadena, located in eastern Fayette County, was incorporated in 1895, has a population of approximately 262 residents, and a median income of approximately \$44,962 per capita. The community lies at the intersection of County Roads C24 and W51 and the Volga River flows through the city. The most common industries are construction (30%) and transportation and warehousing (27%) with accommodations and food service at 4%. Wadena is most well known as the site of the historic Wadena Rock Fest, a controversial event, which at its peak hosted over 40,000 spectators. Held in 1970 on the 220-acre Clarence-Schmitt farm, the Rock Festival has been compared to Woodstock, and photos from the event can still be seen at the local bar. The event was originally unpopular with the Fayette County officials at the time, and as the festival was announced, performed and dismissed, it received considerable pushback from both the locals of Wadena and state officials. Despite numerous attempts at lawsuits, the festival still took place and was a huge success overall. While the town itself is located a little ways off of the actual Byway, the community of Wadena caters to and is popular with motorcyclists, due to its convenient restaurant and gorgeous scenic roadways. Food plays a part in drawing people to Wadena, and Barney's is a popular stop for almost everyone passing through. Offering delicious food and photos from the past, Barney's is a must for all driving through Wadena. Another food attraction is the Wadena meat locker, which boasts fresh cut meat and award winning bologna, salami, and jerky. Wadena also features a fantastic city park, in which families can go to relax and enjoy nature to the fullest. The Wadena City Park offers playground equipment, volleyball courts, and even overnight camping on the premises. Wadena is also an excellent stop for those interested in traveling the RBSB in search of barn quilts, which can be found in the surrounding area on the barns and silos of local farmers.



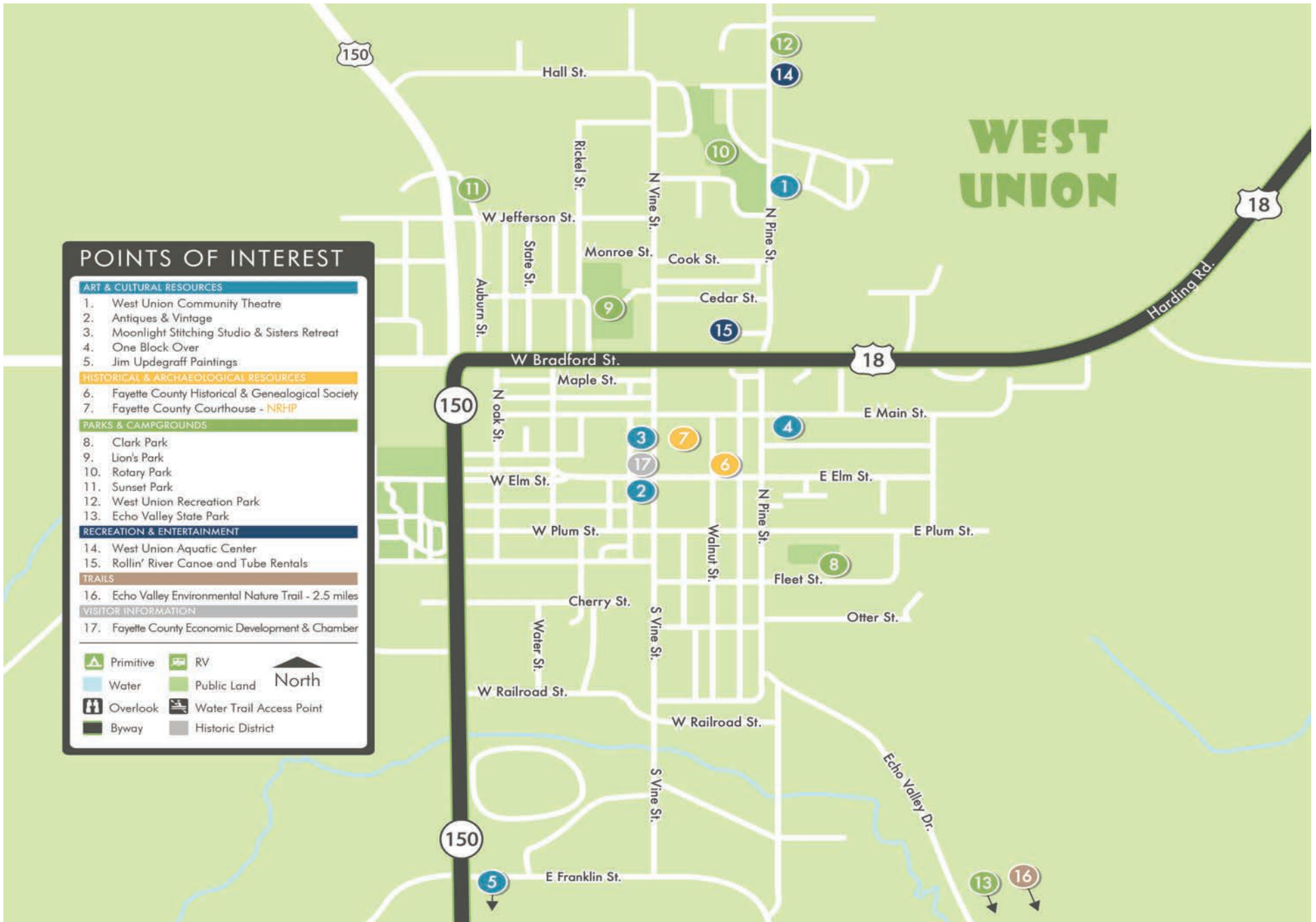
Home of Wadena Fest: Iowa's Woodstock



Barney's Tavern



Byway Community of Wadena



## RBSB Anchor Community: West Union

West Union is located in north central Fayette County. Incorporated in 1879, today it has a population of approximately 2,486. The city is located at the intersection of US Highway 18 and State Highway 150. State Highway 56 also begins at its intersection with State Highway 150 in West Union. The community serves as the county seat for Fayette County and has an estimated median household income of \$45,182. The most common industries in West Union are manufacturing (24%) and construction (18%). The retail industry is fourth overall at 10% and accommodations and food services are 5%. West Union has become most well known across the nation as a Green Streetscape Pilot Project Program Community. Their award winning downtown streetscape project, which incorporated many different green community features includes permeable pavers, rain gardens, bio-swales, rooftop gardens etc. The community hosts tour groups from throughout the nation and provides interpretation about their green community project for the public. West Union also has several parks and recreation areas, including the West Union Recreation Complex. The 100-acre Iowa DNR natural area, Echo Valley State Park is located just east of town with a trout stream and hiking trails as well as many hand-built historical structures built by Clayton County Conservation. The Fayette County Historical Museum is also located in West Union and has diverse, well-kept and interesting historical collections. West Union also boasts several recreational facilities, such as an aquatic center, a bowling alley, and a golf course. There is also the West Union Recreation Complex, which is a 40-acre outdoor recreational area, including trails, softball and baseball diamonds, soccer fields, and several ponds which are open to 'catch and release' fishing. A particularly interesting feature of this park is the hand-made bridge that spans one of the larger ponds, which was created and installed by the locals of West Union. This community is truly committed to creating a better environment for future generations.



Fayette County Historical Center



Fayette County Courthouse



Downtown West Union

#### 4.6 RBSB Small Incorporated Communities

**Garber:** Surveyed in 1872 and incorporated along the banks of the Turkey River in 1907, Garber is located in Volga Township in south central Clayton County. Garber has a population of approximately 88 residents according to the 2010 US Census. The RBSB travels along County Road C7X through Garber. The estimated median household income in Garber is \$48,693. Because of devastating flooding, Garber has repeatedly been impacted by flooding from the Turkey River, including most recently in 2013 when the river crested at 8 feet above its flood stage. As a result, very few of the businesses remain with only one active establishment, the Anchor Inn restaurant. The RBSB, Turkey River Water Trail and the Anchor Inn are the main features in this community.

**St. Olaf:** The small community of St. Olaf in Clayton County has approximately 108 residents. It was incorporated in 1900 and sits at the intersection of County Roads B65 and X28. The median household income is \$34,583. The community is struggling, but is still known as the home of the St. Olaf Tenderloin, a hand pounded tenderloin. The one-pound sandwich is available at the St. Olaf Tap and locally touted as the “Biggest Tenderloin in Iowa” and recognized statewide as one of Iowa’s best pork tenderloins.

#### 4.7 RBSB Unincorporated Communities

Most unincorporated communities along the RBSB boast only a few houses and may or may not have any businesses or local establishments.

**Elkport:** Elkport is located just west of Garber in Volga Township in south central Clayton County near the confluence of the Volga and Turkey Rivers at the intersection of County Roads X3C and C7X. The community was originally incorporated as a city in 1896, but due to severe flood damage, the community agreed to a federal buyout in 2006.

**Osborne:** Osborne is located in Cox Creek Township in central Clayton County along the RBSB on State Highway 13 between Elkader and the intersection with County Road C24.

**Froelich:** Froelich is located in Giard Township in northeastern Clayton County along US Highway 52 about one mile west of the RBSB intersection at US Highways 18 and 52.

**Giard:** Giard is located in Giard Township in northeastern Clayton County along the RBSB section of US Highway 18 between the intersection of US Highway 52 and Marquette.

**Gunder:** Gunder is located in Marion Township in northwestern Clayton County at the intersection of County Roads B60 and B64. Gunder is famous for the “Gunder Burger,” which can be purchased along with other local favorites at the Irish Shanti. Visitors from around the nation travel to Gunder to dine at the Shanti.

#### 4.8 Other RBSB Corridor Communities

**Strawberry Point:** Strawberry Point, a Clayton County community of 1,254, may be most well know for having the world’s largest fiberglass strawberry that graces its main street or the strawberry shortcake that can be enjoyed at the historic Franklin Hotel. Both the shortcake and the hotel are said to be on the national register of historic places. Located next to the community is Backbone State Park, Iowa’s oldest state park.

**Edgewood:** Edgewood, a community on the far southern edge of the RBSB Corridor with approximately 869 residents, is home of the Edgewood Meat Locker, a destination for foodies. It is also home to Kendrick Forest Products, the largest working sawmill in Iowa. Public educational tours are available to the public upon request Fri-Sun.

**Millville:** An unincorporated town in Clayton County with approximately 30 residents, Millville sits in a scenic valley at the intersection of the Turkey River, the Great River Road, Millville Road, Graham Road, Omega Road, Cherry Valley Road and Noble Road. The Bootleggers Bar and Restaurant in Millville is a common motorcycle stop for byway bikers.

**Eldorado:** Eldorado is a small village located in the Turkey River Valley in Fayette County. The community may be most well know for the iconic double church steeple that can be seen from the Goeken Park overlook on the northwest edge of the RBSB.

**Osterdock:** Osterdock, population of 59, is located in Clayton County. The Osterdock Store, Restaurant and Bar is a local gathering place that features hearty meals like hog and beef roasts with mashed potatoes and homemade salads or their fish dinners.



Elkport



St. Olaf



Gunder



Strawberry Point



Garber



Eldorado



Edgewood



# Section **Five**

Natural Resources & Major Land Uses

# Natural Resources

*“Apply to those features in the visual environment that are in a relatively undisturbed state. These features predate the arrival of human populations and may include geological formations, fossils, landform, water bodies, vegetation, and wildlife. There may be evidence of human activity, but the natural features reveal minimal disturbances.” Scenic America*



Mississippi River

### 5.1 Background

The “Natural” Intrinsic Qualities of the RBSB Corridor are significant. They include dozens of cold-water trout streams, caves, exposed limestone bluffs, hundreds of threatened and endangered species, Iowa’s first river corridor to be declared an Iowa Great Place, a World Birding Area, the Mississippi River Flyway, which is considered one of the greatest bird flyways in the world, dozens of springs, including the largest spring in Iowa, and one of five State Forests. City, county, state and national parks, monuments, wildlife areas and other public natural areas are listed in the table on page 65. These include some of the more prominent public natural resource areas in Iowa. According to the most recent Iowa DNR report, there are at least ten Iowa DNR

Wildlife Management Areas, three County Conservation Board Areas, one State Forest, two State Preserves, one Fish Hatchery, and one State Recreation Area. Local stakeholders report that local public entities have or are in the process of purchasing additional properties since the time of the DNR report. The management of these properties can positively or negatively impact the byway traveler and add character and diversity to the landscape. It is important to remember that 98% of the land in the RBSB viewshed is privately owned. Private lands conservation, or lack of it in natural landscapes, can enhance or distract from the byway traveler’s experience. The private lands in the RBSB Corridor are individually and collectively managed differently than the majority of private lands in Iowa, as shown in the map on

page 65 of land use in the RBSB Corridor. Unlike other areas of Iowa dominated by corn and beans, many farms in the RBSB Corridor still have significant native woodland, prairie, pasture and grassland.

### 5.2 Significant Natural Resources

Natural Resources are abundant along the RBSB. Some of the most significant natural resources located on both public and private lands are listed below. An in-depth inventory and analysis for each are included within this section along with the RBSB Board’s proposed strategies.

**1. Upper Mississippi River:** The Mississippi River and its backwaters are part of the Upper Mississippi River National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), which encompasses one of the largest blocks of floodplain habitat in the lower 48 states and is a major flyway and migration route for millions of birds annually.

**2. High Quality Resource Waters:** The Turkey River, Volga River and Bloody Run flow through the RBSB Corridor. These are arguably some of the most significant cold and warm aquatic systems in Iowa. The Turkey River Recreational Corridor is considered so significant that it is the first river corridor in Iowa to be named an Iowa Great Place.

**3. Cold Water Trout Streams:** There are 18 cold water trout streams in the RBSB Corridor stocked with rainbow, brook and brown trout reared at the Big Springs Hatchery or naturally reproduced in the stream. Although the majority are in private land ownership, many are open to public fishing.

**4. Sinkholes and Caves:** There are between 7,000 & 10,000 sinkholes and extensive and active cave systems in the RBSB Corridor. Although few are accessible to the public, those that are provide opportunities for the visitor to better understand the karst geology and topography of the corridor.



**5. Springs including Big Springs:** There are hundreds of springs, including the largest spring in Iowa, Big Springs, in the RBSB Corridor. These springs feed the cold water trout streams and help support endangered and threatened plants and ecosystems. The temperature of the water is particularly significant for the aquatic systems in the region.

**6. Endangered Ecosystems:** There are dozens of Algific Talus Slopes in the RBSB Corridor, many of which are included as part of the US Fish and Wildlife's Driftless Area Refuge. There are very few fens, but some have been protected as public preserves in the RBSB Corridor.

**7. Hardwood Forests, including Yellow River Forest:** Large blocks of hardwood forest, including some of the largest public forest areas in Iowa, are found in the RBSB Corridor. This includes the Yellow River State Forest, which is one of only five State Forests in Iowa. The habitat that is created by contiguous blocks of public and private woodland is particularly significant for neotropical migratory birds and other species that need interior hardwood forest. This is even more notable given that forest loss and degradation is one of the key factors in bird population decline worldwide.

**8. Globally Significant Bird Area:** The RBSB Corridor encompasses a Globally Important Bird Area, which harbors many threatened and endangered or important bird species, and is particularly known for populations of Cerulean Warbler *Dendroica cerulean*.

**9. Limestone Outcroppings & Geologic Features:** Because the geologic bedrock is so close to the surface in the RBSB Corridor, limestone and sandstone are frequently visible in road cuts and along bluffs. These features add a natural character and ruggedness to the RBSB Corridor and to the visitor's experience.



**Cold Water Trout Streams**



**Yellow River State Forest**



**Globally Significant Birding Area**

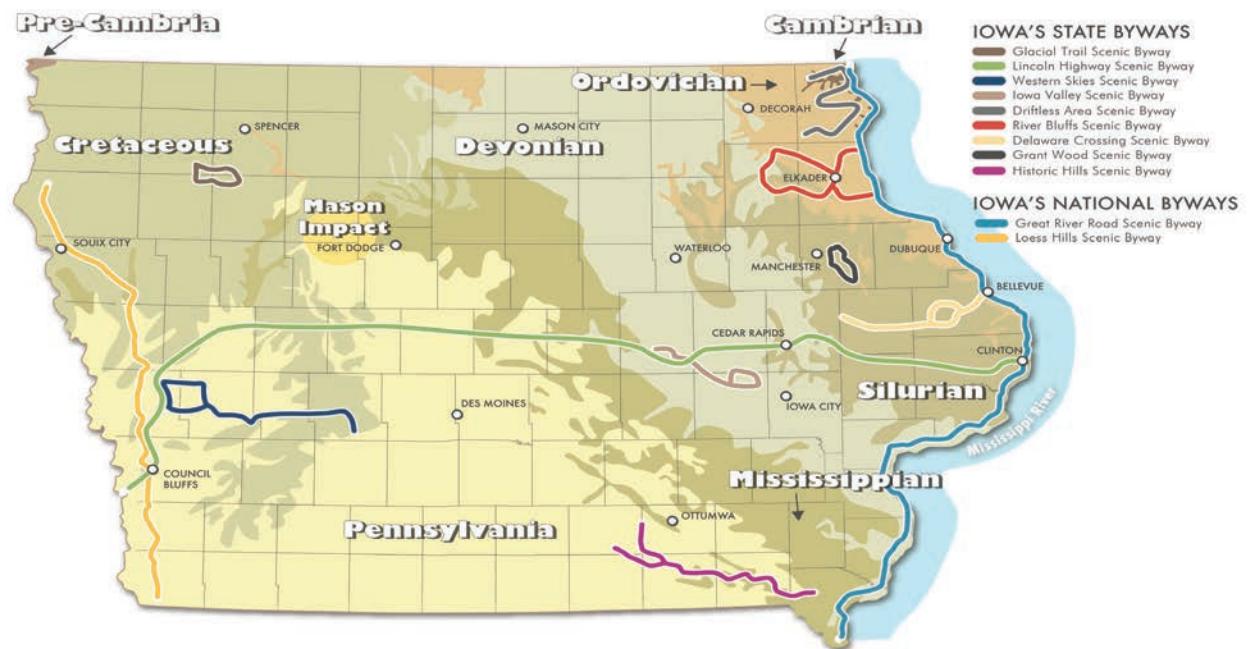
### 5.3 Iowa's Landform Regions

The RBSB travels through the Paleozoic Plateau, also referred to as the Driftless Area, which is a unique region of the Upper Mississippi River Basin that encompasses portions of four states and creates a landscape unlike any other in Iowa. This area is commonly believed to have been by-passed by the last continental glacier some 12,000 years ago. As a result, the glaciers that leveled out the majority of the rest of Iowa did not push glacial till into the streams and river valleys in the RBSB Corridor, nor did any tectonic force push up the hills. Instead, the streams and rivers in this area had longer to cut deeper down into the landscape and carve out valleys, creating a steep, rugged landscape with incised stream and river valleys. Visitors are intrigued to find that there are many places where they can stand on a flat hilltop and look to the west at the more level landscape that dominate the rest of Iowa or turn to the east and look down into the incised river valleys.



### 5.4 Iowa's Geologic Bedrock

Bedrock in the Driftless Area of Iowa and the RBSB Corridor is dominated by Ordovician age rock with some Cambrian along the eastern edge of the RBSB near the Mississippi River and some younger bedrock on the western edge of the byway, as can be seen in the Iowa DNR's Bedrock Geologic Map of Iowa. Fossils are abundant in the limestone and shale of these bedrock layers and are the subject of extensive study by amateurs and professionals. Hillside soils are typically shallow, forest formed, and highly erodible so that in many cases bedrock in this area is less than 50 feet from the surface or exposed. Because it is visible in many places, the bedrock has had, and continues to have, a distinct impact on the RBSB Corridor, the land use and natural resources in the corridor, and on the byway visitor's experience. The bedrock also influences the topography in the RBSB Corridor.



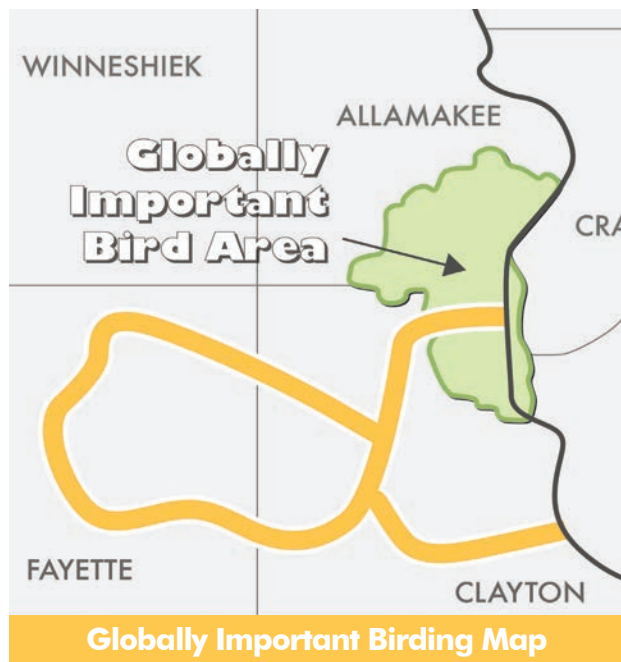
## 5.5 Land Use

Hilly topography and shallow soils have greatly impacted and restricted land use and agriculture in the RBSB Corridor. Where other areas of Iowa are dominated by corn and soybean production, the RBSB Corridor is dominated by hardwood forest and it is estimated 60-70% of the RBSB Corridor is covered by woodland. There are three state forests in or near the RBSB Corridor including the Yellow River State Forest, Volga White Pine Forest Preserve and Backbone State Forest. The limestone bedrock, topography, streams and rivers, and even the hardwood forests have greatly influenced domestic and business decisions as well as enterprises including everything from building construction, furniture, business start-up and prosperity, to community location and layout. The RBSB Corridor is a holdout for small livestock production, making small farms and pastures a more common site for visitors and where row crop has been planted. The rolling terrain has necessitated increased participation in land conservation programs.

## 5.6 Flora & Fauna

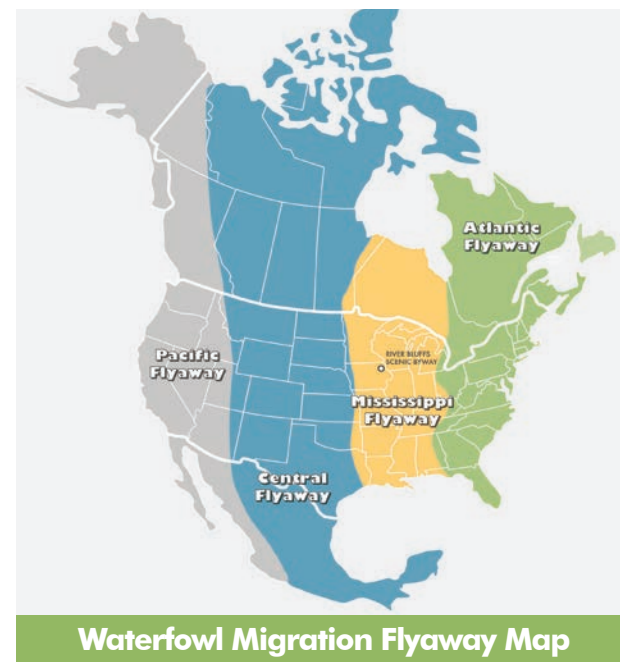
The diverse landscape and land use in the RBSB Corridor make it ideal habitat for aquatic and terrestrial plants and animals. As a result, the RBSB Corridor is home to hundreds of threatened and endangered state and federal animal and plant species (map on page 60). Common mammals in the RBSB Corridor include white-tailed deer, beaver, red fox, coyote, turkey, woodchuck, muskrat, gopher, raccoon, squirrels, ground squirrels, bats, chipmunks, least weasel, mink, badger, skunk, rabbits and small rodents. Less common mammals include gray fox, bobcat, river otters, ermine, civet cat and long-tailed weasel. Black bear has been documented passing through the Corridor.

The large blocks of hardwood forest, native plantings associated with conservation programs and the river systems provide exceptional habitat for many bird species. The northeast segment of the RBSB Corridor in Clayton



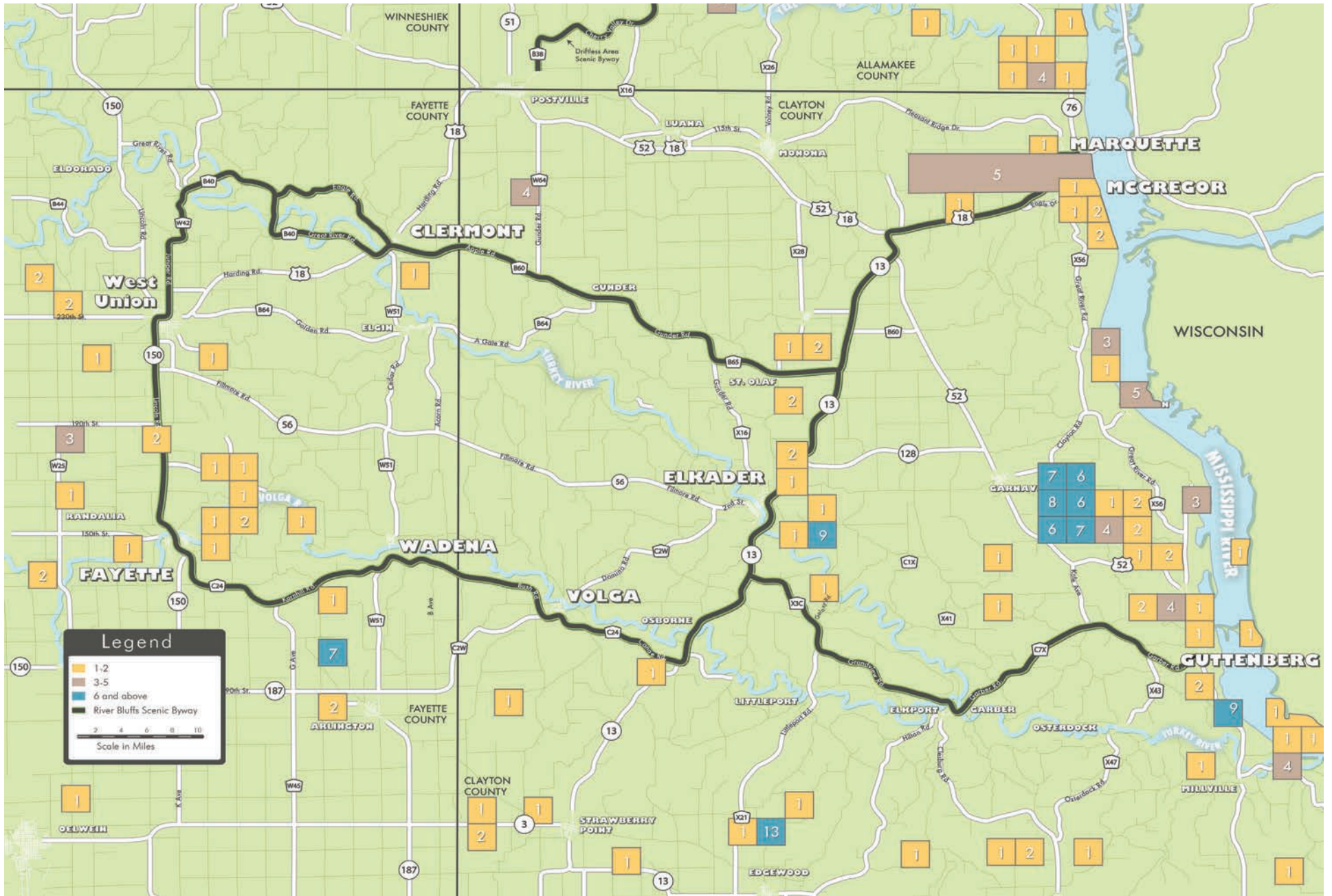
County overlaps with a Globally Important Birding Area associated with the Effigy Mounds-Yellow River Forest Bird Conservation Area, which encompasses more than 14,000 acres of public land including the Yellow River State Forest, Effigy Mounds National Monument, Pikes Peak State Park and the Bloody Run and Sny Magill-North Cedar State Wildlife Management Areas. An increase in rare cerulean warblers in the canopy of tall trees on the remote bluffs and in the ravines was a deciding factor in the designation.

Clayton County and Allamakee County (the county to the north of Clayton) rank second and first in Iowa respectively for number of nesting eagles. There are 62 eagle nests along the Mississippi River just in Clayton County. The Mississippi River is a major flyway and migration route for millions of birds annually. Visitors can view hundreds of thousands of anasback ducks, flocks of pelicans, swans, blue heron rookeries or see



and hear sandhill cranes. Federal, state and local public accesses along the Mississippi River provide bird viewing from shore but visitors can also catch a river cruise out of RBSB Corridor communities to get closer to birds and nests in the Mississippi River backwaters.

Northeast Iowa was the headquarters for reintroduction of the peregrine falcon through the Raptor Resource Project. As a result there are both natural nesting sites on cliffs and man-made sites on buildings, including 17 nesting pairs, some of those in the RBSB Corridor. In recognition and celebration of the abundance of birds in this area, RBSB Communities and organizations hold annual events and festivals. An Annual Hawk Watch Weekend is held at Effigy Mounds National Monument each year in October, giving visitors an opportunity to enjoy programs, get close-up views of live raptors, have their photo taken by a life-size replica of an eagles nest, watch for hawks as they migrate south and see an Indian



Threatened & Endangered Species within the RBSB Corridor

effigy mound in the shape of an eagle. Guttenberg holds an annual Bald Eagle Watch the second full weekend in February when hundred of eagles feed on fish from the Mississippi River. Viewing scopes are provided along the 2-mile Guttenberg Riverwalk and 6 binoculars are provided at restaurants and at the welcome center.

Due to the forested nature of the RBSB Corridor, it has a more abundant and diverse woodland plants assemblage. Visitors are particularly drawn to the hundreds of species of woodland wildflowers, ferns and mushrooms found on the forest floor. County conservation boards in the RBSB counties conduct spring hikes on public lands in the Corridor. Unfortunately, many of these plants communities are threatened by invasive species spread by people and wildlife.

### 5.7 Climate

The average annual precipitation of the area along the RBSB is 32-35 inches. Two-thirds or more of the precipitation falls during the freeze-free period. Most of the rainfall occurs as high-intensity, convective thunderstorms during the summer. Research shows that the rainfall patterns have shifted in the past 50 years, resulting in fewer, more intense, rainfall events increasing flooding and alternating with drought. Snowfall is common in winter. The average annual temperature is 42 to 50 degrees F (6 to 10 degrees C). The freeze-free period averages about 175 days and ranges from 145 to 205 days. Seasonal variation also provides for changing flora and color patterns along the byway.

### 5.8 Rivers & Watersheds

The steep and varied terrain of Clayton and Fayette Counties that surround the RBSB feed the streams and high quality resource rivers that drain to the Mississippi River. The RBSB Corridor is primarily within the watershed area of the Turkey River, which includes the watershed of the Volga River, a major tributary to the Turkey River. The



Turkey River Water Trail

northeast section of the RBSB Corridor also passes through the Bloody Run Watershed, which drains directly to the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River and its world renown corridor are at the beginning and end of the RBSB at the eastern arms of the byway. The rivers and streams, their associated valleys and the forested bluffs that surround them, define and dominate the magnificent scenic beauty of the RBSB.

**1. Turkey River:** The Turkey River Watershed spans more than 1,067 square miles in Clayton and Fayette Counties covering nearly 70% of each county. The Turkey River Watershed covers more than 1,693 square miles overall. The river begins in Howard County, Iowa as the Turkey River and Little Turkey River and flows though



Prairie Smoke Wildflower

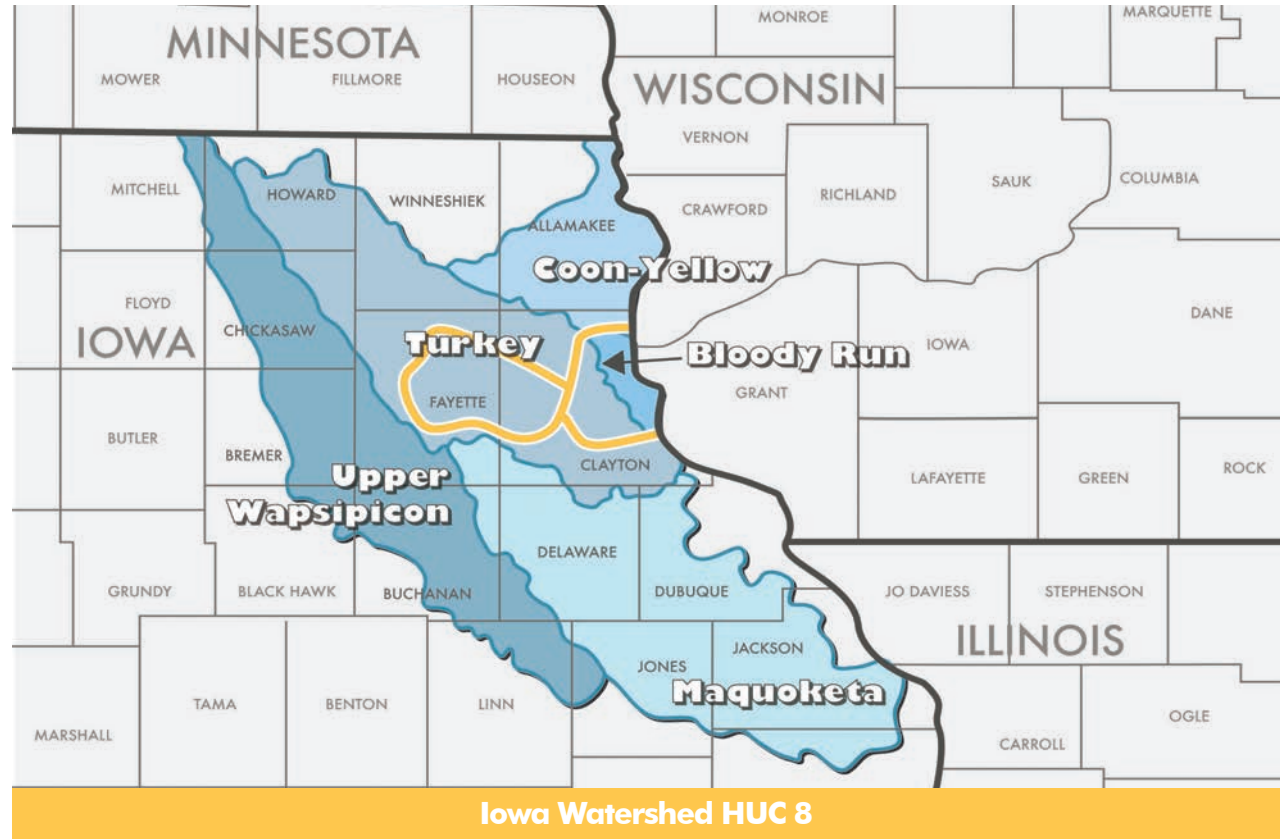


Pleistocene Snail

Chickasaw and Winneshiek Counties in Iowa before entering Fayette County. By the time it approaches the RBSB where the Turkey River and Little Turkey River join together just west of Eldorado in northern Fayette County, it is a major landscape feature situated in a river valley that is surrounded by forested bluffs. The river enters Clayton County three miles east of Elgin near County Road B64 and continues southeasterly until the confluence with its largest tributary, the Volga River, near Elkport and Garber. The river then flows east until emptying into the Mississippi River approximately six miles south of Guttenberg and four miles east of Millville. Thousands of years of flow across the landscape by the Turkey River and its tributaries have cut the deep, large floodplains resulting in the spectacular bluffs and vistas

that can be seen along the majority of the RBSB. The RBSB crosses, parallels and overlooks the river and its tributaries along the majority of its route. Unlike many Iowa streams and rivers, the Turkey River and its streams have not been channelized. They meander across the landscape with only one remaining large dam blocking passage to upstream waters. Public access to the river and its tributaries has been a priority for byway counties and communities and so this river is one of the most popular recreational rivers in Iowa. In part because this river has a history of frequent and violent flooding, much of the corridor is forested, in prairie or used for pasture, making it a wildlife corridor and helping to protect water quality during all but the highest flash flows. As a result, the river has an abundant and diverse fish assemblage with as many as 56 different fish species recorded. Anglers primarily fish for trout, sauger and walleye, channel catfish (below the dam in Elkader), and white and smallmouth bass.

**2. Mississippi River:** The Mississippi River flows the entire length of Clayton County, from its eastern border and is a major attraction in three RBSB communities. The forested bluffs that tower over both sides of the river serve as a dramatic backdrop to the diverse river system as it travels south. The river and its corridor are world renown for many things including its natural and scenic beauty, its archeological significance including the compelling Native American history that is manifested in Indian Mounds and artifacts, its role as a major bird flyway and fall migration route, as a transportation and commerce system that has a complex system of lock and dams, for its diverse aquatic and terrestrial habitat and wildlife and for the unique river cultures, communities and experiences that grace its shores. The Mississippi River and its backwaters are part of the Upper Mississippi River National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), which was established in 1924. According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Refuge covers just over 240,000 acres and extends 261 miles, encompassing one of the



largest blocks of floodplain habitat in the lower 48 states. The RBSB connects to the Mississippi River and the Refuge in Marquette and Guttenberg. The Mississippi River and the Refuge is a major tourist attraction and economic engine and contributes to the natural, historic and cultural intrinsic qualities of three RBSB communities: Marquette, McGregor and Guttenberg. These communities have all developed various types of public access to the river and events associated with the river. According to the National Park Service, 40% of the nation's migratory waterfowl use the river corridor during their spring and fall migration and 60% of all North American birds (326 species) use the Mississippi River Basin as their migratory flyway. They also note that the river is home to at least 260 species

of fish (25% of all fish species in North American), 60 species of mussels and over 145 species of amphibians and reptiles, turtles and snakes.

**3. Bloody Run:** Bloody Run is a direct tributary of the Mississippi River that forms approximately two miles north of Froelich in northern Clayton County and flows east before emptying into the Mississippi River on the south edge of Marquette. Bloody Run is a coldwater stream fed by groundwater springs for much of its lower stretch and cuts a deep ravine into the landscape as it flows to the Mississippi. The watershed area covers nearly 38 square miles. The RBSB travels adjacent to Bloody Run along US Highway 18 near Marquette.

## 5.9 Karst Features & Natural Resources

The topography in the RBSB Corridor is considered karst topography. Karst topography is defined as a type of terrain underlain by soluble bedrock, which in this case is limestone. Karst topography is characterized by shallow bedrock soils, sinkholes, caves, underground drainage and limestone outcroppings. Karst features and their presence near the RBSB can be seen in the karst features map on page 64 and are discussed in more detail below. These features provide unique experiences and opportunities for RBSB travelers.

**1. Sinkholes and Caves:** There are between 7,000 and 10,000 sinkholes and extensive cave systems in the RBSB corridor. The sinkholes, as well as the fractured limestone bedrock that is close to the surface in this area, act as conduits for surface water. Stormwater runoff around sinkholes drains off the land into the sinkholes and then flows underground through bedrock and sometimes through caves to re-emerge miles away in springs, streams, rivers and wells. Sinkholes are even documented in streams and rivers, creating “losing streams,” or streams that have less water downstream in some cases. The public can better understand this hydrologic system by visiting nearby caves including Duttons Cave, Spook Cave or Backbone Cave.

**2. Springs and Coldwater Trout Streams:** There are 18 coldwater trout streams in the RBSB counties of Clayton and Fayette. These streams are fed by hundreds of small and large springs. The Driftless Area of Iowa was a holdout for Iowa’s historic brook trout population, which just 20 years ago was surviving in only one stream segment. Today the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) stocks rainbow, brown and brook trout from hatcheries located in this region of Iowa into the coldwater trout streams around the RBSB and have restored natural reproduction of trout in several streams. The IDNR also stock walleye into RBSB rivers. Hatcheries located in the RBSB Corridor include the Big Springs Hatchery, which is located between Elkader and Elgin near the banks of the Turkey River, and the Guttenberg Fish Hatchery in Guttenberg. The Big Spring

Fish Hatchery relies on water from Big Springs, Iowa’s largest spring to rear the trout they stock.

**3. Algific Talus Slopes:** The US Fish and Wildlife Driftless Area Refuge encompasses 911 acres in Iowa, a small portion of the entire Driftless Area. The Driftless Area Refuge is a group of federal property holdings and easements of various sizes that protect and conserve the endangered or threatened species that thrive on Algific Talus Slopes. The name Algific Talus Slope describes the condition of the ecosystem, as Algific means cold air and talus is loose rock. These slopes are found on northern hillsides, typically have loose rock and large limestone rocks, are noted to have ferns and trees found in colder climates, and many times have springs on or at the base of the slope. Sinkholes above the hillside capture and send water into the bedrock during warmer months. The groundwater then freezes during Iowa’s cold winters. In the summer, air moves down through the sinkholes and blows over the frozen groundwater before flowing out through vents or bedrock fissures on the hillsides. The cold air, which is affectionately referred to as nature’s air conditioner, creates a micro climate that is similar to what would have been found in the area during glacial eras. Summer air temperatures on the slopes ranging from just above freezing to around 55 degrees and soil temperatures are also lower than those found on the surrounding landscape. As a result, the slopes have a cold micro climate that is much different than the climates surrounding them. Plants and animals found on Algific Talus Slopes include several rare species of snails, such the Iowa pleistocene snail and the Midwest pleistocene vertigo. northern monkshood, a plant in the buttercup family, is listed as threatened, and is also found on the Algific Talus Slopes. The blue hooded flowers of this plant are very distinctive and bloom between June and September. Activities on the US Fish and Wildlife Driftless Area Refuge are limited to soft uses such photography, wildlife observation, fishing and hunting. The public can visit the Driftless Area Refuge or see an Algific Talus Slope in the RBSB Corridor at the IDNR’s Bixby Preserve two miles north of Edgewood in Clayton County.



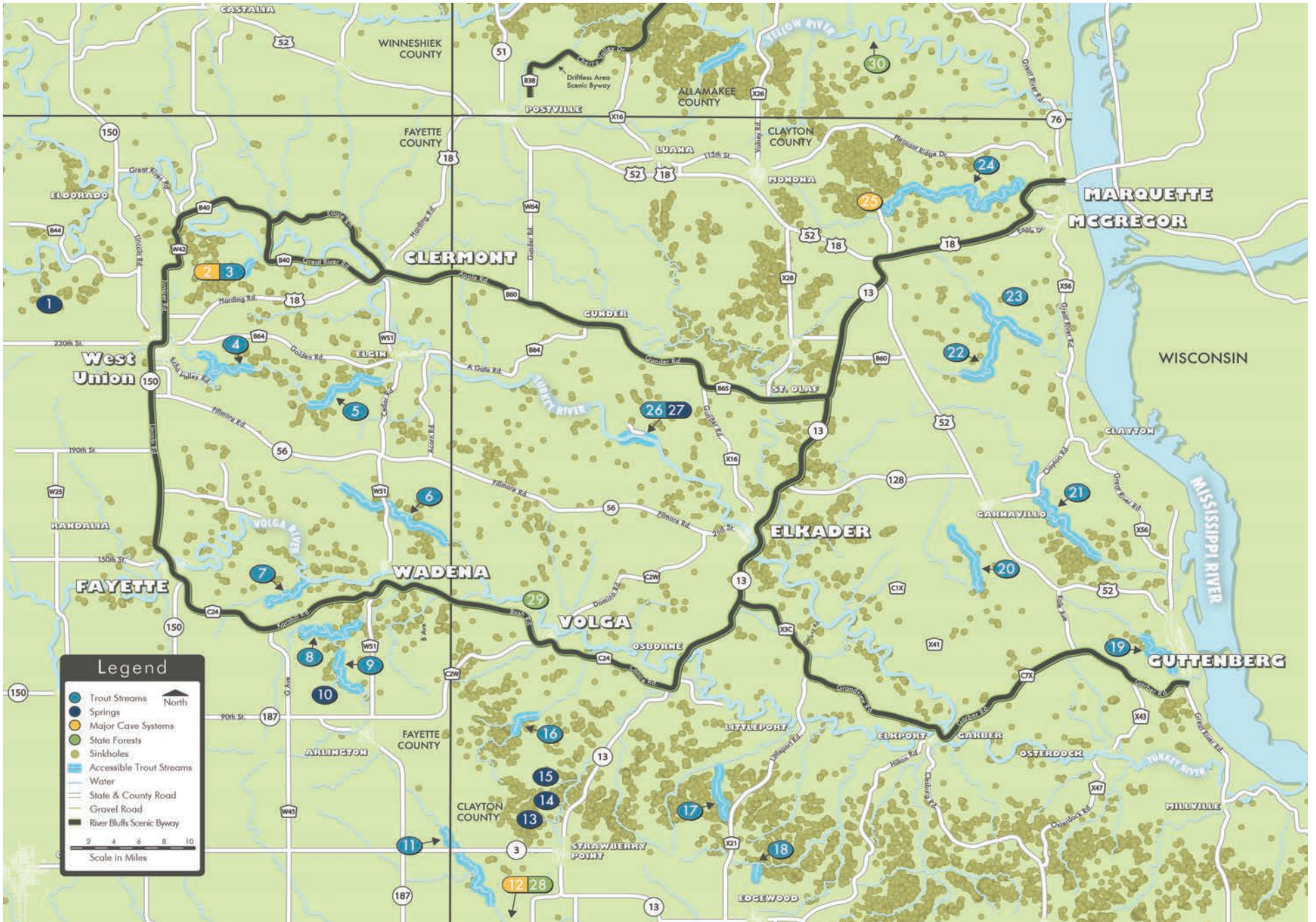
Sinkholes & Caves



Coldwater Trout Stream



Algific Talus Slope





Map #	Natural Resources (Karst Features)	Community
<b>Caves</b>		
2	Dutton's Cave Park	West Union
13	Backbone Cave	Strawberry Point
27	Spook Cave & Campground	McGregor
<b>Coldwater Trout Streams</b>		
3	Dutton Springs Creek	West Union
4	Glovers Creek	West Union
5	Otter Creek	West Union
6	Mink Creek	Wadena
7	Grannis Creek	Fayette
8	Bear Creek	Fayette
9	Brush Creek	Arlington
11	Joy Springs	Strawberry Point
17	Ensign Hollow	Strawberry Point
19	Mossy Glen	Edgewood
20	Bear Creek	Edgewood
21	Miners Creek	Guttenberg
22	South Cedar Creek	Garnavillo
23	Buck Creek	Garnavillo

Map #	Natural Resources (Karst Features)	Community
24	North Cedar Creek	McGregor
25	Sny Magill Creek	McGregor
26	Bloody Run Creek	Marquette
29	Turkey River	Elkader
<b>Natural Springs</b>		
1	Falling Spring	West Union
10	Blue Spring	Wadena
14	South Spring	Strawberry Point
15	Big Springs	Strawberry Point
16	Baron Spring	Strawberry Point
30	Big Springs	St. Olaf
<b>State Forests</b>		
12	Backbone State Forest	Strawberry Point
18	Volga White Pine Forest Preserve	Volga
28	Yellow River State Forest	Harper Ferry
<b>Rivers</b>		
N/A	Turkey River	Fayette/Clayton Counties
N/A	Volga River	Fayette/Clayton Counties
N/A	Mississippi River	Clayton County

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## 5.10 Challenges & Opportunities

The greatest potential challenge the RBSB Board faces in the protection of natural resources is tied to land ownership. 98% of the RBSB Corridor is privately owned and managed and many landowners are fiercely protective of their rights. The RBSB Board can not just tell them what to do and expect a positive response. Fortunately, private land management and land use in the RBSB Corridor is already diverse and respective of a variety of natural ecosystems including wetlands, woodlands, prairies, fens, algalic talus slopes, cold water trout streams and other ecosystems. Some private landowners allow fishing, hunting, horseback riding and other activities with permission. Recognizing the efforts and contributions that private landowners have already made to the natural environment and the visitor will be important. It will also be critical to help them understand the connection between private lands natural resource protection in the RBSB Corridor and byway tourism. Outreach and communication efforts will need to be honest, open discussions that combine recognition of the existing efforts with statistics connecting natural byway intrinsic qualities with economic revitalization of communities, jobs and small business. The RBSB Board has found private landowners along the RBSB to be very receptive to discussion and project development on private lands. During development of this CMP, several private landowners stepped forward and offered to partner with the RBSB Board on interpretation of private lands conservation efforts. Their interest and willingness to engage creates a positive environment for future partnership.

Although they only control 2% of the land area in the RBSB Corridor, public entities have an opportunity to provide interpretation of the natural areas they control, which are the majority of the places where visitors are invited to interface with the natural resources. Unfortunately, personnel and interpretation at Iowa DNR properties is extremely limited. City, county, state and federal areas are managed in relative isolation from one another. Managers rarely share information or work across political and/or park boundaries. Increased public use and interface with natural areas will bring with it inherent problems and creates challenges for natural resource managers including transport of invasive species into and/or between natural environments, overuse of sensitive ecosystems and general increased pressure on public areas that have limited staff to care for them.

## 5.11 Proposed Strategies

Strategies for expanding opportunities for RBSB byway travelers to enjoy, while at the same time protecting natural resources, are listed below. Several of the strategies the RBSB Board would like to implement to protect the viewshed will also help them protect the natural intrinsic qualities of the byway. They are not repeated in this section but may be found within the Scenic Resources Section of this CMP..

- **Partner with Public and Private Stakeholders on Natural Resource Projects:** Develop and implement projects and programs that encourage both public and/or private partnership and recognition.

- **Increase Site Specific, Topical and Landscape Interpretive Tools:** Secure or develop maps, descriptions and photographs of significant natural landscapes, native flora and fauna from aquatic and terrestrial habitats, invasive species, and good and bad public use that can be utilized in publications regarding specific sites, resources or topics.
- **Sustainable Branding:** Develop an RBSB natural resources brand that draws responsible users and encourages sustainable use of resources
- **Develop Promotional Materials that Reinforce the Sustainable Brand:** Work with partners to develop RBSB promotional publications, magazine articles, special interest stories and social media content that demonstrate and encourage a respect for natural environments, flora and fauna.
- **Implement High Quality Interpretation that Reinforces the Sustainable Brand:** Work with partners to develop Information Hubs, on-site web interfaces and other interpretive methods that reinforce the sustainable brand.
- **Foster Private Lands Partnership:** Research, develop and distribute outreach messaging and materials that help private landowners in the RBSB Corridor understand the connections between how they manage their natural areas and byway vibrancy, visitor appeal, job creation, community development, property tax vs sales tax, and other issues that are important to the private landowners.
- **Support Restoration of Natural Ecosystems:** Partner with private & public land owners to develop projects & programs that result in native ecosystem restoration and preservation and an increased presence of diverse native ecosystems in the RBSB Corridor.
- **Facilitate and Coordinate Discussion and Partnership:** Facilitate discussion with and between city, county, state and federal park managers to exchange information about the natural resources they manage, challenges within those natural areas and opportunities to engage the public, expand partnerships and minimize public impact to natural areas.
- **Empower Local Public Land Managers with Planning Assistance:** Work with public area managers to develop and implement Site Plans for public land units that help them improve the visitor interface through infrastructure improvements, wayfinding, interpretive tools and other amenities while protecting the natural intrinsic qualities of the land unit.



Support Restoration of Natural Ecosystems

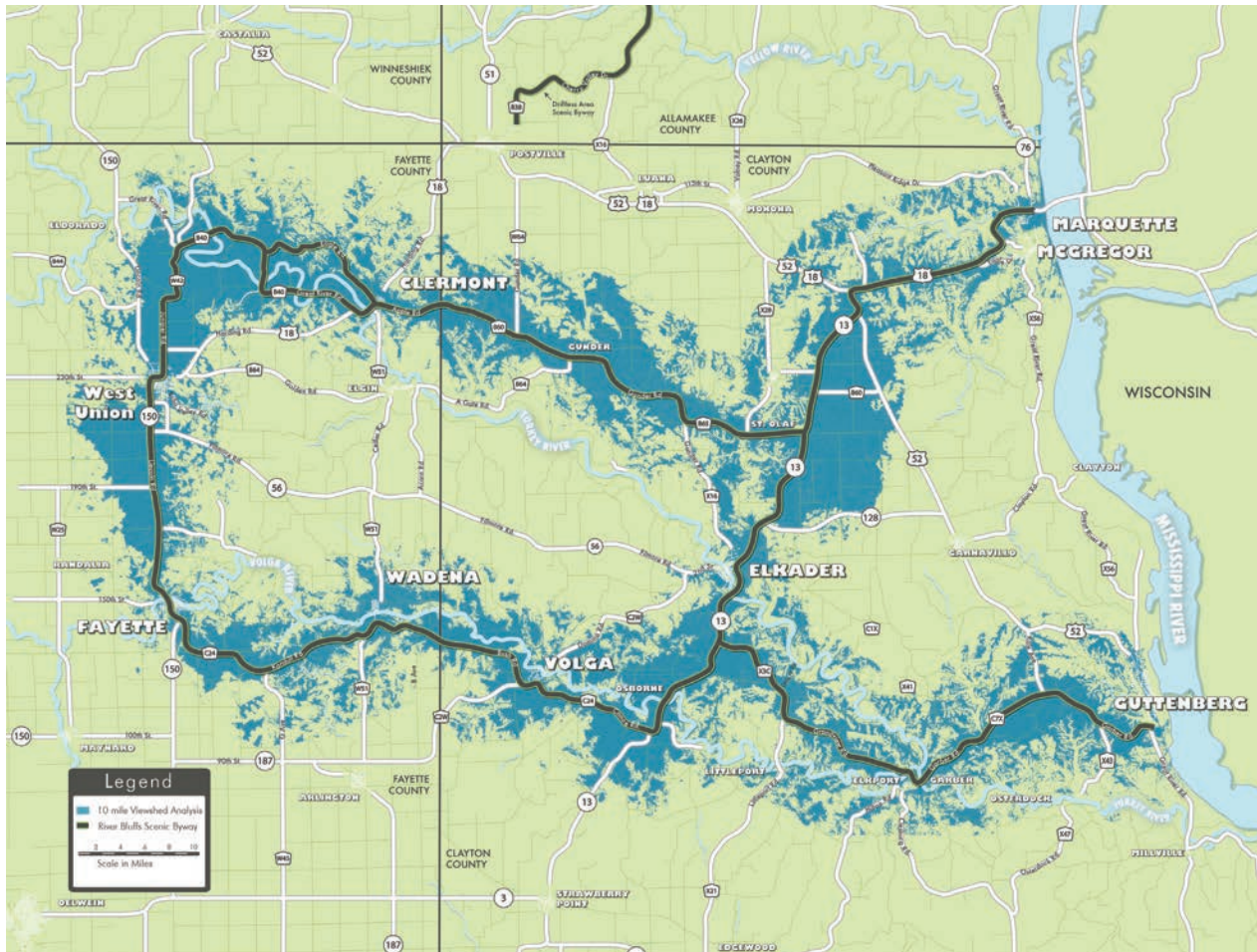


# Section **Si**x

Scenic Resources

## Scenic Resources

*“Scenic Resources are the heightened visual experiences derived from the view of natural and manmade elements of the visual environment of the scenic byway corridor. The characteristics of the landscape are strikingly distinct and offer a pleasing and most memorable visual experience. All elements of the landscape--landform, water, vegetation, and manmade development--contribute to the quality of the corridor’s visual environment. Everything present is in harmony and shares in the intrinsic qualities.”*  
Scenic America



**Three-Mile Viewshed of the River Bluffs Scenic Byway**

### 6.1 Key Visual Resources

Conserving the scenic resources of the RBSB will be one of the most significant things that the RBSB Board does during the implementation of the RBSB Corridor Management Plan. According to the America’s Byways Resource Center, surveys of nonresident byway travelers found that negative impacts to a byways scenic resource results in a greater than 1:2 negative impact to tourism. They note that studies

show nonresident visitors would reduce their visits by half should development or pollution degrade byway views by as little as 25%. The RBSB is considered by independent review as the second most scenic state byway in Iowa, second only to the Driftless Area Scenic Byway, which starts just eight miles to the north of the RBSB in the same type of terrain. As such, travelers to the RBSB are expecting a high quality visual experience.

Fortunately, the RBSB doesn’t disappoint. The scenic resources in the RBSB Corridor are varied and in many cases arresting in their beauty and expanse. The topography and diverse land use provide opportunities for byway travelers to observe the landscape from relatively higher elevations that provide extensive panoramic views of forested hills, limestone bluffs, river valleys and bucolic small farms. It is more common along the RBSB for the visitor to see areas of timber, small livestock herds grazing on hillsides and natural areas than it is in the majority of Iowa. Where the view along many of Iowa’s roads is dominated by row crop, only 45.5% of the RBSB viewshed is in row crop. The second most dominate land use is hardwood forest at 18.4%, then 17.9% pasture or hay and 10.7% grassland. Only 6% of the viewshed is developed (land use map on page 30). Rivers and streams meander across the valleys. Most of the historic, quaint villages and communities are tucked into those river valleys so they are hidden from view until the traveler is fairly close to them, looking down on them or in the same valley. Many of the small farmsteads still sport red barns and outbuildings that are picturesque against the brilliant green of the natural and agricultural landscapes. Churches and their steeples, historic bridges and pioneer cemeteries dot the landscape periodically providing visual interest and creating iconic images of rural Iowa.

The changing, undulating character of the roadway itself also lends visual interest to the RBSB: the road lays on the land, winds through river valleys and climbs up hills. The roadway periodically cuts through and exposes limestone bedrock, leads the byway traveler through narrow valleys to expansive views and open vistas and creates a visual excitement. Even the glimpses of the roadway in the distance engages the byway traveler, making them contemplate what view lies around the next turn, from the next hilltop or along the roadway as it meanders down and disappears in the distance into a forested valley.

## 6.2 Viewshed Analysis & Distance Zones

Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation and Development (RCD) completed a Viewshed Analysis of the RBSB Corridor in 2016 through a statewide partnership with the Iowa DOT. The project utilized Quick Terrain Modeler and LiDAR software to analyze the view available to the traveler within a three-mile distance from the center of the RBSB roadway. The three-mile distance was selected in part because of the physical limitations of the human eye as it processes images while traveling along a roadway at a rate of 45 mph or greater, the relevance of the analysis as it relates to commonly defined Distance Zones, and the technical limitations related to analytical hardware and software used during the process. The three-mile distance used for the RCD Viewshed Analysis encompasses the “Immediate Foreground,” “Foreground” and the majority of the “Middle-Ground” of the view as they are defined by the USDA Forest Service.

The USDA Forest Service notes that there are four distinct “Distance Zones” that define and should be used to manage the scenic quality of the byway and considered when making decisions as “they are based on scientific research on the amount of detail people can discern from different distances.” Independently and collectively these four zones influence the quality of the byway’s viewshed, the visitor’s experience, the ability of the byway to draw visitors, and ultimately the long-term capacity of the byway to sustain related economic development.

The four USDA Forest Service Distance Zones include the following designations and descriptions:

- **Immediate Foreground:** This area includes all that is visible within 300 feet of the road. At this distance people can perceive fine detail. This area typically includes the road right-of-way, which is managed along the RBSB by city, county and state entities.
- **Foreground:** This area includes all that is visible between 300 feet and ½ mile of the road. At this distance, fine details have less influence on scenic

quality and general shape and scale become more important. Shape, sizes, colors and the relationships of these individual elements to each other define the scenic quality.

- **Middle Ground:** This area includes all that is visible within ½ mile to 4 miles of the road. At this distance, landscape and other patterns and topography define the visible elements and the terrain features define the view.
- **Background:** This area includes all that is visible beyond four miles from the road. At this distance, color, large patterns and topography influence the landscape’s appearance.

The RBSB Corridor Analysis, which can be seen in the RBSB’s ten-mile viewshed map in page 70, found that the route of the RBSB provides opportunities for visitors to see the landscape of the region and its intrinsic qualities from multiple viewpoints and perspectives including from valley floors, climbing and descending hills, from some of the highest points in the county, within historic downtown districts and looking down on villages. The winding, looping, nature of the byway, with its changes in elevation, creates a viewshed that encompasses diverse landscape features, dynamic landuse, undulating topography, the presence of a variety of intrinsic qualities, and periodic notable features that create even greater visual interest. The density of the built environment and the population within the very rural RBSB viewshed is low and dispersed. The vegetation in the viewshed is mature and the buildings are historic, creating a sense of age and maturity. Oaks, walnut, and maple trees dominate the hillsides and riparian areas adjacent to the rivers, adding to the texture of the viewshed. The small, historic communities are interspersed along the route in such a way as to add visual interest at regular intervals. These features combine to create an exceptional scenic experience for the traveler. Intrusions to the visual experience along the RBSB and within the RBSB Corridor are minimal; however, some are unfortunately notable,

such as the private storage shed business located within the Immediate Foreground of the RBSB viewshed in what is considered to be one of the most extensive “High Value Areas” along the RBSB overlooking the Emerald Valley. There are several trends, including residential housing development and off-site advertising that have already impacted and continue to threaten the Immediate Foreground of the RBSB. Frac sand mining, which removes entire bluffs, has also already impacted and continues to threaten the Immediate Foreground, Foreground, Middle Ground and Background of the RBSB viewshed.

Recognizing that RBSB nonresident visitors are seeking opportunities to slow down and pull off the roadway and enjoy the view, the RBSB Board took action through the Corridor Management Planning process to better understand the RBSB viewshed and strategically identify opportunities to make travel along the RBSB safer and more accommodating to the visitor. To help them better understand the visual resources associated with the RBSB and how they should prioritize overlook/pullout development, the Board traveled the length of the RBSB and conducted a manual visual assessment. They then selected four strategically located High Value Areas for a more extensive viewshed analysis. The RCD completed the analysis from each of the four sites for a ten-mile radius. High Value Areas are defined by the America’s Byways Resource Center as “the views that are most valued along the byway.” The RBSB High Value Areas as identified by the RBSB Board did not include local, state or federal park sites associated with the spectacular views in RBSB communities on the Mississippi River, as those sites are already widely recognized and with assistance from the RBSB Board, the RCD, and state and federal partners, have been developed. Those resources are briefly described as ‘existing overlooks’ further in this section. The results of the ten-mile analysis can be seen in the map on page 78. It includes the following sites.

### 6.3 High Priority Overlooks:



Goeken Park

**1. Goeken Park/Overlook of Eldorado and the Turkey River Valley:** Just south of the community of Eldorado on State Highway 150, before the traveler descends into the Turkey River Valley, the Fayette County Conservation Board manages Goeken Park, which is a well known for its overlook of the Turkey River Valley and the view of the small Turkey River community of Eldorado. The town's location in the wide valley, along the banks of the meandering Turkey River, the bluffs and forested hillsides along both sides of the valley, and even the church steeple towering above the community, combine to create an iconic and picturesque image of rural, small town Iowa. There are out of state visitors that make a pilgrimage to this overlook annually. The viewshed analysis confirms the expanse of the view and the limitations that can and do occur because of trees and vegetation that grow on the steep bluff between the park and the valley. Because it is a popular overlook and the viewshed analysis confirms that with vegetation management it can be even more expansive, the RBSB Board recently worked with the county, the RBSB Board, RCD and other partners to add interpretation to this site and clear trees from the Immediate Foreground. The partners are also considering installation of an artistic fence/overlook railing, which is further discussed in the Project Section of this CMP. Other amenities on-site includes a playground, two shelter houses, pit latrine, and primitive camping.



Chicken Ridge

**2. Chicken Ridge/Emerald Valley:** The viewshed analysis confirmed that the view from Chicken Ridge Overlook and this section of the RBSB is the most extensive of those evaluated. Located between Elkader and Strawberry Point, Chicken Ridge is the ridge that forms the divide between the Turkey River Watershed and the Volga River Watershed in Clayton County. The Clayton County Conservation Board (CCCB) manages Chicken Ridge Overlook, which is located on the ridge adjacent to one of the highest points along the RBSB along Highway 13. The overlook boasts a newly constructed, small, universally accessible, viewing platform, which was built in 2015 through a Clayton County CCB partnership with the RBSB Board, the RCD and the Mississippi River Gaming Commission. The CCB and RBSB partners have also enhanced the overlook with interpretation, removal of trees that blocked the view and a wildflower planting. The RBSB in this area and the Chicken Ridge Overlook itself provide exceptional views of the landscape, but are most well know for the striking view of portions of the Volga River Watershed known as the Emerald Valley, so named for the beautiful combination of idyllic green pasture and forested hillsides. Although impressive from any perspective, the view is remarkable to the byway traveler driving south on Highway 13 up and out of the Turkey River Valley to cross the ridge and see the view of the landscape open up to the expansive, lush, Emerald Valley. After evaluating the viewshed analysis, the RBSB Board felt that additional improvements to the Chicken Ridge Overlook will be a good investment and a high priority.





**Turkey River Valley**

**3. Great River Road Fayette County/View of the Turkey River Valley:** The viewshed of the Turkey River Valley along the RBSB between Clermont and Eldorado is a remote, isolated experience that the RBSB Board feels provides a different type of scenic viewing opportunity, one within the river valley rather than looking down on it. They also note the historical significance of the valley as an area that would lend itself to natural history and cultural interpretation. The RBSB Board has also partnered with the Turkey River Recreational Corridor, of which the proposed overlook would be located within. Working collaboratively with one another, both organizations have interest to see trail development continue for the Turkey River Recreational Corridor Trail that currently connects the byway communities of Clermont and Elgin. The proposed Great River Road (Clermont) overlook would be located on the proposed trail extension route and would serve as a point of reference, anchor attraction and/or destination for trail users. For those reasons, the RBSB Board selected a random point along a segment of the Great River Road to have analyzed by the RCD. After review of the viewshed analysis, the board felt that the view was expansive enough that it warranted further consideration for development of a pulloff or interpretive site and have included further discussion of the effort in the Project Section of this CMP.



**Volga River Valley**

**4. Volga River Recreation Area:** Although a site in the Volga River Recreation Area was identified as a priority for analysis, the viewshed was not as extensive as originally believed and thus was taken off the list of proposed overlooks. However, the RBSB Board is supportive of improved visitor amenities, especially enhanced viewing and interpretive opportunities, in this Iowa DNR managed park as there is currently no interpretation in this park.

The RBSB Board feels that development and/or enhancement of scenic overlooks should occur in such a manner as to strategically create intermittent opportunities for the byway traveler to pull off and enjoy High Value Areas along the entirety of the RBSB. They feel periodic placement of the overlooks along the route will also encourage continued travel along the entire RBSB route, benefiting the maximum number of businesses and communities. In addition to development of new overlooks along the Fayette County Great River Road and in the Volga Lake Recreational Area, the RBSB Board has identified six additional locations to consider for development of new overlooks or roadside pulloffs. They are identified in the RBSB overlooks map on page 78. These sites are located in or near the five RBSB communities of McGregor, Gunder, Garnavillo, Clermont and Wadena. Development of these sites would only occur if the communities or counties associated with each site works with the RBSB Board to secure land or easements and/or develop 28e agreements for site improvement and long-term management.

### 6.3 Significant Existing Overlooks

There are over a dozen existing, signed and unsigned overlooks, including overlooks within community, county, state and federal parks, trails with overlook opportunities, and roadway pull offs that have been developed in the RBSB Corridor to provide opportunities for the byway traveler to slow down and safely enjoy the RBSB viewshed. As previously noted, many of the existing overlooks are located along the Mississippi River in and near the RBSB Mississippi River communities of Marquette, McGregor and Guttenberg. The RBSB overlooks map on page 78 provides information about and locations for fourteen existing overlooks along the byway. The most significant existing overlooks and their association with High Value Areas are found in Marquette, Guttenberg, at Effigy Mounds National Monument and in Pikes Peak State Park.

**1. Effigy Mounds National Monument:** Located just to the north of the RBSB community of Marquette, within the RBSB Corridor, Effigy Mounds National Monument provides opportunities for visitors to access extensive views of the Mississippi River Valley from designated overlooks and trails. Specific overlooks include: Fire Point, Eagle Rock, Twin Views, Third Scenic View, Hanging Rock Overlook, Nezekaw Point Overlook and Founders Pond Overlook. These various overlooks are accessible by hiking trails, and include views of the Mississippi River and its many islands, Hanging Rock, historic Prairie du Chien and the mouth of Yellow River. Trails and viewpoints also provide ample opportunities for birding and wildlife watching. The perspective the Effigy Mounds National Monument provides on scenic resources is couched in the story of the sacred places and burial mounds that are situated along the Mississippi River bluff tops that provide spectacular panoramic views. Although they have been altered over time, these sites and their spectacular views were significant to the American Indian cultures that considered them sacred.

**2. Marquette/Mississippi River Valley:** The community of Marquette is located on the banks and bluffs of the Mississippi River where one of the few bridges across the Mississippi River connects Wisconsin to Iowa. It is also located at the intersection of the Great River Road and the River Bluffs Scenic Byway. Various locations within Marquette provide exceptional viewing of the Mississippi River Valley. The City recently worked with the RBSB Board of Directors and the RCD to secure a National Scenic Byway grant to update an overlook situated on a forested bluff above the community. The upgrades expanded the overlook, made it universally accessible and provided funding for new interpretive panels. The new overlook now extends out over the historic downtown, providing expansive view of the Mississippi River Valley and is accessible via a stairway from a new hotel or by vehicle on a road that winds up the hill north of the downtown district. The grant also provided funding for the city to build a one-of-a-kind Mississippi River Boardwalk that extends from the main street into the Mississippi River. The universally accessible boardwalk provides opportunities for all visitors to view the Mississippi River Valley from the river regardless of whether or not they have a boat. The city is in the process of adding amenities to the boardwalk, such as interpretation, benches, etc.

**3. Pikes Peak State Park:** Pikes Peak State Park lies on the bluffs of the Mississippi River just south of the RBSB community of McGregor. Named for the famed explorer Zebulon Pike who recommended it as a suitable location for a military fort that would have a sweeping view of the entire valley, including the mouth of the Wisconsin River, the trading hamlet of Prairie du Chien and the Wisconsin delta, today it is a well known Iowa DNR State Park that has been well developed for scenic viewing. Iowa has invested in beautiful overlooks and trails that provide different perspectives of the river and views of Wisconsin and the Mississippi Valley for as far as the eye can see. The park and the panoramic views from Pikes Peak have historical, archeological, geographic and scenic value.

**4. Guttenberg/Mississippi River Lock & Dam 10:** The City of Guttenberg, located on the banks and bluffs of the Mississippi River, is at the center of a High Priority Area. Approaches to the community as well as public roads, walking trails and parks in the community all provide expansive views of the Mississippi River and its valley. Lock and Dam 10 is also visible from several locations. Guttenberg, the State of Iowa and Clayton County have and continue to develop viewing opportunities in and near Guttenberg. State overlooks along State Highway 52, including to the north and to the south of the community, are the most well-known and most impressive. They are well maintained, feature limestone retaining walls, plenty of parking, interpretive signage and exceptional views of the Upper Mississippi River Valley. Also notable are the viewing opportunities found in Ingelside Park, a city park with viewing scopes, benches, trails, restrooms and other visitor amenities that follows the length of the community along the Mississippi River.



Marquette River Boardwalk



Marquette Observation Deck (from above)



Guttenberg North Overlook



Effigy Mounds National Monument



Marquette Observation Deck (from below)



Guttenberg South Overlook



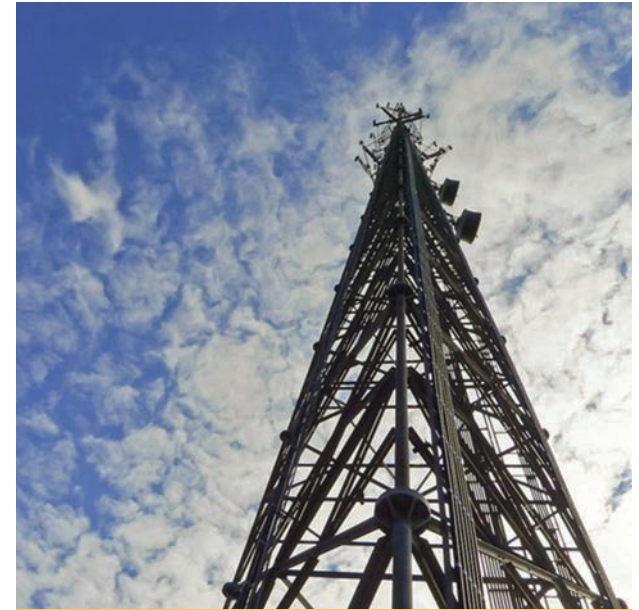
Pikes Peak



**Brownfield Sites**



**Mining & Mineral Extract**



**Wireless Telecommunication Towers**



**Public Area Management**



**Road Conditions**



**Roadside Management**

## 6.4 Challenges & Intrusions

There are several common scenic conservation issues that byway stakeholders are advised by America's Byways Resource Center to address as well as issues that are specific to the RBSB. These issues are many times related to the challenges and intrusions that do and can occur in a byway corridor. In the RBSB Corridor they include but are not limited to the following:

**1. Mining and Mineral Extraction:** Frac Sand Mining is a major issue in RBSB counties and some of the targeted areas for mining coincide with High Value Areas of the RBSB viewshed. Large mining operations can directly and irrevocably impact the viewshed.

**2. On-Premise, Off-Premise and Roadway Signage:** Although billboards and advertising are limited along Iowa's byways, signage issues at the site of a business or off-premise can still impact, block or degrade the viewshed in the Immediate Foreground and Foreground.



**Flood Damage**

**3. Brownfields Sites:** County economic development partners have inventoried potential Brownfield Sites along and near the RBSB. These sites are land previously used for industrial purposes or some commercial uses that may have been contaminated with hazardous waste or pollution or is feared to be so. They can be privately or publically owned, but they typically distract from the byway traveler's experience.

**4. Private Land Use and Conservation:** Ninety-six percent of land in the RBSB viewshed is privately owned. Private lands conservation, or lack of it, in agricultural and natural landscapes, like the majority of the RBSB has, can enhance or distract from the byway traveler's experience and make or break the Foreground, Middle Ground and Background viewshed.

**5. Wireless Telecommunication Towers, Overhead Utility Lines, and Wind Turbines:** Towers, utilities and turbines are large structures that can impact site lines and horizon lines. Working with the local, regional and state planning and zoning restrictions can reduce the impact of these features.

**6. Design Standards in Byway Communities:** The byway reflects the history and culture of the rural landscape, towns, historic districts and/or residential areas in its viewshed and corridor. "Historic" experiences are one of the main attractions along the scenic byway. Restoration, improvements and modifications to historic structures and districts can enhance or detract from the RBSB brand.

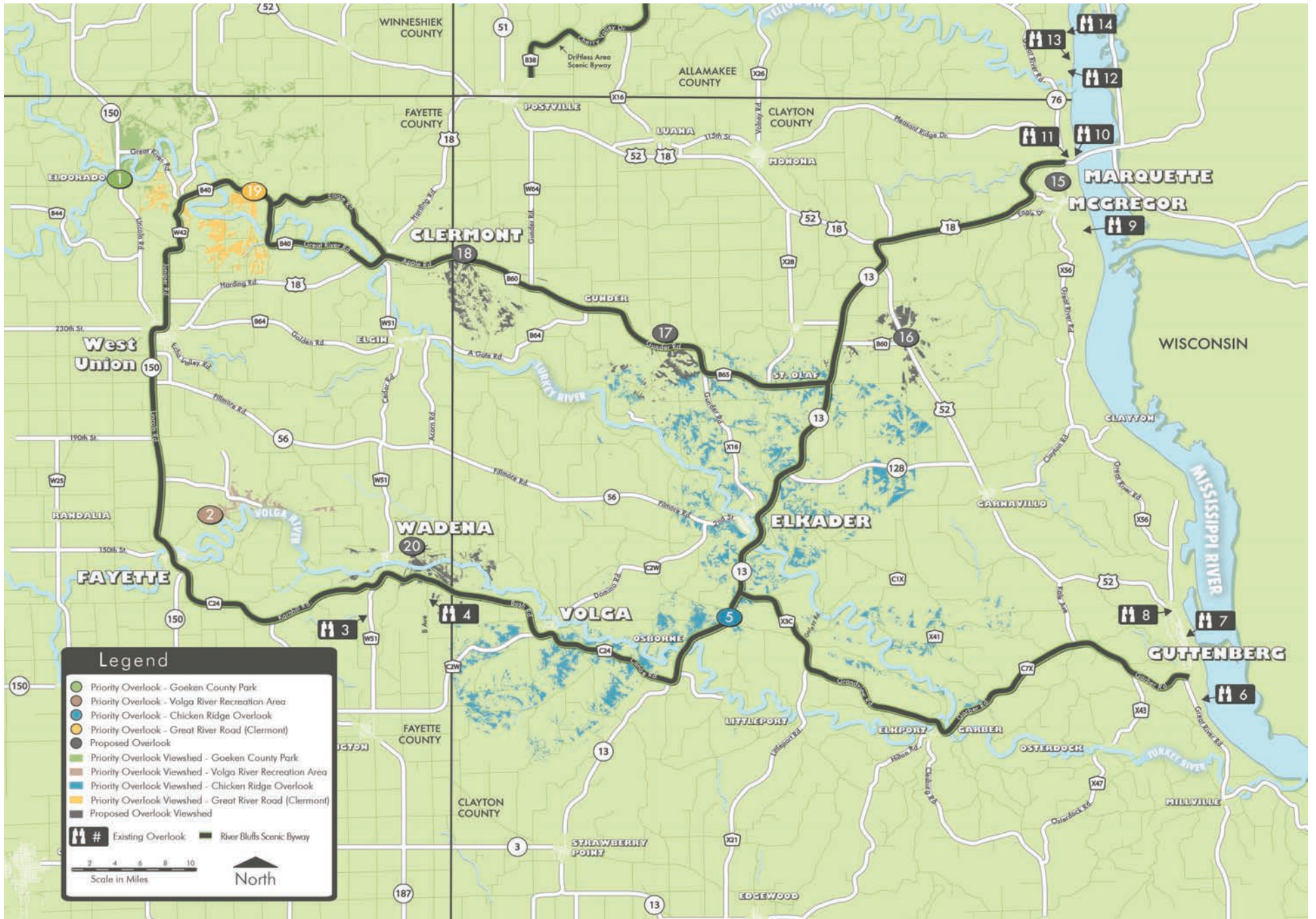
**7. Flood Damage to Roads, Bridges and Natural Areas:** The streams and rivers that enhance the RBSB frequently flood. Floods along these water courses can destroy infrastructure and natural areas that contribute to the functionality and scenic beauty of the RBSB and its intrinsic resources.

**8. Residential & Commercial Structures in the Immediate Foreground and Foreground:** The more popular the RBSB becomes, the more pressure there will be on the most easily accessible land/properties, areas and districts for residential and commercial development. This has the potential to be particularly detrimental to those High Value Areas and overlook viewsheds that define the RBSB.

**9. Public Areas Management:** The RBSB viewshed encompasses city, county, state and national public land, many of which abut the byway in the Immediate Foreground. The management of these properties and public areas can positively or negatively impact the byway traveler, add character & diversity or leave an impression of neglect.

**10. Roadside Management:** The road right-of-way is the single largest public land unit in the RBSB viewshed. It is also located in the Immediate Foreground making plants, natural resources, wildlife and features in this land area highly visible to the byway traveler. Management or neglect of native vegetation and invasive species in the road right-of-way can greatly impact the byway traveler's experience. Trash in this area can negatively impact the traveler's perceptions of the RBSB.

**11. Byway Roadway Context/Sensitive Highway, Street, and Bridge Solutions:** The characteristics of the RBSB road and adjacent trails within the byway corridor are an important part of the experience for RBSB travelers. The aspect of winding, undulating, smooth paved surfaces and well-maintain roads appeal to motorcyclists and other travelers. A decline in road maintenance and conditions, modifications to historic bridge structures and/or realignment of the byway can impact the appeal of the RBSB for many byway travelers and local residents alike.



Map #	Category	Private/Public	Scenic Resources (Overlooks)	Community
1	Priority Existing Overlook	Public	Goeken County Park Overlook	Eldorado
2	Priority Proposed Overlook	Public	Volga River Recreation Area Overlook	Volga
5	Priority Existing Overlook	Public	Chicken Ridge Overlook	Elkader
19	Priority Proposed Overlook	Public	Clermont Great River Road Overlook	Clermont
3	Existing Roadside Pull-off	Private	Brush Creek (Eric Boehm's Property)	Wadena
4	Existing Roadside Pull-off	Private	Wetland Restoration (Roger Erickson's Property)	Wadena
15	Proposed Overlook	Private	Agri Aeri Property Overlook	McGregor
16	Proposed Overlook	Private	Cedar Creek Overlook	Garnavillo
17	Proposed Overlook	Private	Gunder Road Overlook	Gunder
18	Proposed Overlook	Private	East Clermont Church Overlook	Clermont
20	Proposed Overlook	Private	Wadena River Valley Overlook	Wadena
6	Existing Overlook	Public	Guttenberg South Overlook	Guttenberg
7	Existing Overlook	Public	Ingelside Park River Walk & Viewing Stations	Guttenberg
8	Existing Overlook	Public	Guttenberg North Overlook	Guttenberg
9	Existing Overlook	Public	Pikes Peak State Park Overlook	McGregor
10	Existing Overlook	Public	Mississippi River Boardwalk	Wadena
11	Existing Overlook	Public	Marquette Observation Deck	Marquette
12	Existing Overlook	Public	Effigy Mounds: Eagle Rock & Fire Point Overlook	Marquette
13	Existing Overlook	Public	Effigy Mounds: Twin Views Overlook	Marquette
14	Existing Overlook	Public	Effigy Mounds: Hanging Rock Overlook	Marquette

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## 6.5 Proposed Strategies

The RBSB Board developed strategies for conservation, protection and enhancement of the RBSB. These strategies are intended to address issues, maximize visual resource management and minimize scenic losses and intrusions along the RBSB, while recognizing that over 96% of the RBSB viewshed is in private ownership and the RBSB Board has no authority to enforce the strategies. Therefore, many strategies will need to be voluntarily implemented or implemented through informed public policy. Basic strategies include:

- Implement education and outreach strategies.
- Develop partnerships with local, state and federal public and private partners.
- Develop and implement technical and financial assistance for voluntary measures.
- Encourage participation in local, state and federal programs and incentives.
- Acquire property or easements that protect the viewshed.
- Inform and encourage regulatory measures that protect the viewshed.
- Inform community and county policy, planning and zoning and public land management objectives.

## 6.6 Proposed Strategies by Issues

### 1. Brownfield Sites

- Inventory Brownfield Sites within the RBSB Viewshed.
- Hold informational meetings for landowners of Brownfield Sites to inform them about the potential incentives and partnerships that can help them improve the sites.
- Provide technical assistance to Brownfield Site owners to help them secure grants and other financial incentives and proceed with clean-up or site improvements.
- Encourage communities to develop ordinances or take action that encourage site improvements.

### 2. Private Lands Use and Conservation

- Develop a visual catalog that records land use in the RBSB viewshed over time.
- Educate private landowners adjacent to the RBSB and in the RBSB viewshed about local, state and federal conservation programs and incentives.
- Implement a RBSB viewshed education and outreach program that raises awareness of the value of the viewshed and highlights private landowners that are contributing positively to the RBSB viewshed.
- Develop and present an annual RBSB award that recognizes private landowners that enhance the RBSB viewshed through implementation of conservation practices.
- Educate landowners in High Value Areas about conservation easements and estate planning that helps preserve viewsheds.
- Work with private partners and agricultural groups to build pride of, and to offer increased technical and financial assistance to, landowners along the RBSB.

- Work with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Fayette and Clayton County Conservation Boards, Sustainable Iowa Land Trust and other organizations to secure funding for viewshed easements.
- Educate communities and/or counties about the benefits of the RBSB to encourage the use of complimentary policies, zoning or ordinances that support tree planting, management and/or protection during development.
- Encourage landowners participating in the Forest Reserve Program to manage their woodlands using timber stand improvement, best management practices and strategies.
- Consider the RBSB viewshed in relation to watersheds, with special attention to High Value Areas of the viewshed to help local conservation partners understand which watersheds could be targeted for outreach and technical assistance to have the greatest impact on the RBSB viewshed and why that outreach and technical assistance is important.
- Support and encourage communities, the Fayette and Clayton Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), the Turkey River Watershed Management Authority (WMA), the RCD, and other conservation entities, to target outreach, technical and financial assistance to High Value Areas of the viewshed.
- Encourage private landowners within the RBSB viewshed to participate in programs and practices promoted by their community, their SWCD, the WMA, the RCD, and other conservation partners.
- Work with communities, the Keep Iowa Beautiful Program, the RCD and others to secure funding for and develop technical and financial incentives for residential and business boulevard beautification, including tree and native flower plantings.

### 3. Design Standards in Towns, Historic Districts, Commercial Areas & Neighborhoods

- Host Community Design Workshops in RBSB communities.
- Give presentations for merchants at Chamber meetings on design options for commercial areas.
- Convene meetings for local businesses to discuss interests and concerns about community appearance and then encourage individual or collaboration among merchants or residents to take actions such as street plantings, painting programs, store front restorations, etc.
- Provide information about and assistance to help RBSB business owners and residents secure Technical Advisory Network assistance from the State of Iowa and assistance with development and submission of Iowa HRDP grants for historic restoration of properties on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Encourage pedestrian friendly design and projects.



- Organize neighborhood projects along the RBSB route to clean, paint, restore or enhance buildings in the Immediate Foreground of the RBSB viewshed.
- Work with local organizations to beautify downtowns and other areas with plantings and organize trash pick up efforts such as adopt-a-highway along the RBSB.
- Create an awards program to recognize citizens that have made an extra effort to contribute to an attractive community through new signage, new facades and other voluntary measures.
- Work with partners to create a matching grant program for property owners to offset the costs of restoration, maintenance, landscaping or façade improvements.
- Work with partners to create a grant program that helps businesses rehabilitate or adapt buildings in older neighborhoods.
- Encourage communities and counties to offer zoning and tax incentives for restoration and rehabilitation that respects historic design standards and educates the public about state and federal incentives and benefits.
- Work with partners to develop a design assistance program to provide free or reduced-price design services or materials for property owners who wish to restore, rehabilitate or generally improve their property's appearance.
- Pursue Certified Local Government status for those communities along the RBSB that don't already have it so they qualify for technical and financial assistance from the State of Iowa.
- Develop and utilize a fund for acquisition of historic easements, façade easements and property purchase with intent of restoration or easement purchase.
- Encourage creation of local Historic Properties Commissions, designation of Historic Districts and Historic Neighborhoods.
- Provide information and draft documents for communities interested in developing ordinances and regulations governing restoration and maintenance of historic properties or updating comprehensive plans to include design standards and aesthetic concerns.

#### 4. Residential & Commercial Structures in the Immediate Foreground & Foreground

- Educate Planning & Zoning Committees and Administrators about the RBSB viewshed and the impact planning and zoning can have on the different Distance Zones.
- Assist with research for policy development that will help city and county Planning and Zoning Committees and Administrators protect the RBSB viewshed.
- Educate rural landowners in High Value Areas about the USDA NRCS Agricultural Conservation Easement Program and encourage their participation.
- Work with local and state conservation partners to encourage them to acquire and hold agricultural conservation easements that prohibit development and encourage agricultural use protection in rural High Value Areas.

#### 5. Mining and Mineral Extraction

- Educate city and county Planning and Zoning Committees and Administrators about the RBSB viewshed including the economic, job and business creation, tourism and other benefits.
- Assist with research and mapping for policy development that will help city and county Planning and Zoning Committees and Administrators protect the RBSB viewshed.

#### 6. Roadside Management

- Educate RBSB cities and counties about, and encourage participation in, Iowa's Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Program.
- Provide technical assistance to county engineers and roadside managers to help them secure Living Roadway Trust Fund Grants for land purchase and roadside plantings that have a high percentage of, and high diversity of, native forbs/flowers in and adjacent to the RBSB road right-of-way.
- Provide technical assistance to community leaders and citizens groups to plan and implement community entrance enhancements that include native flowers and other low maintenance improvements.
- Work with partners including the Iowa DOT, Keep Iowa Beautiful Program, and Byways of Iowa Foundation to encourage local education about and participation in roadside adoption programs that reduce litter in the RBSB road right-of-way.

#### 7. Public Areas Management

- Educate public land managers about the RBSB, its viewshed and its significance locally, as well as its position within the state and national byway system and the related significance of their lands.
- Invite a state and federal public areas managers to act as a liaison to the RBSB Board, attend meetings and provide input for initiatives (Fayette and Clayton county already participate on the RBSB Board of Directors).
- Encourage and support public programming that promotes native vegetation and ecosystems, encourages biodiversity, increases invasive species management and fosters a positive conservation ethic.
- Develop a RBSB community public areas management committee that informs and makes recommendations to the RBSB Board regarding community land issues such as public lands issues and private lands development etc.
- Encourage and inform state and federal public land managers to consider the RBSB viewshed in program, policy and project decisions.
- Work with public land managers to secure technical, financial and volunteer assistance for control of invasive species and noxious weeds.
- Encourage & empower communities to develop & implement Community Tree Plans.

- Educate and assist communities with planning for removal of trees impacted, or soon to be impacted, by the Emerald Ash Borer and other invasive pests.
- Assist RBSB communities and counties with development of Iowa REAP and other local, state and federal program grants that help them secure funding and technical assistance for native vegetation plantings, trails and other improvements to public amenities and properties.

### 8. Byway Roadway Context/Sensitive Highway, Street, and Bridge Solutions

- Attend and inform regional Transportation Enhancement, Policy and other meetings that influence the use of state and federal funding within the region.
- Work with Fayette and Clayton County Engineers and community administrators to plan for and secure funding for well maintained roads, streets, bridges and shoulder trails along the RBSB route.
- Work with County Engineers Supervisors to un-designate dangerous gravel sections of the RBSB and/or to secure funding to pave gravel sections of RBSB roadway.

### 9. On-Premise, Off-Premise and Roadway Signage

- Educate partnering communities and counties, private businesses and the general public about existing signage policies, ordinances, laws and restrictions.
- Encourage communities and downtowns to develop on-premise sign guidelines.
- Assist with research for policy development that will help city and county Planning and Zoning Committees and Administrators protect the RBSB viewshed.

### 10. Wireless Telecommunication Towers, Overhead Utility Lines, and Wind Turbines

- Map the best locations for towers, overhead utilities and turbines to provide guidance for future action.
- Identify priority locations for reducing the visual impact of utility wires along the byway through undergrounding, screening or relocation.
- Encourage utility companies to paint transmission and telecommunications towers colors that blend with the landscape.
- Work with industry to encourage placement of telecommunication, wind turbine or utility sites that consider the impacts of placement on the landscape, particularly where there are High Value Areas or important byway views.
- Placement should take into consideration the immediate visual impact as well as views from a distance, particularly when those views are within the visual corridor of a High Value Area.
- Support development plans that require developers to avoid hill top locations so that turbine blades cannot be viewed above a ridgeline.
- Draft and distribute sample ordinances and planning and zoning policies.

- Utilize tools and techniques, such as photomontages, computer imaging and Zone of Visual Influence digital mapping to assess the potential visual impact of proposed Wireless Telecommunication Towers, Overhead Utility Lines and Wind Turbines.
- Associated structures, such as pylons, access roads etc. will be evaluated for visual impact.
- Environmental Impact Studies will be completed for Wireless Telecommunication Towers, Overhead Utility Lines and Wind Turbines.
- Post-construction vegetation cover will be replaced on disturbed ground and when possible, used to reduce the visual impact of towers, lines, turbines and associated structures.
- Acquire Conservation Easements that prohibit overhead utilities, telecommunications towers and wind mills on properties in High Value Areas.
- Work with public lands partners to help them understand their rights with regard to placement of telecommunications towers and utility wires on public lands.
- Work with communities & counties to consider incentives for underground utility lines.

### 11. Flood Damage to Roads, Bridges and Natural Areas

- Encourage the Fayette and Clayton County SWCDs, the Turkey River WMA and its members, the RCD and other private and public conservation partners to implement programs, projects and policies that reduce flooding.
- Consider the RBSB viewshed in relation to watersheds and water flow, with special attention to High Value Areas of the viewshed, to help local conservation partners understand which watersheds could be targeted for outreach and technical assistance to have a positive impact on the RBSB roads, bridges and natural areas and why that outreach and technical assistance is important.
- Develop a GIS overlay of floodplain properties in relation to the RBSB viewshed and work with partners to encourage enrollment in programs and buyouts that expand the resiliency of the watersheds while increasing the scenic quality of the RBSB viewshed.
- Support installation, maintenance, repair and use of stream and river gauging stations and other technology that can help cities and counties better understand storm water runoff and stream and river flow.
- Support work by the Iowa Flood Center, IIHR, WMAs and WMA member communities, counties, and SWCDs to implement policies, projects and initiatives that demonstrate or implement urban and rural storm water runoff best management practices that will reduce damage to RBSB roads, bridges and natural areas.
- Work with local and state emergency management personnel to secure funding and technical assistance to implement projects and programs that reduce downstream flooding rather than exacerbate the problem.



Effigy Mounds National Monument



# Section Seven

Recreational Resources

# Recreational Resources

*“Recreational Resources involve outdoor recreational activities directly association with and dependent upon the natural and cultural elements of the corridor’s landscape. The recreational activities provide opportunities for active and passive recreational experiences. They include, but are not limited to, downhill skiing, rafting, boating, fishing, and hiking. Driving the road itself may qualify as a pleasurable recreational experience. The recreational activities may be seasonal, but the quality and importance of the recreational activities as seasonal operations must be well recognized.”*  
Scenic America



**The RBSB Features Abundant Access to Natural Areas**

### **7.1 Significant Recreational Resources**

Recreational venues in the RBSB Corridor, especially those visible from the RBSB roadway, encourage byway travelers to slow down and thus spend more time and money in the RBSB Corridor. Fortunately, not only are there high quality natural and cultural intrinsic qualities in and near the RBSB, its Corridor and its viewshed, there are also recreational opportunities and public access to natural areas including public parks, wildlife

areas, public and private campgrounds, public fishing areas, exceptional access to rivers and streams for water recreation, wildlife viewing and hunting, different types of trails and access to cultural landscapes and other recreational venues. Residents and visitors can access and view natural habitats and areas, cultural landscapes and sites, but just as important, they can experience them. They can bird watch or hunt in one of America's premier flyways, photograph woodland

spring ephemerals, run through a corn maze, kayak down a water trail, fish for trout, walleye or small mouth bass or visit a working farm. They can explore trails in the Shin Bone Valley on foot or by bike, canoe or ride a horse to Motor Mill Historic Park, snowmobile or ice fish. They can swim in a river or fish in a pond, picnic under tall oak trees as they watch eagles glide over the Mississippi River, play golf next to one effigy mound and sleep under the stars in a primitive or a full service campground. Visitors are encouraged by locals, who themselves enjoy the natural resources, to explore public areas and participate in outdoor recreation activities. Rather than hotel chains, the RBSB visitors find bed and breakfasts, cabins, and restored barns that encourage and foster an intimate connection to the land. Community events and festivals frequently include canoeing, horseback riding, running, biking, motorcycle riding, bird programs, leaf watching, geocaching, nature hikes and cultural reenactments. At fairs, events and festivals, byway visitors also taste local foods like sweet corn, brats or maple syrup, enjoy local or ethnic music, create or buy local art, make a basket or candle, run through a corn maze or watch a rodeo.

Although public lands only occupy two percent of the RBSB Corridor land area, the public lands in the RBSB are significant. However, it is important to note that many private landowners in the RBSB Corridor allow limited public access for specific predetermined recreational uses like trout fishing, hunting, horseback riding with riding clubs, snowmobiling, and nature walks etc. Their willingness to share the natural resources they own at their discretion has economic, social and recreational benefits that can not be over stated. Whether viewed from a distance or encountered up close, the opportunities for RBSB travelers to experience the natural intrinsic qualities of the RBSB give the RBSB Board and their stakeholders a competitive edge. The following are significant recreational resources within the RBSB corridor:



**1. Mississippi River**

**1. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Refuge/Mississippi River:** Included in the RBSB Corridor is the Mississippi River and the US Fish and Wildlife Refuge. The wildlife watching, fishing, hunting, boating and hiking on the refuge are world renown. Access to the river from the RBSB Corridor communities is exceptional, with public and private marinas in the RBSB communities of Marquette, McGregor, and Guttenberg. Resources include universal access for fishing, boating, bird watching and hiking. The RBSB Mississippi River communities sport trails along the river, a new boardwalk and phenomenal overlooks. riverside picnic sites, viewing scopes, benches, playgrounds, restrooms, information centers and kiosks, community centers, ballrooms, fish aquarium and other visitor amenities that complement the nature based recreation associated with the Refuge.



**2. Turkey River Recreational Corridor**

**2. Turkey River Recreational Corridor (TRRC):** The Turkey River Recreational Corridor, which is the corridor of the Turkey River from Clermont to Elgin, and on to the Iowa DNR Big Springs Fish Hatchery, Elkader and Motor Mill Park, is the first river corridor in the state of Iowa to be designated as an Iowa Great Place. The Turkey River in this section meanders back and forth through a lush valley that is flanked by pasture, farm fields and forested bluffs. Some sections are remote and create a feeling of isolation, on others, river accesses are close together and river users are abundant. The communities and counties have and continue to develop this section as a nature-based recreational venue for outdoor water and land trail enthusiasts. They have developed and continue to construct land trails in the TRRC, connecting community downtowns, campgrounds, historic and cultural venues,



**3. Curvey Roads**

parks and other attractions. To date there are an estimated 380 miles of land trails in the TRRC and more being added every year. The three communities, Fayette County, two County Conservation Boards and the Motor Mill Foundation, also work independently, together and with the RBSB Board to foster opportunities for engagement at historic sites, reenactments and cultural opportunities at art fairs and events.

**3. Motorcycle Along Curvy Roads:** The RBSB Corridor is a well known destination for motorcycle enthusiasts. Motorcyclists from throughout the Midwest enjoy the well maintained, winding roadways and beautiful scenery that is common along the byway route. RBSB Communities are strategically placed for these enthusiastic tourists, with local bars, breweries and wineries being popular stops.



**4. Turkey River Water Trail**

**4. Turkey River Water Trail:** The Turkey River has been designated a state water trail for 98-miles in Fayette and Clayton counties but is most well developed in the TRRC. This water trail meanders through the region down the center of the RBSB Corridor. TRRC communities are working together to enhance the water trail. To date they have developed the first whitewater course in Elkader and (22) publically accessible river access locations, making the Turkey River one of the most accessible rivers in Iowa. Paddlers are drawn by the short distances between access points, which give them more opportunities to manage float times. Some take advantage of the short access distances to peddle and paddle the river (bike and canoe). The trail has been signed for wayfinding, has informational kiosks, and a water trail guide that helps visitors navigate their river experience.



**5-6. Rivers & Coldwater Trout Streams**

**5. Cold Water Trout Streams:** 19 of Iowa's 81 trout streams (23%), totaling 37 miles of fishable water are located with the RBSB's corridor. These streams are stocked with ainbow, brown and brook trout and public and private lands along these streams are open for fishing as designed by the Iowa DNR and private landowners.

**6. High Quality Rivers:** Although the area is renown for its trout fishing, the RBSB Corridor has exceptional public fishing in its rivers. Access in public parks and via water courses are extensive. Byway fishermen and women can use their skills to lure bass, walleye, catfish, sauger, northern pike, pan fish and other sport fish. Ice fishing on the Mississippi River for pan fish, including crappies and bluegills, is also extremely popular.



**7. Equestrian Trails**

**7. Equestrian Trails:** There are over 80 miles of equestrian trails in the RBSB Corridor. Parks that allow horseback riding include Gilbertson Park near Elgin, Volga Lake Recreation Area near Fayette, Pony Hollow Trail in Elkader, The Natural Gait near Marquette and Yellow River State Forest north of Marquette. The three saddle clubs that organize rides in the RBSB Corridor work with private landowners to create rides in remote and beautiful natural landscapes, over hills and through woodlands, along streams and rivers, to hilltops and to cultural sites.

**8. Snowmobile Trails:** RBSB travelers have access to 300 miles of snowmobile trails within the RBSB Corridor. These trails are diverse, winding trails that climb and descend through the RBSB Corridor to provide high quality winter sport experiences.





**8. Snowmobile Trails**



**9. Family Activities**



**10. Globally Significant Birding Area**

**9. Family Oriented Activities:** There are several safe activities that have been developed by public and private entities specifically to engage families and provide opportunities for children to get outside and enjoy themselves. These include the Maize Maze, Petting Zoo and “Touchable” Wildlife displays at Gilbertson Conservation Education Area, Fishing Ponds in Gilbertson and at Big Springs Fish Hatchery and activities at Heritage Farm Park near Clermont and numerous playgrounds. To encourage youth exploration, the RBSB Board developed and tested a River Bluffs Scenic Byway Activity Book and partnered with the TRRC Board to develop and distribute a ‘Safari.’ Both encourage area and visiting youth and their families to explore twenty heritage, natural and cultural sites.

**10. Wildlife and Birds:** The Upper Mississippi River is a major flyway and migration route for millions of birds annually but birding opportunities abound throughout the RBSB Corridor. A total of (69) territories that bald eagles use for breeding purposes are located in Clayton County, ranking second in Iowa and comprising (16%) of all territories within the state. Visitors can observe hundreds of thousands of ducks and flocks of pelicans, boat beneath blue heron rookeries, listen and view Sandhill cranes, spy an eagles nest from a distance or up close. The northern section of the RBSB encompasses a Globally Important Birding Area that includes public lands with remote hiking trails and look outs where byway travelers can see and hear rare Neotropical migrants, or threatened and endangered species, such as the cerulean warbler. The area was also the headquarters for reintroduction of the

peregrine falcon through the Raptor Resource Project. Several RBSB communities and parks have special events dedicated to bird watching, bird counting and interpretive programming about birds. Visitors can walk into a life-sized replica of an eagle nest, get a close-up view of eagles and hawks at interpretive programs or use public viewing scopes in parks or binoculars strategically placed in restaurants to identify different bird species.

**11. Guided Tours:** Several park managers in the RBSB Corridor offer guided tours of native flora & fauna, including spring ephemeral hikes through native hardwood forests, mushroom identification, maple syrup collection/hikes, night hikes, birding programs, & other nature experiences. Historical society volunteers & conservation board employees also offer guided hikes of historic structures & districts.

**12. Single Track & Paved Trails:** Public entities have developed high quality hiking and biking trails including paved trails in the Turkey River Recreational Corridor and along the Mississippi River Trail, in Clermont, Elkader, and Fayette and walking trails in Gilbertson Park, Motor Mill Park, Volga Lake Recreation Area, Effigy Mounds, Pikes Peak, Bloody Run Wildlife Management Area, Sny Magill, Yellow River Forest and Bixby State Park. These trails were specifically developed to provide diverse opportunities for the byway visitors to engage with the natural and cultural environments adjacent to them, including cold water trout streams, hardwood forests, river valleys, historic sites like Motor Mill, cultural landscapes like the Shin Bone Valley and native ecosystems like algific talus slopes, prairies and woodlands. Private trails that are open to the public have also been developed in the RBSB Corridor including trails in Heritage Farm Park and the Jensen Trail.

**13. Cultural Recreation:** Byway visitors can take a hike to effigy mounds shaped like bears, birds and lizards. They can walk or bike across the Shin Bone Valley, or climb to the top of a bluff that has been considered a sacred place by generations of Native Americans. They can also join a group of travelers in a guided tour of effigy mounds.

**14. City, County, State and Federal Parks, Natural Areas and Fish and Wildlife Management Areas and Protected Areas:** In addition to the US Fish and Wildlife Refuge, the RBSB corridor encompasses thousands of acres of public land that have a variety of visitor amenities including campsites, multi-use trails, fishing access and water sport options and interpretive programming.

**15. Festivals and Fairs:** RBSB communities and counties hold themed festivals, fairs and events annually. German, Irish, Norwegian, Swedish and other cultures are celebrated at these outdoor events that create unique opportunities for visitors to participate in historic and cultural competitions, watch outdoor performances and listen to local music.

**16. Campgrounds:** There are over 70 private and public primitive/tent campsites and over 775 private and public RV campsites in the TRRC Corridor. Most of these are located along trout streams, ponds, rivers, and in or near woodlands or trees. Some are larger units of campsites within walking or biking distance to historic downtowns, communities, historic sites and festivals. Others are remote or primitive campsites only accessible by river. Camping in the RBSB Corridor provides unique opportunities for the byway travelers to become immersed in a natural area and be close to dozens of different recreational amenities.

**17. Adventure Tourism Activities:** Water skiing, rock climbing, white water kayaking and other adventure tourist activities are available in or near the RBSB Corridor. The TRRC Board is specifically developing adventure river experiences and rock climbing is common in Backbone State Park, not far from the RBSB Corridor community of Edgewood.

**18. Driving for Pleasure:** Although not typically included as having its own recreational intrinsic quality, the RBSB roadway is considered by the RBSB Board to be an existing recreational resource that connects a variety of recreational venues to each other. It is something that does not need to be created, as it already exists. According to Scenic.org, nearly fifty percent of Americans drive for pleasure. Like a bike trail through a scenic valley that connects parks, it provides recreation and pleasure for those using it. When regard thusly, the RBSB provides a high quality recreational experience for those drivers looking for smooth roads that are curvy, hilly and have low traffic counts. The RBSB delivers on all counts. On a scale of zero to one hundred, of those that have been evaluated, the majority of the state roads that make up the RBSB are ranked between 70 and 90 for pavement condition, roughness, congestion and other factors. (These rankings are detailed in the Transportation and Safety Chapter of this CMP.) There are only two sections of the RBSB in state ownership that are rated below 70 and one is scheduled for repair in 2016.



**11. Guided Tours**



**15. Festivals, Fairs & events**



12. Single Track & Paved Trails



13. Cultural Recreation



14. Public Land



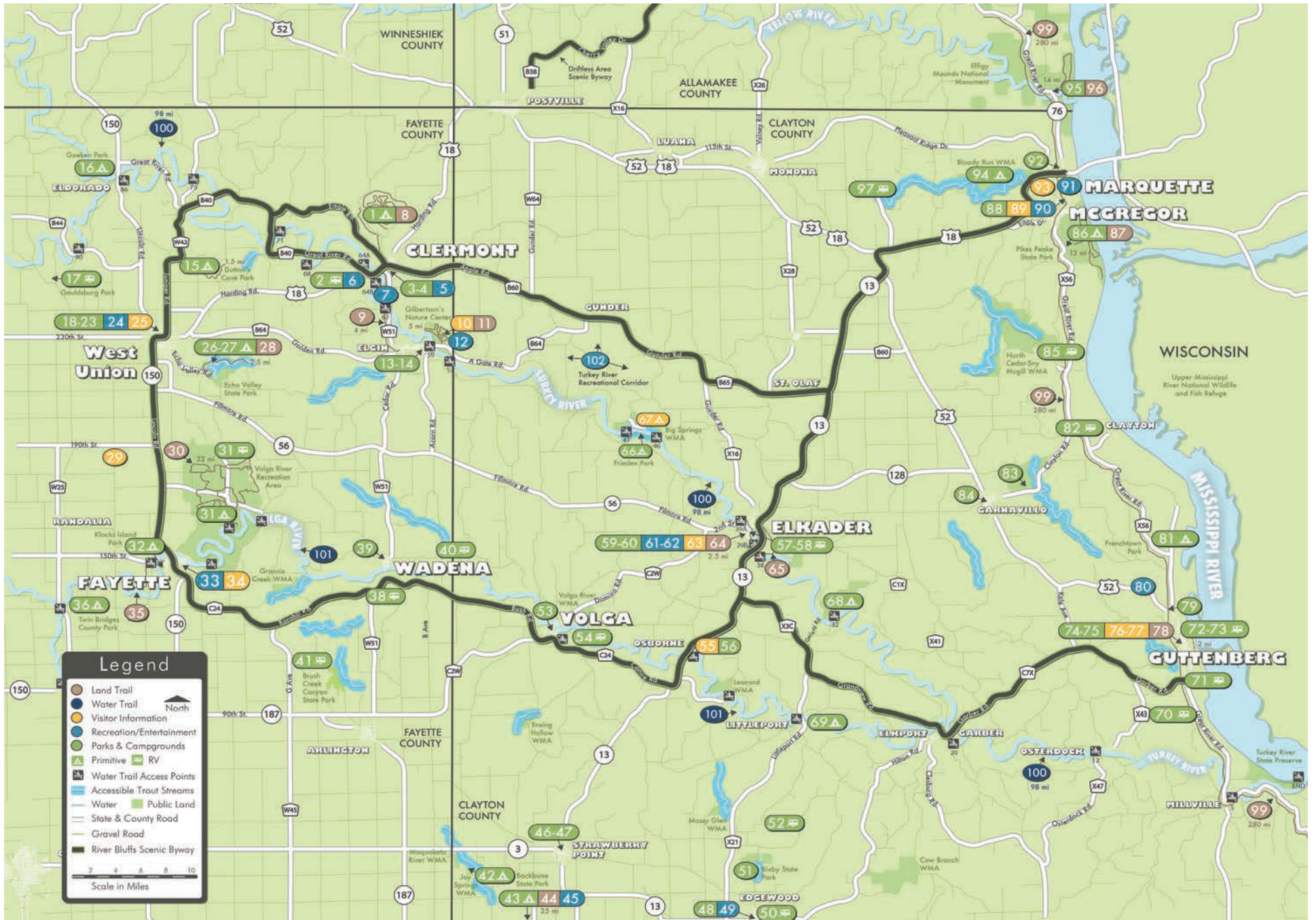
16. RV & Primitive Campgrounds



17. Adventure Tourism



18. Driving for Pleasure



Map #	Recreational Resource	Map #	Recreational Resource	Map #	Recreational Resource	Map #	Recreational Resource
<b>City Parks</b>		36	Twin Bridges Park	70	Miners Creek Campground	78	Guttenberg Riverwalk - 2 mi
3	Clermont City Park	42	Joy Springs Park	71	The Guttenberg RV Park	87	Pikes Peak Trail System - 10 mi
4	Riverside City Park	56	Osborne Park	72	Great River Rd. Campground	96	Effigy Mounds - 14 mi
14	Elgin City Park	59	Founders Park	73	Lakeside Park & Campground	99	MRT - 280 mi
18	Aquatic Center	60	Turkey River Park	82	Clayton Hills Campground	<b>Water Trails</b>	
19	Clark Park	66	Frieden's Park	85	Paradise Valley Campground	100	Turkey River Water Trail
20	Lion's City Park	68	Motor Mill Park	97	Spook Cave Campground	101	Volga River Water Trail
21	Rotary City Park	81	Frenchtown Park	<b>Nature Center</b>		<b>Recreation &amp; Entertainment</b>	
22	Sunset City Park	83	Buck Creek Park	10	Gilbertson Education Area	5	Double J's Canoe Rental
23	West Union Recreation Park	94	Bloody Run Park	29	Wildwood Nature Center	6	JR's Canoe Rental
32	Klock's Island City Park	<b>State Parks</b>		55	Osborne Welcome Center	7	Pleasant Valley Golf Course
37	Maynard City Park	27	Echo Valley State Park	67	Big Springs Fish Hatchery	12	Maize Maze
39	Wadena City Park	31	Volga River Recreation Area	76	Guttenberg Fish Hatchery	24	Rollin' River Canoe/Tube Rentals
46	Campbell City Park	41	Brush Creek State Park	93	Driftless Area Wetland Center	33	Big Rock Golf Course
47	Inger City Park	43	Backbone State Park	<b>Visitor Information Centers</b>		45	Backbone Golf Course
48	Edgewood City Park	51	Bixby State Preserve	93	Fayette County ED & Chamber	49	Woods Edge Golf Course
53	Volga City Park	86	Pikes Peak State Park	93	Fayette County Tourism Ctr	61	Elkader Golf & Country Club
57	Elkader City Park	98	Yellow River State Forest	93	Clayton County Dev Group	62	Turkey River Outfitters
74	Guttenberg City Park	<b>National Parks</b>		93	Guttenberg Welcome Center	80	Guttenberg Golf Course
75	Ingleside City Park	95	Effigy Mounds Ntl Monument	93	McGregor-Marquette Chamber	90	Maiden Voyage Tours
79	Big Springs Nature Park	<b>Primitive &amp; RV Campgrounds</b>		<b>Land Trails</b>		91	Lady Luck Casino
84	Garnavillo City Park	1	Heritage Hill Campground	8	Heritage Farm Park - 10 mi	101	Turkey River Rec. Corridor
88	McGregor Riverfront Park	2	Skip-a-Way Resort	9	TRRC - 4 mi		
92	Marquette City Park	38	Deer Ridge Campground	11	Gilbertson Education Area - 5mi		
<b>County Parks</b>		40	River Valley Campground	28	Jensen Trail - 2.5 mi		
13	Valley Canoe Access	50	Sweet Dreams Campground	30	VRRR - 22 mi		
15	Dutton's Cave Park	52	D&D Campground	35	Fayette Rec. Trail - 2.8 mi		
16	Goeken Park	54	Volga U Campground	44	Backbone State Park - 25 mi		
17	Gouldsburg Park	58	Deer Run Resort	64	Elkader Riverwalk - 2.5 mi		
26	Glovers Creek Fishing WMA	69	Littleport Campground	65	Pony Hollow Trail - 4 mi		

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## 7.2 Challenges & Opportunities

During the CMP process, the RBSB Board identified their recreational resources as the number one intrinsic quality and the most significant aspect of their RBSB brand. There are many opportunities for the RBSB byway traveler to create memorable individual and family experiences by recreating in the RBSB Corridor. Most of the experiences are place-based, unique opportunities that allow byway travelers to experience the culture and the natural environment around them.

The interface of high quality natural resources and recreation in the RBSB Corridor creates a need for development of strategies that lead to sustainable use of natural areas and respect for the landscape policies that protect them. Informed strategies can also be implemented to protect natural areas so they are not degraded by the very people that come to see and experience them.

Unfortunately, the same historic, ethnic, cultural and family ties that created the fascinating one of a kind communities and customs in the RBSB Corridor have also fostered a culture of competition and isolationism between RBSB communities and counties. Because RBSB communities and counties have limited funds for development of recreational infrastructure or for tourism and economic development initiatives, their competitive attitude limits their access to a broader and more extensive group of travelers. Over the past few years, the RBSB Board has worked to educate the RBSB communities and counties about the benefits of working together to market the recreational opportunities along their byway, independently and as a unit of attractions. Community leaders and business owners from each of the RBSB towns and counties have been invited to serve on the RBSB Board and develop marketing and interpretive materials that cross-market and promote historic, cultural and other attractions, events as well as public parks and public and private recreational venues. The majority of the RBSB Board's efforts have been considered "ecotourism" or ecological tourism." Ecotourism is tourism that is developed and managed in such a way that all tourism activity can continue indefinitely without detracting from efforts to maintain the resources in perpetuity. Ecotourism is also defined as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of the local people."

Nearly every RBSB community and both County Conservation Boards are eager to add or improve recreational amenities. Unfortunately, public funding to create and maintain the recreational amenities they are interested in, such as white water courses, hiking and bike trails, marinas, fishing access, and other recreational venues is extremely limited and competitive at the state level. Federal grants for recreational infrastructure have been eliminated or greatly reduced and the RBSB communities are very small with a limited numbers of private donors. The efforts to unite communities and counties in

the TRRC to develop land and water trails demonstrates that attitudes are shifting and partnerships can result in projects and initiatives that benefit multiple stakeholders.

Development of trails, if not done properly, can result in soil erosion and trail users can transfer invasive species, negatively impacting adjacent natural areas. For example, new research shows that horseback rides inadvertently spread oak wilt, which is a significant danger given the economic and environmental importance of oak growth in the RBSB Corridor. Safety issues can arise when inexperienced land and water trail users who aren't familiar with trail etiquette are mixed with experienced trail users, yet no trails currently post any information about rider conduct. Riders may not understand who has right-of-way, when to yield, private landowner rights or the dangers of canoeing in flood waters.

The RBSB Board also recognizes that information, interpretation, maps and marketing regarding recreational venues and/or intersecting cultural venues in the RBSB Corridor is extremely limited. During CMP development the RCD staff worked with several entities to test different types of maps and publications for promotion, interpretation, wayfinding and marketing of recreational and cultural venues. They also worked to determine if and how city and county tourism and economic development leaders from the RBSB Counties and throughout the region could work with county and state conservation partners and natural resource professionals to influence Northeast Iowa's tourism brand to make it more focused on natural resource based recreation. The Northeast Iowa Tourism Association, some of the county economic development, and some of the tourism and chamber organizations adopted the idea and have since worked independently or with the RBSB Board and RCD to develop or alter publications that detail recreational options and highlights along the RBSB.

Students from the University of Iowa recently completed an economic analysis of the Northeast Iowa trails system, identifying extensive sales tax and other economic benefits to trails development relevant to the RBSB Corridor. Some of the economic benefit of trails is related to the small businesses that support natural resource recreation. There are several gaps in natural resource related business in the RBSB Corridor, such as no business that sells 'flies' to fly fisherman, even though the area is a destination for fly fisherman. Although natural resource based recreation is popular in the RBSB Corridor during the spring, summer and fall, tourism falls off during the winter months and many RBSB communities and their small tourism related businesses struggle in the winter months. Fortunately, many of the recreational venues can be used during the winter months. Some of the trout streams are fishable most of the year. Activities such as ice fishing, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, hunting, trapping, snowmobiling, maple syruping, winter festivals and other activities could be better developed and marketed to byway travelers.



Turkey River

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## 7.3 Proposed Strategies

Strategies to increase opportunities for RBSB byway travelers to recreate, while at the same time protecting natural intrinsic qualities include the following:

### 1. Encourage Development of New Infrastructure

Work with partners to develop new and maintain existing land and water trail infrastructure including paved and unpaved multi-use land trails, water trail access sites, white water courses and other supporting infrastructure including but not limited to parking, restrooms, boat ramps etc. Assist with multi-partner coordination and planning, fundraising and grant writing efforts to ensure city, county and state public and private trails align with and complement each other rather than compete.

### 2. Develop and Distribute a Guide to Recreational Venue Development that includes information about Land and Water Trail BMPs

Work with partners as they repair or develop new land and trails and other recreational amenities to encourage use of Best Management Practices to prevent erosion and natural resource degradation.

### 3. Encourage and Provide Assistance for Natural Resource Based Business Development and Expansion

Work with private and public partners to develop businesses that support recreation in the RBSB Corridor such as those that expand access to recreational equipment, provide tech support and strategically provide access to traveler services and amenities along trails and other recreational venues.

### 4. Develop and Promote Natural Resource Based Education for Youth and Adults:

Work with educators to develop and promote formal and informal classes, programs and other opportunities for RBSB residents and visitors to learn how to participate in the activities that are available in the RBSB Corridor including fishing, biking, skiing, boating, canoeing, kayaking, and hunting. Look for and develop opportunities to engage RBSB travelers in more unusual natural resource activities such as rock climbing, frogging, bow hunting for carp, night hikes etc. Work with partners to develop and market environmental learning opportunities for RBSB travelers regarding native ecosystem, flora and fauna such as spring ephemerals, mushrooms, woodlands, butterflies, birds etc.

### 5. Brand RBSB as a High Quality Recreational Venue:

Develop the RBSB brand, marketing materials, and interpretation to reflect the significance of recreational intrinsic qualities in the RBSB Corridor.

### 6. Develop the Intersection of Recreational and Cultural Experiences

Improve the intersection between recreational and cultural experiences through the use of wayside exhibits at recreational venues such as development of a wayside exhibits about the Shin Bone Valley/Sack Valley along the TRRC trail overlooking that valley between Elgin and Clermont, development of audio tours for hikers, bikers and motorcyclists that includes interesting stories of the RBSB and/or local music selections.

### 7. Educate Trail Users About Trail Etiquette and Respect

Develop and work with partners to distribute or post information that helps trailusers understand trail etiquette, how to respect other trail users and how to respect the natural resources associated with the trail, such as how to prevent the spread of invasive species and disease, how to prevent erosion and reduce other natural resource threats.

### 8. Encourage and Develop Cross-Promotion

Develop opportunities for cross-promotion and encourage cross-promotion of RBSB recreational venues with public and private organizations and businesses. For example, encourage restaurants to tell customers about recreational venues.

### 9. Expand Public Access to Natural Areas

Work with RBSB city and county partners to help them secure easements and purchase land to develop and improve existing or new public recreation facilities that are desired by the RBSB residents and stakeholders, especially those adjacent to the roadway, coldwater trout streams, rivers, or that expand existing recreational venues.

### 10. Develop a “What is There to Do Around Here?” and other Public Awareness Campaigns for RBSB Businesses:

Work with private business owners and community leaders to implement customer service training that is fun and ultimately encourages the people on the front lines, those at RBSB convenience stores and hotels etc. to know about and be able to enthusiastically talk about recreational venues.

### 11. Develop Themed Recreation

Develop themed recreational tours that encourage visitors to travel the entire byway such as but not limited to Birding the Byway, Hiking the Hills and the Valleys of the River Bluffs Scenic Byway, RBSB Trout Fishing Guide etc.



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## 12. Develop and Widely Distribute Information about RBSB Recreational Venues

Develop, publish and distribute RBSB maps, publications and itineraries that highlight recreational opportunities in the RBSB Corridor and make them available to byway travelers electronically and downloadable via the internet.

## 13. Empower Trail Advocates

Develop a “RBSB Recreational Trails Resource Kit” that compiles and provides economic and other data and information that will help RBSB trails advocates secure public and private political and financial support for trails project.

## 14. Develop and Promote Winter Recreational Venues

Work with partners to develop existing and new winter recreational venues such as but not limited to ice fishing, snowmobiling, winter festivals, cross-country skiing, ice sculpting competitions, trout fishing and other activities.

## 15. Secure Adventure and other Recreational Photographs for RBSB Marketing

Secure photographs with people having fun in the RBSB Corridor for use in posters, social media, websites, billboards and other venues that encourage responsible use of the resources through the images and associated language.

## 16. Develop a Guide to Guides

Work with local natural resource fishing, hunting, bird watching and other guides to develop a resource that will make it easier for visitors to find their services.



# Section Eight

Historical Resources

# Historical Resources

*"Historical Resources encompass legacies of the past that are distinctly associated with physical elements of the landscape, whether natural or manmade, that are of such historic significance that they educate the viewer and stir an appreciation for the past. The historic elements reflect the actions of people and may include buildings, settlement patterns, and other examples of human activity. Historic features can be inventoried, mapped, and interpreted. They possess integrity of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, and association." Scenic America*

## 8.1 Background

The unique landscape and distinct natural settings along the RBSB has played an essential role in shaping the RBSB experience. The history of land from the early settlement by indigenous people to major changes brought on by the development of new technologies used in manufacturing, iron works, milling, agriculture and railroad transportation has left behind a variety of cultural and historic resources that have been embraced and celebrated by occupants of the region. These remnants of the past are the physical remains that assist in telling the byway's story of evolution from early Native American habitation to today's diverse rural community.



RBSB Historic Committee

RBSB Board members and Northeast Iowa RC&D staff worked together to develop strategies for public involvement to ensure all historical resources along the RBSB were identified, inventoried and assessed during the CMP planning process. To obtain this information, Northeast Iowa RC&D staff worked with RBSB Board members to form and host a variety of public RBSB Historic Committee Meetings. Participants invited to partake in the meeting discussions included members of the RBSB board as well as historians and heads of city and county historical societies, museums and genealogical associations located within Fayette and Clayton County. A total of 24 individuals actively participated in quarterly, or as needed discussions and/or public input meetings. Working together, members came up with a goal of wanting to “understand, promote, restore, prioritize and interpret the historic sites and collections along the byway. This RBSB Historic Committee was instrumental in helping to accomplish the tasks listed below:

- Developed, maintained and provided input to complete a comprehensive list of high-priority historic sites, collections, artifacts and interpretation as well as the documentation of present, past and desired conditions for each historic site along the RBSB.
- Assisted with on-site visits to inspect, document and photograph historic resources.
- Prioritized historic site, collection and artifact projects along the byway.
- Obtained cost estimates for projects related to high-priority historic sites, collections and resources along the byway.
- The development of a cooperative strategy and standards needed for unified historic preservation, restoration, protection, promotion and interpretation along the byway.
- Began to research and identify potential funding sources for future historic resource projects.

Historic categories identified, inventoried and assessed included: 1) museums, 2) public historic buildings and structures, 3) opera houses, 4) historical walking tours, 5) historic districts, 6) significant historic churches, cemeteries and bridges and 7) significant private buildings and structures listed on the NRHP. An inventory of stone structures was also completed in Clayton County. There are over 70 sites on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in the RBSB Corridor. Several of those sites are unique or exceptional examples of historic architecture and/or culture. There are also historic cemeteries, historic churches and historic schoolhouses. Statues and murals of historic events and people are also fairly common. The most prominent are included on the Art & Cultural Resources map on page 126. Because there are hundreds of historic resources in the RBSB Corridor, the RBSB Board members chose to prioritize and focus their planning efforts on those historic resources identified by the RBSB Board as high-priority sites (HPS).

## 8.2 Significant Historical Resources

Five of the RBSB's ten marquee communities have one or more historic districts including Guttenberg, McGregor, Elkader, Elgin, and Clermont (unofficial). A historic district is a group of buildings, properties, or a site that have been designated by one of several entities on different levels as historically or architecturally significant. The historic district in each of these communities varies greatly in size and number of contributing sites. For example, the byway community of Guttenberg has multiple historic districts and claims to have more historic sites listed on the NRHP per capita than any other community in the nation as compared to the community of Elgin, which has one block in their community designated in honor of an event that took place in that location. There are three communities along the RBSB that have developed self-guided historic walking tours and local historians will provide guided tours. The RBSB communities that have the highest concentration or clusters of historic sites, as well as the most significant high-priority sites within those communities, are as follows:

**The Historic Community of Elgin:** Adjacent to the small RBSB community of Elgin, this county park harbors extensive local collections that originally belonged to the Dummermuth family. The collections are well maintained, clean and well organized and reflect on many aspects of the culture of the region.

**1. Hart Dummermuth Historical House:** This small home showcases interesting antiques as well as a wide variety of collections that would have been found in an Iowa farm house between the 1890's and 1900's including furniture, household items and cooking utensils in a home setting that shows how a family lived at the turn of the last century.

**2. Elgin Historical Museum:** This museum houses Elgin memorabilia, photographs, school information, historical records and furniture as well as detailed genealogy and obituary records of Elgin past residents.

**3. Mavis and Conner Dummermuth Building:** This large building houses an extensive collection of many different kinds of farm tools and antiques from over the last 150 years. The collection ranges from dozens of different kinds of barbed wire, seed and feed sacks from around the state of Iowa, railroad lamps, haying equipment, historic cooking equipment and axes to one of a kind items including a period horse drawn carriage, barber chair and Kentucky whiskey/ moonshine still.

**4. Gilbertson Nature Center:** This building houses a diverse collection of 'touchable' taxidermy, unlike most taxidermy that children must look at behind a case, the Nature Center staff encourages visitors to touch this collection, which helps children connect to nature in a very tactile way. The Center also houses an extensive gun collection that reflects the history of higher arms from the French Indian wars to modern times.



Hart Dummermuth Historical House



Mavis & Connor Dummermuth Building



Gilbertson Conservation Education Area

**The Historic Community of Elkader:** Byway visitors interested in learning more about the unique history of this scenic river town can take a self-guided walking tour of Elkader to view 27 different historic sites throughout the town. Nine sites that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places are on the walking tour, including the Elkader Opera House and the 1855 mansion at the Carter House Museum, the longest keystone arch bridge west of the Mississippi River, several historical homes that date back to the 1800s and the only courthouse in Iowa with a wooden clock tower. Byway visitors can also view thousands of artifacts representing all aspects of Midwest rural living at the George Maier Rural Heritage Center. High-priority sites in the RBSB Corridor in Elkader and near Elkader include the following:

**1. George Maier Rural Heritage Center:** Adjacent to Elkader City Park, this center is located in a restored sales barn, which houses a personal collection of artifacts that represent the work and lives from rural Iowa history spanning 1890-1950. Specific treasures include an antique threshing machine, old Victrola, and a collection of historic calendars. There is also an arrowhead collection, a collection of country school clocks and World War II photographs. Visitors can learn how the 20th century housewife took care of her children and her home and how her husband farmed or ran a business.

**2. Clayton County Courthouse and Clock Tower:** Constructed in 1867 in the “Italianate” style of architecture, this brick building rests on a foundation of limestone blocks quarried just five blocks away. The wooden clock tower at the top of the courthouse is the only one of its kind remaining in Iowa. Not only is the clock tower structure unique but it also has signatures that were scribed on the interior walls over several decades. The records in the courthouse date back to May of 1838, eight years before Iowa’s statehood. Listed on the NRHP.



**Clayton County Courthouse & Clock Tower**

**3. The Keystone Bridge:** At 346 feet, this historic limestone bridge is the longest of its type west of the Mississippi River. It was built of locally quarried limestone in 1889 and continues to serve as a main transportation structure in the historic downtown. Listed on NRHP.

**4. Elkader Opera House:** Constructed in the historic downtown district in 1903 and recently beautifully restored, the opera house has always played a central role in social and civic life in Elkader. The three-story structure features a horseshoe balcony, ruby glass chandelier and period stage curtain advertising the features shops from Elkader’s past as well as exceptional acoustics. The opera house still hosts a wide variety of shows and concerts annually and is open to the public for tours. Listed on the NRHP.

**5. Motor Mill Historic Park:** Motor Mill Historic Park is home to five historic limestone rock structures, a stable, inn, icehouse, cooperage and the six-story Motor Mill Historic Site as well as a reconstructed historic bridge, all of which are located on the banks of the Turkey River. The structures were constructed from limestone quarried on site between 1840 and 1870. Although they do not currently harbor supporting period collections, the structures themselves are impressive in size, form and construction. The park encompasses over 155 acres on both sides of the river and harbors cultural landscapes including native prairie, savanna, woodland and riverine habitats. Interpretive programming, trails, camping and canoe access encourage visitors to learn about and interact with the site. Listed on the NRHP.



**Motor Mill Historic Park**



**Carter House Museum**

**6. Carter House Museum:** Built in 1855, this neoclassic structure has 18 rooms full of historic displays of furniture, clothing and artifacts from the 19th and 20th centuries as well as an adjoining annex with additional collections. Listed on the NRHP.

**7. St. Josephs Catholic Church:** Actually two churches separated by only a few feet, the less impressive being the first Catholic church in Elkader, which now serves as the parish hall. The more impressive structure, which dominates the site is the Victorian Gothic structure that was built for \$19,000 in 1998. Listed on the NRHP, the new Victorian Gothic style structure serves as an iconic architectural building that is still offering services to an active congregation regularly.



**George Maier Rural Heritage Center**



**Elkader Opera House**

**The Historic Community of Clermont:** Clermont is known for its unusual number of brick buildings. As deposits of clay were found to be abundant along the Turkey River, Clermont enjoyed a thriving brickmaking industry from 1855-1942. During this time period, the brickyards in Clermont produced millions of red and white brick, hollow tile and concrete block, making the brickyards the most important employers to the area. Clermont brick went into buildings all over the region, but remain especially visible in structures located on Mill Street in downtown Clermont. The economic importance of the town's bricks as well as the aesthetic qualities of the community's architecture has resulted in this town being known as "The Brick City." This community is also home to many historic structures. Byway visitors interested in learning more about the community's past can take a self-guided historical walking tour of Clermont to learn about 18 historic sites throughout the town, including eight sites that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Hometown of Iowa's 12th governor, William Larrabee, byway visitors can tour historic sites he constructed or influenced. Other historic sites in Clermont, like the Burkhart Reigel Blacksmith Shop, provide unique cultural insight. Anchor sites in the RBSB Corridor in Clermont include the following:

**1. Larrabee School:** The Larrabee School is the only school in Iowa completely donated to a community by a family. Believing children of Clermont were entitled to the best education to be had, both Governor and Mrs. Larrabee studied school buildings for over 15 years prior to the construction of the "Ideal School" in 1913. Today, the structure houses the Clermont Historical Society Museum, city hall and the public library, but the features and construction concepts are what make it an impressive historic site, including a painted stage curtain in the auditorium. Listed on the NRHP.



**Reigel Blacksmith Shop**

**2. Montauk Historic Governor's Mansion:** Home of Iowa's 12th Governor, William Larrabee, Montauk is an Italianate mansion made of brick and native limestone that was built in 1874. All of the furnishings are original to the house, which is the perfect example of life during the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Guided tours are offered on weekends from Memorial Day through the end of October and offered from noon - 4pm. Listed on the NRHP.

**3. Reigel Blacksmith Shop (HPS):** Constructed in 1858, the blacksmith shop was owned and operated by Burkard Reigel from 1931-1967. Today, visitors can take a self-guided tour and see the shop and its contents right as they were until they were last used in the early 1980s. Listed on the NRHP.



**Union Sunday School**

**4. Union Sunday School:** The Union Sunday School features the world's largest pneumatic Kimball pipe organ. Built in 1896, the organ was donated to the historic 1863 Union Sunday School as a gift from Governor Larrabee to his daughter. A musician, Anna served as the church organist for 60 years until her death in 1965. The organ attracts national and local organ enthusiasts and concerts are held on the last Sunday of the month from April to November. Listed on the NRHP.

**5. Clermont Museum:** Built in 1913, this former location of the State Bank was converted into a museum to showcase items collected through Governor Larrabee's world travels. Visitors can find everything from geological collections to prehistoric fossils and ancient artifacts and weapons of war.





**Clermont Museum**

**6. Heritage Farm Park:** Heritage Farm Park is a recreational and educational facility that celebrates and preserves Northeast Iowa's rural agricultural heritage. Located throughout the 106-acre farm are a number of historic buildings and antique farm equipment that include a historic barn and silo, school house, blacksmith shop, covered bridges, log cabin and a train caboose. Recreational activities offered include fishing, camping, swimming, hiking, wildlife viewing and a hillside waterslide.

**7. Clermont's Train Depot:** The historic train depot was originally built by the Burlington Cedar Rapids and MN Railway in 1872 and later suited the Rock Island division in 1903. For over 100 years, the railroad depot was considered the area's transportation hub for passengers and freight services.



**Montauk Historic Governor's Mansion**

**The Historic Community of Guttenberg:** Guttenberg is located along the banks and bluffs of the Mississippi River. It was historically a campsite for explorers in the early 1800s, platted in 1839, and grew quickly when German immigrants flocked to the area in 1845. The buildings in the downtown riverfront district, which is designated as a Historic District, reflect the German influence and were constructed along the river from local limestone in the pre-civil war era. They remain in excellent condition today, some sporting two-story brick stone lintels above and below windows, other with cast iron cornices, railings, security shutters and stoops. With over 80 sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Guttenberg claims to have more sites on the register per capita than any other community in the United States. Twenty-six of the most prominent were constructed in the mid 1800's and are found in the riverfront district. They can be enjoyed through a guided tour and include distinctive limestone structures that today are home to locally owned restaurants, bed and breakfasts, general stores and other small businesses. Some are beautiful examples of German architecture. A few of the most notable are listed below:

**1. The Landing:** Built in 1858 as a stone warehouse along the riverfront, the Landing is a limestone building that was turned into a shell button factory in 1910. The advent of plastic buttons dropped the bottom out of the clam shell button market and the facility closed in 1950. Clam shells with round holes can still be found along the river banks next to the warehouse. The building is now dubbed The Landing and hosts a River Front Inn with Landing 615, boat docks, rentals and gas behind the building.

**2. Kann Building:** This large distinctive limestone structure was originally built in 1858 as a warehouse for local wheat, which would later be moved by steamboat downriver. The building is now houses several small businesses.



**U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Local and Dam 10**

**3. Gutenberg Bible:** A facsimile copy of the Gutenberg Bible is on display at the Guttenberg Public Library. It is one of a two-volume set, which was purchased in the 1940s from the Gutenberg Museum in Mainz, Germany where it was slightly damaged during an air attack in World War II.

**4. U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Local and Dam 10:** To improve navigation of the Mississippi River, the U.S. Corps of Engineers constructed Guttenberg's Lock and Dam 10 in 1937. Today all different types of vessels use Lock and Dam 10, moving as much as 22 million tons of cargo through the lock including farm products, coal and chemicals as well as an average of 7,000 recreational craft each year. Listed on the NRHP.

**5. Lockmaster's Heritage House Museum:** This house is the last remaining lockmaster house on its original site on the Upper Mississippi River. Historically the lockmaster and assistant lockmasters of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were required to live in this abode. Today it provides a glimpse of life in the 1930s and the history of the lock and dam system. It also contains many framed photos of early Guttenberg history as well as some of the construction of the lock and dam. The Heritage Society has helped restore the character of the site with 1938 vintage furniture, appliances, dishes and textiles. Listed on the NRHP.

**6. Pride of Cassville Car Ferry:** This car ferry, which is the oldest operating ferry service in the state of WI, has helped passengers cross the Mississippi River since 1833.



Kann Building



Cassville Car Ferry



Lockmaster's Heritage House Museum



Gutenberg Bible



Historic Front Street District

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### **The Historic Community of Marquette & McGregor:**

The historic Mississippi River town of McGregor was founded by Alexander MacGregor, grandson of Scottish Immigrants, John and Anne MacGregor who immigrated to the United States from Scotland in 1785. Like many of the earliest European settlers, Alexander moved to Northeast Iowa when it was still occupied by the Sioux, Sac, Fox and Winnebago tribes. Today the streets of McGregor are still lined with 19th century buildings backed up against the bluffs. North McGregor was incorporated in 1874 and then renamed in 1920 after Father Marquette, who with Louis Joliet explored the site in 1673. Both communities were greatly influenced by the railroad, which is still a major presence. These communities were places for settlers who were headed west to stop and purchase supplies or to do business. Most of the original buildings were constructed of wood and many were damaged during a series of fires until the city eventually decreed that new commercial buildings be constructed in brick. Today, many of the historic structures that are most prominent are made of brick. Some of the most intriguing are associated with fascinating historical figures. McGregor's Historic Preservation Commission worked with the RBSB Board to develop an extensive self-guided historic walking tour book that includes information, descriptions and photographs of over 100 sites as well as the history of McGregor and its architecture. Although it is not practical to detail all these sites in this CMP, some are noted below.

#### **1. Triangle Park, McHose & Diamond Jo Buildings:**

This Romanesque and Queen Anne style building was constructed in 1880 by Diamond Jo Reynolds, McGregor's first millionaire. The first floor was the headquarters for his steamboat business and the second his residence. It has large windows on each floor that oversee the business district and the façade of the building features unusual brickwork including sunflower tiles. Listed on the NRHP.

**2. St. Mary's Catholic Church:** This majestic church sits on a prominent site in McGregor at the head of Main Street, dominating the downtown thoroughfare. After a wooden church was destroyed by fire, this church was constructed of limestone between 1880 to 1882. Fire devastated the site again, destroying the interior in 1888 but the congregation took the opportunity to redecorate and install a high altar.

**3. McGregor Historical Museum:** This small museum has a wide variety of well preserved and maintained collections including displays about McGregor's history and the Native Americans that once occupied the region, memorabilia from the Ringling Brothers Circus family, and information about Andrew Clemens, a famous McGregor artist known for his great skill in the lost art of sand painting.

**4. Sears Kit Home:** Built as a Sears Roebuck & Company Kit around 1920, this home is one of more than 75,000 Sears kit homes that were sold out of mail order catalogs and built in the United State between 1908 and 1940. Sears kit homes, which cost between \$600 and \$6,000, contained 30,000 pieces, including 750 pounds of nails, 27 gallons of paint and a 75-page instruction book.

**5. Lamp Post Inn and Gallery/The Gilchrist Home:** The first peer in Scotland was Gilchrist, made the Earl of Angus in 1037 by Malcolm the Third of Scotland. In 1857, William Gilchrist organized a McGregor business, Gilchrist and Company. His son built this home which features dozens of stained-glass windows, spacious rooms with distinctive fireplaces, built-in-bookcases and oak floors. It currently serves as a bed and breakfast.

**6. McGregor Pharmacy:** Established as a drug store in 1872, this site is now one of Iowa's oldest continuing businesses. Listed on the NRHP.

**7. Pikes Peak Road/Walton Hollow:** This tiny, unassuming home was the birthplace and boyhood home of the Ringling Brothers. Augustus Ringling and his family, including four of his famous sons who were all born in the house, lived at this site from 1859-1872. The brothers began developing and performing acts for the Ringling Brothers Circus, "the greatest show on earth", on a vacant lot closer to the downtown district. First hand accounts note that the first performances were held under tents that were held in place by clotheslines from neighbor's backyards.

**8. The Hunting Mansion:** Constructed between 1882 and 1886 for \$49,000, this 20-room late Victorian-era Queen Anne style home has been referred to as the finest example of Queen Anne architecture in Northeast Iowa. Local legend tells that Hunting made so much money that one day he decided to build a new house using that day's income of \$49,000. Stone for the two-foot thick foundation was quarried at the site, and sits on solid rock. The mansion features nine fireplaces with marble and ceramic tiles and wood mantles, as well as parquet floors, oak and red brick woodwork, stained-glass windows, and two octagonal towers.

**9. Emma Big Bear Foundation:** Emma Big Bear is remembered at the site of a house in Marquette where she lived in her later years. Although the site is now functioning as Eagle's Landing Winery, the Foundation has a collection of photos, history and genealogical information as well as Emma's black ash baskets and beadwork. They also have art, postcards and memorabilia that commemorate Emma as the last Winnebago to live in the region by traditional means. All items are showcased in the Eagle's Landing Winery banquet room.

**10. Marquette Depot Museum:** This museum celebrates the town's railroad history with exhibits of historic railroad artifacts.



Marquette Depot Museum



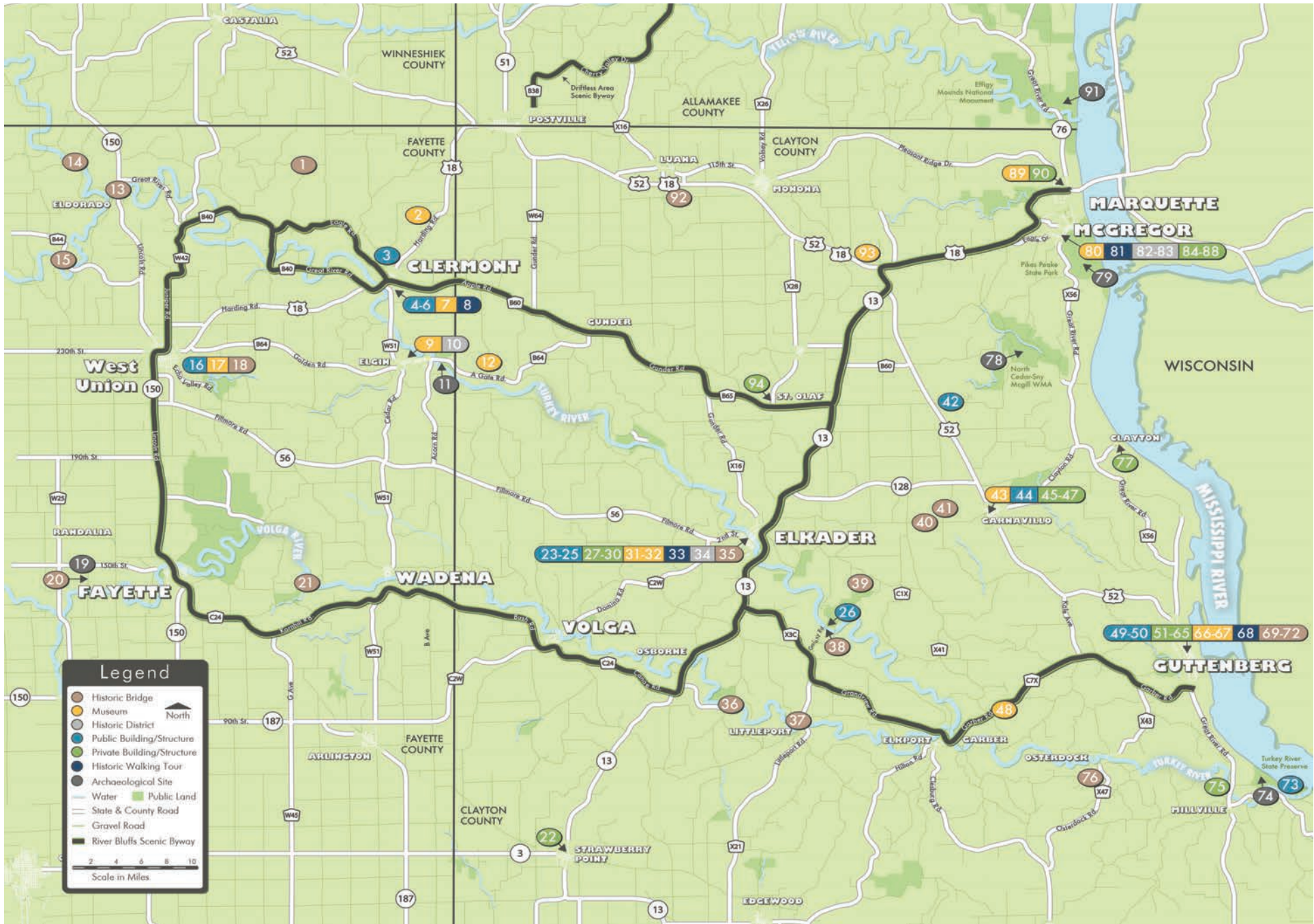
McGregor Historical Museum



McHase & Diamond Jo Buildings



Emma Big Bear Foundation



Map #	Historical Resource	Map #	Historical Resource	Map #	Historical Resource	Map #	Historical Resource
<b>Historic Bridges</b>		12	Gilbertson Nature Center	61	Parker House	78	Clermont Walking Tour
1	300th Street Bridge	17	Fayette Cty Historical Society	62	Pleasant Ridge School House	87	Elkader Walking Tour
13	Eldorado Bridge	31	Carter House Museum	63	Stone Barn	96	Guttenberg Walking Tour
14	Major Road Bridge	32	George Maier Heritage Center	64	Weber House	99	McGregor Walking Tour
15	West Auburn Bridge	43	Garnavillo Historical Museum	65	Wehmer House	<b>Archaeological Sites</b>	
18	Vine Street Bridge	48	Plagman's Barn Museum	75	Round Barn	11	Elgin Brewery
20	Twin Bridge	66	Guttenberg Fish Hatchery	77	Clayton School	19	Stone Man
21	Dutch Murphy Bridge	67	Lockmaster's Heritage Museum	84	American House	74	Turkey River State Preserve
35	Elkader Keystone Bridge	80	McGregor Historical Museum	85	Christian Bloedel Wagon Works	78	Sny Magill
36	Mederville Bridge	89	Marquette Depot Museum	86	Goedert Meat Market	79	Pikes Peake State Park
37	Dry Run Bridge	93	Froelich Tractor Museum	87	"Diamond Jo" Building	91	Effigy Mounds Ntl Monument
38	Motor Mill Bridge	<b>Private Buildings/Structures</b>		88	Peter Stauer House		
39	Read Township Culvert	22	Franklin Hotel	90	Emma Big Bear Residence		
40	Garnavillo Township Bridge	27	J.C. Stemmer House	94	St. Olaf Auditorium		
41	Garnavillo Township Culvert	28	Rialto Price House	<b>Public Buildings/Structures</b>			
76	Mallory Township Bridge	29	Schmidt House	3	Montauk Historic Mansion		
92	Monona Township Culvert	30	Timothy Davis House	4	Larrabee School		
<b>Historic Districts</b>		45	First Congregational Church	5	Riegel Blacksmith Shop		
10	The Elgin Block	46	I.O.O.F. Hall	6	Union Sunday School		
34	Elkader Historic District	47	Valley Mills	16	Fayette County Courthouse		
69	Bluff Street Historic District	51	Albertus Building	23	Clayton County Courthouse		
70	Front Street Historic District	52	Eckert House	24	Elkader Opera House		
71	St. Mary's Historic District	53	Fuerste House	25	St. Joseph Church		
72	S.River Park Dr. Historic District	54	Guttenberg Corn Canning Co.	26	Motor Mill Historic Site		
82	American School Historic District	55	Guttenberg State Bank	42	Sherman Swift Tower		
83	McGregor Historic District	56	Kolker House	44	St. Peters United Church		
<b>Museums</b>		57	Matt-Bahls House	49	Lakeside Ballroom		
2	Heritage Farm Park	58	McClaine House	50	Lock & Dam 10		
7	Clermont Historical Museum	59	Moser Stone House	73	Cassville Car Ferry		
9	Elgin Historical Museum	60	Nieland House	<b>Historical Walking Tours</b>			

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### 8.3 Challenges & Opportunities

Many of the RBSB historical structures need major site repair work and local, state and federal grants available for such work is extremely limited and very competitive. The RBSB communities are small, rural towns with few private funding resources. Some of the work, such as roofs and windows and even weather proofing is urgent and if left unfunded could compromise the structures, collections or sites. Many collections are endangered, as they are stored in uncontrolled environments, undocumented, uncatalogued, and underappreciated by limited volunteer staff that don't have the time or the expertise to care for them properly.

Some historical structures or places are greatly undervalued by community members including churches, cemeteries, school houses, barns and other structures that were once publically or privately maintained but over time have become less useful, less valued, fallen into disrepair, suffered from neglect, or become dilapidated because of the lack of private or public interest and/or funding for ongoing maintenance and repair. Many of these historic sites are in the RBSB viewshed and have the potential to positively or negatively impact the viewshed depending on actions taken within the next ten years. There is a lack of understanding about the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program. Some communities that are CLG have let their certifications lapse at crucial times, disqualifying themselves for grant funding they might otherwise have been awarded.

Although there are impressive public historic sites in the RBSB Corridor that are open to the public, the majority of the historic structures in the RBSB Corridor are privately owned and do not allow visitor access. Historic tours are typically self guided rather than guided and unfortunately most historic sites do not have site interpretation, even though some of the most compelling attributes of the sites are related to the stories about the site rather than the physical features of the site. Historic sites that are open to the public typically have very limited hours, usually, but not always, during the weekdays and very few have personnel available for questions or tours. Some of the museum collections are not well organized or well maintained according to historic preservation standards and have in the past even been harmed by well-meaning community members. Other collections of value are not understood or appreciated, sometimes locked away in basements or storerooms, stacked haphazardly in boxes without good climate control or protection from mold or flooding.

During development of this CMP the RBSB Board conducted a survey of wayfinding and found that most RBSB historic sites do have wayfinding signage directing visitors to the site.

The RBSB Historical Committee recognized that the people taking care of our historic resources are aging and will need support from younger members of the community to continue to maintain the public sites and treasures in the RBSB Corridor. Therefore, it is strategic to engage community members of all ages in the development of new interpretation and educational materials so that their interest and appreciation for the historical resources grows and fosters new generations of historic guardians. Unfortunately, field trip funding for schools to visit historic sites or collections has become limited or completely eliminated. Small, local, historic sites that were once the focus of school field trips for hundreds to thousands of students annually are no longer visited or visited by only a few dozen students annually. These students are the next generation of volunteers and donors but are losing the connection to their history.

The RBSB Historical Committee acknowledged that Museums in the RBSB Corridor are not as interactive or engaging as they could be but also recognized that some efforts have been made in the RBSB Corridor to bring history to life noting events like Heritage Days at Osborne Nature Center, Old West Reenactments in McGregor, guided tours in Clermont conducted by Historical Society members in period dress and character, guided mystery tours of cemeteries and unusual tombstones, and guided bus tours.

"Museums will need to do everything they can to engage with their public, through their displays, education and outreach programs, and by being as open as possible to what their audience wants. Museums are much more than repositories of objects; they are meeting places for people and ideas. Their future depends on remaining a dynamic part of the public realm." -Robert Hewison (Guardian)

During the development of this CMP, the RBSB Board made the decision to develop and test market historic interpretation methods in two communities. They subsequently developed a short tri-fold historic walking guide pamphlet that was made available at no cost to visitors of Clermont. A more extensive historic booklet was developed and made available for a small fee to visitors interested in taking a self guided tour of McGregor. Both historic publications were extremely well received by the public. Both Historical Societies were easy to work with and appreciative of the RBSB Board's commitment to historic interpretation.

During planning meetings, RBSB Historical Committee members expressed interest and support for improved wayfinding, exterior interpretation at all historic sites, and for the development of new walking tours. They were also interested in the development of new types of interpretive media including interactive kiosks, responsive i-pad and phone video media, educational websites and mobile applications and other new methods of making history come alive.



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## 8.4 Proposed Strategies

Strategies to increase opportunities for RBSB byway travelers to enjoy, while at the same time protecting historic intrinsic qualities include the following.

### 1. Develop and Implement a RBSB Historic Restoration Plan

Work with RBSB Stakeholders to develop a RBSB Historic Restoration Plan that identifies and prioritizes historic infrastructure and collections projects within the RBSB Corridor, identifies private and public funding opportunities and encourages strategic and timely implementation of those projects.

### 2. Develop and Coordinate Historic Project Fundraising

Work with RBSB Stakeholders to identify, develop and help implement opportunities for increased private and public fundraising for historic projects.

### 3. Develop and Distribute Education and Information

Develop presentations and information for distribution to local historical societies, preservation commissions, Chambers of Commerce, economic development boards, Boards of Supervisors, city councils and city and county staff to help them understand the importance of historic preservation as it relates to community and county vitality and tourism.

### 4. Educate Communities about the CLG Program

Work with RBSB communities and counties to help them understand the Certified Local Government Program, how to stay current and in compliance with the program, what funding sources are available to CLGs, and how to access them.

### 5. Restore and Interpret Pioneer Cemeteries & Historic Churches

Work with local cemetery, historic and preservation groups, church councils and others to develop and implement restoration and interpretive programs for pioneer cemeteries, tombstones and churches.

### 6. Restore Performance Spaces

Work with partners to secure funds for and restore historic venues that create spaces for human interactions and performances such as theatres, opera houses, bandstands, ballrooms and other historic structures and buildings that foster community performance and engagement.

### 7. Develop Walking Tours

Partner with Historical Societies to coordinate and develop historic walking tours for each RBSB community as well as an overall RBSB historic tour.

### 8. Develop Historic Interpretation

Create and implement projects that follow RBSB Interpretive standard for for all RBSB historic sites including development and installation of exterior Wayside Exhibits at all historic sites.

### 9. Create Dynamic Historic Learning Opportunities

Partner with RBSB Museum Curators and Museum Managers to create more interactive and dynamic learning and engagement using new technology and partnerships.

### 10. Connect Historical Societies and Preservation Commissions with Volunteers

Partner up young professionals from LinkedIn and other social media sites that are interested in serving on nonprofit boards and volunteering for community groups with local historical societies.

### 11. Celebrate Success and Raise Public Awareness

Identify, document and celebrate successful historic restoration, preservation and engagement projects through press releases, interviews that include before and after photography, recognize private and public funders, and/or express public appreciation for the efforts of local historical societies, preservation commissions and other partners and organizations.



# Section **Nine**

Archaeological Resources

# Archaeological Resources

*“Archaeological Resources involve those characteristics of the scenic byways corridor that are physical evidence of historic or prehistoric human life or activity that are visible and capable of being inventoried and interpreted. The scenic byway corridor’s archeological interest, as identified through ruins, artifacts, structural remains, and other physical evidence have scientific significance that educate the viewer and stir an appreciation for the past.” Scenic America*

## 9.1 Significant Archaeological Resources

Background: The RBSB meanders through areas rich in Native American history and archeological treasures. Archeology is the study of human activity through the recovery and analysis of material culture. The archaeological record consists of artifacts, architecture, biofacts or ecofacts and cultural landscapes. The RBSB region was important to many different Native American tribes, as evidence of their presence continues to be found in the form of artifacts, biofacts and cultural landscapes. Although many of the most sacred places to the Native Americans are hidden on private lands or have been destroyed, thanks to county, state and national public and private programs and amenities, residents and visitors can explore cultural landscapes that are in much the same condition as they were hundreds of years ago when American Indians populated the region. With assistance from Northeast Iowa RC&D and local stakeholders, the RBSB Board identified what they believe are the major archeological intrinsic qualities along the RBSB. They are listed in the map on page 110. Descriptions of the most significant are provided below:

**1. Effigy Mounds National Monument:** One of the most sacred archeological cultural landscapes along the RBSB has been preserved by the federal government. Located just three miles north of the RBSB community of Marquette, within the RBSB Corridor, Effigy Mounds National Monument, is the only National Monument in Iowa. This National Monument provides a glimpse into the human activity and the archaeological record of the Effigy Mound Builders that lived in the region from Dubuque, Iowa, north into southeast Minnesota, across southern Wisconsin from the Mississippi to Lake Michigan and along the Wisconsin-Illinois boundary, in the Archaic Period, 10,500 – 2,800 years ago. According to The Archaeological Guide to Iowa, most of Iowa's prehistory is included in the Archaic Period, when humans shifted toward hunting and gathering within smaller territories and built increasing larger sites, which were occupied seasonally. It was toward the end of the



**Little Bear Effigy at Effigy Mounds National Monument**

Archaic Period that pottery making, plant cultivation, and mound building began. The RBSB county of Clayton is one of three in Iowa that contain almost all the effigy mounds found in Iowa. The mounds are considered ceremonial and sacred sites that, according to the US Forest Service, may have delineated territories of choice gathering and hunting grounds. There are over 20 American Indian Tribes that are currently associated with the Monument. Byway travelers can walk next to Indian burial mounds shaped like bears, lizards and eagles, peruse the visitors center, take a guided hike and listen to a program to learn about the Native American cultures that dominated the region. Although Effigy Mounds National Monument is most well known for its bird and bear effigies, including the Marching Bears, there are actually more than 200 mounds at the North and South units of the park and the Sny Magill unit, the majority of which are conical or round in shape.

The largest known mound group in Iowa is found in the Sny Magill unit of Effigy Mounds, where as many as 121 mounds from the Late Archaic to Late Woodland period have been documented. The site is unusual in that it is located in a floodplain, on a gravel bar of the Mississippi River. Where the majority of floodplain effigies would have been covered by silt deposits or influenced by other manmade or natural events, those at Sny Magill have survived. Unfortunately, most of the mounds were disturbed by looters prior to establishment of the park. With the development of new technology, including LiDAR aerial images of mounds, perspective and appreciation for these unique structures has changed over time. Although the presence of the National Monument has drawn attention to this cultural resource and created a high quality experience for byway visitors, related public private sites along the RBSB have largely been ignored.

**2. Pikes Peak State Park:** Pikes Peak was a location for a military fort in 1805 by explorer and scout Zebuon Pike, who recommended that the site be selected, as it not only had a sweeping view of the mouth of the Wisconsin River, the trading hamlet of Prairie du Chien, and the Wisconsin delta, but just as importantly would be impervious to attack since the bluffs were nearly vertical and musket fire from below would be ineffective. Some critics speculate that had the government listened to Pike rather than ignore him and build their fort, Fort Shelby, on an island near Prairie du Chien, they might not have lost the fort in the War of 1812. According to *The Archeological Guide to Iowa*, Alexander McGregor, founder of the RBSB community of McGregor and descendant of the fabled Scots hero Rob Roy, purchased the land and eventually his grand-niece, Martha Buell Munn donated the property to the federal government in 1919. The federal government transferred the property to Iowa in 1936 and Iowa made visitor improvements. Over time, 69 mounds in 11 groups along the bluffs have been documented. Unfortunately, the majority have been looted, farmed or destroyed by construction.



**Effigy Mounds are Found at Pikes Peak**

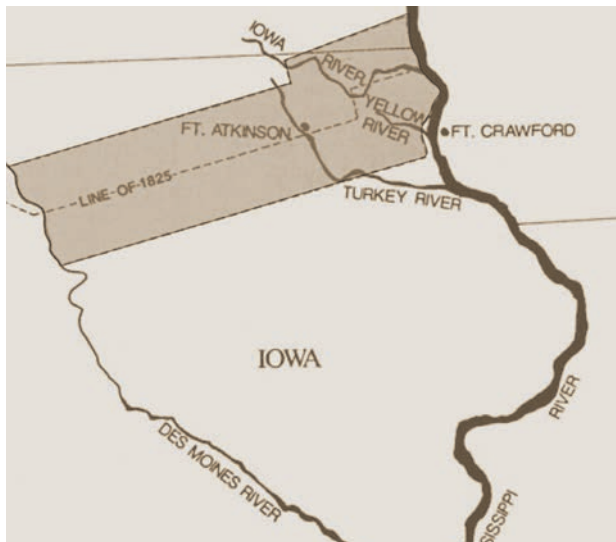
**3. Turkey River Mounds State Preserve:** This 62-acre state preserve, just 4.5 miles southeast of the RBSB community of Guttenberg, harbors a large complex of 43 conical, linear and compound effigy mounds on a ridge overlooking the confluence of the Turkey River and the Mississippi River, dating from the Late Archaic to the Late Woodland period between 500 B.C. and A.D. 900. Other artifacts have also been found in this archaeological, geological and biological state preserve. The preserve follows a low ridge on the west bank of the river and has extensive views of the Mississippi River Valley. The first exploratory survey of the mounds occurred in 1885, with additional surveys before it was designated as a state preserve in 1968 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990. According to *The Archeologic Guide to Iowa*, many

of the mounds were excavated by Marshall McKusick in the 1960s and reported to be burials typical of the Woodland period. McKusick reported that there were some very unusual burials at the site, including many headless individuals and many that showed evidence of violence. According to *The Guide to Iowa's State Preserves*, the excavations at this site helped researchers better understand the cultural interchange of goods between the local tribes and others, noting "excavated material indicates that these people traded, directly or indirectly, with people as far away as North Dakota, Ohio, and the Gulf coast" and "the site is important for studies of early Upper Mississippi Valley burial groups as well as the Archaic to Woodland transition." Although this area is open to the public, there is no interpretation or visitor amenities at the site.



**Turkey River Mounds State Preserve**

**4. Neutral Ground:** By 1830 the government had relocated a number of tribes within the future Iowa boundaries. The Sioux were assigned to an area around the Upper Iowa River. The Sauk and Mesquakie were placed south of the Upper Iowa River. The Winnebago were squeezed into a 40-mile area along the Upper Iowa River. Eventually a 40-mile wide strip of land running from the northeast corner of the state in a southwesterly direction to the upper fork of the Des Moines River was established as a "Neutral Ground" for the tribes. The U.S. government set this land aside, which today is a cultural landscape, as an area where members of any Indian tribe could hunt and fish without being charged with trespassing. It was also a "buffer zone" between enemy tribes-- the Sioux and Sac and Fox. The RBSB passes through this zone, which in modern times has largely been ignored or forgotten by the majority of the populace but it is a significant part of the history of how Native Americans were treated with regard to land ownership and rights.



Map of the "Neutral Ground"

**5. Sack Bottom / The Shin Bone Valley:** Referred to as Sack Bottom by early traders and later as the Shin Bone Valley by European settlers, this valley is located on the east side of the Turkey River near the RBSB Corridor community of Elgin. According to the Past and Present of Fayette County, Iowa by B.F. Bowen & Company, the Sac and Fox Indians had buried their deceased in "Sack Bottom" for many generations. When the Winnebagoes moved into the area, the custom was continued. Although Bowen believed that Native Americans were "indifferent as to the depth of the grave, hence the erosion of many years had exposed the skeletons of some of their dead," there are historic references about the fences and even a pole lodge erected over graves, which indicates that although they may not have been respected by the European Immigrants, these were not unmarked graves. Bowen notes that "when the first white settlers invaded the "sacred precincts," human bones were in evidence in great profusion." Just how much agricultural practices or human disturbance of the valley "influenced" the exposure of the graves is undocumented. It is clear that between 1850 and 1901 the Indians returned annually to visit the graves and hold memorial services and that they also gathered for "pow-wows" nearby on the opposite side of the Turkey River. One of the graves, considered of particular significance was marked with a pole lodge and a white flag and was visited frequently by the Native Americans. The grave is believed to have belonged either to Chief "Whirling Thunder" and/or to an old and respected medicine woman. Bowen noted the following regarding the grave.

Some of the graves of the departed redskins were surrounded with rude palings. One in particular, said Mr. Connor, had a sort of a pole lodge erected over it, from the top of which floated a white flag,

and which was frequently visited by the Indians, who kept the rude structure in repair for several years. It had become noised about among the settlers that this was the grave of the Chief "Whirling Thunder," and it was supposed that many valuable articles were buried with him. Some irreverent person or persons attempted to do a little "grave snatching" on their own account, and began to dig for plunder, but were frightened off by a passer by. When the settlers discovered what had been done, they repaired the injury as well as they could. Soon afterward, two Indians visited the spot and discovered the trespass, and went to the mill for an explanation. They were told of the rumor that prevailed, that "Whirling Thunder" was buried there, and that an attempt had been made by somebody to rob his grave; also that the settlers had endeavored to repair the injury. The Indians gravely replied that "Whirling Thunder" was reposing on the bank of the Volga, and the grave so ruthlessly disturbed was that of a very aged medicine woman, who had been held in great veneration by the tribe, and when she died, the squaws had built the enclosure as a mark of respect. "But," said the Indian, who appeared to be remarkably intelligent for his class, "I am ashamed that white men, Christians, should try to rob Indian graves." The cultural conflicts in this valley continue today. When a local golf course was built in the Shin Bone Valley near the RBSB community of Clermont, developers found out that burial mounds are protected by law and were required to design around an Indian burial mound. The Sack Bottoms/Shin Bone Valley provides opportunities for interpretation, learning and respect of and for the cultures that graced the region before and during European settlement. This clash between Native American cultures and modern development, although difficult to discuss, is an important dynamic that should be recognized, preserved and interpreted rather than ignored.

**6. Emma Big Bear:** According to the Emma Big Bear Foundation, Emma Big Bear was born on July 5, 1869 to Chief Big Bear and Mary Blue Wing in a small frame home on the Winnebago Indian Reservation at Tomah, Monroe Co., Wisconsin. But her impact was keenly felt in and around the small northeast Iowa Mississippi River towns Emma lived in for most of her life. Emma was a direct descendent of early 19th Century Winnebago Chief Waukon Decorah. She was one of few Native Americans in the region that refused to be relocated to a reservation, preferring to stay close to the graves of her ancestors near Effigy Mounds along the Mississippi River. Emma and her husband, William J. "Henry" Holt of Winnebago and Sioux parentage, and daughter Emmaline, lived by traditional tribal means. Although both Henry and Emmaline died in the mid 1940s, Emma continued to live in Northeast Iowa in a contemporary chipodoke in the RBSB community of McGregor. When the chipodoke was destroyed by floods, Emma moved to a house on Marquette's main street where she lived until shortly before her death in 1968 at 99 years old. Stories surrounding Emma include those



**Roger Halvorson, Founder of the Emma Big Bear Foundation**



**Painting of Emma Big Bear**



**Home Where Emma Lived her last years**



**Emma is best known as a basket maker**

of local fishermen giving her carp for soup and Emma skinning muskrats and raccoons for hunters and trappers in exchange for meat. Emma was a well known herb gatherer, basket maker and bead worker, using materials from black ash trees and natural dyes, selling her wares by the Marquette bridge and in downtown McGregor. Emma Big Bear is remembered as the last full-blooded American Indian to live in Clayton County, Iowa -- and possibly all of Northeast Iowa -- by traditional Winnebago (now Ho-Chunk) tribal means in everyday life. Her life and legacy provide opportunities for the RBSB Board to engage the visitors and make sure the legacy, trials and beliefs of the Native Americans in this area are not forgotten. Eagles Landing Winery in Marquette has a small display dedicated to Emma, including photos, historical and genealogical information, examples of Emma's black ash baskets and a Native American weaving. The Emma Big Bear Foundation is working to establish a museum.

**7. Artifacts:** Several museums and businesses in the area have small collections of Native American artifacts including the McGregor Historical Museum, which has photographs of Emma Big Bear, her woven baskets, information about her as well as artifacts from other Native Americans such as jewelry, arrowheads, pottery, photographs and clothing. The Fayette County Historical Center and Museum has a small display of Emma Big Bear baskets with a fact sheet about her. They also have rock/stone tools, arrowheads, beads, a map of early Iowa Indian tribes and historic Native American clothing. The Clermont Historical Society Museum in downtown Clermont has a case of 100 arrowheads, tools, beads and other items found locally. They also have a weaving/quilt with Native American design and photos. The George Maier Rural Heritage Museum in Elkader has a small flat case of 70 arrowheads on display with some brief information about each, most of which were found in nearby farm fields.

**8. Stories, Events & Beliefs:** The RBSB Board realizes and acknowledges the past societies that flourished in this region, their beliefs and activities, and even an account of the most notable inhabitants and events, create compelling byway experiences. Books such as *The Archaeological Guide to Iowa* provide short summary interpretations about the beliefs and rituals of Native Americans. Robert Hall, a professor emeritus at the University of Illinois at Chicago in the Department of Anthropology, an adjunct curator emeritus of Plains and Midwestern archaeology and ethnology at the Field Museum in Chicago, a former Director of the Institute of Indian Studies at the University of South Dakota and former curator of anthropology at the Illinois State Museum, was a leading expert who studied the beliefs about the afterlife of many Native Americans. He found common themes among disparate groups noting that water was often seen as a barrier to spirits, which is why in some communities the dead were buried on the other side of the river from the communities. His work could inform interpretation along the RBSB.

The RBSB Board asked local stakeholders to share the RBSB folklore, stories and legends that express the customs and traditions of the people that lived in the area and have the capacity to shape the visitor's perception of the byway. The responses provide opportunities for related visitor interaction and engagement. Reports, stories and folk lore related to Native Americans, their life, culture and trials in the region are poignant. There are people in the region that have additional information that has been passed down for generations.

## **9.2 Challenges & Opportunities**

Although there are many archeological sites along the RBSB, such as the Neutral Ground, Sack Bottom/Shin Bone Valley, the "dragon blood" painting near Marquette and other sacred sites that lend themselves well to interpretation, most have received little recognition and have no interpretation. Unfortunately, many of the stakeholders that have the most

information are in ill health or elderly, making it important that the RBSB Board interview, record and document as much information as possible in a timely manner. This includes stories about the Native American Tribes, including Red Ocher People, Hopewell, Sioux, Algonquin, Illini, Sac, Fox, Ioway, Winnebago and others, as well as stories about the lives of well known figures like Chief Keokuk & Emma Big Bear. The Black Hawk War and how the Native Americans were treated in this region is a significant part of America's history along the RBSB, but related information is scarce.

Books such as *The Archaeological Guide to Iowa* and experts such as Robert Hall can provide information to help with interpretation of Native Americans and their cultures. Museum collections along the RBSB provide some limited opportunities for byway visitors to see first hand evidence of native cultures, however, in 1990, the federal government passed the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, which gave Native American tribes the legal authority to reclaim artifacts from federally funded museums. Today museums are asked to return objects that are sacred, meaning they are used in present-day ceremonies, as well as artifacts that have "ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance central to the Native American group or culture itself." The law requires museums that receive federal funding to keep an up-to-date inventory of all artifacts that are of Native American origin. Tribes can claim ownership of the objects, and if a review determines their claim is justified, ownership of the artifact is given to the tribes. What happens to the artifacts is then up to the tribes so quality interpretation of these resources should be undertaken with the assistance of and respect for the rights of the tribes. Modern technology and computer software provide unique opportunities for aerial photography and LiDAR imagery that helps convey the scope and scale of effigies. Responsible use of these methods will require careful consideration and planning to ensure their use doesn't result in additional destruction of limited archeological resources but could also play a role in their protection.



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## 8.4 Proposed Strategies

Strategies to increase opportunities for RBSB byway travelers to enjoy, while at the same time protecting archeological intrinsic qualities include the following.

### 1. Expand the Depth and Breadth of Knowledge & Understanding

Conduct further research to obtain first hand and written accounts of native cultures and archeological sites to ensure accuracy. Conduct interviews with national, state and local experts, including Native Americans, archeologists and others that have artifacts or biofacts including stories about Native American history and European settlement.

### 2. Develop Interpretive Materials

Develop interpretive media including but not limited to brochures, books, and RBSB social media that include maps and descriptions of culturally significant landscapes and the archaeology of the region. Partner with Native Americans from the region and/or historic tribes and other experts to develop the materials so the stories can be told from a less biased perspective and the Native American people, artifacts, mounds and viewpoints will be considered and respected.

### 3. Develop Audio Tours

Incorporate stories about the Native American tribes and people that once populated the area into RBSB audio self-guided tours.

### 4. Increase Awareness Through Partner Sites

Partner with Effigy Mounds National Monument and others to develop and distribute interpretive printed and audio materials about RBSB sites other than Effigy Mounds where byway travelers can learn about Native American history and archeology along the RBSB.

### 5. Develop Wayside Exhibits

Strategically develop new, creative, wayside exhibits that engage the public and tell the stories of specific battles, sacred places and Native Americans in a respectful manner, specifically but not limited to the stories such as that of Black Hawk, the Sauk war chief and the Black Hawk War, Sack Valley/Shin Bone Valley, Emma Big Bear, cultural conflict between Native Americans and European settlers, Turkey River Mounds State Preserve Archaeological District etc.

### 6. Provide Training and Technical Assistance to the Museums:

Provide training for museum curators, directors and workers to help them better understand how to care for, preserve and display Native American artifacts as well as whether or not they should be in contact with the tribal representatives concerning the artifacts.



# Section Ten

Art & Cultural Resources

# Cultural Resources

*“Art and Cultural Resources are evidence and expressions of the customs or traditions of a distinct group of people. Cultural features including, but not limited to, crafts, music, art, dance, rituals, festivals, speech, food, special events, vernacular architecture, etc., are currently practiced. The cultural qualities of the corridor could highlight one or more significant communities and/or ethnic traditions..” Scenic America*

## 10.1 Background

The RBSB Corridor is steeped in diverse cultures and rich heritage that provide opportunities for byway travelers to have unique travel experiences and to learn more about the people, customs and beliefs that span time and place along the RBSB. From Native Americans, to European settlers, to today's Hispanic, Russian and Somali immigrants, the inhabitants have left their mark on the region, added a depth of character to the byway and created a sense of authenticity that byway travelers are seeking. Even though the private and public art resources along this byway are just one component of the cultural experiences, recent efforts to provide more public art interactions and experiences in addition to community interest in art projects is growing and has the potential to have a greater presence on the RBSB traveler than ever before.

As part of their planning process, the RBSB Board members and RCD staff worked together to engage the public to identify, inventory, and develop strategies to improve cultural and art resources and experiences while protecting the intrinsic qualities of those cultural resources. Together, they hosted public meetings, visited with local organizations and completed inventories of the cultural events and art resources. To get a more in-depth understanding of the RBSB art resources, the RCD invited artists, art groups, art focused business owners, art teachers, byway board members and community leaders that were interested in advancing the arts along the entire byway to serve on a RBSB Art Committee and provide more detailed input. The goal of the Art Committee was "To understand, expand, promote, market and celebrate past, current, and future artists, art related activities, and art projects along the River Bluffs Scenic Byway and to advance the arts, increase the economic impact of the arts and expand the opportunities for artists to succeed".

RBSB stakeholders helped complete, and continue to work to implement, the following strategies:

- Develop/maintain a list of current artists and artist groups that are currently working to promote or advance performing, visual and other types of art along the RBSB.
- Develop and maintain an updated comprehensive list of art venues along the byway including art galleries, theaters, live music, murals, statues, pottery studios, home studios and other places byway travelers can create or purchase art and/or crafts including photography, paintings, pottery, leather works, furniture, jewelry, kaleidoscopes, quilts etc. Places where the visitor can taste, experience or purchase 'local' are included in the map, "Local Art, Performances, Food and Shopping."
- Conduct site visits to inspect, document and photograph art projects and cultural sites.
- Work with partners to obtain funding to implement cultural projects for proposed projects in RBSB communities, with emphasis on projects located in downtown districts.
- Develop a strategy for unified artistic collaboration, promotion and marketing along the byway.

With assistance from the RCD, RBSB Coordinator and local stakeholders, the RBSB Board identified what they believe are the anchor cultural and art intrinsic qualities along the RBSB. Descriptions of the most significant art and cultural resources are provided within this section. A map and table that displays an inventory of 1) art studios and galleries 2) public art 3) murals 4) live music venues 5) opera houses and opportunities to 6) quilt and/or antique along the RBSB can be found on page 127. Cultural events and/or festivals were also inventoried. Results of this inventory of significant annual events and/or festivals can be viewed in the table on page 127.



Amish & Mennonite



Volga Opera House



Woodland Designs: Handcrafted Kaleidoscopes



Guttenberg Gallery & Creativity Center

## 10.2 Significant Art & Cultural Resources

Local cultural resources include music, food, art and jewelry, locally made gifts, live theatre and local owned and operated businesses, including antique shops that feature local treasures. Byway visitors can experience the current culture in a way that is tangible and experiential. Local items personify the existing culture and heritage of the region. The small communities along the byway harbor small, locally owned businesses that embrace and celebrate “locally grown” and “locally made.” Byway visitors looking for Walmart, Target and Red Lobster will be disappointed but visitors looking for an authentic experience will not. Dozens of artists, including some internationally renowned, create and sell art along the RBSB at galleries, festivals, open air markets, and

a few even open their studios to the public. Locally grown and processed meats, cheeses, vegetables and baked goods can be purchased in almost every community. Many recipes have been handed down for generations or are authentically made by new immigrants. Local musicians commonly perform in taverns, small opera houses and at festivals. Although these venues are not well advertised, a concerted effort is being made to organize and publicize the local music venues. Artists that open their studios for the Northeast Iowa Artist Studio Tour each fall sell one of a kind and unusual items out of their studios and through galleries along the byway all year. The community of Volga is partnering with a nonprofit to develop a historic opera house that will serve as the community’s anchor business, providing space

for plays, bands and other live performances. They are partnering with the Elkader Opera House, which already hosts regional and national performances. Some of the most well-known antique stores in the region are found along the RBSB including a four-story Turkey River Antique Mall in Elkader and a rare and collectable book store in McGregor that draws visitors from around the world. These stores provide an opportunity for visitors to take home a piece of the culture. Because antique stores provide a unique opportunity for visitors to have an authentic cultural experience and to own a tangible piece of the RBSB culture, all art and cultural resources along the byway were inventoried by the RBSB Board and included on the map and table that can be viewed on page 127.



Map #	Art & Cultural Resource	Community
<b>Art Studios &amp; Galleries</b>		
1	Woodland Designs, Inc.	Clermont
3	The Green Door	Clermont
9	Jim Updegraff Paintings	West Union
14	Upper Iowa University Art Gallery	Fayette
27	Guttenberg Creativity Center	Guttenberg
34	McGregor-Marquette Center for the Arts	McGregor
<b>Live Music &amp; Theatre</b>		
4	Clermont Opera House	Clermont
10	West Union Community Theatre	West Union
15	Fayette Opera House	Fayette
16	Volga City Opera House	Volga
19	Elkader Opera House	Elkader
28	Guttenberg Lakeside Ballroom	Guttenberg
35	The Hole in the Sock Gang	McGregor
<b>Public Art</b>		
2	Civil War Statues at Montauk	Clermont
5	David Henderson Statue	Clermont
6	Lincoln Park & Statue	Clermont
7	The Little Switzerland of Iowa Mural	Elgin
8	Train Depot Mural	Elgin
17	Volga Chautauqua Mural	Volga
20	Pedretti's Bakery Mural	Elkader
29	Guttenberg Mural "Riverboat" at Essers	Guttenberg
30	Sculptures	Guttenberg
36	Ringling Brothers Mural	McGregor
<b>Quilts &amp; Antiques</b>		
11	Antiques & Vintage	West Union
12	Moonlight Stitching Studio & Sisters Retreat	West Union

Map #	Art & Cultural Resource	Community
13	One Block Over	Clermont
18	Old Stone School - Quilts & Tea	Clermont
21	Antiques on Main	Clermont
22	Archive	West Union
23	The Backstitch	Fayette
24	The Copper Frog	Guttenberg
25	Turkey River Mall	McGregor
26	The Stitchin Post	McGregor
31	Sew Many Memories	Clermont
32	Barr House Antiques & Gifts	West Union
33	School House Mall	Fayette
37	Diamond Joe Trading Llc	Volga
38	Old Time Shoppe	Elkader
39	Past 100 Years	Guttenberg
<b>Festivals &amp; Events</b>		
N/A	Heritage Days	Elkader
N/A	Sweet Corn Days	Elkader
N/A	Watermelon Days	Fayette
N/A	Guttenberg Germanfest	Guttenberg
N/A	Brew-B-Q	Independence
N/A	Buchanan County Fair	Independence
N/A	Fall Arts & Crafts Festival	McGregor
N/A	Lazy River Beer & Wine Festival	McGregor
N/A	Leaf Arts & Crafts Festival	McGregor
N/A	River Junction Trade Co. Traders Jubilee	McGregor
N/A	Spring Arts & Crafts Festival	McGregor
N/A	Volga City Truck Cruise	Volga
N/A	Fayette County Fair	West Union
N/A	Clayton County Fair	Garnavillo



Live Music



Antiques & Thrift Stores



Osborne Heritage Days

### 10.3 Challenges & Opportunities

The RBSB Board and stakeholders feel strongly that more recent history, culture and folk lore should be interpreted for the byway traveler to add additional depth to the RBSB experience. Folk lore and stories about specific places, people or events, such as those of Silver Fox, a grey wolf that roams the wooded bluffs, a “polite” Jesse James, the Ringling Circus Family, who was from the RBSB community of McGregor, and others, are difficult for the RBSB to access and not organized in any way. Accounts vary in length, depth and accuracy and therefore, will need to be researched before being used at various interpretive sites along the RBSB. Opportunities for visitor engagement and learning about the cultures in the area in general are extremely limited. The RBSB community of Elkader, which was settled by Germans, Scandinavians and Irish European immigrants, is actually named after a Muslim

hero, Abd el-Kader. RBSB visitors are able to golf next to Indian Mounds, eat authentic Greek or Mexican cuisine, attend German festivals, and visit Amish settlements, yet very little information is available for the public regarding these cultures, folk lore or stories that could enhance the visitor’s experience. Even less information is available about newer immigrants to the area such as Russian, Hispanic or Somali.

Existing murals along the RBSB vary in condition, with some in dire need of restoration and with a couple notable exceptions such as the Eagles Nest between Elgin and Clermont. Other types of public art are very limited in RBSB communities. However, the RBSB communities are all open to development of public art, including new murals and sculpture pieces that could enhance downtowns, trails and other venues. Two communities, Guttenberg and Elkader,

are currently participating in a Byways of Iowa public art project to develop place-based art in downtown spaces.

The RBSB counties produce and sell a variety of local foods, pottery, paintings, jewelry, crafts and other local items at farmer markets, direct from producers/artists, through producer/art groups and and seasonally at local businesses. Unfortunately, the majority of these opportunities for visitors to experience or take home local goods are not well coordinated or promoted to visitors, even though travelers are looking for them.

Live music and theatre along the RBSB is not well organized or promoted between venues. Fortunately, there are new regional arts groups forming that are interested in encouraging collaboration and promotion of live music and theatre.



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## 10.4 Proposed Strategies

CMP strategies to develop and enhance Art & Cultural Intrinsic Resources while preserving them within the corridor include the following:

### 1. Conduct Oral Histories

Identify and collect oral histories of regional icons, local experts, including Native Americans, European immigrants and others that have first or second hand accounts or stories about their cultures and experiences and use them for interpretation and outreach.

### 2. Call for Cultural & Historic Documentation

Work with partners including county genealogic societies and museums to publish a call for diaries, documents, photographs and other evidence of cultures in the region and compile and catalog them for use in development of interpretive and educational materials and storage in protected files.

### 3. Develop Cultural Interpretation

Develop site wayside exhibits that engage the public and tell the stories of specific battles, sacred places, cultures or RBSB persons in a respectful manner and provide accurate and culturally sensitive interpretation of past and current cultures.

### 4. Create Self-Guided Audio Tours

Develop audio self-guided tours that provide first hand accounts and stories for byway travelers to listen to as they drive along the RBSB.

### 5. Develop Topical Printed Cultural Interpretation

Develop topical cultural interpretive printed materials that travelers can pick up at key visitor amenities and refer to, or take home.

### 6. Develop initiatives and projects to Install Art Along the RBSB Trails

Strategically develop experiential and interactive or culturally based art along RBSB trails.

### 7. Celebrate Local through Publications

Develop information and outreach materials about the unique opportunities for visitors to experience the “local” culture, including but not limited to locally grown foods, local ethnic cuisine and regional foods, local jewelry, pottery, glass, furniture, paintings and other art and culture.

### 8. Foster Cultural Partnerships with the Amish

Partner with amenable Amish communities to provide healthy Amish-English interaction, learning and commerce.

### 9. Encourage Downtown Beautification through Art

Use art, murals, and trompe l’oeil to beautify abandoned buildings and blighted areas in downtowns, historic districts and other high trafficked areas.

### 10. Provide Project Development and Implementation Assistance

Assist with projects that create and market public and private art, art spaces, and artist or cultural collaborative efforts.

### 11. Create a Local Music Legacy

Seek partnerships and opportunities to record/document local music and local folk art to expand the presence/availability of music and art for the visitor and to document it for future generations.

### 12. Develop, Coordinate, Promote and Market Cultural Events

Encourage collaboration and coordination to develop, implement and market/promote art and cultural events and opportunities.

### 13. Foster Increased Learning and Engagement

Create and market more public and private art and cultural learning and teaching opportunities, including but not limited to classes, artist in residence programs and community college courses and continuing education that invite artists, academicians, curators, and all manner of creative people to learn, engage and grow. Work with private and public entities to increase art and cultural experiences such as restoration and management of a clay studio, community theatres and opera houses, art galleries, shared local art distribution sites etc.

### 14. Collaborate on Art and Cultural Initiatives

Work with the Northeast Iowa Regional Art & Cultural Council and other groups to develop and advance new projects and initiatives, including “Theme Years,” “Interactive Timelines,” a “Northeast Iowa Traveling Art Gallery” and other initiatives.

### 15. Develop Stories

Connect with diverse interests to develop stories of culturally significant historical timelines and events such as, but not limited to, the history of viticulture and wineries, the history of agriculture or one room school houses in the RBSB Corridor.

### 16. Develop and Install Place-Based Community Art

Develop local, place-based art in the downtown districts of 10 RBSB communities.



# Section **E**leven

Transportation & Safety

# Road Safety

*Road safety refers to the methods and measures used to prevent road users from being seriously injured. Typical road users include pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, vehicle passengers and passengers of on-road public transport (mainly buses and trams).*

## 11.1 Introduction

Transportation and safety are essential components to the success of the byway and have been identified as a top priority by the RBSB Board. Although the transportation network is the lifeline of any byway, the RBSB, like all of Iowa's byways, is owned by multiple entities including 10 communities, two counties and the State of Iowa. This shared ownership of a transportation resource makes understanding and managing the existing conditions of a byway more complicated than it is for byways in other states that are contained within a single state or national park, or any other situation that results in single ownership and management of the byway. Fortunately, the entities responsible for care and maintenance of the RBSB have opportunities to partner and work together. There are also established systems that help these jurisdictions manage resources on a regional level.

This section provides information about transportation and safety as they relate to the specific jurisdictions. It also includes a review of data on existing conditions, accidents and other relevant information that is then summarized as it relates to the RBSB, as well as how the RBSB data compares to the counties and State of Iowa. All the data for this section was obtained from the Iowa DOT. Infrastructure Condition Evaluation (ICE) data from 2015 was collected and all crash data was used from 2004 through 2013. This section also identifies challenges and opportunities as well as strategies for how to improve the transportation infrastructure and safety, facilitate communications between jurisdictions and develop and implement multi-jurisdictional projects.

## 11.2 Existing Road Conditions

The RBSB is 109-miles in length, looping through eleven incorporated cities, five unincorporated villages and two counties, Clayton and Fayette. Although 10 communities have jurisdiction over 10 miles of the RBSB route, the other communities and

villages do not manage any portion of the RBSB, either because the byway follows state roadways through their communities, the designated route of the byway actually skirts the town rather than being routed through it, or the community is not incorporated and has no capacity to manage a roadway. Other existing conditions that impact the byway travelers' safety and use of the RBSB include the following:

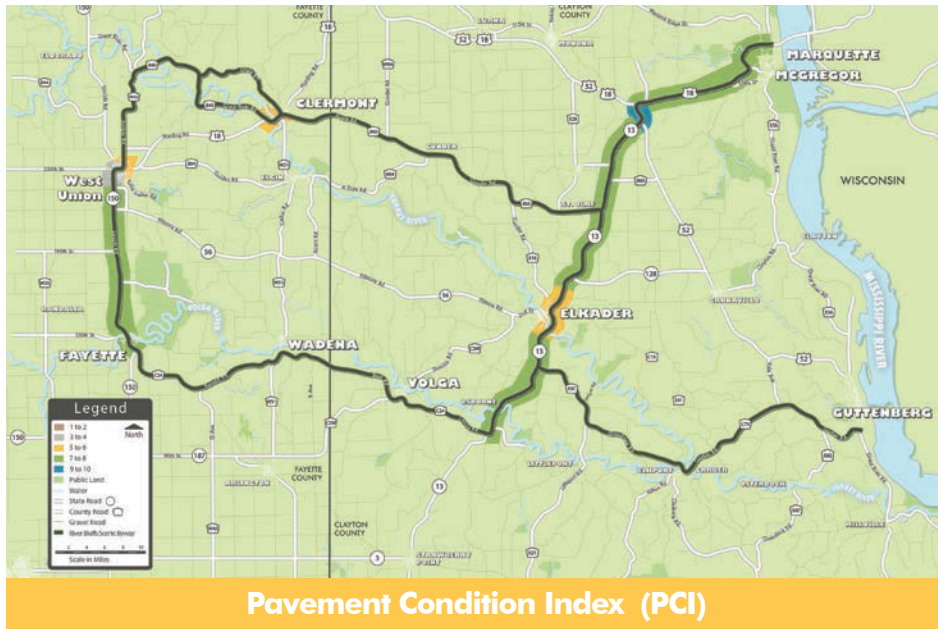
- Average speeds along the RBSB are 20 miles per hour in communities and 55 miles per hour outside city limits on county and state roads.
- Clayton County has no stop lights protecting any intersection.
- Nine miles, or 8% of the RBSB designated route is gravel surface.
- Three projects have been planned that will directly impact the RBSB in the Iowa DOT's 5-year Plan and are as follows: 1) A stretch of HWY 18 in West Union east of the HWY 18 and HWY 150 intersection in 2017. 2) A structure will be worked on in 2018 along HWY 18 west of the HWY 18 and HWY 13 intersection. 3) A structure will be worked on in the City of Marquette near the HWY 18 intersection with the bridge in multiple years of the Iowa DOT 5-year plan.
- Fayette County currently has no current plans that would affect the RBSB route through Fayette County in the next 5 years.
- Clayton County will begin work on C7x about ½ mile east of Ironwood Rd and work will begin in the summer of 2016. Work will be done to move the rock face further away from the road and widen the shoulders.

To evaluate the existing road conditions along the byway, the RBSB Board conducted an 1) Infrastructure Condition Evaluation (ICE) as well as research regarding 2) paved shoulders, 3) uncontrolled intersections and 4) bridge conditions. Their findings for each are as follows:

### One: Infrastructure Condition Evaluation

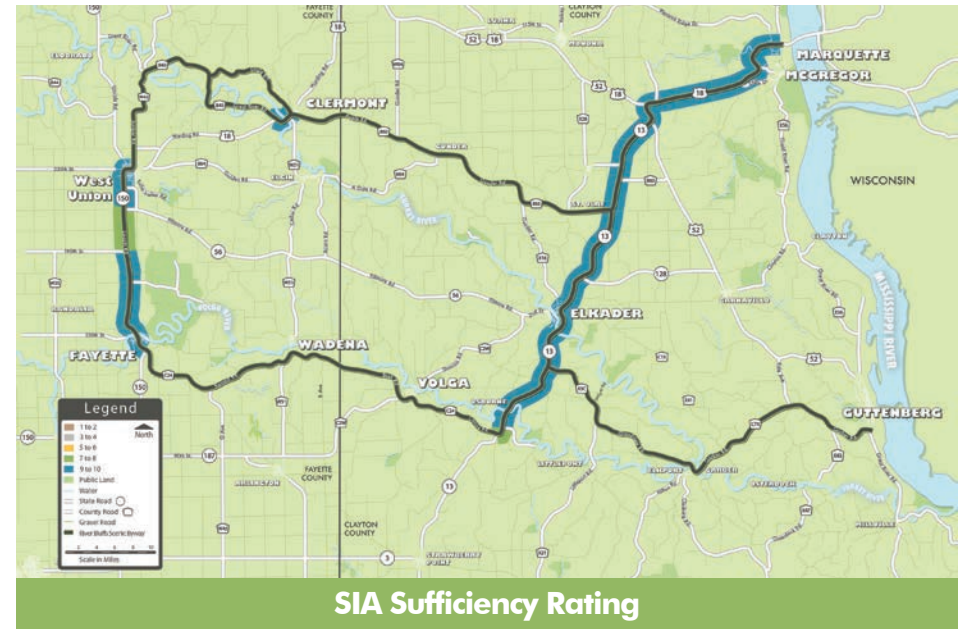
The Infrastructure Condition Evaluation (ICE) is based on the result of merging seven individual criteria using a linear overlay process that includes Iowa DOT's in-house Geographic Informational Management System (GIMS) and Pavement Management Informational Systems (PMIS). Data is currently being displayed from analysis performed in 2014 and 2015. The ICE tool relies heavily on the use of Linear Referencing System (LRS) which is spatial referencing component that utilizes reference posts to calculate the segmentation found in ICE. Utilizing the ICE tool, the RBSB Board secured information regarding 1) Pavement Conditions, 2) SIA Sufficiency Ratings, 3) International Roughness Index and 4) Annual Average Daily Traffic. This information is valuable to the RBSB Board in highlighting the relative condition of road segments to one another. An assessment of each are as follows:

**1. Pavement Condition Index:** The Pavement Condition Index (PCI) is a numerical index, initially developed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, which is used to indicate the condition of pavement. The index is based on a field survey of the pavement and is expressed as a value between 0 and 100, with 100 representing excellent condition. Generally, the surveying process involves breaking the pavement section into sample units; determining how many units are to be tested; recording type, extent, and severity of pavement distress; calculating a value for these distresses; and then subtracting that value from a base value to derive the PCI value. It has been illustrated that the appearance of a pavement is not always an indicator of its underlying condition, which is also considered in PCI. Many different variables factor into the Iowa DOT's calculation of PCI on road segments, including age, percent of life used, high/moderate/low severity longitudinal cracking, IRI, aggregate class durability, pavement thickness, friction value, moderate severity patching, total asphalt

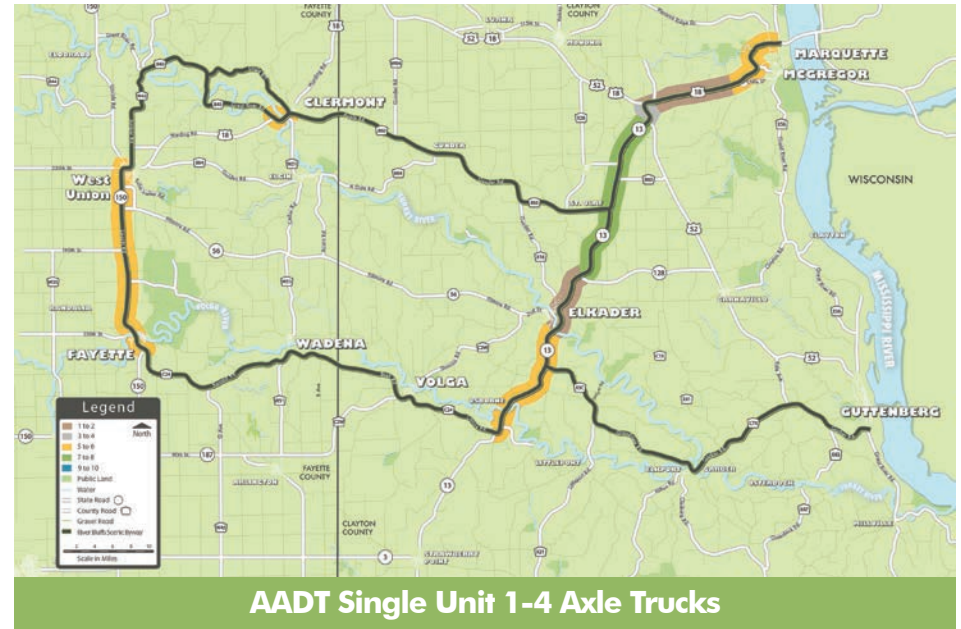
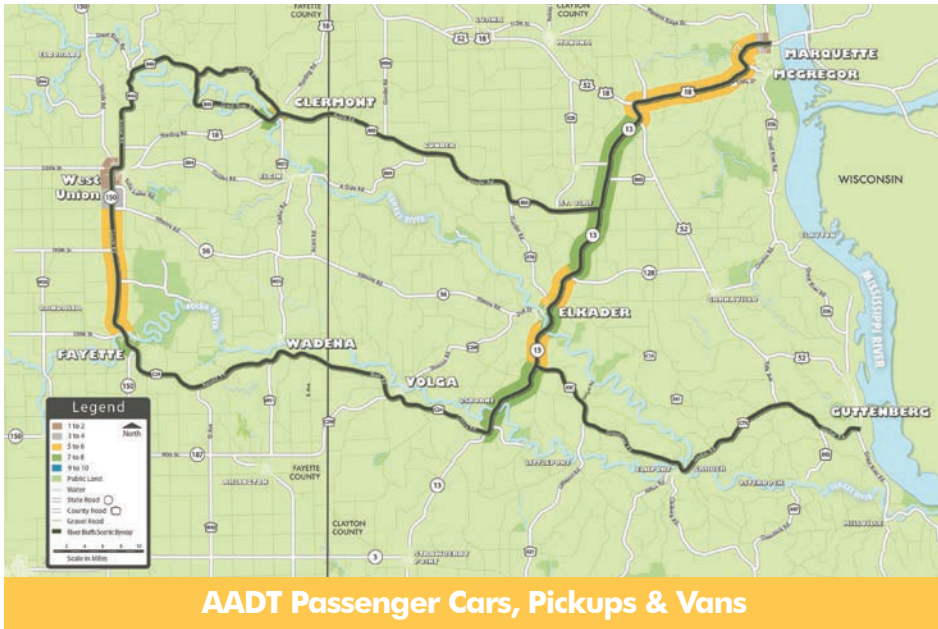


depth, relative structural ratio, and base thickness. Ultimately, the condition index is a reasonable indicator of the pavement condition of a network. The source of PCI data at the Iowa DOT is PMIS. This information is a valuable component of the ICE as it depicts road segments along the byway that have poor to good PCI. With this information the RBSB Board will be able to identify and prioritize road segments of the RBSB that need to be improved.

**2. SIA Sufficiency Rating:** The SIA Sufficiency Rating is a method of evaluating roadway bridge structures by calculating four separate factors to obtain a numeric value that is indicative of a structure's sufficiency to remain in service. These factors include structural adequacy and safety, serviceability and functional obsolescence, and essentially for public use of the structure. From there, various reductions are then factored into the rating. The full structure inventory contains dozens of data fields, which are used to meet several Federal reporting requirements set forth in the National Bridge Inspection Standards. The information is collected through on-site inspections conducted at regular intervals, not to exceed 24 months. The source of structure sufficiency rating data at the Iowa DOT is Geographic Information Management Systems (GIMS). This information is extremely valuable to the RBSB Board due to the high priority the RBSB has for safety along the byway. This information may be utilized by the RBSB Board to identify and prioritize road segments along the RBSB for improvement.



**3. International Roughness Index (IRI):** The IRI is a numerical roughness index that is commonly used to evaluate and manage road systems. It is calculated using measured longitudinal road profile data to determine units of slope of a roadway segment. The profile data can be obtained using anything from traditional surveying equipment to more modern inertial profiling systems. There is no defined upper limit to IRI. In Iowa, IRI is primarily measured using what is known as a profile meter. This tool utilizes a laser in a combination with an odometer and an inertial unit, which establishes a reference plane against which the laser can measure distance. Profile meters are able to collect data at highway speed, typically sampling the surface at intervals of one to six inches. The data collected by the profile meter is used to calculate the IRI, expressed as inches/mile or meters/kilometer. The source of IRI data at the Iowa DOT is the Iowa Pavement Management Information System (PMIS). This information is prized by the RBSB Board not only for safety along the byway, but also for providing an enjoyable experience for the RBSB travelers. Creating an enjoyable experience for byway travelers is a priority for the RBSB Board and can have an enormous impact on influencing the byway visitors. This information will be utilized by the RBSB Board to identify and prioritize road segments along the RBSB for improvement. According to AAA, nearly seventy percent of drivers are concerned about road condition and motorcyclists, which make up a large segment of RBSB summer byway travelers, are particularly concerned about the road condition.



**4. Annual Average Daily Traffic (Passenger Cars/Pickups, Single Unit Trucks):** The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) is a general unit of measurement for traffic, which represents the annual average daily traffic that travels a roadway segment. Vehicular traffic counts can be collected on a short-term duration using portable counting devices or on a long-term duration using permanent counting devices. Short duration counts ensure geographic diversity and coverage while continuous counts help understand time-of-day, day-of-week, and seasonal patterns. Continuous counts are also used to accurately adjust short duration counts into accurate annual estimates of conditions. To conduct average daily traffic counts, the Iowa DOT utilizes the FHWA’s 13-Category Vehicle Classifications. Maps depicting the average daily traffic counts for 1) passenger cars, pickups and/or vans as well as 2) single-unit two, three and four axle trucks can be found above.

**Two: Paved Shoulders**

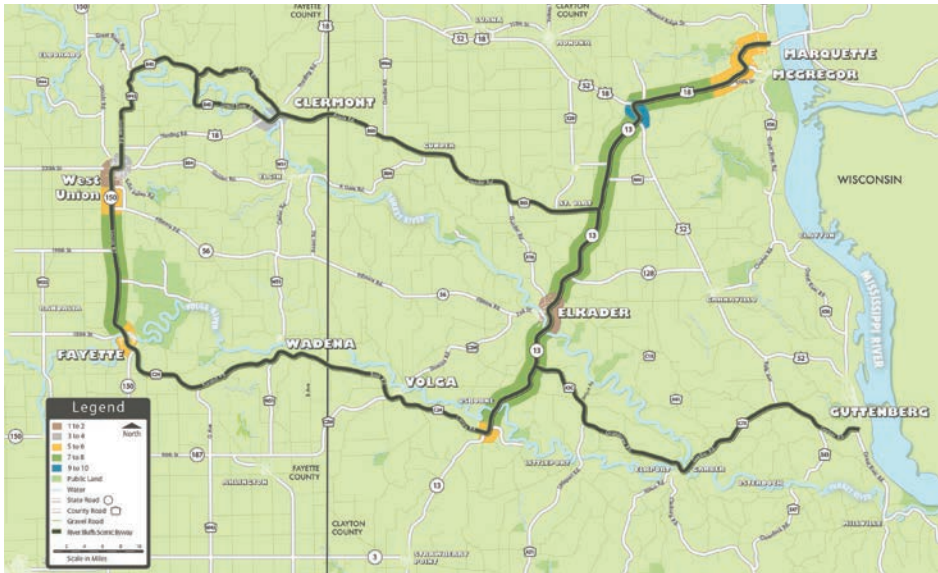
A Paved Shoulder is the portion of the roadway contiguous with the traveled way that accommodates stopped vehicles. Shoulders paved, are often used by bicyclists and may contain rumble strips. The RBSB has a total of 12 miles of road with a paved shoulder, with 3.8 miles on HWY 13 between 205th St. to County Road 128 north of Elkader and east of St. Olaf. The other segment of the RBSB with a paved shoulder is located along HWY 18 between the intersection of HWY 52 and Marquette and stretches for 8.2 miles.

**Three: Uncontrolled Intersections**

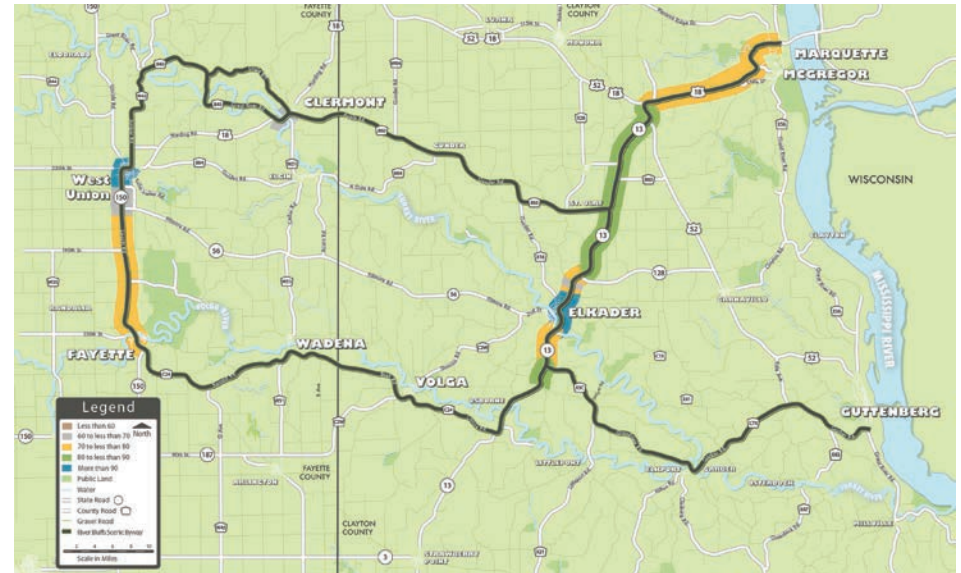
An uncontrolled intersection is usually found in residential areas of a community, city or town, as well as rural gravel roads. It will not have a sign or signal lights to control the traffic. The RBSB contains 6 uncontrolled intersections throughout the entirety of the byway.

**Four: Bridge Condition Index**

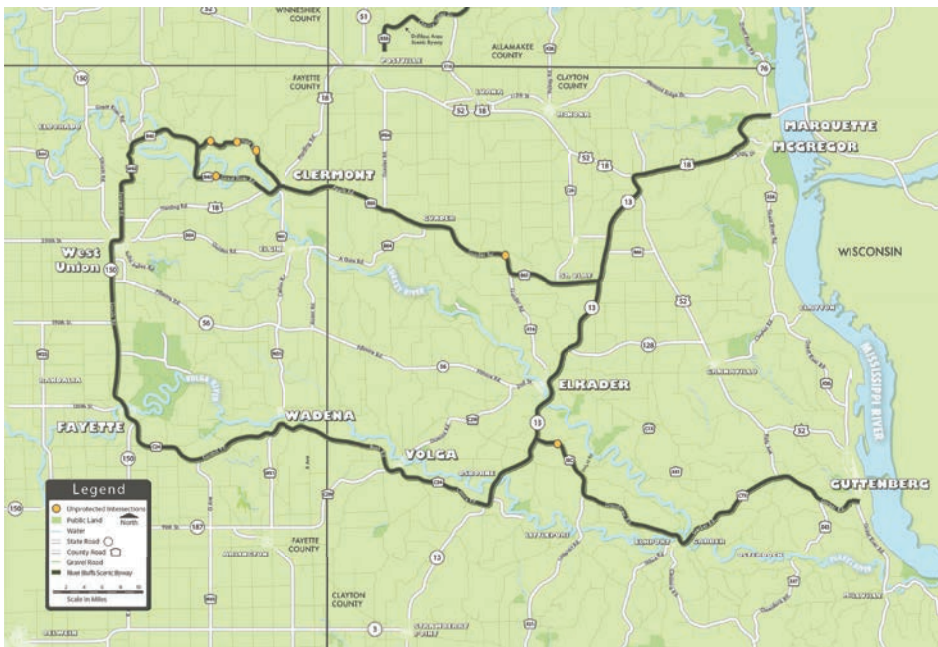
The bridge condition index reflects the overall condition of the bridge, taking into account things such as: structural condition, load carrying capacity, horizontal and vertical clearances, width, traffic levels, type of roadway its serves and the length of out-of-distance travel if the bridge were closed. A bridge in good condition is adequate for today’s traffic and vehicle loads. A bridge with a poor condition index is not unsafe, but should be considered for repair, replacement, posting or weight limits, or monitoring on a more frequent basis. The RBSB contains 41 bridges that are directly on the RBSB with 0 in poor condition, 11 in fair condition, and 30 in good condition. The RBSB anchor communities contain an extra 22 bridges with 2 being in poor condition, 6 in fair condition, and 14 in good condition. One of the 2 bridges in poor condition is the Keytsone Bridge located in Elkader, IA which is a historic landmark and known as the longest keystone bridge west of the Mississippi River.



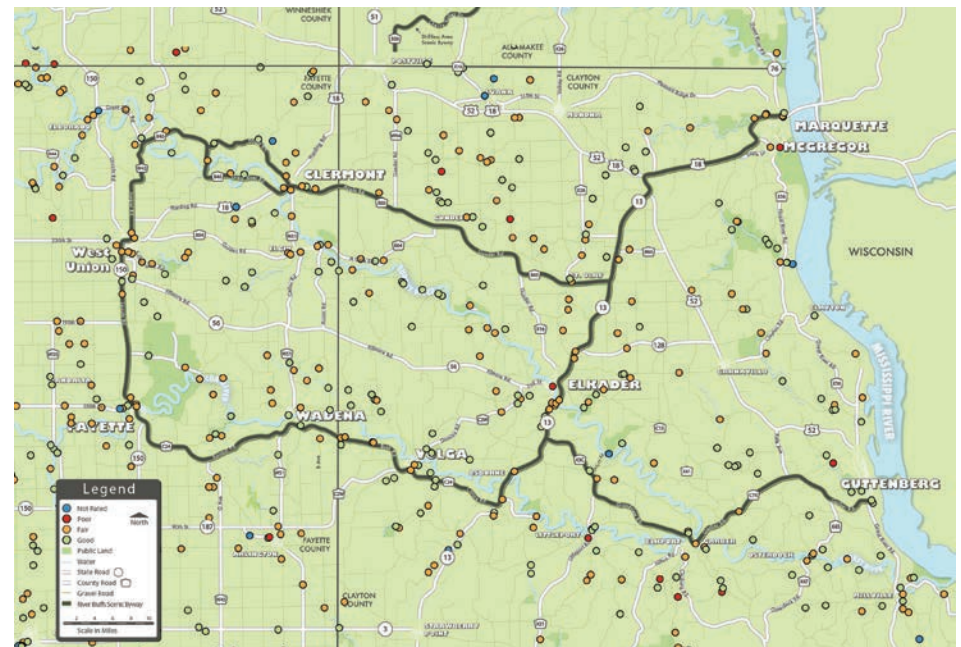
**International Roughness Index (IRI)**



**Overall ICE Rating**



**Uncontrolled Intersections**



**Bridge Condition Index**

### 11.3 Assessment of Safety Concerns

Iowa DOT's Statewide Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (STRCC) was developed to act as a traffic record clearinghouse by including information about all six components of Iowa's traffic data system in order to serve as a gateway for traffic data users. The website, which can be found at [www.iowadot.gov/tsda](http://www.iowadot.gov/tsda), is a tool to provide data to foster awareness and understanding of the state's data system, as well as to promote the expansion and enhancement of traffic safety data and stakeholders. The website is designed to introduce users to the traffic records and reports available in Iowa, the organization and partnerships of Iowa governmental agencies regarding traffic records, and the STRCC. The website also provides users with contact information for data managers who can assist in providing additional information. To assess the existing conditions regarding safety along the byway, the RBSB Board utilized this software to identify and inventory the varying safety hazards along the byway. It is the RBSB Board's hope that this information will be utilized to improve problem areas and/or locations to prevent or minimize safety concerns in the foreseeable future.

In Iowa, any incident in which causes death, personal injury or total property damage of \$1,500 or more must be reported on an Iowa Accident Report form. Analyzing Iowa Accident Report forms that were compiled and collected between 2004-2013 shows that Iowa had 969,243 crashes reported, with 1,517 having occurred along the RBSB's designated route. The RBSB accounted for 0.16% of the reported crashes in Iowa, with an average of 151 crashes per year. In comparison, when the analysis of data is expanded to include the RBSB corridor of Fayette and Clayton Counties, there was a reported 11,777 crashes, which represents 1.22% of the reported crashes in Iowa from 2004-2013. On a regional level, 12.88% of crashes reported in Fayette and Clayton Counties occurred along the RBSB's designated route.

This section of the CMP looks to examine these incidents and provide an inventory of the types of Accident Report Forms that have been filed along the RBSB. An assessment of data regarding 1) general crashes, 2) environment related accidents, 3) roadway related accidents and 4) vehicle related accidents are provided. It should be noted that all definitions and information utilized in cartography have been obtained from the Iowa Department of Transportation's Office of Traffic Operations. The RBSB Board's assessments of crash analysis data is as follows:

#### One: General Crash Data

**1. Impairment-Related Crashes:** Impairment, or drug and/or alcohol related crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes involving any driver with a positive drug test, a nonzero blood alcohol content (BAC) result, a driver condition indicating officer judgment that the driver was under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medications, or a test refusal (whether drug or alcohol). When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 60 impairment related crashes, in which represented 16.8% of the 357 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 60 impairment related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.21% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (28,226 crashes). This equates to roughly 7 impairment crashes along the RBSB per year.

**2. Inattentive or Distracted-Related Crashes:** Inattentive or distracted crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes that involved a driver who contributed a circumstance that indicated inattentive or distracted behavior (i.e., inattentive/distracted by passenger, use of phone or other device, fallen object, or fatigued/asleep). When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 20 inattentive or distracted-related crashes, in which represented 17.7% of the 113 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 20 impairment related crashes along the RBSB equaled

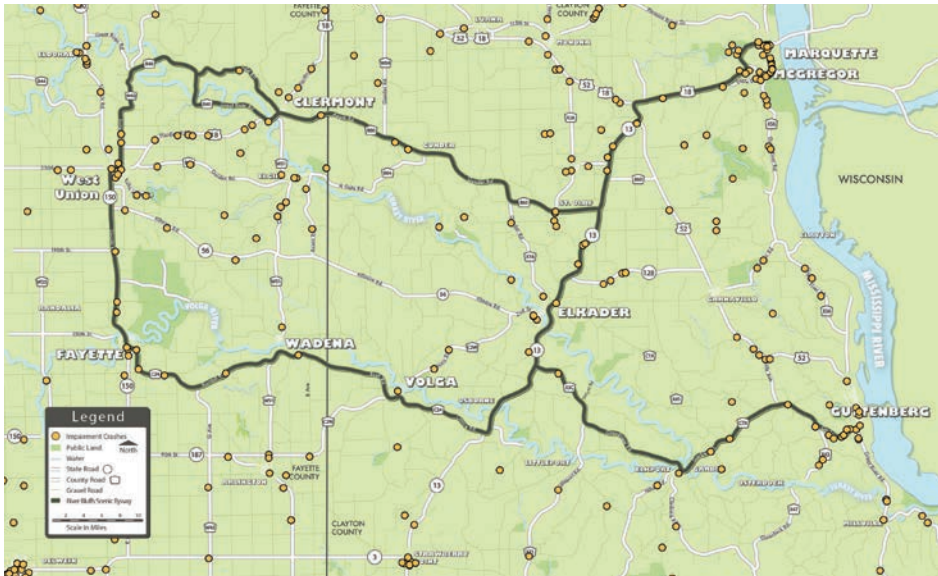
0.13% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (15,943 crashes). This equates to roughly 2 inattentive or distracted-related crashes along the RBSB per year.

**3. Old Driver-Related Crashes:** Old driver-related crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes involving a driver at or older than age 65. Selection of these crashes only indicates involvement and not causal factors. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 142 old driver-related crashes, in which represented 16% of the 876 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 142 old driver-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.17% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (81,309 crashes). This equates to roughly 16 old driver-related crashes along the RBSB per year.

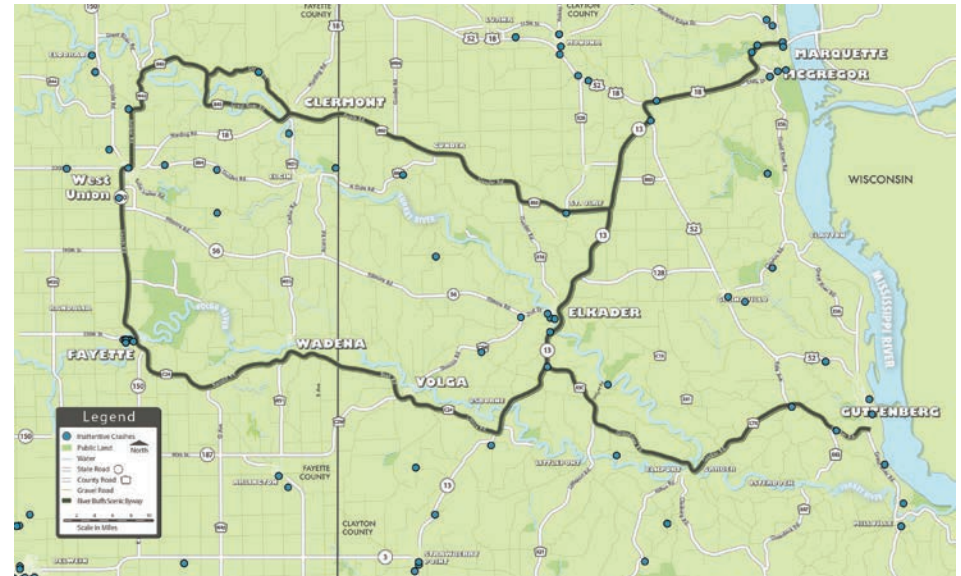
**4. Young Driver-Related Crashes:** Young driver-related crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes involving a driver between the ages of 14 and 20 (inclusive). Selection of these crashes only indicates involvement and not causal factors on the part of the young driver. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 159 young driver-related crashes, in which represented 11.34% of the 1,402 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 159 young driver-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.11% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (145,219 crashes). This equates to roughly 18 young driver-related crashes along the RBSB per year.

**5. Speed-Related Crashes:** Speed-related crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes involving a driver contributing circumstance indicating speed-related behavior (i.e., exceeded authorized speed; driving too fast for conditions; lost control; followed too close; or operating vehicle in an erratic, reckless, careless, negligent or aggressive manner). Maps and reports are subsequent to this selection. When analyzing this

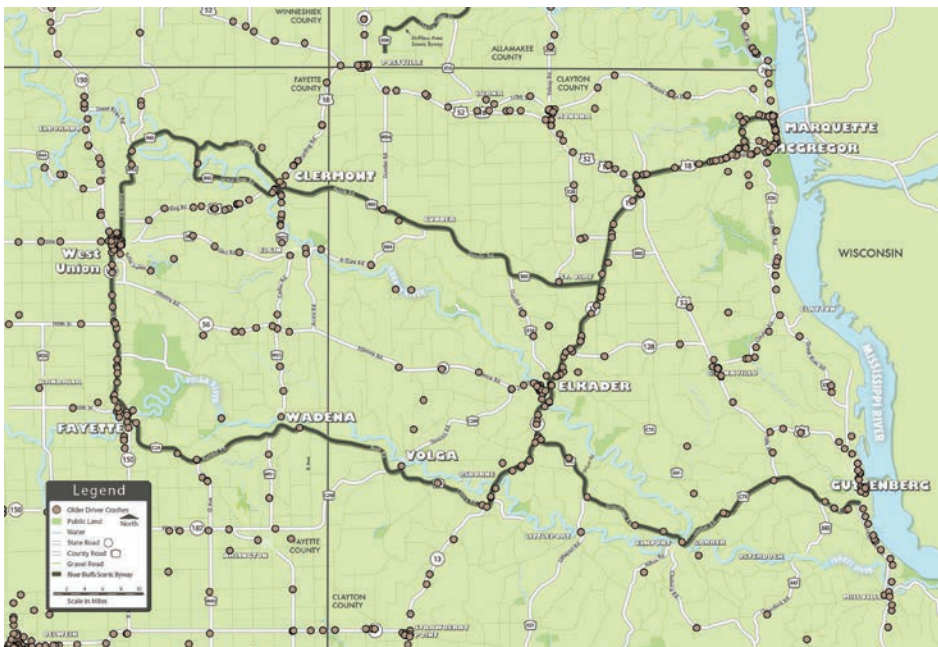




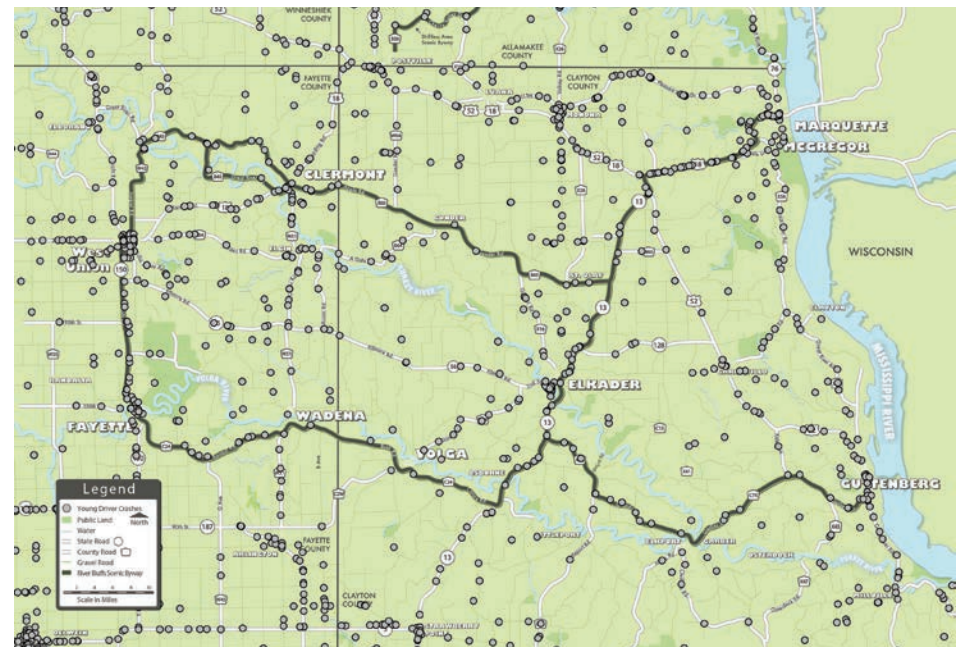
**1. Impairment-Related Crashes**



**2. Inattentive or Distracted-Related Crashes**



**3. Old Driver-Related Crashes**



**4. Young-Driver Related Crashes**

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type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 206 speed-related crashes, in which represented 9.75% of the 2,113 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 206 speed-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.11% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (187,957 crashes). This equates to roughly 23 speed-related crashes along the RBSB per year.

**6. Unbelted Injured Person-Related Crashes:** Unbelted passenger-related crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes and further limiting crashes to those involving an unbelted occupant of a vehicle and injuries to those persons who were unbelted. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 56 unbelted passenger-related crashes, in which represented 18.54% of the 302 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 302 unbelted passenger-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.27% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (20,479 crashes). This equates to roughly 6 unbelted passenger-related crashes along the RBSB and within the byway corridor per year.

### Two: Environmental Crash Data

**7. Wild Animal-Related Crashes:** Animal-vehicle crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes and then by querying animal from major cause, where major cause is a derived field in which animal is determined as the major cause if a collision with an animal is indicated in any of the Sequence of Events (up to four per vehicle) entries. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 233 animal-vehicle crashes, in which represented 11.34% of the 1,922 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 233 animal-vehicle crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.32% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (71,696 crashes). This equates to roughly 26 animal-vehicle crashes along the RBSB per year.

**8. Weather-Related Crashes:** Icy, snowy, or slushy surface condition-related crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes involving an icy, snowy or slushy surface condition. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 96 condition-related crashes, in which represented 12.72% of the 755 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 96 condition-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.19% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (51,155 crashes). This equates to roughly 11 condition-related crashes along the RBSB per year.

### Three: Roadway Crash Data

**9. Intersection-Related crashes:** Intersection-related crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes and querying for the intersection options under the type of roadway junction portion of the crash report form. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 139 intersection-related crashes, in which represented 11.76% of the 139 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 139 intersection-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.07% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (199,443 crashes). This equates to roughly 15 intersection-related crashes along the RBSB per year.

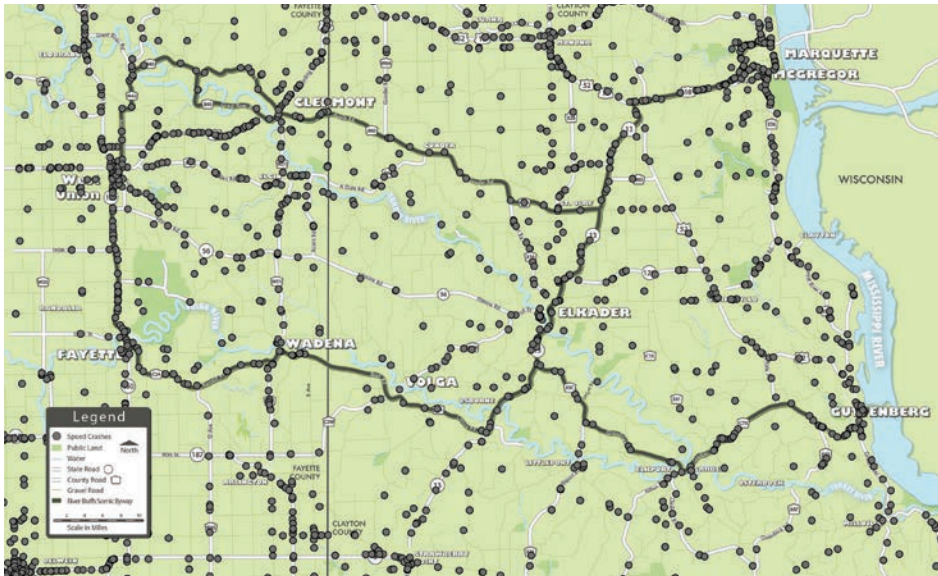
### Four: Vehicle Crash Data

**10. Heavy Truck-Related Crashes:** Heavy truck-related crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes and limiting those crashes to those involving heavy trucks (truck/trailer, truck tractor (bobtail), tractor/semi-trailer, tractor/doubles and tractor/triples). Selection of these crashes only indicates involvement and not causal factors on the part of the trucker. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 62 heavy truck-related crashes, in which represented 23.31% of the 266 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 266 heavy truck-related crashes

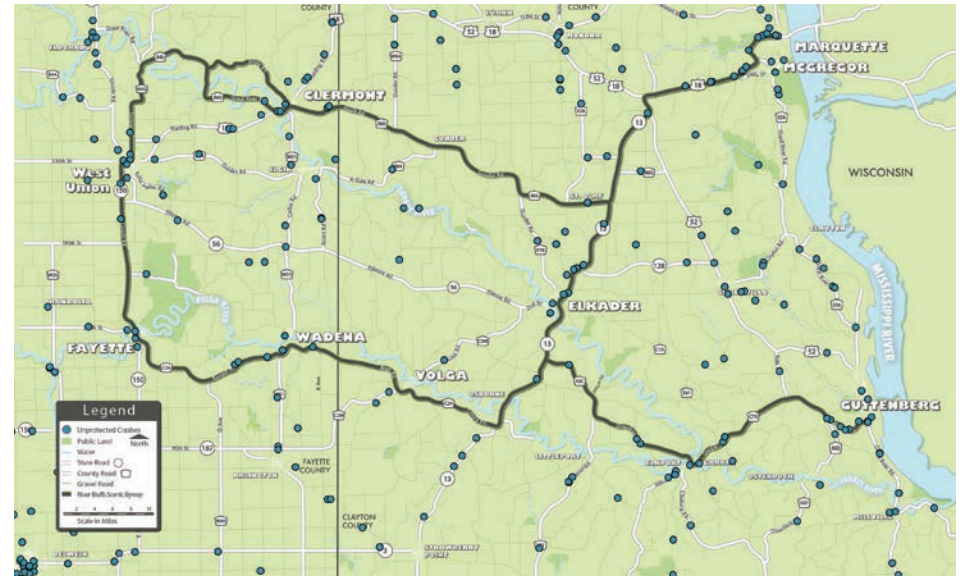
along the RBSB equaled 0.25% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (24,859 crashes). This equates to roughly 7 heavy truck-related crashes along the RBSB per year.

**11. Motorcycle-Related Crashes:** Motorcycle-related crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes and limiting those crashes to those involving motorcycles. Selection of these crashes only indicates involvement and not causal factors on the part of the motorcyclist. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 41 motorcycle-related crashes, in which represented 29.08% of the 141 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 141 motorcycle-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.41% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (10,099 crashes). This equates to roughly 5 motorcycle-related crashes along the RBSB per year.

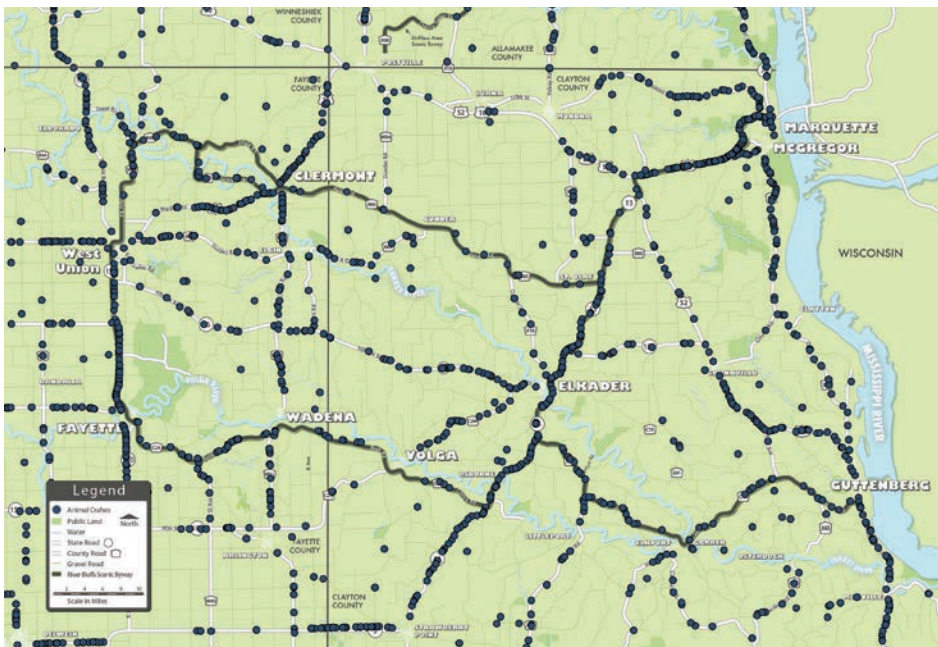
**12. Multi-Vehicle Crossed Median Related Crashes:** Multi-vehicle crossed centerline/crossed median (MVCC/CM) crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes and then by limiting to multivehicle crashes and then further querying manner of crash/collision impact equal to head-on; sideswipe, same direction; or sideswipe, opposite direction or any sequence of event (up to four per vehicle) equal to crossed centerline/median or any contributing circumstance, driver (up to two per driver) equal to traveling wrong way or on wrong side of road, crossed centerline, or lost control and then limiting the occurrences of these to nonintersection sites. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 57 multi-vehicle related crashes, in which represented 21.03% of the 271 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 271 multi-vehicle related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.34% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (16,956 crashes). This equates to roughly 6 multi-vehicle related crashes along the RBSB per year.



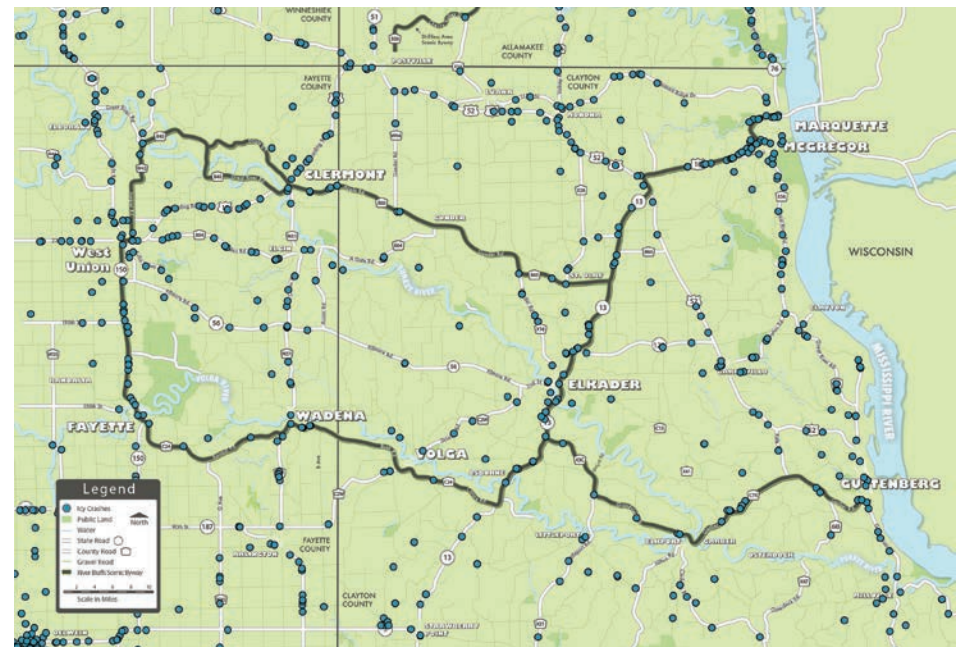
5. Speed-Related Crashes



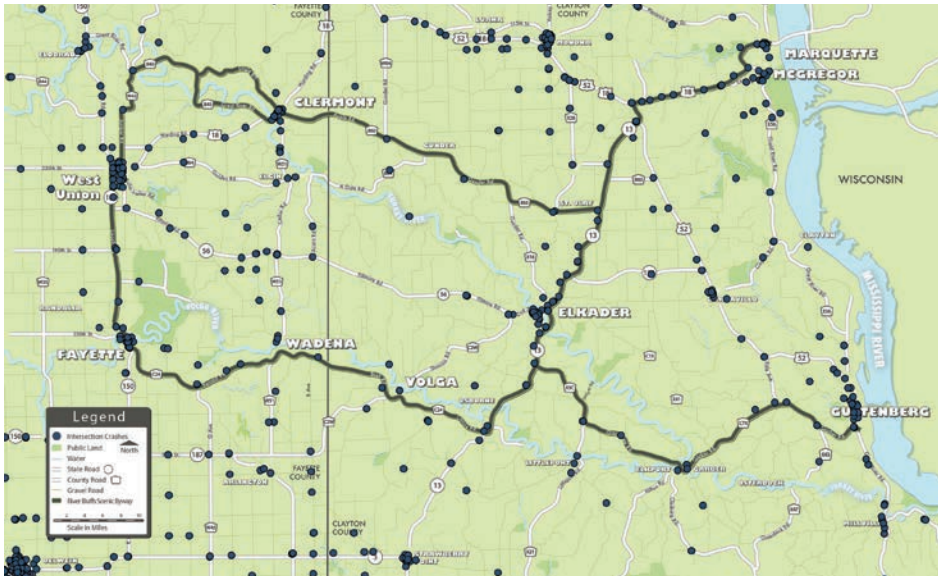
6. Unbelted Injured Person-Related Crashes



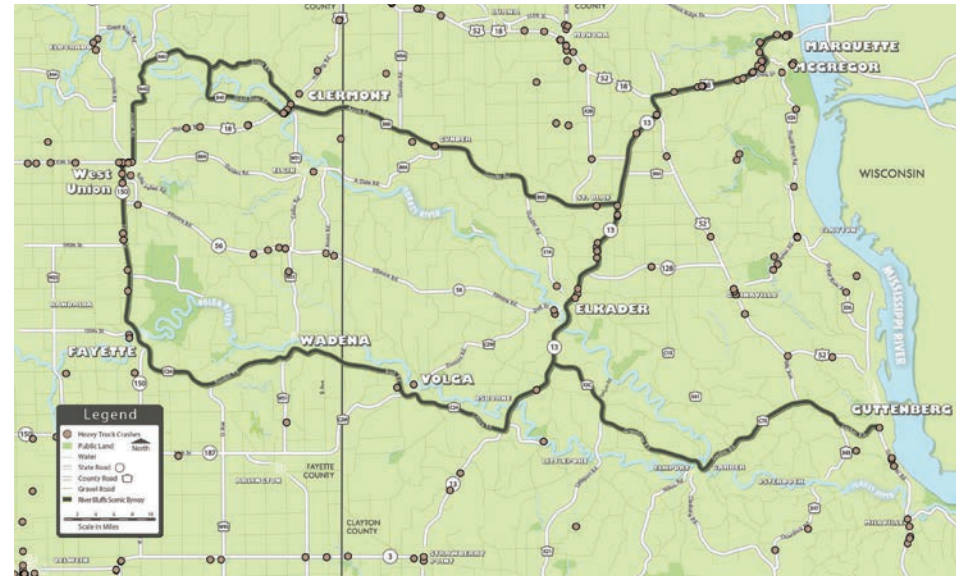
7. Wild Animal-Related Crashes



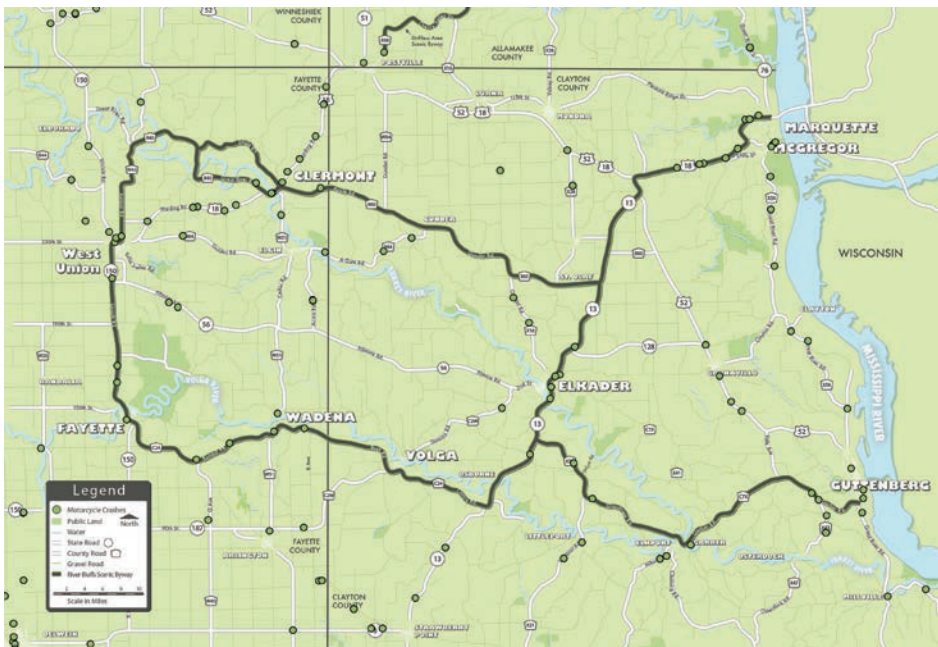
8. Weather-Related Crashes



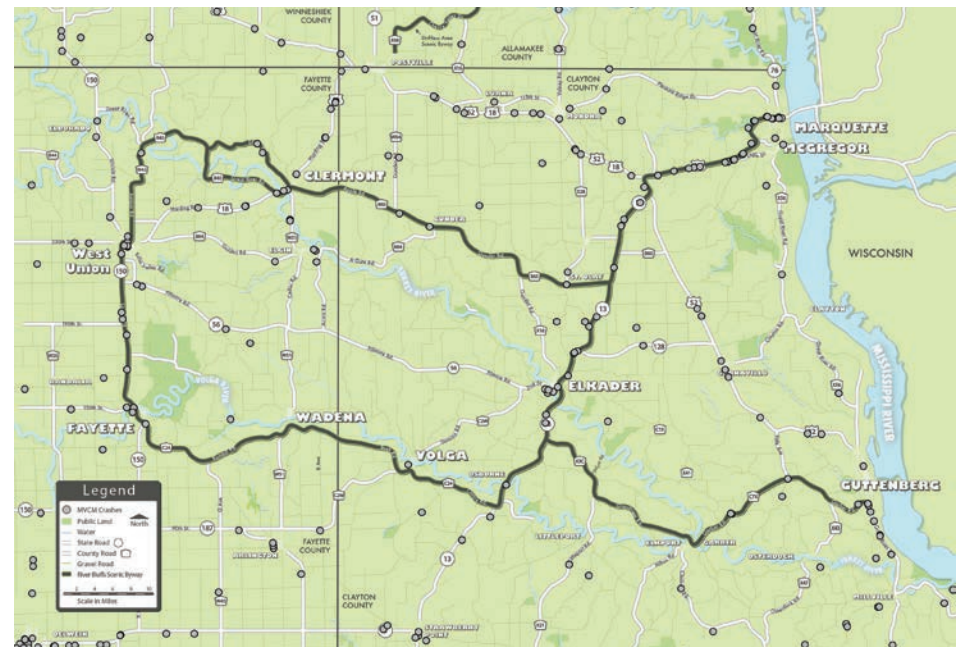
9. Intersection-Related Crashes



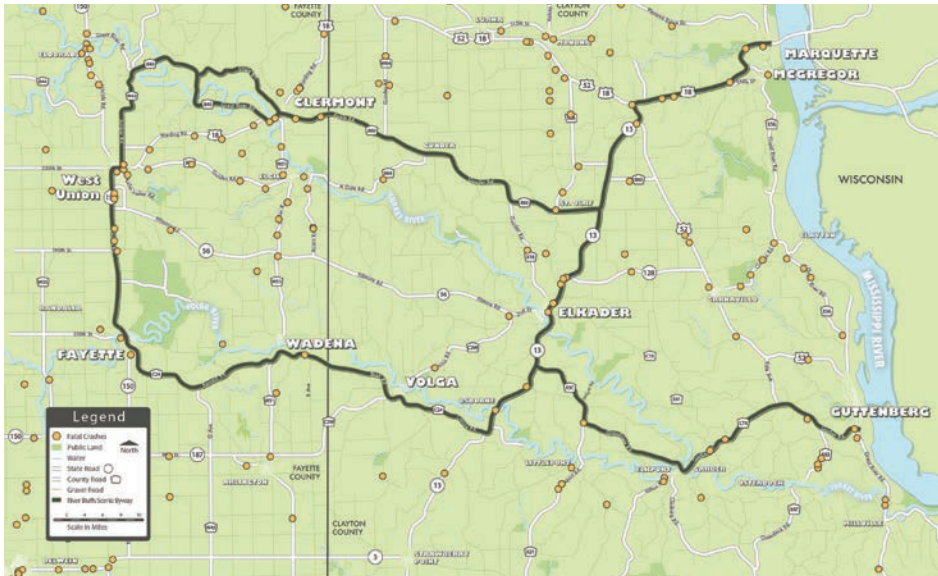
10. Heavy Truck-Related Crashes



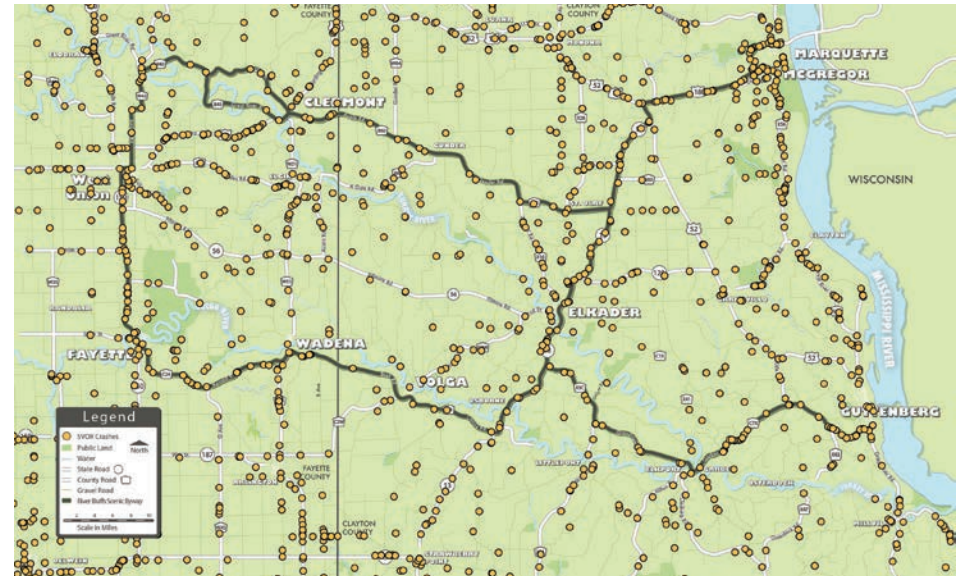
11. Motorcycle-Related Crashes



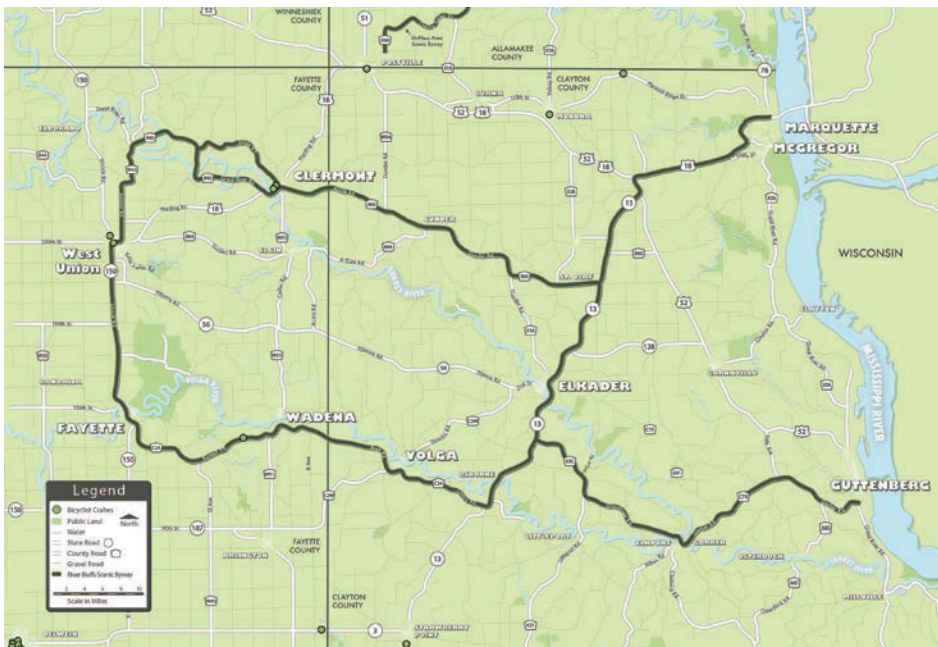
12. Multi-Vehicle Crossed Median-Related Accidents



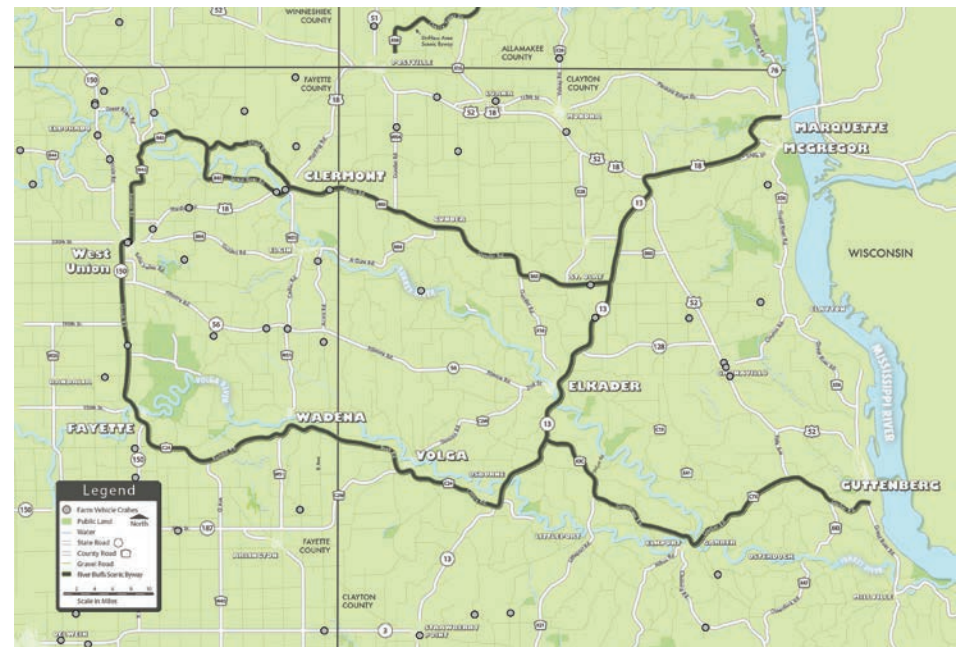
13. Fatal and Major Injury-Related Crashes



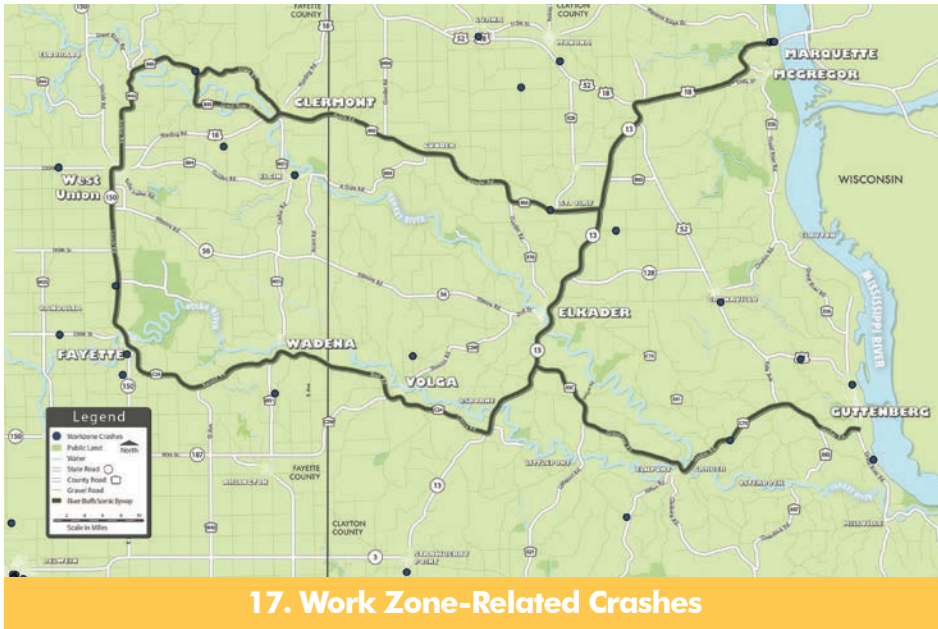
14. Single Vehicle Run Off Road Crashes



15. Bicycle-Related Crashes



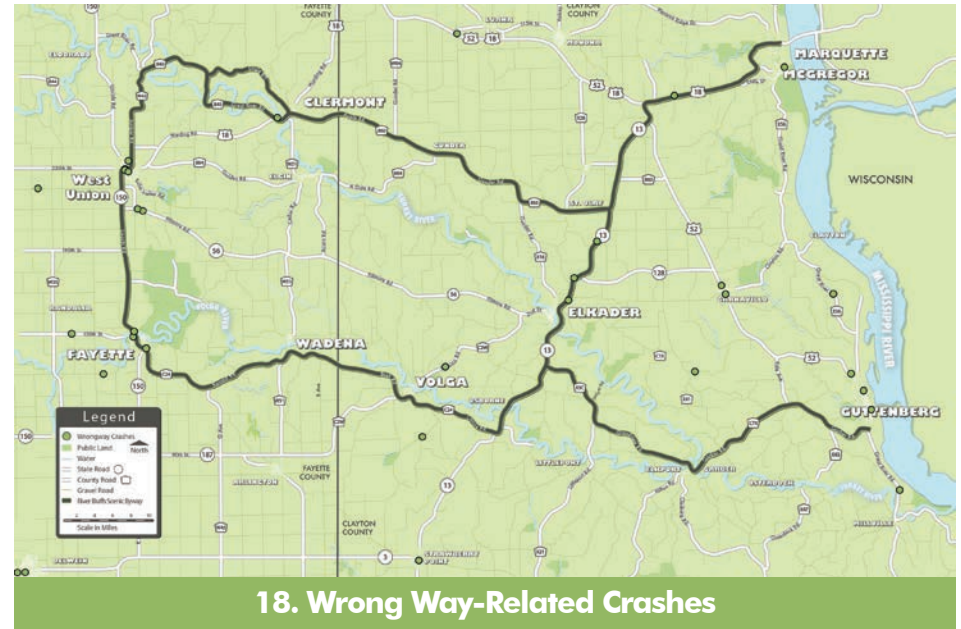
16. Farm Vehicle-Related Crashes



**17. Work Zone-Related Crashes**

**13. Fatal and Major Injury Related Crashes:** A fatality is any injury that results in death within 30 days after the motor vehicle crashes in which the injury occurred. A major injury is an injury which prevents the injured person from walking, driving, or normally continuing the activities the person was capable of before the injury occurred. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 46 major fatal-related crashes, in which represented 21% of the 219 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 219 major fatal-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.28% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (16,476 crashes). This equates to roughly 5 major fatal-related crashes along the RBSB per year.

**14. Single-Vehicle Run Off Road (SVROR) Crashes:** Single-vehicle run-off-road crashes were selected by identifying rural crashes and then by limiting to single-vehicle crashes and then further querying for any sequence of event (up to four per vehicle) equal to ran off road, right; ran off road, straight; or ran off road, left. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 168 single vehicle-related crashes, in which represented 9.93% of the 1,692 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 168 single vehicle-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.20% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (82,600 crashes). This equates to roughly 19 single vehicle-related crashes along the RBSB per year.



**18. Wrong Way-Related Crashes**

**15. Bicycle-Related Crashes:** A bicycle is a two-wheeled, non-motorized cycle or a vehicle that has four wheels but is propelled by pedal power and is not defined as a vehicle but has all of the rights and duties of a vehicle. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 3 bicycle-related crashes, in which represented 14.29% of the 21 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 3 bicycle-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.07% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (4,181 crashes). This equates to under 1 bicycle-related crash along the RBSB per year.

**16. Farm Vehicle-Related Crashes:** A farm vehicle driver is a person who drives only a commercial motor vehicle that is controlled and operated by a farmer as a private motor carrier of property; and is being used to transport either agricultural products, farm machinery or farm supplies to or from a farm, is not being used in the operation of a for-hire motor carrier, is not carrying hazardous materials of a type and quantity that requires the commercial motor carrier to be placarded and is being used within 150 air-miles of the farmer's farm. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 11 farm vehicle-related crashes, in which represented 16.67% of the 66 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 11 farm vehicle-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.56% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (1,950 crashes). This equates to roughly 1 farm vehicle-related crash along the RBSB per year.

**17. Work Zone-Related Crashes:** A work zone is an area of traffic way with construction, maintenance, or utility-work activities. A work zone is typically marked by signs, channeling devices, barriers, pavement markings, and/or work vehicles. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 8 work zone-related crashes, in which represented 2% of the 302 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 168 work zone-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.11% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (6,972 crashes). This equates to roughly 1 work zone-related crash along the RBSB per year.

**18. Wrong Way-Related Crashes:** Wrong-way related accidents are caused by a vehicular movement along a travel lane in a direction opposing the legal flow of traffic. When analyzing this type of incident along the RBSB, there were a total of 10 wrong way-related crashes, in which represented 25.64% of the 39 crashes in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The 10 wrong way-related crashes along the RBSB equaled 0.27% of the total crashes that occurred statewide (3,723 crashes). This equates to roughly 1 single vehicle-related crash along the RBSB and within the byway corridor per year.

After compiling and analyzing all of the accident reports along the byway, the data reveals that the top five categories with the highest percentage of incidents between 2014-2015 were the result of 1) Wild Animal-Related crashes (15.36%), Speed-Related crashes (13.58%), Single-Vehicle Run Off the Road crashes (11.07%), Young Driver crashes (10.48%) and Intersection-Related crashes (9.16%). Of the 18 categories that were inventoried and assessed, these 5 types of incidents comprised of over 59% of all of the incidents and crashes reported along the RBSB between 2004-2013.



**The RBSB has 9-Miles of Gravel Road**



**Unpaved Road Shoulder**



**Paved Road Shoulder**

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## 11.4 Proposed Strategies

The RBSB Board recommends the following strategies to maintain, enhance and improve the safety of the segments of roadway that comprises the byway. These strategies are intended to address issues, maximize management, and minimize transportation issues along the route. The RBSB Board understands that they do not have the authority to enforce their proposed strategies. However, the RBSB Board hopes that voluntarily implementation and/or informed public policy will help them address many of their safety concerns. The RBSB Board's recommended strategies include the following:

### 1. Conduct Infrastructure Condition Evaluations of the RBSB Annually

The RBSB Board recommends that Infrastructure Condition Evaluations be gathered and shared annually with city, county and state entities to:

- Aid in the evaluation of the RBSB by providing up-to-date information about the current condition of roadway segments calculated from several different subsets of criteria.
- Increase the number of miles with paved shoulders to improve safety by reducing run-off-the-road crashes, better accommodation of bicyclists and space for off road parking for emergencies and car trouble.
- Provide education to drivers on how to operate when approaching an uncontrolled intersection.
- Maintain and improve bridge conditions along the RBSB.

### 2. Collaborate with Maintenance and Transportation Districts

The RBSB Board encourages stakeholders and byway supporters to collaborate with Maintenance Districts and Transportation Districts to exchange information about the resources they manage, challenges they face, and recognize opportunities for partnership. The State of Iowa consists of six maintenance districts. Each maintenance district covers a specific area of the state and is assigned a district engineer. The RBSB is located in maintenance district 2 and has a district engineer contact for Jon Ranney P.E./PLS and can be reached at 641-422-9465 and EJon.Ranney@dot.iowa.gov. The State of Iowa also consists of six transportation districts, in which the RBSB is located in district 2. The transportation districts are a point of contact for interested landowners in harvesting hay or mowing the road ditches. The Iowa DOT has two harvesting and mowing seasons and interested landowners need to complete an application before July 15, which is the first day mowing or harvesting the state highway right of way is allowed. The contact person to receive assistance in processing your application for the RBSB is Linda Kofoot and can be contacted by phone 866-849-0327 or email linda.kofoot@dot.iowa.gov.

### 3. Compile General Crash Data of the RBSB Annually

The RBSB Board advises that an inventory and assessment of general crash accident reports be gathered and shared annually with city, county, and state entities. The RBSB Board also recommends the following strategies to improve and/or diminish general crash accidents along the RBSB:

- Impairment-related: Provide education to drivers on how alcohol is a depressant that reduces the brain's control over the body and express that drinking and driving is not a socially acceptable behavior.
- Inattentive-related: Offer education to drivers related to distractions while driving including texting, grooming, driving while angry, depressed, emotionally upset and more.
- Old driver-related: Encourage drivers to read the Iowa DOT's Driving with Diminished Skills booklet as part of "Choices Not Chances – The Road to Driving Safer and Longer."
- Young driver-related: Encourage drivers to read the Iowa DOT's guide "You're the Coach – A Guide for Parents of New Drivers."
- Speed-related: Provide education to drivers on following speed limits along all of Iowa's roadways.
- Unbelted-related: Promote the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration report that "Seat belts are your best protection in a crash."

### 4. Compile Environmental Crash Data of the RBSB Annually

The RBSB Board advises that an inventory and assessment of environmental accident reports be gathered and shared annually with city, county and state entities. The RBSB Board also recommends the following strategies to improve and/or diminish environmental crash accidents along the RBSB:

- Weather-related: Recommend that byway roads be sanded, salted, and plowed during the winter months to address ice and snow that can lead to deterioration of the road and unsafe driving conditions. The RBSB Board advocates working with city, county and state agencies to achieve the Iowa DOT's goal during the winter season to return roads to reasonably near normal winter driver conditions as quickly as possible after a winter storm.
- Weather-related: Flooding has had a major influence on the RBSB roads and bridges and can prohibit movement during storm water runoff events. The RBSB board advises working with the Turkey River Watershed Management Authority to exchange information, discuss challenges, and identify opportunities.
- Wild animal-related: Provide education to drivers on deer crossing warning signs, deer behavior and proper protocol when approaching deer. This is especially important considering that 30% of crashes in NE Iowa are related to animals.



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## 5. Compile Roadway Crash Data of the RBSB Annually

The RBSB Board advises that an inventory and assessment of roadway accident reports be gathered and shared annually with city, county, and state entities. The RBSB Board also recommends the following strategies to improve and/or diminish roadway crash accidents along the RBSB:

- Work with the Iowa DOT “to advocate for a modern transportation system that provides pathways for the social and economic vitality of Iowa, getting our customers where they need to go safely, efficiently, and conveniently.”
- Collaborate with partnering entities to provide quality and safe road conditions to the byway visitor.
- Encourage partnering entities to participate in local, state and federal programs and/or incentives.

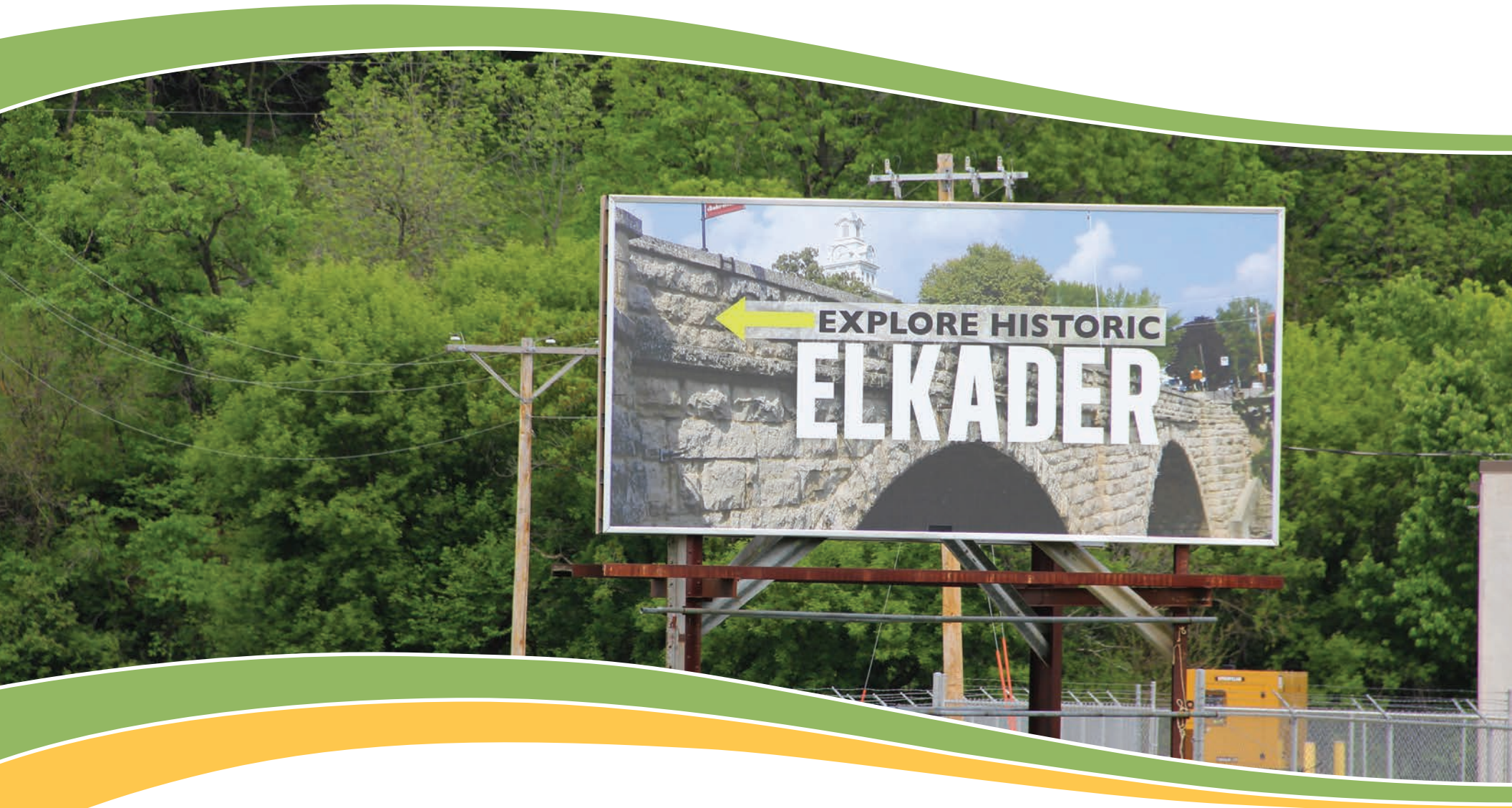
## 6. Compile Vehicle Crash Data of the RBSB Annually

The RBSB Board advises that an inventory and assessment of vehicle accident reports be gathered and shared annually with city, county and state entities. The RBSB Board also recommends the following strategies to improve and/or diminish vehicle crash accidents along the RBSB:

- Provide education to drivers on how to operate around cars, trucks, emergency vehicles, work zones, school buses, farm equipment and railroads, as well as instill an understanding of blind spots and other best practices encouraged from the Iowa DOT.

## 7. Undesignate the 9-mile RBSB Gravel Loop

The RBSB Board advises that the 9-mile gravel portion of the RBSB be undesignated. due to safety issues and road conditions.



# Section Twelve

Control of Outdoor Advertising

# Outdoor Advertising

*"More than 700 communities nationwide prohibit the construction of new billboards. Why? Because billboard control improves community character and quality of life -- both of which directly impact local economies. In fact, despite billboard industry claims to the contrary, communities and states that enact tough billboard controls enjoy strong economic growth." Scenic America*

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## 12.1 Highway Beautification Act

The widely controversial Highway Beautification Act was passed into law in 1965. This bill commonly referred to as “Title 23 US Code 131,” called for the erection and maintenance of all outdoor advertising signs, displays and devices in areas within 1,000 feet of interstate highway to be controlled. The legislation also gave jurisdictions the right to remove certain types of signs along highway systems to encourage scenic enhancement and roadside development.

However, in the years following Title 23 US Code 131 being passed into law, countless bills have been introduced, public hearings held, committees formed and debates between the House and Senate conducted to reach a compromise between the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the outdoor advertising industry and states over outdoor advertising legislation. Despite the reoccurring debates, the law controversies related to outdoor advertising remain. Supporters of Title 23 US Code 131 believe that the traveling public is entitled to relief from unattractive sign clutter for scenic enhancement, safety and roadside development. Opponents of Title 23 US Code 131 believe the legislation sets severely unfair sign restrictions on businesses and has failed to set national standards for the issues below:

- Who enforces the control of outdoor advertising?
- Should this be done on a federal, state or local level? Should billboard locations be limited to zoned commercial/industrial areas, unzoned commercial/industrial areas or locations the state deems appropriate? Should agencies and/or organizations receive just compensation for the removal of billboards and signs? What should the billboard draft standards be set at (billboard size limits, spacing between signs, spacing from at-grade intersections etc.)?
- In an attempt to reach a compromise over the outdoor advertising and billboard debate, the U.S. House and

Senate reached an agreement on major changes to the transportation program by establishing the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. Under this legislation, amendments made to the Highway Beautification Act were the following:

- Highway Trust Funds could be used for the removal of nonconforming signs and billboards. Illegal signs must be removed 90 days after the enactment of the bill.
- The Highway Beautification Act applies to all signs on highways designated as the “federal-aid primary” system or any highway designated as the ‘new national highway” system.
- States will no longer have to submit their Highway Beautification Act laws for federal revisions. Existing state compliance laws and regulations will remain intact.
- Erection of new billboards on state designated scenic byways is prohibited. Control of signs on such highways shall be in accordance with Highway Beautification Act control provisions.

However, laws surrounding outdoor advertising listed in the newly implemented Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) became the center of debate only months after being established in December of 1991. Opponents argued that Title 23 US Code 131 was unjust in requiring states to use highway trust funds to remove all nonconforming signs. Therefore, a technical amendment to section 131(n) of the Highway Beautification Act was changed so that Federal funds for the removal of legal, nonconforming signs was at the states discretion.

Shortly after the enactment of ISTEA, the mandatory ban of new billboards along state-designated scenic byways became a contentious issue during the 1993 National Scenic Byways Commission deliberations. Concerns within the commission’s final report resulted in two more years of debate over controversial issues related to outdoor advertising control recommendations.

Then in 1995, while the National Highway System Designation was under consideration by the House and Senate, the House of Representatives approved an amendment to subsection(s) of the Highway Beautification Act to clarify that the federal ban on new billboards on scenic byways did not restrict the authority of a state with respect to commercial and industrial areas along a scenic byway or roads in accordance with ISTEA language. As a result, substitute language was agreed upon which stated “In designating a scenic byway for purposes of section 131(s) and section 1047 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, a state may exclude from such designation any segment of a highway that is inconsistent with the state’s criteria for designating scenic byways.” The legislation went on to state that the exclusion of a highway segment must have a reasonable basis and that the Secretary of Transportation has the authority to prevent actions that evade Federal requirements.”

This change in legislation still exists today and means that while local units of government generally control outdoor advertising, one federal regulation applies to state designated scenic byways. Title 23 US Code 131(s) prohibits new billboards when the route is part of an Interstate, National Highway System or former federal-aid primary road. However, local, county or state laws are responsible for billboard control on designated byways in other road classifications.

This continuous change of language under Title 23 US Code 131(s) means that under the most current FHWA policy, each state has the option to permit new billboards along sections of a scenic byway that does not contain intrinsic resources that led to its designation, or ban them along state byways altogether. In other words, its really up to each state and their DOT for how they choose to manage, control and restrict outdoor advertising.



Signing of the Highway Beautification Act in 1965

## 12.2 Regulations in Surrounding States

When comparing Iowa to its surrounding states, one can see that each state has varying laws and statutes when it comes to sanctioning segments to permit new billboards or imposing stricter controls to prevent billboards on state byways. The information included in this section demonstrates how Iowa's six border states codify sign rules and regulations related to scenic byways on a local, state and federal level:

**Minnesota:** The jurisdictions of which the designated routes pass must have ordinances to control outdoor advertising consistent with 23 U.S.C. 131 (s).

**South Dakota:** There is no mention of outdoor advertising rules or regulations related to scenic byway designation in South Dakota law.

**Nebraska:** Neb. Rev. Stat. 39-218 states: "No sign shall be erected which is visible from the main-traveled way of any scenic byway except (1) directional and official signs to include, but not be limited to signs and notices pertaining to natural wonders, scenic attractions, and historical attractions; (2) signs, displays, and devices advertising the sale or lease of property upon which such media are located; and (3) signs, displays, and devices advertising activities conducted on the property on which such media are located. Signs which are allowed shall comply with the standards and criteria established by rules and regulations of the Department of Roads in Title 410, Chapter 3. These rules and regulations implement the preceding state statutes."

**Wisconsin:** Trans 202.11 Outdoor advertising states: "Highways designated by the secretary as scenic byways pursuant to s.84.106, Stats. and are subject to all applicable state laws and regulations and local ordinances regarding outdoor advertising signs. Highways designated as scenic byways shall also conform to s.Trans201.23."



Laws Limiting Outdoor Advertising Vary from State to State

**Missouri:** Mo. 226.801. states: "Signs and outdoor advertising, rules and regulations states: 1. The commission may adopt rules to regulate or prohibit outdoor advertising in order to preserve scenic corridors adjacent to, and visible from, roads and highways designated as scenic byways pursuant to the provisions of section 226.797, except, that on-premise signs may be regulated, but not prohibited. Areas zoned commercial or industrial shall not be designated as scenic byways. 2. The commission may adopt rules to implement a program for the erection and maintenance of tourist-oriented directional signs within the right-of-way of scenic byways in the state."

The tourist-oriented directional signs shall provide business identification and directional information for businesses, services, natural attractions and activities which, during a normal business season, derive the major portion of the income and visitors for the business or activity from motorists not residing in the immediate area of the business or activity. Tourist-oriented directional signs shall only be used on roads and highways designated as scenic byways under section 226.797."

**Illinois:** There is no mention of outdoor advertising and scenic byway designation in Illinois law.

### 12.3 Regulations in Iowa

So how is outdoor advertising regulated within the state of Iowa? And more specifically, along the RBSB? To answer this question, one can refer to snippets of Iowa statutes and code that are provided below:

- **306D.4 of the Iowa Statutes regarding Scenic Highway Advertising:** The state department of transportation shall have the authority to adopt rules to control the erection of new advertising devices on a highway designated as a scenic highway or scenic byway in order to comply with federal requirements concerning the implementation of a scenic byways program.
- **761-Ch. 117.3 regarding Iowa Administrative Code:** The rule provides that no new off-premise advertising device may be erected along an interstate, freeway-primary or primary highway that has been designated as a scenic byway if the advertising device will be visible from the highway.

Iowa's 2009 Guide to Outdoor Advertising Regulations for Interstate Highways, summarizes it best. This document states that "the erection of billboards is prohibited along any state or nationally designated scenic byway. Existing permitted billboards along scenic byways may remain in existence, provided that appropriate permit fees are remitted in a timely manner and no relocation or reconstruction of the billboard occurs."

### 12.4 Existing Outdoor Advertising

An inventory of outdoor advertising reveals that the majority of billboards are located within commercial and/or industrial areas, or are along segments of the RBSB where significant resources are not present. Few are visible from the actual RBSB route itself, in which the RBSB Board is making the assumption that these outlier outdoor advertising billboards have been "grandfathered in" and are permitted under the states regulations. The RBSB Board also conducted an inventory of existing digital billboards and found that none exist along the RBSB. A map inventorying all existing outdoor advertising billboards can be referenced on page 152.



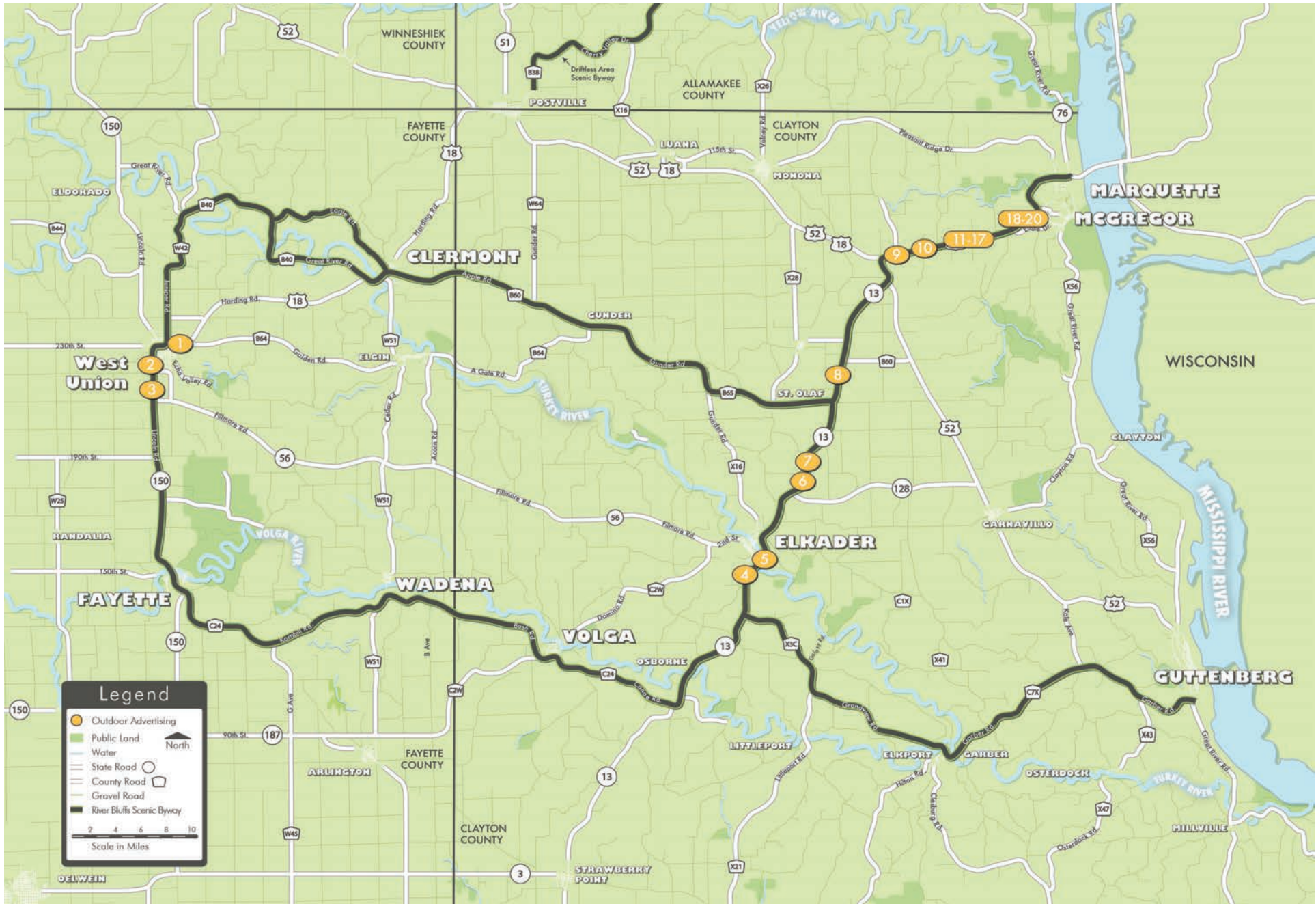
Large Advertising Billboard in Elkader



Large Advertising Billboard in McGregor



Large Advertising Billboard in Elkader





Map #	Outdoor Advertising	Location	Billboard Content	Community
1	Large Advertising Billboard	North Pine Street	Discover the Forest (Interchangeable)	West Union
2	Small Advertising Billboard	Hwy 150	U.S Cellular (Interchangeable)	West Union
3	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 150	Feed a Hungry Child (Interchangeable)	West Union
4	Large Destination Approach Sign	Hwy 13	Explore Elkader	Elkader
5	Large Wooden Destination Approach Sign	Hwy 13	Johnson's Restaurant	Elkader
6	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 13	Brown's Auto Dealership (Interchangeable)	Elkader
7	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 13	Quit Smoking Support (Interchangeable)	Elkader
8	Small Wooden Destination Approach Sign	Hwy 13	Spook Cave & Campground	Farmersburg
9	Large Wooden Destination Approach Sign	Hwy 18 / 52	Spook Cave & Campground	Froelich
10	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 18 / 52	Ashley Furniture (Interchangeable)	Giard
11	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 18 / 52	Support Our Veterans (Interchangeable)	McGregor & Marquette
12	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 18 / 52	Guttenberg South Overlook	McGregor & Marquette
13	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 18 / 52	Lady Luck Casino (Interchangeable)	McGregor & Marquette
14	Wooden Advertising Billboard	Hwy 18 / 52	For Sale: 100 Acres (Interchangeable)	McGregor & Marquette
15	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 18 / 52	Lawn Mowing Advertisement (Interchangeable)	McGregor & Marquette
16	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 18 / 52	Northwest Communications (Interchangeable)	McGregor & Marquette
17	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 18 / 52	Crossing Rivers health Clinic (Interchangeable)	McGregor & Marquette
18	Small Wooden Destination Approach Sign	Hwy 18 / 52	The Frontier Motel	McGregor & Marquette
19	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 18 / 52	Your Local Employment Option (Interchangeable)	McGregor & Marquette
20	Large Advertising Billboard	Hwy 18 / 52	Area Farmer's Markets Ad (Interchangeable)	McGregor & Marquette



# Section **Thirteen**

Developing a Comprehensive Wayshowing System

# Signage & Wayfinding

*“Wayfinding is essentially about knowing where you are and finding where you want to go. Wayshowing gives you the means to do both. That sounds simple and straightforward. But the experiences of travelers, as well as byway organizations and byway experience providers, suggests otherwise. Responding to the needs of byway travelers and the organizations that create, manage and sustain high-quality byway experiences, is essential to implementing a successful way finding system.” America’s Byways Resource Center*

### 13.1 Introduction

Being able to communicate information to visitors and assist them with their travel plans are important issues board members would like to address. Visitors need to be able to find their way through unfamiliar and complex environments at all times. The implementation of an effective wayshowing system is an essential component of the RBSB, as it would employ the art of using written, audible and visual information such as signs, maps, landmarks or icons to help pedestrians and vehicles navigate the byway with ease. These environmental cues and tools are needed to assist byway travelers' answer the questions below:

- How do visitors find the byway?
- How do visitors know they are still on the byway?
- How do visitors orient themselves along the byway?
- Where does the byway begin and end?
- How much time should visitors allocate for travel on and to the byway?
- What and where are the byway's intrinsic qualities?
- Where should visitors stay, eat, shop, learn and recreate?
- Where are the travel services located (ATM, restrooms, gas stations etc.)?

This section of the corridor management plan looks to address these questions and outlines a preliminary plan and course of action to implement an enhanced wayshowing system along the RBSB. In achieving this goal, the plan aims to provide an overview about the key concepts of 1) wayshowing vs. wayfinding, 2) the three stages of trip planning and 3) challenges associated with wayfinding that the visitor must overcome for successful navigation of the byway to occur. This plan also identifies and analyzes seven wayshowing components needed for a successful wayshowing system and provides RBSB Board member recommendations for how each component can be improved upon along the byway.



Wayshowing Sign



Wayshowing Landmark







Wayshowing Icon

### 13.2 Wayfinding vs. Wayshowing

Wayfinding & wayshowing are related, but distinct concepts. To understand the difference between the two terms, one needs to recognize that travelers of the byway do the wayfinding. Wayfinding is defined as the mental process performed by byway travelers that turn their goals into decisions, actions and behaviors. It is the act of navigating the byway by being able to continuously problem-solve under uncertainty. Everything from byway travelers looking for clues to reassure them that they are where they hoped to be, to the use of information and amenities to make their byway experience safe, rewarding and enjoyable pertaining to wayfinding.

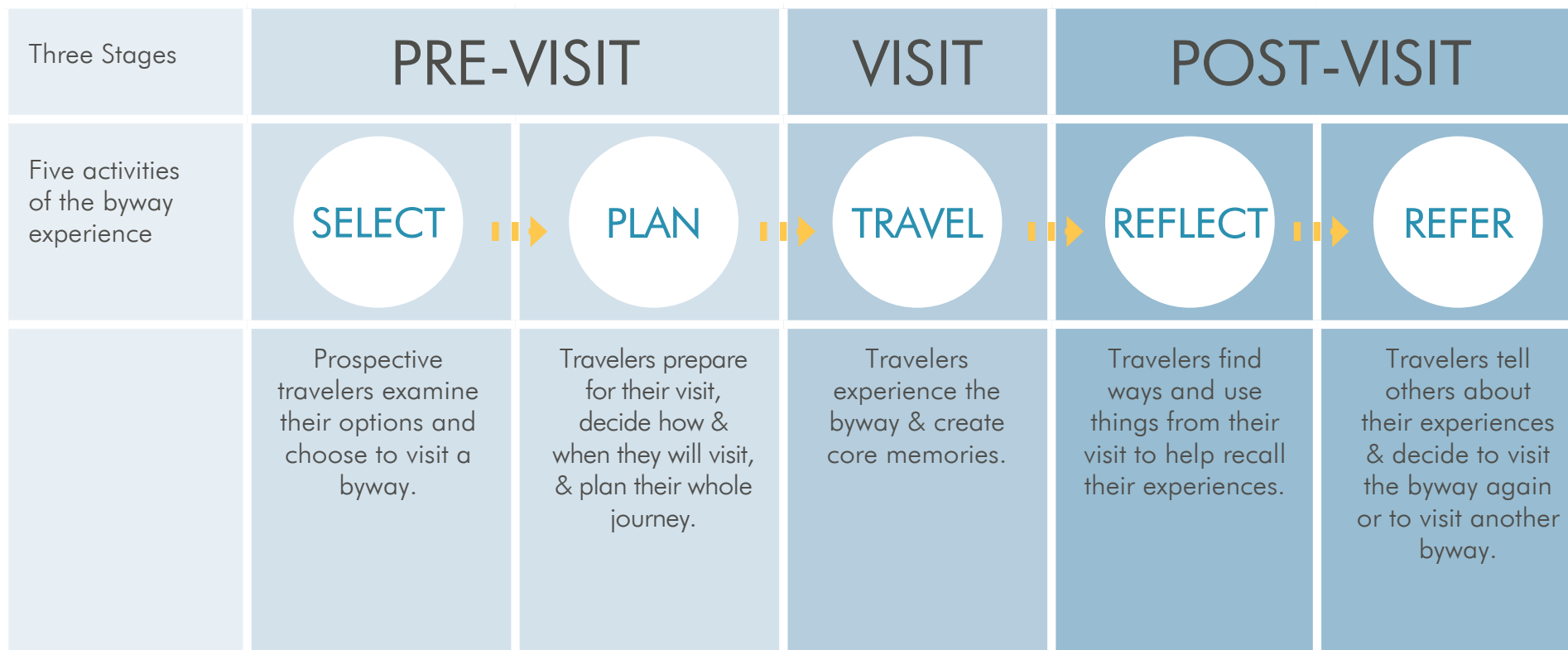
On the contrary, wayshowing is defined as the need for constant communication of information, intentionally undertaken by byway providers, to aid travelers in setting desired goals, making decisions and taking appropriate actions. Byway providers are all the individuals who have some responsibility for the byway, whether with governments, tourism agencies, volunteer committees, land owners, businesses, the RBSB Coordinator, RBSB stakeholders or an active member of the RBSB Board. Their role is to provide assistance to byway travelers so that their wayfinding problem solving can be successful along the route. Anything from preparing travel information, developing maps and brochures, planning and installing signs, or preparing navigational help in person or by electronic means relates to wayshowing. For the RBSB to be successful at providing the traveler with pleasing experiences, the RBSB will need to respect the wayfinding needs of its visitors in addition to providing and maintaining an appropriate mix of wayshowing components.

It is important to note that wayfinding and wayshowing are the basic elements found along every byway. the figure on page 157 represents the relationship between travelers to providers and identifies the basic tools

<b>WAYFINDING</b> Is What Byway Travelers Do	<b>WAYSHOWING</b> Is What Byway Providers Do
Seeing	Drawing  Offer Maps, Signs & Illustrations
Reading	Writing  Offer Brochures & Driving Directions
Hearing	Speaking  Offer Audio Tours, Guides or Personal Narratives
Learning	Teaching  Offer Educational Opportunities

needed to accomplish the most fundamental element of wayshowing, which includes helping the visitor navigate, learn about and enjoy the byway safely and without getting lost. Key concepts to take away from the

figure above is to understand that wayfinding is what travelers do and wayshowing is what byway providers do. It is the job of byway providers to supply the visitor with tools needed for successful navigation.



### 13.3 Stages of Byway Trip Planning

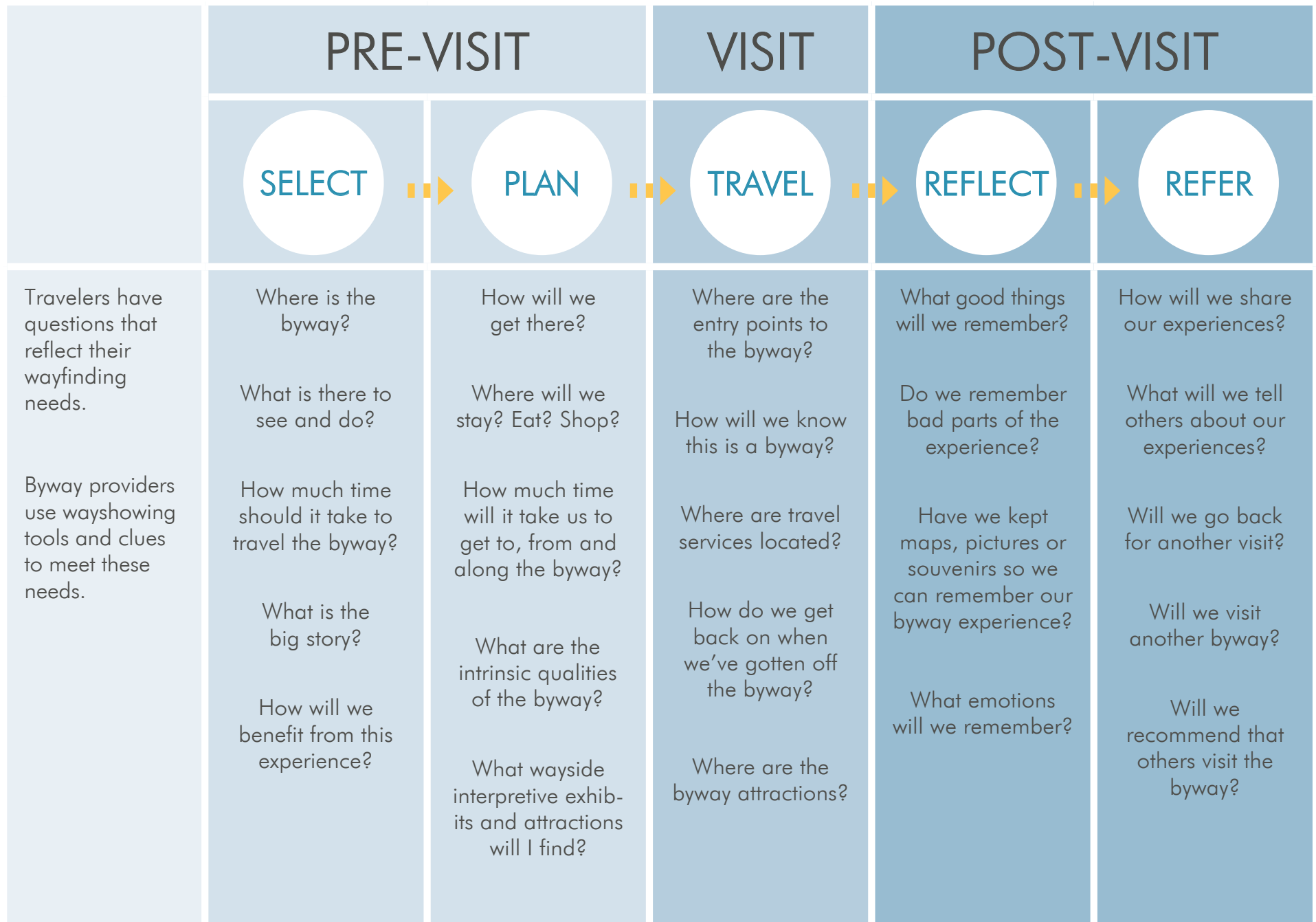
For the RBSB to successfully develop an engaging wayshowing system, it is imperative to understand the three stages visitors go through when planning a trip to the RBSB. A basic understanding of the communication tools needed and questions that must be addressed during each stage will also have a strong influence on the visitor's overall experience of the RBSB. The figures illustrated in section 14 have been adopted from *Wayshowing for Byways, A Reference Manual*, published by the America's Byways Resource Center. The following figures in section 13.3 look to identify the stages of byway trip planning, communication tools needed at each stage and questions that must be addressed to assist the RBSB traveler.

Analyzing the figure above, which depicts the three stages of trip planning (pre-visit, visit and post-visit) and the five activities of the byway experience (select, plan, travel, reflect and refer), allows one to see a breakdown of how visitors will usually plan for their upcoming byway trip in stages, which can be broken down into activities. The first stage is Pre-Visit (activities include select & plan). During the Pre-Visit Stage, the visitor selects what byway they would like to visit and then begins to plan for that trip. Decisions about what the visitor is most interested in doing to, from and along the byway are researched. Helpful tools RBSB providers should use to help persuade the byway visitor to make a trip to the RBSB are depicted on page 159. Questions byway providers should address during the Pre-Visit Stage are listed in page 160.

The second stage is Visit (activities include travel). The Visit Stage is where the visitor arrives at a byway and attempts to navigate the route and find the byway's special places. Helpful tools RBSB providers should use to help visitors safely navigate the RBSB are shown in the figure on page 159. Questions byway providers should address during the Pre-Visit Stage are listed on page 160.

The third stage is Post-Visit (activities include reflect & refer). The Post-Visit Stage occurs after the visitor has found their way back home and has had an opportunity to recall and reflect upon their trip. Helpful tools providers should use to help leave a positive, lasting memory of the RBSB are portrayed on page 159. Questions providers should address during the Post-Visit Stage are listed on page 160.

Importance to the byway wayfinding experience:	PRE-VISIT		VISIT	POST-VISIT	
	SELECT	PLAN	TRAVEL	REFLECT	REFER
<p>● HIGH</p> <p>● MEDIUM</p> <p>● LOW</p>					
Print Brochure	●	●	●	●	●
Website	●	●	●	●	●
Advertising	●	●		●	●
Printed Maps	●	●	●	●	●
Guide Signs	●	●	●	●	●
Electronic Guidance		●	●	●	
Wayside Int. Exhibits			●	●	●
Merchandise	●	●	●	●	●





### 13.4 Wayfinding Challenges

Being able to identify the stages travelers go through when planning a trip and the media needed to address traveler's questions is an important concept to understand when overcoming challenges to implement a proper wayshowing system. Especially, considering that an effective wayshowing system responds to the needs of visitors at all stages in their journey along the Byway to assure that travelers avoid becoming lost or confused. Because of this, effective wayshowing for the average byway traveler must at minimum:

- Support how people find their way in unfamiliar travel environments
- Provide a guidance system of reliable and consistent components on the byway
- Respond to the unique characteristics of the byway
- Integrate Pre-Visit, Visit and Post-Visit stages of the byway experience
- Contribute to a safe roadway & travel environment
- Become a widely practiced body of knowledge among byway providers

To help RBSB Board members accomplish these requirements, the group referenced Wayshowing for Byways, published by the America's Byways Resource Center to identify five of the most common wayfinding challenges visitors are likely to experience while navigating the RBSB. With the assistance of the manual, board members identified the essential wayfinding challenges below and have made it their goal to provide visitors with the tools needed for them to be able to:

- Identify origin and destination
- Determine turn locations
- Identify segment links and directions of movement
- Recognize on-route and distant landmarks
- Mentally embed or visualize the route in a larger reference frame; a cognitive map



**Wayfinding Should Address Traveler's Questions... Not Create More**

### 13.5 Assessment of the Wayshowing System

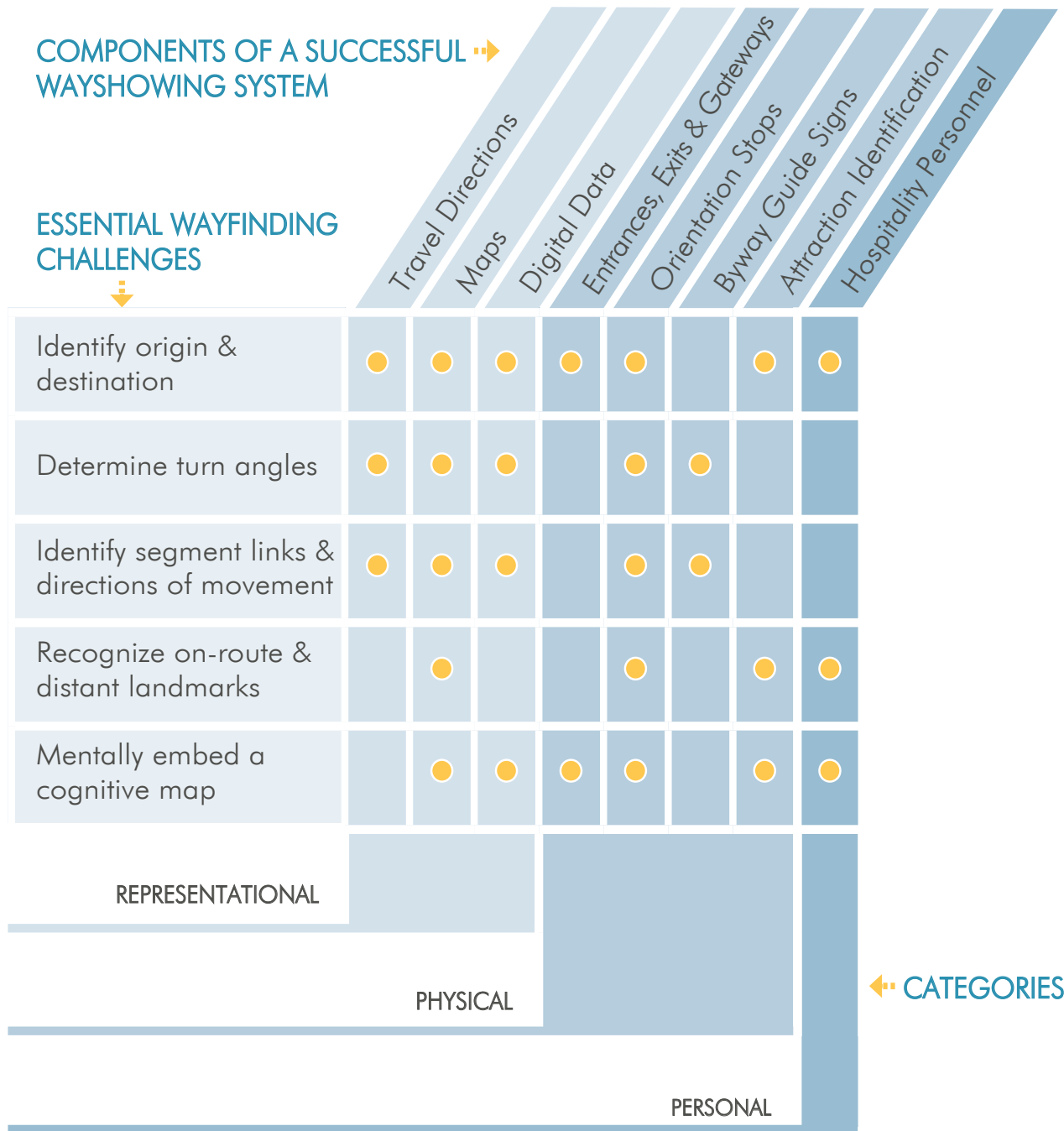
To overcome the challenges visitors are likely to experience while navigating the byway, RBSB Board members identified and analyzed five components they believe are necessary to implement into their wayshowing plans. The five components identified for inclusion into the RBSB wayshowing system include:

- 1. Driving Directions:** Turn-by-turn narrative descriptions of each distinct route segment of the RBSB.
- 2. Maps:** Graphic (cartographic) displays of the RBSB, its surrounding corridor and regional setting.
- 3. Electronic Devices & Digital Data:** Media provided for customer electronic and mobile devices.
- 4. Trained Staff & Hospitality Personnel:** RBSB educated visitor center staff, interpreters, volunteers, park rangers, business owners and other people who have the duty to provide timely and factual information to travelers and visitors.
- 5. Signage:** A systematic collection of 1) RBSB Guide Signs, 2) RBSB Welcome Signs, 3) Community Welcome Signs, 4) RBSB Approach Signs, 5) Destination Approach Signs, 6) On-Site Identification Signs and 7) Iowa 511 Service Signs that help guide tourists to and along the byway's route.

Once the components for the Byway were selected, RBSB Board members began their assessment of the byway's current wayshowing system. Their findings, as they relate to the wayshowing components that exist today are as follows:

### COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL WAYSHOWING SYSTEM

### ESSENTIAL WAYFINDING CHALLENGES





Maps



Trained Staff & Hospitality Personnel



Electronic Devices & Digital Data



Signage

## One: Driving Directions

When visitors arrive at the RBSB during the Visit-Stage, they travel along its route and ultimately reach an end point or desired location. The route itself is connected by a continuous sequence of segments of highway, county and gravel roads that carry the byway designation. With a few exceptions, the RBSB's route is an overlay designation on otherwise official numbered or named highways, roads and streets. Well-established signs are used to name these roadways (ex: Highway 18, County Road B60 and Main Street) to assist with navigation. When traveling any road, byway or not, the traveler has an expectation that every stretch of road has a name and/or number that will help them locate points of interest, attractions, travel services or an address. Because of this, RBSB Board members determined that the development of driving directions were necessary to help the visitor identify the road names, numbers and surface type for proper navigation of the byway.

**Existing Conditions:** To date, driving directions have been identified, developed and made available to help travelers navigate the byway during the Visit-Stage of trip planning. Given the byway's start/end points, the RBSB Board felt it necessary to break the RBSB into three sections and provide directions for each. Driving directions for each of the three byway sections are as follows:



**Three Byway Segments**

Step	Segment One Directions	Miles
1	START in the town of Marquette at the intersection of US-18 & the Great River Rd	START
2	Head west on US-18	10
3	Turn left onto US-52	1
4	Turn right onto IA-13	8
	Arrive at intersection of IA-13 & County Road B65 / 205 Street	
	<i>*To travel SEGMENT THREE skip to STEP 16</i>	
5	Continue to follow IA-13	8
6	Turn left onto County Road X3C / Grandview Rd and follow into the town of Elkport	9
7	Turn left onto County Road C7X / Garber Rd and travel through the town of Garber	10
8	END in Guttenberg at the intersection of County Road C7X / Garber Road & US-52	END/46

Step	Segment Two Directions	Miles
9	START at the intersection of US-18 & Stone Street	START
10	GRAVEL - Head west on Stone Street (will turn into Eagle Road)	
11	GRAVEL - Continue to follow Eagle Road	5
12	GRAVEL - Turn left onto Great River Road	1.5
13	GRAVEL - Turn right onto Harvest Road (will turn into Garden Road)	0.5
14	GRAVEL - Continue to follow Garden Road	2
15	END at the intersection of US-18 & Garden Road	END/9

Step	Segment Three Directions	Miles
16	START at the intersection of IA-13 & County Road B65 / 205 Street	START
17	Head west on County Road B65 / 205 Street and follow into the town of St. Olaf	2
18	Continue to follow County Road B65 /200 Street	2
19	Turn right onto County Road X16 / Gunder Road	1
20	Stay left onto County Road B60 / Gunder Road and follow into the town of Gunder	6
21	Continue to follow County Road B60 / Apple Road into the town of Clermont	8
	<i>* To travel SEGMENT TWO skip to STEP 9</i>	
22	Turn left onto US-18 / Mill Street	1
23	Turn right onto County Road B40 / Great River Road	10
24	Turn left onto County Rd W42 / Juniper Rd and follow into the town of West Union	5
25	Turn right onto US-18 / E Bradford Street	0.5
26	Turn left onto IA-150 and follow into the town of Fayette	8.5
27	Turn left onto Water Street	0.5
28	Turn right onto Washington Street	1.5
29	Turn left onto Wadena Road (turns into Kornhill Road)	0.5
30	Turn left onto County Road C24 / Kornhill Road	7.5
31	Turn left onto D Ave	0.25
32	Turn right onto County Road C24 / Bush Road	7.5
33	Turn left onto County Road C2W / Bell Road (town of Volga will be on left)	0.25
34	Turn right onto County Road C24 / Canoe Road	5
35	Turn left onto IA-13	13.5
36	END at the intersection of IA-13 & County Road B65 / 205 Street	END/81



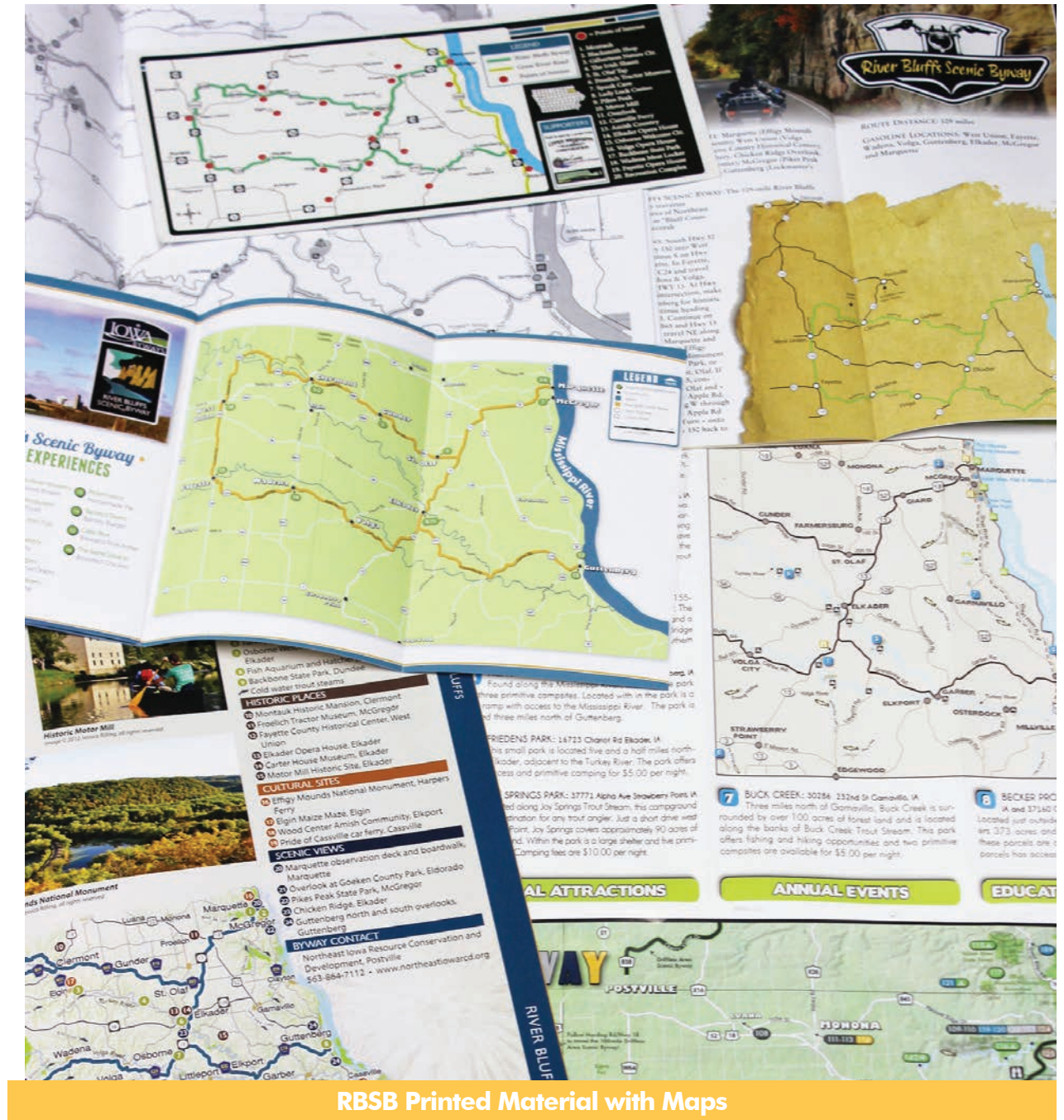
**Driving Directions**

## Two: Maps

RBSB visitors unfamiliar to Fayette & Clayton Counties often rely on maps as much as any other wayshowing component when attempting to navigate along the RBSB. Referring to the chart on page 162, one can see how maps factor into the three stages of byway trip planning. They are a helpful tool for travelers when deciding what they are interested in doing, where they would like to go and recalling their time along the byway. In other words, maps are a helpful tool during the entire byway trip planning process as they help the visitor answer the following questions: 1) Where are we now?, 2) Where do we wish to go?, 3) Which road or highway should we take next?, 4) How far do we go before we turn or stop?, 5) What way will we be traveling?, 6) How will we identify and locate attractions and travel service amenities? and 7) What will we remember from our byway trip?

**Existing Conditions:** The RBSB Board has worked to develop and incorporate maps into a wide variety of promotional material and digital media sources to help the visitor navigate and locate places of interest along its route. It was their hope that a range of varying maps would help them reach multiple audiences, as one byway wayshowing map is most likely not capable of displaying or incorporating all of the places of interest or things to do along the entire roadway. Because of this, a variety of promotional material and digital media sources that included byway maps were developed. Digital and print promotions that feature a map of the RBSB include the following:

- **Printed material with maps:** Iowa Byways travel guide, RBSB rack card, RBSB activity book, RBSB tear-sheet map, RBSB culinary passport and the Iowa DOT Transportation map.
- **Digital marketing with maps:** An online interactive map of the byway exists for tourist use on the Iowa Tourism's RBSB webpage. The interactive map identifies the byway route and provides the ability to zoom in and out along sections of the RBSB.



RBSB Printed Material with Maps

### Three: Electronic Devices & Digital Data

The RBSB Board recognizes that digital data is widely available through electronic devices and can be an extremely beneficial tool for creating a successful wayshowing system. Many byway organizations have incorporated or deployed electronic technologies to provide visitors with narrative, maps, GPS points and other content to provide navigational assistance. This can be beneficial to travelers during the Pre-Visit and Visit Stage of byway planning, as digital data can create an effective cognitive map of the routes corridor, helping visitors determine where they want to go and how they are going to get there. Visitors to a byway may use a wide variety of digital data provided through the use of customer electronic and mobile devices. Potential devices the RBSB has identified in which could assist visitors with their driving experience are listed below:

- Personal GPS (handheld or dashboard)
- Smartphone
- Radio, audio CD or MP3 player
- Video DVD
- Laptop
- Handheld device with Internet connection (iPad)
- Telecommunication systems via OnStar or SYNC

**Existing Conditions:** Today, byway travelers are able to conduct online research about the RBSB and its resources and/or attractions using the Travel Iowa's RBSB webpage. GPS coordinates for RBSB anchor businesses and attractions have also been inventoried, compiled and utilized in a wide variety of ways. This is helpful for visitors in the Pre-Visit Stage. However, due to the byway's geographic location in rural Iowa, spotty and limited cell phone coverage often times limit the opportunities for byway travelers to use smartphones and/or handheld devices with Internet connectivity along many remote sections of the RBSB.



**Handheld Devices are used Annually To Conduct A Signage Inventory**

#### Four: Trained Staff & Hospitality Personnel

At every stage of byway trip planning - Pre-Visit, Visit and Post-Visit - trained personnel can often make a difference between a byway traveler having a good trip or a bad trip, an extra night's stay, or a reason to recommend the experience to others. Interaction with people familiar with what there is to see and do in the region can help the traveler gain valuable knowledge from a local's perspective that may be unattainable through publications. Trained hospitality personnel can provide estimated time of travel, customize directions, weather, road condition updates as well as recommendations on where to stay, eat and/or shop. Because of this, RBSB Board members believe that educating hospitality personnel about the byway and all that there is to see, do and experience along it's route is an important wayshowing component to implement.

**Existing Conditions:** Through discussions with Byway stakeholders, the RBSB Board has come to the conclusion that many front line hotel, restaurant and retail employees, in addition to the "locals" who regularly interact with the RBSB visitor often lack information or know little about how to properly inform the visitor about what there is to see and do in the region, let alone along the byway. RBSB Board members have received input from stakeholders that often times, the employees who are working many of the jobs within the tourism sector are young, part-time seasonal workers from the area. Attitudes from many when asked "what is there to do around here?", often don't know what to say, or worse yet, say nothing at all. Certain sectors within the tourism industry along the RBSB have tended to perform at differing levels of success regarding visitor hospitality, though it is common belief that additional trainings and/or educational services looking to strengthen this component of wayshowing could only serve as a benefit to the byway.



Retail Employee/Owner along the RBSB



Retail Employee/Owner along the RBSB



Retail Employee/Owner along the RBSB



## Five: Signage

The term “byway attraction” can be defined as a place or point of interest that is intended for visitors to notice or stop while driving within the RBSB corridor. Byway attractions can refer to overlooks, historic sites, museums, parks, trails, information/interpretive centers or other places of interest that add to the visitor’s travel experience. For a traveler to successfully find their way to and along the byway, well-marked signage that serves to direct, identify and confirm the identity of the RBSB and each of its destinations is essential for visitors in the Visit-Stage of trip planning. When an analysis of existing signage was conducted, the RBSB Board decided to inventory and assess the existing conditions of 1) RBSB guide signs, 2) RBSB welcome signs, 3) community welcome signs, 4) RBSB approach signs, 5) destination approach signs, 6) on-site identification signs and 7) Iowa 511 Service Signs. Their assessment, as it relates to each type of wayshowing signage, are listed as follows:

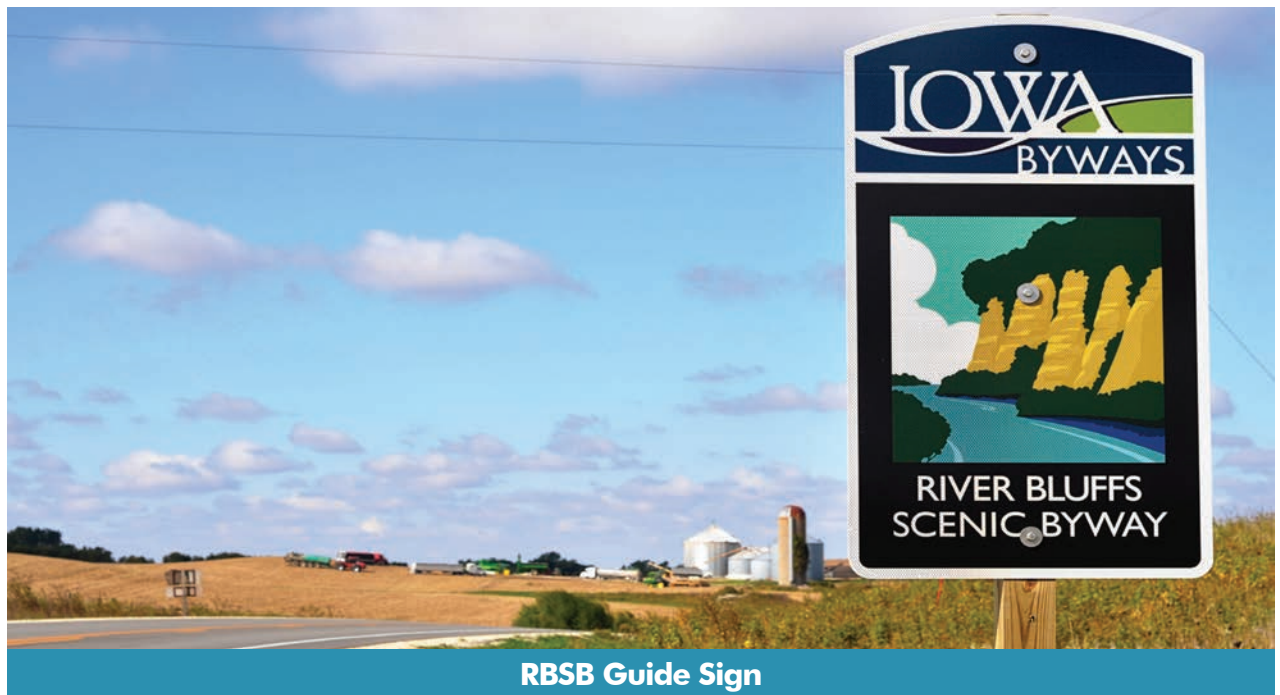
**A. RBSB Guide Signs:** A Byway Guide Sign can be defined as branded signage that are to provide the visitor with visual confirmation that they are on their designated route. Byway Guide Signs have the ability to be seen and used 24 hours a day/365 days a year, which makes them an invaluable tool for visitors during the Visit-Stage of byway trip planning. When RBSB Board members worked with the Iowa DOT and Scenic Byway Coordinators across the state to analyze Iowa Byway Guide Signs, input received in 2008 resulted in detecting a need for new and improved visual aid along each designated route in Iowa. Program participants believed that updated Guide Signs would help visitors navigate each route and distinguish one byway from the next. Other benefits participants believed would be a result of implementing a properly installed system of Iowa byway guide signs are listed as follows:



New RBSB End Sign



Old RBSB Begin Sign



RBSB Guide Sign

- Inform motorists of designated byway routes
- Guide travelers along the multiple routes that comprise a designated byway
- Inform byway users of entrances and exits
- Direct travelers to byway attractions
- Offer a safe traveling environment
- Prevent travelers from becoming disorientated, lost or frustrated

**Existing Conditions:** Prior to 2008, guide signs were the most coveted wayshowing component the RBSB Board desired to add along the byway. By working with a variety of partners, the RBSB Board was able to receive funding for the design, planning and installation of new Byway Guide Signs. Today, there are 122 main route signs and 74 auxiliary signs that comprise the Byway Guide Sign System. The RBSB Board's accomplishments, as they relate to the installation of byway guide signs are listed below:

1. Decision to Phase out Existing Byway Signage in the Fall of 2009: Although guide signs had been installed at different times along each scenic byway in Iowa between 1993-2011, all signs displayed the same graphic identity of a barn and silo. This provided the visitor with the ability to recognize when they were driving on an Iowa byway, but the universal sign was outdated and did not allow visitors to distinguish one byway from the other. Because of this, Iowa Scenic Byway Coordinators employed from RC&D's across the state worked with the Iowa DOT to develop a system-wide identity and individual graphic identities for each byway in Iowa.

2. Awarded Funding from the National Scenic Byway Program (NSBP) in the Winter of 2010: RC&D's across the state worked with the Iowa DOT to receive a \$580,000 grant from the NSBP for the Iowa Byways Signage Implementation Project. Funding was used to hire a consulting firm to design and install guide signs along 10 of Iowa's byways.

3. Hiring of Shive-Hattery & Voltmer Inc in the Spring of 2010: After submitting a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), Iowa Byway Coordinators selected an engineering consulting firm, Shive-Hattery, to develop a graphic identifier for the Iowa byway's program as well as individually branded logos for each of the ten Scenic byways in Iowa. Voltmer Inc. was hired to install the byway guide signs across the state.

4. System-Wide Graphic Identity Complete in the Summer of 2010: Shive-Hattery worked with all of the Iowa Scenic Byway Coordinators to develop a system-wide graphic identity for the Iowa Byways Program. The phrase "system-wide graphic identity" can be defined as the single image that represents the comprehensive family of Iowa byways. The "Iowa Byways" design was developed to be used as a stand-alone graphic for identifying and promoting the Iowa Byways Program, as well as to be combined with individual byway graphic identities on guide signs for each route. Graphic colors, proportions and dimensions of the system-wide graphic identity for the Iowa Byways Program can be found in the Iowa Byway Signage Policy Manual.

5. Individual Byway Graphic Identity Complete in the Summer of 2010: Working alongside Shive-Hattery and the Iowa DOT, Northeast Iowa RC&D held multiple board and stakeholder meetings to develop the RBSB's logo concept. After considerable discussion about what would make a memorable graphic theme for the byway, the group decided on a logo that would portray an image of a winding river between limestone outcroppings that is frequently on display along the route. In addition to the unique graphic image, the name of the byway was added to the sign to help visitors distinguish each roadway from one another. Graphic colors, proportions and dimensions of the RBSB guide sign logo can be found in the Iowa Byway Signage Policy Manual by visiting [www.iowadot.gov/traffic/manuals/pdf/02g-01.pdf](http://www.iowadot.gov/traffic/manuals/pdf/02g-01.pdf).

6. Iowa Byways Signage Policy Manual Complete in

the Winter of 2010: Once a system-wide identity and individual graphic identities for each byway in Iowa was completed, the Iowa DOT developed the Iowa Byways Signage Policy Manual to meet the needs of those responsible for implementing, installing and sustaining the byway guide signs. The policy manual was adopted by the Iowa DOT and is amended to the Traffic and Safety Manual (TAS). In addition to providing information about each logos colors, proportions and dimensions, the manual clearly defines the "rules" for how to properly install the byway guide signs. Height, off-set from traveled way, etc. are spelled out in the policy manual, which can be referenced by visiting [www.iowadot.gov/traffic/manuals/pdf/02g-01.pdf](http://www.iowadot.gov/traffic/manuals/pdf/02g-01.pdf).

7. Predictive Maps Complete in the Summer of 2011: With the rules and standards in place for the byway guide signs, Shive-Hattery developed predictive maps for each byway in Iowa. Predictive maps were completed to provide knowledge and illustrations about the proposed locations of byway signs and recommended installation type for each. The RBSB predictive map document can be found by visiting <ftp://ftp.shive-hattery.com/Iowa%20Byways%20Signage%20Maps/River%20Bluffs/River%20Bluffs%20Sign%20Assemblies%20map.pdf>.

8. Jurisdictional Coordination Meeting Held in the Summer of 2011: Northeast Iowa RC&D invited city officials, tourism directors, county engineers as well as employees of Iowa DOT, Voltmer and Shive-Hattery to attend a jurisdictional coordination meeting to identify, review and verify the byway guide sign locations and installation types. Each jurisdiction was encouraged to review all proposed locations of signs and alert Shive-Hattery of any changes that needed to be made.

9. Locations of Proposed Signs Marked in the Summer of 2011: Jurisdictions along the RBSB received a call from the contractor, Voltmer Inc., indicating that

proposed sign locations had been marked with flags, ribbons or water-based marking paint. County Engineers and the RBSB Board was asked to promptly review the proposed locations and respond directly to the contractor with questions or concerns. Each jurisdiction was given two weeks to review the proposed sign locations and installation types.

10. Installation of Byway Guide Signs in the Fall of 2011: Once the proposed signage locations were approved, the installation of 122 main route signs and 74 auxiliary signs (mostly directional arrows) were installed along the RBSB.

**B. RBSB Welcome Signs:** One critical function of a successful wayshowing system is to properly mark main vehicular entrances and exits to the RBSB. One way to accomplish this is through the installation of Byway Welcome Signs at major starting or portal entrance points along the RBSB. A Byway Welcome Sign can be defined as an expression of cordial greeting to a visitor whose arrival to the byway is desired. By strategically placing Byway Welcome Signs at high-traffic intersections and entrances, they can act as cues that let visitors know when they have arrived to the RBSB, or are leaving its corridor.

**Existing Conditions:** When the RBSB Board took inventory of existing Byway Welcome Signs, they found two locations where they were present. The first location was at the intersection of County Road C7X and the Great River Road in Guttenberg, IA. The second location was at the intersection of Highway 18 and Highway 76 near Marquette, IA. Both locations featured black and white BEGIN and END auxiliary signs that are mounted directly below the standard RBSB Guide Sign. However, the RBSB Board did note that both of the existing byway welcome signs more or less blended in with the other Byway Guide Signs and did not convey a sense of truly being “welcomed to the RBSB.”



McGregor Community Welcome Sign



West Union Community Welcome Sign



Wadena Community Welcome Sign



Elkader Community Welcome Sign



Marquette Community Welcome Sign



Guttenberg Community Welcome Sign



Clermont Community Welcome Sign



Elgin Community Welcome Sign



**Volga Community Welcome Sign**

**C. Community Welcome Signs:** A Community Welcome Sign can be defined as an entrance sign that enables a community, town and/or incorporated township to define itself and welcome visitors with a sign that reflects some aspect of the community's character. Often times, a Community Welcome Sign is developed to establish a "brand" or sense of place and are custom-made signs, monuments and/or landscapes that are developed to act as cues to let the visitor know when they have arrived into the community. Their presence can help create a positive first impression, provide a constant reminder of the community's presence and/or manifest a sense of pride for the township.

**Existing Conditions:** When an analysis of existing Community Welcome Signs was conducted, RBSB Board members identified signs for 8 of the 10 RBSB anchor communities that included: Clermont, Elgin, West Union, Volga, Elkader, Guttenberg, McGregor and Marquette. Each community welcome sign varied with differing materials and slogans. Everything from billboard graphic designs to carved wood signs and limestone landscapes are present along the byway. The RBSB Board also noted that no existing Community Welcome Signs incorporate information or acknowledgement of the RBSB or that they are an anchor byway community. Only the towns of Fayette and Wadena were found to not have a community welcome sign.

**D. Downtown and/or Historic District Loop Signs:** Downtown/Historic District Loop Signs can be defined as a sign installed at a high-trafficked intersection at the entrance of a byway community that has potential to direct or bring people into the central business district, or focal point of the town. This type of signage would be especially beneficial for the communities parallel, or just off the byway route. Often times, Downtown District Loop Signs are comprised of the community logo with an Auxiliary Sign attached at the bottom. The Auxiliary Sign typically has a message or phrase to inform the traveler

of the commercial, office, retail, and/or cultural hub of the community and what direction he or she must turn to reach their desired travel destination.

**Existing Conditions:** No Downtown District Loop Signs exist within or outside of the RBSB corridor.

**E. Destination Approach Signs:** A Destination Approach Sign can be defined as a sign that serves to indicate that there is a landmark, attraction, place of interest and/or other site destination ahead. In Iowa, types of destinations that qualify for this type of signage include: incorporated communities, recreational areas, historic sites and facilities, tourist attractions, colleges and universities, public and nonprofit cultural facilities, regional airports, bus terminals, ground transportation centers, state or federal medical facilities and national guard units. To qualify, the site must be on or within 1 mile of the intersected route. Differing colors of destination signs also exist and are based on the type of destination listed on the sign. Brown signs are used for cultural and recreational destinations. Green signs are used for all other destinations. Blue signs are used for information related to motorist services such as gas, food, lodging, camping, rest areas, etc.

**Existing Conditions:** After selecting what the RBSB Board believes to be the anchor attractions along the route, an assessment of Destination Approach Signs relating to each was collected. Their analysis revealed that Destination Approach Signs were present for just over half of all of the anchor attractions along the RBSB.

**F. On-Site Identification Signs:** An On-Site Identification Sign can be defined as a sign confirming that the visitor has reached the site and/or location they are looking for. This type of sign is often used at the entrance to a site, or located on the site itself and are typically not located within the public road right of way.

**Existing Conditions:** An analysis of On-Site Identification Signs along the byway revealed that just over half of the RBSB Board's anchor attractions have some type of On-Site Identification Sign. The RBSB Board also noticed during their inventory that this type of signage varied in shape, size, color and material from one to another. In other words, there was a lack of consistency and/or cohesive design elements when identifying one attraction from the other. Another observation made was that of the existing On-Site Identification Signs, none of the attractions acknowledged themselves to be partners of the RBSB through the use of the byway logo or narrative.

**G. Iowa 511 Service Signs:** An Iowa 511 Service Sign can be defined as a sign displaying a call-in number that provides information about construction, detours, route-specific weather forecasts, road conditions and/or tourism info to the visitor. While this system of signage is aimed at managing traffic congestion and primarily used in urban areas, Iowa is exploring its use within the tourism sector.

**Existing Conditions:** No Iowa 511 Service Signs exist along the byway or within the RBSB corridor.

**H. Byway Cross Marketing Signs:** This type of signage promotes and/or informs the RBSB traveler about other nearby scenic byways within the region, while providing direction on how to get there.

**Existing Conditions:** No Byway Cross Marketing Signs exist along the byway or within the RBSB corridor.

### **13.6 Existing Wayshowing Signage**

An inventory of existing wayshowing signage along the RBSB is documented below. The RBSB Board would like to note that although a wide variety of signage needs may exist within the RBSB corridor, they chose to focus their attention on the byway sites they consider to be their anchor attractions. Their inventory of existing signage is as follows:



E. Destination Approach Sign



F. On-Site Identification Sign



D. Downtown/Historic District Loop Sign



E. Destination Approach Sign



F. On-Site Identification Sign



G. Iowa 511 Service Sign

Intrinsic Resource	Point of Interest	Town	RBSB Welcome Sign	Community Welcome Sign	Downtown District Sign	Destination Approach Sign	On-Site Identification Sign	Iowa 511 Service Sign
		Clermont	X					
Art & Cultural	Woodland Designs, Inc.	Clermont						
Recreational	Heritage Farm Park	Clermont				X	X	
Historical	Montauk Historic Site	Clermont				X	X	
Historical	Riegel Blacksmith Shop	Clermont					X	
Historical	Union Sunday School & Kimball Pipe Organ	Clermont						
Historical	Larrabee School & Museum	Clermont					X	
Recreational	Riverside Park	Clermont				X	X	
Scenic	Great River Road Proposed Overlook	Clermont						
Scenic	Goeken County Park	Eldorado				X		
		Elgin	X					
Historical	Elgin Historical Museum	Elgin					X	
Visitor Information	Gilbertson Conservation Education Area	Elgin				X	X	
		Wadena						
Scenic	Brush Creek Roadside Pull-Off (Eric Boehm)	Wadena						
Scenic	Wetland Roadside Pull-Off (Roger Erickson)	Wadena						
		West Union	X					
Historical	Fayette County Historical & Genealogical Society	West Union				X	X	
Visitor Information	Fayette County Economic Dev & Chamber	West Union						
Recreational	Echo Valley State Park	West Union				X	X	
		Fayette						
Recreational	Volga River State Recreation Area (VRSRA)	Fayette				X	X	
Recreational	Fayette County Tourism Center	Fayette					X	
Recreational	Wildwood Nature Center	Fayette					X	
Archaeological	Stone Man	Fayette						
		Volga	X					
Scenic	VRSRA Proposed Overlook	Volga						
Art & Cultural	Volga City Opera House	Volga						
Recreational	Volga City Park	Volga						
		Elkader	X					
Art & Cultural	Elkader Opera House	Elkader					X	
Recreational	Founders Park	Elkader						
Historical	Carter House Museum	Elkader					X	
Historical	George Maier Rural Heritage Center	Elkader				X	X	
Historical	Clayton County Court House & Clock Tower	Elkader						
Historical	Elkader Opera House	Elkader					X	
Visitor Information	Clayton County Development Group	Elkader					X	
Visitor Information	Big Springs Fish Hatchery	Elkader				X	X	



Intrinsic Resource	Point of Interest	Town	RBSB Welcome Sign	Community Welcome Sign	Downtown District Sign	Destination Approach Sign	On-Site Identification Sign	Iowa 511 Service Sign
Scenic	Chicken Ridge Overlook	Elkader						
Recreational	Osborne Park	Elkader						
Visitor Information	Osborne Conservation and Welcome Center	Elkader				X	X	
Recreational	Motor Mill Park	Elkader						
Historical	Motor Mill Historic Site	Elkader				X	X	
		Guttenberg	X	X				
Art & Cultural	Guttenberg Creativity Center	Guttenberg				X	X	
Recreational	Ingleside Park	Guttenberg						
Historical	Lockmaster's House Heritage Museum	Guttenberg				X	X	
Historical	Lock & Dam 10	Guttenberg				X	X	
Visitor Information	Guttenberg Fish Aquarium and Hatchery	Guttenberg				X	X	
Visitor Information	Guttenberg Welcome Center	Guttenberg				X	X	
Scenic	Guttenberg North Overlook	Guttenberg				X		
Scenic	Guttenberg South Overlook	Guttenberg				X		
Archaeological	Turkey River State Preserve Archeological District	Millville						
Historical	Cassville Car Ferry	Millville				X	X	
		McGregor		X				
Archaeological	Sny Magill	McGregor						
Recreational	Pikes Peak State Park	McGregor				X		
Art & Cultural	McGregor-Marquette Center for the Arts	McGregor				X		
Historical	McGregor Historical Museum	McGregor					X	
Visitor Information	McGregor-Marquette Chamber	McGregor				X		
Historical	Froelich Tractor Museum	McGregor				X	X	
		Marquette	X	X				
Visitor Information	Marquette Depot Museum & Information Center	Marquette				X	X	
Historical	Emma Big Bear Residence	Marquette						
Visitor Information	Driftless Area Wetland Center	Marquette				X	X	
Recreational	Bloody Run Park & Campground	Marquette				X		
Archaeological	Effigy Mounds National Monument	Marquette				X	X	
Scenic	Marquette River Boardwalk	Marquette						
Scenic	Marquette Observation Deck	Marquette				X	X	
		Other						
Recreational	Turkey River Recreational Corridor	FC & CC						
Recreational	Turkey River Water Trail - 114 miles	FC & CC					X	
Recreational	Volga River Water Trail	FC & CC						
N/A	N/A	Fayette County (FC)				X	X	
N/A	N/A	Clayton County (CC)				X	X	

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## 13.7 Proposed Wayshowing Projects

After completing an inventory and assessment of the RBSB's existing wayshowing components, the RBSB recommends a variety of strategies and projects that they would like to implement into their comprehensive wayshowing system to help RBSB travelers navigate the byway. It should be known that employee time and wages needed to complete each strategy and/or project is not included into the cost estimates below. Only direct project costs for every recommendation has been included. RBSB Board recommendations as they relate to each of the five wayshowing components (driving directions, maps, electronic devices & digital data, trained staff & hospitality personnel and signage) are below. A map identifying the number and location of proposed wayshowing signage is located at the end of this section on page 182.

**1. Develop RBSB Turn-By-Turn Direction Flyers:** National surveys indicate that online mapping services offered by Google Maps, MapQuest, Bing and/or Yahoo tend to dominate the market for directions when travelers are in the Pre-Visit Stage of trip planning. However, in the case of traveling along the 109-mile RBSB, an insurmountable amount of time may have to be spent zooming-in and out along the maps offered through these online mapping services to compile an accurate depiction of driving directions. Byway route signs accomplish this, to an extent, through the use of visual cues in the form of branded RBSB guide signs. Though, there may be some travelers of the byway that would prefer to have some reassurance in the form of printed driving directions to assist them with their navigation of the byway. Because of this, the RBSB Board recommends that an 8.5"x11" flyer be developed to provide detailed driving directions for each of the three sections of the RBSB. It is recommended that the flyer be made available online, so that printing costs would not be incurred or associated with this project. Making the flyer 8.5"x11" and posting it on the Travel Iowa's RBSB webpage would make the publication easily accessible, downloadable and printable for travelers to use while traveling the byway.

**Partners:** Iowa DOT, Travel Iowa, Iowa Byway Coordinators, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**2. Establish & Implement RBSB Cartographic Standards:** Maps allow travelers to make informed and efficient decisions. They enable them to answer location-related questions, to support spatial behavior, to enable spatial problem solving and/or to simply be able to become aware of space. The RBSB Board understands that great maps feature good design principles such as visual contrast, legibility, figure-ground organization, hierarchical

organization and balance. Together, these principles form a system for seeing and understanding the relative importance of the content in the map, which helps users navigate with confidence. To ensure the development of highly effective maps for the byway, the RBSB Board believes that a set of standards and/or rules must be identified, agreed upon and incorporated. Referencing many concepts adopted from Wayshowing for Byways, A Reference Manual, published by the America's Byways Resource Center, RBSB Board members have identified a list of standards and/or rules for maps and cartography that include the following:

- Prominently display the byway route
- Indicate the byway corridor
- Indicate gravel sections of the byway
- Identify all nearby towns and cities
- Illustrate attractions & travel services with symbols or labels
- Label all roads that make up the byway's route and lead to byway attractions
- Use symbols, line weights, colors, patterns & fonts to consistently communicate a common meaning. Ex: all highways use a common line weight, all water bodies are blue, etc.
- Exhibit essential intrinsic qualities and resources such as rivers, trout streams, public land and other geographical features
- Instruct travelers to look for and follow the byway's guide signs
- Indicate byway orientation stops, visitor centers and other public locations where travel information may be obtained

**3. Provide Downloadable RBSB Printed Material & Maps:** According to the Federal Communications Commission, broadband deployment in the United States, especially in rural areas, is failing to keep pace with today's advanced, high-quality voice, data, graphics and video offerings. In 2015, it was reported that over half of all rural Americans lack access to 25Mbps/3Mbps service. Factor in the spotty and/or lack-there-of cell phone coverage along the RBSB, and one can begin to understand that it may be difficult for many byway travelers to rely on online map resources to assist them with navigation. Because of this, the RBSB Board recommends making all byway printed material available for download from the Iowa Tourism's RBSB webpage. Special emphasis by prioritization, should be given to those downloadable printed publications that feature a map of the byway.

**Partners:** Travel Iowa

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**4. Incorporate RBSB Information into AAA Mobile App:** Statistics show that the average American spends more than two hours a day on his or her mobile device. While probably only a handful of applications make up the bulk of this total usage, it doesn't change the fact that each user has to unlock, scroll and scan their device for the Apps they are looking for. Having the Iowa Byway's presence online can be undoubtedly beneficial for those who are actively looking for information about Iowa's byways, or just so happen to come across information about them unexpectedly. However, when the RBSB Board and other Iowa Byway Coordinators conducted initial research for the development of an Iowa Byway's App, they learned quickly that cost estimates for the development, management and maintenance of such an App is not a feasible budgeted option for the Iowa Byways Program at this time. Cost estimates show that in addition to the initial start up cost of \$3,700 - \$7,000 to develop the App itself, there is often a monthly surcharge in the range of \$199-499 to maintain its presence on App search libraries. With this in mind, the Iowa Byway Coordinators expressed their desire for an online App to members of the Byways of Iowa Foundation. Through initial conversations, a partnership opportunity to merge information about each of Iowa's scenic byway's into the existing AAA Mobile App was discussed. It is the recommendation of the RBSB Board to continue to pursue the partnership with AAA in order to include information about the RBSB on the existing App.

**Partners:** Byways of Iowa Foundation, American Automobile Association (AAA), Iowa DOT, Iowa Byway Coordinators

**Potential Funding Sources:** Byways of Iowa Foundation

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**5. Promote Iowa's 511 Service, Website & App:** Traveler safety is first and foremost the primary concern and priority for the RBSB Board. The Iowa DOT's 511 Traveler Information System is a systematic approach to providing the most up-to-date travel information through the use of a phone system, website and App. Iowa travelers can call or visit either online media outlet to receive accurate and time sensitive information about 1) weather related road conditions from Oct. 15th through April 15th, 2) statewide weather conditions, 3) state road construction projects, maintenance activities, crashes, truck restrictions and detours and 4) traveler information services regarding tourism and community events. This service is free of charge and operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The RBSB Board recommends that the Iowa DOT's 511 website link, App link and phone number found at <http://511ia.org> be included on RBSB digital marketing sources, printed material and Information Hubs.

**Partners:** Iowa DOT

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**6. Trained Staff & Hospitality:** The RBSB Board has identified the need to increase educational efforts pertaining to trained staff and hospitality personnel along the RBSB. Specific recommendations for this wayshowing component may be found within the Strategic Marketing Plan's Marketing Mix Recommendations.

**7. Inventory Byway Guide Signs Annually:** Byway providers should conduct an annual inventory of RBSB Guide Signs and communicate the inventory results to the applicable RBSB jurisdictions and Iowa DOT. To conduct a sign inventory, the RBSB Coordinator will need to drive the route and compare what signs currently exist along the byway to the sign types displayed in the RBSB predictive map document, which can be obtained from the Iowa DOT. If Guide Signs and/or Auxiliary Signs are found to be missing or damaged, the Iowa DOT will provide replacement signs and the owner of the road (local agency or District DOT) will provide the pole replacement/ hardware as needed. For sign replacement, Scenic Byways Program Manager, Mary Stahlhut, may be contacted at 515-239-1369.

**Partners:** Iowa DOT

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**8. Install Byway Welcome Signs at Select Information Hubs:** Today, black & white BEGIN and END Auxiliary Signs mounted below RBSB Guide Signs exist at two locations along the byway. However, Board members believe that both RBSB Welcome Signs blend in with the byway's many Guide Signs and do not convey a sense of truly being "welcomed to the RBSB." Therefore, the RBSB Board recommends that a RBSB Welcome Sign be an added component to select information hubs along the route (information hubs are referenced within the Interpretation Section of this CMP). The message "Welcome to the River Bluffs Scenic Byway" or "Your River Bluffs Scenic Byway Experience Starts Here" will be displayed. The RBSB Welcome Sign component will be an extension added to the information hub, where a wooden post will protrude out from the top of the structure's side. A RBSB logo will be hung from the wooden post, with the welcome message added to the bottom of the sign. Recommended locations for each RBSB Welcome Sign can be referenced by viewing the "map of proposed wayshowing media" at the end of this section.

**Partners:** Fayette County Community Foundation, Clayton County Community Foundation, Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette/Clayton County Community Foundations, UMGC

**Quantity:** 4

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$8,000 (\$2,000 per sign)

**9. Install Community Welcome Signs:** The RBSB Board recommends the installation of Community Welcome Signs for the RBSB anchor communities where none exist. Recommended locations for each Community Entrance Sign can be referenced by viewing the “map of proposed wayshowing media” at the end of this section.

**Partners:** City of Wadena, City of Fayette

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette County Community Foundation, Clayton County Community Foundation, Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation

**Quantity:** 2

**Estimated Cost:** \$20,000 (\$10,000 per welcome sign)

**10. Install Downtown District Loop Signs:** The RBSB Board recommends the installation of Downtown District Loop Signs at select intersections and/or entrances near byway communities where the byway route does not go directly through town. Recommended locations for each Downtown District Loop Signs can be referenced by viewing the “map of proposed wayshowing media” at the end of this section.

**Partners:** Iowa DOT, Community Officials, Tourism Directors, County Engineers, Voltmer, Shive-Hattery

**Potential Funding Source:** TBD

**Quantity:** 20

**Estimated Cost:** \$7,000 (\$350 per sign)

**11. Install Destination Approach Signs:** The RBSB Board recommends the installation of Destination Approach Signs for select anchor attractions where none exist. Recommended locations for each Destination Approach Sign can be referenced by viewing the “map of proposed wayshowing media” at the end of this section.

**Partners:** Iowa DOT

**Potential Funding Source:** TBD

**Quantity:** 4

**Estimated Cost:** \$1,400 (\$350 per sign)

**12. Distribute “Friends of the Byway” Replica Alum Signs:** The RBSB Board had intentions of identifying select anchor businesses and attractions along the route, considered to be RBSB partners, through the distribution of the RBSB window clings. However, after market research was conducted, it was found that many of the custom clear static window clings that were purchased became diluted, or their adhesive backing would no longer stick to the glass surface after a short period of time. To prevent this from reoccurring while also

branding said businesses and attractions as anchor byway partners, the RBSB Board recommends purchasing reflective engineer grade (standard) aluminum signs that feature the RBSB logo with the phrase “Friend of the River Bluffs Scenic Byway” on the bottom, with a recommended size of 7”x10.” Signs should be given to anchor businesses and attractions along the RBSB.

**Partners:** Chambers, Visitors Bureau, Byways of Iowa Foundation

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fundraising, Byways of Iowa Foundation

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Quantity:** 80

**Estimated Cost:** \$2,800 (\$35 per sign)

**13. Install Iowa 511 Service Signs:** The RBSB Board recommends the installation of Iowa 511 Service Signs displaying a call in number at select locations along the RBSB to provide travelers with information about construction, detours, route-specific weather forecasts, road conditions and tourism information pertaining to the RBSB Corridor. Recommended locations for each Iowa 511 Service Sign can be referenced by viewing the “map of proposed wayshowing media” at the end of this section.

**Partners:** Iowa DOT

**Potential Funding Source:** TBD

**Quantity:** 4

**Estimated Cost:** \$1,400 (\$350 per sign)

**14. Install Public Land Wayfinding Signs:** Through this project the partners, including county and city park managers throughout Clayton and Fayette counties will strive to improve wayfinding on public lands including: water accesses, city and county parks and preserves, Iowa DNR Wildlife Management Areas, trout stream access and land and water trails. Maps outlining public lands and their recreational features and amenities will be developed for every public land and access. This will also include national grid system signage to improve emergency reporting procedures. Educational talks for the public will be incorporated with the installation of wayfinding signage on public lands.

**Potential Partners:** Fayette County Conservation Board, Clayton County Conservation Board, Clayton and Fayette Counties Emergency Management Personnel, municipalities along the RBSB

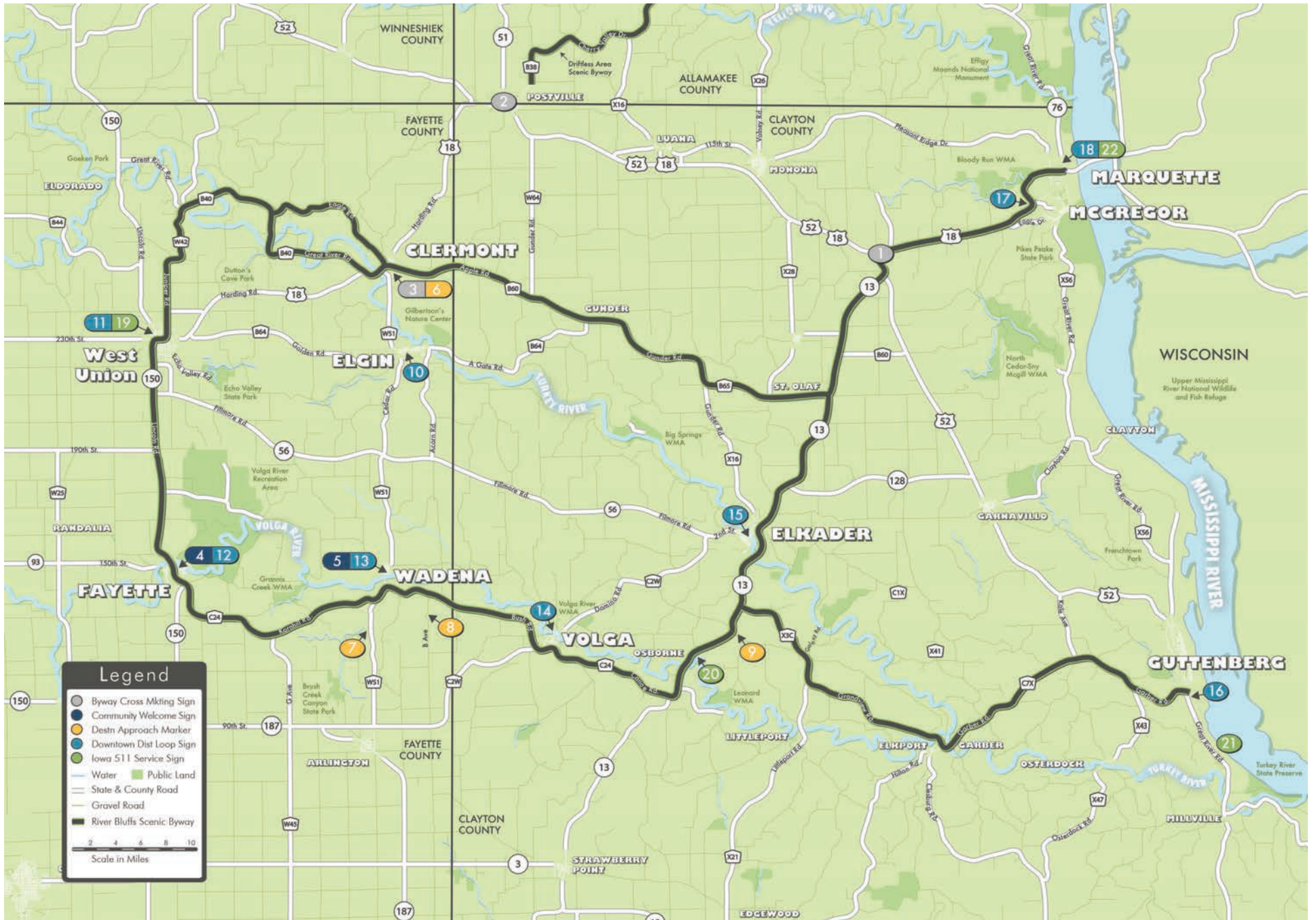
**Potential Funding Sources:** Land and Water Conservation Fund, Iowa County and City REAP, Iowa REAP CEP, RBSB communities

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$52,000



**Limited Public Land Wayfinding Signs are Located along the RBSB**



Map #	Wayshowing Media Recommendation	Proposed Location	Community
1	Byway Cross Marketing Sign	N/A	Intersection of Hwy18/Hwy13
2	Byway Cross Marketing Sign	N/A	Clermont
3	Byway Cross Marketing Sign	N/A	Postville
4	Community Welcome Sign	N/A	Fayette
5	Community Welcome Sign	N/A	Wadena
6	Destination Approach Marker	Gilbertson Nature Center	Clermont
7	Destination Approach Marker	Cedar Creek Roadside Pull-Off (Eric Boehm)	Wadena
8	Destination Approach Marker	Wetland Restoration Roadside Pull-Off (Roger Erickson)	Wadena
9	Destination Approach Marker	Chicken Ridge Overlook	Elkader
10	Downtown District Loop Sign	N/A	Elgin
11	Downtown District Loop Sign	N/A	West Union
12	Downtown District Loop Sign	N/A	Fayette
13	Downtown District Loop Sign	N/A	Wadena
14	Downtown District Loop Sign	N/A	Volga
15	Downtown District Loop Sign	N/A	Elkader
16	Downtown District Loop Sign	N/A	Guttenberg
17	Downtown District Loop Sign	N/A	McGregor
18	Downtown District Loop Sign	N/A	Marquette
19	Iowa 511 Service Sign (Information Hub with Byway Welcome Sign)	Veterans Memorial Park	West Union
20	Iowa 511 Service Sign (Information Hub with Byway Welcome Sign)	Osborne Conservation and Welcome Center	Elkader
21	Iowa 511 Service Sign (Information Hub with Byway Welcome Sign)	Guttenberg South Overlook	Guttenberg
22	Iowa 511 Service Sign (Information Hub with Byway Welcome Sign)	Mississippi River Boardwalk	Marquette



# Section **Fourteen**

Interpretive Plan



# Interpretive Planning

*“Interpretive planning is an initial step in the planning and design process for informal learning-based institutions like museums, nature centers, heritage sites, parks and other cultural facilities where interpretation is used to communicate messages, stories, information and experiences. It is a decision-making process that blends management needs and resource considerations with visitor needs and desires to determine the most effective way to communicate a message to a targeted audience.”*

## 14.1 Introduction

While the RBSB strategic marketing plan looks to identify strategies for how to entice the visitor into traveling and exploring the RBSB, effective interpretation looks to address how the byway stories get told to the visitor in an interesting, concise, relevant and memorable way. Interpretation is defined as a communication process designed to reveal meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage to the public, through first hand experiences with objects, artifacts, landscapes and/or sites. Essentially, interpretation involves the process of defining what makes the byway special. The RBSB Board understands that interpretation, if used correctly, can be an effective communication strategy to help visitors understand the rare and local stories associated with the roadway. Interpretation can reveal stories of the people, places and events that have occurred, or are occurring, while also serving as a medium for sharing the region's history, culture and natural heritage. Perhaps this is why interpretation is so important, as renowned Tourism Planner John Veverka states, "it changes the byway from being a place to an edutainment experience."

When developing this section of the CMP, the RBSB Board would like to note that their Interpretive Plan is intended to lay the groundwork for a more detailed and expansive Interpretive Master Plan (IMP) for the byway that Schmeckle Reserve Interpreters expects to have completed by the Fall of 2016. For this reason, this section provides more of a snapshot of existing interpretive resources, in addition to the RBSB Board's recommendations for future interpretation. In their mission to assist Schmeckle Reserve Interpreters with the development of a successful interpretive program for the byway, the RBSB Board conducted research, inventoried existing interpretation and assembled their recommendations to identify future interpretive investments that should be made. Their findings are as follows.



Osborne Welcome Center Wayside Exhibit

## 14.2 Benefits of Interpretation

The difference between sharing interpretation instead of information with the byway visitor can be instrumental in helping to provide a successful traveling experience for those who travel the byway.. The RBSB Board views interpretation is an integral component of the byway and has identified their reasoning for why additional opportunities should be pursued. RBSB Board members believe that additional interpretive programs and projects related to the RBSB and its intrinsic resources can:

- Inspire visits to other nearby RBSB sites, helping regional tourism grow

- Increase repeat use of the RBSB route
- Expand the marketability of the RBSB and its anchor attractions
- Educate the traveler about the intrinsic resources along the RBSB through the use of photographs, narrative, artifacts, documents, panels, hubs and/or displays.
- Encourage travelers to use the RBSB in a safe and responsible manner
- Help residents gain a greater appreciation and pride of their own local heritage
- Inspire residents to take a more active role in the stewardship of RBSB resources

### 14.3 Assessment of Existing Interpretation

RBSB Board members understand that a wide variety of interpretive methods, ranging from publications and multi-media, to exhibits and theme/message development are all elements associated with a successful interpretive program. However, since many of these strategies may be referred to in several other sections of this CMP, or will be included in Schmeckle Reserve Interpreter's IMP for the byway, the RBSB Board elected to focus primarily on evaluating the existing 1) interpretive plans, 2) interior interpretive displays and 3) exterior interpretive displays at anchor attractions along the byway. After each anchor attraction's existing interpretive conditions were inventoried, RBSB Board members provided recommendations for each. Their findings, as they relate to these three components of interpretation are as follows:

#### One: Interpretive Plans

According to the National Association for Interpretive Planning (NIAP), an interpretive plan clearly identifies the themes and storylines of the Byway and identifies strategies for how these are effectively shared with the byway traveler. The successful implementation of the interpretive plan can have an immense impact on the RBSB Board's goals related to advocacy, partnerships, programs, marketing and management of the byway. This is because excellent interpretive plans often times provide the foundation for the development of marketing materials, identifying anchor attraction needs, guiding program development and prioritizing projects that are needed to effectively communicate the byway's stories.

**Existing Conditions:** When the RBSB Board conducted an inventory of existing interpretive plans, they decided to sort their findings into two categories, of which included information related to 1) the RBSB and 2) anchor attractions along the byway. Existing conditions for both are as follows:

- **RBSB Interpretive Master Plan:** An interpretive master plan (IMP) for the RBSB does not exist. However, as stated within the introduction, the RBSB Board has already partnered with Schmeckle Reserve Interpreters, who expect to have a draft of the byway's Interpretive Master Plan completed by the Fall of 2016.
- **RBSB Anchor Attractions:** When conducting an inventory of existing interpretive plans for anchor attractions along the byway, RBSB board members found that very few exist today. Out of 55 anchor attractions, only the Motor Mill Foundation in partnership with the Clayton County Conservation Board has received funding to begin the development of an interpretive visioning plan. Though, this funding was used to collect input through public meetings, which means a lot of work remains before the desired interpretation can be implemented at Motor Mill.

#### Two: Interior Interpretive Displays

Interior interpretive displays can be defined as exhibits with archaeological artifacts, natural objects and/or historic implements, in combination with visuals, hands-on-displays and easily understood language. These displays are typically found within museums, historic sites, nature centers and/or visitor welcome centers.

**Existing Conditions:** An inventory of anchor attractions with interior interpretive displays featuring artifacts, objects and/or implements worthy of being interpreted revealed that 19 of the byway's 55 sites qualify (35%). However, further research reveals that 3 sites have efficient interpretation, 2 sites have minimal interpretation and 1 site has funding secured for interpretive displays, meaning that only 32% of the sites with interior objects and/or artifacts are being interpreted, with only 16% being interpreted efficiently.

#### Three: Exterior Interpretive Displays

**A. Information Hubs:** Information hubs are thematic kiosk structures that the RBSB Board would like to develop at key visitor intersects to help introduce travelers to the byway and help inform and orient them to the route's attractions, stories and communities. These structures consist of multiple signs that provide maps, information and interpretation 24 hours a day year-round. They are a useful component to incorporate since they have the ability to introduce the byway to motorists and visitors who pass by serendipitously. Their size and character draw attention that can help support the byway's identity and brand. Information hubs are typically found at community gathering spaces and/or elite anchor attractions.

**Existing Conditions:** When the RBSB Board conducted an inventory of Information Hubs, it was discovered that none exist along the byway or within the RBSB corridor. However, the Clayton County Development Group has developed large interpretive panels depicting everything there is to see and do within Clayton County. These panels have been placed at various attractions, businesses and community gathering spaces within Clayton County.



Clayton County Interpretive Hub

**B. Wayside Exhibits (WE):** Wayside exhibits are interpretive panels that are placed along the byway to help visitors understand messages, stories and meanings behind a resource or site. These messages or stories are included on wayside exhibits to change a behavior, educate or evoke emotion to the traveler. Wayside exhibits are typically found at anchor attractions, roadside pull-offs and/or overlooks.

**Existing Conditions:** An inventory of wayside exhibits along the RBSB revealed that 13 of the byway's 55 sites qualify (24%). However, the RBSB Board also noticed that the majority of the wayside exhibits located along the byway vary in size, shape, material, placement and consistency. Almost all of the wayside exhibits are site-specific. In other words, there has been a lack of coordinated effort to thematically unify wayside exhibits within the RBSB corridor.

**C. Territory Orientation Panels (TOP):** Territory orientation panels are information signs that are predominately used to identify, attract and orient visitors to collections of resources along the byway. Examples of locations for where this type of signage is most beneficial includes county parks, natural areas, trailheads, water trails, trout stream access points and historic districts. In other words, this type of signage helps provide a collection of detailed information regarding a specific grouping of similar resources or sites to the traveler.

**Existing Conditions:** An analysis of existing territory orientation panels revealed that panels have been developed for two resources along the RBSB, which include the Turkey River Water Trail and Turkey River Recreational Corridor Trail. Territory orientation panels have been installed at 8 different canoe access points along the Turkey River Water Trail and at 3 different trailhead locations along the Turkey River Recreational Corridor Trail.



Brush Creek Roadside Pull-Off (RBSB WE)



Wetland Roadside Pull-Off (RBSB WE)



Goeken Park (RBSB WE)



Chicken Ridge (RBSB WE)



Guttenberg/GRR Welcome Center (WE)



Guttenberg's Bussey Lake (WE)



Turkey River Recreational Corridor (TOP)



Driftless Area Wetland Centre (WE)



Turkey River Water Trail (TOP)



Marquette Observation Deck (WE)

Intrinsic Resource	Point of Interest	Town	Has an Interpretive Plan	Has Objects and/or Artifacts to Interpret	Has Interior Interpretive Displays	Information Hub Present	Wayside Exhibit Present	Territory Orientation Panel Present
		Clermont						
Art & Cultural	Woodland Designs, Inc.	Clermont						
Recreational	Heritage Farm Park	Clermont						
Historical	Montauk Historic Site	Clermont		X			X	
Historical	Riegel Blacksmith Shop	Clermont		X	Secured \$ for Displays			
Historical	Union Sunday School & Kimball Pipe Organ	Clermont						
Historical	Clermont Museum	Clermont		X				
Historical	Larrabee School & Museum	Clermont		X			X	
Recreational	Riverside Park	Clermont						
Scenic	Great River Road Proposed Overlook	Clermont						
Scenic	Goeken County Park	Eldorado					X	
		Elgin						
Historical	Elgin Historical Museum	Elgin		X				
Visitor Information	Gilbertson Conservation Education Area	Elgin		X	Minimal			
		Wadena						
Scenic	Brush Creek Roadside Pull-Off (Eric Boehm)	Wadena					X	
Scenic	Wetland Roadside Pull-Off (Roger Erickson)	Wadena					X	
		West Union						
Historical	Fayette County Historical & Genealogical Society	West Union		X	Efficient			
Visitor Information	Fayette County Economic Dev & Chamber	West Union						
Recreational	Echo Valley State Park	West Union						
		Fayette						
Recreational	Volga River State Recreation Area (VRSRA)	Fayette						
Recreational	Fayette County Tourism Center	Fayette						
Recreational	Wildwood Nature Center	Fayette						
Archaeological	Stone Man	Fayette						
		Volga						
Scenic	VRSRA Proposed Overlook	Volga						
Art & Cultural	Volga City Opera House	Volga		X				
Recreational	Volga City Park	Volga						
		Elkader						
Art & Cultural	Elkader Opera House	Elkader		X				
Recreational	Founders Park	Elkader					X	
Historical	Carter House Museum	Elkader		X				
Historical	George Maier Rural Heritage Center	Elkader		X				
Historical	Clayton County Court House & Clock Tower	Elkader						
Historical	Elkader Opera House	Elkader		X				
Visitor Information	Clayton County Development Group	Elkader						

Intrinsic Resource	Point of Interest	Town	Has an Interpretive Plan	Has Objects and/or Artifacts to Interpret	Has Interior Interpretive Displays	Information Hub Present	Wayside Exhibit Present	Territory Orientation Panel Present
Visitor Information	Big Springs Fish Hatchery	Elkader						
Scenic	Chicken Ridge Overlook	Elkader					X	
Recreational	Osborne Park	Elkader						
Visitor Information	Osborne Conservation and Welcome Center	Elkader		X	Minimal			
Recreational	Motor Mill Park	Elkader						
Historical	Motor Mill Historic Site	Elkader	Partially Completed	X				
Guttenberg								
Art & Cultural	Guttenberg Creativity Center	Guttenberg						
Recreational	Ingleside Park	Guttenberg						
Historical	Lockmaster's House Heritage Museum	Guttenberg		X				
Historical	Lock & Dam 10	Guttenberg					X	
Visitor Information	Guttenberg Fish Aquarium and Hatchery	Guttenberg		X			X	
Visitor Information	Guttenberg Welcome Center	Guttenberg						
Scenic	Guttenberg North Overlook	Guttenberg						
Scenic	Guttenberg South Overlook	Guttenberg					X	
Archaeological	Turkey River State Preserve Archeological District	Millville						
Historical	Cassville Car Ferry	Millville						
McGregor								
Archaeological	Sny Magill	McGregor						
Recreational	Pikes Peak State Park	McGregor					X	
Art & Cultural	McGregor-Marquette Center for the Arts	McGregor						
Historical	McGregor Historical Museum	McGregor		X	Efficient			
Visitor Information	McGregor-Marquette Chamber	McGregor						
Historical	Froelich Tractor Museum	McGregor						
Marquette								
Visitor Information	Marquette Depot Museum & Information Center	Marquette		X				
Historical	Emma Big Bear Residence	Marquette						
Visitor Information	Driftless Area Wetland Center	Marquette					X	
Recreational	Bloody Run Park & Campground	Marquette						
Archaeological	Effigy Mounds National Monument	Marquette		X	Efficient			
Scenic	Marquette River Boardwalk	Marquette						
Scenic	Marquette Observation Deck	Marquette					X	
Other								
Recreational	Turkey River Recreational Corridor	FC & CC						X
Recreational	Turkey River Water Trail - 114 miles	FC & CC						X
Recreational	Volga River Water Trail	FC & CC						
N/A	N/A	Fayette County (FC)						
N/A	N/A	Clayton County (CC)						

## 14.4 Proposed Interpretive Projects

After completing an inventory and assessment of the RBSB's existing interpretive plans and components, the RBSB Board analyzed their findings to develop a list of recommendations and strategies they wish to implement along the byway. It should be noted that employee time and wages needed to complete each strategy and/or project is not included into the cost estimates below. Only direct project costs for each recommendation has been included. The RBSB Board recommendations, as they relate to each component of interpretation that was analyzed (interpretive plans, interior interpretive displays and exterior interpretive displays) are below. A map identifying the number and location of proposed interpretation is located at the end of this section on page 201.

### Recommendation One: Interpretive Site Planning

**1. Collect stories for RBSB IMP:** To be able to implement what Schmeckle Reserve Interpreters advises within the byway's Interpretive Master Plan (IMP), RBSB Board members recommend compiling stories through the use of Q & A sessions, public input meetings and oral history interviews that can be used in interpretation along the byway. It is recommended that stories in which are relevant to the cultural aspects of the region today that trace back to earlier times be collected. Examples include stories related to commercial industries (clamming, railroad, button making, pearls, commercial fishing, logging, farming, etc.) and/or local celebrities (Emma Big Bear, Chief Waukon, Ringling Brothers Circus, Jesse James, Diamond Joe Reynolds etc.)

**Potential Partners:** Historical Societies

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fundraising, Byways of Iowa Foundation, Fayette County Community Foundation, Clayton County Community Foundation, UMGCC, Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area

**Quantity:** N/A

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**2. Inventory photos for RBSB IMP:** To be able to implement what Schmeckle Reserve Interpreters advises within the byway's Interpretive Master Plan (IMP), RBSB Board members recommend starting to compile an inventory of historic photos that can be used in interpretation along the byway. Examples include photos related to commercial industries (clamming, railroad, button making, pearls, commercial fishing, logging, farming etc.), local celebrities (Emma Big Bear, Chief Waukon, Ringling Brothers Circus, Jesse James, Diamond Joe Reynolds etc.) and/or anchor attractions along the byway.

**Potential Partners:** Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Quantity:** N/A

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**3. Clermont IMP Development and Implementation:** The City of Clermont, the Clermont Historical Commission and the Clermont Historical Society work independently and collectively to manage several significant historic structures, statues and collections in the RBSB community of Clermont. These historic treasures define the character of the community and are the main tourism draw. They also are the basis for Clermont's brand/community identity. They include the Riegel Blacksmith Shop, the Clermont Museum, the Larrabee School, the Clermont Depot, Union Sunday School, the Straight Story Tractor, the Clermont Painted Stage Curtain and other significant historic sites and collections that have been, or are scheduled to be, restored. During development of this CMP, the RBSB Board provided assistance to the Clermont Historical Society with development of a self guided tour brochure and the City of Clermont worked with the TRRC and the RBSB Board to design, fabricate and place interpretive panels for the community, including one interpretive panel by City Hall that depicts most of the historic treasures in the community. However, given that Clermont's main tourism focus is the history of the community and its collections, this project will maximize the opportunities that the overall community collection of historic venues provides by developing an interpretive plan for the community. The plan will provide specific design and content for interpretation at, and of, each of the historic sites and collections in Clermont. It will include both interior and exterior interpretive recommendations. With the help of the Clermont Historical Society, partnering organizations and the city, the plan will then be implemented.

**Schedule:** 2018 – 2022

**Potential Partners:** City of Clermont, Clermont Historical Society, Clermont Historical Commission, TRRC, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette Community Foundation, Certified Local Government Grant, Clermont Historical Society, Clermont Historical Commission, Iowa Tourism Grant, Silos and Smokestacks, Iowa City REAP

**Estimated Cost:** \$115,000

**4. Gilbertson Conservation IMP Development & Implementation:** Gilbertson Conservation Area is located just outside of the Elgin City limits and is a very popular park because of its diverse attractions. Gilbertson includes a campground, maize maze, crop demonstration plots, handicapped accessible trail, primitive nature trails, a petting zoo, nature center, and Hart-Dummermuth Historical House and Museum. The challenge with Gilbertson is that all of these attractions are spread across the entire 565-acre park area, so visitors typically come for one part but do not explore other parts of the park. Gilbertson would like to help RBSB travelers/visitors experience the park in its entirety and enhance the visitor experience. At each major site within



the park, it would be beneficial to place an information hub containing a map and information about all of the other attractions. Currently, there are no wayfinding signs in the park, so Gilbertson would like to add wayfinding signage directing to all sites in the park. The existing signs throughout the park were added as facilities were built so they do not match and because they are not uniform in design they are easy to miss and confusing. As part of the wayfinding and information hub project, design standards will be implemented so that there is connectivity and cohesiveness throughout the park. Additionally, the park would like to add large native limestone entry signs at each of its major entrances to alert visitors to the park's existence and that they are entering the conservation area. Several resources within the park need specific improvements. Many visitors at the campground walk along the nearby highway to get to other park areas because the existing trails go out of the way, are primitive, and poorly marked. This is unsafe and can be prevented by increasing connectivity within the park via simple paved trails that are direct routes from one area to another. These trails could be extended to connect the park to the City of Elgin nearby. Once built, signage would be added so that visitors would be able to start using and finding their way along the trails. The historical area of the park includes the Dummermuth-Hart Historical Museum and House. The museum has a brochure, but it could use exterior and interior interpretive materials that are more engaging. The brochure could be redesigned to match the new interpretation. Additionally, the house is open to the public, but there is no signage indicating that it is okay to go in on one's own. Together, these improvements will enhance the Gilbertson Conservation and Education Area in a way that engages all visitors throughout all areas of the park.

**Schedule:** 2017-2027

**Partners:** Fayette County, Fayette County Conservation, City of Elgin, TRRC Board

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette County Conservation Board, Iowa County REAP, Fayette County Community Foundation, Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission, Certified Local Government Grant, Land and Water Conservation Grant

**Estimated Cost:** \$200,000

### 5. Volga River State Recreation Area IMP Development & Implementation:

The RBSB anchor park can be enhanced through added interpretation about the natural features in the park and visible from the park. Trails pass by 20-foot high limestone bluffs, a unique 15-acre white pine plantation, and many diverse plant and animal species, but there is no information to help the RBSB traveler know or understand these features. Interpretive panels and kiosks will not only interpret the nature features in the park but include information about the park's resources, park information, and orientation maps that help the RBSB traveler understand where they are in the park in association with trails, campgrounds,

the lake, the river and other natural and visitor amenities. Since the staffed hours of the park vary, planning at the Volga River State Recreation Area will result in greater visitor engagement and a positive visitor experience with information available to visitors 24/7/365.

**Schedule:** 2017-2019

**Potential Partners:** Volga River State Recreation Area, Iowa DNR, Fayette County Conservation Board, TRRC

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa DNR, Fayette County Community Foundation, Fayette County Conservation Board, Certified Local Government Grant, Land and Water Conservation Grant, REAP CEP Grant

**Estimated Cost:** \$75,000

### 6. Driftless Area Wetland Centre & Trail IMP Development & Implementation:

The City of Marquette, which is an Iowa entrance community from Wisconsin and at the beginning of the RBSB, is in the process of planning and developing a walking trail that will ultimately connect the community's downtown with the Driftless Area Wetland Center and then on to Bloody Run Park and cold water trout stream. For many RBSB visitors, Marquette's venues including their downtown attractions, i.e. the former home of Emma Big Bear, the winery, the scenic overlook, the Mississippi River Boardwalk and the Marquette Railroad Museum, or the trail, the Wetland Centre or Bloody Run Park, will be their first encounter with the RBSB and/or the State of Iowa. The quality of that experience will shape their perceptions of what they can expect if they venture further along the RBSB into Clayton County and the State of Iowa. This project will complete development of a plan for comprehensive interpretation along the trail, at the Wetland Centre and in Bloody Run Park. It will include design and content for that interpretation related to the Driftless Area as a landform, the Mississippi River wetlands and other ecosystems, cold water trout streams, use of the valley by Native Americans and information on other RBSB intrinsic qualities. This project will also help pay for fabrication and placement of the interpretation.

**Schedule:** 2018-2023

**Potential Funding Sources:** City of Marquette, Upper Mississippi River Gaming Commission, Clayton County Community Foundation, Certified Local Government Grant, Iowa Tourism Grant, Silos and Smokestacks Grant, REAP CEP Grant, Iowa City REAP

**Potential Partners:** City of Marquette, Driftless Area Wetland Centre, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Estimated Cost:** \$105,000

**7. Motor Mill Park IMP Development and Implementation:** Clayton County Conservation Board and the Motor Mill Foundation have worked diligently to develop many features in the Motor Mill Park, from restored savanna and woodland to restored historic structures. The park now has the potential to tell stories of European settlement, agricultural history, geology, natural ecosystem, energy, river transportation, flooding and other topics that few sites in Iowa can tell. However, the majority of the current interpretation in the park is very limited and unprofessional. Telling the story of the mill and the other structures on this site is difficult without any of the historic equipment or furnishings. This project will help the partners purchase some historic mill equipment and furnishings, to maximize interpretive opportunities. This project will also help the partners develop an interpretive plan for the entire park and then design, fabricate and place the various components of that plan within and outside of buildings. The plan will incorporate stories and first hand accounts from the Motor Mill Board and other Clayton County residents whenever possible.

**Schedule:** 2018 - 2023

**Potential Partners:** Clayton County Conservation Board, Motor Mill Foundation, TRRC, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** UMGC, Clayton County Community Foundation, Certified Local Government Grant, Iowa Tourism Grant, Silos and Smokestacks Grant, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Tourism Cares, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, REAP CEP Grant, REAP County Grant

**Estimated Cost:** \$125,000

**8. George Maier Rural Heritage Center IMP Development & Implementation:**

The George Maier Rural Heritage Center is located in the Elkader City Park. The museum collection is housed in a restored 1919 sales barn and includes artifacts representing the work and lives of rural Midwest residents from the 1850's to present. The collection includes a threshing machine, arrowheads, local memorabilia, and World War 2 photos. Wayfinding to the museum has improved with new signage but additional wayfinding needs to be added to other signs in Elkader to help direct the visitor to the museum from other parts of town. This would help the RBSB traveler be more likely to "wander in" to the museum in addition to helping those who are specifically seek to find the facility. Once inside the museum, there are countless historical items and collections on display, but very little interpretation. Existing information about specific items or folkloric stories is hand written or typed on printer paper and taped to a nearby wall. While this retains the old-school charm of the museum as many of these notes were written by George Maier himself, it is not an effective way to engage visitors and tell the museum's stories. The museum will benefit from the addition of interpretive materials to help explain the significance of items and

collections and tell the many folkloric stories preserved through the artifacts. Because of the open floor plan layout of the museum, interpretive panels will need to be small and mounted on moveable bases. The panel's shape and/or design could mirror the museum's entrance sign by using the silhouette of the building to create a cohesive and branded interpretive theme. Oral histories and information from George, his brother Alvin, and other community members could be recorded and used to create video interpretation. Adding the signage will make the center easier to find and help draw more visitors to the Maier Rural Heritage Center. Adding the interpretive panels and materials will strengthen the visitor experience through education and compelling stories, and leave a lasting impression.

**Schedule:** 2017-2023

**Potential Partners:** Clayton County, Turkey River Recreational Corridor, Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission, Silos and Smokestacks

**Potential Funding Sources:** Clayton County Community Foundation, HRDP, Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission, Silos and Smokestacks

**Estimated Cost:** \$65,000

**9. Big Springs Fish Hatchery IMP Development & Implementation:**

The Big Springs Fish Hatchery is located along the Turkey River northwest of Elkader. Each year, about 150,000 rainbow and brook trout are reared at the hatchery before they are stocked into 15 different coldwater streams. The water at the Big Springs Fish Hatchery comes from Big Springs, the largest coldwater spring in Iowa, which discharges between 20,000 and 30,000 gallons per minute. The Hatchery recently added an improved angler access trail, a trout pond, and a kid's fishing pond. It is a premier natural resource recreation venue for families traveling along the RBSB. It is open to the public every day from sunrise to sunset, but only has a very basic self-guided tour that does not share all of the interesting details about the facilities. Because of this, the partners would like to develop an interpretive plan for the Big Springs Fish Hatchery site. This plan will include sharing information about the hatchery's history, fish, coldwater streams and watersheds, conservation practices, and natural features with the public via indoor and outdoor interpretive panels. Having interpretive materials will enhance the Hatchery site and result in increased RBSB traveler engagement, satisfaction and appreciation.

**Schedule:** 2017-2019

**Potential Partners:** Big Springs Fish Hatchery, Iowa DNR, Clayton County Conservation Board, TRRC, Northeast Iowa RC&D, EPA Education Grant

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa DNR, UMGC, Clayton County Community Foundation, Friends of the Hatchery Group, REAP CEP, EPA Education Grant

**Estimated Cost:** \$50,000

**10. Osborne Welcome Center IMP Development and Implementation:** The Clayton County Conservation Board will work with partners to develop an interpretive plan for Osborne Park. This 300-acre park houses the Osborne Conservation/Welcome & Nature Center, Clayton County Conservation Board staff offices, a county shop, the Pioneer Village, a pond, picnic shelters (5), extensive hiking and cross-country skiing trails, access to the Volga River Water Trail, a native wildlife exhibit, a demonstration of timber stand management, a nature playscape and playground, a gift shop, archery range, disc golf course, mountain biking trails, a hunter education course, and wildlife viewing (including an active eagle nest!), and much more. Ultimately, an interpretive plan will help the Conservation Board develop and place interpretive panels and signage throughout the park and increase the interactive nature of the facilities to maximize the traveler experiences in the park.

**Schedule:** 2017-2019

**Potential Partners:** Clayton County Conservation Board, Northeast Iowa RC&D  
**Potential Funding Sources:** Clayton County Conservation Board, Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission, Clayton County Community Foundation, EPA Education Grant, REAP CEP Grant, REAP County Grant

**Funding Secured Date:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$50,000

### Recommendation Two: Visitor Engagement

**11. Nature Activities at the Osborne Welcome Center:** The Clayton County Conservation Board plans to develop and implement new educational activities in the nature center at Osborne Welcome Center. This will include designing new displays and exhibits in the basement room space which is approximately 90 square yards. These activities will focus on the native landscape, wildlife, flora and predominant waterways in Clayton County. The educational features will include 3D, interactive, manipulative, sensory and SMART (stimulating maturity through active readiness training) features wherever possible. The new display features will encourage the kid in everyone to learn about the natural world in which they live.

**Schedule:** 2016-2018

**Potential Partners:** Clayton County Conservation Board, Northeast Iowa RC&D  
**Potential Funding Sources:** Clayton County Conservation Board, EPA Education Grant, Clayton County Community Foundation, Upper Mississippi River Gaming Commission, RJ McElroy Foundation, County REAP Grant, REAP CEP Grant

**Funding Secured Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$250,000



Osborne Welcome Center



Osborne Welcome Center Nature Activities

**12. Install RBSB Information Hubs:** The RBSB Board recommends that at least one information hub be installed within each of the 10 anchor communities along the byway. To thematically unify all information hubs, the RBSB board recommends that each must use design elements that represent the RBSB brand and local sense of place. Recommendations the RBSB Board wishes to implement are twofold, and include preferences related to the 1) hub design and 2) interpretive panels displayed on the hub. Recommendations for both are as follows:

**Information Hub Design:**

- Display a unified design that is consistent with all other wayshowing media.
- Use construction elements that are complimentary to northeast Iowa.
- Be located in a high-traffic area and easily visible to traveler.
- Help inform and orient travelers to the byway’s attractions, stories and communities.
- Be vandal-resistant, durable and non-corrosive.
- Use limestone bedrock for each information hub’s base.
- A limestone slab will be placed on the top of each information hub’s base at a size large enough for travelers to be able to sit on the structure.
- Wooden timbers from native or “local” trees will be used for each information hub’s support beams (Ex: maple, basswood, oak-hickory, white ash, red elm etc.).
- Weathering steel will be used for each information hub’s arched mount plate, brackets and panel frames.
- All weathering steel will be powder coated with the color black.
- Thematic cut-out graphics will be incorporated into each information hub’s weathering steel mount plate. Board members would like to explore the possibility of adding stained glass within each cut-out to enhance its aesthetic properties. The “themed art” will be a representation of the entire byway and its corridor.
- Interpretive panels installed on each information hub will use graphic elements that are complimentary and cohesive with all other wayshowing media. This includes the use of unified color palettes, fonts, logos, maps, and other graphic elements.
- On select locations where the information hub will be located at main byway portals, an additional byway welcome sign will be incorporated into or constructed next to the hub.

**Information Hub Interpretive Panels:**

- The RBSB recommends that interpretive panels displayed on each hub should be designed to provided the traveler with basic information about the byway in addition to the community or significant attraction in which the hub is located. Each information hub will contain two to four interpretive panels. For the four-panel information hub, a wooden beam will run parallel down the center, providing an

opportunity to separate each panel from one another. All four panels will be 36”x36” in size and fabricated on ½”-thick exterior CHPL material. Panel (1) will be located on the front of the hub and display basic information about the byway, it’s intrinsic resources and a map identifying the locations for each. Panel (2) will also be located on the front of the hub and display a segment of the byway within close proximity to the hub’s community. It will provide themes, messages and stories related to the identified segment of the byway. Panel (3) will be located on the back of the hub and display basic information about the community where the hub is located, it’s attractions and a map identifying the locations for each. Panel (4) will also be located on the back of the hub and will provide themes, messages and stories related to the community where the hub is located.

**Potential Partners:** Byway Communities

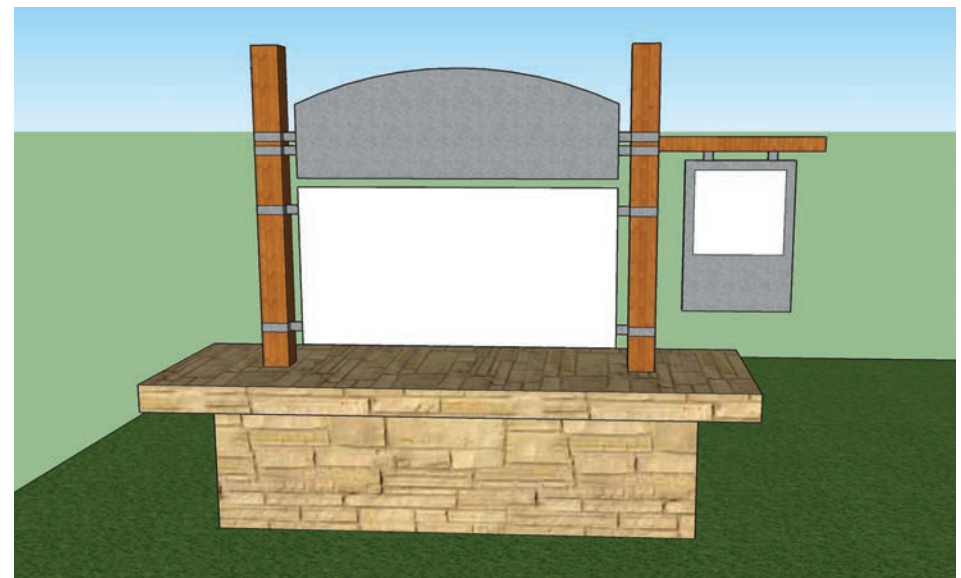
**Potential Funding Sources:** Fundraising, Byways of Iowa Foundation, Fayette County Community Foundation, Clayton County Community Foundations, Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation, Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area

**Quantity:** 12

**Estimated Cost:** \$120,000 (\$10,000 per Hub)

**Quantity:** 4

**Estimated Cost with Welcome Sign:** \$124,000 (\$1,000 per Welcome Sign)



**Concept Design for Two-Panel Info Hub with Welcome Sign**

**13. Install RBSB Wayside Exhibits:** The RBSB recommends that wayside exhibits be installed at select anchor attractions. To thematically unify all wayside exhibits, the RBSB Board recommends that all new wayside exhibits should follow the design concepts that were created and used for the 2015 Conservation Innovation Grant Interpretive Panels Project. Additional recommendations the RBSB Board wishes to implement are twofold, and include preferences related to the 1) exhibit design and 2) interpretive panels displayed on each exhibit. Recommendations for both are as follows:

**Wayside Exhibit Design:**

- Display a unified design that is consistent with all other wayshowing media.
- Use construction elements that are complimentary to northeast Iowa.
- Help visitors understand messages, stories & meanings behind a resource or site.
- Be vandal-resistant, durable and non-corrosive.
- Use weathering steel for each wayside exhibit’s base and arched mount plate.
- Incorporate thematic cut-out graphics into each wayside exhibit’s weathering steel mount plate. The “themed art” should be related to the content represented on each wayside exhibit. Cut-out artwork featured on the arched mount plate can vary from one wayside exhibit to another, though three illustrated graphics should be present on each weathering steel arched mount plate. All wayside exhibits should feature the Iowa Byway’s logo on the support base.
- All weathering steel will be powder coated with the color black.
- Installed Interpretive panels will use graphic elements that are complimentary and cohesive with all other wayshowing media. This includes the use of unified color palettes, fonts, logos, maps and other graphic elements.

**Wayside Exhibit Interpretive Panels:**

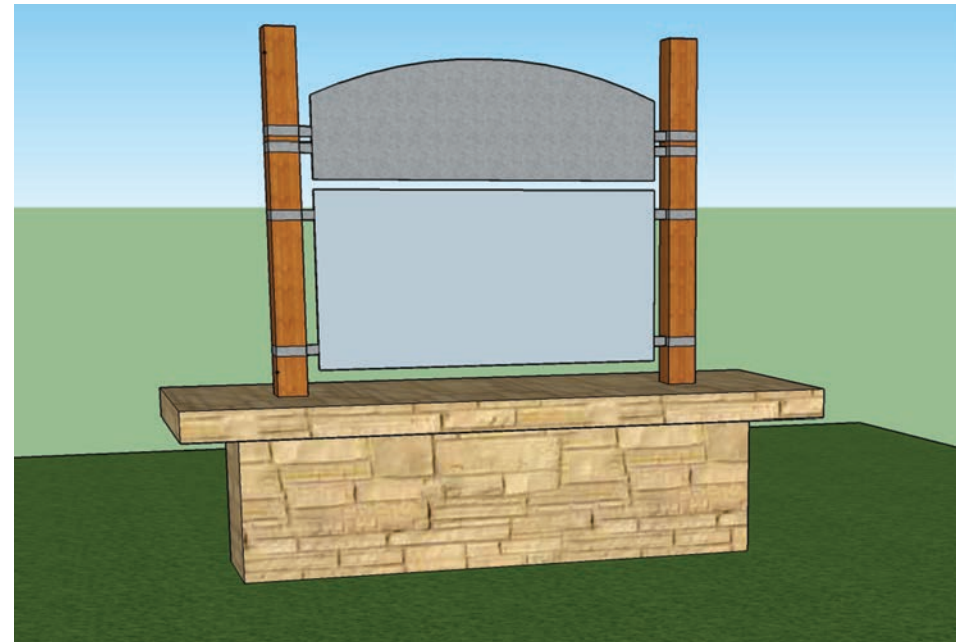
- The RBSB Board recommends that interpretive panels displayed on each wayside exhibit should be designed to provide resource and/or site specific information that is related to the location for where the exhibit is installed. Each wayside exhibit will feature one panel. The panel will be 24”x36” in size and be fabricated on ½”-thick exterior CHPL material.

**Potential Partners:** Anchor Attraction Organizations

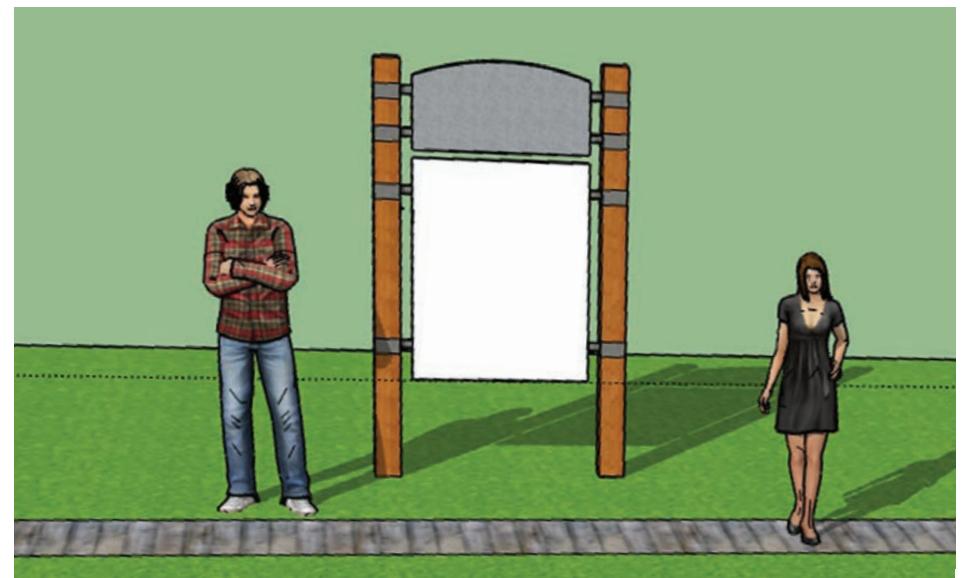
**Potential Funding Sources:** Byways of Iowa Foundation, Fayette and Clayton County Community Foundations, Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation, Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area

**Quantity:** 27

**Estimated Cost:** \$81,000 (\$3,000 per sign)



**Concept Design for Two-Panel Info Hub**



**Concept Design for Territory Orientation Panel**

**14. Install RBSB Territory Orientation Panels:** The RBSB recommends that territory orientation panels be installed at select natural areas and trailheads. Like the information hub’s and wayside exhibits, the RBSB Board recommends that design elements used for territory orientation panels should be thematically unified to all other wayshowing media. Recommendations the RBSB Board wishes to implement are twofold, and include preferences related to the 1) territory orientation panel design and 2) interpretive panels displayed on the territory orientation panel. Recommendations for both are as follows:

**Territory Orientation Panel Design:**

- Display a unified design that is consistent with all other wayshowing media.
- Use construction elements that are complimentary to northeast Iowa.
- Help visitors understand messages, stories & meanings behind resources or sites.
- Be vandal-resistant, durable and non-corrosive.
- Wooden timbers from native trees will be used for each information hub’s support beams. Wood used could come from maple, basswood, oak-hickory, white ash, red elm, etc. Whatever type of wood is selected for the first information hub/territory orientation panel should set precedence for all others.
- Weathering steel will be used for each territory information panel’s arched mount plate, brackets and panel frames.
- Thematic cut-out graphics will be incorporated into each territory orientation panel’s weathering steel mount plate. Board members would like to explore the possibility of adding stained glass within each cut-out to enhance its aesthetic properties. The “themed art” should be a representation of the collection of resources/sites being highlighted.
- All weathering steel will be powder coated with the color black.
- Interpretive panels installed on each territory information panel will use graphic elements that are complimentary and cohesive with all other wayshowing media. This includes the use of unified color palettes, fonts, logos, maps and other graphic elements.

**Territory Orientation Panel Interpretive Panels:**

- The RBSB recommends that the interpretive panels featured on each territory orientation panel be designed to provide information about the resource/site where the territory orientation panel is located and about the grouping of similar resources/sites. Each wayside exhibit will feature two panels – one panel on each side. Both panels will be 54”x36” in size and be fabricated on ½”-thick exterior CHPL material. Using Glovers Creek trout stream access as an example, subject matter displayed on the front would feature a map of Glovers Creek along with detailed information about the stream. Subject matter displayed on the back

would feature a map with all of the publically accessible trout streams located within the byway corridor. Though, this is only one example, it demonstrates how the RBSB Board would like to utilize this type of interpretation along the RBSB.

**Potential Partners:** Clayton County Conservation, Fayette County Conservation, Turkey River Recreational Corridor, Trail Associations

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fundraising, Byways of Iowa Foundation, Fayette County Community Foundation, Clayton County Community Foundation, UMGC, Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area

**Quantity:** 14

**Estimated Cost:** \$63,000 (\$4,500 per sign)

**15. Guttenberg Historic Walking Trail/Self-Guided Tour:** Guttenberg boasts more historic buildings on the National Register of Historic Places per capita than any other community in the nation. Although they currently have a Guttenberg Historic Walking Tour brochure, it is limited in scope and provides only limited information on the sites that are included. The new guide will allow the Historic Preservation Commission in Guttenberg to improve the historic interpretation of specific sites and of the community itself. It will expand the information on specific sites as well as expand the scope of the tour beyond a few blocks of the downtown.

**Schedule:** 2016-2017

**Potential Funding Sources:** City of Guttenberg, Guttenberg Historic Preservation Commission, UMGC, Clayton County Community Foundation, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, REAP CEP Grant, Certified Local Government Grant

**Potential Partners:** Guttenberg Historic Preservation Commission, City of Guttenberg

**Estimated Cost:** \$12,500

**16. Eye Spy Scenic Viewing Interpretive Project:** The viewshed of the RBSB is one of the top for state byways in Iowa, ranking second in the state overall. This project would place viewing scopes in 10 sites along the byway. Some of those site currently have interpretation; others would benefit from interpretation. The viewing scopes would be universally accessible on a ‘pay-per-view basis.

**Schedule:** 2017-2019

**Partners:** RBSB Board, Clayton County Development Group, Fayette County Tourism

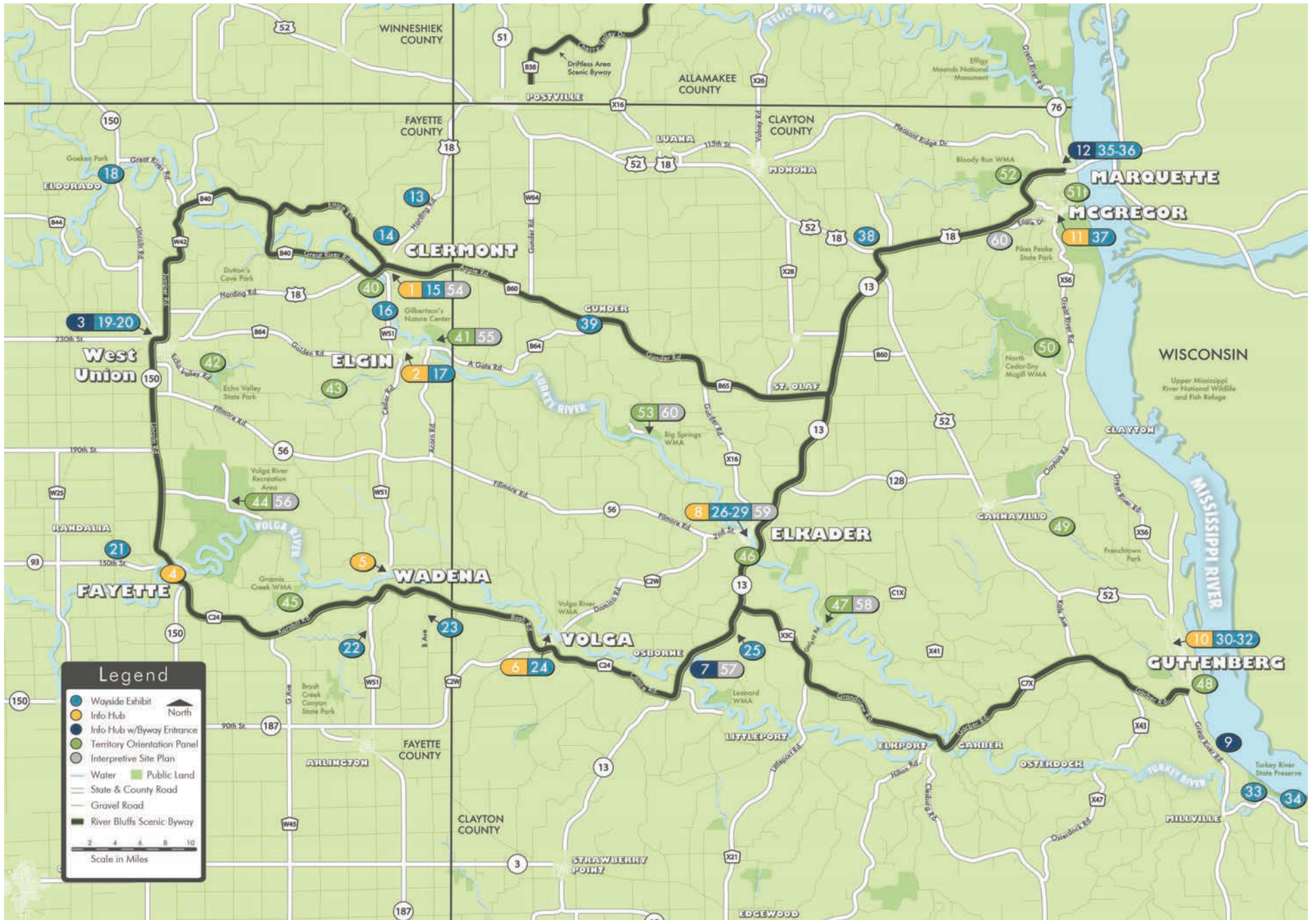
**Potential Funding Sources:** UMGC, Fayette County Community Foundation, Clayton County Community Foundation, Iowa Tourism Grant, Clayton County Community Foundation, Upper Mississippi River Gaming Commission, Fayette County Historical Society, Turkey River Recreational Corridor

**Estimated Cost:** \$80,000

Map #	Interpretive Media Recommendations	Proposed Location	Community
1	Information Hub	Lincoln Park	Clermont
2	Information Hub	Elgin City Park	Elgin
4	Information Hub	Fayette County Tourism Center	Fayette
5	Information Hub	Wadena City Park	Wadena
6	Information Hub	Volga City Park	Volga
8	Information Hub	Keystone Bridge City Park	Elkader
10	Information Hub	Ingelside Park	Guttenberg
11	Information Hub	McGregor Main Street Park	McGregor
3	Information Hub with Byway Welcome Sign	Veterans Memorial Park	West Union
7	Information Hub with Byway Welcome Sign	Osborne Conservation and Welcome Center	Elkader
9	Information Hub with Byway Welcome Sign	Guttenberg South Overlook	Guttenberg
12	Information Hub with Byway Welcome Sign	Mississippi River Boardwalk	Marquette
13	Wayside Exhibit	Heritage Farm Park	Clermont
14	Wayside Exhibit	Montauk Historic Mansion	Clermont
15	Wayside Exhibit	Union Sunday School & Kimball Pipe Organ	Clermont
16	Wayside Exhibit	Shin Bone Valley/Neutral Zone - Canoe Access	Elgin
17	Wayside Exhibit	Elgin Historical Museum	Elgin
18	Wayside Exhibit	Goeken County Park	Eldorado
19	Wayside Exhibit	Fayette County Historical & Genealogical Society	West Union
20	Wayside Exhibit	Barrel Drive In	West Union
21	Wayside Exhibit	Stone Man	Fayette
22	Wayside Exhibit	Cedar Creek Roadside Pull-Off (Eric Boehm)	Wadena
23	Wayside Exhibit	Wetland Restoration Roadside Pull-Off (Roger Erickson)	Wadena
24	Wayside Exhibit	Volga City Opera House	Volga
25	Wayside Exhibit	Chicken Ridge Overlook	Elkader
26	Wayside Exhibit	Carter House Museum	Elkader
27	Wayside Exhibit	George Maier Rural Heritage Center	Elkader
28	Wayside Exhibit	Clayton County Court House & Clock Tower	Elkader
29	Wayside Exhibit	Elkader Opera House	Elkader
30	Wayside Exhibit	Lockmaster's House Heritage Museum	
31	Wayside Exhibit	Lock & Dam 10	

Map #	Interpretive Media Recommendations	Proposed Location	Community
32	Wayside Exhibit	Lakeside Ballroom	Guttenberg
33	Wayside Exhibit	Turkey River State Preserve Archeological District	Millville
34	Wayside Exhibit	Cassville Car Ferry	Millville
35	Wayside Exhibit	Marquette Depot Museum & Info. Center	Marquette
36	Wayside Exhibit	Emma Big Bear Residence	Marquette
37	Wayside Exhibit	McGregor Historical Museum	McGregor
38	Wayside Exhibit	Froelich Tractor Museum	McGregor
39	Wayside Exhibit	The Irish Shanti	Gunder
40	Territory Orientation Panel	Turkey River Access #64B - Clermont Canoe Access	Clermont
41	Territory Orientation Panel	Gilbertson Nature Center	Elgin
42	Territory Orientation Panel	Glovers Creek Trout Fishing Access	Fayette County
43	Territory Orientation Panel	Otter Creek Trout Fishing Access	Fayette County
44	Territory Orientation Panel	Volga River State Recreation Area	Fayette
45	Territory Orientation Panel	Grannis Creek Trout Fishing Access	Fayette County
46	Territory Orientation Panel	Turkey River Access #38 - Turkey River Park Access	Elgin
47	Territory Orientation Panel	Motor Mill Historic Site	Elkader
48	Territory Orientation Panel	Guttenberg Marina	Guttenberg
49	Territory Orientation Panel	Buck Creek Fishing Access	Clayton County
50	Territory Orientation Panel	Sny Magill Fishing Access	Clayton County
51	Territory Orientation Panel	McGregor Marina	McGregor
52	Territory Orientation Panel	Bloody Run Fishing Access	Marquette
53	Territory Orientation Panel	Big Springs Fish Hatchery Fishing Access	Elkader
54	Interpretive Site Plan	Riegel Blacksmith Shop	Clermont
55	Interpretive Site Plan	Gilbertson Nature Center	Elgin
56	Interpretive Site Plan	Volga River State Recreation Area	Fayette
57	Interpretive Site Plan	Osborne Conservation and Welcome Center	Elkader
58	Interpretive Site Plan	Motor Mill Historic Site	Elkader
59	Interpretive Site Plan	George Maier Rural Heritage Center	Elkader
60	Interpretive Site Plan	Big Springs Fish Hatchery	Elkader
61	Interpretive Site Plan	Driftless Area Wetland Center	Marquette







# Section Fifteen

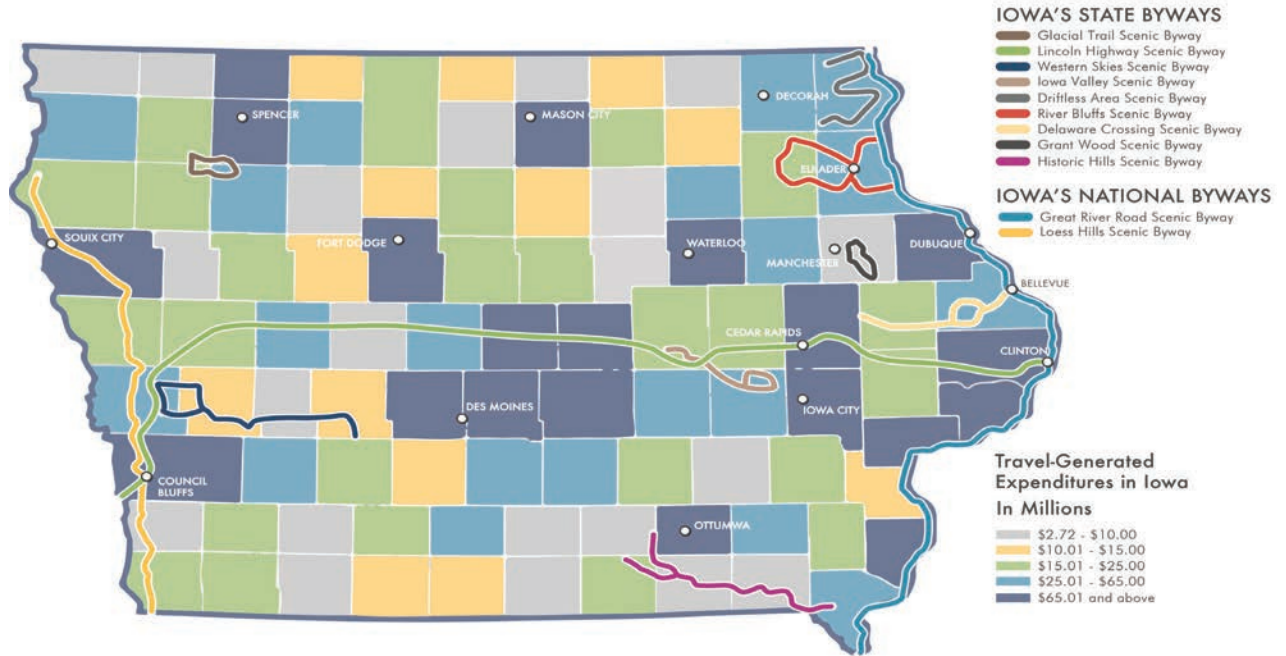
Strategic Marketing Plan

# Strategic Marketing

*"A strategic marketing plan, as the name suggests, discourages organizations from making ad hoc and impulsive marketing decisions. The process involves collecting marketing information in a systematic manner and then integrating that data into a detailed analysis that helps project long-term marketing goals."*

## 15.1 Introduction

A marketing plan is the *process of anticipating future events and conditions and determining the best course of action necessary to achieve marketing objectives*. These marketing objectives include uncovering the unique and distinctive features, benefits and values one can expect to experience along the byway, both natural and manmade, which can be shaped into a distinctive identity or brand. Through branded marketing material and promotions, the RBSB Board can then develop and distribute material that accurately portrays the byway experience in addition to highlighting its unique or special properties effectively. These marketing objectives can have an enormous impact on influencing the byway visitation patterns of tourists and residents alike, especially when all are combined to satisfy the needs of a target market. If marketing of the byway is done properly, it will yield net sales, or new and repeat byway visitors. An increase of byway visitors will translate to more overnight stays, growth of local jobs and additional revenue produced by lodging and sales tax. In other words, successful marketing can have a vast impact on tourism, which in return can result in direct economic benefits to byway communities and businesses. Because of this, the RBSB Board has made it their goal to identify and implement marketing strategies that affect the greatest number of byway travelers in the most cost-effective way. Included in this marketing plan is a comprehensive collection of the research, assessments, strategies and proposed actions comprised from board members and stakeholders alike that were assembled with the purpose of accomplishing this goal. It is their intention, that all recommendations related to year-round tourism and byway use be balanced with the protection and preservation of byway resources. Information collected for this plan is the result of extensive public information gathering, market research and surveys. It is a representation of the “local’s” support for the byway and their commitment to the protection, enhancement and marketing of the intrinsic resources and values that make up the RBSB.



## 15.2 Situational Analysis

Tourism, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council, generated US\$7.6 trillion (10% of global GDP) and 277 million jobs (1 in 11 jobs) for the global economy in 2014. In the United States, the travel and tourism industry is one of the largest industries, making a total contribution of \$1.47 trillion in 2014, with \$26 billion coming from international travel.

In the state of Iowa, the tourism industry is significant, employing 66,500 Iowans. This represents (4.3%) of the state's total non-agricultural employment. On average, every dollar spent by domestic travelers produced 15.2 cents in payroll income for Iowa residents. In 2014, domestic travel expenditures in Iowa totaled \$8.1 billion, which if broken up by tourism sectors includes general retail trade (7%), public transportation (10.7%), auto transportation (41.1%), lodging (11.2%), foodservice (20.2%) and entertainment and recreation (9.8%).

Comparing Iowa's scenic byways to the state's tourism industry shows that there has been a positive correlation between the overall health of the state's tourism economy and the development of the Iowa Byways Program. Although quantitative research about the economic impacts of scenic byway tourism is limited, other indicators from 2015, such as the \$150 million generated from state gas tax and an increase in revenues brought in by tourists in the auto transportation sector (privately-owned vehicles that are used for trips), indicate that Iowa's scenic byways are having a positive impact on the economy. Iowa's two national scenic byways and nine-state designated scenic byways comprise 1,668 of DOT's 9,043 maintained miles of roadway (18%), are present in 40 of Iowa's 99 counties (40.4%) and traverse through 158 of the 947 incorporated communities in the state (17%). 14 of the 26 Iowa welcome centers (54%) also happen to be located along Iowa's byways. When one takes into account all of the attractions, intrinsic resources and tourism sectors that are found along each byway, their presence becomes even more impactful to the state.

## 15.3 SWOT Analysis

While scenic byways have emerged in Iowa as a potential growth strategy for the state's tourism market, the RBSB Board understands that the strengths (S) of Iowa's byways, and more specifically the RBSB, are offset by weaknesses (W). In addition, opportunities (O) that can be utilized to accelerate this process are matched with a number of threats (T). A summary of the RBSB Board's SWOT analysis is as follows:

### STRENGTHS: Support Successful Outcomes for the RBSB

- The RBSB's aesthetic properties contributed to it being rated as the second most scenic state-byway in Iowa.
- The RBSB is comprised of winding and curvy road segments that are entirely paved (with the exception of a 7-mile gravel excursion loop), feature low traffic volume and maintain a feeling of spacious solitude, perfect for American adults who enjoy driving or riding for pleasure.
- Five of the RBSB's ten marquee communities feature historic districts. This includes the byway community of Guttenberg, which claims to have more historic sites listed on the NRHP per capita than any other community in the nation.
- The RBSB encompasses one of the most extensive water trail hubs in the state, the 98-mile Turkey River Water Trail. Included in the river's corridor is the Turkey River Recreational Corridor, which is a segment of the river from Clermont to Elkader that is the only river corridor in the state to be recognized as an Iowa Great Place. The water trail also features a whitewater course and 22 publically accessible river access locations.
- The RBSB incorporates over 380 miles of land trail, 80 miles of equestrian rail and 300 miles of snowmobile trail.
- 19 of Iowa's 81 trout streams (23%), totaling 37 miles of fishable water are located with the RBSB's corridor.

- Included in the RBSB corridor is the Mississippi River, which is the third largest watershed in the world and home to 360 species of fish, 326 species of birds, 145 species of amphibians and 50 species of mammals.
- The RBSB corridor includes Pikes Peak, which is the highest bluff on the Mississippi River and draws over 200,000 visitors annually.
- A total of (69) territories that bald eagles use for breeding purposes are located in Clayton County, ranking second in Iowa and comprising (16%) of all territories within the state.
- Located within the RBSB's corridor near the community of Marquette is Effigy Mounds National Monument, which features the largest and finest group of animal-shaped Native American burial mounds (known as effigy mounds) in the country.

### WEAKNESSES: Aspects that Detract Value from the RBSB

- Rural business hours of operation vary, are limited or are inconsistent with one another.
- Many community downtowns have empty store fronts.
- Iowa is a seasonal state, (60%) of tourists visit during 3 months of the year.
- Rural sections of the byway often have poor mobile network coverage.
- The closest airport to the byway is 72 miles away in Dubuque, IA. The closest international airport is 205 miles away in Minneapolis, MN.
- The region's property tax values and declining rural populations make it challenging to fund community infrastructure improvements and projects.

### OPPORTUNITIES: Resons the RBSB is Likely to Prosper

- Overcome misconceptions and perceived ideas about what Iowa is like.
- RBSB communities care about their natural resources and are open to developing and sharing them with the visitor.

- Historical and recreational resources comprise the largest segment of tourism activities and are consistent along the entire byway.
- The volunteers involved with byway-related projects are passionate, dedicated and engaged. The RBSB board alone is comprised of (12) members, who collectively serve on (75) different boards and/or committees within the region.
- Locals, many of which are the descendants and relatives of the German, Irish & Norwegian settlements along the byway, are willing & eager to share their recollections, stories, traditions & values with the visitor.

### THREATS: External Factors Beyond the RBSB's Control

- The RBSB must compete to attract byway travelers with 74 other byways from Iowa (10) and the bordering states of Illinois (7), Kansas (8), Minnesota (21), Missouri (10), Nebraska (8), South Dakota (6) and Wisconsin (4).
- A lack of completed economic impact studies and surveys regarding the RBSB's ROI data may hinder potential supporters, volunteers, allies or investors and funding sources.
- There are many local, regional and state entities and organizations competing for the same limited grant funding foundations/sources used to fund byway projects.
- Reductions in state funding, changes in leadership and/or volunteer burnout can impact the byway's sustainability and longevity.
- Outside economic factors such as the general state of the economy, high taxes and/or rising gas prices may cause travel along the byway to fluctuate or be inconsistent.
- Incompatible infrastructure development, natural disturbances and/or industrial expansion (ex: frac sand mining) may have an impact on the byway's intrinsic resources.

## 15.4 Market Analysis

Identifying the assets and liabilities of the RBSB is an important exercise when attempting to gauge the potential visitor's perception. To take this a step further, a marketing analysis can be completed to help identify the dynamism of a market, or the collection of information regarding the market in which one is operating in. When this concept is applied to the RBSB, it helps address the following questions: 1) who are the potential byway visitors, 2) where are they coming from, 3) when are they planning to come and 4) what do they like to do? In an effort to understand the current tourism trends as they relate to the state of Iowa, the RBSB Board found it beneficial to first analyze information pertaining to Iowa tourists and tourists from surrounding states collected from Travel Iowa's Trip Planning Surveys and Welcome Center Survey Reports for the state of Iowa. Findings as they relate to travel in Iowa are as follows:

### Who are the Demographics of Families Touring Iowa?

- Market Share: Families make up 48% of all individuals traveling to Iowa.
- Age: The average age of the family trip planner was 43.
- Gender: 75% of family trip planners are female.
- Travel Party Size: 4.2 people.
- Average Number of Nights: 1.9 nights spent while traveling in Iowa.
- Purpose of Trip: The primary purpose of the trip included (87%) leisure, (9%) family & friends and (4%) other.
- Lodging: Family lodging preferences included (78%) hotel/motel, (35%) campgrounds, (21%) day trip/no overnight, (21%) resort, (16%) friends & family and (15%) bed & breakfast.

### Who are the Demographics of Adults Touring Iowa?

- Market Share: Adults make up 52% of all individuals traveling to Iowa.
- Age: The average age of the family trip planner was 56.
- Gender: 60% of family trip planners are female.

- Travel Party Size: 2.4 people.
- Average Number of Nights: 1.9 nights spent while traveling in Iowa.
- Purpose of Trip: The primary purpose included (82%) leisure, (14%) family & friends and (4%) other.
- Lodging: Family lodging preferences included (76%) hotel/motel, (23%) campgrounds, (22%) bed & breakfast, (22%) day trip/no overnight, (17%) friends & family and (13%) resort.

### What are Tourists to Iowa Most Interested in Doing?

- A survey conducted in 2015 revealed that tourists who planned their trip to Iowa using the Travel Iowa website were most interested in (74.8%) scenic byways, (73.9%) festivals and events, (69.9%) history, (68.7%) outdoors, (57.3%) food & drink, (36.1%) shopping, (24%) agriculture and (16.5%) sports.

### When are Tourists to Iowa Planning their Trip?

- Due to the inclement weather and changing seasons experienced throughout the Midwest, most tourists plan their trip to Iowa during the summer months. In fact, more than (91%) of tourists visit Iowa between May and October and nearly (60%) of all visits occur during June, July and August. A breakdown of when trips were planned in Iowa in 2015 are as follows: (0.3%) January, (0.4%) February, (1.5%) March, (3.7%) April, (9.3%) May, (21.3%) June, (22.6%) July, (15.5%) August, (12.3%) September, (10.1%) October, (2.3%) November and (0.8%) December.

### Where are Tourists to Iowa Coming from?

- During the latest series of surveys and studies, Iowans accounted for (24%) of the people planning a trip in Iowa. Travel planners from the bordering states of Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wisconsin were (33%) of the planners. Tourists from other states were (43%) of

the planners. Focusing on Iowa and the surrounding states, the travelers' places of residence were as follows: (39.3%) Iowa, (16.3%) Illinois, (13.5%) Wisconsin, (11.4%) Minnesota, (9.3%) Missouri, (5.3%) Nebraska, (3.5%) Kansas and (1.5%) South Dakota.

### Where are Tourists Receiving Info about Iowa's Byways?

- A survey conducted by Iowa Welcome Centers found that 1 in 4 tourists who stopped in at an Iowa Welcome Center in 2009 requested information about Iowa's scenic byways.
- Surveys and studies show that 94% of scenic byway tourists use the internet to decide on a destination.
- According to a survey conducted by Travel Iowa, 3 out of 4 tourists who plan a trip to Iowa using the [www.traveliowa.com](http://www.traveliowa.com) website request information about Iowa's Byways.
- Many scenic byway tourists are introduced to the byway at their travel destination. In fact, this represents the largest group of byway users who claim a willingness to sample the byway experience if it is at or near their travel destination.

After compiling and analyzing all of the current tourism trends as they relate to the state of Iowa, the RBSB Board was able to gain valuable insight about the average trip planner and traveler visiting the state of Iowa. The information reveals that Travel Iowa's primary target audience is women with children in their homes, and since over 70% of tourists who plan their trip using Travel Iowa's website are interested in Iowa's scenic byways, this is a strong target audience for the byway to allocate resources towards. However, the RBSB Board also realizes that there has been a limited amount of information gathering, market research and surveys completed specifically about Iowa's Byways. Because of this, the RBSB Board believes there are untapped target markets and marketing strategies that need to be explored.

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## 15.5 Targeted Markets & Audiences

The identification of target markets is the process of selecting a group of people who the firm decides to direct its marketing efforts toward. When this concept is applied to the RBSB, it helps address the following questions: 1) what types of tourists should we target?, 2) what are the characteristics of these tourists?, and 3) how do we target them? In an effort to answer these questions, the RBSB Board has worked with a variety of partners to conduct a considerable amount of information gathering to identify, analyze and prioritize the target markets for whom the marketing strategies should be directed towards. Following this research, the RBSB Board identified their primary target market to be Scenic Byway Tourists. The secondary target audiences for Scenic Byway Tourists, prioritized in order, includes those who are seeking 1) Scenic Byway Tourism 2) Adventure Tourism, 3) Cultural & Heritage Tourism, 4) Culinary Tourism and 5) Motorcycle Tourism. Information about each target market is as follows:

### One: The Scenic Byway Tourist

**Overview:** Scenic Byway Tourists can be defined as an individual who enjoys traveling along a designated route to experience one or more of the six intrinsic resources: archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic. The Scenic Byway Tourist represents over (70%) of the visitors who are planning a trip to Iowa. They are comprised of individuals with a variety of interests and values. However, one characteristic that Scenic Byway Tourists seem to all have in common is that they enjoy driving for pleasure. This is a huge segment of the American population and probably the most obvious market likely to be interested in Iowa's scenic byways. According to the National Scenic Byway Foundation, (40%) of American adults drive for pleasure, which makes driving the second favorite recreation activity of American adults second only to walking. Pleasure drivers are very likely to pursue roadways that will satisfy their desires for entertainment, adventure, cultural heritage, history and aesthetics.

**Demographics:** Information collected from an Iowa Welcome Center Survey show that (94%) of Scenic Byway Tourists, with an average age of 58, use the Internet to decide on a destination. An average of (56%) of those tourists stay in a hotel or motel, and (59%) of those tourists come for vacation or leisure. Over (50%) of Scenic Byway Tourists are families with children, with (26%) being retired. If there is a scenic byway in the area, the Scenic Byway Tourist will often extend their initial stay from one to three days. While traveling along a designated route, the Scenic Byway Tourist is most interested in (41%) historical sites, (41%) general sightseeing, (29%) outdoor recreation, (20%) visiting friends/relatives and (12%) museums. Scenic Byway Tourists are also interested in shopping, festivals/events and local foods. According to the National Scenic Byway Organization, "the most important features for a Scenic Byway Tourist is relaxation, scenic beauty and a wide variety of things to do."

**Psychographics:** The Byway Tourist is an environmentally conscious individual who enjoys outdoor recreation and historic exploration within an aesthetically appealing setting.

**Target Audience:** For the families touring the RBSB, the RBSB Board recommends the primary target be educated women, with household incomes of over \$100,000 who are Gen-Xers (born between 1965-1980) and have children in their homes. For adults touring the byway without children, the RBSB Board recommends the primary target be educated women, with household incomes of over \$100,000 who are Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964) and have no children in their homes.

### Two: The Adventure Tourist

**Overview:** Adventure tourism can be defined as a domestic or international trip that includes at least two of the following three aspects: physical activity, interaction with nature and cultural learning or exchange. The Adventure Tourist represents over (68%) of the visitors who are planning a trip to Iowa. This includes tourists who seek outdoor activities and

challenges such as boating, fishing, hunting, birdwatching, horseback riding and pushing their limits with physically exerting activities such as biking, canoeing, backpacking, caving and hiking. Globally, adventure tourism remains a relatively small player in the tourism industry. However, according to "UNWTO's Global Report on Adventure Tourism," between 2010 and 2014, the adventure tourism industry grew by (195%) with over (69%) of all Adventure Tourists coming from Europe, North America and South America. Nearly (42%) of travelers from these three regions reported an adventure activity as the main activity of their last trip, which would project to an adventure travel market worth \$263 billion. In 2014, (24%) of all travelers into and out of the United States identified themselves as adventure travelers. The report went on to find that in unlike mass tourism, where approximately (80%) of trip revenue goes towards airlines, hotels and other international companies, 70-80% of revenue generated from adventure tourism stayed in local communities.

**Demographics:** According to an "Adventure Tourism Market Study" conducted by The George Washington University on 2013, the majority of Adventure Tourists are male (57%) and single/never been married (48%). The higher percentage of single Adventure Tourists may be due to the fact that they skew younger with an average age of 26, compared to Non-Adventure Tourists who have an average age of 41. (37%) of Adventure Tourists have at least a four-year degree, including (11%) with a professional degree. Their average income level is \$46,800. Adventure Tourists continue to value international travel, with (71%) owning a valid passport. Their preferred travel party size includes travel with (21%) friends, (37%) spouse and (30%) families with children.

**Psychographics:** The Adventure Tourist places a high importance on exploring/discovering new places. They enjoy submersing themselves in nature, meeting and engaging with local cultures and pushing their physical limits.

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**Target Audience:** To attract the Adventure Tourist to the byway, the RBSB Board recommends the primary target be males, with household incomes of over \$46,000 who are Gen-Yers (born between 1981-2000) and single.

### Three: The Cultural Heritage Tourist

**Overview:** The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines cultural heritage tourism as “travel to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present, including cultural, historic and natural resources.” The Cultural Heritage Tourist represents over (68%) of the visitors who are planning a trip to Iowa. This type of tourism provides an opportunity for tourists to experience someone else’s culture in depth, whether by visiting an attraction, historically significant place or by taking part in cultural activities. According to the Cultural and Heritage Travel Study, conducted in 2009 among U.S. domestic travelers, “(78%) of all U.S. leisure tourists participate in cultural and/or heritage activities while traveling. This translates to 118.3 million adults per year. With cultural and heritage travelers spending an average of \$994 per trip, they contribute more than \$192 billion annually to the U.S. economy.”

**Demographics:** Findings from the “Cultural and Heritage Travel Study, conducted in 2009, found that the majority of “passionate or active” Cultural Heritage Tourists are likely to be retired males, who hold a graduate degree and have a household income of \$100K+. Cultural Heritage Tourists have a tendency to travel more often (5 trips per year) and are more likely to take weekend trips (3-4 days) over longer excursions. They are also more likely to spend more than other tourists and prefer relaxing and educational activities best.

**Psychographics:** The Cultural Heritage Tourist pursues authentic destinations and experiences that are rich with historic character. They enjoy learning about the stories of the past while exploring destinations and social gatherings that reflect the locals’ values.

**Target Audience:** To attract the Cultural Heritage Tourist to the RBSB, the Board recommends the primary target be well educated males, with household incomes of over \$100,000 who are Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964) and retired.

### Four: The Culinary Tourist

**Overview:** According to the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance, “culinary tourism is defined as any tourism experience in which one learns about, appreciates and/or consumes food and drink that reflects the local, regional or national cuisine, heritage and culture.” The Culinary Tourist represents over (57%) of the visitors who are planning a trip to Iowa. Over the past few years, tourists seeking out these types of tourism opportunities has been on the rise. According to the American Culinary Traveler Report, published by Mandala Research, “U.S. leisure tourists who travel to learn about and enjoy unique dining experiences grew from 40% to 51% between 2006 and 2013. Topping \$201 billion, this tourism segment represents nearly a quarter of all travel income in the U.S.” It is estimated that there are roughly over 120 million Americans today that can be classified as culinary tourists.

**Demographics:** According to the Culinary Tourism in Ontario Strategy and Action Plan, the profile of a “food and wine” Culinary Tourist is more likely to be male, more highly educated and more affluent with annual average incomes of \$125,000 and spend approximately twice as much as the generic tourist. They also tend to have the highest socio-economic profiles and reported the highest levels of activity on trips, which included spending (40%) more than the average tourist on accommodations and activities.

**Psychographics:** The Culinary Tourist likes to socialize and exchange experiences about the native cultures relationship with food and drink. They generally have a high level of loyalty and will often go to great lengths to try, share and experience the locals “taste of place.”

**Target Audience:** To attract the Culinary Tourist to the byway, the RBSB Board recommends targeting highly educated males and females, with household incomes over \$125,000 who are Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964) and have high-economic profiles.

### Five: The Motorcycle Tourist

**Overview:** A Motorcycle Tourist can be defined as someone who enjoys riding motorcycles, loves to ride short and/or long distances, uses proper safety equipment and enjoys some measure of “safe” adventure. In 2011, there were over 8.4 million motorcycles registered in the U.S. To put this into perspective, 1 out of every 36 people in America owned a motorcycle. Surprisingly, Iowa came in third nationwide, with 18 people for every motorcycle in the state. This shattered the national ratio of people per motorcycle by 50%. Iowa’s 172,929 registered motorcycles represented (2.1%) of all motorcycles in America, equating to a 1.4-billion-dollar share of the 67-billion-dollar market.

**Demographics:** The majority of Motorcycle Tourists are male with an average age of 48. For generation X riders, women make up 15% of the demographic, the largest female demographic there is. It is reported that 1 in 4 riders hold a four-year graduate degree, including (16%) with a post graduate degree. Their average household income is \$85,000. Characteristics to a ride that Motorcycle Tourists value most include: 1) scenery & views, 2) to get away from traffic, 3) challenging curvy roads, 4) nature, 5) historic sites, 6) solitude, 7) wildlife and 8) social connections.

**Psychographics:** The Motorcycle Tourist is an affluent, working professional. They enjoy the journey of a ride just as much as reaching their final destination.

**Target Audience:** To attract the Motorcycle Tourist to the byway, the RBSB Board recommends the primary target be males, with a household income of over \$85,000 who are Baby Boomers (born between 1946-1964) and enjoy day, overnight and weekend excursions.





One: The Scenic Byway Tourist



Two: The Adventure Tourist



Three: The Cultural Heritage Tourist



Four: The Culinary Tourist



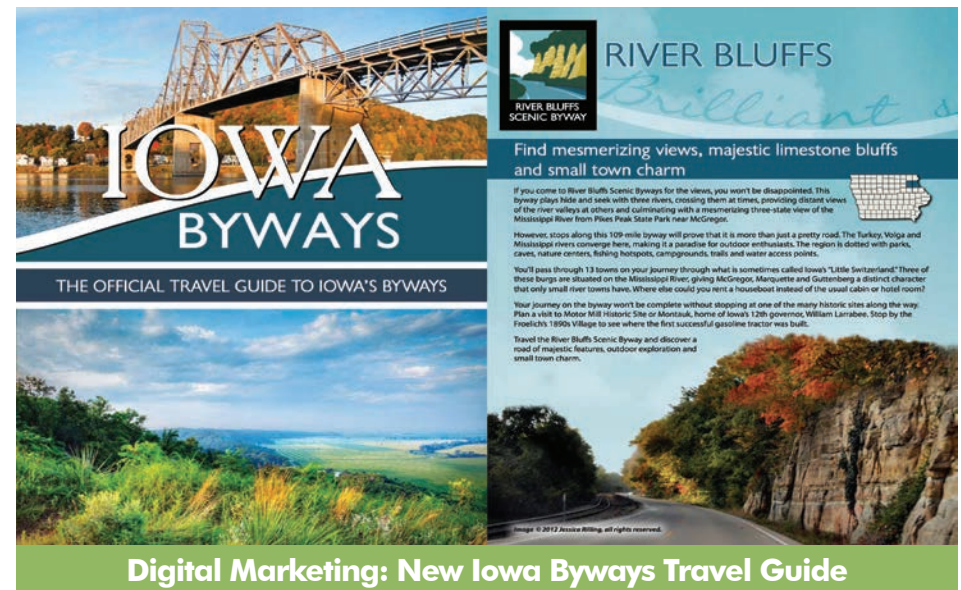
Five: The Motorcycle Tourist



Digital Marketing: Old Iowa Byways Travel Guide

## 15.6 Market Research

When NEIA RC&D received a contract from the Iowa DOT to begin coordinating efforts for the RBSB in 2008, very little marketing research strategies or material had been tested, analyzed or developed. An Iowa Scenic Byway's Statewide Travel Guide existed, but that was it. Content within the publication was limited to a generic map and route description for each byway. A universal Iowa scenic byway logo graced the cover, that at this time, featured a blue, white, green and brown silhouette depicting the traditional small town farm in Iowa. Knowing this, the RBSB Board recognized that additional marketing and promotional strategies had to be developed, tested and analyzed to properly gauge what strategies were most beneficial to the byway visitor. The RBSB Board decided to implement the strategy of applied planning by testing promotional strategies they believed would be most effective, while simultaneously developing this CMP. It should be stated that no marketing materials created through the development of this marketing plan were paid for using CMP dollars. All funding for the development, distribution and testing of these promotional strategies were made possible by working with RBSB Board members to secure alternate funding sources, partnering with Byway Coordinators on a statewide level or by working directly with the Iowa DOT. Promotional strategies tested include the following: Digital Marketing, RBSB Printed Material, Outreach & Events, Advertising and Media Relations. It should be noted that the RBSB Board worked with NEIA RC&D to design, develop and fund each RBSB Standard Collateral project with the exception of the Iowa Byways Travel Guide. An overview describing all of the tested promotional strategies are as follows:



Digital Marketing: New Iowa Byways Travel Guide

**1. Iowa Byways Travel Guide:** The RBSB Board worked with state Byway Coordinators and the Iowa DOT to develop an Iowa Byways Travel Guide in the spring of 2013. The purpose of the project was to develop a publication that would provide visitors with information about each designated route in the state and be used as a resource to help Byway Tourists plan their vacation in Iowa. The completed guide included descriptions about and maps of each Iowa byway, in addition to the recreational, historic, cultural and scenic attractions along all of the routes. Visitors are able to order a free Iowa Byways Travel Guide, or view an online version of the guide by visiting the Travel Iowa RBSB webpage at <http://www.traveliowa.com/GetInspired/scenicbyways>, or by visiting the Iowa DOT webpage at <http://www.iowadot.gov/iowasbyways/index.aspx>. A total of 5,000 travel guides were distributed to Iowa Byway Project Coordinators and Iowa Welcome Centers in 2013 and an additional 20,000 were ordered in 2014. The Iowa DOT paid for travel guide printing services and plans to continue reprint of this publication annually.

**What we Learned:** This printed publication has been well received along the RBSB. We learned that the guide was most beneficial when given to people who know little about Iowa's Byways and were requesting general information about the program.

**Partners:** Iowa DOT, Northeast Iowa RC&D, Iowa Byway Coordinators

**Funding Sources:** Iowa DOT

**Quantity:** 20,000

**Cost:** \$14,000



**Digital Marketing: Old Iowa DOT Byways Website**

**2. Iowa Byways Website:** The RBSB Board worked with state Byway Coordinators, Iowa Interactive and the Iowa DOT to launch the Iowa Byways website on October 1, 2012. The launch came as a result of Iowa Department of Transportation’s (DOT) desire to have an online presence capable of marketing the appealing and collective touring experiences found along each byway. Visitors to the Iowa DOT’s www.iowabyways.org website were able to learn about Iowa’s 11 byways, be informed about things to do and create custom travel agendas by utilizing the site’s trip planner. Visitors were also able to use the website to research information about art & culture, dining, events & festivals, historic sites, natural areas, recreation, shopping and lodging experiences that were found along each designated route. The Iowa byways website can still be accessed at www.iowabyways.org. However, the long term plans moving forward with site management of the www.iowabyways.org website are to phase it out and transition the information to the Travel Iowa RBSB webpage.

**What we Learned:** Not having access to properly manage this website has been a great challenge for all of Iowa’s byways. Efforts are being coordinated to transition the Iowa byway’s online presence and main hub for digital information to the Iowa Tourism website as of 2016.

**Partners:** Iowa DOT, Iowa Interactive, Iowa Byway Scenic Byway Coordinators

**Funding Sources:** Iowa DOT

**Cost:** N/A



**Digital Marketing: RBSB Facebook Page**

**3. RBSB Social Media:** The RBSB Board partnered with Northeast Iowa RC&D to develop, manage, promote and maintain a variety of social media networking sites for the RBSB. Social media networking sites utilized to provide RBSB related news and activities on a regular basis included Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and Pinterest accounts.

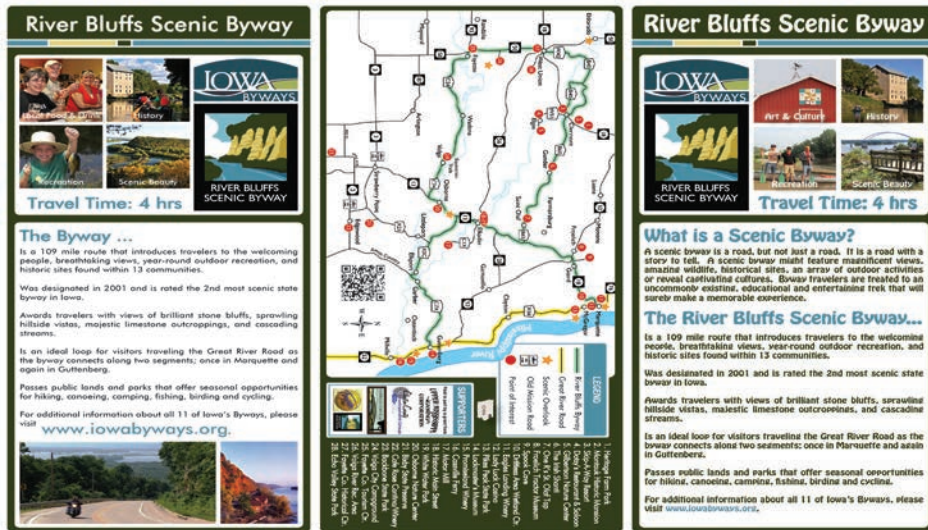
**What we Learned:** 93% of people trust peer review and this is a powerful tool if it is updated and managed on a frequent basis. Lessons learned regarding social media include posting diverse information such as photography, videography, news about RBSB businesses/attractions, featured businesses, RBSB project updates, RBSB community festivals & events as well as visitor recommendations such as “must-do-activities” or “best of the RBSB.” Staff at NEIA RC&D also learned that providing information related to the RBSB on a frequent basis was crucial to maintaining and increasing the number of RBSB Facebook page followers. Northeast Iowa RC&D staff accomplished this by developing strategies for how to post information related to the RBSB on a weekly basis. Topics that were posted weekly included information about 1) upcoming community events, 2) featured RBSB businesses, 3) RBSB project updates, 4) RBSB related articles and news releases and 5) grants secured for RBSB related projects.

**Partners:** Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Funding Sources:** N/A

**Frequency:** Weekly

**Cost:** \$0



Printed Material: RBSB Rack Card

**4. RBSB Rack Cards:** The RBSB Board created a rack card in the fall of 2011. The rack card provides a route description, photos, fun facts on one side and a map of the byway with points of interest on the back. Originally, the rack cards were developed to be used at the 2011 Legislative Showcase. However, many found them to be extremely useful, so the RBSB Board continued to distribute them at various tourism-friendly locations following the event. Through a partnership with Clayton County Development Group (CCDG), a total of 10,000 laminated rack cards have been funded by the CCDG over the past four years. Having run out of cards in 2012 and 2013 when only 2,000 were ordered, the CCDG purchased 6,000 additional copies in 2014. The CCDG continues to reprint this publication when necessary.

**What we Learned:** The rack card size worked well when wanting to include the RBSB flyer in mailings. Though, after creating the RBSB tear-sheet map, this publication was almost duplicating a marketing strategy that was being met with greater success in the form of the tear-sheet map. The RBSB Board learned that funding used to print the rack card would be more beneficial if it were reallocated to help pay for additional RBSB tear-sheet maps.

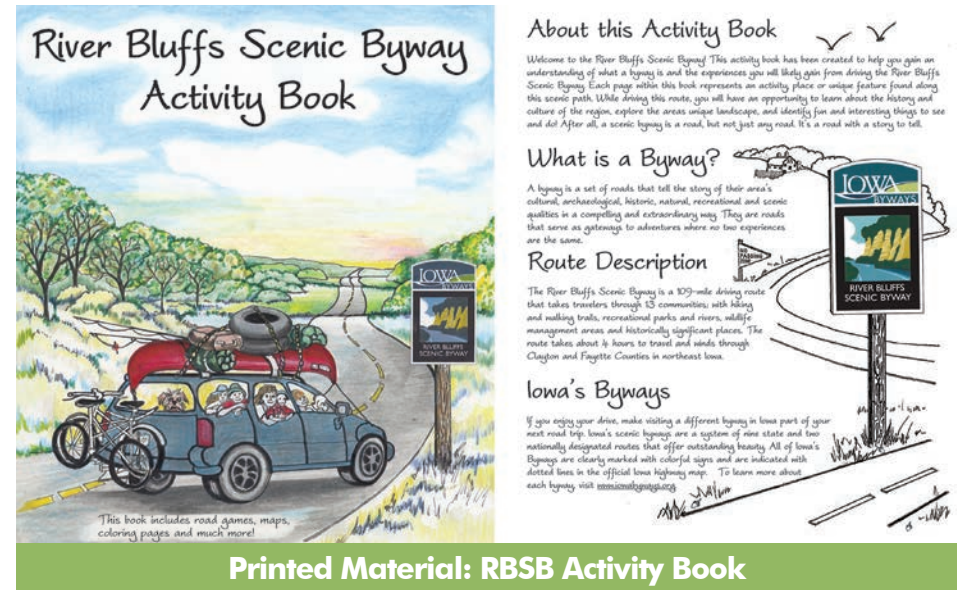
**Partners:** Clayton County Development Group

**Funding Sources:** Clayton County Development Group (CCDG)

**Partners:** Northeast Iowa RC&D, CCDG

**Quantity:** 6,000

**Cost:** \$675



Printed Material: RBSB Activity Book

**5. RBSB Activity Book:** The RBSB Board worked with local artist Carol Lange of Postville to develop a RBSB activity book in the spring of 2013. The RBSB activity book was created to help children gain an understanding of the byway and what they will likely experience along the route. The book features 40 pages of illustrations that showcase all of the activities and places along the RBSB. The RBSB activity book also provides a variety of games and activities that include coloring pages, crossword puzzles, sign finds, bingo cards and much more. The RBSB activity books were distributed to visitor friendly businesses, attractions and every third grade student in Fayette and Clayton County in 2013 and 2014.

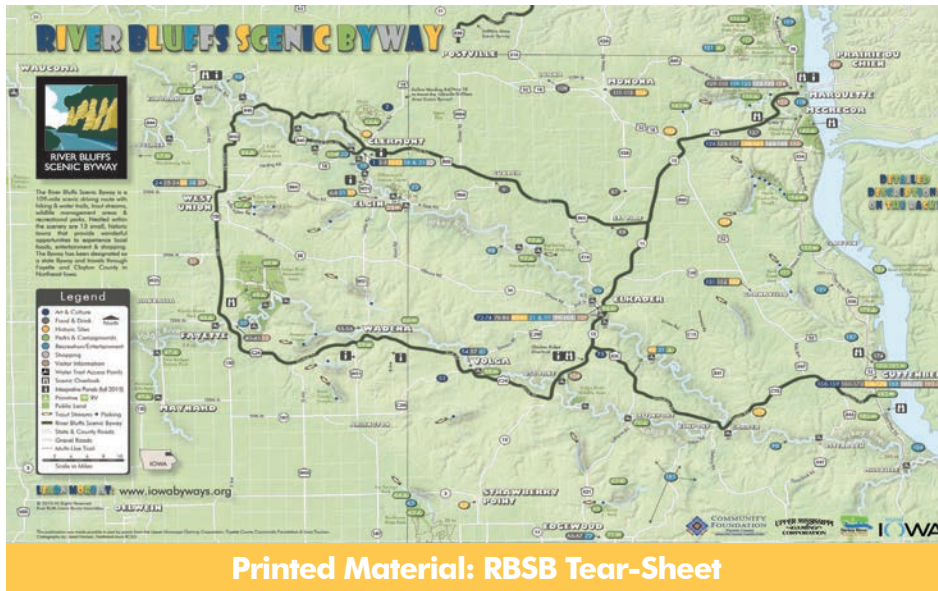
**What we Learned:** 100% of the teachers surveyed 1) found this publication to be useful, 2) felt like the students responded positively to receiving the publication, 3) would like to distribute the publication in the future and 4) felt like the publication made them more aware of the RBSB. From surveys and through the local banks desire to fund this project, the RBSB Board learned that this project is highly coveted by local youth within the RBSB corridor.

**Partners:** Northeast Iowa RC&D, Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation (UMGC), regional banks, local and regional artists in NE Iowa

**Funding Sources:** Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation (UMGC), regional banks within the RBSB corridor

**Quantity:** 2,500

**Cost:** \$2,750



**6. RBSB Tear-Sheet Maps:** Realizing the need to educate byway travelers about the variety of historical, scenic, natural and cultural experiences along each scenic roadway, the RBSB Board decided it was pertinent to develop a byway tear off map. The 11x17 tear-sheet map was distributed for the first time in the spring of 2013. This publication provides a detailed look at points of interest and services along each route to help orient the traveler. The tear-sheet map also includes narrative about the RBSB and a brief description of each point of interest along with contact information. Information about rivers, trout streams, towns, water trail access points, scenic overlooks, public land and most byway friendly businesses in the categories of art & culture, food & drink, historic sites, parks and campgrounds, recreation/entertainment, shopping and visitor information are included on each tear off map. A reprint of the RBSB tear-sheet maps were ordered in the spring of 2014.

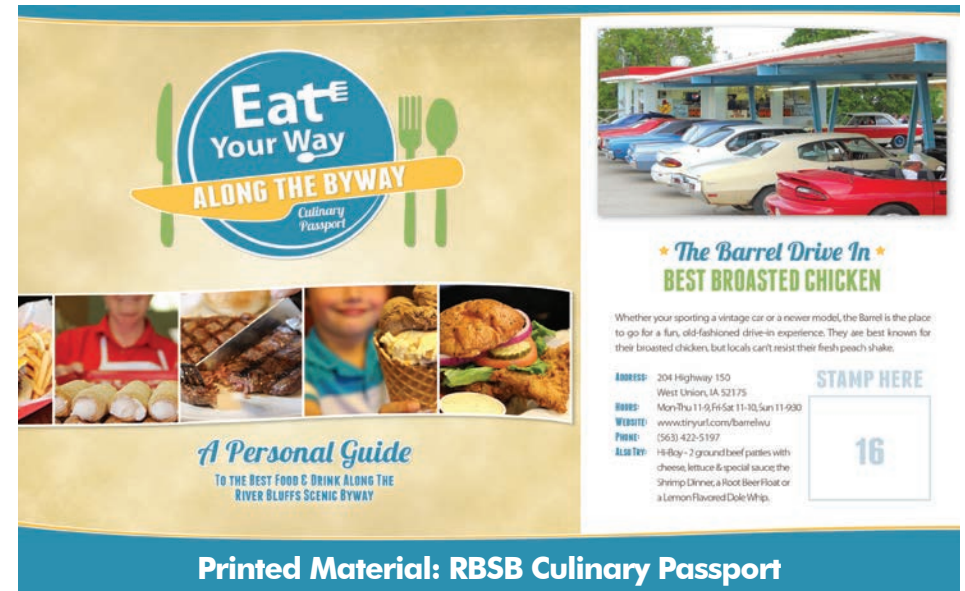
**What we Learned:** The quantity and frequency in which the RBSB tear-sheet map was distributed, makes it the most sought-after RBSB publication developed to date. From input provided by local businesses, the RBSB Board learned that they could strengthen this publication by including the lodging establishments prior to reprint.

**Partners:** Northeast Iowa RC&D, UMGC, Iowa Tourism, CCCF, FCCF

**Funding Sources:** Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation (UMGC), Iowa Tourism, Clayton and Fayette County Community Foundations

**Quantity:** 15,000

**Cost:** \$1,620



**7. RBSB Culinary Passport:** The RBSB Board developed an “Eat Your Way Along the Byway” Culinary Passport in the summer of 2015. The RBSB Culinary Passport was developed to provide information about what 16 culinary businesses along the RBSB are “most known for” by including a brief description, contact information and a short list of favorite food/drink items available at each location. To compliment the culinary passport, each participating business received a RBSB culinary passport poster, stamp and window cling.

**What we Learned:** The RBSB Board learned a valuable lesson through the implementation of the Culinary Passport Program. The enthusiasm for this project was incredible. With limited funding, certain food and drink establishments who wanted to participate in the project had to be turned down due to the limited number of pages within the booklet. Funding was secured from participating businesses and grants for the development of the passports and purchase of the stamps. Unfortunately, funding was only secured to print 850 passports. Not knowing how popular this publication would ultimately be, the RBSB Board distributed every copy within a two-week period and had no additional funding to reprint once all had been distributed (the program that was supposed to last until the fall of 2016).

**Partners:** Foods & Drink Establishments, Iowa Tourism, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Funding Sources:** Iowa Tourism, Food & Drink Establishments, FCCF

**Quantity:** 850

**Cost:** \$1,220 (\$670) for the brochures and (\$550) for the stamps and posters



Printed Material: RBSB Window Cling

**8. RBSB Window Clings:** The RBSB Board fabricated window clings with assistance from Northeast Iowa RC&D. The window clings were designed to depict the RBSB logo and were fabricated in the fall of 2013. The 3x5" window clings were developed and distributed to "friends of the byway" businesses, attractions, establishments and organizations along the byway to reinforce the RBSB brand and to let the Byway Tourist know that the place of interest is associated with and supportive of the RBSB. **What we Learned:** The window clings were a highly coveted RBSB item when they were first introduced, but the RBSB Board learned quickly that they failed to deliver from a product quality standpoint. After surveys were distributed to a variety of RBSB attractions and businesses regarding the most coveted and useful RBSB marketing material, the RBSB Board discovered that many of the custom clear static window clings became diluted, or their adhesive backing would no longer stick to the glass surface after a short period of time. This was a challenge that ultimately resulted in many of the window clings that were given to RBSB businesses, attractions and organizations being removed and/or taken down. The RBSB Board learned that a different material may have to be used if they plan to incorporate small RBSB identification signs at businesses and attractions in the foreseeable future.

**Funding Sources:** Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Partners:** Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Quantity:** 1,000

**Cost:** \$447



Printed Material: Historic Tour of Clermont Brochure

**10. RBSB Historic Tour of Clermont Brochure:** The RBSB Board partnered with members of the Clermont Historical Society to develop a Historic Walking Tour of Clermont brochure in 2012. The brochure was originally developed for a RBSB historic tour event in partnership with Project AWARE, but has been and continues to be distributed throughout the community and byway corridor. The 11x17 tri-fold then half fold brochure features a map of Clermont that identifies and provides descriptions for each of the town's 18 anchor historic sites. The brochure also includes in-depth information and photos about the Larrabee Family, town of Clermont and RBSB. A total of 1,000 brochures were ordered in June of 2011 and an additional 2,500 were ordered in May of 2012. The Clermont Historical Society incurred all printing fees for this project and have continued plans to reprint this publication when necessary.

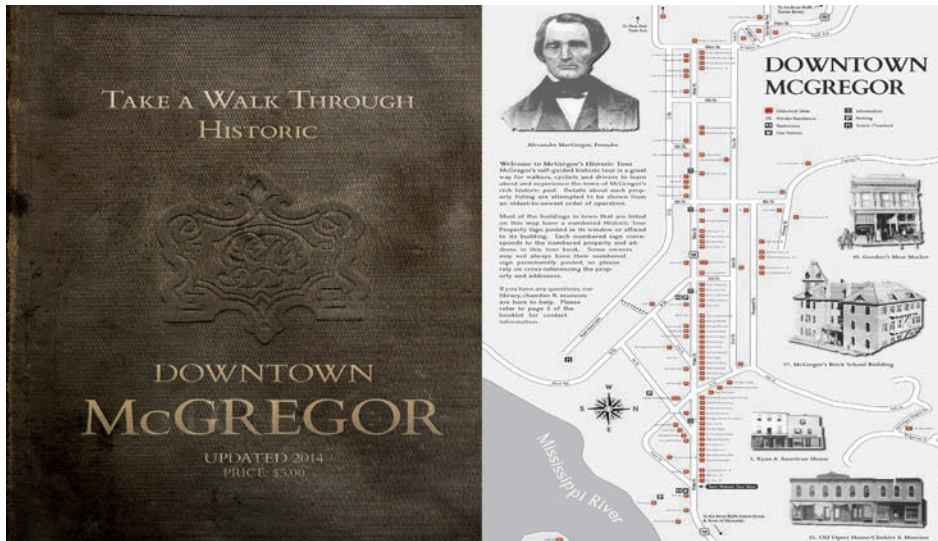
**What we Learned:** This publication was living proof to the RBSB Board that history is popular, abundant and sought-after in Clermont, along the RBSB and within the byway corridor. Despite being a relatively quaint byway community, Clermont's Historic Walking Tour Brochure remains to be popular and in high demand throughout the region.

**Funding Sources:** Clermont Historical Society

**Partners:** Northeast Iowa RC&D, Clermont Historical Society

**Quantity:** 2,500

**Cost:** \$800



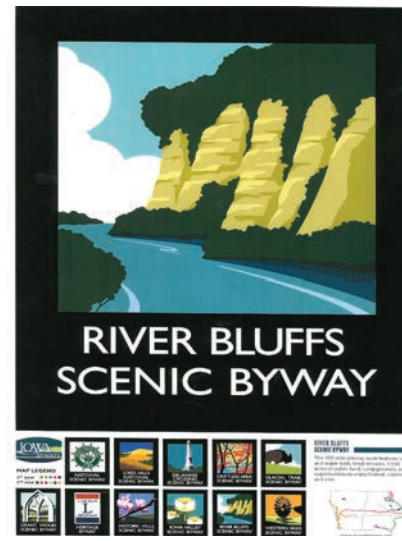
**Printed Material: Historic Tour of McGregor Brochure**

**11. RBSB Historic Tour of McGregor Brochure:** The RBSB Board partnered with the McGregor Historic Preservation Commission to develop a 50-page historic walking tour booklet. Completed in February of 2014, the booklet provides old photographs and detailed descriptions of over 100 historic sites located within the byway community of McGregor. The brochure includes information about the town's founding family "The Clan MacGregor," Alexander MacGregor, history of McGregor, historic architecture and town cemeteries. There is also a page devoted to the RBSB that includes a description and map featuring 18 of the most interesting and historic places within the byway corridor. Inside the front cover is a 11x17 fold out map of the town that shows the locations of each historic site and attraction. Members of the McGregor Historic Preservation Commission funded this project and continue to sell this publication for \$5. All proceeds go to the McGregor Historic Preservation Commission.

**What we Learned:** The RBSB Board learned that detailed, yet concise information is most preferred by the RBSB visitor. The booklet is perfect for the history buff wanting to know everything there is to know about the community of McGregor. Though, an opportunity does exist to develop a condensed version of the McGregor publication similar to the one developed for Clermont.

**Funding Sources:** McGregor Historic Preservation Commission  
**Partners:** Northeast Iowa RC&D, McGregor Historic Preservation Commission

**Quantity:** 1,000  
**Cost:** \$1,800



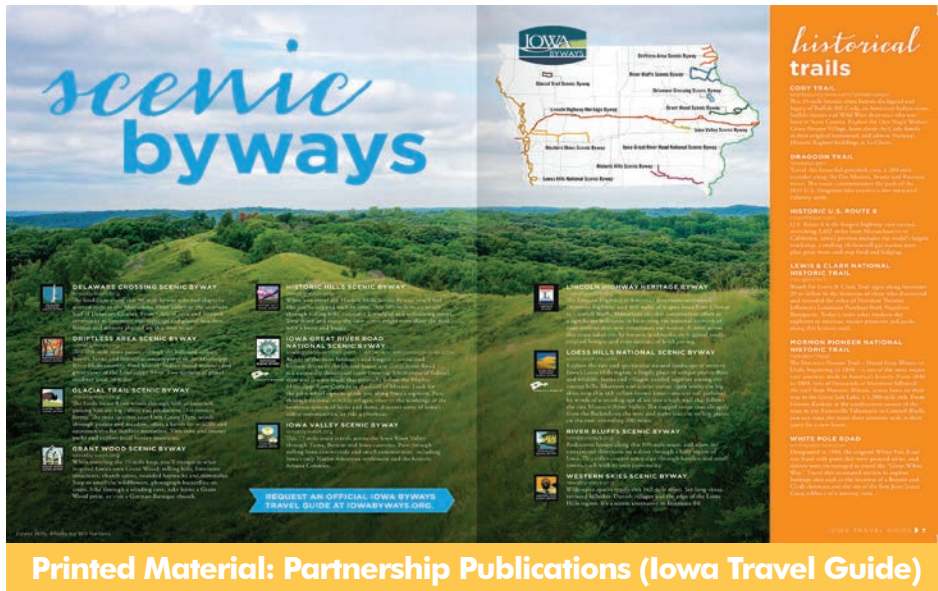
**Printed Material: Iowa Byways Promotional Posters**



**9. Iowa Byway's Promotional Posters:** News broke in the spring of 2016 that the Iowa DOT completed the design and printing of a poster for all 11 of Iowa's Byways. The series of posters feature each Byway's logo, an illustration of its geographic location in Iowa and a brief description about the byway's route and main attractions that visitors can expect to experience. The 11"x17" posters are available free of charge and can be requested through the Iowa DOT's website and/or contacting any one of the Iowa Byways Coordinators.

**What we Learned:** Inconclusive.

**Partners:** Iowa DOT  
**Funding Sources:** Iowa DOT  
**Cost:** N/A



**Printed Material: Partnership Publications (Iowa Travel Guide)**

**Outreach & Events: RBSB Trade Show Banner**

**12. RBSB Information was Included in Partnership Publications:** RBSB Board members collaborated with a wide variety of partners to distribute byway-related photographs as well as develop maps and narratives about the RBSB so that information about the byway can be included in other promotional publications geographically on a local, regional and statewide level. During the development of this CMP, narrative and/or maps related to the RBSB were included in a large assortment of promotional material. A list of significant publications included the following: 1) Iowa Tourism Travel Guide, 2) Turkey River Recreational Corridor Safari Guide, 3) Clayton County Conservation Brochure, 4) Northeast Iowa Tourism Association Travel Guide, 5) Clayton County Travel Guide, 6) Fayette County Travel Guide and 7) the NE Iowa and SE Minnesota Bluff Country Visitors Guide.

**What we Learned:** Over the past five years, the RBSB Board has learned that creating and maintaining partnerships with local, regional and statewide entities is invaluable and perhaps the most important strategy within this entire marketing plan. Many, if not all of the marketing strategies mentioned or tested within this CMP was a direct result of collaboration between multiple partnerships. An additional byproduct and benefit of multiple partnerships is that funding needed to complete many RBSB-related projects may be leveraged, shared and/or entirely covered by a partnering entity.

**Funding Sources:** N/A

**Cost:** N/A

**13. RBSB Trade Show Banner:** In order to market and promote the RBSB at conferences, welcome centers, events and other public and private venues, the RBSB Board secured funding from the Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation (UMGC) to fabricate one 34" wide by 83" tall banner stand for the Byway. The banner stand features a retractable graphic banner, hardware, aluminum casing & a canvas-carrying bag. The banner has been and continues to be used at a variety of events, conferences, trade shows, meetings and presentations today.

**What we Learned:** The RBSB trade show banner has been a great marketing tool for when there has been a need to promote the RBSB at events, conferences, trade shows, meetings and presentations. The trade show banner has been durable and is easy to set up and tear down. One lesson learned from only having one trade show banner is that when the RBSB Board is promoting the Iowa Byways Program collectively with all other Iowa Byway's banners, it serves its purpose and compliments the other byway banners perfectly. However, for events, conferences, trade shows, meetings and presentations where the RBSB Board is only looking to promote the RBSB by itself, the one banner does not fill the entire 10x10 exhibit space that is commonly given to exhibitors at these public gathering spaces.

**Funding Sources:** Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation (UMGC)

**Partners:** Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation (UMGC)

**Quantity:** 1 banner

**Cost:** \$600



**Advertising: AAA Magazine RBSB Ad**

**14. Advertising:** Prior to 2008, local, regional and/or state ads and articles promoting Iowa’s Scenic Byways did not exist. However, as more visitors and local residents became aware of Iowa’s Scenic Byways and began to seek them out, local, regional, and statewide ads that featured the RBSB began to emerge. One example of this includes the RBSB Board’s partnership with the Clayton County Development Group. Partnering with the RBSB Board, the Clayton County Development Group (CCDG) placed an ad in AAA magazine and American Road magazine promoting the RBSB in 2010.

**What we Learned:** The ad placed in AAA magazine generated over 1,800 inquiries, while the ad placed in American Road magazine generated over 3,200 inquiries from people interested in receiving information about the byway. CCDG Director, Darla Kelchen, stated that “The RBSB ad that was featured in AAA magazine and American Road magazine generated more interest through inquiries than any other ad in my 14-year career working in the field of economic development.” The success of this ad has prompted Clayton County to feature the RBSB in a variety of county-specific print, radio and TV ads. Clayton County Development Group continues to promote the RBSB using a variety of media sources annually.

**Partners:** Clayton County Development Group

**Funding Source:** Clayton County Development Group

**Quantity:** N/A

**Cost:** \$0

**Media Relations: Edible Iowa Magazine**

**15. Promotion of the RBSB occurred at Events, Conferences and Meetings:** On behalf of the RBSB Board, NEIA RC&D staff presented information about, or attended gatherings pertaining to byway issues at over 50 events, conferences, trade shows, presentations and outside organizational meetings.

**What we Learned:** The RBSB Board learned that having a 30-second elevator pitch is extremely beneficial for when promoting the RBSB at public events. It was also imperative to have a variety of RBSB print publications available for distribution. Another lesson learned from working events was that food, candy and/or drink serves as a great incentive for visitors to stop by and visit.

**16. Media Relations:** Working in unison with NEIA RC&D, the RBSB board experimented with writing articles about the RBSB and submitting them to local newspapers, radio stations, and magazines. During the development of this CMP, articles related to the RBSB appeared in a range of local media sources and articles, most notably Our Iowa Magazine’s April/May 2014 issue and Edible Iowa Magazine’s Spring 2016 issue.

**What we Learned:** Working exclusively with the two publications mentioned above, the RBSB learned that high-quality photos when submitting articles to professional publications is a must. They also learned that planning must be coordinated well in advance (over a year in both cases), to be invited to submit articles about the RBSB.  
**Cost:** \$0

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## 15.7 Proposed Marketing Mix Projects

After developing, testing and analyzing the marketing strategies that have been implemented over the past five years, the RBSB Board has gained invaluable knowledge about what strategies have worked and which have not been as effective. Yet, in order to develop a truly successful marketing plan, these “lessons learned” must be incorporated into their future goals and approaches in order to successfully market the RBSB. To identify recommendations that the RBSB Board proposes for the Byway, they have categorized each suggestion as it relates to a concept known as the “marketing mix.” The marketing mix can be defined as a concept used to identify a set of actions or tactics that an organization can use to promote its brand or product to the market. The 4Ps that make up a typical marketing mix are Price, Product, Promotion and Place. However, nowadays, the marketing mix increasingly includes several other Ps like “Positioning” and “People.” RBSB Board recommendations as they relate to each of the Ps that make up the marketing mix include the following:

### Recommendation One: Position

**1. Identify and Incorporate the RBSB’s Unique Selling Proposition:** The RBSB Board understands and recognizes that they have a brand. A RBSB logo has been developed and incorporated into all marketing material to date. However, the RBSB Board knows that a unique selling proposition must be identified and broadcasted to the visitor through the use of a tagline or slogan to reinforce its message. To gain an understanding of how other organizations and communities in Iowa and along the RBSB have positioned themselves in the tourism industry, the RBSB Board researched their slogans or taglines. The RBSB Board’s research of state, regional and local slogans and/or taglines are provided below:

- State: This is Iowa
- Regional: You’ll Love the View from Here, This is Bluff Country, Relax. Enjoy. Experience., Where Hills & Prairies Meet
- Local: The Little Switzerland of Iowa, Life can’t be this Good!, The Brick City, Deeply Connected, Historic Rivertown, Iowa’s Best Kept Secret, Historic Rivertown Paradise

After this research was completed, the Board analyzed the RBSB and identified that historical and recreational resources comprised the largest segment of tourism activities in addition to being the most consistent resources along the entire byway. Therefore, the RBSB Board recommends that a slogan or tagline in which highlights the roadway’s historical resources, while also encouraging the visitor to experience the byway’s opportunities for outdoor recreation be used. The RBSB Board recommends that a slogan and/or tagline for the RBSB be developed using the previously listed criteria.

### Recommendation Two: People

**2. Continue to Collaborate and Partner with Like-Minded Organizations:** The RBSB Board has partnered with a variety of local, regional and statewide entities that have included conservation boards, tourism associations, county engineers, city council members, community visioning groups, county supervisors, city chamber of commerces, city and county historical societies, the Regional Transportation Enhancement Committee, Regional Technical Committee, community betterment organizations, Byways of Iowa Coalition, Iowa DOT, Iowa Byways Coordinators, stakeholders, CMP committees, small group partners, survey groups as well as private and public businesses. The RBSB Board understands that each partnership is vital to improving the efficiency and sustainability of the RBSB, as allies provide opportunities to 1) save costs by sharing expenses, 2) strengthen programs, 3) provide more effective outreach and 4) tap complimentary skills and abilities. This has been the RBSB’s greatest asset and it is the RBSB Board’s hope that it will continue to be well into the future.

### Recommendation Three: Price

**3. Promote the RBSB as a Relatively-Low-Cost Tourism Destination:** One of the key components for promoting the RBSB is the rage of low-cost trip activities that one can expect to find along the route. Through research and input collected about Scenic Byway Tourists and what they are most interested in doing while traveling the Byway, the most popular activities included historical sites, general sightseeing and outdoor recreation, all of which can be done for little or no cost. Promoting the byway as an affordable/low-cost tourism destination should be pursued.

### Recommendation Four: Product

**4. Create an RBSB Experience that Exceeds the Tourist’s Expectations:** Effective visitor management within the byway corridor must be present and consistent throughout the duration of the RBSB experience. This includes not only meeting, but exceeding the visitors’ expectations when it comes to local business and attraction customer service, restrooms, facilities, parking, infrastructure, roadway improvements, wayfinding, signage and interpretation. It also means that places of interest in which are marketed through RBSB promotional strategies (digital marketing, printed material, advertising, public relations, as well as outreach and events) are easily accessible, convenient and well-maintained. The RBSB Board recommends these components of the RBSB be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that the most sought-after and visitor friendly sites and locations are the ones in which are being heavily promoted to RBSB travelers.

**5. Create a Distinctive Visual Identity for the RBSB:** The RBSB Board has developed, printed and distributed a wide variety of byway-related promotional material. This has resulted in a family of media for the byway visitor. However, many of the promotional publications and media sources were created prior to the completion of this CMP so the RBSB Board could test each marketing strategies value. An assessment of all RBSB promotional material reveals that many of the publications possess characteristics and traits that are similar to one another. Nevertheless, the RBSB Board recommends that a set of design guidelines be developed and incorporated into existing and new promotional material to increase the RBSB’s brand recognition that will result in a more cohesive experience for the visitor. This includes the use of unified and repeated colors, fonts, logos and graphic elements. To accomplish this, the RBSB Board began by referencing the “Iowa Byways Brand Guidelines.” Created by the Department of Transportation Office of Media and Marketing in 2010, this document established logos and color palettes for all of Iowa’s Byways and the overall brand. Referencing Iowa DOT’s brand guidelines, the RBSB Board recommends the following design standards:

- Color Palette: A color palette is a range or set of colors that should be used in a visual medium. The RBSB Board recommends a color palette that both compliments and incorporates colors from the RBSB logo and Iowa’s Byways brand be used. RBSB Board recommends for the color palette include the following:
  - Dark Gray CMYK is 64, 57, 59, 37
  - Medium Gray CMYK is 56, 48, 49, 15
  - Light Gray CMYK is 27, 21, 22, 0
  - Green CMYK is 47, 11, 79, 0
  - Dark Blue CMYK is 90, 69, 33, 17
  - Light Blue CMYK is 50, 10, 14, 0
  - Yellow CMYK is 0, 23, 79, 0
  - Brown CMYK is 28, 38, 48, 1
- Typography: The design and selection of letter forms and fonts can create personality and enhance readability, while varying styles can add hierarchy to media. RBSB Board member recommendations for typography include the following:
  - Futura Light BT
  - Futura Medium
  - Gill Sans
  - Gill Sans UltraBold
  - Showcard Gothic

- Repeating Graphic Elements: A unified design style is the use of repeating graphic elements. RBSB Board recommends for the use of repeating graphic elements include the following:
  - RBSB Logo
  - Curved header bars comprised of colors from the RBSB color palette
  - Byway website & contact information
  - Large, dynamic and engaging photos

#### Recommendation Five: Place

**6. Promote the RBSB on a Local, Regional, State National & International Level:** The RBSB Board has identified multiple geographic segments where they recommend promotional strategies be directed. A breakdown of each geographic segment is listed below. Plans for which geographic segment is recommended for each promotional marketing strategy is defined within the 5-year Marketing Action Plan.

- Local (39,000 people): The byway corridor within Fayette and Clayton County.
- Regional (115,000): Seven County area of NE Iowa comprised of Clayton, Fayette, Winneshiek, Allamakee, Buchanan, Chickasaw and Howard County.
- State (3.1 million): Throughout the state of Iowa.
- National (350 million): Throughout North America.
- International: Throughout Canada, United Kingdom, Japan and China.

#### Recommendation Six: Promotional Strategies

**7. Implement the most Successful Promotional Strategies:** RBSB Board members recommend that an evaluation of efforts related to existing online communication, standard collateral material, alliance building, outreach and events as well as advertising and media relations be conducted on an annual basis. The RBSB Board’s recommendations for which promotional strategies they wish to incorporate into this strategic marketing plan can be referenced by viewing the 5-year Marketing Action Plan that begins on page 231.

**8. Make Internet a Top Priority:** Quoting an excerpt from Roger Brook’s keynote ‘presentation “The New Age of Tourism,” Brooks states that “74% of all households in America now have internet and 94% of all trip planning is done online. Often times the experience is searched prior to the location. The Internet is, far and away, the most effective way to market your activities.” Knowing the importance of digital marketing nowadays, the RBSB Board recommends that additional resources be invested in 1) frequent updates, 2) improved content seasonally, 3) e-newsletters, 4) video, 5) social media, 6) Google AdWords pay-per-click (only pay when someone clicks your ad

to visit your website) and 7) search engine optimization (in order to make sure the RBSB experiences are on the first page of search results related to their primary and secondary audiences). The RBSB Board is open to partnerships when exploring these digital marketing strategies, but would be particularly interested in pursuing an Iowa Byway's statewide project when it comes to the implementation of video creation, Google AdWords pay-per-click and search engine optimization for the Iowa Byways Sustainability Program.

**9. Transition Website from [www.iowabyways.org](http://www.iowabyways.org) to [www.traveliowa.com](http://www.traveliowa.com):**

Though the RBSB Board and many of their partners have spent considerable time developing the [www.iowabyways.org](http://www.iowabyways.org) website, the RBSB Board, with support from the Iowa DOT, recommends that all activity related to the continuation of this website stop immediately. Having limited abilities to manage website content and features, the challenges of maintaining and keeping the website relevant and up-to-date have outweighed the benefits. With support from the Iowa DOT, it is the RBSB Board's recommendation that all communications with places of interest along the RBSB that wish to add information about their business and/or attraction to the Byway website should do so utilizing Iowa Tourism's [www.traveliowa.com](http://www.traveliowa.com) website. All promotional material, photos and narrative related to the RBSB should be incorporated into the Travel Iowa website immediately.

**Potential Partners:** Iowa DOT, Travel Iowa, Iowa Byway Coordinators

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**10. Contract for Seasonal Photography:** The right photos make a huge difference in the overall impression and effectiveness of what it is that you are promoting to the visitor. This is especially true for any digital marketing platform. The RBSB website is often where Byway Tourists experience their first impression of the Byway and its brand. Snap decisions are made, credibility is gauged and a level of trust is often established within just a few clicks. The RBSB Board believes it to be imperative that the RBSB retains a variety of high-quality professional photos from all four-seasons to properly and effectively portray the RBSB and the activities one can experience along the route. Ideally, the Board recommends securing at least 100 high-quality signature photographs for the RBSB.

**Potential Partners:** NEIA RC&D, Clayton County Development Group, Fayette County Economic Development & Tourism, Jessica Rilling Photography

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Tourism, Community Foundations, Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation, Iowa Byway's Foundation

**Quantity:** 1

**Estimated Cost:** \$750 per session

**11. Contract or Create Professionally Produced Videos for the RBSB:** Before redevelopment of the Iowa Byway's online presence can be fully re-established on the Iowa Tourism website, an arrangement of professional videos is recommended by the RBSB Board to help with visual communications. Each video should be fun, festive and engaging, all while fitting within the frame of the visual identity and brand of the Byway. The focus portrayed in each video should be on people having a great time while traveling the RBSB. Board members recommend that a number of 20-second to two-minute videos featuring "great experiences" found in every season of the year should be highlighted. The videos should be formatted for the use on YouTube, the Travel Iowa website and other online media sources.

**Potential Partners:** NEIA RC&D, Iowa Scenic Byway Coordinators, Iowa DOT, Luther College

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Tourism, Byways of Iowa Foundation

**Quantity:** 1

**Estimated Cost:** \$2,000 per video

**12. Implement a RBSB & TRRC Trail Social Media Campaign:** With the growing use of social media, using location services to tag a location or a hashtag to reinforce a brand is a crucial element of place-based marketing. The Turkey River Recreational Corridor (TRRC) Trail is a popular paved trail connecting Elgin and Clermont, with plans underway to extend the trail and connect other RBSB communities. Partnering with the TRRC, the RBSB Board recommends developing a social media marketing campaign to encourage the use of the TRRC Trail with the goal of getting more people posting online about using this popular RBSB trail. This begins with making the TRRC Trail a location option on popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. This will allow visitors to tag their posts as being along the trail based on their physical location. To encourage photographs of the most unique and scenic locations, photo opportunities will be marked with signs, with more opportunities being added as the trail expands. These signs will denote that this is an ideal photo location, give branded hashtags to use in the post, and provide interpretation. Visitors can choose to take a photo of the view and they will also be encouraged to take a "selfie" or group photo. To encourage including people in the photos, the marker signs will be optimally placed relative to the photo view and designed in a way that will safely hold a phone or camera so that trail users can use their camera timer. Photo locations can be further enhanced by public art or a unique free-standing frame to pose within. Photo locations will be included on TRRC maps and other marketing materials, but the bulk of the marketing will be done at the grassroots level by trail users. Locations will be chosen by the TRRC Board with input from the RBSB

Board when considering the quality of the view/background, uniqueness and recognition, and what locations are already popular for photos. For example, the eagle's nest sculpture or a beautiful bluff view. Branded hashtags will also be carefully chosen and could include #TRRC or #trailstoFUN, a more regional hashtag like #exploreIA or #riverbluffsscenicbyway, or a funny hashtag like #GoOutsideAndPlay. If this project limited along the TRRC Trail proves to be popular and effective, it would be very simple to expand this marketing idea to locations along the RBSB to market the entire byway.

**Potential Partners:** NEIA RC&D, Clayton and Fayette Counties, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Tourism Grant, Fayette County Community Foundation, Iowa Arts Council Project Grant

**Estimated Cost:** \$20,000

**13. Develop Detailed RBSB Itineraries:** Over the years and through the addition of new and more efficient technologies and mediums, the expectations of the average tourist have changed. Today, the average tourist is looking for specifics, not generalities. Therefore, the RBSB Board recommends that detailed itineraries should be incorporated into their promotional strategies. The itineraries should be highly-specific and feature half day, full-day, two-day and/or even three-day itineraries. Each itinerary could focus on a wide variety of things to do within each tourism sector, or they could be tailored to attract each of the RBSB's primary and secondary target audiences. They could be seasonal based, activity based or focused on any one of the Byway's intrinsic resources.

**Potential Partners:** Northeast Iowa RC&D RC&D, Clayton County Development Group, Fayette County Economic Development & Tourism, Iowa Byways Sustainability Program

**Potential Funding Sources:** UMGC, Fayette and Clayton County Community Foundations, Iowa Tourism

**Quantity:** 1

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**14. Narrow the Arsenal of Go-To RBSB Material Down to Three Per Year:**

Knowing the difficulty of reprinting promotional material on an annual basis, the RBSB Board recommends that a total of three printed promotional pieces be identified as the RBSB's "Go-To" materials. These pieces may vary from year to year, but the idea is that there are always at least three different printed publications specifically promoting the RBSB on an annual basis. The RBSB Board has identified their top three RBSB publications, which can be viewed by referring to the 5-year Marketing Action Plan.

**15. Distribute RBSB Promotional Material on a Quarterly Basis:** After years of distributing byway-related promotional material to the businesses and/or attractions along the RBSB, a pattern began to emerge. Many of the businesses and/or attractions were very appreciative when someone was to swing by and drop off promotional material. However, many of these businesses and/or attractions are understaffed, or do not have the time and/or resources to make sure that their promotional rack is continuously kept up-to-date. The local attitude seems to be that "if we have it, we'll promote it." Unfortunately, this means that many opportunities to get byway-related information into the hands of potential RBSB travelers is lost. Because of this, the RBSB Board recommends that the Byway Coordinator, RBSB ambassadors and/or volunteers should travel the byway on a quarterly basis to distribute byway-related material that is requested by each business and/or attraction.



**Contract Seasonal Photography**

**16. Develop a “Hidden Gems” RBSB Brochure:** The RBSB Board recommends developing a print publication for the RBSB that features complementary Byway activities, or those “things to do” that are not the primary draw to the community. These “things to do” would be gems that come from local knowledge that would otherwise be hidden or bypassed by the tourist. Concepts or gems that the RBSB Board has identified to consider for inclusion on this publication includes information about seeking 1) trilobites, crinoids & cephalopods, 2) surface hunts for arrowheads, 3) Native American folklore sites, 4) significant tombstones & historic statues, 5) churches & stained glass and/or 6) stone structures. The RBSB Board recommends a 5.5”x8.5” 20-page printed publication.

**Potential Partners:** NEIA RC&D, Clayton County Development Group, Fayette County Economic Development & Tourism, Iowa Byways Sustainability Program

**Potential Funding Sources:** Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation, Fayette and Clayton County Community Foundations, Iowa Tourism

**Quantity:** 10,000

**Estimated Cost:** \$2,700

**17. Develop a Series of RBSB Activity Guides for each Target Market:** The RBSB Board recognizes that there are a growing number of tourists today who are focused on activities, or things to see and do in addition to receiving print material that exclusively feature an inventory or list of local businesses and attractions. They also recognize that providing content or activity-specific information to their target audiences will help them achieve their goal in attracting, prolonging and retaining the Byway Tourist. Therefore, Board members recommend that a series, or at least one print publication be developed for each secondary target audience. This includes the Adventure Tourist, Cultural & Heritage Tourist, Culinary Tourist, Motorcycle Tourist and the families touring the RBSB with children. Ideas for potential RBSB activity guides include: 1) Outdoor Adventure along the RBSB, 2) Northeast Iowa Motorcycle Routes, 3) Historic Walking Tours along the RBSB, 4) Make Way for Play – Playgrounds & Youth Activities along the RBSB 5) Wildflower Hikes, 6) Painters, Potters & Pubs Tour, 7) Birding Activity Guide and/or 8) Geocaching Guide. The RBSB Board recommends a 11”x17” half-fold then tri-fold printed publication.

**Potential Partners:** NEIA RC&D, Clayton County Development Group, Fayette County Economic Development & Tourism, Iowa Byways Sustainability Program

**Potential Funding Sources:** Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation, Fayette and Clayton County Community Foundations, Iowa Tourism, Iowa Byway’s Foundation

**Quantity:** 10,000

**Estimated Cost:** \$1,300

**18. Create a “Best of” the RBSB Brochure:** Even though a wide variety of print promotional material for the RBSB exists, the Byway does not have an exclusive publication that highlights the “best” places and sites to experience each of the RBSB’s intrinsic resources. RBSB Board members recommend that a brochure be developed to accomplish this by identifying the top five anchor attractions for each of the seven intrinsic resources along the RBSB. The RBSB Board recommends a 11”x17” half-fold then tri-fold printed publication.

**Potential Partners:** NEIA RC&D, Clayton County Development Group, Fayette County Economic Development & Tourism, Iowa Byways Sustainability Program

**Potential Funding Sources:** Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation, Fayette and Clayton County Community Foundations Iowa Tourism, Iowa Byway’s Foundation

**Quantity:** 15,000

**Estimated Cost:** \$1,800

**19. Develop Fayette & Clayton County Trout Fishing Guides for the RBSB:**

Clayton & Fayette Counties are known to have some of the most pristine Coldwater trout streams in the entire state and perhaps in the upper Midwest. With 19 of Iowa’s 81 trout streams (23%), totaling 37 miles of fishable water being located with the RBSB’s corridor, this region of Iowa attracts thousands of anglers on an annual basis. The RBSB Board has identified the promotion of their trout streams as a high-priority project and recommend that a trout fishing guide be developed for both counties in which comprise the RBSB. Each trout fishing guide would feature 1) a large detailed county road map to help anglers navigate to each trout stream, 2) information about fly hatches, trout stocking, guide services, fishing-related businesses & Iowa fishing regulations and 3) individual trout stream maps that display parking lots, campsites, trout stiles, public land, mowed trail, stream crossings, stream classification and stream length for each county.

**Potential Partners:** NEIA RC&D, Clayton County Development Group, Fayette County Economic Development & Tourism, Iowa DNR

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Tourism, Fayette County and Clayton County Community Foundations, Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation

**Quantity:** 7,500 per county

**Estimated Cost:** \$5,300 per county

**20. Develop RBSB Poster Maps:** Businesses in the tourism sectors of lodging as well as food & beverage get asked “what’s there to do?” and “where is that?” on a regular basis. Restaurant and hotel owners located along the RBSB have specifically requested that a large, detailed poster map of the RBSB be created. The RBSB poster map would include a listing of businesses within each tourism sector, attractions related to each intrinsic resource and a list of activities to do

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in the RBSB corridor. Each listing would include a brief description. The 24"x36" poster would be distributed to businesses and attractions along the RBSB.

**Potential Partners:** Chambers, Visitors Bureaus, Byway businesses

**Funding Sources:** UMGC, Fayette and Clayton County Community Foundations, Iowa Tourism, Iowa Byway's Foundation, local businesses, Hotel/Motel funding

**Quantity:** 100

**Estimated Cost:** \$750

**21. Develop a Byway Business Information Sheet:** To educate and distribute the most sought-after print promotional publications to businesses along the byway, the RBSB recommends developing a Byway Business Information Sheet that can be printed in-house and given to business owners. The Information Sheet should include information about 1) what a byway is, 2) how the RBSB benefits their business, 3) current byway-related projects, 4) economic development facts related to the RBSB, 5) a map of the RBSB route and 6) a listing of all free byway online and offline promotional opportunities that they can take advantage of. The RBSB Board recommends that the RBSB Coordinator or Volunteer Byway Ambassador make in-person visits to businesses to distribute the information sheet. If time permits the manager to review the list on-site, the printed promotional items most desired should be distributed following the brief meeting. This should be done in the spring on an annual basis.

**Potential Partners:** Chambers, Visitors Bureau

**Potential Funding Sources:** N/A

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**22. Develop an Identity System for the RBSB:** The RBSB Board recommends the development of an identity system for the Byway. An identity system is comprised of stationary items that include business cards, letterhead, envelopes, mailing labels, presentation folders and email signatures. Color palettes, typography and repeating graphic elements of the RBSB's visual brand identity should be used. The RBSB Board recommends the following be ordered: 1,000 labels (\$30), 250 business cards (\$25), 250 pieces of letterhead (\$35), 250 envelopes (\$45) and 100 custom folders (\$200). Collectively, these items reinforce the RBSB brand and are great tools to use when communication with internal and external audiences, stakeholders and partners as needed.

**Potential Partners:** Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fundraising

**Estimated Cost:** \$335

**23. Develop RBSB Stone Structure Promotional Material:** The limestone bedrock in Northeast Iowa is an important part of the RBSB experience. Unlike most of Iowa, the bedrock is close to the surface and exposed in many places along the RBSB route by weathering, road cuts or geologic formations. It not only influences the byway corridor's appearance, it has shaped the infrastructure, the culture and the sense of place in the RBSB Corridor through time. The rugged limestone bluffs create a scenic beauty that lends a unique natural, timeless, feel of to the landscape, and enhances outdoor recreational experiences along the RBSB. The RBSB partners would like to draw attention to the limestone building structures along the RBSB. To that end, a stone structure inventory by township was completed in the RBSB Corridor in Clayton County. This project will use the same process to inventory stone structures in Fayette County, including historic and new, and then identify which structures in both counties are immediately along the byway road. Interpretive materials, maps, and self-guided tours will be developed. These marketing materials will include both the man-made stone structures and other limestone geographical features of interest. Creating targeted, niche marketing and promotional materials for the RBSB is a priority of the RBSB Board. This will help bring diverse travelers to the byway by engaging them in various interest areas while they discover other intrinsic qualities that the byway has to offer.

**Potential Partners:** RBSB Board, Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission, Fayette County Historical Society, Turkey River Recreational Corridor, Clermont Historical Society, Guttenberg Heritage Society, McGregor Historical Society, Elgin Historical Society

**Potential Funding Sources:** UMGC, Fayette & Clayton County Community Foundations, Historical Resource Development Program, Travel Iowa Tourism Grant

**Estimated Cost:** \$6,000

**24. Develop RBSB Restaurant Placemats:** The development of a RBSB disposable paper restaurant placemat would be a cost effective way to promote the RBSB and activities along the route. This idea was specifically recommended by a hand full of restaurant owners located along the RBSB. The 11"x17" two-color placemats would feature a map of the RBSB on front, and activities/games related to the RBSB on the back.

**Potential Partners:** Business Chambers, Visitors Bureau, Byway food & drink establishments located within the corridor

**Potential Funding Sources:** UMGC, Fayette and Clayton County Community Foundations, Iowa Tourism, Iowa Byway's Foundation

**Quantity:** 20,000

**Estimated Cost:** \$2,000 (10 cents per placemat)

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**25. Implement a Geocaching Program along the RBSB:** Geocaching is an emerging recreational activity that takes the fun of a scavenger hunt to the next level by incorporating secret clues, cyphers, and Global Positioning System (GPS) technology on a GPS unit or smartphone to find a hidden “cache.” Geocaching is popular among all demographics from families to young persons to retired seniors. The sport is popular because it is a fun challenge and takes cachers to unique spots in their local communities and while travelling. Collecting many caches is the goal, and there is a very engaged online community where one can find caches, clues, get hints, and network with fellow geocachers. There are over 1,000 documented geocaches within 30 miles of the RBSB. The RBSB would like to promote the byway as a geocaching destination by creating an official GeoTour to market the byway. There is no official geocaching website-sanctioned GeoTours nearby in the Midwest, so this would be a unique and new recreational resource that would draw a different demographic to the area and get individuals travelling to many stops along the byway and in the byway corridor. This could be marketed as the River Bluffs Scenic Byway GeoTrail. All caches could be included, or certain caches that highlight byway themes could be featured. Since caches are managed by their creators and the online Geocaching community, there would be no oversight needed for the caches once the GeoTour was created. Specific marketing materials such as a map noting locations of caches, but not their hiding places, could be created and periodically updated as old caches disappear and new caches are created.

**Potential Funding Sources:** UMGC, Fayette and Clayton Community Foundations, Iowa Tourism Grant, RJ McElroy Foundation

**Potential Partners:** TRRC Board, Iowa Geocachers, Local City and County Governments, Northeast Iowa Tourism Association, County Conservation Boards, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Estimated Cost:** \$32,000

**26. Self-Guided Audio Tour of the RBSB:** There has been a lot of interest in adding interactive forms of interpretation to the byway experience, sites and communities. One way to engage different learning styles, create interpretive diversity, and share stories is through a self-guided audio tour of the RBSB. There are several options available for self-guided audio tours. This project will implement several to maximize the opportunities to engage the RBSB traveler. The method will be development of a compact disk (CD) that can be distributed and played in one’s car as they drive the byway. However, since newer model cars no longer come standard with a CD player, and this method limits the audio tour to being in one’s car, additional interpretation will be made available online and accessible via a smartphone with a data connection. There are smartphone applications that allow the development of audio-tours that are

guided by the smartphone’s GPS system. This option also has some challenges because not everyone has a smartphone and not every carrier has strong data service in some of the byway’s rural areas. To address these challenges, the RBSB Board will pursue development of an OnCell Audio Tour. <http://www.oncell.com/> Using this provider, each selected site along the RBSB will have a small sign stating a call in phone number and site code. Users will use an active phone connection to dial in and hear the interpretive material through their phone. The information will be accessible from any phone anywhere as long as the caller has the phone number and site codes. An audio guide will be developed so the listener can find the sites with interactive audio interpretation and re-listen to the audio as many times as they want. Call in numbers and codes will be added to existing marketing materials for audio sites. Using the OnCell software, the audio information can be accessed and heard online as well, and it is very easy to change the interpretation to create an interesting and personalized experience. OnCell also provides analytics to track the use of each site’s code and the option for a mobile app in addition to the phone numbers. The RBSB will use these methods, including the interpretive audio, as an opportunity to share more information about sites, especially information that is not tied to a physical place like oral histories, folklore, and even music.

**Potential Partners:** TRRC, Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission, Historical Society of Fayette County, Clayton County Development Groups, Fayette County Tourism, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Tourism Grant, Clayton and Fayette County Community Foundations, UMGC, Byways of Iowa Foundation

**Estimated Cost:** \$41,000

### **Recommendation Seven: Public Relations**

**27. Promote the RBSB Through Media Relations:** Newspaper editors and staff as well as magazine editors and writers are often overloaded with information from promoters regularly. However, if you give them something new that fits their deadlines and meets their needs and/or desires, this can be a great and inexpensive way to promote the RBSB. Recommendations for how to do this well includes making sure that the story is: 1) logical, allowing journalists to assess its newsworthiness, 2) factual, with interesting figures and anecdotes which bring it alive, 3) timely, meeting media deadlines and 4) newsworthy, makes good TV, article or images. The RBSB Board recommends an increased focus on this strategy, especially since publicity gained through this media source often comes at little or no cost and can add great benefit to the RBSB.

**Potential Partners:** Radio, print and online media sources

**Potential Funding Sources:** N/A

**Estimated Cost:** \$0





Implement a Geocaching Program along the RBSB

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## Recommendation Eight: Outreach & Events

**28. Implement a Byway Ambassador Program:** The RBSB Board recommends that a Byway Ambassador Program be initiated to have Project Staff work with the RBSB Board to recruit and educate Volunteer Ambassadors from each community. The program will look to educate Volunteer Ambassadors about the economic and tourism potential of the RBSB, while also instructing businesses owners for how they can help foster a culture of collaboration within their community and along the RBSB. Each Volunteer Ambassador will serve as the “go-to” person from their community and will be given the task of educating the business owners and community members about the economic benefits they may experience from being on or near the RBSB. This project will provide initial support, education, development and outreach materials. Project staff will implement the following strategies as part of this program:

- Facilitate two Byway Ambassador meetings annually.
- Develop and provide a packet of materials for the Byway Ambassadors to use to educate business owners and residents. Materials will simplify and explain the byway traveler demographics, convey the economic benefits associated with byways and foster marketing and business, and public and private partnerships.
- Facilitate discussion between Byway Ambassadors and the RBSB Board to ensure that all stay “in the know” about what is happening with businesses, business districts, and byway initiatives in each community.
- Bring Ambassadors from each byway together to develop and implement at least one multi-community outreach activity or event annually that will raise public awareness about how community collaboration can foster economic vitality.
- Conduct Ambassador recruitment meetings to secure at least one Ambassador for each of the 10 anchor byway communities.
- Have businesses adopt attractions along the RBSB and vice versa. Though front-line employees and staff can’t market every activity, they can become familiar with one. A strategy of asking each business to partner with an attraction and become highly familiar with each other can be beneficial for both. Employees from the business can recommend the attraction, and vice versa. Implementing partnerships like this along the entire length of the RBSB has the potential to lengthen the visitors stay and provide them with a better traveling experience.
- Have employees working within differing tourism sectors take a familiarization tour of the RBSB, where they would drive the length of the byway to learn about, stop at and experience the attractions and intrinsic resources themselves. By experiencing what there is to do along the byway themselves, they are more inclined to share personal recommendations and stories with visitors.

**Potential Partners:** NEIA RC&D, Iowa Byways Sustainability Program

**Potential Funding Sources:** USDA, Iowa Byway’s Foundation

**Estimated Cost:** \$40,000

**29. Implement a Hospitality Training Program for the RBSB:** Quoting an excerpt from renowned tourism expert Roger Brooks, “Brands must be more than skin deep. To really “own” your brand, EVERYONE, from the saloon bartenders to front desk employees at hotels to the retail workers, must be hospitable and friendly. But if you hope to have front-line employees come to a host-training workshop on their own time, guess again.” To educate those who are employed and working in the tourism sector along the RBSB, the Byway Board recommends utilizing a recommendation from Roger Brooks and would like to purchase the 14-minute video “The Guest,” produced by Media Partners in Seattle. This 14-minute video is humorous, easy to watch, and is a great way to “teach” hospitality without it being time consuming and degrading. When front-line workers realize that every customer is paying something that directly goes into their paychecks, they often will realize how important that person is to their paycheck. The Hospitality Training program would include setting up appointments where the RBSB Coordinator or Volunteer Byway Ambassador would go to a hotel, meet with the general manager, front desk manager or other staff working that day and schedule a 30-minute meeting. Using a computer monitor, the RBSB Coordinator or Volunteer Byway Ambassador would show the 14-minute video and then talk to the staff for an additional 10 minutes. That’s it. As a byway business/attraction, this will help the front-line people be friendly, courteous, happy and outgoing.

**Potential Partners:** Chambers, Visitors Bureau

**Potential Funding Sources:** UMGC, Fayette County and Clayton County Community Foundations, Iowa Tourism

**Video Estimated Cost:** \$900 for purchase of video with exercises

**Program Estimated Cost:** \$10,000

**30. Develop Logo Gear & Collectibles:** To increase awareness of the byway and its brand, the RBSB Board recommends logo gear be developed. Logo gear and collectibles can be made available for purchase at hotels/motels, visitor information centers, museums and/or local retail outlets. Using the RBSB logo and tagline, recommended swag includes the following: 1) key rings, 2) mugs, 3) bumper stickers, 4) charms, 5) postcards, 6) t-shirts and /or motorcycle kick stands. The RBSB Board also recognizes that each byway’s logo must be approved by the Iowa DOT for licensing. Though licensing of the RBSB logo has yet to be resolved, the development of merchandise is a project the RBSB Board wishes to pursue and implement in the near future.

**Potential Partners:** NEIA RC&D, Iowa Scenic Byway Coordinators, Iowa DOT

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Byways Foundation, Fundraising

**Estimated Cost:** N/A

**31. Fabricate a Set of Four RBSB Trade Show Banners:** The RBSB Board has purchased, used and displayed one 34" wide x 83" tall retractable RBSB trade show banner at a variety of conferences, welcome centers, trade shows, attractions, events and public/private venues to market and promote the RBSB. However, after market research has been conducted, the RBSB Board has learned that collectively, when the RBSB banner is present at displays where other Iowa Byway's banners are also being displayed, the existing trade show banner is cohesive with the others, as it is 1 of 9 in the series that represent Iowa's Byways. But when the RBSB trade show banner is displayed on its own or by itself, the size is not always indicative to the area and/or public space where a larger display would be beneficial. Furthermore, the design of the banner does not completely follow the principles identified as the distinctive visual identity of the RBSB. The proposed trade show banners should be 34" wide x 83" tall with stand, hardware, aluminum casing and a canvas carrying bag.

**Potential Partners:** Chambers, Visitors Bureau, Byways of Iowa Foundation

**Potential Funding Sources:** Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation, Fayette County Community Foundation, Clayton County Community Foundation, Iowa Tourism, Byways of Iowa Foundation

**Quantity:** 4

**Estimated Cost:** \$2,400



**Implement a Hospitality Training Program**



**Recruit Byway Ambassadors**

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## 15.8 Metrics

Metrics is all about tracking and measuring the results of the implemented marketing activity. This process will allow the RBSB Board to take an existing static, or one-time plan and turn it into a breathing blueprint that will grow and develop with the RBSB. Ways for which the RBSB Board plans to track and measure their promotional marketing activity are as follows:

### One: Digital Marketing

- **Unique Visitors:** Unique visitors are defined as the number of individuals who visit your website during a given period of time, where each visitor is only counted once. This information will be used to identify how many web viewers are visiting the RBSB and Iowa Byway webpage and what months during the year receive the highest traffic volume of page views. This strategy will be incorporated when analyzing Travel Iowa's Iowa Scenic Byways Website.
- **Page Views:** Page views can be defined as the cumulative number of individual pages that your visitors click on during a given period of time while on your website. This information will be used to measure how engaged and interested the web viewer is in Iowa Byway's content by the number of times they click to multiple pages. This strategy will be incorporated when analyzing Travel Iowa's Iowa Scenic Byways Website.
- **Search Engine Traffic:** Search engine traffic can be defined as the amount of traffic being referred to your site through search engines, such as Google, Yahoo and/or Mozilla Firefox. This information will be used to indicate how effective the RBSB Board and Iowa Byways Program is doing at optimizing our content for search. This strategy will be incorporated when analyzing Travel Iowa's Iowa Scenic Byways Website.
- **Bounce Rate:** Bounce rate can be defined as the percentage of visitors who come to your site and then immediately "bounce" or leave before clicking on any other pages. This information will be used to gauge if the web viewer likes what they find on the website. A bounce rate of 40% is average. Anything higher may suggest the web viewer does not find the content appealing. This strategy will be incorporated when analyzing Travel Iowa's Iowa Scenic Byways Website.
- **Inbound Links:** Inbound links can be defined as the number of external links to your site. This information will be used to see if other people and partnering organizations have found the RBSB and Iowa Byways content important enough to link to it. This strategy will be incorporated when analyzing Travel Iowa's Iowa Scenic Byways Website.
- **Social Media:** The number of "likes" will be used to measure the RBSB Facebook site's effectiveness. Other tracking tools available using Facebook and social media sites will be explored.

- **Conversion Rate:** Conversion rate is defined as the percentage of visitors to your site who take a specific action that your content encourages them to, such as signing up for your newsletter or downloading an online publication/itinerary. These usually remain around 2 and 3 percent, but the RBSB Board would like to aim for a conversion rate of 5 percent. This strategy will be incorporated when analyzing Travel Iowa's Iowa Scenic Byways Website.
- **Emails:** The number of emails opened will be used to measure the metrics of any marketing strategy such as e-newsletters, news releases or articles that are sent to byway stakeholders.

### Two: Public Relations

The number of articles and news releases sent to media will be tracked and the conversion rate will be documented. Over time, the RBSB Board hopes to identify patterns for which stories and or news related articles are most desired and published to help promote the RBSB in the future.

### Three: Advertising

- **Measure Inquiries:** RBSB Board members plan to measure the number of inquiries, or "people interested in receiving information about the RBSB" that are generated from each ad placed in a paid-for print publication, travel guide or magazine.
- **Measure Ads Effectiveness:** The RBSB Board can compare pre- and post advertising traffic on the Travel Iowa website to measure an ads effectiveness.

### Four: Printed Material

- **Customer Surveys:** A customer survey can be defined as identifying the level of satisfaction and/or discovering hidden needs and expectations for new or proposed products. The RBSB Board plans to continue to use customer surveys to identify which printed publications are most desired and helpful to the RBSB businesses and attractions. In the Spring of 2015, the RBSB Board developed a postcard that encouraged businesses in the hospitality sector to "check the RBSB publications they would like to receive at no cost." The postcard was mailed to every hotel, motel, bed & breakfast, lodge, cabin, guesthouse and campground along the RBSB. A total of 83 postcards were mailed, all self-addressed with paid for postage. The postcards that were mailed back to Northeast Iowa RC&D showed that the businesses along the RBSB in the hospitality sector preferred the following publications, represented by the percentage of those who wished to receive the printed material: RBSB tear-sheet map (88%), Iowa Byways travel guide (86%), RBSB window cling (71%) and RBSB children's activity book (57%). Using this information, the RBSB Board discovered that the tear-sheet map, Iowa

Byways travel guide and window clings were most desired for those within the hospitality sector. The RBSB Board plans to conduct similar surveys for businesses and attractions that fall under the “other tourism” sectors to identify what material each entity prefers to have on hand to distribute. This will include mailing similar postcard surveys to businesses, attractions and/or organizations in the tourism sectors of 1) entertainment & recreation, 2) retail, 3) auto transportation and 4) food service.

- **Demand:** Demand can be defined as a desire or need for a specific product. This metric can be assessed when the RBSB Coordinator or Volunteer RBSB Ambassador distributes printed material to businesses and attractions on a quarterly basis. A total number of printed publications, while identifying quantities for each different publication should be documented.
- **Frequency:** Frequency can be defined as the rate in which something occurs. The RBSB Board plans to be conscious as to how many RBSB-related publications are in the possession of businesses and/or attractions each time a RBSB Board member or the RBSB Coordinator stops in at each location quarterly. If the business and/or attraction has printed material on hand that was provided 6-months ago, the business and/or attraction may not be an ideal location for receiving future RBSB promotional material. Contrary, if the business and/or attraction is consistently out of, or calling to request additional RBSB print publications, they should be given an increased amount or number of RBSB print material per quarter.

### Five: Outreach & Events

The RBSB Board can measure the success of any given event, conference, trade show or public/provate gathering by documenting quantitative data such as how many engaging conversations they had with attendees, how many print publications were distributed, what print publication was distributed the most, how many people were in attendance, etc.

### 15.9 Five-Year Marketing Action Plan

The RBSB Board recommends a 5-year marketing action plan to implement their top-priority marketing strategies. It has been suggested that a period of time should be taken to properly strategize ways in which projects can be prearranged and potential funding sources can be prioritized and pursued. It should be noted that although a wide variety of strategies and promotional activities are included within the 5-year plan, all promotional strategies are subject to change based on opportunity, funding sources and availability, or time that is needed for each line item. The budgeted items only refer to direct costs associated with each project and do not take into account staff wages. The RBSB Board’s 5-year marketing action plan begins on page 230.



Iowa State Fair

Year One Promotional Strategy	% of Budget		Recommendation	Distribution Frequency	Geographic Segment					Estimated Cost			Total Cost		
	Partners	RBSB			Local	Regional	State	Nat'l	Int'l	Partner	Amount	RBSB Board			
1	Digital Marketing (45%)	16%	39%	Social Media Marketing	Weekly	X	X	X							
				Website Content	Monthly	X	X	X	X	X					
				E-Newsletters (4)	Quarterly	X	X								
				Content Generation - Itineraries (4)	Quarterly	X	X								
				Content Generation - Photography (4 photo shoots)	Quarterly	X	X	X	X	X				\$3,000	\$3,000
				Content Generation - Video (2 videos)	Annual	X	X	X	X	X				\$4,000	\$4,000
				Pay-Per-Click or AdWords	Annual	X	X	X	X	X	Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100
				Search Engine Optimization	Annual	X	X	X			Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100
Online Trip Planning websites (TripAdvisor, Pinterest, YouTube)	Annual	X	X	X	X		Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100				
										\$3,000	\$7,300	\$10,200			
2	Public Relations (20%)	0%	0%	Articles (4)	Quarterly	X	X	X							
				News Release	As Needed	X	X	X							
										\$0	\$0	\$0			
3	Advertising (20%)	0%	0%	SE MN, NE IA & SW WI Visitors Guide (1/2 page ad)	Annual		X	X					\$452	\$452	
				American Road Magazine (1/2 page ad)	Annual				X		CCDG		\$500	\$500	
				AAA Magazine (1/2 page)	Annual			X			CCDG		\$500	\$500	
										\$0	\$1,452	\$1,452			
4	Printed Material (10%)	77%	45%	Create, Print & Distribute Byway Business Information Sheet	Annual	X									
				Create, Print & Distribute an Identity System for the RBSB	Annual	X							\$335	\$335	
				Create, Print & Distribute Clayton County Trout Fishing Guides (7,500)	Quarterly	X	X							\$5,300	\$5,300
				Create, Print & Distribute "Best of" the RBSB Brochure (15,000)*	Quarterly	X								\$1,800	\$1,800
				Print & Distribute RBSB Tear-Sheet Map (7,500)*	Quarterly	X	X							\$900	\$900
Distribute Iowa Byways Travel Guide*	Quarterly	X	X	X				Iowa DOT	\$14,000		\$14,000				
										\$14,000	\$8,335	\$22,335			
5	Outreach & Events (5%)	7%	1%	Iowa Motorcycle Safety Forum	Annual			X			Iowa DOT	\$30		\$30	
				Iowa State Fair	Annual			X			Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100	\$1,100	
				Iowa Legislative Showcase	Annual			X			Iowa DOT	\$250		\$250	
										\$1,280	\$100	\$1,380			
* Identified as RBSB GO-TO Printed Material															
										<b>Total</b>	\$18,280	\$18,639	\$36,819		

Year Two Promotional Strategy		% of Budget Partners RBSB		Recommendation	Distribution Frequency	Geographic Segment					Estimated Cost			Total Cost	
						Local	Regional	State	Nat'l	Int'l	Partner	Amount	RBSB Board		
1	Digital Marketing (45%)	16%	25%	Social Media Marketing	Weekly	X	X	X							
				Website Content	Monthly	X	X	X	X	X					
				E-Newsletters (4)	Quarterly	X	X								
				Content Generation - Itineraries (4)	Quarterly	X	X								
				Content Generation - Photography (4 photo shoots)	Quarterly	X	X	X	X	X				\$3,000	\$3,000
				Content Generation - Video (2 videos)	Annual	X	X	X	X	X				\$4,000	\$4,000
				Pay-Per-Click or AdWords	Annual	X	X	X	X	X	Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100
				Search Engine Optimization	Annual	X	X	X			Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100
				Online Trip Planning websites (TripAdvisor, Pinterest, YouTube)	Annual	X	X	X	X	Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100	\$1,100		
											\$3,000	\$7,300	\$10,200		
2	Public Relations (20%)	0%	0%	Articles (4)	Quarterly	X	X	X							
				News Release	As Needed	X	X	X							
											\$0	\$0	\$0		
3	Advertising (20%)	0%	5%	SE MN, NE IA & SW WI Visitors Guide (1/2 page ad)	Annual		X	X					\$452	\$452	
				American Road Magazine (1/2 page ad)	Annual				X		CCDG		\$500	\$500	
				AAA Magazine (1/2 page)	Annual			X			CCDG		\$500	\$500	
											\$0	\$1,452	\$1,452		
4	Printed Material (10%)	77%	62%	Create, Print & Distribute RBSB Poster Maps (100)	Annual	X							\$750	\$750	
				Create, Print & Distribute Fayette County Trout Fishing Guide (7,500)	Quarterly	X	X						\$5,300	\$5,300	
				Create, Print & Distribute updated RBSB Culinary Passports (5,000)	Quarterly	X							\$3,350	\$3,350	
				Create, Print & Distribute RBSB Restaurant Placemats (20,000)	Quarterly	X							\$2,000	\$2,000	
				Print & Distribute an Identity System for the RBSB	Annual	X							\$335	\$335	
				Print & Distribute RBSB Tear-Sheet Map (7,500)*	Quarterly	X	X						\$900	\$900	
				Print & Distribute RBSB Activity Book (5,000)	Quarterly	X							\$5,500	\$5,500	
				Distribute Byway Business Information Sheet	Annual	X									
				Distribute Clayton County Trout Fishing Guide	Quarterly	X	X								
				Distribute "Best of" the RBSB Brochure*	Quarterly	X									
Distribute Iowa Byways Travel Guide*	Quarterly	X	X	X				Iowa DOT	\$14,000		\$14,000				
											\$14,000	\$18,135	\$32,135		
5	Outreach & Events (5%)	7%	9%	Create & Fabricate Trade Show Banners (4)	As Needed	X	X	X					\$2,400	\$2,400	
				Iowa Motorcycle Safety Forum	Annual			X			Iowa DOT	\$30		\$30	
				Iowa State Fair	Annual			X			Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100	\$1,100	
				Iowa Legislative Showcase	Annual			X			Iowa DOT	\$250		\$250	
											\$1,280	\$2,500	\$3,780		
<b>Total</b>											\$18,280	\$29,387	\$47,567		

Year Three Promotional Strategy		% of Budget Partners RBSB		Recommendation	Distribution Frequency	Geographic Segment					Estimated Cost			Total Cost	
						Local	Regional	State	Nat'l	Int'l	Partner	Amount	RBSB Board		
1	Digital Marketing (45%)	16%	40%	Social Media Marketing	Weekly	X	X	X							
				Website Content	Monthly	X	X	X	X	X					
				E-Newsletters (4)	Quarterly	X	X								
				Content Generation - Itineraries (4)	Quarterly	X	X								
				Content Generation - Photography (4 photo shoots)	Quarterly	X	X	X	X	X				\$3,000	\$3,000
				Content Generation - Video (2 videos)	Annual	X	X	X	X	X				\$4,000	\$4,000
				Pay-Per-Click or AdWords	Annual	X	X	X	X	X	Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100
				Search Engine Optimization	Annual	X	X	X			Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100
Online Trip Planning websites (TripAdvisor, Pinterest, YouTube)	Annual	X	X	X	X		Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100				
											\$3,000	\$7,300	\$10,200		
2	Public Relations (20%)	0%	0%	Articles (4)	Quarterly	X	X	X							
				News Release	As Needed	X	X	X							
											\$0	\$0	\$0		
3	Advertising (20%)	0%	8%	SE MN, NE IA & SW WI Visitors Guide (1/2 page ad)	Annual		X	X					\$452	\$452	
				American Road Magazine (1/2 page ad)	Annual				X		CCDG		\$500	\$500	
				AAA Magazine (1/2 page)	Annual			X			CCDG		\$500	\$500	
											\$0	\$1,452	\$1,452		
4	Printed Material (10%)	77%	43%	Create, Print & Distribute RBSB Activity Guides for Target Markets (5)	Quarterly	X	X						\$6,500	\$6,500	
				Print & Distribute an Identity System for the RBSB	Annual	X							\$335	\$335	
				Print & Distribute RBSB Tear-Sheet Map (7,500)*	Quarterly	X	X						\$900	\$900	
				Distribute Byway Business Information Sheet	Annual	X									
				Distribute updated RBSB Culinary Passports	Quarterly	X									
				Distribute RBSB Restaurant Placemat	Quarterly	X									
				Distribute RBSB Activity Book	Quarterly	X									
				Distribute Fayette County Trout Fishing Guide	Quarterly	X	X								
				Distribute Clayton County Trout Fishing Guide	Quarterly	X	X								
				Distribute "Best of" the RBSB Brochure*	Quarterly	X									
Distribute Iowa Byways Travel Guide*	Quarterly	X	X	X				Iowa DOT	\$14,000		\$14,000				
											\$14,000	\$7,735	\$21,735		
5	Outreach & Events (5%)	7%	9%	Create & Distribute "Friends of the Byway" Replica Alum Signs	Annual	X							\$1,600	\$1,600	
				Iowa Motorcycle Safety Forum	Annual			X			Iowa DOT	\$30		\$30	
				Iowa State Fair	Annual			X			Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100	\$1,100	
				Iowa Legislative Showcase	Annual			X			Iowa DOT	\$250		\$250	
											\$1,280	\$1,700	\$2,980		
<b>Total</b>											\$18,280	\$18,187	\$36,367		



Year Four Promotional Strategy		% of Budget Partners RBSB		Recommendation	Distribution Frequency	Geographic Segment					Estimated Cost			Total Cost	
Local	Regional	State	Nat'l			Int'l	Partner	Amount	RBSB Board						
1	Digital Marketing (45%)	16%	25%	Social Media Marketing	Weekly	X	X	X							
				Website Content	Monthly	X	X	X	X	X					
				E-Newsletters (4)	Quarterly	X	X								
				Content Generation - Itineraries (4)	Quarterly	X	X								
				Content Generation - Photography (4 photo shoots)	Quarterly	X	X	X	X	X				\$3,000	\$3,000
				Content Generation - Video (2 videos)	Annual	X	X	X	X	X				\$4,000	\$4,000
				Pay-Per-Click or AdWords	Annual	X	X	X	X	X	Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100
				Search Engine Optimization	Annual	X	X	X			Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100
				Online Trip Planning websites (TripAdvisor, Pinterest, YouTube)	Annual	X	X	X	X	Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100		\$1,100	
											\$3,000	\$7,300	\$10,200		
2	Public Relations (20%)	0%	0%	Articles (4)	Quarterly	X	X	X							
				News Release	As Needed	X	X	X							
											\$0	\$0	\$0		
3	Advertising (20%)	0%	4%	SE MN, NE IA & SW WI Visitors Guide (1/2 page ad)	Annual		X	X					\$452	\$452	
				American Road Magazine (1/2 page ad)	Annual				X		CCDG		\$500	\$500	
				AAA Magazine (1/2 page)	Annual			X			CCDG		\$500	\$500	
											\$0	\$1,452	\$1,452		
4	Printed Material (10%)	77%	68%	Create, Print & Distribute a "Hidden Gems" Brochure	Quarterly	X	X						\$2,700	\$2,700	
				Create, Print & Distribute updated RBSB Culinary Passports (5,000)	Quarterly	X							\$3,350	\$3,350	
				Create, Print & Distribute RBSB Restaurant Placemats (20,000)	Quarterly	X							\$2,000	\$2,000	
				Print & Distribute an Identity System for the RBSB	Annual	X							\$335	\$335	
				Print & Distribute RBSB Tear-Sheet Map (7,500)*	Quarterly	X	X						\$900	\$900	
				Print & Distribute RBSB Activity Book (5,000)	Quarterly	X							\$5,500	\$5,500	
				Print & Distribute Fayette County Trout Fishing Guide (7,500)	Quarterly	X	X						\$5,300	\$5,300	
				Print & Distribute Clayton County Trout Fishing Guide (7,500)	Quarterly	X	X						\$5,300	\$5,300	
				Distribute Byway Business Information Sheet	Annual	X									
				Distribute RBSB Activity Book	Quarterly	X									
				Distribute a Series of RBSB Activity Guides for each Target Market (5)	Quarterly	X	X								
				Distribute "Best of" the RBSB Brochure*	Quarterly	X									
Distribute Iowa Byways Travel Guide*	Quarterly	X	X	X				Iowa DOT	\$14,000		\$14,000				
											\$14,000	\$25,385	\$39,385		
5	Outreach & Events (5%)	7%	1%	Iowa Motorcycle Safety Forum	Annual			X			Iowa DOT	\$30	\$30		
				Iowa State Fair	Annual			X		Coordinators	\$1,000	\$100	\$1,100		
				Iowa Legislative Showcase	Annual			X		Iowa DOT	\$250		\$250		
											\$1,280	\$100	\$1,380		
<b>Total</b>											\$18,280	\$34,237	\$52,417		





The Iowa Byway



# Section **Sixteen**

Economic Development Plan

# Economic Development

*Economic development can be defined as efforts that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community by creating and/or retaining jobs and supporting or growing incomes and the tax base.*

## 16.1 Introduction

This RBSB Economic Development Plan is intended to help the RBSB Board and their stakeholders maximizing the economic impact of the RBSB. It considers the existing economic conditions, the state of the community infrastructure and the business climate. It sets the course for economic growth, and identifies policies, strategies, programs, and projects to help improve the economy in the RBSB Corridor over the next decade. It will be used by the RBSB Board to encourage RBSB communities, counties and stakeholders to work together to use the RBSB as a tourism venue and as an asset that will help them develop an economy that creates and supports desirable jobs that provide a good standard of living for individuals and a high level of services for RBSB residents and visitors. A resulting stronger economy will increase the tax base, improve the quality of life and create a more vibrant RBSB Corridor. The proposed strategies will maximize the opportunities presented by the local, regional, state and national partnerships associated with the RBSB.

Because the RBSB is a multi-city, multi-county byway, the RBSB Economic Development Plan is predicated on Regionalism, which in this case is correlated with the RBSB Corridor. The policies and strategies the RBSB Board recommends in this plan support and encourage regional collaboration among all the RBSB public and private stakeholders. The RBSB Board feels that if public and private stakeholders work together they will be better able to address major economic, social and environmental challenges in the RBSB Corridor for years to come. Stakeholders that have already committed to working with and for the RBSB to improve their economy through implementation of this Economic Development Plan include, but are not limited to the following:

- RBSB Board of Directors through planning, coordination and project implementation.
- RBSB towns & counties through voluntary participation on the RBSB Board and committees, individual and collaborative RBSB projects, events and initiatives.

- RBSB businesses, historical societies, art and cultural organizations, community foundations and other public and private stakeholders through voluntary participation on the RBSB Board and committees, financial contributions and volunteer service to implement projects and events.
- Northeast Iowa RC&D through coordination and technical and financial assistance to the RBSB Board and private and public stakeholders.
- Iowa DOT through the Iowa Byway Sustainability Program for coordination, branding, and technical assistance to the RBSB Board as well as financial assistance for projects.
- National Scenic Byway Program (NSBP) through grants, education and information.
- Byways of Iowa Coalition (BIC) through byway collaboration, training, cross promotion and partnership.
- Byways of Iowa Foundation (BIF) through project and program funding, collaboration, outreach and education to potential stakeholders and funders.
- Northeast Iowa Tourism Association (NEITA) through marketing, promotion, technical and financial assistance.
- The Turkey River Recreational Corridor (TRRC) through partnership with marketing and business initiatives, interpretation, recreational infrastructure improvements and other projects.

## 16.2 Existing Conditions

The RBSB Corridor encompasses portions of two Northeast Iowa counties, Clayton and Fayette Counties, which have 17,644 and 20,257 residents respectively. There are a total of 11 incorporated cities: Clermont, Elkader, Fayette, Garber, Guttenberg, Marquette, McGregor, St. Olaf, Volga, Wadena and West Union and 5 unincorporated villages: Elkport, Froelich, Gunder, Giard and Osborne, on or directly adjacent to the RBSB, with another five towns and villages in the RBSB Corridor. The RBSB Corridor is a very rural area of Iowa where communities are small and the population is spread

out across the landscape. Unfortunately, although the remote nature of the byway adds a special character to the experience, it also prohibits easy movement to and from the byway. There are no interstate roadways in the RBSB Corridor and the closest regional airport is seventy-two miles away in Dubuque, IA. The closest international airport is over two hundred miles away in Minneapolis, MN. Although smaller airports are available closer to the byway, their services and capacity are limited.

- Both RBSB counties have lost residents since 2010, with Clayton County having a 2.7% decline and Fayette County a 3% decline in population.
- The percent of people living in poverty in Fayette County is 14.4%, and Clayton 10.8%, compared to Iowa at 12.2%.
- Median Household Income (MHI) for RBSB counties is low, Fayette County's MHI is \$45,443, and Clayton MHI is \$47,725 compared to Iowa at \$52,716.

In 2014, there were 528 businesses in Clayton County and 554 in Fayette County, employing 4,944 and 6,308 people respectively. Clayton County has approximately 1,577 farms, for which 448 of those farms hired 1,355 workers. Fayette County has approximately 1,286 farms, of which 396 farms employ 1,266 workers.

The total number of non-employer establishments was 1,382 for Clayton County and 1,444 for Fayette County. A non-employer business, as defined by the US Census Bureau, is one that has no paid employees, has annual business receipts of \$1,000 or more (\$1 or more in the construction industries) and is subject to federal income taxes. The number of small businesses in the RBSB counties, considered with the statistics regarding the number of non-employer establishments and the number of self-employed persons, indicates a healthy entrepreneur spirit in the RBSB counties.

26.6% of Fayette County's population are working in the Educational, Health Care and Social Services industry. Manufacturing is second at 14.3% and Retail Trade third at 10.4%. Clayton County's top three industries are the same with 21.1%, 16.9% and 12.7% respectively. Retail, which is heavily influenced and supported by the tourism industry. It is also relevant that Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, which also relies heavily on the tourism industry, provides employment for another 5.5% of the residents in Clayton County and 6% of the residents in Fayette Country. These statistics are important considerations for the RBSB counties who are currently in the process of evaluating existing and developing new planning and zoning ordinances and policies related to industries that could positively or negatively impact tourism including mining, placement of wind energy etc.

**1. Labor Considerations:** On average, the labor force in RBSB counties is changing and much different than Iowa. The population in the RBSB counties is aging with declines in persons under 18 years of age and increases in person over 65. Although approximately 90% of the residents in these counties 25 and older have graduated from high school, only 16-18% of persons 25 and older have a bachelor's degree or higher. This is compared to the state of Iowa's percent with bachelor's degree or higher for residents age 25+ at 26.4%.

Although working with the two, four-year colleges and a community college located on or within minutes of the RBSB to expand the capacity and skill set of the RBSB labor force will benefit the region in the long run, the RBSB Board feels they also need strategies to provide immediate assistance to the existing labor force. Efforts to create and expand tourism, retail, and service industry businesses and jobs by providing technical assistance and training to small and emerging businesses can immediately benefit the existing RBSB labor force. It will also maximize the potential for the

Occupations (16+ Years)	Clayton	Fayette
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining	973	942
Construction	759	641
Manufacturing	1,533	1,434
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	468	440
Information	109	127
Finance and Insurance, Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	298	374
Professional, Scientific, Mngmt, Admin. and Waste Mngmt	513	545
Educational Service, Health Care, Social Services	1,914	2,669
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodations, Food Services	504	603
Other Services (Except Public Admin)	390	492
Public Administration	247	370
Class of Worker	Clayton	Fayette
Private Wage and Salary Workers	6,738	7,832
Government Workers	1,126	1,157
Self-Employed	1,185	1,023
Unpaid Family Workers	40	12

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RBSB Board to foster community development sooner rather than later. Although there is room for expansion of the tourism economy and the related retail sales, total retail sales per capita for Fayette County is \$8,559 and \$11,863 for Clayton County, compared to Iowa's average retail sales at \$14,607. There are challenges related to seasonal tourism cycles: sixty percent of tourism in Iowa happens during three months of the year. Although RBSB communities typically extend that season into the fall months because of the spectacular fall leaf watching season, winter and spring are currently a tourism sink negatively impacting business and travel in the RBSB Corridor. The tourism cycles, as well as other factors, like limited business management training and start-up capital, must be addressed to ensure that short-term economic gains related to the RBSB Board's work are not lost.

**2. Infrastructure:** When considering the RBSB as an attraction, the communities along the route are well spaced to provide services to the traveler, offer experiences and activities for the traveler and provide spaces for the traveler to take a break from driving. Although they are strategically located, some of the communities have few or no services or attractions.

Overall, the public and private physical infrastructure within RBSB anchor communities is aging. Many of the RBSB communities along rivers and streams have seen repeated and devastating flooding including Garber, Volga and Elkader. Some, including Elkader, Volga, Garber and others have worked with FEMA to complete floodplain buyouts, which resulted in new green spaces and parks, but also the loss of hundreds or even the majority of their residents and visitors, as well as significant percentages of their tax base. Today, several communities have historic downtowns with structures in need of restoration or renovation. Some have vacant or abandoned businesses, empty storefronts or vacant

second stories of key downtown properties. Most of the downtown businesses districts in the RBSB Corridor could benefit from organized store front/façade restoration or business incubators.

Some RBSB communities have successfully implemented community downtown streetscape or main street projects that have enabled them to install new sewer, water, stormwater, street and/or sidewalks infrastructure, including West Union, Elgin and Clermont. Other RBSB towns need funding and technical assistance or are working to raise funding to restore basic community infrastructure that has been repeatedly damaged by flooding and/or age, including Volga, Fayette and Garber. Property tax values or city income from taxes in those RBSB communities hardest hit by natural disasters have declined making it challenging to fund the community infrastructure improvements and projects that would help them draw back new community members and businesses and restore their tax base.

Community tourism infrastructure such as street lighting, parking, trails and river accesses is also inconsistent, being well-developed in some RBSB communities and absent in others. With assistance from the RBSB Board and partners, Marquette recently updated its scenic overlook and developed a new Mississippi Boardwalk, Elkader developed a new white water course and Fayette County extended their bike trail along and over the Turkey River. Clayton County is actively working on trails in the Turkey River Recreational Corridor and along the Great River Road Mississippi River Trail. These and other highly visible primary and supporting community infrastructure projects plays a key role in the RBSB visitor's experience. They influence the overall perception of the RBSB, the traveler's satisfaction with their trip and whether or not they repeat their visits and/or referrals they make to friends and family. Therefore, these projects are an important consideration for the RBSB Board when considering

economic development and expansion of the tourism industry in the RBSB Corridor. There are several private and public groups in the RBSB Corridor actively working to improve both primary and secondary community infrastructure including the communities themselves, trails groups in both counties, the Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board (Fayette and Clayton Counties, Clermont, Elgin, Elkader and Motor Mill), community historical societies, Northeast Iowa RC&D, Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission and other partners. The RBSB Board is supportive of their efforts and the majority of the entities and collaborative groups within the RBSB Corridor assisted with the development of this CMP in some way. The RBSB Board has included some of their proposed projects in the Projects section of this CMP.

The collaboration in the RBSB Corridor, as it relates to capacity building and infrastructure funding, has been strong and multifaceted. It provides a solid basis and exceptional justification for regional economic development.

**3. Product:** The Product associated with the RBSB as a public-private venture is *"The unique sense of place and experiences associated with the RBSB and its corridor."*

**4. Brand:** The RBSB Brand is the set of marketing, promotion and communication methods that help convey that "product" or "sense of place" that distinguishes the RBSB from other byways, scenic routes and/or travel destinations. The RBSB Brand also creates a lasting impression in the minds of the byway traveler. The RBSB Board has selected natural resource based recreation and historic and cultural resources as the focus of their brand. They feel that collectively the communities and counties in the RBSB Corridor have these characteristics above all others and that these characteristics define the sense of place that is the RBSB Corridor.





Painted Stage Curtain Clermont



RBSB Observation Deck Marquette



RBSB Turkey River Recreational Corridor

**5. Sense of Place:** In addition to the brand associated with the RBSB and its corridor, each of the communities along the RBSB has its own sense of place that has evolved over time. It has been influenced by the historic, cultural, economic, and natural resources and amenities surrounding it and the people that founded and expanded each of the communities. The character, look and heritage of the RBSB communities are not found in other towns and the RBSB Board does not desire that they change or alter their sense of place to try to become more like other byway communities. Each of the RBSB community's individual sense of place is not only a strength but also an asset and opportunity for the RBSB to strengthen its own brand. The RBSB public-private stakeholders, businesses and communities will benefit from the communities understanding and developing their sense of place to its full potential and then working with the RBSB Board to market their communities as part of the overall RBSB brand.



**RBSB Traveler Services**

The RBSB is fortunate that many of its communities do understand 'sense of place' and are working to enhance it. Some have maintained and/or restored their historic downtowns. Chamber and economic development leaders continue to encourage small business owners and new entrepreneurs so that the RBSB downtowns are dominated by unique, locally owned, small businesses located in historic storefronts, rather than chain stores or business franchises in modern buildings. This has allowed the communities to keep their sense of place distinctive and provides a stark contrast to large cities or suburban architecture. Some of the RBSB communities have begun to build on their historic, economic, natural and cultural amenities. Public and private partners have implemented historic downtown restoration, community art, façade restoration projects and other projects that will strengthen, integrate and promote the unique characteristics that embody their RBSB community's sense of place. Established and new community events and festivals are popular and the RBSB communities

are restoring or constructing community infrastructure like streets, sidewalks, lighting and trails in a historically respectful manner that also reflects a new understanding for functionality. Many of the communities have worked to create pedestrian friendly downtowns by adding brick pavers to make their sidewalks more distinctive, incorporating planters, flower beds, flower baskets and period street lighting, RBSB communities have banners and flags that are festive and colorful, and benches and parks that encourage visitors to linger. RBSB communities have implemented several projects that take advantage of their proximity to a river, building boardwalks, white water courses, universal fishing access, riverfront trails, and marinas, including Clermont, Elgin, Elkader, Guttenberg, Marquette and McGregor. Because the RBSB Board is supportive of these efforts, they have included proposed project that will help restore and enhance each community's sense of place, which is located in 16.5 Proposed Projects section that begins on page 251.

**6. Services:** The services provided to the consumer by the public-private partners in the RBSB are diverse and multi-faceted. They collectively influence what and how existing and created experiences along the RBSB are perceived, delivered, consumed and remembered. Therefore, the success of the RBSB as a public-private business venture that positively impacts the economy of RBSB communities and counties depends on the unified development, branding and marketing of services in the RBSB for, and to the traveling public. The nature, diversity, standards, consistency and delivery of these services will influence the public's access to and enjoyment of the designated route and its amenities and the perceived quality of the byway travelers experience. These factors will also drive the nature of the encounters with and between travelers, impact the success of businesses and ultimately drive or influence future decisions made by public-private stakeholders in the RBSB Corridor. Although the quality of the scenic view is a high priority to the RBSB traveler, several studies document that scenic byway travelers prefer specific types of services and experiences, including

historic sites, recreational venues, festivals and events and natural areas. They also enjoy local food and other authentic experiences. While the RBSB byway traveler can experience all these things in the RBSB Corridor, and the RBSB Board has worked to provide information that helps the traveler find the related services, the Board also recognizes that there are still some gaps and constraints in basic services within specific RBSB communities, or as related to types of service, spacing of service along the route, hours of operations and other factors that can positively or negatively impact the byway travelers experience.

**7. Market:** Although the RBSB is one of the most scenic state byways in Iowa, it is competing with 74 other byways, including ten from Iowa and over sixty byways from the states that border Iowa, where the majority of Iowa's tourists originate. Other than the Driftless Area Scenic Byway in Iowa, the closest competing byways in terms of proximity and similarity of topography and sense of place are in southeast Minnesota and southwest Wisconsin. Minnesota has twenty-one scenic byways and Wisconsin has four. Also within fairly close proximity, Illinois has seven byways. Additional relevant byways are located in Kansas, which has eight, Missouri, which has ten, Nebraska with eight, and South Dakota with six scenic byways. The market for the RBSB is the traveling public, some of whom are specifically looking for scenic byways and activities along those byways and more specifically, those characteristics that are the basis for the RBSB brand, natural resource recreation and historic and cultural resources.

Byway travelers are particularly interested in many of the amenities and characteristics found along the RBSB including diverse views, well-maintained, winding roads, historic and cultural sites, recreational venues and natural areas. Specific segments of the market are covered in more detail in the RBSB Strategic Marketing Plan. The RBSB Strategic Marketing Plan provides details on several segments of the traveling public that the RBSB Board and

stakeholders are more interested in attracting based on their travel and spending habits, appreciation for the services and attractions in the RBSB Corridor, their interactions with and considerations for private and public stakeholders and other factors.

**8. Operations:** Because the 'business' of tourism along the RBSB is dependent on hundreds of diverse public and private partners, coordination of 'operations' at several levels would benefit the stakeholders. However, coordination of operations is complex and must be sensitive to the limitations in human and financial resources associated with small businesses and organizations that provide the services and experiences along or associated with the byway.

The RBSB Board has completed an inventory of public and private tourism venues, attractions and businesses that are featured on the RBSB tear-sheet map. A list of potential attractions, businesses and services that could enhance the byway travelers is also being developed by the partners a detailed description of this project can be found on page 213.

Part of the coordination of operations is related to access to services and products in terms of location, timing and diversity. Although the communities are periodically spaced along the RBSB route in a manner that is conducive to strategically providing opportunities for the RBSB visitor to interrupt their travel along the RBSB to participate in activities other than driving, not all of the communities have businesses that can meet the needs and/or wants of the traveler. Neither do all the communities have the public services/facilities and/or infrastructure that byway travelers will be expecting.

The majority of the tourism related businesses along the RBSB are small, private businesses located in the downtowns of the RBSB communities. Hours and methods of operation

vary within communities and along the byway and many of the private businesses, historic sites and public facilities are closed in the evenings and on weekends when the traveling public is seeking products, services and experiences. The RBSB Board recognizes that although coordination of hours of operations will benefit the traveling public, as well as the businesses in the RBSB Corridor, successful coordination of hours would not necessarily mean "to have the same hours of operation." What is important is facilitating good communication and understanding for stakeholders and the traveling public about what is open and when during all phases of travel is paramount, especially during the planning and trip implementation phases. Unfortunately, the Internet presence of RBSB businesses is inconsistent and limited. Even if they are able to improve their Internet presence, many sections of the byway have poor mobile network coverage. However, opportunities to reach the traveling public during trip planning and implementation are abundant. Tools such as Facebook, Twitter, business websites, and other social media as well as cross-marketing to travelers looking for byway destinations are currently underutilized.



**RBSB Historic Downtown**

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## 16.3 Challenges & Opportunities

**1. Organizational Structure:** There are multiple levels of organization related to the RBSB. There are the individual communities and different county departments of the RBSB who work independently and cooperatively as needed and there are county economic development and tourism organizations, who serve their county and multiple communities. The RBSB Board of Directors was developed to serve as a structure for those partners who are interested in strengthening their individual byway communities and counties by working with others to develop the RBSB as a regional tourism venue and a destination-based regional economic development engine. Implementation of this CMP will be maximized when the partners are supportive of building the assets of the individual communities while at the same time working to maximize and build the potential for the greater RBSB Corridor as a singular tourism destination.

**2. Work Force Development:** The public-private nature of the RBSB is predicated on, and strengthened by, the successful business acumen of the small, privately owned businesses and historic business districts in the RBSB Corridor. They not only create unique experiences for the byway traveler, they are ultimately one of the main local benefactors of the RBSB's success. Although many of the challenges related to educating the existing and future workforce in and near the RBSB are beyond the scope of the RBSB Board, there are strategies to increase the capacity of business owners, workers and entrepreneurs in the RBSB Corridor. Many of the strategies developed to strengthen or expand businesses will, by necessity, need to be developed with support from, and delivered to, the business owners, managers and workers locally so as to not disturb business operation or service. Strategies to develop new businesses and develop clusters of businesses will involve new entrepreneurs and potential business owners.

**3. Economic Structure:** The economic structure of each RBSB community, each RBSB county and of all the RBSB communities and counties collectively is important and should be strengthened through implementation of this CMP. Some of the RBSB communities have or are using recognized strategies to develop new economic structures for their downtown business districts, but others are unaware or have been unable to develop support for implementation of those strategies. In order to catapult the RBSB and make it a premier tourism destination that had wide-reaching economic benefits, all the communities and both counties will need to implement strategies to maximize the structure of their own economies while also working together to understand how their structure works in tandem with the others as part of the larger, multi-faceted, economic system of the RBSB.

**4. Partnership, Cross Marketing, and Promotion:** Partnership between entities, like those in the RBSB Corridor with limited funding, can be an effective and affordable means of creating a more appealing tourism venue, as well as a more effective method of reaching the public. Although some communities and counties are competitive with and between each other, over the past few years, RBSB counties and cities have been partnering on RBSB branding, marketing, projects and initiatives. The Turkey River Recreational Corridor communities and counties partnered to brand and market the TRRC and the RBSB. Clayton County has helped market the RBSB nationally. These and other existing partnerships indicate the climate for partnership, marketing and promotion is at a high level in the RBSB Corridor. Marketing of the RBSB has been greatly expanded over the past five years, in part through test promotions and marketing that occurred through the development of this CMP. This has included some cross-promotion and marketing within and between the RBSB communities and counties as well as branding, marketing and promotion with other Iowa byways. However, private and public entities have limited technical aptitude or

financial means to develop and sustain high quality marketing campaigns and mobile network coverage on the byway is limited. An analysis of how well this branding, marketing and cross-promotion between RBSB partners and other Iowa byways has not been conducted.

**5. Sense of Place/Community Pride:** Each byway community and the RBSB Corridor as a venue in and of itself will benefit from having a strong sense of place and a pride of community that is reflected in the public and private spaces, particularly in the downtown districts. This includes developing and restoring the historic and cultural venues and structures, updating community services and creating downtown spaces and events that are unique to the community, people, and cultures, found only in the RBSB communities and corridor. There is no shortage of community pride in the RBSB communities and counties. However, connecting that pride to the development of a sense of place through public and private projects is vital to the branding and marketing associated with the RBSB. For that pride and sense of place to be embraced, it must be something that permeates all levels of the economy, the community infrastructure and the social system, including both public and private sectors. Partners must find ways to celebrate and market the rural nature of the RBSB Corridor as an opportunity. The RBSB partners have used their own funds to implement RBSB-wide branding and marketing projects and initiatives but would benefit from expanding their focus to include strategies that foster downtown revitalization, façade or other RBSB-wide community improvement projects. Developing a sense of place for the RBSB and community pride in the RBSB is a long-term initiative that can reap great returns for the RBSB communities and counties.

**6. Private and Public Service:** As the RBSB becomes more and more well-known as a tourism venue in its own right, it will become even more important for private and public entities to recognize the gaps and challenges related



Community Pride

to services. Seventy percent of all consumer spending (both locals and visitors) takes place after 6:00 p.m. (Roger Brooks International) Inconsistent, limited and/or interrupted services encountered by the RBSB traveler at any point along the byway can impact the visitor's perception of the entire byway and their overall satisfaction, including those of businesses and communities that may not have been at fault. Unfortunately, as a general rule, business or visitor hours in the RBSB public and private businesses and venues are limited, inconsistent and not tourism oriented. Seasonal weather, including heavy snowfall, flooding and other considerations can further interrupt travel and business hours by prohibiting or discouraging movement during winter and spring months. Many business owners are aging and unlikely to pass their businesses on to family members. As businesses close, the 'gaps' in services and products increases – (i.e. Although there are 19 trout streams, there is not a fly fishing equipment business. Some communities no longer have coffee shops, diners, a bakery or ice cream shop. Although there are opportunities to engage in winter sports, there are few places on the RBSB to purchase or rent winter sports gear). Other challenges related to private and public service are tied to the workforce. For example, the existing workforce is not as educated as the average Iowa workforce and although some business owners may be willing to sell their business when they retire, other community members may not be willing to work the hours or afford to limit their income to the lower wages associated with limited profit margins.

**7. Seasonal/Cyclical Tourism:** One of the greatest economic challenges RBSB Corridor businesses face is the seasonal/cyclical nature of tourism. Over the years, hundreds of small businesses have been established and thrived during the summer months, only to close in the winter due to a dearth of customers. This has been particularly hard for RBSB communities like Guttenberg and McGregor, that have summer residents occupying community residences that they leave vacant during winter

months. Recognizing and addressing this challenge may be one of the greatest accomplishments the RBSB Board can achieve. If it is not addressed, short term gains could be compromised and lost.

**8. Financial and Technical Resources:** The private and public technical and financial resources in the RBSB Corridor are extremely limited at every level. Not only do the community members have lower incomes, there are also fewer community members to contribute. This impacts the availability of funding for new venture start-up capital, decreases the tax base and therefore the capacity of the communities to complete capital infrastructure projects and reduces the donations to charitable foundations that could provide technical and financial assistance to individuals or communities. The RBSB Board can not create new revenue streams but they do advocate for strategic use of public and private funding through strategies that maximize all the opportunities and leverage outside sources of funding. The number of private and public entities that can provide technical assistance is also more limited than it is in larger communities, creating an even greater need for expanded partnerships and direct communications with local entities and those from outside Northeast Iowa. The very rural nature of the RBSB Corridor also limits the number of volunteers available to serve on boards, committees and at events so the use of volunteer time and effort must be well thought out and maximized for greatest impact.

**9. Natural Resource Based Economics:** The rural nature of the RBSB Corridor is one of the venture's greatest strengths. The high quality views, diverse landscape and access to natural resource based recreation, coupled with supporting community and county infrastructure, visitor amenities, small businesses and clean, inviting downtowns make the RBSB a solid, ready-made tourism venue that has all the characteristics for and the potential to become an international tourism destination. However, private business interests influenced by national energy demands have the potential to greatly

impact most of the characteristics that make the RBSB appealing including the scenic views, landscape diversity and community and county infrastructure. The RBSB Board is a diverse group of public and private representatives that not only understand the potential for the RBSB but also have a good understanding of the public and private pressures on the Corridor. Their efforts to protect the RBSB viewshed through policy and economic and natural resource projects that recognize that viewshed is a major component of the tourism industry and a key economic driver for the region will be vital over the next decade.

**10. Community Infrastructure:** Public and private community infrastructure has been degraded by age and flooding and is inconsistent in quality and content across the byway and across the byway communities. Fortunately, there is strong public support for secondary community infrastructure improvements and upgrades including new bike, equestrian and hiking trails, such as the trails in the Turkey River Recreational Corridor and new water trail features, such as a white water course in Clermont. Private groups, including historical societies and cultural coalitions are actively pursuing technical and financial assistance to preserve, restore and interpret historical sites and cultural treasures. Several of the communities have already completed or are in the process of completing major community downtown streetscape projects that have made their cities more appealing to the byway traveler. Others have community support and leadership for such projects. Some of the communities that are in the worst shape may qualify for grants and loans that would help them restore critical infrastructure and Iowa has grant programs that can help with downtown revitalization projects including façade improvements to privately owned businesses. Although funding for private and public infrastructure projects is limited, there are grants available for public infrastructure project and the RBSB Board and their partners have access to local organizations that excel at securing public and private grants for infrastructure and other projects.



**Elkader Whitewater Park**



**Big Springs Fish Hatchery**



**Bikers along the RBSB**



**Eagles Landing Winery**

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## 16.4 Proposed Strategies

### Strategy one: Maximizing Limited RBSB Human Resources

- 1. Engage existing community groups:** Interaction with stakeholders at previously scheduled meetings will reduce the number of new meetings that volunteers must attend. The RBSB Board will use those opportunities to engage with existing community groups in discussion about maximizing the economic opportunities associated with the RBSB, about RBSB branding and marketing strategies, to develop new projects and opportunities and to gather input for RBSB Board decision making.
- 2. Foster creation of new downtown organizations and public-private collaboration:** Individual RBSB communities will be better able to retain and enhance their sense of place if they have a committed downtown organization working in concert with local government so that they can effectively manage public and private infrastructure to ensure a unified approach. Local private and public efforts to develop organizational initiatives that foster private-public community partnerships will be encouraged.
- 3. Maximize opportunities for communities and counties to interact with the RBSB Board:** Community leaders, Chamber of Commerce organizations, Main Street boards and other community organizations and leaders will gain more benefit from the RBSB for their communities if they have good communication with the RBSB Board and vice versa. Each community and each county will be encouraged to designate active community leaders to participate on the RBSB Board and committees, to diligently replace vacancies and encourage attendance at and reporting from RBSB Board meetings.
- 4. Encourage development of and discussion about how individual community brand/sense of place fits in with the overall RBSB brand/sense of place:** Kindle community pride and pride in being a member of the RBSB by educating and engaging RBSB community leaders and businesses about issues regarding sense of place and brand. Conduct stakeholder meetings to include multi-community discussions to encourage community branding and economic restructuring that complements and/or strengthens the overall RBSB Brand/Sense of Place.
- 5. Foster long-term collaboration for project development and implementation:** Conduct public project meetings that generate idea sharing in the RBSB Corridor, build partnerships, create vision and vibrancy and serve as a catalyst for action. Develop private and public funding data bases and strategies that help RBSB partners see their Corridor as a public-private venture that can effectively and efficiently identify potential obstacles and find ways to overcome them.

- 6. Facilitate cross-marketing and cross-promotion:** In the past, RBSB communities have been competitive with and between each other. More recently, Clayton County has encouraged communities to work together to market and brand their services and amenities. This same strategy can work for the RBSB communities and can be an effective and affordable means of reaching the public. Although RBSB communities are small, rural towns with limited resources, through the RBSB Board, they have access to public and private partners that can help them develop high quality, professional publications and social media including brochures, advertisements, press releases, web and Facebook pages and other tools that will help them effectively get the word out to both the traveling public and potential investors and entrepreneurs. Their status as a RBSB community also provides opportunities for cross marketing and promotion that would otherwise be unavailable or difficult to manage. Since the public is looking for trip planning information on-line, the use of affordable and free methods for utilizing the Internet as a marketing and outreach tool including websites like lowabyways.org, traveliowa.com and byway Facebook pages is encouraged. Marketing efforts will be maximized by partnering with other businesses and downtowns on the RBSB and businesses and communities along other Iowa byways, to cross promote amenities, products and services. Mobile network coverage can be turned into an asset by selling it as an opportunity to 'get away' from work and/or a busy, hectic schedule to a quiet, relaxing place that is 'off the grid.'

### Strategy two: Encourage and Facilitate Economic Restructuring

- 7. Create Opportunities for public-private interaction, discussion and collaboration:** Economic revitalization must be gradual, well-planned and comprehensive to ensure it is sustainable. It must also involve both the public and private sectors of each of the RBSB communities. Opportunities for facilitate discussion, programs development, implementation of projects, events and initiatives that include collaboration between private and public entities will be fostered and encouraged. Coordinate and facilitate meetings and distribute information between all sectors of the RBSB, communities and in the corridor
- 8. Distribute information about the Main Street Program strategies to all communities:** Rebuilding the economic vitality of traditional commercial districts is the main goal of the Main Street Program, which is a model that will enhance the RBSB sense of place and the economic vitality of the RBSB Corridor. Some of the RBSB communities are Main Street communities, but others are not. Sharing information and techniques and providing technical and financial assistance to help with economic restructuring in all the RBSB communities will not only help revitalize all the RBSB communities, but also ultimately enhance the RBSB 'product', 'brand' and sense of place as a destination byway.



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9. **Conduct research that informs and fosters economic vitality:** Monitor economic performance within communities and for the RBSB over time. Research should be conducted for each of the communities and for the RBSB as a system, as recommended by Main Street America. This includes downtown building and business inventories. Demographic profiling of the Market Area, compilation of local and downtown retail sales information, consumer and visitor surveys, identification of existing and potential financial incentives and business assistance programs, and identification of business clusters. Collection of this data should occur every two years so partners can track economic change.
  10. **Encourage “Economic Restructuring” of RBSB communities:** Although it will include relatively short-term initiatives such as façade development that are considered “low hanging fruit,” economic restructuring must strive to attract long-term investment to the commercial or downtown districts in the RBSB Corridor. This includes focused research, strategic action and deliberate partnership between public and private entities that results in effective incentives, business assistance and expansion programs and recognition of compatible opportunities.
  11. **Foster and implement business development projects:** Work with business owners and downtown organizations to develop and/or identify projects that strengthen the existing RBSB businesses and foster new business development within RBSB downtowns, with an emphasis on smart business development that recognizes economic opportunities and strategic business placement within the RBSB Corridor and individual communities. Orchestrate recruitment of ‘critical mass’ or ‘clustering’ in RBSB downtowns. Help RBSB communities recruit and/or develop ‘Anchor Tenants’. Help RBSB businesses relocate to more advantageous downtown locations.
  12. **Develop and implement projects that maximize downtown real estate:** Encourage downtown organizations and city officials and staff to identify new economic uses for RBSB main street buildings, including both main floor and upper floor spaces, finding new ways to utilize unoccupied or underused space. Spur and manage investment in RBSB main street businesses and buildings. Revitalize vacant second story spaces to include apartments, bed and breakfasts or short term vacation rentals. In critical areas where vacant buildings are a detriment to the downtown, work with partners to provide incentives, reduced rental/lease rates etc. Begin revitalization in a smaller area for a bigger impact. Invest in retail beautification.
  13. **Leverage funding and implement projects at the highest return on investment, while maintaining the cultural and historic integrity of the RBSB communities:** Identify and educate stakeholders about low-interest loans, incentive programs, grants and technical assistance for building and business owners. Identify and invest in small-scale, high-impact improvements. Identify and maximize opportunities to take advantage of waterfronts. Provide and enhance open spaces in RBSB communities and in the RBSB Corridor and implement projects that foster community heritage within communities and the RBSB Corridor.
  14. **Create & implement positive messages about RBSB public and private downtown venues:** Market RBSB downtowns to consumers as well as potential investors and entrepreneurs. Work with RBSB business and property owners to improve operations and educate their workforce through workforce training
- Strategy three: Develop the RBSB as an “Outstanding Destination”**
15. **Strengthen the RBSB brand and retail focus:** Partners must work together to engage all the private and public partners in the ‘branding’ and marketing of the RBSB as well as the retail focus of the byway, which relies heavily on the private businesses in the RBSB Corridor.
  16. **Encourage public and private strategies that increase community tourism appeal:** Help RBSB downtowns work with property owners to develop lease agreements that include defined operating hours and days to encourage evening and weekend hours. Make sure parking is available, affordable and well posted. Provide public restrooms in the heart of the downtown district. Develop private and public gathering places in the downtown districts including outdoor eating, benches, parks etc. Encourage communities to name their downtowns and create gateway signage that draws, directs and encourages visitors to visit downtown districts. Implement the wayfinding recommended in this CMP, which includes a signage plan, information centers and other wayfinding components. Encourage and/or provide customer service training for business owners and front-line employee. Provide training for community leaders and small business owners so they understand strategies and policies that will draw visitors and increase traveler spending including things such as the use of perpendicular signage that is well planned and consistently implemented. Work with local stakeholders to develop activities and live entertainment in the downtown district.
  17. **Implement, review accomplishments from, and update the CMP regularly:** Work with partners to refer to, implement, and update the Corridor Management Plan, keeping it a “Working” document rather than letting it sit on a shelf.

**18. Work with RBSB stakeholders to develop messaging that promotes the remote aspects of the RBSB as a positive thing:** Develop messaging that recognizes the value of the natural resources and outdoor recreational opportunities along the RBSB and promotes the natural and recreational assets of the byway as an opportunity to ‘get back to nature’ so that visitors expect that it will take time to reach their destination but once they get there, there will be abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation and other rural adventures. Work with partners to market complementary activities and routes that encourage travelers to enjoy the time they spend getting to the RBSB just as much as the time they spend on the RBSB, including partnership with the Mississippi River Parkway Commission/Great River Road etc., adjoining counties and state partners from Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois.

**Strategy four: Work with Private & Public Partners to Expand & Improve Public & Private Services in the RBSB Corridor**

**19. Encourage community leaders to know and implement proven downtown business program and initiatives:** Educate community leaders about different types of downtown business programs and initiatives that have been successfully implemented in other communities and could be demonstrated/utilized in RBSB downtowns to maximize the tourism market for RBSB businesses. Provide information regarding visitor consumer spending habits and other trends that influence business decision making.

**20. Encourage community leaders and business owners, especially those within a RBSB downtown or cluster of businesses to increase evening and weekend hours:** Educate downtown organizations and businesses about how and why to increase evening and weekend hours and strategies that will help them make the transition in hours economically feasible such as starting with one extended day for two additional hours one evening, and then adding more hours and days each year with long-term goals.

**21. Work with communities and local businesses to implement strategies that support private business efforts to increase services:** Work with RBSB anchor communities to support nighttime events including music, entertainment and festivals to the downtown corresponding with extended businesses hours. Organize cash mobs that help the public realize the businesses are open and help the businesses recoup staff costs. Work to develop partnerships between RBSB lodging, restaurant, antique and specialty shops to cross-market and promote each other.

**22. Encourage community organizations and businesses to work together to implement initiatives and campaigns that benefit multiple entities:** RBSB businesses and communities can work together to develop, implement market and promote winter events, festivals, activities and traveler incentives that will draw travelers to the RBSB Corridor during the off season. The RBSB Board also plans to educate stakeholders through facilitation, communication and input meetings to be sure that locals are prepared to properly inform the traveling public about what businesses, attractions and amenities in the RBSB Corridor are open and when.

**Strategy five: Foster Entrepreneurialism**

**23. Develop business transfer and apprentice opportunities:** Encourage dialog with and between community leaders and retiring business owners that are open to hosting apprentices to help them transfer their knowledge, skills and assets to the next generation.

**24. Foster business leadership and employee excellence:** Encourage development, implementation and participation in formal and informal classes on business leadership training and customer service training that increases the capacity of existing and potential business owners and the capacity of front line and other employees that serve byway travelers.

**25. Increase access to business planning and management services:** Develop print and social media that helps RBSB residents know which public and private, city, county and regional organizations are available to help entrepreneurs and businesses owners and what those organizations can offer.



**RBSB Private Businesses**



**Volga River State Recreation Area**

## **16.5 Proposed Projects**

This section provides information about infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects that are supported by the RBSB Board of Directors that are related to economic development and tourism. These projects were selected in part because of their benefit to the byway traveler or the byway experience as a result of the CMP process. They are also considered priority projects based on state and national byway traveler trends, existing community infrastructure, byway capacity and stakeholder input. Additional projects were considered but not included for recommendation within the next few years. The RBSB Board will continue to revise this project list as projects are completed, funded or proposed. Throughout the planning process they worked, and continue to work, closely with community leaders to develop, plan, fund and implement projects. The RBSB Board will work to update this chapter annually or more frequently as needed.

Notes: “Potential Funding Sources” listed within this section of the CMP are not all-inclusive but rather the funding sources that are the “best fit” of currently known sources. The “Responsible Partners” for each project are the primary partners in the project other than the RBSB Board, who are partners in each of these projects. It should also be noted that many of the projects and/or programs identified within this section were funded and completed during the duration of CMP development. Completed projects (yellow) can be distinguished from incomplete projects (green) by the color of the project title. Completed projects are identified with a blue project title, while incomplete and/or proposed projects are identified using a green project title. The RBSB Boards proposed economic development projects as they relate to infrastructure and programming are as follows:



**Roadside Beautification**



**Native Wildflowers**



**Beeghly Prairie**

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## Recommendation One: Beautification

**1. Roadside Beautification with Native Vegetation along the RBSB:** This project will maintain and enhance the RBSB Corridor’s scenic qualities. As the RBSB road right-of-way is in public ownership, many of the scenic qualities of the immediate foreground can be positively influenced by local public policy and decision making, but some funding is needed to accelerate beautification of the immediate foreground. Roadside beautification through Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management (IRVM) is crucial. Fayette County has one of the most active IRVM programs in Iowa but could use funding to expand their efforts. Clayton County has no IRVM program and could use funding to get a program established. Establishment of the IRVM program in Clayton County and continuation of the IRVM program in Fayette County will help RBSB counties maintain and increase native roadside vegetation, especially native flowers that would greatly enhance the RBSB traveler’s experience. IRVM is a maintenance approach that combines management techniques with sound ecological principles to establish and maintain safe, healthy, and functional roadsides. IRVM includes sparing use of herbicides, spot mowing, prescribed burning, mechanical tree and brush removal and the prevention and treatment of erosion and other disturbances. The long-term goal is to establish diverse stands of native plants to beautify the roadside and provide habitat for local species. The RBSB would like to use IRVM as a practice to beautify and maintain the rights-of-ways along the byway roadway. An added benefit of the IRVM practices can be increased habitat for the corridor’s natural resources such as threatened species like the monarch butterfly. Private landowners adjacent to the road right of way that are interested in selling land or easements to county conservation boards for restoration into native plantings could enhance the viewshed even more. Native plantings in Iowa DOT right of ways is also desirable as are community plantings for each RBSB community. Another aspect of roadside beautification is regularly picking up trash and other debris along roadways to keep the byway clean. This can be managed through the Adopt a Highway Program and local volunteer and service groups.

**Schedule:** 2015-2020

**Partners:** Clayton and Fayette County Board of Supervisors/Engineers, Clayton and Fayette County Conservation Boards, UNI Tallgrass Prairie Center, Iowa DOT, City and County Street Departments, Iowa DOT Living Roadway Trust Fund, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, TRWMA, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Clayton County Community Foundation, Fayette County Community Foundation, UMGC, Iowa DOT Living Roadway Trust Fund, National Fish and Wildlife Fnd., Iowa NRCS

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$208,000

**Funding Pending:** \$45,000

**Estimated Cost:** \$554,000

**2. Main Street Community Entrance Project in Volga:** The RBSB community of Volga has developed a community vision to recreate the main street in their downtown, which has been devastated by flooding. The overall goal of the project is to foster a more visitor friendly community gateway and downtown district. This project will enhance the main entrance into the community by narrowing the street, replacing broken sidewalks, restoring historic lighting and picket fencing and incorporating significant natural landscape features such as a grass boulevard and vegetated swales into the downtown. It will improve the overall aesthetic appeal of the community, create a strong sense of place and provide the impetus for revitalization of the abandoned, historic, downtown buildings. It will also improve safety for residents and visitors during heavy rainfall events by improving the overall functionality of the storm water system in the downtown.

**Schedule:** 2017-2018

**Partners:** City of Volga, Volga Visioning Committee, Turkey River Watershed Management Authority, Northeast Iowa RC&D, Trees Forever, IRVM Program, Living Roadway Trust Fund Program

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Economic Development Authority, the Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission (UMGC), Iowa Green Streets Program, Iowa Community Attraction and Tourism Grant, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Urban Water Quality Demonstration Project, CDBG, Iowa City REAP, Living Roadway Trust Fund, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, US Forest Service Urban Grants

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$40,000

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$750,000

**3. Fayette Downtown Rehabilitation & Beautification Project:** The RBSB community of Fayette plans to complete this multi-faceted project to ensure that the downtown district has appropriate services, visitor amenities and infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and RBSB visitors, to improve the functionality of their storm water runoff system to improve public safety during rain events and to beautify and enhance their commerce district. They will replace the old sewer and water mains in five blocks of Main Street and Water Street in the downtown area. At the same time, the storm sewers will be replaced with larger piping to handle water run-off from the streets south of the downtown area which presently back up in the street intersections when there is a heavy rain. To help off-set this additional flow of water in the storm sewers in the downtown area, the City of Fayette will install street trees with catch basins around them and install rain gardens with native plantings to reduce water run-off from the streets and sidewalks. The

sidewalks will also be replaced and finally the streets will be resurfaced. There will be a nature theme for Fayette's downtown area to tie in with our recreation trail system that meanders through hardwood forests, native prairies and along the Volga River. To go along with that theme, the City of Fayette will install steel panels with nature and wildlife pictures etched out of the middle.

**Schedule:** 2014 – 2018

**Partners:** City of Fayette, Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission, WHKS Engineering, Turkey River Watershed Management Authority, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Economic Development Authority CDBG program, City of Fayette: Local Option Sales Tax, fees from Sewer, Water, Storm Water, General Obligation Bonds, Sewer & Water Revenue Bonds, Road Use Tax, Internal Loans, Iowa Department of Culture Affairs, Iowa Arts Council, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Urban Water Quality Demonstration Project, CDBG, Iowa Revolving Loan Sponsored Projects Funding, Iowa City REAP, Iowa State Recreational Trails Grant, Federal Recreational Trails Grant, LRTF

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$2,500,000

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$3.5 million

**4. Volga Greenscaping and Park Improvements:** The RBSB city of Volga has experienced several devastating floods that have devastated the visitor appeal and livability of the community. This project will help community leaders restore and improve their community so they can regain their visitor appeal, improve visitor services, and better manage storm water runoff in the future. It uses greenscaping and new park infrastructure to beautify and revitalize the downtown area and improve visitor amenities in city parks and greenspaces. Bioswales, raingardens, trees and showy native plantings will be installed in FEMA buyout areas and parks. Upgraded camping, public restrooms, shelters and other park amenities facilities will also be developed to appeal to campers.

**Schedule:** 2017-2018

**Partners:** City of Volga, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** City of Volga, UMGC, Trees Forever, Living Roadway Trust Fund, Clayton County Community Foundation, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Urban Water Quality Demonstration Project, CDBG, Iowa Revolving Loan Sponsored Projects Funding, Iowa City REAP, Iowa State Recreational Trails Grant, Federal Recreational Trails Grant, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$226,000

**5. Elkader Downtown Greenscaping:** The RBSB community of Elkader would like to incorporate green stormwater runoff practices into their downtown, or pursue funding to complete greenscaping in the city's downtown. This project is modeled after the downtown of West Union. This project includes planning and implementation. The Elkader Downtown Greenscaping project will specifically include many different greenscaping elements that use plants to landscape an area in a cost-efficient and environmentally friendly way. This includes using low-maintenance, slow-growing, native plants to minimize the upkeep needed to maintain greenspaced areas. Raingardens that capture and use directed rainfall and stormwater runoff and bioswales, designed to remove silt and pollution from surface runoff water, will be strategically placed in or near the downtown district. Impermeable surfaces will be replaced with permeable pavers to allow water to flow freely.

**Schedule:** 2017-2018

**Partners:** City of Elkader, Clayton County Conservation, Main Street Elkader, Turkey River Recreational Corridor, Turkey River Watershed Management Authority, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** City of Elkader, Clayton County Community Foundation, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Urban Water Quality Demonstration Project, CDBG, Iowa Revolving Loan Sponsored Projects Funding

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$550,000

**6. Downtown Reconstruction and Greenscaping in Fayette:** The RBSB community of Fayette would like to use greenscaping to beautify the in the city's downtown district. They will strategically add plants to the landscape in a cost-efficient and environmentally friendly way, specifically low-maintenance, slow-growing, native plants to minimize the upkeep needed to maintain greenspaced areas. This will include raingardens, bioswales, prairie and tree plantings. Permeable pavers will be incorporated into downtown parking lots and or other public/private spaces, replacing concrete and allowing water to flow more slowly and/or be directed toward bioswales and raingardens as is appropriate.

**Schedule:** 2017-2018

**Partners:** City of Fayette, TRWMA, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** City of Fayette, Fayette County Community Foundation, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Urban Water Quality Demonstration Project, CDBG, Iowa City REAP, Living Roadway Trust Fund

**Estimated Cost:** \$340,000

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## Recommendation Two: Historic Infrastructure Restoration

**7. Friends of Dover #4: Restoration of the One-Room Schoolhouse:** Dover School House #4 was once a rural one-room country school that served Dover township in Fayette County. Built in 1912, Dover School House #4 is a 24x32 foot framed building with a cupola for the bell. The structure still contains many square nails, which were once the standard nail design throughout the region. When Dover School House #4 was being built, the use of round head nails was just beginning. Recently, the one-room schoolhouse has fallen into disrepair and a non-profit group called “Friends of Dover #4” has formed to lead its preservation and restoration. Dover School House #4 sits on its original site in a prominent location along Iowa State Highway 150, so it has been prioritized for restoration based on its high visibility. Of the 175 one-room schools that once existed in Fayette County, only approximately 76 remain today, and the majority of those have been converted into other uses. Dover School House #4 is unique in that it is still in its original, albeit much deteriorated, state. A Technical Advisory Network (TAN) Grant has been obtained and a preservation architect has evaluated the school and made suggestions for preservation and restoration. Recently, the roof was restored, which included replacing a few rafters and wall studs and straightening and strengthening the belfry. Also, the floor was replaced, the building rewired using the original light fixtures, and locks added. “Friends of Dover #4” are pursuing fundraising and grant opportunities to fund the school’s preservation and restoration. Once restored, the school will be used as a museum and educational tool to allow students and adults to experience attending a country school. Also, the facility will be used for the local summer tutoring program, and will also be available for use by artists, churches, and the community for classes, events, parties, and reunions. The space around the school will also be developed as demonstration gardens for items such as locally-grown foods, butterfly habitat preservation, and more the Dover School House #4 is considered an icon, representing Iowa’s one-room country schools and their teachers who taught in them who formed the legacy that made Iowa a leader in learning.

**Schedule:** 2017-2027

**Partners:** Clermont Historical Society, City of Clermont, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board, Fayette County, City of Eldorado

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette County Community Foundation, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Historical Resource Development Program (HRDP), Country School Grant Program, local and state “Quester” organizations, Silos & Smokestacks

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$4,000

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$200,000

**8. The Burkard Riegel Blacksmith Shop Historic Restoration:** The Burkard Riegel Blacksmith Shop, located in the heart of Clermont’s historic downtown on Mill St/Hwy 18 is a one-of-a-kind historic place. The small but unique structure, on the National Register of Historic Places and part of the Clermont Historical Tour, is one of the of the last 2 blacksmith shops in the state of Iowa that exist both structurally in its original building and internally with a century’s of blacksmith tools and equipment. Clermont has traditionally been, and continues to be, the most history-centric community on the RBSB because of its dozens of historic sites – the Blacksmith Shop is one of the most popular and significant sites. Since the site had become unsafe for visitors, closure was imminent. Historic tourism is one of the major tourism venues for RBSB travelers, so the improvements associated with the restoration project is important to the RBSB Board and byway community of Clermont. Phase I of the Historic Restoration project, to restore the structural integrity of the building was recently completed. This phase focused on structural repairs and included installation of a new roof, new interior structural beams in the main room, new historically accurate windows, a new lintel above the door, and repair of the exterior brick walls. Phase II of the project, cataloging the collections has also been completed. The partners are now ready to move onto Phase III, which includes projects in the main room as well as the back storage area. Main room goals include installation of new hidden electrical wiring, boxes, and lighting, and designing 7 (1 large photo, 6 with written info) interpretive panels which will be installed in Fall of 2016 (FCCF Grant). The back storage area will undergo significant improvements, such as installing supports, sealing the room from outside elements, and a cement floor. The storage area is where excess artifacts are stored while not on display, and shelving and pegboard will be developed so that the collection can be organized and displayed appropriately (HRDP pending). Phase IV is projected to include universal access and multi-media interpretation.

**Schedule:** 2016 - 2019

**Partners:** Clermont Historical Society, City of Clermont, Silos and Smokestacks General Grant, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board, Fayette County, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette County Community Foundation, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Historical Resource Development Program (HRDP), State Historical Society, local and state “Quester” organizations, Silos & Smokestacks

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$8,585.83

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$65,000

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**9. Clermont Depot Restoration:** Known as the “Brick City,” the vast majority of Clermont Iowa’s buildings are made of brick made from local clay deposits and mined in local kilns. The Clermont Depot, which served Clermont and the surrounding area from 1872-1971, is no exception. It was originally built by the Burlington Cedar Rapids and Minnesota Railway and later was a Rock Island Lines train depot. For almost 100 years it was considered the area’s transportation hub for passenger and freight services and the railway ran along the southwest side of the building. Now it sits on a lumberyard where it is part of the Historical Walking Tour of Clermont. There is renewed interest in restoring this unique historical treasure. The depot is very striking in its Italianate-inspired architecture. It is unique in that it is one of the few two-story train depots built in Iowa let alone still standing. The use of red brick for its walls with lighter brick to accent its edges and segmental window arches creates for a unique design. The exposed and intricately carved wooden roof support beams are original. If you look closely, you can see messages carved into the red brick by railway passengers and locals. Many of the bricks along the foundation and corners are falling off of the building, as seen in the photo on page XX. Clermont bricks from the local brick maker, who is no longer in operation, will be needed for the restoration. The building will need to be purchased or gifted from the current private owner and may need to be moved to a new site. The restoration will include restoring the Depot’s façade and brickwork, new windows, a new roof and interior restorations so that visitors could safely go inside of the Depot. The partners would like to interpret the restoration process and describe it on the exterior where they would also like to tell the history of the Clermont Depot through time.

**Schedule:** 2017-2022

**Partners:** Clermont Historical Society, City of Clermont, Fayette County, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette County Community Foundation, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Historical Resource Development Program (HRDP), State Historical Society, local and state “Quester” organizations, unknown partner depot organizations, City of Clermont

**Estimated Cost:** \$250,000

**10. Clayton County Courthouse Clock Tower Restoration:** The Clayton County Courthouse sits in a highly visible location above and adjacent to the Turkey River and Elkader’s historic downtown. It is an iconic historic structure for Clayton County and the community of Elkader and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Courthouse has been in continuous use since 1878

and the Clock Tower has kept time since its addition in 1886. It is the only surviving entirely wooden courthouse clock tower in Iowa. Recognizing the rare historical resource in their community, the Clayton County Courthouse Clock Tower Rehabilitation Plan was developed to inventory the existing condition of the Clock Tower and provide guidance and recommendations for preservation and restoration to return the clock tower to its original state. Phase I of the plan, which has already been completed, included repair/restoration of interior surfaces, all window sash, sills, and trim, complete replacement and upgrade of electrical service to the tower, new LED exterior lighting, and complete restoration of the original E. Howard #1 striker tower clock that powers the clock faces. Phase I also included collecting many folkloric stories and oral histories. Phase II of the Plan is currently underway and calls for restoring all remaining exterior surfaces. The clock faces will be restored Summer/Fall of 2016. All four faces will be removed and undergo smalting, a historic process applying ground glass onto a binder pigment to make the clock face historically accurate and prevent water penetration to the underneath wood surface of the clock faces. The roman numerals and minute markers will be replaced and be historic replicas of the actual originals, gilded with gold leaf on a bronze cast. The next step is to restore and preserve the bell room and clock room exteriors and widow’s walk, including repair and repainting of all wood and metal components and replacement of wood shingle and metal roofing. Phase II will also include replacement of missing architectural details that have deteriorated and removed over time. An HRDP grant is pending to hire professional preservation architectural services to provide the expertise, planning, and construction documents needed for to move forward with restoration. Other ideas to enhance the Clock Tower focuses on interpretation of this unique historical resource. Ideas for interpretation include historical photos, information, oral histories, and before and after photos of the restoration process presented either on the top floor of the Courthouse or outside in the Courthouse yard.

**Schedule:** February 2015 – February 2018 (per CCHPC timeline)

**Partners:** Clayton County, Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission, Northeast Iowa RC&D, City of Elkader, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board

**Potential Funding Sources:** Clayton County Community Foundation, State Historical Society, Historical Resource Development Program (HRDP), Hart Family Fund for Small Towns, Certified Local Government Grant

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$64,500

**Funding Pending:** CCHPC Public Fund Drive

**Estimated Cost:** \$200,000



**11. Downtown Façade Improvements:** The McGregor Commercial Historic District is made up of three blocks of 150+ year old brick buildings. The architecture of these buildings is responsible for much of the character and unique feel of the community. Therefore, continued preservation of these buildings is a key element in McGregor’s economy. Downtown revitalization, to include façade improvements, will enhance the business community’s appearance, help to preserve this important historic district, and in turn help to boost the attraction of new businesses to McGregor.  
Schedule: 2016-2021

**Potential Funding Sources:** CDBG Downtown revitalization grant, Certified Local Government Grant, Main Street Program, Vision Iowa – CAT Grant, Rural Business Development Grant

**Partners:** Business owners, City of McGregor, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$500,000

**12. Sullivan Opera House Rehabilitation:** McGregor is a Mississippi River community located amongst the bluffs of the Mississippi River in Clayton County, Iowa. The town has many acres of forest surrounding it as well as acres of woodlands within the city limits. The landscape of the community makes it a prime location to establish walking and biking trail connections with Marquette to its north and to Pikes Peak State Park to the south. Pikes Peak officials are interested in working with the community to develop a trail system that allows its users to enjoy the natural beauty of this unique part of Iowa. The City of McGregor will work with DNR officials and City of Marquette officials to map out potential trails. Mapping, construction, and signage will be needed to create miles of interconnecting trails that cross both state and city property.  
Schedule: 2016-2021

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa State Recreational Trails Grant, Federal Recreational Trails Grant, Vision Iowa CAT Grant, State and regional TAP Funding, Clayton County Community Foundation, Upper Mississippi River Gaming Commission, Iowa City and County REAP Grants, Living Roadway Trust Fund, City of McGregor, Bikes for People, RJ McElroy Foundation

**Partners:** City of McGregor, City of Marquette, IA DNR Pikes Peak Rangers, Clayton County, Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission, Iowa Great River Road Community Coach Partners, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$100,000



Clayton County Courthouse & Clock Tower Restoration



Turkey River Water Trail



Motor Mill Historic Site

**13. Motor Mill Park Historic Restoration:** The 155-acre Motor Mill Historic Park is the most extensive historic mill site in the State of Iowa and a premier historical visitor attraction along the RBSB. It encompasses five limestone buildings including the 90-foot tall Motor Mill, an icehouse, inn and cooperage as well as restored and/or native prairie, savanna and a riverine aquatic system. The entire Park is on the National Register of Historic Places. The site is within the corridor of the RBSB and through this project is being made accessible by road and trail. It is considered one of the major historic tourism venues for the RBSB. This project will restore the historic buildings, making them weather tight and stabilizing them. It will also complete restoration of the interiors of these buildings, making them safe and developing venues for interpretation. A recreational trail is being developed from the RBSB, near the RBSB community of Elkader, to the site. A historic road bridge was constructed through this project to improve road access to the site from the RBSB. Some of the priority projects within this project are also listed independently within this plan.

**Schedule:** 2016 – 2018

**Partners:** Motor Mill Foundation, Clayton County Conservation Board, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs HRDP, Clayton County Foundation, Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$3,500,000

**Funding Pending:** None

**Estimated Cost:** \$5,000,000

**14. Motor Mill Archaeology/Based Excavation Project:** Motor Mill Park, which is a premier historic attraction along the RBSB, is managed by the Clayton County Conservation Board and the Motor Mill Foundation. The Clayton County Conservation Board has been working with partners to improve the sites for over a decade. Although several site improvements have been completed, including construction of a new reproduction historic bridge over the Turkey River at the site, new roof and interior structural work on the Motor Mill, there is still much work to do including in the basement of the Motor Mill. The entire basement of Motor Mill is covered with eight feet deep of silt that has been washed in during flood events. The length and width of the basement is approximately 60' x 40'. This project, which was developed after discussions between the Motor Mill Foundation and the State Historic Preservation Office, would pay for consultation with three ground reader specialists to determine the best technology to estimate what artifacts may be

in the basement before commencing excavation. It will then use the identified technology to assess basement conditions and excavate the basement and remove identified artifacts. It will also close the flume doors to the basement of the mill to prevent silt from entering the basement during future flood events. Any artifacts that can and should be preserved may also be preserved and interpreted at the site.

**Schedule:** 2016 – 2018

**Partners:** Clayton County Conservation Board, Motor Mill Foundation, State Historical Preservation Office, TRRC

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa County REAP, Iowa HRDP, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Upper Mississippi River Gaming Commission, Clayton County Community Foundation, Iowa Community Attraction and Tourism, Motor Mill Foundation, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Funding Secured Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$12,500

**15. Motor Mill Permanent Electrical, Lighting and Alarm System Installation:**

Interpretation and events at the Motor Mill Park, which is a premier historic destination along the RBSB, is hampered by the lack of electrical. The Motor Mill Foundation and Clayton County Conservation Board would like to proceed with installing permanent electrical capabilities in the Mill. This would allow for lights to be placed in and outside the buildings to increase functionality, security, and safety. It will allow the partners to install an alarm system and help them prepare the buildings for heating and cooling systems that will protect future collections that the partners would like to install in the spaces. It will also protect the integrity of the restored elements of the Historic Mill. Electricity will allow for lighting that will improve programming options and extend hours for interpretation during overcast days and evening events and increase options for multi media interpretation.

**Schedule:** 2016 – 2020

**Partners:** Clayton County Conservation Board, Motor Mill Foundation, State Historical Office of Preservation, Northeast Iowa RC&D, TRRC

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa County REAP, HRDP, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, UMGC, Clayton County Community Foundation, Iowa Community Attraction and Tourism, Motor Mill Foundation

**Funding Secured Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$14,500

**16. Motor Mill Cooperage & Ice House Preservation:** The Motor Mill Foundation recently completed restoration of interior infrastructure components of the Motor Mill, including, stairs, walls and floors, for the six story structure. They are now ready to turn their attention to restoration of the historic Cooperage and Ice House at the Motor Mill Park. Both buildings are in need of shingles and reconstruction of chimneys as well as some historical interior and exterior structural work that will make them usable while maintaining the historic integrity of the buildings. Once restored the Cooperage will be used for exhibits and demonstrations of coopering. The Ice House will be utilized as an information hub for the park site.

**Schedule:** Ongoing

**Partners:** Clayton County Conservation Board, Motor Mill Foundation, State Historical Office of Preservation, Northeast Iowa RC&D, TRRC

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa County REAP, HRDP, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, UMGC, Clayton County Community Foundation, Iowa Community Attraction and Tourism, Motor Mill Foundation

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$59,500

**17. Restoring Motor Mill Inn:** This project will secure technical and financial assistance to help the Motor Mill Foundation and the Clayton County Conservation Board stabilize and preserve the structure of the Motor Mill Inn, which is a very significant structure at the Motor Mill Park. The partners vision utilizing the structure as an on-site interpretive and visitor services facility that will help the Motor Mill Park function at its highest capacity as a historic tourism venue along the RBSB. The third floor will be restored as a sleeping quarters, the second floor will be restored and utilized as an on-site office space and staff quarters for Motor Mill Park staff, and the first floor will be restored as it was in the 1870s, as a functioning kitchen and dining area. Along with the restoration, another primary task of the project will be to create a flood mitigation plan that ensures the structural improvements to the Inn will withstand future flood events similar to those that damaged it repeatedly in the first place.

**Schedule:** 2016 – 2018

**Partners:** Clayton County Conservation Board, Motor Mill Foundation, State Historical Office of Preservation, Northeast Iowa RC&D, TRRC

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa County REAP, HRDP, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Upper Mississippi River Gaming Commission, Clayton County Community Foundation, Iowa Community Attraction and Tourism, Motor Mill Foundation

**Funding Secured Date:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$623,000

**18. Motor Mill Park Interpretive Staff: Engaging Visitors in the Story:** The Clayton County Conservation Board recognizes the Motor Mill Historic Site as principal park in their county conservation system. As a primary historic destination along the RBSB, a Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area Partner Site, a National Great River Road Interpretive Center, and as a Historic Place on the National Register, the Clayton County Conservation Board has identified a need for a permanent, full-time staff member on site at the Motor Mill Park. The position will help the County Conservation Board and the Motor Mill Foundation maintain, preserve and interpret the Motor Mill Park. Ideally this staff member would live on-site.

**Schedule:** 2016 – 2036

**Partners:** Clayton County Conservation Board, Motor Mill Foundation, NE Iowa RC&D

**Funding Sources:** Clayton County, Motor Mill Foundation, Silos and Smokestacks, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, RJ McElroy Foundation, Young Foundation

**Estimated Cost:** \$35,000/annually: \$700,000

**19. Elkader Depot Reconstruction Project:** The railroad played an important role in early Elkader, bringing passengers and goods to town. The railroad first reached Elkader in 1875 when the narrow gauge tracks of the Iowa Eastern Railroad were built through town. It was later bought by the Iowa Eastern Railroad, but the first car didn't come to town until 1889. The last train left town in 1973 and the depot was torn down shortly thereafter. Since then, Elkader has had a strong railroad history that has been told and retold to and by community members for decades. Many of those story tellers historically worked for the Milwaukee Railroad. The stories sparked an interest in railroads and trains that some community members have carried throughout their lifetime. Community leaders are now spearheading a project to build a full-size replica of the Elkader Railroad Depot that once stood on the southeast side of Elkader. The original was torn down years ago, so they hope to build the replica in the Elkader City Park which is just south of where the original once stood. The City of Elkader has already donated the land where the depot will be built and the Milwaukee Road Historical Society has provided the original Depot's blueprints to be used for building the replica. When completed, the depot will display railroad and regional memorabilia, serve as an educational area with hands on exhibits, and strengthen Elkader's reputation as a historic RBSB community. For example, a HO scale gague train layout will be set up modeled after the Marquette train yard that will allow children to control the trains and drive them through the model hills of Clayton County. The replica Depot would join a 1949 Ribside Caboose and a 1953 Boxcar that has already been purchased, restored, and displayed in the park on 90-feet of railroad track. More track will be laid in Summer 2016, with the goal of finding an engine to make the rails complete.

A challenge with the project is the fact that the building will be a “new” structure modeled after a historic structure. Ideas to circumvent this challenge and thus make the project more eligible for grant funding include making the building double as a welcome center for Elkader or the region, or building it specifically as a regional railroad interpretive center. To date, all funding has been secured via fundraisers and donations. The major fundraiser for the project is a train show each August which draws around 500 people to the tables of memorabilia and vendors. 100% of the proceeds go to the project. Another popular fundraiser is that each year an O scale gague train car is built especially for the show. This car usually has ties to the Elkader area, such as a CJ Monya construction grader or Elkader Co-Op label. Although community support for the project has been demonstrated, the cars sell out quickly, the partner’s capacity to fund the project with fund raisers is limited.

**Schedule:** Summer 2016-2020

**Partners:** City of Elkader, Clayton County, Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission, Milwaukee Road Historical Society, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fundraising events such as model train shows and swaps and selling special model train cars, Clayton County Community Foundation, Community Impact Grant, Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission, Greater Dubuque Community Foundation, Milwaukee Road Historical Society, National Railroad Historical Grants, BSNF Railroad, Vision Iowa CAT grant

**Funding Secured to Date:** Unknown

**Funding Pending:** Unknown

**Estimated Cost:** \$96,000

## 20. Volga City Opera House Restoration:

The Volga Opera House was historically the anchor business in the small RBSB community of Volga. Unfortunately, the structure was flooded, abandoned and fell in disrepair in the 1990’s and 2000’s. This project would help the nonprofit, Volga City Truck Cruise (VCTC), and the City of Volga work to repair and restore the historic structure so that it can be used to host events and activities, including live music and theatre performances, for travelers along the RBSB.

**Schedule:** 2017-2022

**Partners:** City of Volga, VCTC, Volga City Visioning Committee, Clayton County Development Group

**Potential Funding Sources:** Community Tourism Grants, UMGC, Iowa Arts Council Grant/Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Clayton County Community Foundation

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$100,000

**Funding Pending:** Unknown

**Estimated Cost:** \$750,000

**21. Fayette County Visitor Center Log Home Restoration:** Next to the Fayette County Tourism Center is a period log home from the earliest settlers of the county. The log home draws visitors from the RBSB and those stopping into the Tourism Center. It is located adjacent to a busy intersection, and draw attention for travelers who notice either the structure or the the colorful barn quilt in its yard. The Log Home is only used during the summer tourism season as a tourism site. It is open to visitors and it furnished with items from the time period in which it was built. The log home is in need of restoration to ensure that it is properly preserved so it lasts for many years. Small repairs have been done, but a complete evaluation needs to be done. A professional in preservation architect will need to be brought in to assess the logs, caulk, floor, roof, and windows and make suggestions and prioritize needs. The most pressing need is a new roof. Also, the exterior of the log home is accessible all day, all year so many individuals stop to see it during times when the Tourism Center is closed. There needs to be interpretation about the site and its significance for visitors to read if no one is available to give more information.

**Schedule:** 2017-2020

**Funding Sources:** Fayette County Community Foundation, Certified Local Government Grant, Upper Iowa University, City of Fayette

**Partners:** Fayette County Tourism, Fayette County, City of Fayette

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$125,000



**Volga City Opera House Restoration**

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### Three: Land & Water Trail Expansion & Enhancement

**22. Elkader Whitewater Park:** This project continues to develop the Elkader Whitewater Park, which includes the recently construction of water trail feature, a “White Water Play Area,” in the RBSB community of Elkader. The White Water Play Area provides recreational opportunities for byway travelers who are able to kayak, boogie board and engage in white water competitions. It was developed at the low-head dam, which was modified with placement of large and small habitat boulders and a wave catalyst structure. These features created an interesting and challenging wave action in a relatively safe environment. Universal River Access to the Turkey River Water Trail and the White Water Play Area, were also developed, providing high quality opportunities for limited mobility and elderly water trail users interested in enjoying the river as fishermen or spectators. The Universal River Access trail switches back and forth across the incline from the river. It is approximately eight feet wide and constructed of 4” thick concrete with a pea-gravel bed. The slope is compliant with handicapped accessible guidelines. Through this project the trail would be extended, additional features such as built in seating, interpretation, and other park amenities will be added in the green space adjacent to the river.

**Partners:** City of Elkader, Elkader Development Corp., Clayton County Development Group, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Clayton County Community Foundation, UMGC, City of Elkader, Vision Iowa CAT, RJ McElroy Foundation, Iowa Water Trails Program, Keep Iowa Beautiful, Living Roadways Trust Fund, Trees Forever, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Urban Water Quality Demonstration Project, CDBG, Iowa Revolving Loan Sponsored Projects Funding, Iowa City REAP, Iowa State Recreational Trails Grant, Federal Recreational Trails Grant, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$400,000

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$600,000

**Project was Completed in 2015**

**23. RBSB Land and Water Trails within the TRRC:** The TRRC is one of the most significant recreational resources along the RBSB. The RBSB and its corridor intertwine with the Turkey River and its Corridor, sometimes running parallel and other times intersecting with each other. This project recognizes the benefits of co-development of these venues and cross marketing of the recreational, visitor resources. The Turkey River and its Corridor are collectively branded as the Turkey River Recreational Corridor or TRRC. This project is developing land and water

trails in the TRRC that provide alternative transportation options for RBSB users. This effort includes development of 40.6 miles of land trails and the Turkey River Water Trail in Fayette and Clayton County. As of December 2012, 11.2 miles of land trail have been developed and 29.4 miles of land trail are still to be developed. Over 52-miles of Turkey River Water Trail are also being developed as a State of Iowa Water Trail. To date, signage, kiosks and programming have occurred. Additional projects include dam removal and or modification at several sites and development of rock arch rapids. Some of the projects included in this total are individually described further, but not all.

**Schedule:** 2016 - 2021

**Partners:** Fayette County Conservation Board, Clayton County Conservation Board, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board, Northeast Iowa RC&D, the communities of Elkader, Elgin and Clermont

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa State Recreational Trails Program, Federal Recreational Trails Program, (MAP 21) Regional TAP Grant, Iowa City and County REAP Grants, Fayette County Community Foundation Grant, Clayton County Community Foundation Grant, Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation, Bikes for People, Vision Iowa CAT grant, RJ McElroy Foundation, Young Foundation, Fayette County Trails Group

**Funding Secured Date:** \$3,500,000

**Funding Pending:** \$10,000

**Estimated Cost:** \$18,500,000

**24. Clermont Whitewater Park:** This project will develop a new water trail feature, a “White Water Play Area,” in the RBSB community of Clermont. The White Water Play Area will provide recreational opportunities for byway travelers who will be able to kayak, boogie board and engage in white water competitions. It will be developed at the low-head dam, which will be greatly modified with placement of large and small habitat boulders and a wave catalyst structure. These features when placed in the river will create interesting and challenging wave action in a relatively safe environment.

**Schedule:** 2017-2019

**Partners:** City of Clermont, Fayette County Economic Development and Tourism, Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette County Community Foundation, Vision Iowa CAT Grant, Federal Recreational Trails Grant, State Recreational Trails Grant, Iowa Water Trails Program, US Fish and Wildlife Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

**Funding Secured Date:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$400,000

**25. Volga River State Recreation Area Trail Infrastructure:** The Volga River State Recreation Area is a 5,420-acre Iowa park that is a major attraction along the RBSB. It provides opportunities for RBSB travelers to engage in a variety of outdoor activities and natural recreation, such as fishing, hunting, bird watching, hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding. Volga River State Recreation Area features two campgrounds in the park, one with primitive toilets and sites for equestrian and tent campers, the second with modern facilities for campers. Currently, the park's trail system is only 25-miles which is very short considering the park's total area. These trails are shared by hikers, horseback riders, mountain bikers, and cross country skiers, and because of this shared use the trails are very rough. Trail improvements include expanding the trail system to cover more miles, enhancing trail conditions by dedicating certain portions of the trail specifically for horses or mountain bikers, and adding and updating wayfinding signage and maps. Specifically, Frog Hollow Lake is a popular spot for fishing, boating, kayaking, canoeing, and swimming. Frog Hollow Lake will be the focus of a trail loop around the lake. The park's water trails will also be expanded and enhanced. The Turkey River and several of its small streams and tributaries run through the park. These will be marked with signs, interpretation, and marketed as an additional recreational opportunity in the park. Together, these changes will turn the park from a good into a great RBSB destination, serve more visitors and allow RBSB visitors and other park users to have a better experience.

**Schedule:** 2017-2027

**Partners:** Iowa DNR Volga River State Recreation Area, Fayette County, the communities of Fayette and West Union, Fayette County Conservation Board, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** State Recreational Trails Grant, Federal Recreational Trails Grant, Regional TAP funding, City of Fayette, Upper Iowa University, Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation, Fayette County Community Foundation, Travel Iowa Tourism Grant, Fayette County Trail Group

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$220,000

**26. Volga River Recreation Trail & Gazebo Lookout:** The City of Fayette, located along the banks of the Volga River in Fayette County, has extended their 2.8-mile asphalt trail system completed in 2006 with an additional 1.5-miles of concrete trails. There is one-mile of trail remaining

with finely crushed stone that needs hard surfacing. The Fayette-Volga River Recreation Trail begins from the City of Fayette's Sports Complex on the north side of town and extends to the existing trails in the Iowa DNR Volga River State Recreation Area north of Fayette. It is easily accessible from the RBSB. The area surrounding existing trail consists of hilly bluffs that rise above the river and wooded areas that provide numerous scenic attractions including a variety of plant and wildlife. There are bald eagles nesting in the bluff adjacent to the city park, Klock's Island Park, which is at one end of the existing trail system. The new trail meanders past a restored Oak and Hickory Savanna, through 150 acres of restored Native Prairie and past a type of Native Prairie Remnant dominated by sedges - long-lived, grass-like perennial plants, identified as a Sedge Meadow by The Iowa Nature Conservancy (INC). At the top of the hill, which is approximately the halfway point of the trail, there will be a two-story gazebo (completion July 2016) with benches for trail users to sit, relax and enjoy the breathtaking 360-degree view of the scenic panorama which stretches for as far as the eye can see. In the Volga River Recreation Area State Park, the trail will run through a beautiful hardwood forest, with deer, birds and other wildlife. There is educational signage to identify special areas for all to learn about our local prairie formation and encourage the appreciation of the beauty of this natural habitat. There is also a board walk over a primitive peat bog. The Fayette-Volga River Recreation Trail builds on the premise that anyone who desires to engage in outdoor activities for recreation and enjoyment and experience nature and all of its elements, can have the access and the means to follow their individual pastimes or pursuits. This trail will be a pathway to increasing participation and environmental stewardship in the State Park and allow RBSB visitors to take pleasure in the natural beauty of the RBSB Corridor all year long.

**Schedule:** 2012 – 2017

**Partners:** City of Fayette, Upper Iowa University, Fayette County Conservation Board, Iowa DNR, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa DNR City and/or County REAP, City of Fayette Local Option Sales Tax & donated land, Upper Iowa University donated land, IDOT National Recreation Trails Program, IDOT TAP, State Recreational Trails Program, Fayette Community Foundation, Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation.

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$1,150,000

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimate Cost:** \$1,450,000

**27. MRT: Clayton County – Buck Creek to Marina Road:** This RBSB Corridor project will develop 2.7 miles of new trail, including 2.3 miles of new Mississippi River Trail (MRT) and 0.4 miles of new trail from X56 to the islands north of Guttenberg along the Great River Road. Portions of the trail will be shoulder trail and portions will be separated from the roadway. It expands the livability of and enhances the traveler amenities in the RBSB Community of Guttenberg. It connects disparate county and city segments of the MRT. There are several significant natural resources along the proposed trail route, including access to Frenchtown County Park, Big Springs Nature Area, Bussy Lake, the US Fish and Wildlife Refuge and Ingelside Park. These public areas and other adjacent lands have public and private off-road trails, forested hillsides, bluff overlooks, trout streams and natural resource areas near the river, lake and river access, public restrooms, picnic areas, shelters, public and private campgrounds. There is also universal access to public fishing in streams, a lake, the Mississippi River, and, through the Ingelside Park MRT access to downtown Guttenberg, public and private marinas, an Iowa DNR Fish Hatchery, the City of Guttenberg Welcome Center, the historic Lakeside Ballroom, restaurants, shops and other amenities.

**Schedule:** 2017 – 2019

**Partners:** City of Guttenberg, Clayton County Roads/Engineering, Clayton County Conservation Board, Abel Island and Esmann Island homeowner associations

**Potential Funding Sources:** State Recreational Trails Program, Clayton County Farm to Market Funding, Region and state TAP funding, City and County Iowa REAP, Bike for People, Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission, Clayton County Community Foundation, Federal Recreational Trails

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$1,079,815

**Estimated Cost:** \$1,079,815

**28. Trail from Marquette to Driftless Area Wetland Centre to Bloody Run:**

This proposed trail will follow Highway 18 to connect the RBSB community of Marquette to the Driftless Area Wetlands Centre and Bloody Run County Park, a distance of about 2.5 miles. These three locations are independently popular with RBSB travelers and have the potential to become an even greater RBSB tourism venue if they are connected by trail. Marquette is home to the popular Eagle's Nest Winery tasting room, antiquing, Lady Luck Casino, and several beautiful parks. They have well attended events and flea markets that draw thousands of visitors. The Wetland Centre's exhibits and activities connect people to the natural world, hosts a farmers market and has visitor services. Bloody Run Park's 135 acres encompasses a trout stream, fishing, camping, trails, and world class bird

watching opportunities. Building a multi-use trail would increase multi-modal transportation to each location and provide safe alternative transportation options for RBSB travelers and locals. (The first step in building the trail will begin in Summer 2016. Marquette is redoing a section of their sewer line along Edgar Street and will use that opportunity to put in the first portion of the trail from Marquette part-way to the Wetland Centre.)

**Schedule:** 2017-2021

**Partners:** Clayton County Conservation, City of Marquette, Clayton County, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa State Recreational Trails Program, Federal Recreational Trails Program. (MAP 21) Regional Enhancement Grant, Iowa City and County REAP Grants, Clayton County Community Foundation, UMGC

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$1,500,000

**29. Horse Trails along the RBSB:** The RBSB travels through remote forested hills and river valleys that are conducive to alternate forms of transportation, including exceptional horseback riding through public and private lands. This RBSB nature focused activity is something that sets the RBSB apart from many other byways. Several equestrian clubs organize public rides on private lands. Citizens, including equestrian club members, from and around the RBSB communities of Volga and Wadena, are working with private landowners to develop high-quality equestrian trails on public and private land that would be open to the public more regularly for free or for a small fee. The RBSB communities of Volga, Wadena and other towns, as well as the Clayton County Conservation Board and the Fayette County Conservation Board, are supportive of the development of these equestrian trails. This project will provide funding for the communities and counties to work together and with the private landowners to develop the trails. Funding is specifically needed for trail clearing, fencing, surfacing, development of a trail-head and marketing. Easements and land-purchases are also being considered.

**Schedule:** 2016-2021

**Partners:** City of Volga, Clayton County Conservation Board, Fayette County Conservation Board, TRRC

**Potential Funding Sources:** Map 21, Iowa State Recreational Trails, Federal Recreational Trails, REAP

**Funding Secured Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$750,000



**30. McGregor Walking and Biking Trails:** McGregor is a Mississippi River community located amongst the bluffs of the Mississippi River in Clayton County, Iowa. The town has many acres of forest surrounding it as well as acres of woodlands within the city limits. The landscape of the community makes it a prime location to establish walking and biking trail connections with Marquette to its north and to Pikes Peak State Park to the south. Pikes Peak officials are interested in working with the community to develop a trail system that allows its users to enjoy the natural beauty of this unique part of Iowa. The City of McGregor will work with DNR officials and City of Marquette officials to map out potential trails. Mapping, construction, and signage will be needed to create miles of interconnecting trails that cross both state and city property.

**Schedule:** 2016-2021

**Partners:** City of McGregor, City of Marquette, IA DNR Pikes Peak Rangers, Clayton County, Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission, Iowa Great River Road Community Coach Partners, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa State Recreational Trails Grant, Federal Recreational Trails Grant, Vision Iowa CAT Grant, State and regional TAP Funding, Clayton County Community Foundation, UMGC, Iowa City and County REAP Grants, Living Roadway Trust Fund, City of McGregor, Bikes for People, RJ McElroy Foundation

**Estimated Cost:** \$100,000



Horse Trails along the RBSB



Trout Fishing along the RBSB

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#### Four: Natural Area Expansion & Enhancement

**31. Ingleside Park Enhancement Project:** Ingleside Park is a popular recreational area in the RBSB anchor community of Guttenberg. The park runs the entire length of the City of Guttenberg next to the Mississippi River and has one of the longest Mississippi River Trail segments in a community on the Mississippi River. It is a very popular park because of its beautiful views of the river, bluffs, and Lock and Dam #10. Many individuals use the park's two-mile paved multi-use trail, picnic tables, benches and hi-spy viewing machines. It is an ideal spot to sit and watch barges on the river or bird watch, and is the venue for many events in Guttenberg. Clayton Ridge School is located in this park as is a city marina and community center. The Ingleside Park spans the length of the downtown district, which boasts many traveler amenities and businesses including the Guttenberg Welcome Center. Currently, Ingleside Park has a small restroom structure. However, that restroom structure is not handicapped accessible per the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. The City of Guttenberg would like to modernize the restroom and make it handicapped. At the same time, they plan to improve landscaping adjacent to the restroom. Landscaping within the park will be updated to have showy, low-maintenance, native plantings/vegetation around the restroom facility. The proposed facility will also be an ideal location for interpretation and/or information hubs about the park, Mississippi River, Native Americans of the area, Guttenberg's heritage and/or the historic cannon in the park. Additionally, the paved trail's north section ends abruptly on top of a levee, leaving no safe entry or exit from that end of the trail. Enhancement suggestions include extending the trail down the hill to the nearby parking area. Or, if a trail extension is not feasible, the City of Guttenberg proposes that the north end of the trail can be made into a destination overlook area with benches. The Enhancement Project also includes general beautification of the park with native plantings and flowers, cleanup of the park, its monuments and other small changes that will enhance the park's current status.

**Schedule:** 2017-2022

**Partners:** City of Guttenberg, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Funding Sources:** Clayton County Community Foundation, UMGC, State Recreational Trails Grant, Federal Recreational Trails Grant, Regional TAP funding, City REAP Grant, Keep Iowa Beautiful, RJ McElroy Foundation, Silos and Smokestacks, Vision Iowa CAT grant

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$250,000

#### Five: Overlook Acquisition & Development

**32. Chicken Ridge Overlook Development:** This project will develop an overlook at Chicken Ridge, one of the highest priority sites along the RBSB, to provide strategic viewing opportunities for RBSB travelers, improve safety for RBSB travelers wanting to enjoy some of the most spectacular views along the byway, and encourage RBSB travelers to slow down. Chicken Ridge, which overlooks the Emerald Valley, has one of the most extensive viewsheds along the RBSB and in the region. The project includes the recent development of an elevated viewing platform that provides extensive viewing of the Volga River Valley and the Turkey River Valley and installation of interpretive panels that feature information on private lands conservation and natural resources. Vegetation that was blocking parts of the view was cleared and replaced with native plantings. Additional work to be completed includes development of directional signage on Highway 13. The RBSB would like to have the same design of all scenic overlooks along the byway, so are considering development of a new overlook for this that is a 20'x40' open lookout shelter with a concrete floor, wood frame, steel roof, and benches similar, if not identical to, the shelter built in Marquette, Iowa, which would provide shelter for RBSB visitors from sun, rain and winter weather.

**Schedule:** 2016 – 2021

**Partners:** Clayton County Conservation Board, Clayton County, RBSB Board, Byways of Iowa Foundation, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Funding Sources:** Clayton County Community Foundation, UMGC, USDA/NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant, REAP Education Grant, Clayton County Conservation Board, Byways of Iowa Foundation, County REAP, Iowa DOT Statewide TAP

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$15,000

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$250,000

**33. Marquette Observation Deck and Mississippi River Boardwalk:**

The City of Marquette is remaking itself to become more "traveler" friendly. They have partnered with a private developer to construct a new multi-story building on the main street that houses a new hotel, community room and city offices. The upper stories are being constructed to include a walkway and stairs from the structure to the bluff above, which provides a stunning overlook of the Upper Mississippi River and its backwaters. This overlook area, known as the Marquette-Joliet Bridge scenic overlook observation deck, had a small, aging, 10'x10' lookout platform on the bluff that was recently replaced with a 20'x40' open lookout/shelter, that expands the capacity of the site for

viewing. Kiosks were also added to increase interpretation for the RBSB and Great River Road byway travelers. The City also constructed a new 30'x90' Mississippi River boardwalk that extends from the east end of North Street (the primary downtown thoroughfare in Marquette) out into the Mississippi River. Additional improvements included in this project include a universally accessible drop off area and approach and all-weather interpretive panels. Construction of these tourism facilities provides byway visitors with easy access to unique viewing opportunities. Interpretive panels have been constructed of long lasting weatherproof resins to educate the visitor about the area's natural features and byway resources.

**Partners:** City of Marquette, National Scenic Byway Program, RBSB Board, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** City of Marquette, National Scenic Byway Program

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$416,000

**Estimated Cost:** \$416,000

**Project was Completed in 2016**

**34. Great River Road Overlook in Clermont:** Northwest of Clermont, the RBSB forms a small loop when it takes a right on Great River Road. This section of the byway is especially scenic, following the Turkey River and over the hills and bluffs of Northeast Iowa. The RBSB Board has decided that this would be an ideal location for a second scenic overlook and/or roadside pull-off along the byway. This project includes working with the RBSB Board and byway anchor community of Clermont to identify potential sites along the Great River Road, securing land by fee for title or easement, and planning and building the overlook with parking and interpretation. The RBSB would like to have the same design of all scenic overlooks along the byway, so the overlook constructed will ideally be a 20'x40' open lookout shelter with a concrete floor, wood frame, steel roof, and benches similar, if not identical to the shelter built in Marquette, Iowa overlooking the Mississippi River and byways there.

**Schedule:** 2017-2025

**Partners:** Fayette County Conservation Board, Fayette County, RBSB Board, Byways of Iowa Foundation, Northeast Iowa RC&D, TRRC

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette County Community Foundation, Byways of Iowa Foundation, County REAP, Iowa DOT Statewide TAP

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$275,000

**35. Goeken County Park Artistic Safety Metal Sculpture Railing:** North of the RBSB community of West Union, Fayette County Conservation Board owns and manages Goeken County Park. This park overlooks the Turkey River Valley and the community of Eldorado, which is nestled in the valley, providing a particularly poignant view of a picturesque Iowa small town on a winding river. The view also provides opportunities for visitors to see many different types of birds in flight, particularly raptors. This is a popular overlook for RBSB travelers from throughout the nation. The park currently has restrooms, picnic facilities and interpretation of the river valley and the viewshed as well as interpretation of the raptors that soar above the valley. Because the park is situated at the edge of a precipice and the railing is a crude wood and chain link structure, this project will design and construct a new metal sculpture that will serve as a safety function and will be a one-of-a-kind artistic piece that reflects the nature of view, with an emphasis on birds in flight.

**Schedule:** 2017-2019

**Partners:** Fayette County Conservation Board, RBSB Board, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette County Conservation Board, Fayette County Community Foundation, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs/Iowa Arts Council, Byways of Iowa Foundation, private donors

**Estimated Cost:** \$25,000

**36. Lighting along the RBSB on Scenic Overlooks and Pulloffs – Phase I:**

Because the RBSB is a very rural byway, the pulloffs and overlooks are by their very nature remote. They are less visitor friendly during the extended darkness hours of fall and winter and can thus be potentially dangerous for RBSB travelers for a variety of reasons, including proximity to steep drop offs and uneven hillsides, distance from phones and emergency help, limited visibility associated with early darkness during winter hours, vulnerability to personal attack by unknown persons and other dangers. The RBSB Board and County Conservation Boards would like to increase safety for the RBSB traveler through the installation of solar, night-sky friendly, lighting at all the scenic overlooks and pulloffs. Phase I of this project would place these lights at five sites along the RBSB including those county conservation board sites that have interpretive signage, Motor Mill, Chicken Ridge, Goeken Park and two other site to be determined.

**Schedule:** 2017-2019

**Partners:** Clayton & Fayette County Conservation Boards, RBSB Board, NE Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Fayette County Conservation Board, Fayette County Community Foundation, Byways of Iowa Foundation, Clayton County Conservation Board, Clayton County Community Foundation, UMGC

**Estimated Cost:** \$75,000

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## Six: Community Art Projects

**37. Art Deco Restorations to Guttenberg Municipal Building:** The Guttenberg Municipal Building is an old school that was originally constructed using art deco style exterior and interior elements. The building has been converted to many different uses since it's days as a school, and many of the art deco elements have been lost or covered up. Guttenberg would like to restore the building to its original interior and exterior style and finishes.

**Schedule:** 2017-2020

**Partners:** Clayton County, City of Guttenberg

**Potential Funding Sources:** Clayton County Community Foundation, HRDP

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$200,000

**38. McGregor Center for the Arts and Rubidoo:** The RBSB Community of McGregor is establishing itself as an artistic community that provides opportunities for residents and visitors to experience, create and purchase local art. The hub for the community will be the McGregor Center for the Arts, which is located on a corner in the historic downtown/main street business district. The art center will be owned by a nonprofit organization with operational assistance from the City of McGregor. This project will help the partners purchase, remodel and establish the art center as a viable nonprofit business. The facility needs interior and exterior renovations to make it safe and useable for art classrooms, activities and exhibits and the third floor of the facility would be remodeled for resident artists. When complete, this indoor space will house and implement art classes, gallery exhibitions, artists in residence programs, musical performances, community art festivals, poetry readings and after school programs.

**Schedule:** 2017-2020

**Partners:** Marquette-McGregor Center for the Arts, City of McGregor

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Arts Council, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Iowa Community and Attraction Grant, National Endowment for the Arts, RJ McElroy Grant, Living Roadway Trust Fund

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$50,000

**Funding Pending:** None

**Estimated Cost:** \$509,500

**39. RBSB Corridor Opera Houses: Restoration and Programming:** The RBSB corridor communities have a rich performing arts tradition as evidenced by the six opera houses and theatres in the RBSB corridor and theatrical performances were once a popular pastime. Today three of the six have been restored, Elkader Opera House, Clermont Opera House and the Fayette Opera House, with the Elkader

Opera House being the most significant architecturally and functionally it is currently serving as an theatre. Clermont and Fayette facilities are used more as meeting places. Two of the six are in the process of restoration, the Volga Opera House and McGregor's Sullivan Opera House. The Volga Opera House, originally paid for and constructed by citizens in the 1800s as a community opera house and central meeting place, was vacant for several years after flooding in 1999 and 2008 damaged its interior finishes. With help from the City, a local nonprofit secured the structure and has slowly been restoring it. The Sullivan Opera House is a rare upper-level opera house that originally had businesses on the first floor and a grand staircase leading to the opera house on the second floor. After housing several businesses, such as a hardware store, it is vacant and in disrepair. The Sullivan Opera was purchased by the City of McGregor and a "Save The Sullivan" campaign is in its early stages. The sixth opera house, St. Olaf Auditorium, constructed of local limestone by the Works Progress Administration in the early 1900's, is still used as a common meeting space but the interior has been gutted. This project would help the opera houses that haven't yet been restored or are lacking theatrical or performance facilities be restored so they could serve as a community theatre or opera house. This project will also develop programming that brings fine arts to the RBSB historic opera houses and by doing so, brings visitors to the corridor and enriches the lives of corridor residents. An event series specific to each opera house and a travelling event series, that rotates among corridor opera houses would be implemented. Events could include theatre productions, Shakespeare recitations, musical concerts, dance programs, opera productions or performances, and experiential events. These events could be collaborations utilizing local and area talent, organizations, and schools or bringing in outside performers. A person is needed to coordinate this effort and schedule and market performances.

**Schedule:** 2017 – 2025

**Partners:** Cities of Volga, McGregor, Elkader, Clermont, St. Olaf and Fayette; Clayton and Fayette Counties; Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board, Northeast Iowa Regional Arts and Cultural Council, Hollywood in the Heartland project by Preservation Iowa, Volga City Truck Cruise, Fayette Family Enrichment Project, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Iowa Arts Council, Certified Local Government Program, Upper Mississippi Gaming Grant, Vision Iowa CAT, Clayton County and Fayette County Community Foundations, Historical Resource Development Program, National Endowment for the Arts, ArtWorks Opera

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$580,000

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$1,230,000



Marquette Center for the Arts



RBSB Anchor Community of Fayette



Elkader Opera House

**40. Public Art Along the RBSB:** Recognizing the ability of art to build community and bring economic benefits, the RBSB would like to strengthen the corridor's art resources by placing public art in all of the byway anchor communities. The RBSB Board believes that public art will improve quality of life for locals and draw visitors to each community to view the art pieces. A Public Art Project is currently being coordinated with other Iowa Byways. This project will plan and place public art pieces in ten RBSB communities. The Elkader art piece will be located in Founder's Park and is yet to be determined. The Guttenberg art pieces will be fish sculptures paying homage to the Mississippi River that will be displayed on newer streetlamps throughout the community. Other communities will determine where and what are will be place in their community. When appropriate, some art will be placed at overlooks, such as the Goeken Park art railing. These art pieces will be based on themes determined with public input and ideally will be made by an area artist. There will be a special emphasis on creating art that reflects the community's sense of place and is interactive. Steps will be taken to insure that the art's location does not interfere with any historic sites, and the money needed for the art, artist, and coordination will be generated through grants and donations. Art pieces will be included and featured in RBSB marketing materials when they are complete and cross promoted with other RBSB art and other art along Iowa's byways.

**Schedule:** 2017-2020

**Partners:** RBSB communities, the Northeast Iowa Regional Art and Cultural Council, area art groups, area artists, Clayton and Fayette County Conservation Boards, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Art Place America, Clayton and Fayette County Community Foundations, Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs/Iowa Arts Council, Byways of Iowa Foundation, Caseys General Stores, John Deere Foundation, Bank of America

**Funding Secured to Date:** \$15,000

**Funding Pending:** \$20,000

**Estimated Cost:** \$300,000

## Seven: Visitor Welcome Centers

**41. Construction of Marquette-McGregor Driftless Area Wetland Centre:** This project will develop a regional educational center in the RBSB community of Marquette, Iowa. The center will be adjacent to the byway and will provide programming and hands on learning regarding the Driftless Area

of Iowa and the importance of wetlands in the Mississippi River Valley. The project will also provide funding for interpretation and programming for the first two years.

**Partners:** Marquette- McGregor Driftless Area Wetland Board, City of Marquette, MFL MarMac School District, Northeast Iowa RC&D

**Potential Funding Sources:** Community Attraction and Tourism Grant, Marquette Action Club, Alpine Community Giving, Living Roadways Trust Fund, Upper Mississippi Gaming Commission (UMGC), City of Marquette, RJ McElroy, Walmart Foundation, Bungee North America, Waste Management Foundation, Cabelas Inc., US Fish & Wildlife Service

**Estimated Cost:** \$1,502,352

**Project was Completed in 2013**

**42. Osborne Welcome Center Third Floor RBSB Visitors Center:** The Osborne Visitor Center is currently the only Iowa Welcome Center in the northeast region of Iowa. It is the Clayton County Conservation Board (CCCB) primary welcome center, interpretive facility and conservation headquarters/office and is located on the RBSB. The third floor of the Welcome Center, which has windows and a deck, that would provide exceptional public viewing of the surrounding landscape, is currently unfinished and available for development. The Clayton County Conservation Board is supportive of using the space to highlight the intrinsic resources of the RBSB and to provide information to the visitor about the opportunities to engage in recreation and natural resource exploration along the RBSB. This project would more specifically develop the space with flooring, walls and trim and develop interactive byway displays and interpretation. It will pay for high-resolution photography that will be printed as posters and used in the displays. Development of large-scale maps that show the byway routes and destinations will also be developed and fabricated for the space. Interpretive signs, exhibits and displays will also be developed for the 3rd floor of the Welcome Center. The RBSB Board also plans to facilitate public meetings to gather information and stories that are related to the region within the RBSB corridor.

**Schedule:** 2017-2020

**Potential Funding Sources:** UMGC, Clayton County Foundation, Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, Local businesses

**Partners:** Clayton County Conservation Board

**Funding Secured Date:** \$0

**Funding Pending:** \$0

**Estimated Cost:** \$125,000



**Barr House Antiques & Gifts**



**Marquette Depot Museum**



**Driftless Area Wetland Centre**



# Section **Seventeen**

List of All Proposed RBSB Projects



# Byway Projects

*A piece of planned work or activity that is completed over a period of time and intended to achieve a particular goal.*

#	Category	Sub-Category	Page #	RBSB Proposed Project	Secured Funds	Pending Funds	Estimated Cost	Proposed Location
1	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	178	Develop RBSB Turn-By-Turn Direction Flyers			Time	Byway Corridor
2	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	178	Establish & Implement RBSB Cartographic Standards			Time	Byway Corridor
3	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	178	Provide Downloadable RBSB Printed Material & Maps			Time	Byway Corridor
4	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	179	Incorporate RBSB Information into AAA Mobile App			Time	Byway Corridor
5	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	179	Promote Iowa's 511 Service, Website & App			Time	Byway Corridor
6	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	179	Trained Staff & Hospitality			Time	Byway Corridor
7	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	179	Inventory Byway Guide Signs Annually			Time	Byway Corridor
8	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	179	Install Byway Welcome Information Hubs (4)			\$8,000	Byway Corridor
9	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	180	Install Community Welcome Signs (2)			\$20,000	Byway Corridor
10	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	180	Install Downtown District Loop Signs (20)			\$7,000	Byway Corridor
11	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	180	Install Destination Approach Signs (4)			\$1,400	Byway Corridor
12	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	180	Distribute "Friends of the Byway" Alum Signs (80)			\$2,800	Byway Corridor
13	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	180	Install Iowa 511 Service Signs (4)			\$1,400	Byway Corridor
14	Signage & Wayfinding	Signage & Wayfinding	180	Install Public Land Wayfinding Signs			\$52,000	Byway Corridor
<b>Signage &amp; Wayfinding</b>							<b>\$92,600</b>	
1	Signage & Wayfinding	Interpretive Site Planning	192	Collect stories for RBSB IMP			Time	Byway Corridor
2	Signage & Wayfinding	Interpretive Site Planning	192	Inventory photos for RBSB IMP			Time	Byway Corridor
3	Signage & Wayfinding	Interpretive Site Planning	192	Clermont IMP Development and Implementation			\$115,000	Clermont
4	Signage & Wayfinding	Interpretive Site Planning	192	Gilbertson Conservation IMP Development			\$200,000	Elgin
5	Signage & Wayfinding	Interpretive Site Planning	193	Volga River State Recreation Area IMP Development			\$75,000	Fayette

#	Category	Sub-Category	Page #	RBSB Proposed Project	Secured Funds	Pending Funds	Estimated Cost	Proposed Location
6	Interpretation	Interpretive Site Planning	193	Driftless Area Wetland Centre & Trail IMP Development			\$105,000	Marquette
7	Interpretation	Interpretive Site Planning	194	Motor Mill Park IMP Development			\$125,000	Elkader
8	Interpretation	Interpretive Site Planning	194	George Maier Rural Heritage Center IMP Development			\$65,000	Elkader
9	Interpretation	Interpretive Site Planning	194	Big Springs Fish Hatchery IMP Development			\$50,000	Elkader
10	Interpretation	Interpretive Site Planning	195	Osborne Welcome Center IMP Development			\$50,000	Elkader
11	Interpretation	Visitor Engagement	195	Nature Activities at the Osborne Welcome Center			\$250,000	Elkader
12	Interpretation	Visitor Engagement	196	Install RBSB Information Hubs (12)			\$120,000	Byway Corridor
13	Interpretation	Visitor Engagement	197	Install RBSB Wayside Exhibits (27)			\$81,000	Byway Corridor
14	Interpretation	Visitor Engagement	198	Install RBSB Territory Orientation Panels (14)			\$63,000	Byway Corridor
15	Interpretation	Visitor Engagement	198	Guttenberg Historic Walking Trail/Self-Guided Tour			\$12,500	Byway Corridor
16	Interpretation	Visitor Engagement	198	Eye Spy Scenic Viewing Interpretive Project			\$80,000	Byway Corridor
<b>Interpretation</b>							<b>\$1,391,500</b>	
1	Strategic Marketing Plan	Position	218	Identify the RBSB's Unique Selling Proposition			Time	Byway Corridor
2	Strategic Marketing Plan	People	218	Collaborate (clap) with Like-Minded Organizations			Time	Byway Corridor
3	Strategic Marketing Plan	Price	218	Promote the RBSB as a Low-Cost Tourism Destination			Time	Byway Corridor
4	Strategic Marketing Plan	Product	218	Create an RBSB Experience that Exceeds Expectations			Time	Byway Corridor
5	Strategic Marketing Plan	Product	219	Create a Distinctive Visual Identity for the RBSB			Time	Byway Corridor
6	Strategic Marketing Plan	Place	219	Promote the RBSB on Multiple Levels			Time	Byway Corridor
7	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	219	Implement Successful Promotional Strategies			Time	Byway Corridor
8	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	219	Make Internet a Top Priority			Time	Byway Corridor

#	Category	Sub-Category	Page #	RBSB Proposed Project	Secured Funds	Pending Funds	Estimated Cost	Proposed Location
9	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	220	Transition Website from Iowa DOT to Travel Iowa			Time	Byway Corridor
10	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	220	Contract for Seasonal Photography (quarterly)			\$3,000	Byway Corridor
11	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	220	Create Professional Videos for the RBSB (annually)			\$2,000	Byway Corridor
12	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	220	Implement a RBSB & TRRC Social Media Campaign			\$20,000	Byway Corridor
13	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	221	Develop Detailed RBSB Itineraries			Time	Byway Corridor
14	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	221	Narrow RBSB Material Down to Three Per Year			Time	Byway Corridor
15	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	221	Distribute RBSB Promotional Material Quarterly			Time	Byway Corridor
16	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	222	Develop a "Hidden Gems" RBSB Brochure (10,000)			\$2,700	Byway Corridor
17	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	222	Develop a Series of RBSB Activity Guides (10,000)			\$1,300	Byway Corridor
18	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	222	Create a "Best of" the RBSB Brochure (15,000)			\$1,800	Byway Corridor
19	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	222	Develop Fayette County Trout Fishing (7,500)			\$5,300	Byway Corridor
19	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	222	Develop Clayton County Trout Fishing (7,500)			\$5,300	Byway Corridor
20	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	222	Develop RBSB Poster Maps (100)			\$750	Byway Corridor
21	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	223	Develop a Byway Business Information Sheet			Time	Byway Corridor
22	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	223	Develop an Identity System for the RBSB			\$335	Byway Corridor
23	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	223	Develop RBSB Stone Structure Promotional Material			\$6,000	Byway Corridor
24	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	223	Develop RBSB Restaurant Placemats (20,000)			\$2,000	Byway Corridor
25	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	224	Implement a Geocaching Program along the RBSB			\$32,000	Byway Corridor
26	Strategic Marketing Plan	Promotional Strategies	224	Self-Guided Audio Tour of the RBSB			\$41,000	Byway Corridor
27	Strategic Marketing Plan	Public Relations	224	Promote the RBSB Through Media Relations			Time	Byway Corridor

#	Category	Sub-Category	Page #	RBSB Proposed Project	Secured Funds	Pending Funds	Estimated Cost	Proposed Location
28	Strategic Marketing Plan	Outreach & Events	226	Implement a Byway Ambassador Program			\$40,000	
29	Strategic Marketing Plan	Outreach & Events	226	Implement a Hospitality Training Program			\$10,900	
30	Strategic Marketing Plan	Outreach & Events	226	Develop Logo Gear & Collectables			Time	
31	Strategic Marketing Plan	Outreach & Events	227	Fabricate RBSB Trade Show Banners (4)			\$2,400	
<b>Strategic Marketing Plan</b>							<b>\$176,785</b>	
1	Economic Development	Beautification	253	Roadside Beautification with Native Vegetation	\$208,000	\$45,000	\$554,000	Byway Corridor
2	Economic Development	Beautification	253	Main Street Community Entrance Project in Volga	\$40,000		\$750,000	Volga
3	Economic Development	Beautification	253	Fayette Downtown Beautification Project	\$2,500,000		\$3,500,000	Fayette
4	Economic Development	Beautification	254	Volga Greenscaping and Park Improvements			\$226,000	Volga
5	Economic Development	Beautification	254	Elkader Downtown Greenscaping			\$550,000	Elkader
6	Economic Development	Beautification	254	Downtown Greenscaping in Fayette			\$340,000	Fayette
7	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	255	Restoration of Dover #4 Schoolhouse	\$4,000		\$200,000	Fayette County
8	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	255	Burkard Riegel Blacksmith Shop Historic Restoration	\$8,585		\$65,000	Clermont
9	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	256	Clermont Depot Restoration			\$250,000	Clermont
10	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	256	Clayton County Courthouse Clock Tower Restoration	\$64,500		\$200,000	Elkader
11	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	257	Downtown Façade Improvements			\$500,000	McGregor
12	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	257	Sullivan Opera House Rehabilitation			\$100,000	McGregor
13	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	259	Motor Mill Park Historic Restoration			\$5,000,000	Elkader
14	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	259	Motor Mill Archaeology/Based Excavation Project			\$12,500	Elkader
15	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	259	Motor Mill Electrical, Lighting & Alarm System			\$14,500	Elkader

#	Category	Sub-Category	Page #	RBSB Proposed Project	Secured Funds	Pending Funds	Estimated Cost	Proposed Location
16	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	260	Motor Mill Cooperage & Ice House Preservation			\$59,500	Elkader
17	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	260	Restoring Motor Mill Inn			\$623,000	Elkader
18	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	260	Motor Mill Park Interpretive Staff			\$700,000	Elkader
19	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	260	Elkader Depot Reconstruction Project			\$96,000	Elkader
20	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	261	Volga City Opera House Restoration	\$100,000		\$750,000	Volga
21	Economic Development	Historic Infrastructure Restoration	261	Fayette County Visitor Center Log Home Restoration			\$125,000	Fayette
22	Economic Development	Land & Water Trail Expansion & Enhancement	262	Elkader Whitewater Park	\$400,000		\$600,000	Elkader
23	Economic Development	Land & Water Trail Expansion & Enhancement	262	RBSB Land and Water Trails within the TRRC	\$3,500,000		\$18,500,000	Byway Corridor
24	Economic Development	Land & Water Trail Expansion & Enhancement	262	Clermont Whitewater Park			\$400,000	Clermont
25	Economic Development	Land & Water Trail Expansion & Enhancement	263	Volga River State Recreation Area Trail Infrastructure			\$220,000	Fayette
26	Economic Development	Land & Water Trail Expansion & Enhancement	263	Volga River Recreation Trail & Gazebo Lookout	\$1,150,000		\$1,450,000	Fayette
27	Economic Development	Land & Water Trail Expansion & Enhancement	264	MRT: Clayton County – Buck Creek to Marina Road			\$1,079,815	Guttenberg
28	Economic Development	Land & Water Trail Expansion & Enhancement	264	Trail from Marquette to DAWC to Bloody Run			\$1,500,000	Marquette
29	Economic Development	Land & Water Trail Expansion & Enhancement	264	Horse Trails along the RBSB			\$750,000	Byway Corridor
30	Economic Development	Land & Water Trail Expansion & Enhancement	265	McGregor Walking and Biking Trails			\$100,000	McGregor
31	Economic Development	Natural Area Expansion & Enhancement	266	Ingelside Park Enhancement Project			\$250,000	Guttenberg
32	Economic Development	Overlook Acquisition and Development	266	Chicken Ridge Overlook Development	\$15,000		\$250,000	Elkader
33	Economic Development	Overlook Acquisition and Development	266	Marquette Observation Deck and Boardwalk	\$416,000		\$416,000	Marquette
34	Economic Development	Overlook Acquisition and Development	267	Great River Road Overlook in Clermont			\$275,000	Clermont
35	Economic Development	Overlook Acquisition and Development	267	Goeken County Park Artistic Metal Sculpture Railing			\$25,000	Eldorado

#	Category	Sub-Category	Page #	RBSB Proposed Project	Secured Funds	Pending Funds	Estimated Cost	Proposed Location
36	Economic Development	Overlook Acquisition and Development	267	Lighting for Scenic Overlooks and Pulloffs – Phase I			\$75,000	Byway Corridor
37	Economic Development	Community Art Projects	268	Art Deco Restorations in Guttenberg			\$200,000	Guttenberg
38	Economic Development	Community Art Projects	268	McGregor Center for the Arts and Rubidoo	\$50,000		\$509,500	McGregor
39	Economic Development	Community Art Projects	268	Opera House Restoration and Programming	\$580,000		\$1,230,000	Byway Corridor
40	Economic Development	Community Art Projects	270	Public Art Along the RBSB	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$300,000	Byway Corridor
41	Economic Development	Visitor Welcome Centers	270	Construction of Driftless Area Wetland Centre	\$1,502,352		\$1,502,352	Marquette
42	Economic Development	Visitor Welcome Centers	270	Osborne Welcome Center Third Floor Visitors Center			\$125,000	Elkader
<b>Economic Development</b>					<b>\$10,553,437</b>	<b>\$1,144,815</b>	<b>\$43,673,167</b>	

TOTAL	Secured Funds	Pending Funds	Estimated Cost
	\$10,553,437	\$1,144,815	\$45,919,052

*Note: When time is indicated as the estimated cost, it refers to the time that a person such as the RBSB Coordinator, RBSB Board member or partner must spend to complete the associated task. The time may vary depending on the expertise of the individual and/or organization completing each project and/or task.*



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