



Illinois River Road Celebrates Two Milestones!

The Illinois River Road National Scenic Byway is celebrating two milestones that are putting this project on the map...literally! New road signs marking the scenic route along the byway are going up along both sides of the river and there's a brand new website to help visitors navigate the scenic road!

The new website www.illinoisriverroad.org not only has detailed information about the gateway communities and nature destinations along the byway it also allows you to share your "Tales from the Illinois River Road." You can post your pictures and stories on the website to share with everyone. Pat Walters, freelance journalist and National Geographic Explorer says the website is "Phenomenal...What an amazing load of information." Online you can find details on more than 100 nature-based destinations throughout the Illinois River Valley, beginning in Ottawa and ending 140 miles south in Havana. Learn about great places along the byway where visitors and residents alike can go to discover and experience the nature of the region. From hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, canoeing, wetlands, gardens, birding and watching wildlife, the possibilities for adventure are endless. Discover the gateway communities along the byway and find out more about the history of the corridor.

IDOT has been busy putting up the new signs along the byway. These new signs showcase the brightly colored logo and direct visitors along the byway from Ottawa to Havana. These signs are evidence for visitors that this is a road of great significance. Signs are posted along the east side of the river from Pekin to just north of Henry....with many more to come.

Byway Director Anaise Berry says, "We are excited to showcase this very special corridor that runs through central Illinois. In addition to funding programs that enhance the visitors' experience, the America's Byways program also helps put our region 'on the map,' elevating national and international awareness and recognition of this distinct roadway and the communities along its way." "We've been able to leverage funds from byway communities and various organizations to secure more than \$500,000 in Federal Highway Administration grant funds to write an interpretive plan, produce byway maps, interpretive displays and kiosks, audio/video tours, and marketing materials in addition to the signage and website. This is an important program for developing our region as a visitor destination."



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A PROGRAM OF THE EDC FOR CENTRAL ILLINOIS

The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. America's Byways® are the collection of 126 distinct and diverse roads designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. The Illinois River Road National Scenic Byway, spanning both sides of the river from Ottawa to Havana, is one of those roads, designated in 2005 for its unique natural qualities.

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