



State of Illinois
Pat Quinn, Governor

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IDOT, DCEO Invite Travelers to Discover Something New Along Illinois' National Historic Routes During Annual Scenic Byways Week

*Scenic Byway Week Scheduled for October 5-12; Provides Perfect
Opportunity to Explore Scenic Drives and Seasonal Festivities*

CHICAGO - The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Office of Tourism (IOT) today announced that the 2013 Illinois Scenic Byways Week will take place October 5-12. The annual week celebrates Illinois' seven nationally recognized scenic byways and provides the perfect opportunity for the public to enjoy the best of Illinois along these historically significant roadways. With a byway located in every region of the state, favorite fall pastimes such as visiting pumpkin patches, exploring historical sites and enjoying the fall colors are just a short drive away.

"Our byways have an amazing story to tell about Illinois' rich culture and history," said Illinois Transportation Secretary Ann L. Schneider. "We encourage travelers to plan their next road trip along a scenic byway to see first-hand what Illinois has to offer."

Visitors can plan their scenic byways experience at **EnjoyIllinois.com**, where they can explore the must-see roadside attractions along each of Illinois' seven byways. Whether looking for the best photo opportunities, historic landmarks or local seasonal festivals, EnjoyIllinois.com is home to resources to help plan an unforgettable trip.

"Scenic byways are more than roads to get from one place to another. They are symbols of pride for the State of Illinois, representing the progress and hard work of generations past," said Adam Pollet, director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. "We invite Illinois residents and visitors alike to explore the natural beauty and unique cultural experiences along these special roads during scenic byways week."

"Illinois is made for road trips and what better way to do that than on these scenic drives," said



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Jen Hoelzle, deputy director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Tourism. “Road trips are just as much about the journey as the destination and Illinois’ scenic byways provide stunning journeys that travelers are sure to remember for years to come.”

A National Scenic Byway is a road recognized by the United States Department of Transportation for its archeological, cultural, historic, natural recreational and/or scenic qualities as established by Congress in 1991. The seven national scenic byways in Illinois are as follows:

Great River Road

Spanning 550 miles along Illinois’ Western border, the Great River Road National Scenic Byway offers breathtaking views of the banks and bluffs surrounding the mighty Mississippi River. Passing through towns like Galena, Moline, Quincy, Alton and Cairo, the Great River Road is perfect for a weekend trip or an extended journey to explore, play, shop or simply unwind. The Illinois Great River Road was included in National Geographic’s “500 Drives of a Lifetime.” To learn more, visit greatriverroad-illinois.org.

Illinois Lincoln Highway

The Illinois Lincoln Highway National Scenic Byway pays homage to Illinois’ most famous resident, Abraham Lincoln. The first successful, all-weather, coast-to-coast, automobile highway passes through communities like Joliet, Geneva, DeKalb and Dixon. The highway stretches along a 179 mile path from Chicago’s south suburbs, then west toward Fulton on the Mississippi River. Travelers will discover the unique cultures of each community along the way, including a new exhibit at the Joliet Area Historical Museum and Route 66 Welcome Center. To learn more, visit drivelincolnhighway.com.

Historic National Road in Illinois

Known as “the road that built the nation,” The National Historic Road was created in 1806 by President Thomas Jefferson and opened the state up to settlement. Today, the road in Illinois stretches 164 miles from Marshall to East St. Louis. Travelers can journey along the road to see where Lincoln’s political career began, marvel at a giant catsup bottle and take in the local color of communities along the way. To learn more, [visit nationalroad.org](http://visitnationalroad.org).

Historic Route 66

America’s most famous road, the historic Route 66 originates in Chicago and stretches across America. In Illinois, travelers can get their kicks along the 436 mile historic Route 66 from Chicago to East St. Louis, soaking in kitschy roadside attractions, classic American diners and museums along the way. A trip on the Mother Road is sure to bring experiences as unique, fun and memorable as the road is long. To learn more, visit illinoisroute66.org.

Illinois River Road

The Illinois River Road meanders along the Illinois River from Havana to Ottawa. Natural areas like Peoria Wildlife Prairie State Park, Emiquon National Wildlife Refuge and Starved Rock State Park provide a beautiful setting as you follow the same route of early French explorers. Travelers can experience Illinois’ natural resources and countless species of birds, plants, fish and other wildlife that symbolize the American Midwest prairie, in the heart of the state. The Byway region has nearly 100 connected nature sites that offer outdoor recreation in the Illinois



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River Valley. To learn more, visit illinoisriverroad.org.

Meeting of the Great Rivers

The Meeting of the Great Rivers Scenic Byway offers one of the most breathtaking road trips in the Midwest, through the majestic landscape where the Missouri and Illinois Rivers meet the Mississippi. The road winds along a 33 mile path, following the Mississippi on the western edge of the state, from Hartford to Grafton. The byway passes through quaint towns like Elsah, Alton and Godfrey, offering plenty of opportunities for travelers to discover spectacular landscapes. The communities along the way are rich in history and legends. To learn more, visit greatriversbyway.com.

Ohio River Scenic Byway

Southern Illinois is home to treasures like the Shawnee National Forest, Garden of the Gods and the Ohio River Scenic Byway. The byway is a 188 mile journey along the majestic Ohio River, from the Indiana border to the Mississippi River at Cairo. Passing through towns like Golconda and Elizabethtown, the Ohio River Scenic Byway offers a glimpse into an area of Illinois rich with Civil War history, outdoor adventure, geological wonders and more. To learn more, visit ohioriverscenicbyway.net.

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