



# Sen. Crowe Helps Secure \$10 Million In State Investments For Great Rivers Region

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MARYVILLE – To enhance destinations for residents and visitors along the Illinois border of the Mississippi River, State Senator Rachelle Aud Crowe (D-Glen Carbon) secured \$10 million in state investments to improve the region’s infrastructure, outdoor recreation opportunities and interpretive sites.

“Illinois’ Riverbend Region is an economic driver for tourism development throughout the Metro East,” Crowe said. “With this state investment, we can attract visitors to the

area to learn about our rich history while also enjoying time with their loved ones, eating at our restaurants, shopping in our small businesses and utilizing our local lodging.”

Thanks to advocacy from Sen. Crowe, the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway is appropriated \$10 million in the Fiscal Year 2023 state budget for a grant within the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. With the funds, the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau has plans to expand attraction efforts with projects slated to improve Piasa Park, construct an activity center in Downtown Alton, complete the Port of Alton, upgrade public access points along the riverfront and develop areas near the Lewis and Clark State Historic Site in Hartford.

“Sen. Rachelle Crowe recognizes the need to revitalize downstate communities in Illinois by activating our byway corridor along the Mississippi River,” said Cory Jobe, President and CEO of the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau. “This \$10 million commitment from the State of Illinois will enable the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau to activate the next great outdoor destination in southwest Illinois.”

According to Jobe, this grant is part of the forward-thinking transformational efforts being demonstrated by elected officials – both statewide and locally – to ensure tourism development along the Meeting of the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway takes place. Southwest Illinois has scenic wonders not replicated anywhere else in the country with the magnificent Mississippi River and its confluence with the Missouri and Illinois rivers. The funding for phase one of the byway activation strategy will enable the region to tap into and develop the natural wonders and outdoor recreational opportunities of the region and become a gateway and regional hub for visitors and locals.

The FY 23 state budget takes effect July 1, 2023, although the timeline on the funding’s release is to be determined.