

Dept. of Natural Resources: Lower Wisconsin Riverway receives international designation

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Declared Wisconsin's Sixth Wetland of International Importance

MADISON, Wis. – The Lower Wisconsin Riverway is now recognized as a Wetland of International Importance by the United States and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. The Wisconsin Wetlands Association is hosting two live presentations are hosting two live online presentations for people to learn more about the Riverway's natural resources and ecology (Sept. 11) and its social history (Sept. 25).

The area was designated in recognition of its high-quality complex of wetlands, uplands and waterways and the important fish and wildlife habitat these provide. The area's natural resources attract hundreds of thousands of tourists each year who come to hunt, fish, paddle and relax, fueling the region's economy.

"The Lower Wisconsin Riverway is rich in both ecosystem and history, and this important designation is a milestone for our collective work," said Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Assistant Deputy Secretary Todd Ambs. "I have paddled every one of the 92 miles of this riverway. It is truly a world-class gem and this recognition is testament to that fact."

Wetlands provide critical benefits for our community by accommodating floodwaters, stabilizing groundwater recharge, reducing erosion and soil loss and improving water quality. This area provides a natural habitat for rare and endangered species.

"These bottomlands contain rich biodiversity and are critical habitat for plants and

animals, some of which are unique to the Riverway,” according to Mark Cupp, Executive Director of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board. “The Ramsar designation will provide another tool to help the Riverway Board, DNR, partner interest groups and outdoor educators ‘get the word out’ regarding these important resources.”

This designation is Wisconsin’s sixth and largest with 49,000 acres. The site includes land owned by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Ho-Chunk Nation and private landowners. The designation is entirely non-regulatory and does not supersede local ownership and management authority.

For more information about Ramsar and the Lower Wisconsin Riverway, visit wisconsinwetlands.org.

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971.

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EDITORS NOTE: Additional images available for publication use [can be found here](#).