



Illinois River Road Organization HQ Has Moved

Peoria, IL (January 17, 2013)—Earlier today the Illinois River Road National Scenic Byway announced that its organizational headquarters has moved upstream. Since 2006 the Byway program has been housed within the Economic Development Council for Central Illinois (EDC) located in Peoria, but due to changes and restructuring of the EDC, the Illinois River Road National Scenic Byway has found a new home with the North Central Illinois Council of Governments (NCICG) in Ottawa. NCICG and the Illinois River Road organization hosted the open house event where the official announcement was made.

The program will continue its current responsibilities of marketing the regional destination, developing and enhancing small business growth, and business outreach along the byway corridor which encompasses 10 counties from Ottawa at the north to Havana at the south. Anaise Berry will remain the Byway's Executive Director and current programming will stay intact. The main differences are the change in the physical location of the Byway office and NCICG has become the new parent company as of January 1, 2013.

NCICG is a regional planning agency located in Ottawa that has been providing planning, technical assistance, and grant writing services to counties, townships, and communities since 1979. NCICG has a growing economic development role through their partnership with the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Nora Fesco, Executive Director of NCICG is thrilled with the move saying "We will be able to work with the Byway on new grants and project opportunities for nature-related tourism and economic development. It's a good fit with our mission as we aim to meet the needs of local officials by helping improve and strengthen their communities and the region as a whole. This partnership will open doors to new opportunities for us and the Byway."

Berry ensures that communities served by the Byway will not be affected by the change. "This is a positive change that will allow us to forge additional new partnerships while maintaining and strengthening current ones in Peoria and throughout the Byway region. Our portal and gateway communities will continue to receive the same representation they always have and we hope they will continue to support the Byway, financially and otherwise." She explains that the Byway is not a standalone organization, but a nearly self-sustaining program and with NCICG's dedication to helping small communities thrive, she believes it's a great match for the Byway.

The Illinois River Road was designated a National Scenic Byway in 2005 by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, which recognizes roads having outstanding archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities. It stretches 291 miles alongside the Illinois River from Ottawa to Havana and is notable for its natural and historic qualities. The Byway covers ten counties including Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford, LaSalle, Bureau, Putnam, Marshall, Stark, Fulton, and Mason. The Byway has six gateway communities including Ottawa, Princeton, Peoria, Pekin, Canton, and Havana. Learn more at www.illinoisriverroad.org. The Byway office is located at NCICG 613 W. Marquette St., Ottawa, IL 61350 and Anaise Berry can be reached at (815) 433-5830, (309) 256-8170 or Aberry@illinoisriverroad.org.

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