



Nature Tourism:

**The Possibilities Are Endless
...in Illinois River Country**

Presented by:

Vickie Clark

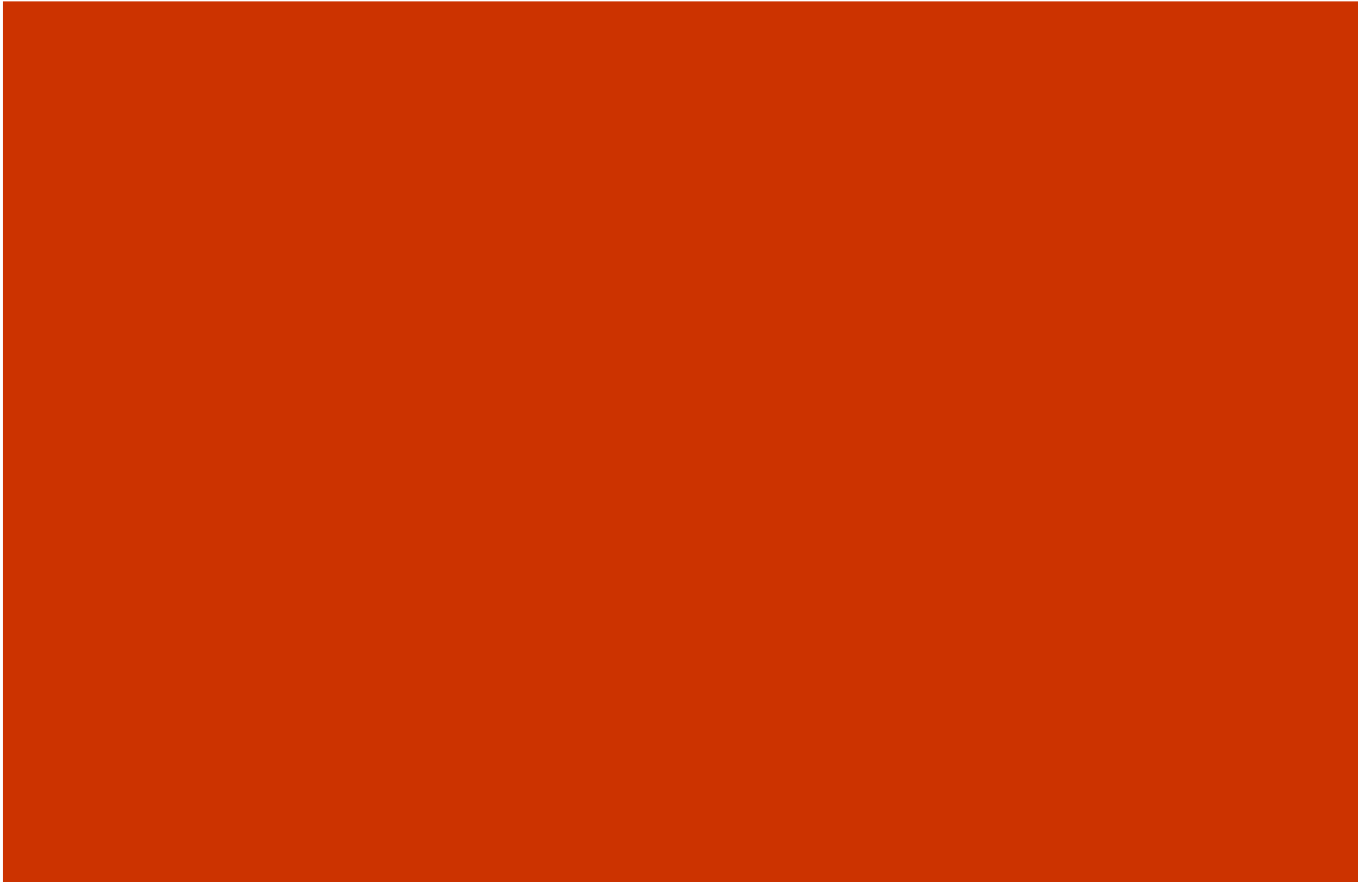
Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

PACVB Mission



To increase overnight visitor dollars to the Peoria area.





Market Potential Over 15 Million



MORE 2-4 DAY TRIPS



Illinois River Country - Marketing

- 4 years
- \$750,000+
- 29 partners
- 4 million households annually
- Chicago, St. Louis, Indianapolis & regional states



one destination...
so many ways to play

illinois river country ↓

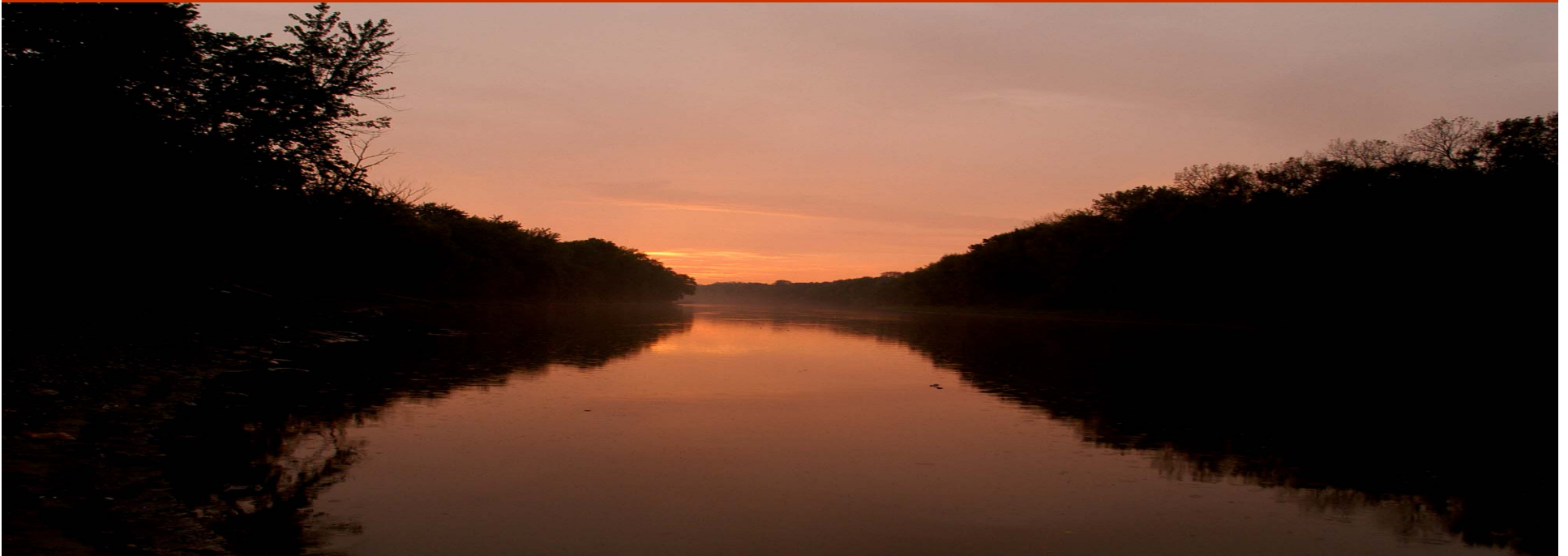
Take a stroll along our revitalized riverfront, catch a big league game, hike a woodland trail, make waves in your own paddleboat, hit the links or explore a new shop or museum.

So easy, only a few miles away...
yet a world apart.
Plan your Illinois River Country getaway now and escape into spring.

ILLINOIS 866-896-6853 • www.peoria.org

Illinois River Country – Nature Now

- WHY?**
- 1) Fastest Growing Tourism Market Segment**
 - 2) We have what they want**
 - 3) It's ready now**
 - 4) Great growth potential**



Top 10 Activities Domestic Travelers

1. Shopping	34%
2. Outdoor Recreation	17
3. Historical Places/Museums	14
4. Beaches	11
5. Cultural Events	10
6. National/State Parks	10
7. Theme/Amusement Parks	9
8. Gambling	8
9. Nightlife/Dancing	8
10. Sports Events	6

Source: Travel Industry Association of America
(TIA)



NSRE Growth Activities 1982-2002

Activity	Growth %	# Participants in Millions
Walking	85.4	179.0
Birdwatching	50.0	71.2
Hiking	48.4	73.1
Swimming (natural)	36.4	92.9
Sightseeing	32.7	114.0
Picnicking	31.8	116.6
Bicycling	27.4	83.9
Camping (developed)	22.8	52.8
Motor Boating	17.8	51.4
Off-Road Driving	17.3	36.7

Nature Based Tourism

www.fermatainc.com

- **Provides authentic product, which exists and is expandable, for us to market**
- **Focus on Illinois River helps people experience this valuable asset and preserve**
- **Provides economic development opportunities**



Nature Based Tourism Project

www.fermatainc.com

www.peoria.org/goto/nature

- ***Identify*** Existing Product
- ***Assess*** Nature and Tourism Ready qualities
- Prepare to ***Market***



Marketing

- 7 Nature Experience Brochures Printed to Guide Visitors (over 100 sites)
- Collaborative marketing implementation plan
- Great American Trails website and multiple community and attraction websites



great american trails

HOME TRAILS TRIPS EVENTS SHOPPING CONTACT US

Search

Trails » Louisiana Great Gulf Coast Birding Trail » Loop 1 » Sabine National Wildlife Refuge Wetland Walkway »

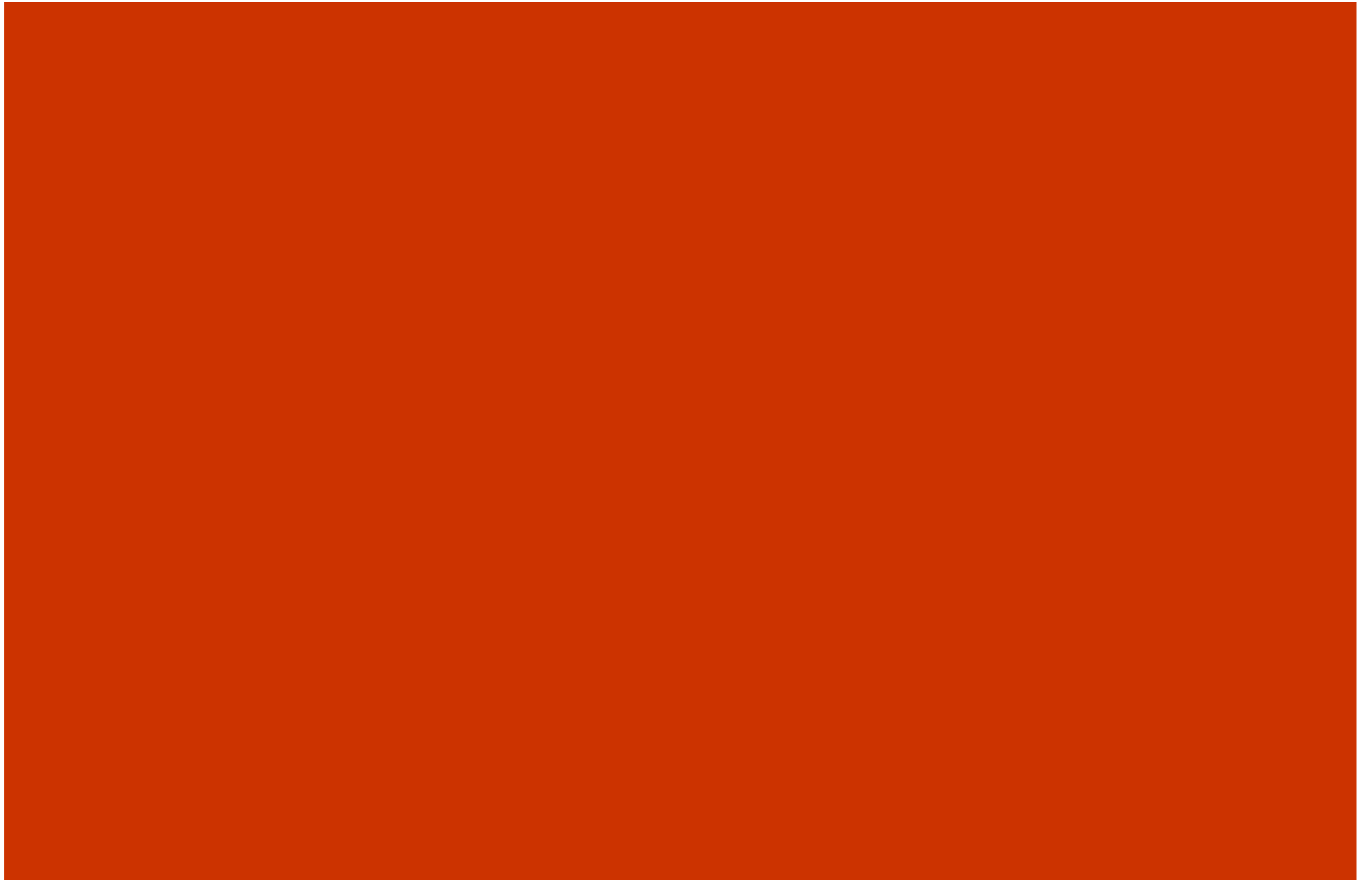
Sabine National Wildlife Refuge Wetland Walkway

Latitude: + 29.8664 NORTH
Longitude: - 93.4557 WEST
State: Louisiana
County: Cameron
Nearest Community: Cameron

Direction:
From the intersection of SR 27W (Exit 20) and I 10 in Sulphur, go south on SR 27W for 28.2 miles. The facility is on the right (west) side of the road.

Description:
Sabine National Refuge's Wetland Walkway features a 1.0-mile cement "sidewalk" which loops out into an extensive freshwater marsh. During the summer months, local breeding birds here include Marsh Wren, Barn Swallow, Eastern Kingbird, Common Yellowthroat, Orchard Oriole, and the gaudy Purple Gallinule. Wading birds frequent this marsh on a year round basis. Look especially for Little Blue and Tricolored herons, as well as Roseate Spoonbills. For those birds close enough to scrutinize, check the facial pattern of all dark ibis. White-faced Ibis is the "default"

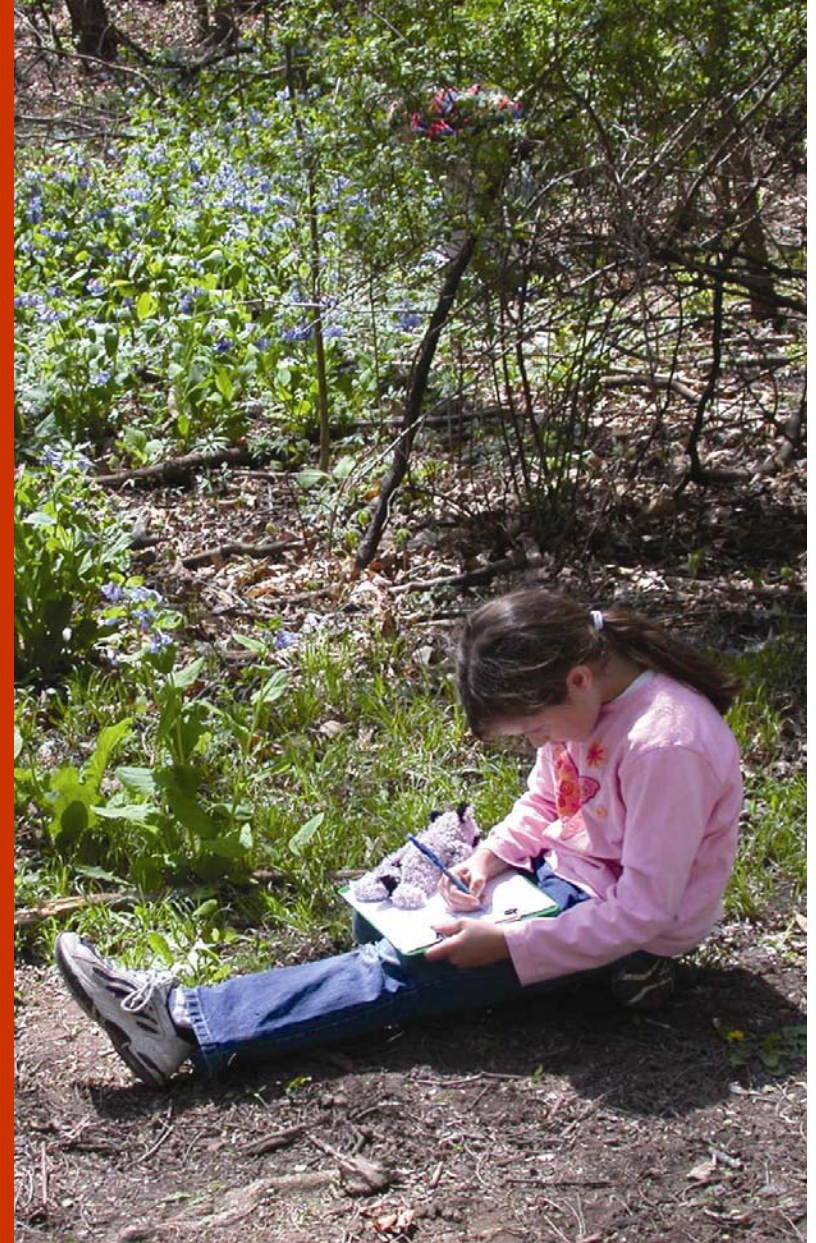
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Add to trip planner



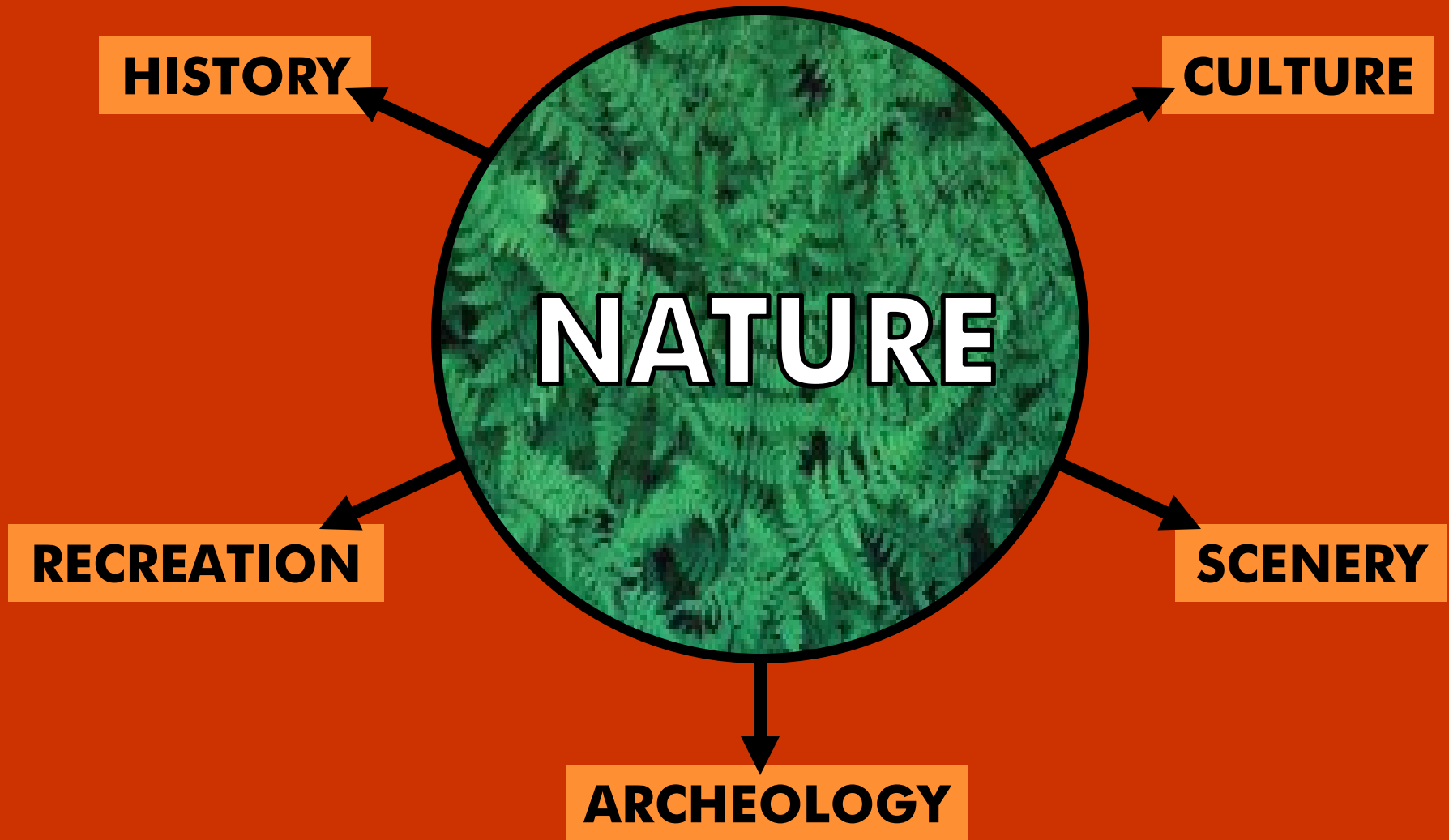
America's Byways

www.byways.org

- **Status**
 - **Designation**
 - **Awareness**
 - **Marketing efforts**
- **Funding opportunities**
 - **Greater merit for grant applications**
 - **Federal and foundation support**



Intrinsic Values



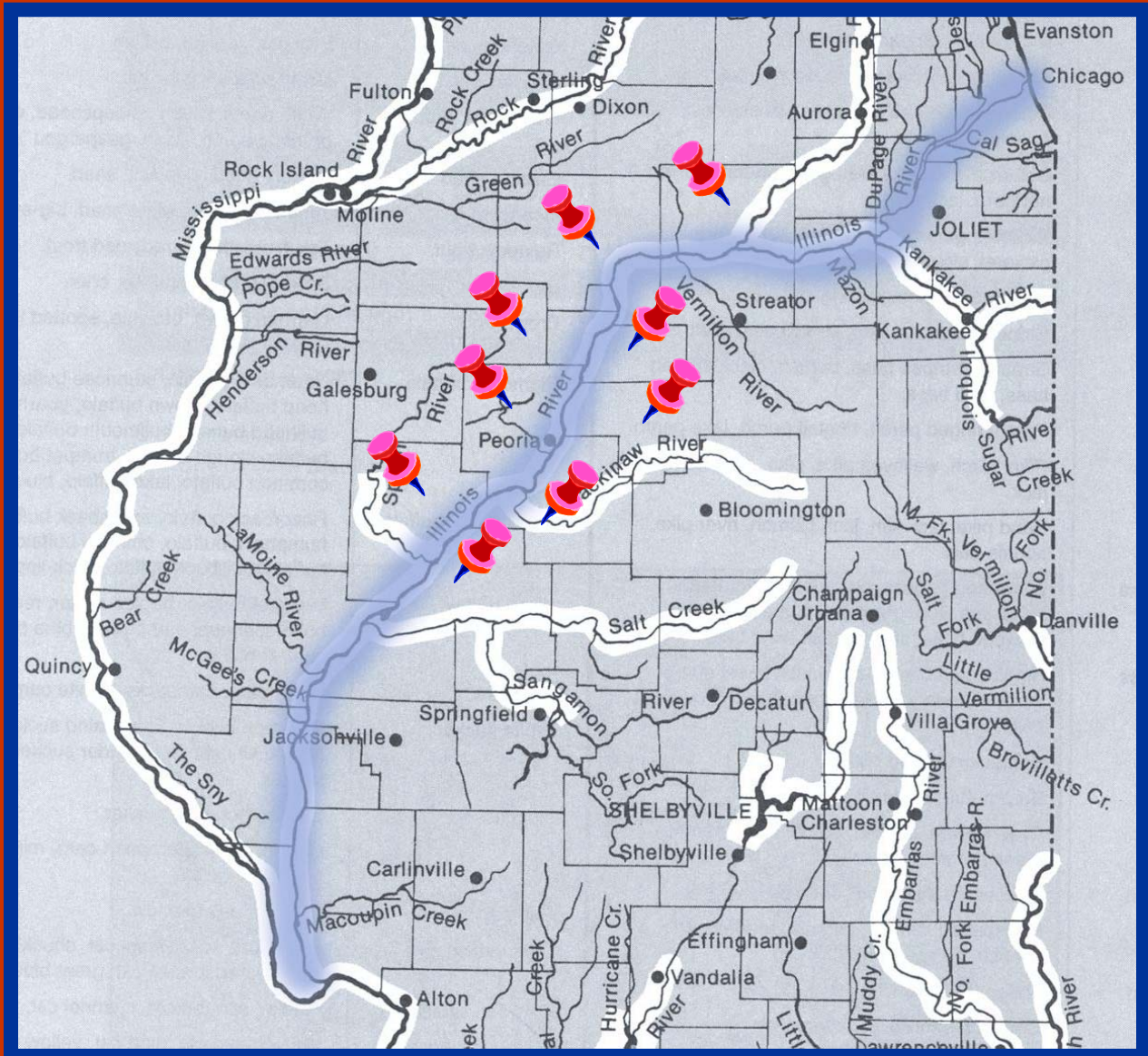
Collaborative Success



- **Illinois River Country Marketing Campaign (29 partners)**
- **Illinois River Country Nature Trails (14 steering committee members; countless volunteers)**
- **National Scenic Byway application (18 steering committee members; 14 supporting organizations)**
- **10 counties; State & Federal Support; private sector & foundation support**

Vision

**Illinois River
Road Scenic
Byway can
be
expanded
to Great
Lakes to
Great Rivers**



Great Lakes to Great Rivers



- **Greater awareness of the Illinois River, its scenic route and communities**
- **Multi-community, state-wide and nation-wide partnerships**
- **Authentic community growth**
- **New small businesses**
- **Additional tourism product**
- **Greater quality of life**
- **Sustainable economic stability**



Nature Tourism:

The Possibilities Are Endless ...in Illinois River Country

4 years of building awareness
Marketing Existing Nature Tourism Product
Scenic Byway Designation Provides Recognition & Status
Collaboration leads to Success

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