

St. Croix Scenic Byway Route

Byway Areas

- **Old Stagecoach Trail**
- **Sawmill District**
- **Immigrant Trail**
- **Nevers Place**
- **White Pines**

With Key Features Listed by Mile Post: Historical, Cultural, Archeological, Natural, Scenic and Recreational

Old Stagecoach Trail (MP 0—MP 21)

(MP 0.0) Your trip begins as you leave the Great River Road (Highway 10) onto to C.S.A.H 21 at Point Douglas, Minnesota. *(The Great River Road is a National Scenic Byway, which follows along the Mississippi National River & Recreation Area)*

Point Douglas: The meeting between the waters of the St. Croix and the Mississippi. It is the beginning of the historic 1852 Point Douglas to Superior Military (or Government) Road, which is encountered in many portions of the byway. At one time Point Douglas was a bustling frontier settlement, now all that remains of the original settlement are some parts of foundations, all the buildings along the boat landing have disappeared. The first post office outside of a military installation was established here in July of 1840. There is a 510-foot swimming beach on the St. Croix River, plus a fishing pier, restrooms, changing rooms, picnic tables and barbeque grills for the public to use. From this vantage point you have a magnificent view of the St. Croix River. (Particularly, note the remains of the old draw bridge.)

Continue North on County 21 and enjoy the rolling hills and pastoral countryside. This highway can be is traveled mostly by local residents getting to and from home, but by no means is it congested. Traffic may pick up as you get near the Communities.

Military Road: The Point Douglas—Superior Road: Construction began in 1852 and final government financing was received in 1858. Just over \$120,600 had been spent on the road, but it was never 100 percent completed. The first US mail service was carried on horseback and afoot early in 1856. Stage service had begun by 1861 and continued until 1870. The demise of the road came when the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad opened its line connecting St. Paul and Duluth. Many areas of the St. Croix Scenic Byway will travel on or near the section of land that was once part of the 185 mile Military Road, including about 15 miles of state Highway 95 between Stillwater and Taylors Falls.

MP 2.0

Carpenter Nature Center: A semi-private, nature preserve for children and adults with many trails, a visitor center, points of geological interest and an historic railroad bridge.

MP 4.0

St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park: St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park is a 579-acre regional park located on the wild and scenic lower St. Croix River. The park offers a variety of landscape types including rolling upland fields, wooded ravines and about three quarters of a mile of river frontage. Facilities include camping, picnicking with shelters, trails, play fields, children's play structures, boat landings and a conference cottage.

MP 7.0

Afton State Park: There are a total of six Minnesota State Parks along the St. Croix Scenic Byway; Afton State Park is the southernmost. The 1,695-acre park has scenic bluff lands, two plus miles of river frontage with a swimming beach, trails, camping area, a visitor center and wonderful contrasts between woods and prairies.

Afton Alps: A very popular recreational facility located in the St. Croix Valley and near to the Twin Cities metro area. It is privately owned and offers downhill skiing, snowboarding and a golf course.

MP 11.0

The Village of Afton, Minnesota: Afton is a charming historic village settled in the 1840's by New Englanders and later German and Swedish farmers. It is an unspoiled community with historic homes and buildings. Afton is home to the Afton Historical Society, the Afton House and several restaurants. Each year it hosts a unique 4th of July parade; it is one block long. Afton has three buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places; the Cushing Hotel—a modest frame hotel built in 1867 to lodge railroad workers, lumbermen and travelers. The Valley Creek residences: Erastus Bolles House built in 1856 by a blacksmith and the Newington Gilbert House built in 1864 by the mill owner, both are Greek Revival dwellings remaining from an Old Stock immigrant community.

As you leave Afton follow along C.S.A.H 21 angling to the left, you will find it becomes a lovely drive with woods, hills and lots of wildflowers. Two miles up the road you will come to Belwin Environmental Nature Learning Center.

MP 13.0

Belwin Environmental Nature Learning Center: It is a privately owned facility, which is used heavily as an outdoor classroom for school children.

You will be passing near the Communities of St. Mary's Point, Lake St. Croix Beach, and Lakeland Shores. Continue on County Road 21 to the Interstate 94 frontage road. Turn left onto State Highway 95. (*Interstate 94 will take you into Wisconsin and provide a future link to the*

Wisconsin St. Croix Scenic Byway). Continue on Highway 95 through the City of Lakeland and Bayport to Stillwater. Although becoming more heavily residential, a rural flavor is maintained with excellent views of the St. Croix River.

Note: Interstate 94 is a major artery going from the capital of Minnesota--St. Paul to the capital of Wisconsin—Madison.

MP 15.5

Lakeland: In its years of origin Lakeland was known as “Shanghai Cooley”, referring to a small ravine. As early as 1857 Lakeland was the center of business activity, having at one time 14 stores, shops and dwellings.

- ❖ John T Cyphers House: Located at 661 Quinnell Ave; is a small cottage with thick exterior walls of grout, (a form of early concrete construction) built by Cyphers in 1858.
- ❖ Mitchell Jackson Farm House: Located at 16376 7th St. is a Greek revival frame house built by Jackson in 1850, it documents a mid-century agricultural life style.
- ❖ John Oliver House: 1544 Rivercrest Rd. A Greek revival frame residence built in 1894 for Captain Oliver, a British naval officer, early Lakeland settler, and St. Croix River ferry operator.

MP 21.0

Bayport: Once known as “south Stillwater” it is now the home of Anderson Window Corporation and the Alan S. King Power Plant. These two industries form the only industrial enclave along the route. The Anderson Corporation is located on what was the site of a Civilian Conservation Corp camp in the 1930’s. The CCC were responsible for building several of the overlooks on the river in this area. It is also the site of the State Prison Historic District—a brick prison complex built in 1910-1914 using the French “telegraph pole” plan. There were also two wardens’ residents, all designed by State Architect Clarence H. Johnson Sr. It’s located at 5500 Pickett Avenue. In 1872 the St. Croix Lumber Company was founded here. For the next six years there was a flurry of sawmill ventures, most plagued by fire or financial difficulty. The Alan S. King Power Plant is home to a pair of nesting peregrine falcons.

Sawmill District (MP 21—MP 38)

MP 22.0

Stillwater: Is an historic “river town” which became the territorial capital in 1848, and center of lumber milling in the 19th and early 20th centuries with many buildings on the National Register of Historic Sites. It is the largest City on the St. Croix River. The antique shops, book stores, festivals, marinas, small businesses, dinner train, restaurants, picturesque churches, architecture and an engaged population are all key factors in this portion of the Scenic Byway.

The Old Territorial Prison (“*home*” of the Younger brothers after they were captured for the notorious Northfield bank robbery) was destroyed by arson fire several years ago, but the warden’s house (1853-1914) still stands adjacent to the prison site. It is a Greek revival dwelling of locally quarried limestone with frame additions. It was not disturbed by the fire and is now the site of the Washington County Historical Society. The area where the old prison stood is also referred to as “Battle Hollow” as it is the site of a fierce battle between the Sioux and Ojibwa Indians.

Other known buildings on the National Register are:

- ❖ Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Depot and Freight House: A brick combination depot built in 1883 of locally quarried limestone foundation. At one time it housed the town’s telegraph office.
- ❖ Roscoe Hersey House: An Eastlake/Queen Anne residence designed by George Orff and built in 1879-1880.
- ❖ Austin Jenks House: A Victorian brick residence with mansard-roofed tower built in 1871 for Captain Jenks, a river pilot and ship owner involved in log rafting.
- ❖ Albert Lammers House: An elaborate Queen Anne frame residence built in 1893 for a partner in one of Stillwater’s leading family lumber businesses.
- ❖ Ivory McKusick House: A small French second empire frame residence built in 1868 for lumberman and surveyor.
- ❖ Nelson School: A Georgian Classical Revival, two story brick school built in 1897.
- ❖ Pest House: Located in Stillwater Township this frame building was constructed in 1872 as a community institution to house persons afflicted with contagious diseases.
- ❖ St. Croix Lumber Mills/Stillwater Manufacturing Company: A limestone powerhouse built in 1850 for Stillwater’s second mill.
- ❖ William Sauntry House and Recreation Hall: A large Queen Anne frame residence built in 1891. In 1902 the prosperous businessman built an exotic revival recreation facility for entertaining.
- ❖ Stillwater Bridge: A ten-span, concrete-and-metal vertical lift highway bridge of Waddell and Harrington type was built in 1931.
- ❖ Stillwater Commercial Historic District: Central business district of 19th century river town, encompassing largely brick commercial buildings of various styles, built in 1860’s-1930’s.
- ❖ Territorial State Prison Buildings: Brick warehouse and manufacturing buildings (1884-1898) of prison that operated from 1849-1914, with convict labor contracted to local manufacturers.
- ❖ Washington County Courthouse: Italianate/Classical Revival, second-generation brick courthouse, jail, and sheriff’s residence designed and built in 1867-1870.
- ❖ Mortimer Webster House: Italian villa-style frame residence built in 1865-1866 for New York immigrant and real estate developer.

Continue north on Highway 95, heading toward Stillwater Township following along the St. Croix River.

MP 24.5

The Old Stone Bridge: The Point Douglas to Superior Road Bridge is a stone arch bridge of locally quarried limestone built in 1863 on the Military Road, crossing over Browns Creek. You will find it located near the junction of Highways 95 & 96.

MP 25.0

The St. Croix Boom Site: Terminus of state's great log drives, the earliest and longest-lived site (1856-1914) for storing, sorting, and rafting logs for mills downstream. It is a National Register and National Landmark property. Currently, it is a rugged, scenic area rest stop with trails, caves and picnic shelters. The towering bluffs make the scenery very dramatic.

Continue north on Highway 95, driving through a rolling, partially agricultural, partially rural suburban landscape, which provides a beautiful contrast to the narrower river valley.

Side Trip: If you jog off Highway 95 onto Arcola Trail, you will discover two architectural gems. Arcola Mills and the SOO Line High Bridge.

MP 26.0-33.0

Arcola Mill Site and John & Martin Mower House: A large Greek Revival residence built in 1847 for the Mower brothers who founded the town of Arcola and built one of the earliest St. Croix lumber mills. Remains of the mill are still standing. The Arcola Mills Foundation is renovating the house. It has superb river frontage, scenery, and several creeks running through the property. In 1856 Mower built the steam mill that produced up to 2,000,000 board feet of lumber, and enlarged it in 1869 to produce 5,000,000 board feet. Mower also operated a store at this site from 1850-1865.

SOO Line High Bridge: This multiple-span steel arch railroad bridge with technical innovations was built by engineer/designer C.A.P. Turner in 1910-1911. At the highest point it is 184-foot above the St. Croix River.

If you choose not to jog over to Arcola Trail, you will want to continue north on Highway 95 until you come to the quaint community of Marine on the St. Croix.

MP 33.0

Marine on the St. Croix: Marine was the site of the first civilian settlement in Minnesota. It is the site of the first (1839) lumber mill on the St. Croix River. After the government land survey of 1847-1848 a company store and other business and industrial type buildings were build and flourished. Many trades flourished here, among them blacksmithing, wagon making, gunsmithing, boot and shoe manufacturing, plus doctors, lawyers, motels and more. At one time in history a record 9,000,000 feet of lumber was produced here per year. The village retains its pioneer character with its old buildings, historic sites and lovely homes. It is also close to the St. Croix Islands Scenic Preserve.

Continuing north on Highway 95

MP 37.0

William O'Brien State Park: The park on the St. Croix contains 1,620 acres with year round access including cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, camping, swimming, interpretive programs, passenger rail service, and visitors center.

Copas: A small-unincorporated settlement, originally known as Vasa; the town site was originally laid out by B.T. Otis and John Columbus. In 1849, a hotel, the Vasa House was built. John Copas built a major store in 1854 and a steam mill was built in 1857. At one time there were several stores, a post office and a saloon. In 1859 the township name was changed to Otis and the settlement became known as Otisville. Later when a railroad station for the SOO Line was built there, the town again changed its name to Copas, in honor of John Copas.

Immigrant Trail (MP 38—MP 53)

Continuing north on Highway 95

Fall Creek Scientific and Natural Area: Washington County's only Scientific & Natural Area, it is a great place to observe spring flowers and the annual warbler migration.

- S & R

The official byway continues north on Highway 95. Highway 95 is a two-lane road going along the St. Croix River in this area and very scenic. When the traffic from Highway 97 enters onto Highway 95, it can be heavy but thins out again at milepost 43.9 where a lot of the traffic crosses the bridge into Wisconsin.

Side Trip: If you take a short jog off from Highway 95, onto Highway 97 you will find the Community of Scandia

Scandia: Swedish immigrants settled this historic and active community in the 1850's. It was the first Swedish settlement in Minnesota; named after the Scandinavian Peninsula where they were from. The terrain and lakes in the area reminded them of home. The Gammelgarden Museum located on Highway 3 south of town preserves the heritage of the settlers.

Cedar Bend: 1825 Treaty: Where the St. Croix angles eastward it is the general location where a "line" was drawn separating Sioux (south of the line) and Ojibwa (north of the line) in hopes of preventing further bloodshed. *It didn't.*

Continuing north on State Highway 95.

MP 41.4

Chisago County-Washington County Line: This could be considered the “Western Gateway to the St. Croix National Scenic Wild River Valley.

MP 43

Franconia Town Hall: A typical example of the township halls dating back to the 19th century and still actively in use today.

Side Trip: Turn right on State Highway 95, to Interstate Highway 243; the shortest Interstate Highway in the Nation, 2 miles long. At the end of Interstate Highway 243 you will come to the Village of Osceola. Turn right to go to the train station and left to go to the downtown area. Come back to State Highway 95 to continue on the St. Croix Scenic Byway.

MP 43.9

Osceola, Wisconsin: Osceola is an historic river town with Cascade Falls; a 24-foot waterfall located in the heart of downtown. It is home to an historic working railroad train depot that offers passenger service through out the valley. The downtown district and the 1916 SOO Line Depot are listed on the National Register of Historic places. *The Highway 243 Bridge is another link to the future planned Wisconsin scenic byway.* On Highway 243 you will find a Minnesota Highway rest stop and Osceola Landing. Osceola Landing is one of the busiest landings on Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway with canoe landing, fishing pier, and a boat access and picnic area.

The Byway continues north on Minnesota State Highway 95.

Side Trip: Another side trip would trip would have you make a left turn on Chisago County 26—Pleasant Valley Road.

MP 44.9

Pleasant Valley Road: Chisago County 26, this pleasant drive heads west through rolling countryside, past and apple orchard, farms and homes leading to the Scandinavian Communities of Shafer, Center City, Lindstrom, Chisago City and the beautiful Chisago Lakes area.

If you left the byway to go pick apples or to shop, reverse your route and come back to Minnesota State Highway 95, continue north on Highway 95 to its intersection with Highway 8.

Side Trip: If you like to look at Greek revival or other early American river town architecture, you should take a small side trip, on Franconia Trail. Go east, turning right on Franconia trail to the small community of Franconia; it is located

on the banks of the St. Croix River. After you look around, come back to Highway 95.

MP 48.0

Franconia National Historic District: This area of lovely homes was originally platted in 1858. This site originally housed several water-powered mills, steamboat landing and a small steamboat building industry. Franconia, located on the banks of the St. Croix was a jumping off point for many early immigrants as they traveled the St. Croix River. The Paul Munch House—Greek revival frame house built in ca 1855 and residence of Civil War veteran and miller Paul Munch is located here.

Continue north on Highway 95 until you come to the Intersection of State Highway 8 and 95. Your journey on the St. Croix Scenic Byway will require you to turn right heading into some of the most spectacular views of the St. Croix River. You will pass by Minnesota Interstate Park and travel into the City of Taylors Falls.

MP 48.8

Highway 8 and 95: A spectacular drive and view shed which, leads down to the village of Taylors Falls. This section of the byway is heavily traveled, but the view is worth the trip in any season.

Franconia Sculpture Garden: An innovative attraction of sculptures, usually on the larger side and done rather “tongue in cheek”. It makes a great family outing to walk the many trails through the works of art.

Side Trip: If you would like to see a large herd of elk or buffalo or are hungry for some fresh cheese you can turn left at the Highway 8 and 95 intersection and take a short drive west on Highway 8. If you go north one mile you will come to the proposed Swedish Immigrant Trail: an historic multiple use trail, planned by the Chisago Country Parks System or the Vilhem Moberg trail is to the east. Come back to the east on Highway 8 and join the St. Croix Scenic Byway for further adventure.

MP 50.3

Minnesota Interstate Park: This is the second oldest state park in Minnesota (1895) and one of the smallest, but yet most heavily used parks in the Minnesota State Park System. It is important for the impressive location on the “Dalles of the St. Croix” and is noted for its unusual geological features of potholes. Historic, cultural, archeological, natural, scenic and recreation resources are outstanding. There are camping, picnicking, canoeing, kayaking, sightseeing, bird watching and hiking trails available. Interstate Park Campground and Stone Buildings are both listed on the National Register of Historic Places. WPA workers constructed the Campground and buildings in 1938-1941 with basalt stone quarried in the park. The other buildings and structures in the Park were also made of local basalt stone, including 1920’s examples of rustic-style construction that later influenced WPA workers. Rock climbers frequently use basalt rock cliffs, along the path to the lower landing. Wisconsin Interstate Park, which can be easily reached on foot

across the interstate bridge, preserves the east side of the scenic “Dalles of the St. Croix” and has an extensive trail system and a swimming lake.

MP 51.7

Taylors Falls: A “Gateway” community known for its history of logging, lumberjacks Swedish immigration and most of all its magnificent scenery of the Dalles of the St. Croix. It’s Angel Hill National Historic District with the 1855 W. H. C. Folsom House, (a Minnesota Historical Society Site open for tours in season) the old 1861 Methodist Church (which is still in use) and many beautiful mid 19th century homes, which are an architectural gem. The small & still active public library (still on its original site) the classic Greek Revival Roos House (1854) and the John Daubney House (1869) an Italianate frame dwelling built in 1870s by local promoter as a residence and a stop for rail travelers, are on the National Register of Historic sites. Taylors Falls is the home of the first circulating library in Chisago County. The Library, listed on the National Register was a frame residence and tailor shop built in 1854 it was later acquired for use as the town library (1888).

We have been following along areas where the old military road passed but when it came into this area. It went over the top of the bluff, past the house of William H.C. Folsom, then down along the edge of the hill to the main street of Taylors Falls. From the foot of the bluff the old road ran toward the St. Croix, then north along the bank of the river to a rocky knoll. This rock outcropping can still be seen at the Minnesota end of the XCEL Energy dam. In Taylors Falls, as elsewhere a hundred years has made many changes in the old government road and in the buildings, but the City still retains its small river town appeal.

Side Trip: Cross over the Highway 8 river bridge to see a great view of the “Dalles of the St. Croix”. (*This river crossing is another possible link to the future Wisconsin Scenic Byway.*) After crossing over the bridge you have two options. When you are done looking around, come back to the City of Taylors Falls.

1. Continue east to the Intersection of Highway 8 and 35, exit unto Highway 35 going south and stop at the **Polk County Information Center** for information about the area. About a half mile south of Highway 35 you will find the entrance to **Wisconsin Interstate Park**. The oldest park in the Wisconsin Park system.
2. Turn off Highway 8 and go to downtown **St. Croix Falls**, see the historic buildings, attend a live professional theatre performance, or at the north end of town you can stop at the **St. Croix National Scenic Riverway’s Park Headquarters** for a view of the river, Visitors Center, Interpretive area or talk to the Park Rangers about the **St. Croix National Scenic Riverway**.

Continue through Taylors Falls on Highway 95, until you come to Highway 16 or Wild Mountain Road, turn to the right and follow Highway 16 until you come to Highway 12.

Highway 95 through town can become backed up at times, but when you leave Highway 95 you have left the majority of traffic behind you. Up to this point everything has been a paved, two-

lane highway for the most part. You may now encounter some small areas of gravel roads, but they are well maintained.

Side Trip: Instead of turning on Highway 16, continue up the hill on Highway 95 for 0.7 miles to reach the Taylors Falls Scenic Overlook site. There you will be rewarded by magnificent views of the Lower St. Croix Scenic River to the south and the Upper St. Croix Wild and Scenic River to the north. The 1906 hydroelectric dam in the valley below you is the official dividing point for these two jurisdictions of the St. Croix. A nice view can be had of historic St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, across the valley. When you exit the overlook, turn left to return to the Highway 16 turnoff.

MP 53

Wild Mountain Road: or County Highway 16. A scenic drive which gives one a view of the only remaining hydro electric dam on the St. Croix, high wooded bluffs, intriguing glimpses of the river and pastoral agricultural settings. Enjoy the route and watch for the eagles nesting in the area and other birds as they travel in their migration path along the St. Croix River.

Nevers Place (MP 53—MP 89)

Continue on Highway 16

MP 59.0

Wild Mountain Recreation Area: This is a popular year round down hill skiing, snow boarding and water activities facility.

MP 64.2

Junction of Wild Mountain Road and Park Trail: The byway continues by turning right off Highway 16 to Highway 12 at this intersection. Go northeast on Highway 12 to Wild River State Park, and then turn on Highway 81. Go north on 81, one mile then turn following Highway 81 to the west.

Another **Side Trip:** You can turn left off the byway and drive a short distance to the community of Almelund (which means “elm grove” in the Swedish language) an unincorporated village with an excellent small museum in the old school house and a pioneer log cabin. Note, also the beautiful 1887 Immanuel Lutheran Church. The Almelund Thrashing Grounds are located near here on Highway 95. The Thrashing Grounds are home to the old Chisago County Courthouse, (which was the oldest frame court house in use in Minnesota at the time it was moved here) a school and depot museums. The Thrashing Show is always the second

weekend in August and one of the best displays of historic steam engines and farm machinery in the area.

Come back on Highway 12 to the Byway follow 12 to the entrance of Wild River State Park. Note: the beautiful view shed of the St. Croix Valley as it spreads out before you from the top of the hill before you descend to Wild River State Park.

MP 66.5

Wild River State Park: This 6,767 acre State Park recently celebrated its 25th Anniversary. It is the site of the remains of Never's Dam (originally build in 1889 for a cost of \$200,000) and contains the Deer Valley section of the Military Road (Listed on the National Register) There is an expanse of prairies, woods, historic sites, the Connors & Samuel Fur Posts and a visitors center. You will find 18-miles of St. Croix River frontage, horseback riding, skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, biking, camping, canoeing, bird watching and maple syrup tapping all available in the Park. It has one of the best views of the St. Croix Valley--seen from the deck of the visitor's center.

When you leave Wild River State Park, the byway turns north. You will be going off the paved road until County Highway 81, for a short distance; this is an old-time narrow "pokey" gravel country road. (This section of the road is scheduled to be paved in 2005 or 2006)

MP 69.0

Amador Hill: Go to the top of the Amador Hill. Here is a splendid view shed. Looking to the east you will see the River Valley far into Wisconsin and if you look to the south; prairies and woodlands spread out before you.

Remember to stop and take some time and pictures along the route. Driving through this area you will find remains of many, once prosperous farms.

Continue on County Road 81 to County Road 9; turn right on 9 and go into the village of Sunrise.

MP 73.0

Sunrise: Once known as Sunrise City, it now is a small-unincorporated village, but when settled in the 1850's it was a busy town with a rip-roaring reputation, based on logging and milling. Note: the 1861 schoolhouse, the old bank (currently a restaurant) and particularly the old Sunrise Cemetery with its beautiful white pines and the sounds of the Sunrise River that is behind it. This Community was once a bustling town with a hotel, stores, mills (both flour & saw) bars, a bank and the major river tributary of the St. Croix.

Side Trip: Follow the gravel road down to the mouth of the Sunrise as it empties into the St. Croix. A boat landing and trails for hiking are available. Plus, canoe landing, fishing and float trips.

Cornstalk War: A few marauding Native Americans had been reported "terrorizing" settlers in 1857 near the mouth of the Sunrise as it enters the St. Croix. On August 28th, 1854, the smartly dressed soldier's met a "host" of Ojibwa, which turned out to

be a few running through the cornfields. One soldier was killed and one Ojibwa. Later the Ojibwa were released and the incident became something of a joke. (Dunn, The St. Croix, p 17-18)

MP 77.7

The Old Military or Government Road: The opening of the Government Road made it easier for the increasing population to push inland and establish settlements away from the river. While WHC Folsom settled in Taylors Falls, his brother George preempted 160 acres in Rushseba Township, in 1855, and with the help of William Plummer, built a hotel and tavern on Government Road, that became the first stage stop on the trip. The stage passed through Rushseba every 2-3 days. The fare for the trip was \$10. Rushseba is named for Rush River or Rush Lake and the Indian word seba or sippi for river. The Northern Chisago County Historical Society has done an outstanding job of recording and marking historic routes, points of interest, schoolhouse sites and old landings in this area.

At Sunrise follow Country Road 9 until you come to County Road 57. Turn right on County 57. You will be going west then north on 57. The route here somewhat follows the old Government Road. Follow the road up the hill to a spectacular view shed looking over the Valley far into Wisconsin. Off to the right in the distance you will see the forested top of Amador Hill, in the distance, on a clear day.

The official St. Croix Scenic byway will follow County Road 57 to County Road 30, to Rush City but we are again offering you another scenic side trip.

Side Trip: Continue north on the Old Government or Military Road going past the Old Taylor Cemetery, crossing over Rush Creek, where the first stage stop was located. At the Ferry Road, turn right and follow it down to the National Park Services Landing. "Ferry Landing" is the site of the Old Rush City Ferry and a put in point for canoeing or fishing and yet another view of the St. Croix River. This is a dead end road and you will have to turn around and come back out. Return west on Ferry Road to County Road 5, still going westerly until you rejoin the Byway at County Road 30, which is also referred to by "old Highway 61"

MP 86.0

Rush City: The Northern most community in Chisago County, it was incorporated in 1870 and was named after Rush Creek, which flows into the St. Croix. It was important as a railroad logging and potato growing area. It is home to the Grant House and the Carlson House, both of which are on the National Register. The Grant House is a brick hotel built in 1896 to serve this railroad community. It was originally built in 1880, but fire consumed it and when it was rebuilt they made it larger. To the northwest of Rush City is the Rush Lake area, which is the site of a Natural, and Scenic heron rookery. Rush City is also the site of a regional airport and a state correctional facility.

Note: In Rush City, County Highway 30 becomes Minnesota Highway 361, (or Old Highway 61) the byway continue north at this point.

Side Trip: If you would like to drive into Rush City you will find the Chisago County Fair Grounds, which has on display a genuine log cabin. Interstate Highway 35 is just ahead of you. Return to the byway.

White Pines (MP 89—MP 124)

Continuing north of Highway 361

MP 89.7

The Chisago County-Pine County Line: Continue north on 361 toward the county line past farms and prairies to Rock Creek

MP 89.7

Rock Creek: One of the first areas to be settled in Pine County in the 1870's first by the Swedes and later by the Czechs. It was originally a lumbering and sawmill center. The old main street of the village quickly takes one back to the 1870's. As you drive north to Pine City you will cross the creek for which the Village and Township were named.

The byway continues north on Highway 361 to Pine City. Highway 361 is blacktop and has very little traffic, as the majority of the traffic heading north will be using the Interstate System.

MP 93.0

Side Trip: Highway 70: If you turn right and head east on Highway 70 towards the St. Croix River you will gain access to the National Park Service's Marshland Center. Amenities near the Center include hiking trails, canoeing, fishing and the bridge over the St. Croix to Grantsburg, Wisconsin--*a link to the future Wisconsin Scenic Byway*. Just east of Grantsburg you will find Crex Meadows, a large natural area of marshland and water. It is a wonder place to watch birds and animals.

Chengwatana State Forest: It is located east of Pine City on Highway 70. Its name relates to the pineries of the past and was the name of an old Indian village.

MP 95.7

Pine City: This is the County seat of Pine County. At one time it was an important rail and logging center. Prior to settlement this whole area had been important to the fur trade that went on in the early and mid 19th Century. The Snake River runs through town providing many recreational opportunities.

If you would like to travel to the Northwest Company Fur Trading Post, go west of Pine City on County 7, for several miles.

Side Trip: Northwest Company Fur Post: This reconstructed winter trading post was built on the site of the original post; built 1804-1805. It is currently operated by the Minnesota Historical Society. It is several miles west of Pine City on County 7, but it provides a unique look at the fur trade, the trappers, voyageurs, and Native Americans who traded at the post. The Interpretive Center at the Fort gives a very historic look into the background of the trading post.

Note: State Highway 361, which is old Highway 61, turns into Pine County Highway 61 at Pine City.

MP 96.0

Lake Pokegama: Played an historic role in the lives of the Dakota and Ojibwa. Many battles were fought here and for several years this was the site of a mission and a rural school.

Continue to the north on County Highway 61.

MP 109.0

Hinckley: This community had its beginning in the logging and pineries industry. In fact Pine County originally had 665,000-forested acres out of its 906,366 acres. It was the site of the disastrous 1894 forest fire, which destroyed an area of 4,400 square miles and took 600, plus human lives. It has an excellent fire museum, housed in the Northern Pacific Depot, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Plus, Hinckley also has several other memorials to honor the victims of the tragedy. Today, Hinckley is renown for its fine restaurants and the casino, operated by the Mill Lac Band of Ojibwa.

Northern Pacific Depot: A frame wood depot built in 1895 after the same plans that were used to build the original depot that was lost in the 1894 fire. The depot features a dining room and a second-story stationmaster's quarters. The depot is currently home to the Hinckley Fire Museum.

MP 109.2

St. Croix State Park: This is Minnesota's largest State Park with 34,000 plus, acres and the largest trail system of all the Minnesota State Parks. The rustic stone/log facilities were built by the CCC and WPA workers and have been listed on the National Register of Historic Sites. The St. Croix River, which forms the parks southern boundary, is a National Scenic and Wild River and the Kettle River, in the western section is a State Wild and Scenic River. The majority of the buildings and structures in the park were created in 1934-1943.

If you cross over the river here to Danbury, you will have another link to the Wisconsin St. Croix Scenic Byway.

MP 116.6

Side Trip: Northwood's Audubon Center: This unique facility is located three miles west of Pine City on County Highway 27 on the south end of Lake

Pokegama. It is an environmental learning center operated by the Audubon Society.

Come back to Highway 61 and follow it as it takes an easterly turn.

MP 120

Sandstone: The community was organized in 1889, and is located on the Kettle River. It was noted for its St. Croix sandstone “touted to be the world’s finest building stone.” It is noted for the beauty of its cliffs and rugged scenery along the Kettle and for the white water canoeing and kayaking on the river. Sandstone was burned over during the Hinckley fire. One of the first houses to be built was the Hinckley Fire Relief House, which is a small frame house with a lean-to, a type built by the state and commissioned to aid survivors of the 1894 forest fire. It is located at Court Avenue and 6th Street and listed on the National Register of Historic places. Another building on the National Register is the Minneapolis Trust Company Building. A development company that helped to rebuild the town completed this commercial building, constructed of Kettle River Sandstone, shortly after the forest fire.

Another Side Trip: would take you to the **Sandstone National Wildlife Refuge:** A wildlife refuge located north and east of Hinckley.

Continue east on County Highway 61.

MP 123

Take a turn off County Highway 61 to Highway 23 and then return back to Highway 61.

Side Trip: Banning State Park: This is the last state park located on the St. Croix Scenic Byway and it has both great scenic and historic interest. It includes over 6,000 acres of forestland plus, the Hells Gate rapids of the Kettle and the home of its “Hells Gate World Class Kayaking” event. It also contains the remains of the old quarry and an excellent trail system and scenery for which our state parks are so well known.

Kettle River Sandstone Company Quarry: Site of State’s most extensive sandstone quarry. It was in operation from 1885-1919 and because of its location it led to the platting of the town of Sandstone. It is a popular site for summer rock climbing and winter ice climbing.

MP 124

The northern most terminus of the St. Croix Scenic Byway is located here, at the intersections of County Road 61 and Interstate Highway 35. It is also the southern most terminus of Minnesota’s first scenic byway: The Evergreen Memorial Highway, established in 1948 as a Memorial to the Veterans of World War II. Hope you have enjoyed your birds-eye-view of the historic, cultural, archeological, natural, scenic and recreational values of the area.