St. Croix Scenic Byway
Historical Travel Guide
Teacher Instructional Guide

The St. Croix Scenic Byway Historical Travel Guide can be viewed or downloaded at:
StCroixScenicByway.org

This Guide is designed to be used by teachers to support students in their learning about the historic St. Croix River Valley, the Point Douglas to Superior Military Road and the communities and heritage sites along the way. It has been written to include information and activities that will increase student understanding of the hardships and adventure of immigrants coming to America. It includes information about how these immigrants may have affected the area where we live. It especially exposes how logging impacted the way of life—river transportation and forest destruction, the importance of river crossings, steamboat building as well as how railroads brought about change. Any and all parts may be reproduced for handouts to your students but may not be reproduced for profit.

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Section 1. Who, What, When, Where:

The St. Croix Scenic Byway is a 124-mile scenic route that follows along the St. Croix National Scenic River. (1) For much of its length, the scenic route hugs the river banks and at other times traverses bluff lands that can rise up 200 feet above the water, often opening into six and eight-mile beautiful vistas along the river. For much of its length the St. Croix Scenic Byway also follows the original alignment of the 1852 Point Douglas to Superior Military Road (2), which originally cut through a wilderness of 4 million acres of dense pine forests to create the first overland connection between the junction of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers and Lake Superior. Travel on the military road was done primarily by horse or stagecoach.

GOVERNMENT ACTION AND BACKGROUND LAWS

(1)(The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The St. Croix was one of the first rivers to receive this designation thanks in part to Minnesota Senator Walter Mondale and Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson who cosponsored the act.)

(2) In 1855 the federal government began building the Point Douglas to Superior Military Road. Although intended as a highway for troop movement, this route from Hastings, Minnesota on the Mississippi River to Superior, Wisconsin on Lake Superior was one of the first roads in Minnesota Territory and attracted a flood of civilian and commercial traffic. Although the road was very rough and in places incomplete, the road was still the best route north until railroads were built in 1870. Traces of the unimproved military road can still be seen in Wild River State Park and Banning State Park.

For centuries, the vast pine forest had supported a traditional way of life for the Ojibwe and Dakota native american peoples who lived here. As the settlers moved in, the forest then generated vast wealth in furs for French, English and American traders. With the start of logging in the 1830's the first European settlement, in what would become Minnesota was founded at present day Marine on St. Croix. Stillwater and other historic river towns along the St. Croix Scenic Byway provide an opportunity to experience this river region that has been called the "Birth Place of Minnesota."

A number of Minnesota firsts can be experienced along the St. Croix Scenic Byway:

FIRST

- European settlement in the state (Marine, 1838)
- Swedish settlement (Hay Lake, 1850),
- Lutheran church (Scandia, 1856) oldest parsonage (Scandia, 1868),
- School house (Taylors Falls, 1852),
- Court house (Taylors Falls, 1852),
- County court house in Minnesota (Stillwater, 1870),
- Interstate Park in the nation (Taylors Falls/St. Croix Falls, 1895/1900), --

Awealth of additional heritage sites and experiences await you, along with hundreds of National Register properties and untold recreational opportunities in six State Parks (Afton, William O'Brien, Interstate, Wild River, St. Croix and Banning) two National Landmarks (St. Croix Boom Site and St. Croix Recreational Demonstration Area) and the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, a unit of the National Park System. These travel experiences and more are brought to life along your St. Croix Scenic Byway.

Already acclaimed for its scenery and natural places, the State of Minnesota designated the *St. Croix Scenic Byway* in 2004 to give the public new opportunities to experience St. Croix River region history, heritage, and culture dating from earliest times into the present along this treasured roadway.

As you study the St. Croix Scenic Byway Historical Travel Guide either in hard copy or on line at www.stcroixscenicbyway.org take the time to enjoy the rich historic river towns and heritage sites in a legendary natural and scenic valley located on the eastern boarder of Minnesota.

We suggest you link to the Minnesota Department of Education to get a first hand look at the core standards in social studies. The document can be found on the Minnesota Department of Education web site at Educator Excellence/Standards, Curriculum and Instruction/K-12 Academic Standards http://education.state.mn.us/mde/index.html/

Minnesota Social Studies Academic Standards

Figure 1: 2011 Minnesota Social Studies Standards "At a Glance"

Although this is a travel guide with many historical references, the guide can be used to stimulate thought and understanding in the core standards of the visual arts and language arts as well.

- We have suggested some general activities to connect with student acquisition of the standards.

Example Activity 1: Write a fictional story of how you traveled by river boat up the St. Croix River to homestead a piece of land.

The Minnesota St. Croix Scenic Byway is divided into five districts beginning in the South:

1. Stagecoach Trail District
2. Sawmill District
3. Immigrant Trail District
4. Nevers Place District
5. White Pines District

Stagecoach Trail: named for the beginning of the Point Douglas to Superior Military Road and the movement of troops and immigrants into the territory. It runs from the Great River Road at Point Douglas on the south, traveling through the communities of Afton, Bayport to the south end of Stillwater. Including the following points of interest: Carpenter Nature Center, St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park, Afton State Park, Belwin Conservancy and the State Prison Historic District. It includes a river crossing into Hudson, Wisconsin.

Social Studies standard activity suggestion:
Describe why you think Minnesota needed a military road at this time in history.

Sawmill District named because of the first sawmill in the St. Croix valley at Marine it runs through Stillwater, Marine on the St. Croix, and the ghost towns of Vasa and Copas. Including many National Historic houses and districts and St Croix Boom Site a National Landmark Site, the Territorial Prison site, William O'Brien State Park.

Social Studies standard activity suggesstion:
Find a picture of the logging that took place along the St. Croix. Describe what you see and provide reasons why logs were in demand.

Immigrant Trail District. Named because of the area that was first settled by immigrants and the proximity to the settlement of the largest group of Swedish settlers in Minnesota. This area includes the cities of Scandia and Taylors Falls, plus the Franconia Historic District. The major points of interest are Wind in the Pines Park, Falls Creek Scientific and Natural Area, Franconia Bluffs Scientific and Natural Area, Franconia Sculpture Park, Minnesota Interstate State Park, St. Croix Falls Hydroelectric Dam and the river crossings into Osceola and St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin. Additionally, there are many connections to the Swedish Ring (see Swedish Ring Teachers Guide) and the early Swedish settlement in this area.

Social Studies, Art, or Language Arts Standard activity suggestion:
The immigrants brought their cultures with them. Choose an aspect of one of the immigrant cultures and explain its usage.

Nevers Place District named for the location of Nevers Dam, which is now the area of Wild River State Park. It contains the cities of Sunrise and Rush City. The points of interest are Lions Park, Almelund, Amador Hill and the Old Government Road alignment.

Social Studies standard activity suggestion:
Draw a picture of a "dam" and explain why these early pioneers would need one or use one.

White Pines District named for the area that was heavily logged of white pine logs that floated down the rivers and were transported by rail through the rest of the districts. It was the location of the Great Hinckley fire and contains the cities of Rock Creek, Pine City, the ghost towns of

Beroun and Mission Creek, Hinckley, Sandstone and ends near Askov, Minnesota. The points of interest are Chengwatana State Forest, Snake River Campground and Soderbeck Landing, Northwest Company Fur Post, Pokegama Mission site, Hinckley Fire Museum, Old Flemming Logging Road, St. Croix State Park, the Audubon Center of the North Woods, Kettle River Sandstone Company, Quarry and Banning State Park with river crossing into Wisconsin at Grantsburg and Thayers Landing.

Social Studies standard activity suggestion:
Explain who benefited or profited and what might have been lost due to taking trees from the forest.

A General Time Line:

- In the early 16th century Ojibwe peoples began a migration from the Lake Superior area into the northern part of the Dakota homeland, and over the next two centuries the relationship between Dakota, Ojibwe, 17th century French fur traders and, later, English fur traders, creates the North Woods story of the heartland's first business—furs.
- During the period between 1680 and 1865 river transport of furs on interconnected waterways between Lake Superior and the Mississippi River was the heart of the regional economy.
- Second half of the 19th Century the pine forests of the northern St. Croix River valley were logged off using the clear cut method and leaving all the fallen limbs behind.
- 1830s a timber claim and sawmill led to the eventual formation of the town site of Taylors Falls.
- 1838 the first steamboat to make its way upriver to the Dalles of the St. Croix was the Palmyra.
- 1839 Marine on St. Croix was founded in 1839 as Marine Mills. The city was the site of the first commercial sawmill on the St. Croix River.
- 1840s Settlers arrived in the Marine area from Ireland, Germany, England, but mainly Sweden.

  Core Standard activity suggestion:
  Pick a culture from the list above. What ideas or artistry did they bring and what is the evidence that some of it still remains today?
  Example: music, ceramics, other
- 1840s Afton was settled by New Englanders and later by German and Swedish farmers.
- 1840 January Joseph R. Brown was granted permission for a river crossing in Stillwater near the "battle-ground" site at the head of Lake St. Croix—the battle-ground site was one of the last places where physical conflict between the Ojibwe and Dakota Nations took place.
- 1847 The Marine General Store was built. It is still in operation today.
- Point Douglas was platted on August 18, 1849.
- The towns of Sunrise, Amador, and Almelund were founded in the 1850s
- 1850 Three young men from Sweden—Carl A. Fernstrom, Oscar Roos, and August Sandahl—established a farm near Hay Lake.

- 1851 steamboats were used for the first time in towing log rafts through the lake sections of the St. Croix River.
- 1852 Sven Anderson built a log cabin about two miles northeast of Marine.
- 1852, Ansel Smith made a claim near the St. Croix River and platted the village of Franconia.
- 1854 Stillwater was officially incorporated as a city on March 4 (the same day as St. Paul).
- 1854 Copas' first log store built in what is now a Minnesota ghost town
- 1855 Glader Cemetery was established, the oldest Lutheran cemetery in Minnesota.
- 1855 The Hay Lake School was first organized.
- 1856 Elim Church building (Gammelkyrkan), which is the oldest Lutheran church building in Minnesota was built. It is now located at the Gammelgarden Museum.
- 1856 the Minnesota Territorial Legislature gave permission to Hiram Berkey of Marine to operate a ferry at Marine Mills. This ferry crossing survived for over 100 years under several different operators.
- 1858 May 11 Minnesota became a State.
  Core Standard activity suggestion:
  Describe what it takes to become a state.
- 1860 Carl and Lena Kajsa Linn family built a home that was later moved to the Ki Chi Saga Park in 1995 to represent the Karl Oskar House.
- 1862 Minnesota's first railroad was completed between St. Paul and St. Anthony. Soon after rail lines began to stretch across the state. The City of Stillwater was the first St. Croix community to be reached by rail.
  Core Standard activity suggestion:
  Describe the economic value the railroad provided in the late 1800s and compare it to today.
- As early as 1870 tourism in the St. Croix valley had become an established business.
- 1870 Rush City was established as a stop along the newly completed St. Paul and Duluth Railroad.
- 1872 Christ Lutheran Church and the Stone House were built in Marine.
- The City of Bayport began as three small settlements along the St. Croix River. In 1873, the St. Croix Railway Improvement Company combined the three settlements into South Stillwater, which was incorporated as a village in 1881. Because many people confused South Stillwater with the City of Stillwater, the City changed its name to Bayport in 1922.
- 1881 Pine City was founded.
- 1891 through 1894 the Weather Bureau in St. Paul reported a steady loss of moisture in central Minnesota, adding to the threat of forest fires.
- The summer of 1894 averaged 4.2 degrees above normal, and barely 2 inches of rain fell in Hinckley and the surrounding areas from May through September. All through the late spring and summer of 1894 a haze of wood smoke hung over the town of Hinckley.
- 1894—On Saturday, September 1, the worst forest fire in Minnesota history swept across 480 square miles and burned 350,000 acres—in five hours—consuming entire towns and claiming over 400 lives.

- In 1895 and 1900 Minnesota and Wisconsin, respectively, established the first Interstate State Parks in the nation facing each other across the St. Croix River. The Interstate Parks are the second oldest park established in Minnesota and the oldest park in Wisconsin.

  Core Standard activity suggestion:

  Describe the economic benefit of forming/establishing a state park.
- 1896 The Hay Lake School building was built and remained in use until 1963.
- 1914 the last great excursion of 800 sightseers on the steamboat Purchase came to Taylors Falls before steam boating as a way of life died on the St. Croix.
- 1916 English sermons were first spoken in the Almelund Swedish church, up until this time all sermons were spoken in Swedish. The schools Swedish textbooks were also replaced with English ones and Swedish was forbidden to be taught.
- 1934 The acreage that is now St. Croix State Park was selected for a Recreational Demonstration Area, a New Deal program that provided jobs, paid farmers for poor cropland, and created outdoor recreation opportunities near urban areas. It became St. Croix State Park in 1943.
- 1938 Sven Anderson cabin moved to Judd Street in Marine for the centennial celebration. It now sits along side the old Mill Pond.
- 1947 William O'Brien State Park opened to the public
- 1963 a bill was ratified to created Banning State Park, although the state didn't acquire enough land to begin developing recreational facilities until 1967.
- 1973 Wild River State Park authorized with 4,497 acres of land donated by Northern States Power Company.
- 1982 Afton State Park opened to the public.
- 1995 the Ki Chi Saga Park was created near Lindstrom, Minnesota, to represent the Karl Oskar homestead.
- 1996 King Carl Gustaf XVI and Queen Silvia of Sweden visited the Carl Oskar site.

Student Activity: Can you tell fact from fiction?

Interstate Park in Minnesota is the second oldest park in Minnesota and the oldest in Wisconsin. Fact or Fiction

The first historical inhabitants of the St. Croix River region were the Dakota. Fact or Fiction

The economic practices of the fur trade eventually exhausted the supply of fur bearing animals in the region but the physical landscape and natural habitats had been left largely intact after more than 200 years. Fact or Fiction

Paul Bunyan and his blue ox Babe logged all the trees in Minnesota. Fact or Fiction

On Saturday, September 1, 1894 the worst forest fire in Minnesota history swept across 480 square miles and burned 350,000 acres—in five hours—consuming entire towns and claiming over 400 lives. Fact or Fiction

As the fire was passing over Hinckley, Duluth pedestrians, more than 70 miles from the fire front, were being assaulted by ash and cinders and the air felt like furnace blasts. Fact or Fiction

Karl Oskar was the first Swedish Immigrant to arrive in Minnesota Fact or Fiction

The flow of settlers into this county swelled greatly from 1868 to 1872, due largely to a considerable upsurge in Swedish immigration resulting from agricultural failures in Sweden during 1868 and 1869. Fact or Fiction

Lots of other people came to America during the 1850's to 1890's, but the Swedish people were the only people that settled in the St. Croix Valley area. Fact or Fiction

Marine on the St. Croix is the oldest settlement in Minnesota. Fact or Fiction

The name Almelund in the Swedish language means, "elm grove." Fact or Fiction

The ferry that operated at Marine on St. Croix was the longest running ferry on the St. Croix River. It last for over 100 years! Fact or Fiction

There are many historic homes and buildings in the St. Croix Valley. All the historic buildings and homes are listed on the National Register of Historic Places Fact or Fiction

The St. Croix National Wild Scenic Riverway, is part of the National Park System, and the only designated Wild and Scenic River in the United States. Fact or Fiction

Quick, make up two of your own fact or fiction statements about the historic byway area. Write them below!

1._____

2._____

Going on a Field trip to a living history or historic site?

Here Is The Part You Play:
When you are on a field trip to a historic site or in class listening to a presenter or conversation about history you are an important audience member. Your cooperation, active listening and appropriate interaction is important.

WE SUGGEST YOU:

- Listen carefully and observe demonstrations or presentations closely.
- Laugh when something is funny.
- Applaud when the time is right.
- Wait for an appropriate time to interact. Talking or whispering out of turn is distracting.
- Respect the people you are learning about and remain open in your thoughts and heart to learn about what is being said.
- Learn about others so you will not fear them.
- Listen, imagine and watch. Your ability to observe is a powerful tool for experiencing the world around you. Use your imagination to interpret what it was like to live in the 1880s. Compared to what it is like to live in the St. Croix Valley today.
- Use your keen sense of sound. Sound adds a richness that sight alone cannot provide.
- Think about what you would do as you hear about life in the 1880s.
- Listen quietly and immerse yourself in the historic time period of the 1880s and the immigration of settlers, the building of the Military Road, the ferries and early railroads, the long and low whistle of the steamboats coming up the river and the arriving immigrants that left everything familiar to them to start a new life in a new country.

Activity Suggestion:
Go into your neighborhood and map out the location of homes, streets, light posts, stores and so on. Describe how your street is a roadway and how people today navigate it. You might ask yourself: What forms of transportation do people use today compared to how they traveled in the 1880s?

Student Outcomes
What I have learned:

1. I can identify the first community settled in the St. Croix River Valley.

2. I know what community the first Swedish people settled and why they came to the St. Croix River valley (Minnesota).

3. I know where the Great Hinckley fire occurred and what caused the distruction of of the area including the deaths of several hundred people.

4. I learned about the hardships of Pioneer life and can cite examples.

5. I learned about the immigration of the Swedish people to the St. Croix Valley in the 1800s.

6. I learned what communities in the valley build steamboats

7. I can identify some of the reasons my ancestors or family came to America.

8. I can identify some of the reasons people are still immigrating to America today.

9. I learned that the St. Croix Scenic Byway closely follows the 1850s Point Douglas to Superior Military Road and that I can even hike or ride my bike on some of the original road sections.

10. I learned that I have many opportunities to experience and learn about history right in my own community.

11. I can talk about how immigrants traveled along the byway area.

Additional Information and Resources
www.stcroixscenicbyway.org
Educator Excellence/Standards, Curriculum and Instruction/K-12 Academic Standards
http://education.state.mn.us/mde/index.html/
Marine on St Croix 150 Years of Village Life, James Taylor Dunn, 1989
Marine on St Croix From Lumber Village to Summer Haven 1838-1968, James Taylor Dunn
Saving the River, The Story of the St. Croix River Association 1911-1986, James Taylor Dunn
The St. Croix Midwest Border River, James Taylor Dunn, 1979
Life & Times in Taylors Falls, Taylors Falls Historical Society
Minnesota Beginnings, Records of the St. Croix County Wisconsin Territory 1840-1849, History Network of Washington County, 1999
The Taylors Falls & Lake Superior Railroad, Richard E. Thompson, S J Monson, 2005
History of the Saint Croix Valley, Vol 1 & 2, Augustus B Easton, 1909
Washington: A History of the County, Willard E Rosenfelt, 1977

An Early Look At Chisago County, Chisago County Bicentennial Committee1976
*The Human Imprint, The Buildings and Sites of Center City, Minn*esota, Center City Historic Preservation Commission, 1995
Shafer Swamp to Village, Vivian Fry Myers, 1978
St. Croix Tales and Trails, Rosemarie Vezina Braatz, 2005
The St Croix River Road, Russ Hanson, 2006

All books listed, if available for sale, can be found on Amazon. Com.or other retailers
Check out your local school and public libraries for more books on the area.
Check out local and on line library sources or for research only, not for check out at the office of the St. Croix Study Center, St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin.