MP 92.5 North West Company Fur Post *(Side Trip)*

(divert from Byway at N45° 49.142', W092° 58.224')

(To reach this Side Trip destination, divert from the Byway at MP 95.2, head west on Pine Co 7 two miles, then north one-half mile on Voyageur Lane to the Fur Post)

This living history museum is reconstructed on the site of an 1804-1805 fur post. Operated by the Minnesota Historical Society, the museum recreates the life of the people who lived and worked on the Snake River during the winter of 1804.

MP 96.1 Pokegama Mission Historical Marker

(N45° 49.858', W092° 58.226')

A mission and school that operated on Pokegama Lake from 1836 to 1846 are described on this marker located on the north end of Pine City in Voyageur Park, immediately north of the Snake River and east of Co Hwy 61. On the west side of Co Hwy 61, opposite the marker, is a 35 feet tall sculpture of a voyageur that was carved with chainsaw from a single redwood log. Pokegama Lake derives it name from the Ojibwe word, *Bakegamaa* (lake goes off from another), which describes the geographical relationship of the lake to the Snake River.

MP 101.3 Beroun

(N45° 54.432', W092° 57.578')

Named after a town in Czechoslovakia, Beroun once boasted a cheese factory, a creamery, a pickle factory, and a brewery. Home to the Beroun Bohemian Brewing Company from 1904 to 1908, it was one of the smallest communities in Minnesota to have a brewery.

MP 105.1 Mission Creek Townsite

(N45° 58.259', W092° 57.193')

The community of Mission Creek was destroyed on September 1, 1894 in the disastrous Great Hinckley Fire. Prior to the fire, the village had a railroad station, commercial buildings, and over twenty residences. Only one home remained standing after the fire.

Hinckley Fire commemorative plaque, Hinckley, photographer Bill Neuman

MP 109.0 Hinckley (N46° 00.682', W092° 56.617')

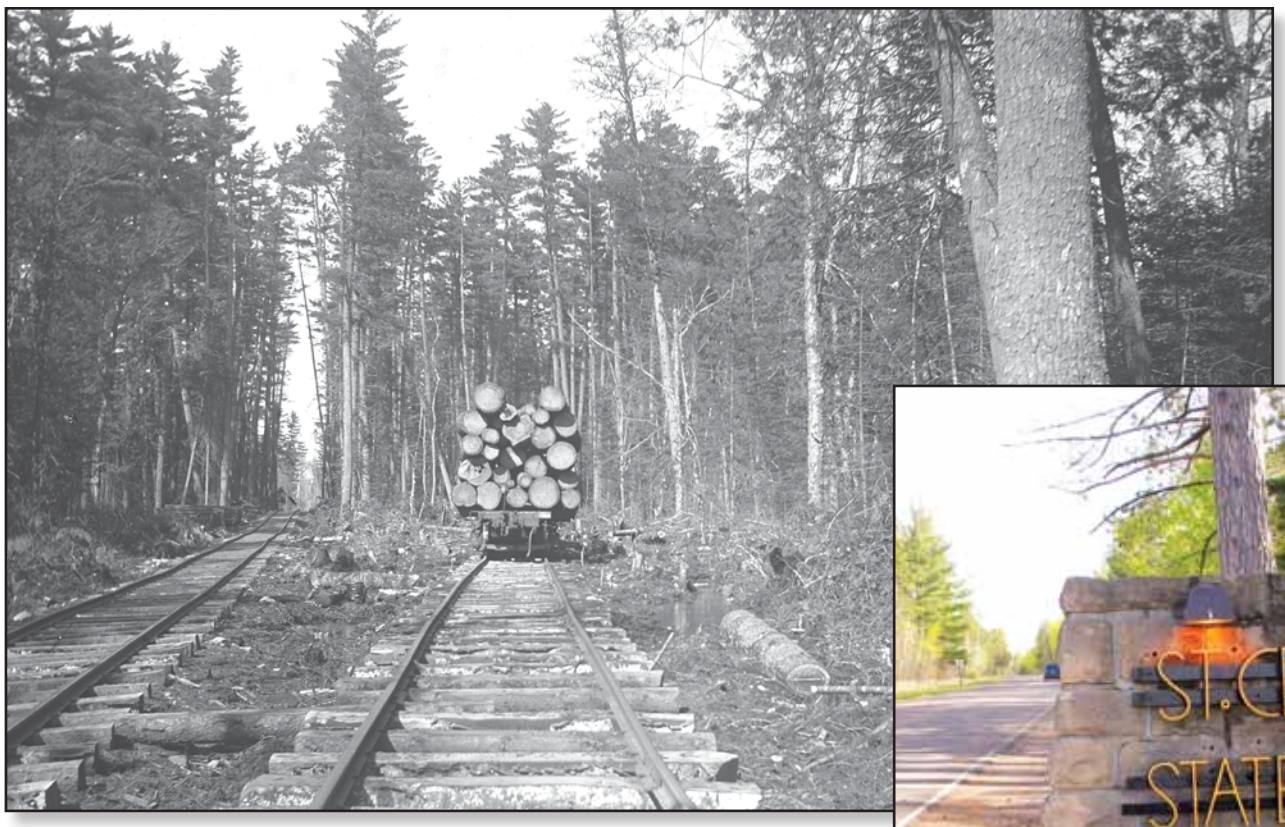
To the Ojibwe the Hinckley area is known as *Gaa-zhiigwanaabigokaag* or "the place abundant with grindstones," because the gritty sandstone available at an outcrop here along the river (Grindstone River) was ideal for sharpening tools. However, it was the surrounding stands of white pine that drew loggers to the Hinckley area during the second half of the nineteenth century. With the coming of the railroad in 1869 the lumber industry prospered and the town grew. However, on September 1, 1894, disaster struck when the largest forest fire in Minnesota's history destroyed Hinckley and surrounding towns. A roadside historical marker for the fire is located along Pine Co Hwy 61 to the north of town. Today, Hinckley offers a variety of attractions including a casino.

Hinckley Fire Museum, photographer Bill Neuman

MP 109.2 Hinckley Fire Museum/ Northern Pacific Depot

(N46° 00.901', W092° 56.578')

The Hinckley Fire Museum is housed in the town's historic Northern Pacific Railway Depot, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Built in 1895, the wood-frame depot was constructed using the same plans that were used to build the original depot lost in the fire. The depot features a dining room and a second-story stationmaster's quarters.



Logging the pine forest by rail, Bill Neuman private collection

Old Flemming Logging Road Historic Backway

[This 35.7 mile Historic Backway route diverts from the Byway at MP 109.0 in Hinckley heading east on MN Hwy 48 (Fire Monument Rd) 15.6 miles, then north on Old Flemming Logging Road 8.6 miles, then west on Pine Co Hwy 30 (Duxbury Rd) 8.5 miles, then continuing straight west an additional 3.0 miles on MN Hwy 123, rejoining the Byway at MP 119.6 in Sandstone]

The Old Flemming Logging Road Historic Backway route passes by the state monument honoring the victims of the Great Hinckley Fire located in the Memorial Cemetery one mile east of Hinckley on the north side of MN Hwy 48 (Fire Monument Road). The Old Fleming Logging Road Historic Backway continues on MN Hwy 48 (Fire Monument Rd) to a point one-tenth mile east of the St. Croix State Park entrance, then turns north on Old Fleming Logging Road (Co Hwy 22 – 3.0 miles paved and 5.6 miles unpaved). This Historic Backway runs north on Flemming Logging Road to County Hwy 30, then west on County Rd 30 (Duxbury Rd), continuing west on MN 123 to the Robinson Sandstone Quarry national historic site on the banks of the Kettle River in Robinson Park.

Driving this Historic Backway route is an opportunity to experience something of a bygone era, a north woods environment that harkens back to the landscape that greeted the earliest European settlers, an environment that would have been familiar to centuries of Ojibwe and Dakota inhabitants who pursued the abundant resources and way of life offered by what the forests, land, lakes and rivers could provide. If you love rural America, this drive represents a sample of time before settlement, at the edge of the frontier, when small towns did not yet exist.

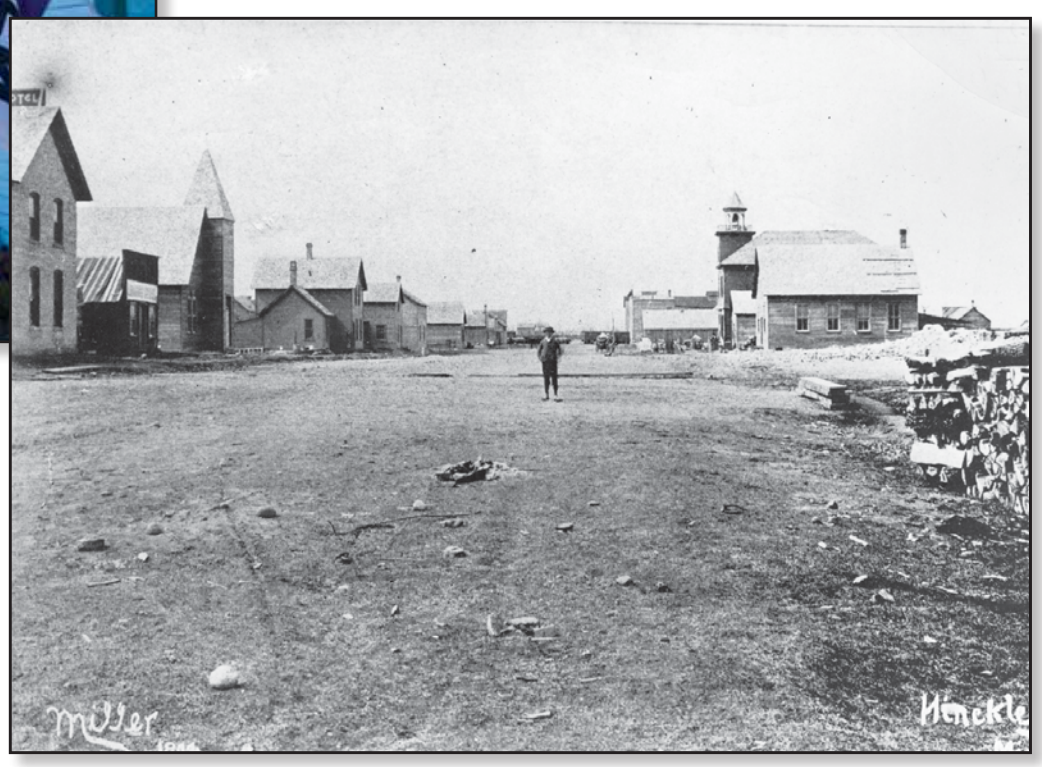
Military Road — Hinckley to Sandstone Historic Backway *(Road signs may display the route as Government Road—unpaved)*

[The south end of this Historic Backway route diverts from the Byway at MP 109.0 in Hinckley heading east on MN Hwy 48 (Fire Monument Rd) 2.5 miles to Government Road (Pine Co Rd 140), then north on Government Road (Pine Co Rd 140) one mile, then bear east on Lone Pine Road two-tenths of a mile—then north on Old Government Road 7.3 miles to MN Hwy 123 to rejoin the Byway at MP 118.8 in Sandstone)

This Backway follows an original 8.3 mile segment of the 1852 Point Douglas to Superior Military Road from east of Hinckley to Sandstone. Take paved MN Hwy 48 east from Hinckley (2.5 miles) then north on unpaved Military Road (Government Road/Pine County Rd 140—bear east on Lone Pine Road 0.2 mile and then north on Government Road) a total distance of 8.3 miles, rejoining the Scenic Byway at MP 118.8 in the City of Sandstone. The Military Road in this section follows along the Kettle River and the Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

The original Point Douglas to Superior Military Road continued north from Sandstone to Superior, Wisconsin—traveling through the communities of Kettle River, Willow River, Moose Lake, Blackhoof, Twin Lakes, Fitzpatrick and ending in Superior.

[Read more about the 1852 Point Douglas to Superior Military Road (Government Road) on the Military Road map on page 20]



Hinckley Rebuilt after the fire, Minnesota Historical Society

St. Croix State Park entrance, photographer Bill Neuman

St. Croix State Park

(Located on the Old Flemming Logging Road Historic Backway)

(N46° 00.718', W92° 37.071')

At 34,000 acres, this is Minnesota's largest state park. It also boasts the largest trail system in the state park system. The park follows the shore of the St. Croix National Scenic River for 21 miles and contains the last 7 miles of Minnesota's first Wild and Scenic River, the Kettle River. At least ten other streams flow through the park, making the park a premiere outdoor recreation and wilderness destination.

Although recognized as a state park in 1943, the area had already been developed as a National Recreational Demonstration Area in the 1930s. From that earlier period 164 structures built by the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration survive. Most are still in use today and represent the largest collection of New Deal projects in Minnesota. Many are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the entire historic district was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1997. The approach road leading from the main gate to the park office is, alone, worth the trip. In 1895, the Empire Logging Company constructed the Flemming Logging Railroad to transport logs from Pine County lumber camps to the St. Croix River's Yellow Banks Landing within the park. The park entrance road closely follows the old railroad bed for the Flemming Railroad. The otherwise lack of roads into the park from any other direction makes this remote park, located 15.5 miles east of the Byway on MN Hwy 48, a destination that will be long remembered. *Vehicle permits required.*

Windstorm Recovery at St. Croix State Park

On the evening of July 1, 2011 a severe storm ripped through St. Croix State Park and surrounding areas. Along with a deluge of rain, pockets of wind estimated between 80 and 100 miles per hour uprooted and snapped trees across the park. Approximately 11,000 acres had at least 50% damage to the trees and 9,600 of those acres lost 75-100% of the trees. Previous windstorms seem small in comparison to this event.

This storm also struck heavy blows to park facilities. Of 197 park buildings, 74 experienced tree damage. St. John's Landing Group Center was most heavily impacted with trees damaging or destroying many historic buildings. These buildings will be restored to their original state to meet standards that must be maintained within a National Historic Landmark such as St. Croix State Park.

The Recovery: The volume of timber down was enormous—if left to dry the trees would have become a very serious wildfire hazard and a breeding ground for forest pests and diseases. After logging the downed timber, the historic landscape of this National Historic Landmark is being restored, including some prairie habitat and areas of Pine Barrens and Oak Savanna. Plan a visit to witness the amazing healing power of nature, when paired with managed restoration by the Minnesota DNR.

MP 116.3 The Audubon Center of the North Woods *(Side Trip)*

(N46° 07.031', W092° 59.876')

(To reach this Side Trip destination, divert from the Byway at MP 116.3, head west on Pine Co 27 approximately 6 miles to Grindstone Lake Road, then proceed to the Center)

The Audubon Center is located 6.2 miles west of Sandstone on the shores of Grindstone Lake. In the 1800s local Ojibwe families used the land that makes up the 535-acre Audubon Center for hunting and gathering. Portions of the forest were logged prior to the Hinckley Fire (1894) and some of the land was farmed. The Audubon sanctuary of today is a mix of old-growth white and red pines, second-growth mixed hardwood forest with birch stands and sugar maples. Old farm fields have been restored to wetlands, and pine plantations established along with restored prairie. The entire Audubon complex is in the National Register of Historic Places and serves as a Residential Environmental Learning Center. The center features environmental educational exhibits, a climbing wall, and plenty of wildlife.