

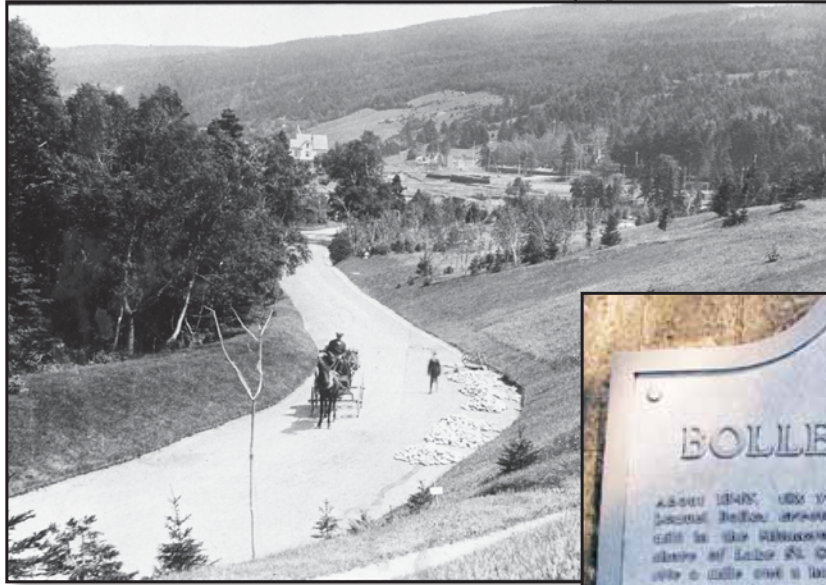
**River Towns Historic Backway**

(To access this Backway route divert from the Byway onto north Co Rd 18 at MP 12.0 in Afton, and the route will rejoin the Byway farther north at MP 17.2 at Hudson Road)

This Historic Backway takes you through the small picturesque towns of St. Mary's Point, Lake St. Croix Beach, Lakeland Shores, and Lakeland. These quiet river towns boast an abundance of scenic views and historic homes and architecture. This Historic Backway follows St Croix Trail/Co Rd 18 (Old MN Hwy 95) between Stagecoach Trail (Afton) on the south and I-94 and Hudson Rd on the north.

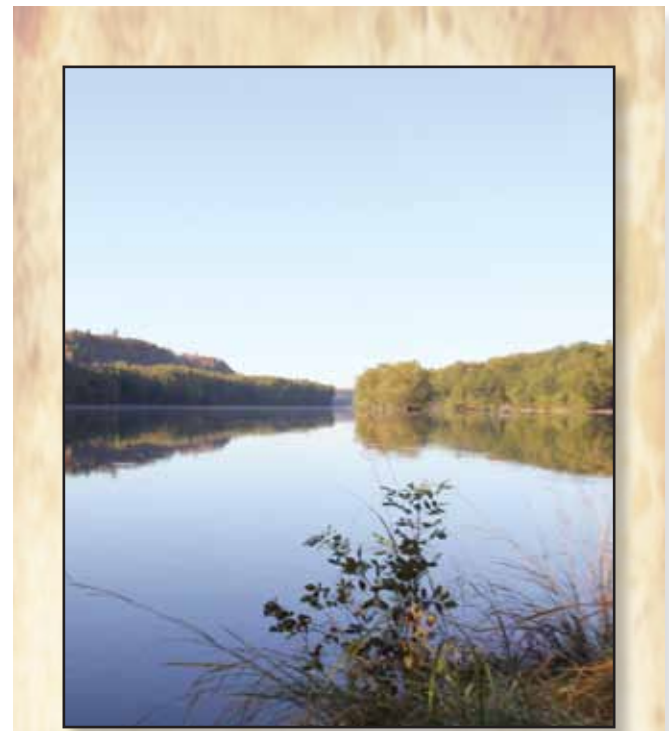
**Bolles Flour Mill Historical Marker**

Just north of the intersection of Stagecoach Trail and Washington Co Hwy 18 (St. Croix Trail) this historical marker notes the location of the first flour mill in what would become the Minnesota Territory. In 1843, lacking nails, Lemuel Bolles erected his mill using wooden pegs. There is a pull off on the east side of St. Croix Trail to view the marker.



Top photo: Road to May Farm near Lakeland, Afton Township, Minnesota Historical Society

Bottom photo: Bolles Flour Mill Historical Marker, north of Afton, photographer Bill Neuman



View of St Croix River, photographer Bill Neuman

*In the Dakota language the St. Croix River is O-Ki-Zu-Wa-Kpa: To meet or to unite, as the waters of a river gather into a lake or two rivers meet or an area where we planted. Dakota and Ojibwe Indians still live in proximity to the St. Croix National Scenic River.*



Belwin Entrance, photographer Bill Neuman



Bayport Public Library, photographer Bill Neuman

**MP 13.9 Belwin Conservancy**

(N44° 55.555', W092° 48.117')

The Belwin Conservancy private nature preserve is a unique property along the Byway. The Conservancy's 1,300 acres of protected land comprises one of the largest remaining intact natural areas in the Twin Cities. The preserve is neither a park nor a nature center and much of the preserve is reserved for the plants and animals that make their home here. This private preserve's mission is primarily the protection of rare habitat, and the center hosts educational and research programs. One special event is the annual Bison Release, usually held in mid-June. There is a bison observation deck and a "bison buggy" to view the herd, which is brought in during the summer to help maintain the native prairie. Facilities are limited, but the public is welcome. Please observe the rules for visiting the Conservancy.

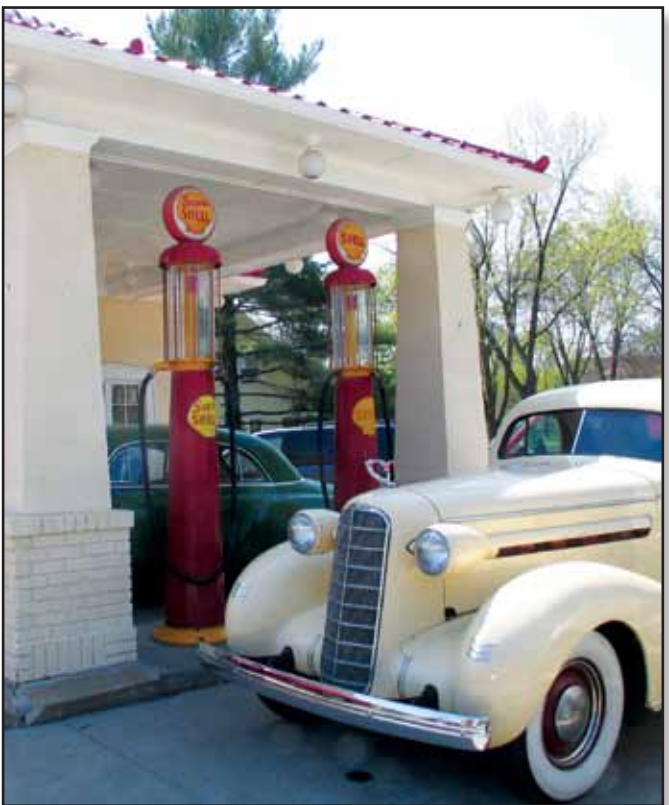
Bikers along Stagecoach Trail, photographer Bill Neuman

**MP 21.2 Bayport**

(N45° 01.007', W092° 46.749')

Once known as "South Stillwater," Bayport 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 Byway. The Anderson Corporation is located on what was the site of a 1930's Civilian Conservation Corps camp. The CCC was responsible for building several of the overlooks on the river in this area. 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 770-foot tower of the Alan S. King Power Plant, a facility of Xcel energy, is a dominant scenic intrusion in this part of the St. Croix valley but is home to a pair of nesting peregrine falcons. The power plant was at the forefront of the peregrine falcon restoration effort, when in 1998 it became the first plant in the nation to have a nest box placed on its stack. In turn, the camera trained on the peregrine falcon nest became the internet's first birdcam. The power plant was also at the forefront of controversy when it was first proposed, and it served as the impetus to protect the St. Croix River as one of the first eight rivers protected under the 1968 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. As part of a deal to permit the power plant, a plan was developed by the utility and then Minnesota and Wisconsin Senators Walter Mondale and Gaylord Nelson, respectively, for the utility to sell 2,255 acres and donate more than 6,000 acres along the upper river to make it possible for the St. Croix to become a National Wild and Scenic River.



Restored garage, Bayport, photographer Bill Neuman

*"It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see."*

~ Henry David Thoreau



**MP 22.0 State Prison Historic District**

(N45° 01.664', W092° 47.069')

Just north of Bayport, the Minnesota State Correctional Facility at Stillwater looms over the Byway from its bluff top setting. Technically located in Oak Park Heights, this is the location of the State Prison National Historic District. This historic site includes the brick prison complex built between 1910 and 1914 using the French "telegraph pole" plan and two warden's residences designed by State Architect Clarence H. Johnson, Sr. This is an active correctional facility and not open to the public.