

**CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM**

State of Wisconsin

**Date:** January 14, 1998  
**To:** Mississippi River Parkway Commission  
**From:** Department of Transportation - Districts 1, 5 & 6  
**Subject:** Annual Maintenance Activity Report

During the past year, and as the result of recommendations set forth from planning studies for the Wisconsin Great River Road Corridor various communications have taken place between WisDOT and the MRPC. It is intended that this memo respond, at least in an initial sense, to one of those recommendations namely, "...that WisDOT inform the MRPC annually of maintenance activities planned for the Great River Road....".

We need to be mindful that funds for maintenance are limited and that expenditures undergo intensive prioritization (statewide), on the other hand, this exercise of identifying/describing an annual maintenance program for the Great River Road provides an opportunity for MRPC input and awareness; provides a "global" (entire 8 county) prospective; and hopefully evokes new ideas within confines of budget and policy. It need also be noted that the county highway segment of the GRR in Grant County is under the maintenance authority of the county – not DOT. For the purposes of this memo maintenance is as defined/discussed in the following: (For information purpose the 1999 improvement projects are listed in attachment A.)

(1) Pavement, Shoulder, Ditch, i.e. activities such as extensive crack filling, patching, shouldering and ditch maintenance while these activities will be sporadically undertaken in 1999 – there is nothing foreseen as extensive or beyond the routine.

(2) Mowing, Vegetation Control

- The Departments statewide mowing policy of mowing 15 feet out from the shoulder or to the bottom of the ditch – which ever is left (summer and fall) applies to the GRR.
- Noxious weeds within the right of way and beyond the 2 mowing passes will be combated.
- It is policy to selectively employ a "brush wacker" to control brush growth within the clear zone (i.e. extending 30 ft. out from edge of traveled way).
- Chemically retarding the growth of the vegetation along guard rails will be tested in some counties this year – as substitute to the difficulty of mowing.
- Selective clearing and brushing at vistas will be undertaken in Pierce and Pepin Counties. It is proposed that the merits of this activity will be field reviewed in the remaining counties.



(3) Waysides, Overlooks, Parking Areas, Picnic Appurtenances, etc.

As mentioned in previous correspondence and as recommended by aforementioned study, the Department intends to undertake a "global" review of off road facilities. In the interim, critical maintenance needs will be undertaken – including the following 1999 calendar year activities:

Pierce

- Picnic table added

Pepin

- Remove toilet

Buffalo

- 

Trempealeau

- 

LaCrosse

- 

Vernon

- 

Crawford

- 

Grant

- 

(4) Special Planting

Special plantings require special and timely maintenance and should be based on a plan. It is the intentions of the Department to consciously field review the existing plantings at the off road facilities. Also, selective consideration of wild flowers will be explored. We ask MRPC Commissioners, as ambassadors of the Great River Road to encourage the river towns to consider special plantings and proper maintenance of existing plantings. (Activities on highway right of way require permits). Grant County is also encouraged to consider these concepts on their segment of the GRR.

(5) Scenic Easements, Access Requests, Setbacks

The Department will continue to solicit MRPC input as issues involving these matters arise.

We trust the aforementioned provides the MRPC background and insights into the Department's projected maintenance activities and 1999 improvement projects for the Wisconsin Great River Road. If you have specific questions, you are encouraged to contact your District DOT representative.