

## Large Rivers:

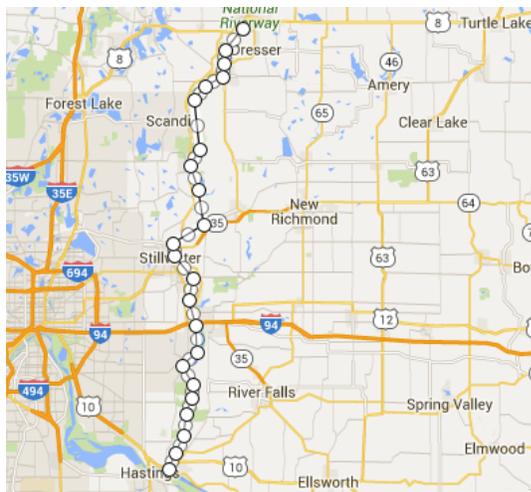
*The Mississippi River and its floodplain natural communities'* natural values are widely recognized by residents and visitors alike. An abundance of fish species, freshwater mussels (known locally as clams), waterfowl and other wetland species thrive in the floodplain. Backwater areas are filled with vegetation and wetland animals. Less well known is the importance of these natural communities as habitat for migrating songbirds. Millions of migrating and nesting birds use the natural communities as crucial foraging areas, in order to be health for nesting success. The multitude of interest groups (National Wildlife Refuges, State Wildlife Areas, City and County Parks, Universities and Private landowners) provide most of the long-term protection for the resource.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderately High
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderately High
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate; with Bluffs - High
- Rare Species – High
- Species of Conservation Concern – High
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Low
- Conservation Status – Mostly complete

This site is a conservation stronghold.

*The Lower St. Croix River, its floodplain natural communities and terraces* (below the dam at St. Croix Falls) harbors larger patches of floodplain forest and traces of native terrace vegetation. The area is heavily utilized for recreation and under substantial development pressure along the river's scenic overlooks. Many rare species are found in the area primarily due to the paucity of natural habitat. The National Park Service, State Wildlife Areas, State Natural Areas, land trusts, and a few private landowners provide the bulk of land protection for the site.

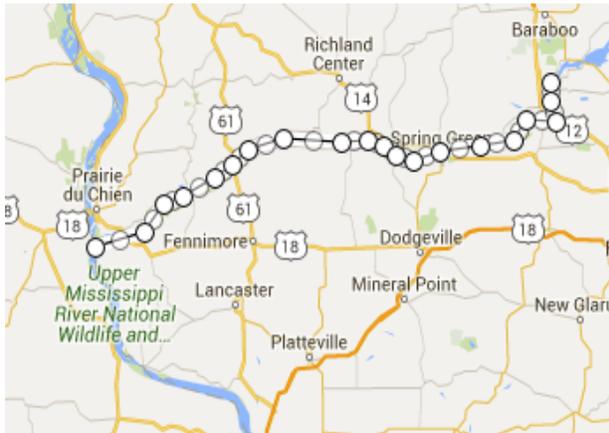


- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderately High
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderately High
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate
- Rare Species – High
- Diversity of Species of Conservation Concern –Moderate
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Low
- Conservation Status – Nearly complete, limited opportunities

This site has narrow opportunities for conservation.

*The Lower Wisconsin River, its floodplain, terraces and blufflands* (below the dam at Prairie du Sac to the confluence with the Mississippi river at Wyalusing) comprises one of Wisconsin's natural treasures. The 92 miles of the Lower Wisconsin River is the longest free-flowing section of a large river anywhere in the Midwest. The globally rare fame flower is found in the valley. Other endangered or threatened plant species include pink milkwort, yellow giant hyssop, round-stemmed false foxglove, tubercled orchid, and wild quinine. Threatened wildlife includes Cerulean Warbler, Bobolink, Arcadian Flycatcher, Kentucky Warbler and ornate box turtle.

The Pecatonica River mayfly recently found in Grant County waters was thought to be extinct in Wisconsin! Another endangered species the Hine's emerald dragonfly was recently discovered in backwater pools of the river. The Lower Wisconsin Riverway project is the protection vehicle.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderately High
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderately High
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate; with Bluffs - High
- Rare Species – High
- Species of Conservation Concern – High
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Low
- Conservation Status – Mostly complete

This site is a conservation stronghold.

## Mid-sized Rivers:

A multitude of small to mid-sized tributaries to the large river systems is vital for the full range of conservation. Water quality and quantity are paramount, but many of these issues are beyond the realm of land protection. Three mid-sized river systems have the qualities in place to justify action. They can provide significant conservation. Many small scale opportunities exist for individual tracts (see springs and cold streams section).

*The Buffalo River and its adjacent wetlands* has habitat for many wetland dependent species. Waterfowl use, especially in the portion nearest the Mississippi River is a favored location for many species of waterfowl including large number of Tundra Swans.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderately Low
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderately Low
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate
- Rare Species – Low
- Species of Conservation Concern – Moderate
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Low
- Conservation Status – Half

This site is adjacent to a conservation stronghold.

*Trempealeau River and its adjacent wetlands* has habitat for many wetland dependent species. Waterfowl use, especially in the portion nearest the Mississippi River is a favored location for many species of waterfowl. In addition patches of wet prairie and quality sedge meadow occur in the floodplain. A small portion is protected as waterfowl production and a State Natural Area.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderately Low
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderately Low
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate
- Rare Species – Moderate Low
- Species of Conservation Concern – Moderate
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – Low
- Conservation Status – Some

This site is adjacent to a conservation stronghold.

*The Pine River and its adjacent wetlands*, downstream from Richland Center to the confluence with the Wisconsin River harbor rare Driftless area natural communities. Preeminent is an extensive tamarack fen near the small community of Sextonville. A few hunting lease are in place, but very little in the way of conservation. These southern Wisconsin tamarack communities are projected to be highly vulnerable to climate change. Protection options may revolve around optimism or pessimism regarding future climatic conditions.



- Wisconsin Responsibility – Moderately Low
- Irreplaceable Features – Moderate
- Diversity of Natural Features – Moderate
- Rare Species – Moderate Low
- Species of Conservation Concern – Moderate
- Vulnerability to a Warming Climate – High
- Conservation Status – Minute

This site is adjacent to a conservation stronghold.