



Providing Planning and Economic Development
Services to Improve the Region's Environment,
Economy and Quality of Life

Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission
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MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

Providing Planning and Economic Development Services to
Improve the Region's Environment, Economy and Quality of Life

52nd
Anniversary
1964-2016

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission would like to thank the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Administration, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, The Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration, Wisconsin Emergency Management, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and most of all the County Boards of Supervisors of Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Trempealeau and Vernon for their cooperation and involvement. The combined resources of these local, state, and federal government partners provide the funding that make the activities of the MRRPC possible.



Buffalo County Awarded a Federal (POWER) Grant. MRRPC assisted Buffalo County with a successful grant application to the U.S. Department of Commerce-Economic Development Administration for a Federal Partnership for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (Power) Grant that will be used to prepare an Economic Development Strategy in response to the negative economic impact of the Alma coal power plant closure. MRRPC staff are working with Buffalo County, UW Extension—Buffalo County, UW-Extension-Madison, and UW Madison Economic Development Specialists. The strategy will include: (1) Analysis of trends and conditions related to business, industry, tourism, and agriculture; (2) Analysis of current economic development strategies; (3) Public meetings with surrounding counties to discuss joint interests, and collaborative efforts and (4) Development of an actionable strategic economic and workforce development plan.

Business Loans Approved to a Craft Brewery and Child Care Business. The MRRPC administers U.S. Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration grants that funded four revolving loan funds (RLFs). These funds were designed to provide affordable gap financing for businesses in the region that involve participation with banks or equity investors. This past year loans were made for two business expansions, a craft brewery in La Crosse and a child day care business in Viroqua. These two loans totaling \$135,000 leveraged \$342,000 in private financing, and are projected to create at least 15 new full time jobs. Since inception these four RLFs have made 79 business loans totaling over \$4.8 million that created or retained over 700 jobs and leveraged over \$46 million in private financing. More information on these funds can be found at www.mrrpc.com. Loan funds are available, so if you know of a business in need of gap financing, please contact the MRRPC office.

Cashton Downtown Revitalization Underway. The Village of Cashton was designated as a "Connect Community" by the WEDC in 2013. This designation provided the village technical assistance from the WEDC that led to funding to prepare a plan. This completed plan calls for aesthetic

improvements to the State Highway 33/Front St. intersection highlighting it as the "gateway" to the downtown area. The plan also includes pedestrian bump outs for consideration on some intersections and landscaping improvements. Other projects include organizing a regularly scheduled Farmer's Market, providing technical assistance services to businesses, determining the feasibility of a business incubator, and enhancing the use of the Cashton Community Hall. The MRRPC continues to provide assistance in the Village's revitalization projects that now have more public support because of this planning effort

SMRT Bus Ridership Continues to Grow. In 2010 the Crawford County Transportation Coordinating Committee completed a feasibility study that showed residents desired a reliable and affordable public transportation service to get people to and from work, to medical appointments, and to shopping, and social activities. Bus routes were designed based on survey analysis and the Scenic Mississippi River Transit Bus Service was organized to provide a fixed route public transportation system serving Crawford County, southern La Crosse County, and middle/western Vernon County. SMRT bus service began operating in December 2012. In 2015, The SMRT bus provided 19,223 rides, a 6.2% increase over 2014, and for the first three months of 2016 ridership is up 17.5%. The MRRPC assists in marketing and promoting the SMRT bus, and routes and schedules are continuously evaluated to provide the best utilization of the service. A survey was conducted in 2016 showing that 95% of riders are either satisfied or very satisfied with the service. The MRRPC continues to explore grant opportunities to help fund bus operation service in 2016.

Vehicle Inventory Study Completed for La Crosse, Vernon and Crawford Counties. WISDOT awarded the MRRPC a research grant to inventory all the state and federally funded transit-related vehicles in La Crosse, Vernon and Crawford Counties. The project documented vehicle ages, annual miles driven, and annual hours used, specific days and hours of operations, and their locations when not operating. The completed study included an inventory of 105 vehicles with recommendations to assist with facilitating vehicle sharing in the study area. Recommendations included better adherence to the 5310 program vehicle sharing requirement and the

creation of an accessible database detailing the location and availability of publicly purchased vehicles. A template of a “vehicle sharing rental agreement” was also prepared and included in the study to help assist in vehicle sharing.

Buffalo County Zoning Ordinance Update is Underway.

MRRPC staff is working with Buffalo County to prepare a new zoning ordinance and zoning maps. Wisconsin Statutes call for zoning ordinances to be consistent with a comprehensive plan. The County adopted their comprehensive plan in 2013 and updating the county’s zoning ordinance was a key recommendation of the plan. During meetings with the county zoning committee and the towns it was decided to implement density based housing zoning districts that will meet state farmland preservation requirements, so eligible land owners can receive farmland preservation tax credits.

With these provisions in mind chapter one of the ordinance has been completed in draft form, the zoning districts are: *Agriculture/ Natural Resource – 40 (ANR- 40), 20 (ANR- 20), 10 (ANR- 10), and 5 (ANR- 5)* these districts are obviously established for the purpose to preserve farmland; *Residential (R)* is created to establish and protect the essential characteristics of areas within which predominantly high density residential development not served by public sewer and water facilities should occur, along with certain community and recreational uses to serve the residents of the district; *Conservation (CONS)*, this district consists primarily of county, state, and federally owned lands established to protect and preserve the natural state of certain areas such as marshes, wetlands, stream beds, slopes, bluffs, wooded areas, water areas and open spaces and other areas of aesthetic value. *Commercial District (C)* is created to establish and protect locations in which a wide variety of compatible commercial uses can be located; and the *Industrial (I)* district is established to accommodate value added production, higher volumes of traffic, rail access, higher noise levels and other factors which could pose a nuisance in other districts.

Thus far the MRRPC and county staff conducted meetings with all seventeen towns and requested that the towns prepare/draft town zoning maps. The drafted town zoning maps will then be combined to create an updated county wide zoning map. It is anticipated that the county zoning ordinance revision process will take until the fall of 2017 to complete.

The Equipment and Metal Manufacturing Association (EMMA) Inc. Transitions to the Upper Mississippi Manufacturing Alliance TUMMA Inc. On July 15, 2015 the EMMA board of directors met with Western Technical College, Workforce Connections, and Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board representatives on the concept of forming a manufacturing organization similar to the North East Wisconsin Manufacturing Alliance. On November 24, 2015 EMMA voted to change its name, articles of incorporation and bylaws to TUMMA and to invite all manufacturers in the tri-state region to join. Its primary focus will be

to improve the skill sets and knowledge of the region’s manufacturing work force and build a stronger relationship with the K-12 schools by providing them presentations, resources and company tours to encourage students to pursue manufacturing careers. TUMMA has a steering group that meets monthly and a K-12 subcommittee that is already making in roads into schools in the region. Through a potential grant from the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board TUMMA hopes to have a staff person on board this summer. This position will be housed in Western Technical College’s new Integrated Technology Center. The MRPPC has been providing technical and administrative support to EMMA - TUMMA since 2006. This support to this private non-profit 501 (c) (6) corporation is provided because manufacturing is the region’s leader in private sector jobs with 24,690 of 196,013 jobs. Manufacturing also provides annual earnings of about \$8,000 more per employee than the average employee earnings, plus manufacturing’s strong supply chain purchases go on to benefit retailing, transportation, education, health care, restaurants, lodging, construction businesses and other business sectors in the region.

Three Sites in La Crosse County are Golden Shovel Ready.

With funding provided by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) to the 7 Rivers Alliance and La Crosse County the “Golden Shovel” Program in Western Wisconsin began in 2015. The program identifies business sites that are development ready and can be closed and sold quickly. “Development Ready” means decisions on price and zoning have been made and any development restraints such as floodplain, environmental concerns, historical site or building issues, public infrastructure, compatibility with surrounding landowners, and land uses have been resolved. These resolved subjects are then documented in writing through the proper authorities. The MRRPC was designated as the Golden Shovel Site Reviewer to make sure all the sites submitted for the Golden Shovel designation meet the criteria and then certify that they are development ready. Once designated a Golden Shovel Site, the 7 Rivers Alliance will market the site. The 7 Rivers Alliance will provide a consultant to work with La Crosse County to collect the necessary information and provide any technical assistance needed during the verification process. Over the past year three sites have been designated as Golden Shovel Ready. They are: (1) Lakeview Business Park in West Salem, 132 acres. (2) International Business Park II in La Crosse, 33 acres. (3) 7 Bridges Site in the Village of Holmen, 234 acres.

Farmland Preservation Plans. Counties are required to update their Farmland Preservation Plans to meet the requirements of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Protection Working Land’s Initiative Program. With this process counties are required to designate Farmland Preservation Zoning Districts and/or Agricultural Enterprise Areas in their counties in order for land

The Top 10 Manufacturing and Health Care Occupations Averaged 769 Annual Job Openings in the Region from 2010 thru 2015.

Through EMSI modeling software provided by the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation the MRRPC analyzed the average number of the top 10 or highest demand annual job openings from 2010 through 2015 in the manufacturing and health care industry. These industries were selected because of their economic prominence in the region as evidenced in the tables on page 5. Attracting workers to fill these much needed jobs are becoming increasingly difficult due to the stagnant growth of the region’s labor force. The MRRPC passed a motion at its June 8, 2016 Annual Meeting to work with other regional economic and workforce development organizations in Western Wisconsin, Southeast Minnesota and Northeast Iowa to undertake a study to analyze this economic development problem and develop regional workforce development strategies to help overcome the region’s workforce shortage.

Manufacturing			Health Care		
Occupations	Job Openings	Average Wage	Occupations	Job Openings	Average Wage
Team Assemblers	113	\$15.52	Registered Nurses	161	\$26.42
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	76	\$18.79	Licensed Practical & Vocational Nurses	21	\$18.69
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders, Except Sawing	56	\$14.11	Pharmacy Technicians	14	\$13.64
Packaging & Filling Machine Operators, and Tenders	56	\$14.74	Emergency Medical Techs & Paramedics	13	\$15.68
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	43	\$16.40	Pharmacists	13	\$59.37
First-Line Supervisors of Production & Operating Workers	43	\$25.03	Physicians and Surgeons & all others	12	\$78.91
Machinists	29	\$19.28	Physical Therapists	12	\$37.37
Helpers—Production Workers	29	\$13.17	Dental Hygienists	10	\$31.32
Bakers	25	\$12.29	Family & General Practitioners	10	\$98.45
Food Batchmakers	24	\$13.40	Chiropractors	9	\$39.67
Total	494		Total	275	

2015 MRRPC AUDIT

Mr. Michael Temp, CPA, Tostrud and Temp, S.C. reported the findings of the 2015 Audit at the April 13, 2016, Commission meeting. Mr. Temp stated that the MRRPC was given an unqualified audit opinion, meaning they found that the MRRPC followed generally accepted accounting principles in the preparation of its financial statements and that the financial statements can be relied upon to provide an accurate picture of the Commission’s finances. The audit showed 2015 operating revenues of \$359,656 and operating expenses of \$343,727. The audit also reported total assets of \$385,242 (not including business revolving loan funds) and total liabilities of \$49,519 resulting in the MRRPC having net assets valued at \$335,723 on December 31, 2015. The audit included reports on the four business revolving loan funds the Commission administers. These reports indicated that since the four revolving loan funds’ inception dates, \$4,795,090 has been loaned to businesses and \$519,512 is presently owed to the respective revolving loan funds from businesses.

Thank you Barb Buros for 27 Years of Service to the Mississippi River Region! Barb Buros the MRRPC Administrative Assistant retired on June 9, 2016. We will truly miss her kindness, knowledge, patience and perseverance. We wish you and Gordy the very best in your retirement.

MRRPC COMMISSIONERS

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Population Change, 2000-2015

County	2000 Census ⁽¹⁾	2010 Census ⁽¹⁾	2015 Estimate	% Change from 2000	% Change from 2010
Buffalo	13,804	13,587	13,672	↓ -1.0%	↑ 0.6%
Crawford	17,243	16,644	16,739	↓ -2.9%	↑ 0.6%
Jackson	19,100	20,449	20,735	↑ 8.6%	↑ 1.4%
La Crosse	107,120	114,638	117,054	↑ 9.3%	↑ 2.1%
Monroe	40,899	44,673	45,494	↑ 11.2%	↑ 1.8%
Pepin	7,213	7,469	7,418	↑ 2.8%	↓ -0.7%
Pierce	36,804	41,019	41,251	↑ 12.1%	↑ 0.6%
Trempealeau	27,010	28,816	29,305	↑ 8.5%	↑ 1.7%
Vernon	28,056	29,773	30,049	↑ 7.1%	↑ 0.9%
Region	297,249	317,068	321,717	↑ 8.2%	↑ 1.5%
Brown	226,778	248,007	255,376	↑ 12.6%	↑ 3.0%
Dane	426,526	488,073	508,379	↑ 19.2%	↑ 4.2%
Eau Claire	93,142	98,736	100,973	↑ 8.4%	↑ 2.3%
Juneau	24,316	26,664	26,987	↑ 11.0%	↑ 1.2%
St. Croix	63,155	84,345	86,169	↑ 36.4%	↑ 2.2%
State	5,363,715	5,686,986	5,753,324	↑ 7.3%	↑ 1.2%
Nation	281,421,906	308,745,538	321,418,820	↑ 14.2%	↑ 4.1%

(1) US Census, 2000 & 2010, (2) WI Dept of Admin.—Demographic Services Ctr 2015, (3) Census Bureau Nat'l Population Estimates

Regional Economic Trends

The table on the left shows the Population Change from 2000 through 2015. Overall the Region increased in population since 2000, with Buffalo, Crawford, and Pepin Counties being the only counties to experience a decrease in population since 2000. The Chart on the left shows the changes in population, whether by natural or migration change.

State and Regional Total Employment Trends

Gov't Unit	December 2015	Change from One Year Ago	Change from last month
Buffalo	6,210	↑ 1.7%	↓ -0.1%
Crawford	7,597	↑ 0.0%	↓ -0.2%
Jackson	9,734	↑ 4.0%	↓ -1.2%
La Crosse	64,628	↓ -0.2%	↑ 0.0%
Monroe	21,614	↑ 1.7%	↓ -0.2%
Pepin	3,852	↑ 2.4%	↓ -2.3%
Pierce	23,842	↑ 1.7%	↓ -0.1%
Trempealeau	16,209	↑ 2.6%	↑ 0.5%
Vernon	14,796	↑ 3.5%	↓ -0.5%
Region*	168,482	↑ 1.3%	↓ -0.2%
Brown	136,604	↑ 1.6%	↓ 0.0%
Dane	303,074	↑ 1.0%	↓ -0.7%
Eau Claire	56,555	↑ 0.1%	↓ -0.5%
Juneau	12,838	↑ 3.5%	↓ 0.0%
St. Croix	47,305	↑ 1.3%	↓ -0.1%
Wisconsin	2,972,148	↑ 0.7%	↑ 0.2%
United States	143,137,000	↑ 1.9%	↑ 0.2%

The table above shows total employment increased by 1.3% in the region over the past year. La Crosse County was the only county with a decrease in the total employment over this time period. Trempealeau County was the only county with an increase in employment from November to December 2015.

State and Regional Unemployment Rates Trends

Gov't Unit	December 2015	Change from One Year Ago	Change from last month
Buffalo	5.3%	↓ 0.0%	↓ 1.1%
Crawford	5.6%	↑ -0.6%	↓ 0.7%
Jackson	5.1%	↑ -0.6%	↓ 1.1%
La Crosse	3.7%	↓ 0.0%	↓ 0.1%
Monroe	4.4%	↑ -0.4%	↓ 0.5%
Pepin	4.4%	↑ -0.6%	↓ 1.0%
Pierce	4.1%	↓ 0.1%	↓ 0.5%
Trempealeau	4.1%	↑ -0.3%	↓ 0.8%
Vernon	4.3%	↓ 0.1%	↓ 0.6%
Region*	4.2%	↑ -0.1%	↓ 0.5%
Brown	3.7%	↑ -0.4%	↓ 0.2%
Dane	2.9%	↑ -0.2%	↓ 0.0%
Eau Claire	3.5%	↑ -0.3%	↓ 0.2%
Juneau	5.0%	↑ -1.1%	↓ 0.5%
St. Croix	3.9%	↓ 0.0%	↓ 0.5%
Wisconsin	4.3%	↑ -0.9%	↓ 0.1%
United States	5.0%	↑ -0.8%	↓ 0.0%

The table above shows the Region's unemployment rate is consistently lower than the State and National rates and shows the unemployment rate is down slightly from a year ago.

owners to be eligible to receive Farmland Preservation Tax Credits. Farmland Preservation Plans must also be consistent with a county's comprehensive plan. MRRPC staff is assisting Trempealeau, Crawford and Pepin counties with their updates. The following is a brief update on the status of each plan.

Trempealeau County Farmland Preservation Plan. Staff has compiled economic, land use, and agricultural trend information. These trends are showing increases in frac sand mining operations with permitted acreage growing from 1,309 acres in 2012 to 5,156 acres in 2014. Rising land values accompanied this trend. Farmland increased in price from \$1,500, per acre in 2000 to \$3,800 per acre in 2012. These factors contributed to a decline in the number of farms and land in farms that decreased 17% and 12% respectively from 2002 to 2012. To preserve farmland Farmland Preservation Areas have been designated on maps. Designating these areas is the first step in developing farmland preservation zoning districts and agricultural enterprise areas that allow a \$5 to \$10 property tax credit per acre for preserving farmland. The plan will be submitted to the Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection for their compliance review and then the County will hold a public hearing on the plan this summer prior to voting on the Plan. When the Plan is approved farmers can then apply for farmland preservation property tax credits.

Crawford County Farmland Preservation Plan. Staff is in the process of updating the land use, economic, and agricultural trend information. These trends are showing a decline in agriculture operations but more production per farm. This is evidenced by the reduction in cropland from 2002 to 2012 by over 24% and the number of farms decreasing by 13%, yet the total value of all agricultural sales was almost \$75 million in 2012, well above the 2002 value of \$42 million and 2007 value of \$61 million. Associated with this trend was the reduction in dairy cows and beef cattle in the county that declined 28% and 16% respectively from 2002 to 2012. Two meetings with the towns have been held to explain the planning process. It has been requested that the towns define areas on maps they would like to see included within the farmland preservation areas which is the first step in developing farmland preservation zoning districts and agricultural enterprise areas that allow a \$5 to \$10 property tax credit per acre for preserving farmland in these designated areas. The County Land Use Concerns Committee is also working on drafting goals that are consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan.

Pepin County Farmland Preservation Plan. MRRPC staff assisted in preparing the Pepin County Farmland Preservation Plan. The plan has been approved by the DATCP and a County Board decision on the plan is expected later this year. Like Trempealeau and Crawford counties mentioned above Pepin County is also experiencing a reduction in farm numbers and

land in farms which dropped by 8% and 7% respectively from 2002 to 2012. These declines however did not cause a decrease in agricultural product sales which grew from \$35 million in 2002 to \$71 million in 2012. Soybean production is the major contributor to this growth. To help counter this decline in farmland the plan includes maps for each town identifying farmland preservation areas from which exclusive agricultural districts and agricultural enterprise zones can be designated that allow farmland owners in these areas to be eligible to receive the \$5 to \$10 tax credit per acre.

MRRPC Comprehensive Plan Allows for Additional Grant Scoring Points for Viroqua and Viola. Under the Agricultural Act of 2014 (adopted in 2015) the USDA Rural Development Administration's grant evaluation system now awards additional points for projects that implement strategic economic and community development plans across multijurisdictional areas. The Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission's Regional Comprehensive Plan 2014-2034 was recently used to help the City of Viroqua and Village of Viola successfully score grants and low interest loans. Viroqua was awarded a \$5 million loan and a \$2 million grant for a wastewater treatment plant project and Viola was awarded a \$1.3 million loan and a \$300,000 grant to provide upgrades to their water distribution system.

Trempealeau County Comprehensive Plans. In April 2016, the MRRPC entered into a contract with the County to update comprehensive plans for the towns of Albion, Burnside, Caledonia, Chimney Rock, Dodge, Etrick, Gale, Hale, Lincoln, Pigeon, Preston, Sumner, and Trempealeau. The existing Town plans were adopted in 2007-2008 and are required to be updated every 10 years. The update process will evaluate plan goals and objectives, update statistical information, and review land use maps. The plans are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2017.

Public Transit Study for La Crosse, Monroe, and Trempealeau Counties Underway. La Crosse County continues to explore options to address transportation issues such as congestion, parking, and infrastructure demands. In an effort to evaluate public transportation options, La Crosse County received a Wisconsin Department of Transportation Planning Grant to determine the feasibility of a daily commuter bus service. The commuter bus would provide service to the USH 53 and STH 93 corridor from La Crosse to Arcadia (serving Onalaska, Holmen, Galesville) and the Interstate 90 corridor from La Crosse to Tomah (serving West Salem, Bangor, Rockland, Sparta). In concept the commuter bus would operate much like the SMRT Bus that has been serving Crawford, Vernon and La Crosse Counties since 2012. The feasibility study would help to determine the costs and benefits of providing public transit services to these counties. At the April 13, 2016 bimonthly meeting the MRRPC entered into a contract with La Crosse County to provide assistance in preparing the feasibility study. La Crosse

County will conduct the study in house utilizing county staff with MRRPC assistance. The MRRPC will provide general oversight and coordination for the project. It is anticipated the study will be completed in 2016.

Buffalo, Trempealeau and Crawford County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans to Include Train Derailments River Traffic Hazards Updates. Updating these three counties' Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans is underway to help reduce costs and losses from disasters by analyzing their vulnerabilities to each hazard. These county plans will address 19 natural hazards such as blizzards, tornadoes, flooding, extreme heat, wildfires etc. In addition, the plans will include two manmade disasters of train derailment and river traffic hazards. These will be the first counties in the region to include them in their plans. The plans will also include an inventory of all critical facilities and structures located in the County and map all floodplain residential units, In addition to identifying critical facilities and structures, Communities provide projects and strategies to reduce losses from future disasters. Some examples of these are the city of Fountain City developing an evacuation plan in the event of a train derailment; the Town of Modena installing air conditioning in the Town Hall for residents during extreme heat events; the Town of Waumandee raising Fimian Road above flood level for residents and emergency responders and the countywide need for additional training for emergency response personnel who respond to train derailment.

Multi-Hazard Mitigation Grant Applications. MRRPC staff assisted Monroe and Vernon Counties in preparing applications to the Local Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Assistance funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The grant applications are for updating their existing Multi-Hazards Mitigation Plan. These multi-hazard mitigation plans maintain the county and other participating local governments' eligibility for Federal and State Hazard Mitigation Grant programs.

Outdoor Recreation Planning Contributes to the Region's Quality of Life. It goes without saying that the Mississippi River Region is blessed with an extremely high quality natural resource base. Developing outdoor recreation amenities and facilities therefore play an important part in providing positive quality of life experiences for residents and attracting tourists that many communities and businesses depend on. The MRRPC helps counties and communities with recreation amenity and facility development by preparing outdoor recreation plans that inventory recreational assets, values, and needs that lead to public supported outdoor recreation projects. Having an up to date outdoor recreation plan keeps communities and counties eligible for Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Grants and State Stewardship Grants that help fund outdoor recreation projects. Millions of dollars in grants have been awarded to communities and counties in the region as a result of outdoor recreation planning.

Buffalo and Trempealeau County Outdoor Recreation Plans Being Updated. MRRPC Staff has completed updating the Geopolitical profile (i.e. landscape, local governments, ecological regions), Socio-Economic Information (i.e. population, housing, income); Recreational Activities; and Recreation Resource Inventory (Federal, State and County facilities). Drafts of the plans were sent to the counties for their review. Both counties are in the process of preparing a list of projects to improve outdoor recreation opportunities and quality of life. New data about recreational activity demand from the State of Wisconsin Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2011-2016 is also included in each plan

MRRPC Forms Mississippi River Regional Development Corporation a 501(c)(3) Corporation to Improve Implementation Services to the Region's Communities. This past year the MRRPC formed a regional non-profit to increase access to federal, state, local and private funding sources. Many funding organizations solicit for applications from non-profits. Plus many of these organizations want their funds to be used for things that are consistent with the MRRPC's function and duties and could help the nine county region economically and/or environmentally. With the assistance of two local attorneys the bylaws and articles of incorporation were approved for the Mississippi River Regional Development Corporation in August of 2015. The Internal Revenue Service approved the Corporation as a 501 (c)(3) organization in October 2015.

Oakdale Economic Development Planning Underway. The MRRPC entered into a contract to help the Village of Oakdale administer a State of Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant - Planning Grant. This planning grant will be used to prepare a five year capital improvement plan, undertake a targeted business study, analyze blighted properties and prepare a sidewalk and trail plan for the Village.

Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update Completed. The annual update of the CEDS maintains the region's economic development district designation allowing local governments, institutions and businesses in the region to qualify for U.S. Department of Commerce-Economic Development Administration grant and loan assistance programs. The update provides an assessment of the past year's economic development activities and describes economic trends. Some of the trends in this report are reported below, go to http://www.mrrpc.com/Misc_pdfs/2016_CEDS_May_2016.pdf to view the entire document.

Regional Economic Base Analysis

The two tables below show the major sectors of the economy, based on number of employees and average earnings. Manufacturing is the largest private sector employer and Utilities employees have the highest earning in the Region.

Economic Sectors in MRRPC Counties by Number of Employees, 2015

	Buffalo	Crawford	Jackson	La Crosse	Monroe	Pepin	Pierce	Trempealeau	Vernon	MRRPC Region	Industry Rank in Region
Crop and Animal Production	411	483	723	133	889	231	487	826	527	4,709	11
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	11	<10	129	<10	340	-	149	98	-	727	20
Utilities	79	18	18	402	63	-	43	34	107	764	19
Construction	233	259	857	3,074	963	210	670	547	559	7,371	7
Manufacturing	271	1,691	950	8,132	3,914	162	1,475	6,595	861	24,051	2
Wholesale Trade	226	142	203	3,256	495	230	268	454	843	6,116	9
Retail Trade	278	1,771	782	8,529	2,067	288	929	1,068	1,073	16,784	4
Transportation and Warehousing	794	176	1,073	2,336	2,052	85	472	734	498	8,222	6
Information	36	86	54	943	107	27	49	99	139	1,539	17
Finance and Insurance	155	153	204	3,281	497	85	309	340	285	5,310	10
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	34	44	26	736	95	15	85	70	49	1,153	18
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	95	87	91	1,857	421	66	337	246	233	3,433	13
Management of Companies and Enterprises	13	50	<10	1,699	54	62	22	31	103	2,034	14
Admin/Support & Waste Mgt & Remediation Services	199	305	76	2,680	599	33	159	322	105	4,478	12
Educational Services	12	46	<10	1,598	92	39	90	30	101	2,006	15
Health Care and Social Assistance	273	950	1,117	14,494	1,924	338	818	1,249	1,799	22,962	3
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	40	61	46	997	107	19	199	108	72	1,649	16
Accommodation and Food Services	303	664	613	6,427	1,603	241	1,282	666	694	12,494	5
Other Services (except Public Administration)	127	266	245	3,605	722	72	542	462	371	6,410	8
Government	846	1,218	2,686	9,134	5,155	515	3,650	2,377	1,938	27,520	1

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. (EMSI)

Economic Sectors in MRRPC Counties by Average Earnings per Employee, 2015

	Buffalo	Crawford	Jackson	La Crosse	Monroe	Pepin	Pierce	Trempealeau	Vernon	MRRPC Region	Industry Rank in Region
Crop & Animal Production	\$26,303	\$19,775	\$39,028	\$27,015	\$38,932	\$25,390	\$31,245	\$29,942	\$25,237	\$29,208	13
Mining, Quarrying, & Oil & Gas Extraction	\$53,525	Insf. Data	\$126,395	Insf. Data	\$77,088	\$0	\$75,087	\$71,107	\$0	\$87,419	2
Utilities	\$131,960	\$113,084	\$110,157	\$111,951	\$104,801	\$0	\$93,971	\$56,756	\$112,163	\$104,356	1
Construction	\$33,967	\$29,227	\$84,698	\$57,741	\$54,602	\$47,613	\$38,791	\$37,478	\$31,181	\$46,144	10
Manufacturing	\$41,503	\$57,237	\$63,599	\$57,721	\$50,762	\$45,692	\$59,935	\$53,931	\$46,018	\$52,933	6
Wholesale Trade	\$46,959	\$49,407	\$49,031	\$62,622	\$54,392	\$53,362	\$33,314	\$47,858	\$51,159	\$49,789	8
Retail Trade	\$22,847	\$30,570	\$24,988	\$28,184	\$27,798	\$33,133	\$25,019	\$26,088	\$29,784	\$27,601	16
Transportation & Warehousing	\$54,609	\$45,148	\$47,857	\$59,937	\$52,188	\$44,262	\$57,462	\$64,236	\$33,212	\$50,990	7
Information	\$55,081	\$33,627	\$50,329	\$68,556	\$43,532	\$72,540	\$57,517	\$64,407	\$56,884	\$55,830	4
Finance and Insurance	\$40,655	\$49,204	\$43,740	\$60,143	\$51,093	\$53,548	\$47,353	\$48,254	\$44,610	\$48,733	9
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	\$19,712	\$23,499	\$24,810	\$36,325	\$25,629	\$41,729	\$28,586	\$38,516	\$18,548	\$28,595	15
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	\$33,258	\$28,664	\$29,691	\$59,403	\$50,350	\$48,911	\$43,546	\$35,745	\$43,622	\$41,466	12
Management of Companies & Enterprises	\$45,642	\$51,158	Insf. Data	\$78,802	\$64,429	\$100,844	\$53,038	\$73,253	\$55,195	\$65,295	3
Admin & Support & Waste Mgt & Remediat	\$42,524	\$31,318	\$13,041	\$30,041	\$28,591	\$21,216	\$24,368	\$24,543	\$45,884	\$29,058	14
Educational Services	\$19,958	\$34,573	Insf. Data	\$34,034	\$25,683	\$20,013	\$14,525	\$14,042	\$15,261	\$25,441	17
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$29,983	\$46,063	\$48,845	\$61,027	\$44,108	\$41,688	\$32,247	\$35,159	\$41,537	\$42,295	11
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$16,324	\$14,681	\$10,436	\$17,140	\$15,037	\$18,632	\$14,737	\$12,378	\$15,462	\$14,981	19
Accommodation and Food Services	\$11,801	\$13,593	\$13,681	\$15,129	\$14,614	\$13,514	\$13,150	\$12,693	\$11,245	\$13,269	20
Other Services (except Public Administration)	\$18,013	\$18,532	\$16,629	\$23,352	\$22,700	\$21,385	\$18,388	\$25,001	\$18,854	\$20,317	18
Government	\$54,839	\$57,529	\$56,377	\$61,792	\$65,683	\$44,248	\$54,922	\$48,479	\$44,330	\$54,244	5

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. (EMSI)