

News Release

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Contact: Sue Roe
Office: 651-366-4268
Cell: 651-503-2467
Susan.Roe@state.mn.us

Lake Mille Lacs is designated state's latest Scenic Byway

ST. PAUL, Minn. – The Scenic Byways Commission designated Lake Mille Lacs as the state's newest scenic byway this week. The designation will open up opportunities for increased tourism and promote the region's unique character.

The commission is made up of the Minnesota departments of transportation and natural resources, the Minnesota Historical Society and Explore Minnesota.

"The Scenic Byways Commission has been tremendously successful in preserving and highlighting some of the very best destinations in Minnesota," said Governor Dayton. "Designating Lake Mille Lacs as Minnesota's newest scenic byway corridor will encourage Minnesotans to enjoy a unique part of our state and support the Mille Lacs Area's economic growth and vitality. I encourage all Minnesotans, and visitors beyond our borders, to plan a trip to Mille Lacs and enjoy all that our newest scenic byway has to offer."

The Lake Mille Lacs 68-mile Scenic Byway is the state's 22nd byway. The state's byways comprise 2,948 miles of regionally outstanding scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historic or archaeological significant corridors.

"Scenic byways offer the best of Minnesota, by vehicle, foot or bicycle," said Minnesota Department of Transportation Commissioner Charlie Zelle. "Designating scenic byways increases economic benefits through improved traveler and community services, promotion of tourism and a broadened appreciation of the state's historic and natural resources. We are pleased that Lake Mille Lacs now joins the list of scenic byways."

Work on the designation began about two years ago when the East Central Regional Development Commission and the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission led a grassroots effort to gain support. The two commissions studied the route possibilities, inventoried the prominent features and held public meetings in communities, including tribal communities, to gather input.

"Partnerships were key to getting this historic and popular recreational lake designated as a scenic byway," Zelle said. "The good work of the two development commissions and the support of the Lake Mille Lacs communities made this happen to ensure this northern Minnesota gem will be enhanced and preserved."

All roadways, except one, on the scenic byway are MnDOT-maintained roads. The byway loops around Lake Mille Lacs and includes highways 169, 27, 18 and 47. Shakopee Lake Road, which is a county-owned road, is also part of the loop.

The state's other byways are listed on MnDOT's [Scenic Byways webpage](#).

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