



Great Rivers and Routes Tourism Bureau

200 Piasa Street
Alton, IL

*Serving Madison, Jersey, Calhoun,
Macoupin, Montgomery, & Greene County*

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Tourism Bureau Adds New Community Partners

*East St. Louis, Pontoon Beach, Granite City become part of
Great Rivers & Routes region July 1*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Alton, IL – June 28, 2021) Two Madison County cities along with East St. Louis, located in St. Clair County, have joined the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau, expanding the bureau's member communities to almost 39.

Pontoon Beach and Granite City will be part of the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau effective July 1. East St. Louis will also be a member of the bureau at that time. The addition of Pontoon Beach and Granite City effectively gives the bureau representation of all of Madison County.

The Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau represents six counties in southwest Illinois including Madison, Jersey, Calhoun, Macoupin, Montgomery and Greene. In the past, the bureau shared representation of Madison County with the IllinoisSouth Tourism Bureau. This year, Madison County Board Chairman Kurt Prenzler, signed a certified letter designating the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau as the certified bureau for the county. All three new communities have signed letters of intent signifying they are now represented by the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau.

"The Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau has done a great job bringing tourism to Madison County and the entire region," Prenzler said. "The bureau's holistic approach to tourism and the area in general means they will continue to work hard to make our region shine."

Pontoon Beach Mayor Mike Pagano said making the decision to move under the Great Rivers & Routes tourism umbrella was a way the city can enhance its tourism products.

"We have seen the work the bureau has done over the years and realized Pontoon Beach could benefit from their regional tourism approach," Pagano said. Pontoon Beach has 5 lodging properties along Interstate 270 and is home to the annual Party at the Beach event each summer.

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East St. Louis Mayor Robert Eastern III noted the city is eager to get involved in tourism and focus on economic development.

“East St. Louis has a rich history,” Eastern said. “We want to highlight that and begin to create the tourism products that will bring travelers to our city.” East St. Louis is also home to the Casino Queen casino located on the city’s riverfront along. The city is also home to the House of Miles and the Malcom W. Memorial Park which boasts picturesque views of downtown St. Louis.

“It is an honor to represent our three new communities,” Cory Jobe, President/CEO of the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau said. “We have been diligent in our efforts to promote the area as a regional tourism destination. Being able to include Pontoon Beach, Granite City and East St. Louis gives us more storytelling opportunities with their rich culture and histories along with additional lodging properties, shopping, dining, arts and music.”

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(The Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau is a certified Destination Marketing Organization serving Madison, Jersey, Calhoun, Macoupin, Montgomery and Greene counties. The bureau is dedicated to educating visitors about the region by providing information regarding the area’s history, unique landmarks, recreational opportunities, leisure attractions, special events and scenic marvels.)