

SOUTHERN LAKE HURON ASSESSMENT



Charting the Course for the Bluewater Coast

2010-2012

Rural Heritage and Tourism

Included in this presentation:

- Status and trends
- Priorities and challenges
- Options
- Tools and resources
- Local case studies
 - Bike Routes
 - Port Austin Kayak
 - Blue Water Winery
- Heritage Routes

For more information,
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Status and
Trends

Priorities
and Barriers

Options

Tools and
Resources

Current
Projects

Why People Come to the Thumb



Status and
Trends

Priorities
and Barriers

Options

Tools and
Resources

Current
Projects

Searches for “Michigan Fishing”



Status and
Trends

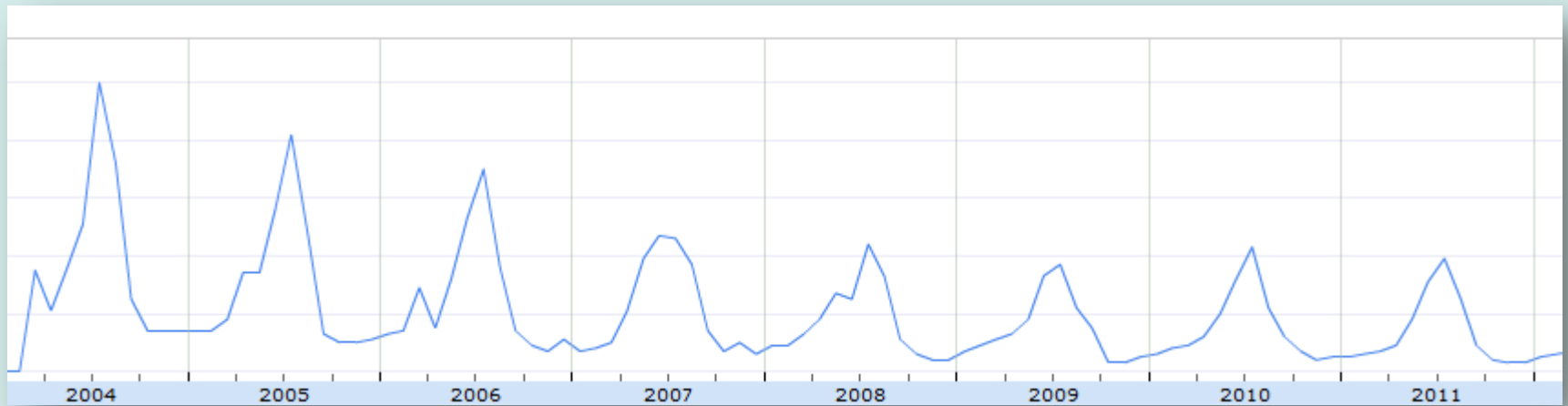
Priorities
and Barriers

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Searches for “Michigan Boating”



Status and
Trends

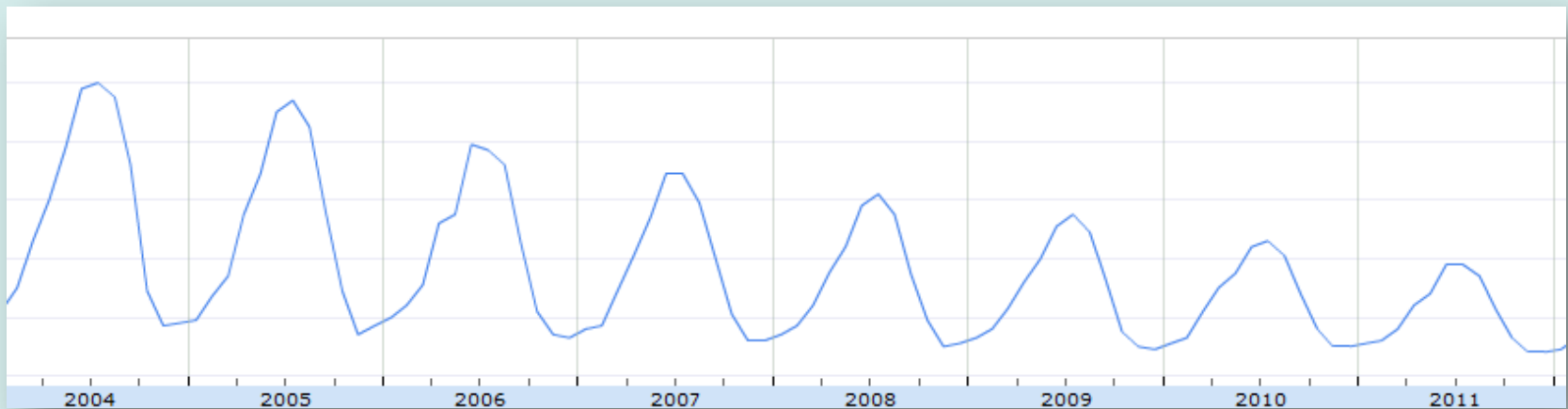
Priorities
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**Status and
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Searches for “Michigan Kayak Fishing”



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Searches for “Michigan Kayaking”



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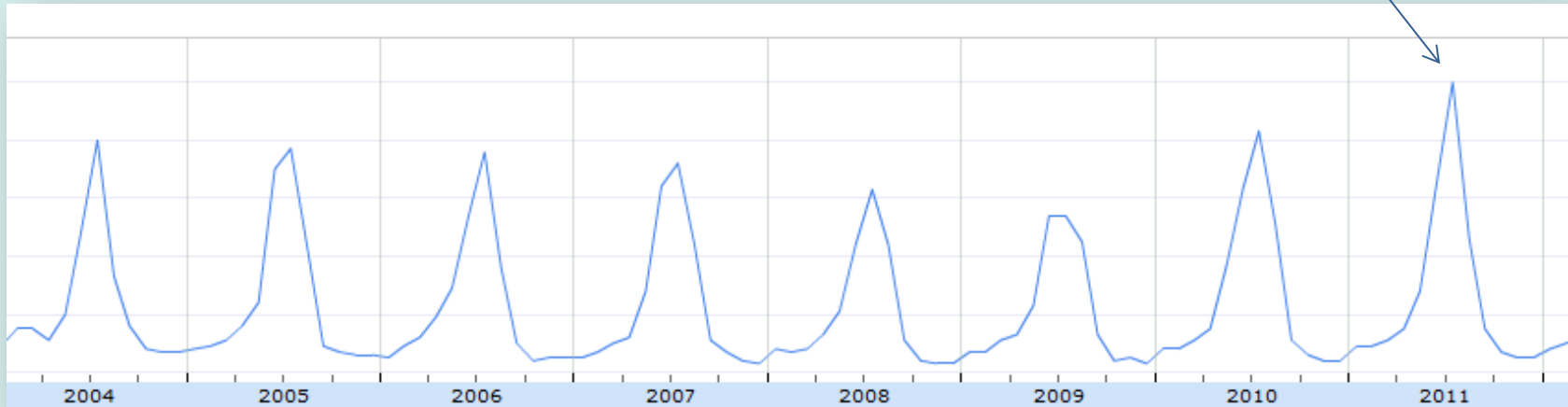
Options

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Searches for “Michigan Beaches”

Highest level of all years



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Searches for “Michigan Breweries”



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Searches for “Michigan Winery”



Status and
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Searches for “Local Food”



Status and
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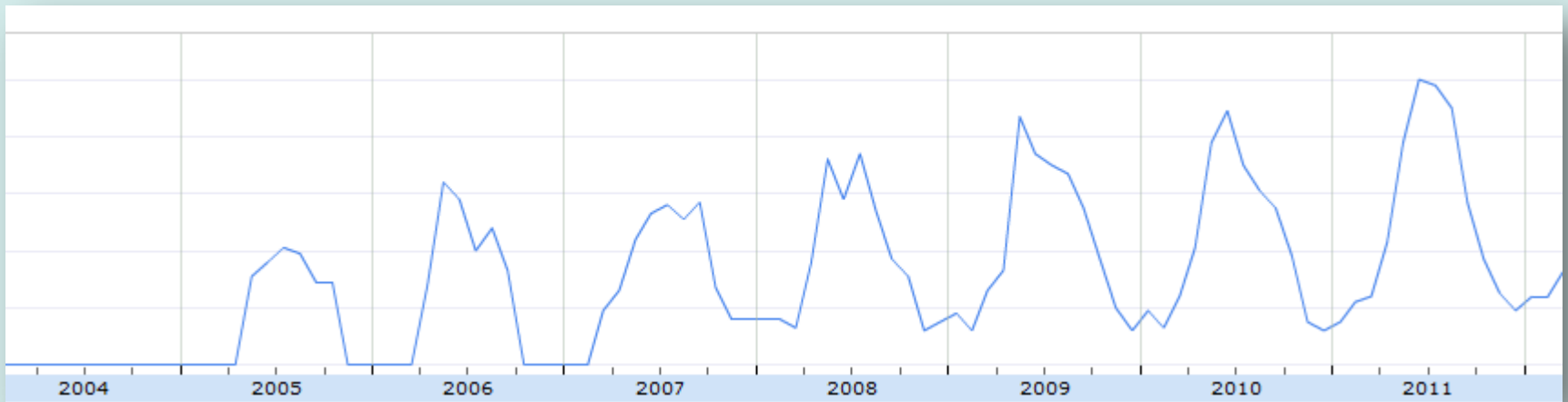
Priorities
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Searches for “Farmer’s Market”



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Priority Strategies

- **Develop different recreational opportunities** Focus attention on recreational activities that capitalize on the region's coastal resources AND will draw tourists to the area.
- **Maintain heritage and rural feel** and developing cool small towns
- **Take a collaborative approach** to packaging the region's tourism/recreation resources to present a more attractive destination to tourists

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Options

- Beaches
- Kayaking
- Biking
- Scuba Diving
- Bird Watching
- Festivals
- Events

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Tools and Resources

- Recreation profiles:

- Kayaking
- Scuba
- Wildlife viewing
- Biking
- Beaches

- MDOT Heritage Route Program
 - Recreational Route



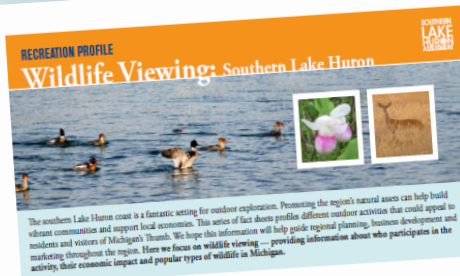
WHY DIVE IN LAKE HURON?

With wildlife, shipwrecks, clear water and nearshore dives, the waters of southern Lake Huron create a unique environment for divers. Underwater life abounds, including colorful nudibranchs and unusual species like the longnose gar. The area offers an easy access by charter or private boat. The fresh water of Lake Huron helps to preserve the wrecks better than recreational as well as technical divers.

How Popular is Scuba Diving?

In 2010, 2.7 million Americans went scuba diving.

Who Scuba Dives?



WHY VIEW WILDLIFE IN THE THUMB?

Humans have long been fascinated by wildlife — whether it is observing a herd of deer, catching a glimpse of a fox, or watching birds on their annual migration. Today more than 70 million Americans seek out wildlife viewing opportunities for pleasure, and many travel away from home to do so. The Great Lakes region has a specific draw. For example, Mape Marsh along Lake Erie in southwest Ohio attracts a wide variety of birds during their spring migration, as well as 100,000 human visitors annually.

Michigan's Thumb offers many wildlife viewing opportunities including observing bird-of-prey, songbird and waterfowl migrations, access to untouched dunes, wetlands, chances to see spawning fish and rare coastal plants, and much more. Many communities have benefited by welcoming wildlife viewers: the Thumb area could also capitalize on wildlife viewing by inviting residents and visitors to share in its biodiversity.

How Popular is Wildlife Viewing?

In 2006, in the U.S.:

- 71 million Americans participated in viewing wildlife.
- Nearly one-third of the U.S. population aged 16 or older were involved.
- 10% of the U.S. population (23 million people) traveled away from home (one or more miles) to view wildlife.

In 2006, in Michigan:

- 3.2 million people observed wildlife in Michigan; most stayed close to home.
- 38% of the Michigan population aged

Who Watches Wildlife?

A snap shot of people who observed birds along the Lake Erie shore in 2011:

- Gender: 51% are female.
- Age: 62% are over 55 years old.
- Income: 54% earn more than \$75,000 a year.
- Education: 86% have a college degree or higher.
- Level of Experience: 24% are casual birders, 51% are serious, 25% are advanced.
- Geography: Bird watchers on Lake Erie traveled 102 to 146 miles on average.

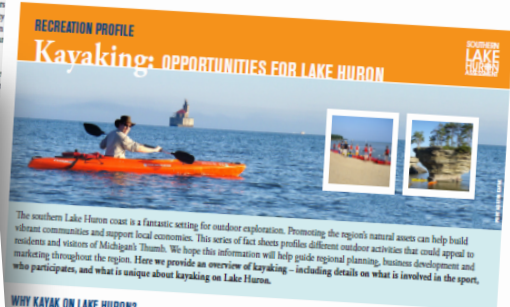
SPENDING RELATED TO WILDLIFE VIEWING IN MICHIGAN (2006)

	Per Participant	Total
Transportation	\$86	\$704 million
Lodging	\$36	\$307 million
Food	\$140	\$1203 million
Miscellaneous trip expenses	\$75	\$630 million
Equipment (binoculars, camera)	\$102	\$856 million
Other expenses, membership dues	\$98	\$827 million
Total	\$435	\$3.6 billion



WHY BIKE IN MICHIGAN'S THUMB?

The southern Lake Huron coast is a fantastic setting for outdoor exploration. Promoting the region's natural assets can help build vibrant communities and support local economies. This series of fact sheets profiles different outdoor activities that could appeal to residents and visitors of Michigan's Thumb. We hope this information will help guide regional planning, business development and marketing throughout the region. Here we provide an overview of biking — including details on who participates, what is unique about biking in the Thumb and how communities can attract cyclists.



WHY KAYAK ON LAKE HURON?

Southern Lake Huron offers a diverse and beautiful shoreline for kayaking, with opportunities to paddle along sandy beaches, unusual rock formations, historic lighthouses, and quiet rivers and wetlands. A 12.5-mile water trail has been developed along the coast between Grand Haven and Leontine, with 44 boat access points. Kayakers can paddle close to shore the whole route, enjoying open water views and safe access to land. Michigan's Thumb Area is also well suited for kayak camping, kayak fishing and surf kayaking, all within an easy drive of southeast Michigan.

How Popular is Kayaking?

In the U.S.:
17.8 million Americans went kayaking at least once in 2008.
18% of Americans age 6 or older were involved in kayaking.

In Michigan:

1% of households participated in kayaking or canoeing in 2007. Kayaking is one of their three important outdoor activities. 10% of households own a canoe or kayak. 1% of U.S. kayakers are Michiganians. Kayakers made an average of 10 outings each in 2008. Michiganians made 1 to 5 outings.

- Geography: 14.1% live in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio or Wisconsin.
- Ethnicity: 82% are white.

Economic Impact

The Outdoor Foundation estimated the annual economic impact of all paddlers (river and lake kayakers, canoeists and rafters) in all of Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio and Indiana. They found:
Participation: 4.6 million
Total-related Spending: \$1.78 billion
Coast-related Spending: \$435 million
Total Tax Revenue: \$236 million
Jobs Supported: 34,900
Source: Outdoor Industry Foundation, 2006

Why do People Kayak?

A recent survey reported the following motives for canoeing, kayaking and rafting:
1% extreme

Industry Outlook

- Nearly half of all Americans participated in some type of outdoor recreation in 2009, and 62% of this group planned to spend more time outdoors in 2010.
- Participation in kayaking has grown over the last few years, and now more Americans paddle kayaks, canoes, rafts than play soccer. Kayaking has a variety of positive aspects, including:
 • Kayaking is a "lifetime sport." It is accessible to people of all ages and ability levels, making it a great family activity.
 • Participation is possible in urban, suburban and rural areas.
 • Little instruction is required, and beginners can be successful.
 • Kayaking can be combined with other activities, such as photography, bird watching, fishing, hunting, camping, hiking or biking.
 • The sport has a low environmental impact.

Status and Trends

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Current Projects

Thumb Area Bike Routes

Carl Osentoski

CREATE – Port Austin Kayak

Chris Boyle

Blue Water Winery

Steve Velloff

M-25 Heritage Route

Chad Gainor



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Heritage Routes

Benefits (from MDOT)

- **Preservation Benefits** Identify, preserve and enhance Michigan's scenic, historic and recreational resources.
 - Promote a greater awareness of and appreciation for those resources.
 - Provide an opportunity for growth management within a corridor by encouraging appropriate development.
 - Provide an opportunity to manage the traveler/tourist impact on resources.
- **Economic Benefits** Attract visitors, who bring additional revenues, enhancing economic activity in the region.
 - Attract new businesses.
 - Enhance existing jobs and create new jobs.
- **Community Benefits** Provide a Vision for the Future, uniting those who share that vision.
 - Enhance the local, regional and state image on a national level.
 - Identify, promote and preserve community uniqueness, enhancing community appeal.
 - Enhance the quality of life in the community.
- **Education Benefits** Provide an education for future generations by example.
 - Opportunity to share ideas, information, research and lessons.
 - Provide an effective hands-on teaching tool.
 - Establish an education network.

Other Benefits

- Priority MDOT funding for communities on routes
- Defines region as a destination
- Inventories, categorizes and promotes resources, businesses and attractions
- Helps identify gaps in tourism product
- Establishes a theme
- Helps promotion and branding
- Fosters structure for regional collaboration

Type of Heritage Routes

- **Scenic (5 in MI)**
 - *A state highway having outstanding natural beauty*
- **Historic (7 in MI)**
 - *A state highway having outstanding historic buildings and resources along its length*
- **Recreational (5 in MI)**
 - *A state highway maintained to serve the recreational driver as well as to capture that recreational setting of the facility or area itself, and set the mood for the recreational experience*

Criteria

- Local Support
- Logical Section
- Management Plan

Scenic

- Regional Attributes
- Visual Quality
- Adjacent Land Use (not commercial or industrial)

Historic

- Nat'l Register Quality
- # of resources
- Visibility
- Setting

Recreational

- Trip purpose (predominant use for rec/tourism)
- Areas/Activities served
- Roadside environment

Application Process

- Local government support
- Pre-application (Short and describes noteworthy qualities)
- If potential, full application
 - Application
 - Evidence of eligibility
 - Local government support
 - Narrative description of project
 - Route location maps/photos
 - Roadside inventory forms
 - Management Plan
 - Goals for protection, preservation and enhancement of resources.
 - List of existing and potential mgt. issues, problems and needs.
 - Corridor Mgt. Plan (commitment to things such as regulation of land use, detailed site planning, traffic controls, etc.)
 - Appropriate illustrations
 - Plan for local promotion

Next Steps

- Gather local support
- Nominating Team
- Pre-application

Heritage Routes

What are Heritage Routes?

Heritage Routes are a way to not only protect the highways that receive the designation, but also a way to preserve and respect the areas that these highways travel through. This is done by officially recognizing the highway as having some recreational, historical, or scenic value.

What benefits do they provide?

The Michigan Department of Transportation designates four categories of potential benefits.

1. Preservation
2. Economic
3. Community
4. Education

What is the process for a road to be designated as a Heritage Route?

Getting a highway designated as a heritage route is initially a rather simple process that can be started by a government entity or a private organization or individual working with a government entity by filling out a simple pre-application form. MDOT will then make a determination as to whether a lengthier, formal application should then be filled out.

How are heritage routes selected?

A heritage route will eventually be selected based on both general and specific criteria:

General→Local Support, Management Plan, and Logical Section

Specific→Would it be a scenic, recreational, or historic route?

Any Heritage Routes in the Thumb area?

Currently, only two highways in the Thumb area have received the designation as heritage routes:

M-15 Recreational Heritage Route “Pathway to Family Fun”

Running along the Western edge of the Thumb, M-15 is designated as a heritage route running from Clarkston in the south to Bay City in the north. A website (<http://www.m15heritageroute.com/index.html>) provides information on different events and businesses along the highway.

Bay City’s Heritage Route

A grassroots effort in 1997 succeeded in getting 1.5 miles of M-25 running through Bay City officially designated as a historic heritage route. The rest of M-25 has received no such designation, even though it closely follows the coast of Lake Huron. It may be a viable candidate to receive designation.

DISCOVER HERITAGE ROUTE 23



The Huron Shores Heritage Route is a 200 mile strip of highway that runs along Lake Huron in the Northern part of the Lower Peninsula. It has a variety of different attractions, including 34 different biking and hiking trails and 10 access points to water trails.

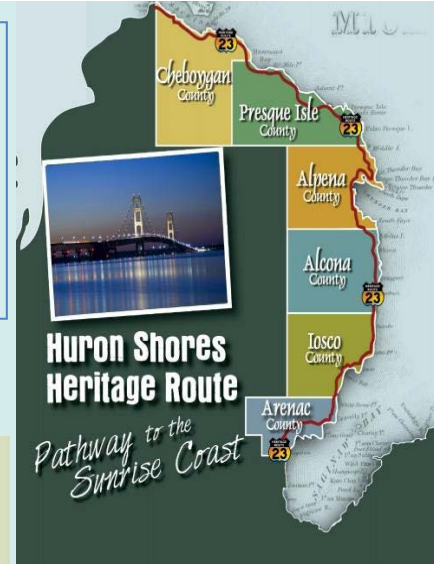


Image found at: <http://us23heritageroute.org/>

Plan Your Trip

When will you arrive here?

Arrive On Depart On

What are you interested in?

Type a word, for example swimming or pizza.

Or, choose attractions or activities:

Click one or more items.

Attractions	Activities
<input type="checkbox"/> Access to River, Lake or Stream	<input type="checkbox"/> Bowling
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Boating
<input type="checkbox"/> Amusement Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Fishing
<input type="checkbox"/> Auto	<input type="checkbox"/> Kayaking
<input type="checkbox"/> Beach	<input type="checkbox"/> Sailing
<input type="checkbox"/> Birding Sites	<input type="checkbox"/> Scuba Diving
<input type="checkbox"/> Boat Launch	<input type="checkbox"/> Go-Karts
<input type="checkbox"/> Campground	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Tag or Paint Ball
<input type="checkbox"/> Culture	<input type="checkbox"/> Petting Zoos
<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Kite Boarding
<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/> Swimming
<input type="checkbox"/> Food	<input type="checkbox"/> Improved Canoeing
<input type="checkbox"/> Golf Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Rustic Camping
<input type="checkbox"/> Guide	<input type="checkbox"/> Golfing

Image adapted from: <http://us23heritageroute.org/tripplanner.asp?ait=us>

The website for Heritage Route 23 is designed to make planning an ideal trip easy. The information available ranges from restaurants and lodging to bird migration waypoints.