

# Iowa Rivers Revival

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## Clinton Named Iowa “River Town of the Year”

**Iowa Rivers Revival: “We hail Clinton’s efforts to preserve its rich history, promote river enjoyment, and protect the Mississippi with strong environmental projects.”**

**Clinton, Iowa.** Iowa Rivers Revival, a non-profit group that advocates for rivers, has named Clinton “River Town of the Year” for 2016.

This year’s award recognizes Clinton especially for tackling difficult water-quality challenges at the same time it promotes river recreation, boating and fishing, recreational trails, wildlife watching, river history sites, and other river-centered activities.

“Clinton celebrates its past as a river town, enjoys the present, and prepares for the future,” said Jerry Peckumn, Chairman of Iowa Rivers Revival (IRR).

“We are especially impressed with Clinton’s forward-looking efforts to protect the environment, improve waste water going into the Mississippi, and reduce storm water and pollutants discharging to the river,” Peckumn said.

Iowa Rivers Revival is presenting the “River Town of the Year” award at a reception Friday morning in Clinton (10:30 a.m., 721 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> St.). Mayor Mark Vulich and other leaders are accepting the award on behalf of Clinton.

### **Iowa Rivers Revival pointed to several key river-related projects in and near Clinton:**

- **The Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility** is a model for Iowa, IRR said. It uses new “biological nutrient removal” technology (BNR) to reclaim *waste water* and reduce nutrient pollution discharges to the Mississippi. It reduces harm to marine life in the river. It is a collaborative regional facility (with nearby Camanche and Low Moor) that saves millions of dollars, spreads benefits, and puts the three communities in good position as new strategies and regulations emerge to reduce nutrient pollution.
- **The Main Avenue Green Infrastructure Project** is a recently-completed, \$1.2 million project improving *storm water* retention, treatment and filtering. It will result in reduced discharges to the Mississippi of bacteria, and solid, metal and nutrient pollution. The Green

Infrastructure Project includes permeable brick parking areas, rain gardens and barrels, bio-retention cells, a bio-swale, tree plantings, and soil-quality restoration. Half the funding for the Project was provided by the Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR).

- **Cultural and Historic Preservation Efforts.** Clinton’s Sawmill Museum (a designated Great River Road Interpretive Center) tells the story of Clinton being the “Lumber Capital of the World” in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The Clinton Area Showboat Theatre hosts a summer repertory theater in a restored old paddle wheeler on the river-front levee.
- **Connecting with the Mighty Mississippi.** The Discovery Recreational Trail and Mississippi River Trail now total 12 miles for bicycle riders, runners, walkers and watchers along the river. There are four boat ramps, a new handicap-accessible fishing pier, and Clinton Marina with slips and services for 150 boats.
- **Celebrating nature.** Clinton’s Soaring Eagle Nature Center (a Silos & Smokestacks “Emerging Site”) is a great resource for public activities and educational activities with area schools. There is an Annual Bald Eagle Watch each January. Eagle Point Park is 200-acre city park with high bluffs and a 1937 stone tower with wonderful views of the Mississippi.
- **Welcoming visitors.** Events and amenities attract visitors and residents. Clinton hosts fishing tournaments, and the Class-A baseball “LumberKings.” In 2015, Clinton became a tour stop for the “American Queen” Steamboat, welcoming visitors to local shops, family farms and historic sites. The River Edge Zone offers fine dining -- and fine Mississippi River views.
- **Encouraging volunteers and community involvement.** Clinton hosts river-front cleanups in Spring and Fall, with volunteers from the community, Fire Department, City of Clinton, Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Clinton Marina. Most of the events and activities mentioned above rely heavily upon volunteers.

Peckumn said one quality seems to be at work in every community that has been named River Town of the Year. “Cooperation and collaboration are crucial,” said Peckumn, the IRR Chair.

“All these efforts in Clinton are characterized by a rich mix of public and private cooperation, and partnerships between city, county, state and U.S. governments, other public agencies, businesses, organizations, and volunteers. That’s how communities embrace their rivers and become River Town of the Year,” Peckumn said. “This award recognizes Clinton and all its partners.”

Peckumn noted, for example, that Clinton worked with the Iowa DNR on the Wastewater Reclamation Facility – and with Camanche and Low Moor. The DNR provided half the funding for the Main Ave. Green Infrastructure Project. The Annual Bald Eagle Watch is co-hosted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Project, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Lock and Dam 13, and Clinton Community College. “Clinton is cooperating to rebuild its historic connection to the Mississippi,” Peckumn said.

**Iowa Rivers Revival** was founded nine years ago to be a voice for rivers. IRR is committed to helping Iowans work on education and public policy to restore and protect Iowa’s rivers and streams.

**Helpful web sites:** [www.iowarivers.org](http://www.iowarivers.org), [www.cityofclintoniowa.us](http://www.cityofclintoniowa.us), [www.clintoniowatourism.com](http://www.clintoniowatourism.com)

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