



WISCONSIN GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

WISCONSIN'S WATERS



Dawn on the Wisconsin River, from Ferry Bluff State Natural Area

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THE WISCONSIN RIVER

flows west across the Driftless Area on its way to the Mississippi River. Although this region was never covered by glaciers, the river bears testimony to the state's glacial history.

Some 20,000 years ago, glaciers dammed the upper part of the Wisconsin River, creating a huge lake. When the ice retreated, the lake drained catastrophically. Floodwaters sliced through sandstone, swept boulders tens of miles downriver, and filled the valley with sand and gravel.

Today, the steep bluffs, broad floodplain, and numerous sandbars make this stretch of the Wisconsin River a major attraction for recreation.



JANUARY

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DECEMBER

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