



BOOK DETAILS CREATION OF KICKAPOO VALLEY RESERVE

MADISON, Wis. — In the heart of Wisconsin’s beautiful Driftless Area lies an 8,600-acre National Natural Landmark—The Kickapoo Valley Reserve. Its steep ravines, rich forest trails, and pristine river are enjoyed by thousands of outdoor enthusiasts each year. Some 400 plant species and more than 200 bird species call it home, making it an ecological gem. One would imagine this slice of pristine Wisconsin was always a protected public place, except that it wasn’t. After decades of turmoil following the US Army Corps of Engineers proposal to build a dam and lake on the Kickapoo River, people from different cultures and communities and institutions teamed up to make sure it would be a protected place, creating a reserve that both saves the beauty and shares it with everyone.

This fall, Little Creek Press publishes the Reserve’s story in **Protecting Paradise in the Driftless: How the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Came to Be**. This inspiring backstory details why the Kickapoo River still runs wild through the Driftless. Author Marcy West shares the Reserve’s innovative preservation and ecological journey from local-scale grassroots activism to a unique Memorandum of Understanding between the State of Wisconsin and the Ho-Chunk Nation. Further, she explains how the failed dam and lake project ultimately created a model for cross-cultural, multi-institutional grassroots ecological protection and low-impact recreation. As a founding member of the effort and the first executive director for the Kickapoo Reserve Management Board, West offers readers an insider’s perspective on the Reserve’s founding, on the tireless work of the hundreds of volunteers, the state, and the Sovereign Nation that came together to form it, and on the Reserve’s continued success in balancing preservation and recreation.

MORE BOOK INFORMATION

Author Marcy West served as the Executive Director for the Kickapoo Reserve Management Board (KRMB) from 1996-2021. Born and raised in Wisconsin, she’s had a lifelong appreciation for environmental issues. Earning a Natural Resource Management degree at University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point, her career always involved protecting resources and allowed her to never stop exploring rivers, lakes and forests. She and her husband reside in the Kickapoo Valley and manage their piece of paradise for pollinators, wildlife and solitude.

... Marcy West is the perfect person to tell this story, as she helped in the creation, nurtured its birth and led the development of the project which today is considered by all a great success. Her inside knowledge and passion for the project shine through in this great read.

—**Brian Rude**, former Wis. Senate President

West is a thoughtful witness to this wonderful transformation, and her account is a master lesson in coaxing a garden out of a wreck. This is “must” reading: funny, poignant, and inspirational.

—**Paul Robbins**, Dean, Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

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