



## NHL Executive Summary



**Name of Property:** *Goldenrod* (showboat) NHL (withdrawal of NHL designation)

**City, State:** Kampsville, Illinois

**Period of Significance:** 1909-1937

**NHL Criteria:** 1 and 4

**NHL Theme:** III. Expressing Cultural Values  
2. visual and performing arts  
6. popular and traditional culture

**Previous Recognition:** 1967 - Designated an NHL

**National Historic Context:** XX. Theater  
F. Performance Venues (Theater Buildings)

### NHL Significance:

- Showboating was a means of bringing dramatic and musical entertainment to frontier families who lived along the great rivers of America. The *Goldenrod* Showboat was built in 1909 during the second great period of showboating.
- The largest, most elaborately decorated showboat ever constructed, *Goldenrod* drew large crowds across some fifteen Midwestern states each season.
- In 1937, *Goldenrod* docked permanently in St. Louis and was still there at the time of her NHL designation in 1967. She was operating as a theater specializing in the traditional melodramas of the late showboating period.



**Integrity:**

- Safety concerns forced *Goldenrod's* closure in 2001. She was sold to a preservation non-profit group in 2003, which moved the vessel to the Illinois River outside of Kampsville, Illinois in 2008.
- Preservation efforts continued until 2015 when the *Goldenrod* sustained hull damage. The following year, effects of flood damage ended all hope of restoration of the vessel.
- On October 21, 2017, an early morning fire destroyed the *Goldenrod* Showboat. The vessel burned to the hull, which was then sold for scrap.
- This NHL has lost its historical integrity and the qualities which originally led it to be designated have been destroyed.

**Owner of Property:** Pool 24 Tug Service, Kampsville, Illinois

**Acreage of Property:** Less than one acre

**Origins of Nomination:** The loss of *Goldenrod* was reported to the (legacy) NPS Midwest Regional Office. The NHL staff recommended consideration of the property for withdrawal of its NHL designation.

**Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:** By withdrawing the NHL designation of this property which no longer meets the criteria for designation, the NPS will be demonstrating its willingness to maintain the integrity of the list of properties of exceptional national significance in the nation's history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture.

**Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:** None known.



**Public Comments (received as of August 21, 2023):** None.

**Landmarks Committee Comments:**

- Committee had no substantial comments.

**Landmarks Committee Recommendation:**

The Committee recommends that the National Park System Advisory Board recommend to the Secretary of the Interior the withdrawal of the National Historic Landmark designation for *Goldenrod* Showboat in Kampsville, Calhoun County, Illinois, because the property has lost its historical integrity and the qualities which originally led it to be designated as an NHL.

**Advisory Board Recommendation:** The National Park System Advisory Board recommends to the Secretary of the Interior the withdrawal of the National Historic Landmark designation for *Goldenrod* Showboat in Kampsville, Calhoun County, Illinois.