state's serious environmental problems. These personal stories thus shed intimate light on the challenges and joys of initiatives like altering one's own land use practices to reduce soil erosion and sequester carbon, organizing river clean-up days, developing Clean Energy Districts, educating others about fens, and cofounding a wildlife rehabilitation center, among many others.

The book concludes with a "Call to Action" by University of Iowa professor Jerald L. Schnoor. Despite the serious environmental challenges that the book unflinchingly lays out, Schnoor's chapter urges readers to take heart and grasp the potential of this moment. Schnoor writes: "Iowans have a unique opportunity and an obligation to succeed with regenerative agriculture, to slow and infiltrate our rainfall, to incorporate atmospheric carbon into our soil, to enhance our landscape's native biodiversity, and to export all that we learn to our global community" (260). In that sense, Mutel's edited volume concludes by urging readers not only to enact and support the strategies outlined in the book but also to see themselves as the vanguard of a renewed land ethic, following Aldo Leopold.

Written in an accessible style, the chapters in this edited collection provide an excellent, if not worrisome, account of Iowa's most pressing environmental problems. Even readers who lack natural science backgrounds will be able make sense of the material, which renders the book's accessibility among its greatest strengths. A "clarion call for the systemic transformation of our uses of Iowa's soil, water, air, and biodiversity" (257), this volume makes it clear that both political will and scientific data are needed to improve the state's ecological health. With its sense of wistful possibility and nod to many kinds of readers, Mutel's book is certain to recruit more Iowans to this cause.

Illinois Trails and Traces: Portraits and Stories along the State's Historic Routes, text by Gary Marx, photographs by Daniel Overturf. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2022. xiii, 266 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $29.95 paperback.

Reviewer Michael Plummer is Historic Sites Manager with the State Historical Society of Iowa. A graduate of Loyola University Maryland and the University of Vermont, his career has included roles in public history, historic preservation, and facilities management.

Author Gary Marx and photographer Daniel Overturf guide readers of *Illinois Trails and Traces* on an exploration of the pathways that have shaped Illinois. Through Marx's well-researched and insightful text and

Overturf's striking photography, the book gives depth and texture to both the city and countryside, past and present.

The book is organized into ten chapters in a roughly chronological manner, with each chapter focusing on a trail type, why it was created, and why people followed it. Throughout, the author does a commendable job of connecting the past to the present. For example, today's drivers may not realize the interstate they're driving on follows the path of an early twentieth-century motor route, which followed a nineteenth-century wagon road, which was influenced by an eighteenth-century buffalo trace with its origins in time immemorial.

Trail types covered in the book include those formed by natural forces, American Indians, euro-American exploration, warfare, and settlement, and technologies like railroads and the automobile. Although Illinois is the focus of the book, similar forces shaped much of the Midwest and readers familiar with Iowa's history will be able to draw parallels west of the Mississippi.

Each chapter ends with a section entitled "A Trail of Place Names" containing settlements, communities, roads, rivers, and natural features that take their names from individuals or events worthy of memory, prominent aspects of the landscape, or from Native American words. These lists are a reminder that history is not only down the trail but also surrounds us and is recorded on the land through the names we give to places and things. Many of the Illinois place names that are listed are also present in Iowa: Fayette, Jasper, and Warren Counties just to name a few. Full-page photographs also end each chapter, which show a contemporary view of a location discussed in the chapter. The photos return the reader to the present and provide a visual connection to the place.

In each chapter, vignettes tie historical trails to the experiences of individuals currently living along the wayside. The vignettes, along with Overturf's photography, demonstrate that these pathways remain alive and continue to influence the state's evolution. Here the book leans close to travel writing, in the best tradition of writers like William Least Heat-Moon. The vignettes are a reminder that the past and present are never really separate but are part of an intertwined continuity.

The book is at its best when text and photographs combine to evoke a sense of place and authenticity within the reader. The intra-chapter vignettes bring texture and humanity to the history. One in particular, which weaves together the Chicago suburbs, the Tuskegee Airmen, and Lt. Uhura from *Star Trek*, is a must-read. The author also does well to note that not all trails are happy trails, spending time discussing trails followed by those fleeing enslavement and racial inequality and the forced relocation of Native Americans.

A few maps are included at the start of the book, which were useful for setting the stage, but at times later in the book this reviewer felt a bit lost, especially when reading about parts of the state where my geographic familiarity isn't as strong. More maps, perhaps one leading each chapter, could have helped alleviate this issue.

However, this is a minor complaint. All in all, whether the book remains in the comforts of a home or rides shotgun down a dusty country road, Marx and Overturf have given readers a useful guidebook for those looking to explore Illinois' trails of yesterday and their relation to the landscape of today.

The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories, edited by Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021. xviii, 372 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $99.00 hardcover, $30.00 paperback, $30.00 e-book.

Reviewer Camden Burd is an assistant professor of history at Eastern Illinois University. His work focuses on U.S. environmental history during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and has focused on eco-tourism in the Upper Midwest and plant nurseries in Rochester, New York.

The Great Plains is a region historically defined by its environmental extremes. It is at once a landscape whose history shares the hopeful optimism of early sodbusting and the harsh extremes of the dustbowl; the dual realities of the near extermination of American bison and the proliferation of cattle; a region where drought is common—wildfires too—even when vast aquifers of water lie beneath the surface. But the problem with histories of environmental extremes is that those stories miss the vast in-between. They overshadow how human beings have historically inhabited the region through adaptation, technological change, and resilience. It is those stories and themes that drive the contributing authors of *The Greater Plains: Rethinking a Region's Environmental Histories*. In this collection, contributors push readers to move beyond a dichotomous interpretation of the region. The history of the Great Plains is neither a whiggish celebration of pioneering spirit or a brutal story of exploitation and environmental degradation. The Great*er* Plains, as editors Brian Frehner and Kathleen A. Brosnan call it, "is a region where adaptation to changing environments advances our understanding beyond dust, drought, and declension"(xv). Such a narrow focus, the contributors demonstrate, is a failure to know this region in its full historical and environmental complexity.

The essays are divided into four sections focusing on key environmental themes of the Great Plains region: indigeneity and grassland