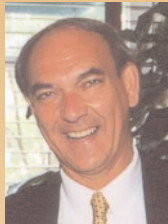


THE NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM AT FIFTEEN: LOOKING BACK AND MOVING FORWARD



TELE-WORKSHOP SPOTLIGHT SPEAKERS



Derrick Crandall
President and Chief Executive Officer
American Recreation Coalition
1225 New York Avenue NW,
Suite 450
Washington, D.C. 20005-6405
Phone: (202) 682-9530
E-mail: derrick@funoutdoors.com
Web: www.funoutdoors.com

Since 1981, Derrick Crandall has served as President and Chief Executive Officer of the American Recreation Coalition (ARC), a Washington-based nonprofit organization formed in 1979 to catalyze public/private partnerships to enhance and protect outdoor recreational opportunities and the resources upon which such experiences are based. Mr. Crandall is the Executive Vice President of The Recreation Roundtable and serves as Co-Chair of the National Recreation Lakes Coalition, the Scenic Byways Coalition and the Coalition for Recreational Trails as well as Treasurer of the American League of Anglers and Boaters. ARC was an initial champion for the National Scenic Byways Program.



Kevin Fry
President
Scenic America
1634 I Street NW, Suite 510
Washington, D.C. 20006
Phone: (202) 638-0550
E-mail: fry@scenic.org
Web: www.scenic.org

Kevin Fry is President of Scenic America, an early champion of the National Scenic Byways Program. Scenic America and its State affiliates help citizens and elected officials take charge of how they want their communities to look and achieve their vision for their communities' futures. Scenic America advocates local, State and Federal laws that help protect and enhance the natural beauty and distinctive community character. It is a leading force in the development of byway corridor management plans and a national advocate for context-sensitive design for transportation projects.

BYWAYS 2021: 15TH ANNIVERSARY OPPORTUNITIES

The National Scenic Byways Program's 15th anniversary in December 2006 presents a golden opportunity to give the Program new momentum, to showcase its considerable achievements, nurture new champions and outline new Byway

initiatives with a re-energized national coalition and grassroots support.

America's Byways[®] Resource Center is working with the American Recreation Coalition, Scenic America and other national advocates of the National Scenic Byways Program to leverage the 15th anniversary year as mile-marker along the road to another 15 years of success.

Called Byways 2021 to reflect its strong focus on the future, the effort will work toward improving access to stories of Byways' accomplishments, while also striving to develop a shared vision for the goals and priorities of the Program for the next fifteen years.

Derrick Crandall of the American Recreation Coalition (ARC) and Kevin Fry of Scenic America discussed plans for Byways 2021, and ways for you to participate in building a better byways program.

A HISTORY OF SUCCESS

Derrick began by noting that the National Scenic Byways Program has a long history of interest and support. According to him, Dr. David Levin proposed developing a national system of scenic roads and byways in early 1966. Congress and various

transportation-related organizations showed some interest, but couldn't come to a consensus on what that system might be like.

Derrick joined the effort to pursue a byway system in the 1970s. "We ran smack into the energy crunch," Derrick said.

Then in the mid-1980s, President Reagan's

Commission on Americans Outdoors again noted that America needed a system of parkways. The diverse group of 15 people

interested in conservation and recreation oversaw

research that revealed recreational driving was a primary leisure time activity. The group also realized that automobile tourists followed routes that typically crossed the jurisdictions of several agencies and involved stops at multiple destinations. The commission recommended pursuing roads as part of a national recreation agenda.

The first major scenic byway effort soon followed, which was co-sponsored by FHWA and AASHTO. It brought together another diverse group of representatives in 1988 to map out a proposal. The timing



finally seemed right, as several members of Congress and President George H.W. Bush were receptive to the idea. Mr. Bush branded the collection “the roads Americans love” and recognized the need to protect and preserve the routes.

“We learned a lot between 1988 and 1991,” said Derrick, noting that Congress was looking at new post-interstate policy in 1990-91. “With the December 1991 ISTEA [Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act] legislation, America had a new approach to transportation that looked beyond highways.”

The Byways Advisory Committee in 1992 authorized a study and helped propel the two-tier system of designations (All-American Roads and National Scenic Byways).

“We were off to a great start. We had support from the USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and others. National magazines gave us attention and explained the significance of the individual Byways and the National Scenic Byways Program,” commented Derrick. “We learned how important it was to build champions.”

Times have changed, however, and political reality is that champions retire. New priorities arise. Coalitions break down or atrophy. Once-exciting programs become static and politically invisible.

“Now fifteen years later, after significant investment of public funds and the recognition of 126 designated National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads, we need to define where we’re going next,” said Derrick. “We need to come together again to shape the next 15 years. The National Scenic Byways Program is really in its infancy, especially compared to something like the 100-year-old USDA Forest Service. We’re molding NSBP for the future. We’re looking at traveler issues, and projecting what they may be in the future. It’s time for us to think big.”

WHAT’S IN THE WORKS

Derrick noted that about 30 organizations have already shown interest again in a coalition to promote Byways. In addition to ARC and Scenic America, organizations committed to Byways 2021 include the National Geographic Society, the American Society of Landscape Architects, American Bus Association, AAA, National Tour Association, AASHTO, Recreation Vehicle Industry Association, and dozens more.

As Byways 2021 gains momentum, the coalition will pursue several components and Derrick highlighted them for byway leaders:

- 1** We’re looking at better ways to recognize the best byway practices and to highlight projects funded by National Scenic Byways Program grants. We want richer content and it should be more accessible through the Internet, so that byway groups can emulate the success stories.
- 2** We’re seeking consensus on what the Program can become by 2021. A blue-ribbon panel, similar to the group in 1988, will listen to your dreams and hear from key organizations to develop a roadmap for success. We want this panel to find ways to capitalize on existing success, not start from scratch. The leaders will explore ways of harnessing technology to make byway

stories readily available, such as iPods and MP3 players, PDAs or other new tools. We expect to announce the panel of seven to nine leaders this spring at a special meeting hosted by Representative Jim Oberstar.

- 3** In October 2006, the panel will send its report and recommendations to the Byways 2021 coalition. Then in December, coinciding with the 15th anniversary of the National Scenic Byways Program celebration event, the panel will present the report and recommendations to the byway community. We’ll host a forum to listen to input from byway leaders and work toward developing consensus on a vision for the next 15 years.

“Then it’s time to put the ideas into action,” Derrick concluded. The National Commission on Surface Transportation and Revenues will begin work in 2007 on a transportation bill that reauthorizes the Program in 2009.

LOCALLY LEVERAGE THE NATIONAL EFFORT

Kevin Fry of Scenic America noted that his organization had been involved with the National Scenic Byways Program since the inception. “We’re extremely eager to see the National Scenic Byways Program grow and strengthen. Byways are crucial to protecting scenic resources—things that are most valuable in landscapes and cityscapes. And Scenic America is a resource for you on conservation issues.”

Kevin noted that every Byway builds grassroots support and finds stories to tell as part of the designation application process. Once a Byway achieves national designation, it has an obligation to its resources and also to the collection.

“We need to pull together to build political and public support,” said Kevin. “Promote your Byway, and also encourage an understanding of the larger collection as a resource for the nation.”

Kevin suggested that Byways leverage the context of the bigger Byway picture.

“It’s easier to build support,” commented Kevin. “Re-emphasize that you’re part of the Program. Maximize your association with the America’s Byways® brand. The 15-year anniversary is a useful tool for promotion. Celebrate locally. Celebrate your own anniversary and successes, too. Look for opportunities to promote your Byway and the America’s Byways® brand. Is it a giant cake in the back of a truck? A parade? Share ideas about ways to celebrate.”

Already, Reader’s Digest, AAA, *Mobil Travel Guide*, and other books and publications have indicated a willingness to once again feature Byways. The National Geographic book on scenic highways is one of their bestsellers, added Derrick, and it’s on the third edition. Local press coverage complements the effort to increase public awareness. “It validates what we’re up to,” said Derrick.

Emphasizing the political process and legislative context of funding, Kevin reminded Byway leaders that it’s crucial to involve local, State, and public officials. Give them positive exposure opportunities, and include their photos with your event press releases. Don’t overlook local politicians, he cautioned, as they form the pool of the legislators who eventually go to Congress.

- Use the America's Byways® brand to emphasize your association with the collection
- Tie into national plans to enhance your local efforts
- Feature the 15th anniversary of the National Scenic Byways Program locally

“The links you make now determine how we grow in the future,” he said.

Kevin also underscored the importance of mobilizing the business community. “Congress listens to economic effects as reported by the business sector,” he said. “Accumulate anecdotal and tangible scientific data on your Byway’s economic effects.”

“Recommit to quality, to your CMP, to recruitment and you’ll be reinvigorating your group and the byway community,” Kevin said.

Derrick concurred and added, “We didn’t get started by PACs or wining and dining. It was our diversity, quality and grassroots support that

appealed to supporters and early champions. We thrive with two strong bases: grassroots and national organizations.”

“We need to know about your best accomplishments over the past 15 years, your dreams for the future and the kind of support you need from the national program to succeed in your efforts,” Derrick said. “The National Scenic Byways Program will continue—we have the support to at least maintain what we’ve accomplished. But now we have the chance to take it to the next level. We need your involvement, support and ideas. Let’s get going!”

Q. Our next big anniversary isn't for a few years. We can promote the National Scenic Byways Program's 15-year anniversary, but what about our own?

A. It's never too soon to start planning your own anniversary celebration and it will dovetail nicely with the NSBP efforts. You know, Walt Disney has a 20-month celebration schedule for its 50th anniversary—don't limit yourself to a date or even a year.

Q. The Midland Trail National Scenic Byway had a successful 15-year anniversary celebration. We also have a good website (www.midlandtrail.com). How can we share what we've learned?

A. The success story there is a good one. Again, the Byways online forum (www.bywaysonline.org) offers a place to share your insights and experiences with other byway leaders, and we expect to improve the information exchange process through our Byways 2021 work.

Q. Wasn't George Schoener supposed to be on this call?

A. Yes, and we missed him! George Schoener, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, was originally scheduled to join the Tele-Workshop but had a last-minute conflict. Notably, George was involved in the 1990 FHWA study, ordered by Congress, of the desirability of a national scenic byways program and was involved as a Congressional staffer in the crafting of ISTEA, which created the program in 1991. More recently, he was actively engaged in the lengthy negotiations that resulted in SAFETEA-LU and its continuation and expansion of the National Scenic Byways Program. George is also likely to be actively involved in the efforts of the new National Commission on Surface Transportation and Revenues scheduled to make summer 2007 recommendations which will shape the 2009 highway reauthorization legislation. He has been a friend to the byway community.

Q. What do we do with data we collect?

A. Share it on the Byways online forum (www.bywaysonline.org). Promote it within press releases, where appropriate. We're planning to create a data repository as part of the efforts to better report accomplishments and encourage others to emulate the successes.

RESOURCES

American Recreation Coalition
www.funoutdoors.com



Scenic America
www.scenic.org



National Geographic Guide to Scenic Highways and Byways
Published by National Geographic

Most Scenic Drives in America
Published by Reader's Digest Editors



America's Byways® Resource Center

provides information, connections and expertise that help build better Byways. State coordinators, local groups, volunteers and organizations with ties to nationally designated scenic Byways look to us for hands-on assistance in planning, preserving, promoting and managing scenic Byways.

Please visit www.bywaysonline.org for
Tele-Workshop Fact Sheet archives.

America's Byways® Resource Center
227 West First Street, Suite 610
Duluth, MN 55802
Tel: 218-625-3469
Fax: 218-625-3333
1-800-4BYWAYS
(1-800-429-9297) Ext. 5
www.bywaysonline.org