

VISTAS



AMERICA'S BYWAYS

MAY/JUNE 2005

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THE CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN:

Your Tool to Spark Continued Progress

At their roots, byways are inherently a transportation function. Obviously, other activities are crucial to the success of byways, including tourism, natural resources, interpretation, fundraising and marketing, to name a few. But it is the very roadway carrying visitors to, through and between the communities that creates the byway corridor. And, in most cases, it is the very roadway that defines the byway's character and essence. Because many people in the grassroots byway community did not come from the transportation world and probably did not study transportation planning and engineering principles, their unique insights from non-transportation perspectives help make the National Scenic Byways Program a truly one-of-a-kind endeavor.

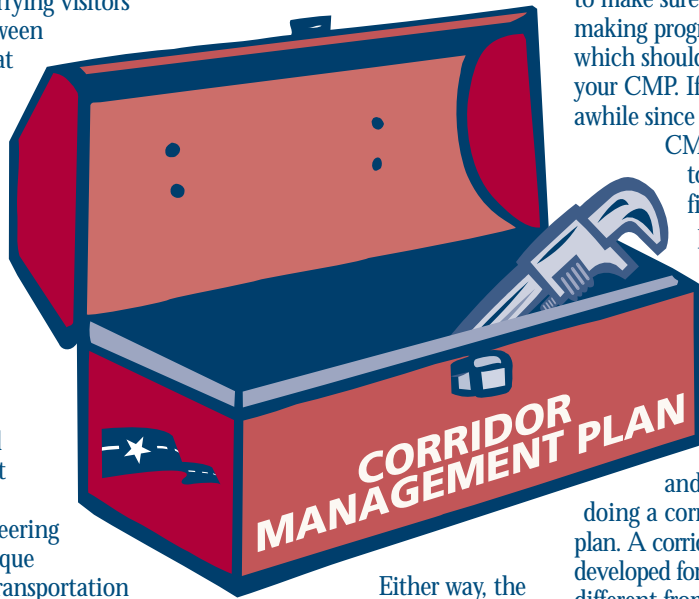
A corridor management plan (CMP) is a major prerequisite to joining the America's Byways™ community, and it's frequently the byway volunteer's first exposure to the world of transportation planning. For previously designated byways, your group has already created a CMP and, most likely, has begun implementing the

strategies contained within those plans. If your group is right in the middle of the nomination process to achieve national designation for your byway, you probably have just completed the CMP.

any planning process. The goals and objectives tend to be long-term and often get put on the back burner. However, as you are likely part of a byway organization, implicitly that means you are also a leader. As a leader it is your responsibility to make sure your organization is making progress toward your vision, which should be highlighted in your CMP. If it has indeed been awhile since you last dug into your CMP, don't fret; it is never too late to stoke the fires of your planning process.

CMP Refresher
In case it has been awhile, or you are new to the byway community, let's review the components and the reasoning behind

doing a corridor management plan. A corridor management plan developed for a byway is substantially different from one created for a non-byway corridor. For instance, DOT may create a CMP for a very busy metropolitan area where the main focus is to alleviate traffic congestion. Or a CMP could be created for a highly residential area to deal with safety concerns from traffic not appropriate for neighborhood areas. Often, other transportation modes are included in a non-byway CMP, such as transit bus, bike/pedestrian and rail, making the plan multi-modal.



Either way, the CMP should outline the strategies you wish to undertake along your byway. If you created your CMP awhile ago, hopefully your planning efforts have not fallen by the wayside. In the byway community, you wear many different hats and often spend a lot of time putting out fires and juggling day-to-day activities. You may have other responsibilities that require immediate attention. That is the inherent difficulty in

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Michelle Johnson,
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Ease on Down the Road: Top Five Reasons for a Good Road Trip

My family and I just returned from a weekend trip. Four and a half hours one way, with three little kids. And surprisingly, it went OK. No screaming fits, no drama, no crying. (And the kids were really good, too.)

When I travel by car for any distances at all, I start to think about taking an even longer road trip. I imagine what I would pack, and what I would snack on, and what music I'd bring to pass the time. I imagine the wind in my hair (course I drive a van, so not much hair-blowing there). I think about the route (do I need a map or do I know the way by heart?). And lastly, the destination (I can't wait to get there!).

Sometimes it's the journey – not the destination – that calls to us. If that's the case, I make sure I have plenty of film aboard to document the joys and events of the journey to save for all eternity. Or something like that. So why do we love road trips? Here are some reasons that come to mind:

#5 MEMORIES

When I asked my colleagues for road trip stories, the response was sort of half-hearted and difficult to understand. Mumbled comments about college or something like that. I'm not sure what that means. Many of you probably have memories of special times with family or friends that occurred on your way to a destination. And sometimes, the events that didn't seem all that great at the time are what we most often remember.

It was July many years ago when just my parents and I headed to all parts of the West. On the third night of a two-week trip, we finished a campfire dinner and took a walk around the campgrounds. I pulled out my brand-new in-line skates and prepared to take a spin. My Dad told me to put "Safety First" and wear wrist and knee guards. I said "Dad, I've been ice skating my whole life, and 'blading is no different than ice skating." Yeah, right. Ten minutes later, as I was lying on the pavement, I gained a rather unpleasant education on blading safety measures. Thankfully, the operation to set my broken wrist went pretty smoothly. I spent the entire trip sporting a neon pink cast (hey, I was in pain!). All we have to do is say "Grand Island, Nebraska" and the memories come flooding back.

#4 FREEDOM

That's the reason Thelma and Louise hit the road. They were in a rut, tired of their current situations, and needed a quick fix. A weekend getaway sounded like the perfect solution. Remember what they wore? Big straw hats and scarves that billowed in the wind. (No van for them.) Unfortunately, various activities turned them into fugitives, and their trip had a rather unexpected—and quite permanent—ending.

My parents take a little less drastic approach to trip planning. They usually have ideas and destinations in mind before they gas up. Sometimes, they just pack and go. When I ask them where they are

going, my Dad will say, "We're heading west on Highway 2 and turning left somewhere." Now that's freedom!

Regardless of your planning style, the desire to change, mix things up, and see different landscapes exists in most of us. The lure of the open road is undeniable and it will get to us sooner or later, whether you plan it or not.

#3 MUSIC

Music is one of the first things I pack in the car for trips. (OK, so it's really the last thing. Mostly, I'm just glad I remembered it at all!) There is music about driving and the open road, and then there is music to hit the road with. Several years ago I attended a byway meeting, and one of the participants told me it took him four Jimmy Buffett CDs to get between his byway and the meeting location. Do you measure time and distance with music?

Music can be a part of a journey or a memory of an event. I remember a family vacation from my childhood when it seemed like all of the radio stations were playing the same hit song—all day long. None of us could stand the song, but there was just no escaping it. Now, years later, whenever I hear that horrible song on the radio, it brings back fond memories of a great family trip. Go figure!

#2 SUMMER

What better time to travel than in summer? The kids are out of school, the weather is great, and you can take a scenic route around the road construction. I'm already looking forward to our annual trip to Michigan to visit my brother and his family. The memories make the 1,000 miles roundtrip with three little kids worthwhile.

We all know that the visitors really come out and experience the byways during these months. You've spent all winter planning events, sites and stories to share with your visitors. Make sure your byway information is up to date on www.byways.org, and get ready to welcome the summer travelers!

#1

ALL ROADS LEAD TO CLEVELAND, OHIO!

How did that get on the list? It's the location for the 2005 National Scenic Byway Conference!

Safe travels!

Rock Road!
and
2005
NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS CONFERENCE
Cruising the Road to Success!



AAA and the Scenic Byways Experience

By Helen Sramek, Director of Government Relations, American Automobile Association (AAA)

Over sixty years ago one of America's premier folklorists penned a song in tribute to the vast scenic beauty of our nation. Reading the familiar lyrics of that Woody Guthrie song calls to mind the images of America's scenic byways. Lush forests, dramatic cliffs, diamond deserts, rolling prairies covered with wildflowers as far as the eye can see, and a long stretch of meandering road known as a byway.

The American Automobile Association (AAA) grasped the importance of scenic byways almost from its beginning. As early as 1906, AAA began recognizing the scenic and aesthetic qualities that were woven among the then-primitive system of roads developing across this vast land. The automobile gave people an opportunity to see the best of America up close and personal.

The AAA Pathfinders Group became our earliest road reporters. These brave individuals lived on the roads, reporting on the route conditions and communicating valuable information to eager travelers. The landscape may have been void of the sophisticated transportation systems we know today, but Americans were eager to see and experience it all. That was true a century ago, and remains true today.

For every traveler who needs to rush from Point A to Point B, there is another who wants to pause and enjoy the more serene and scenic route that allows time for reflection, adventure, education and enjoyment. These latter travelers like to ramble, roam and

embrace the natural beauty that is found on our scenic byways. And, thanks to the National Scenic Byways Program, we have preserved and enhanced a valuable collection of these roads for the benefit of all Americans.

North America is home to an incredibly diverse and beautiful landscape. Every region of the country offers innumerable opportunities that can be found along America's Byways™.

Millions come to AAA to help them with their travel plans.

Not even several summers of record high gas prices have been able to keep Americans from hitting the road. Driving trips, both near and far, remain a welcome respite from Americans' hectic lives. That's why many AAA magazines and websites feature stories on scenic byways.

Early forecasts by the Travel Industry Association of America show that we can look forward to another robust travel season.

active at the local level in promoting individual byways. At the national level, we have joined our colleagues in the byway and recreation communities to support an even stronger National Scenic Byways Program in this year's transportation bill.

It is in the motoring public's best interest that high standards be maintained in designating scenic byways. Federal agencies and their partners must continue to work together to ensure that the scenic byway program remains an outstanding example of public-private partnership.

Providing safe driving tips in and around environmentally sensitive designations and encouraging respect for fellow travelers, no matter what their final destination, remain worthy goals.

The locally based nature of the National Scenic Byways Program gets citizens, groups, businesses and governments working together to preserve their byways. The partners to this endeavor take their hats off to the

countless individual efforts that have grown the Program over the years. Our goal is to ensure its viability long into the future. The American traveler expects that of us.

Let's hope that sixty years from now Mr. Guthrie's lyrics still resonate with new generations of travelers setting forth to experience new adventures along America's Byways. ★



Whether the scenery highlights natural, traditional, cultural or historical elements, byways allow the traveling public to experience America in all its glory. America's Byways do more than just move cars; they tell stories about the American experience.

These American treasures are here for the enjoyment of the traveling public. The good news is that the post-9/11 travel slump has lifted, and Americans have returned to one of their favorite pastimes—driving for pleasure.

TIA predicted nearly 281 million person- trips from March to May 2005—up 1.2 percent from last spring. Barring unforeseen circumstances, AAA has every reason to believe that summer travel will hit record levels this year. And, scenic byways can expect they will see a fair amount of that traffic.

AAA was among the very first partners that helped create the National Scenic Byway Program. We've been proud to be a partner ever since. Some of our clubs are

Below is a summary of the official guidelines, so please consult the *Federal Register* on www.bywaysonline.org to see the actual language of the federal policy. In general, though, a CMP should answer the following five basic questions:

- What are the byway's current conditions?
- What are the goals for the byway?
- What concrete objectives and strategies will move you toward achieving those goals?
- Who will be responsible for carrying out the strategies and objectives?
- When will each of the strategies and objectives be implemented?

But first things first: you should have a vision of what you want or don't want your byway to be in the future. Once your vision is established, you can answer the questions above by defining the current conditions and situation of your byway regarding the roadway itself, the local management and regulations (i.e., zoning ordinances), the intrinsic qualities and the tourism and marketing development efforts.

After you record the current conditions, your organization should establish goals for those same conditions and any other relevant topics. Specific strategies, listing who is responsible, when tactics need to be implemented

and cost estimates finally make up the actual 'plan' section of the corridor management plan. Most of you probably know these things, but it never hurts to review, especially when dealing with a topic that is so important to a byway.

One of the unique features of the National Scenic Byways Program is that, although it's a federal program, it seeks to give implementation and decision-making power to local people and organizations. The CMP is the tool that allows your byway organization to become a local

on the final document that manifests itself as a 'plan'.

In reality, the best plans are those that have torn covers, scribbled notes, ripped pages and are generally inviting to the reader. Similar to a well-shared favorite novel, a compelling plan is far more than a collection of papers.

Think of your plan as a hammer or wrench—a tool to use over and over to take care of the resources that are so near and dear to your heart. You certainly need a hammer to build your house. Likewise, your organization should use the CMP to build your byway's success.

The CMP is your means to define the future of your byway. You may have an idea of what you want that future to be, but unless you have it documented and supported by your stakeholders (via the CMP), that future may never come to fruition. In fact, it is entirely possible that a future that directly conflicts with your vision may transpire. Even though the CMP and the 14 components are required by the federal government, the CMP is your chance to exert local influence onto your treasured resources. However, having that CMP will not alone guarantee success. You need to use it, implement it and adapt it as time goes on. So open it up!

Implementation Strategies
Take your CMP off the shelf and read through it. Re-familiarize yourself with the conditions and situations that faced your byway when the CMP was written.



America's Byways Resource Center has many tools available to help with your planning.

Why did you create a CMP?

Logically, the most obvious answer to why you would create a CMP is to fulfill the requirements outlined in the *Federal Register* to become nationally designated. But are the federal requirements the only reasons why you created a CMP? If the answer is yes, then your byway organization may have missed the point.

grassroots effort. Aside from meeting the 14 planning elements (see below), your group and its stakeholders define and develop the details and direction of your CMP.

The very nature of a CMP implies that your final product is a shiny and glossy document that you are proud to display and show to all. However, we often get hung up

Because byways have unique characteristics, the FHWA requires that a byway seeking national designation develop a CMP that addresses other issues not directly related to transportation. Even if you aren't intending to seek national designation, you cannot go wrong by including these 14 necessary components in your plan.

If you have already completed your plan, you are familiar with these:



1. Corridor map
2. Assessment of the intrinsic qualities
3. Strategies to maintain those qualities
4. A list of the players who will carry out the plan
5. Strategies to address development along your byway
6. Strategies to maximize public participation
7. A general overview of safety issues
8. A plan to accommodate commercial traffic and its impact on other users
9. Strategies to minimize anomalous intrusions to visitor experiences
10. Documentation of compliance with laws regarding outdoor advertising
11. A highway signage plan
12. Marketing plans and strategies
13. Proposals for modifying the roadway
14. Interpretation strategies

In most cases, your vision and mission should not have changed. Remember that the CMP should reflect your vision. Make copies of the important sections and make a point to talk about it at your next byway meeting. Some byways have the CMP as an ongoing agenda item so all organization members can see it progressing.

People in the transportation world often produce implementation reports to show the stakeholders how the planning process is evolving. Think about documenting how you've progressed with your byway's efforts through an implementation report. An implementation report doesn't have to be a shiny, glossy, long-winded, or difficult effort.

Here are some steps for preparing an implementation report.

1. Take your CMP off the shelf and read through it.
2. Note what has changed (specifically regarding the roadway, intrinsic qualities, marketing/tourism efforts).
3. Identify recommendations that have been implemented.
4. Identify recommendations that have yet to be implemented:
 - a. Are they still worthy?
 - b. Do they need to be changed or eliminated?
 - c. Who was responsible? Are they still stakeholders?
5. Identify strategies that need to be created because of changes:
 - a. Identify new issues.
 - b. Identify new players.
6. Summarize the changes in a short Word or Excel file.

You can see that it's not complicated, but it's important. By going through the process above, you can re-connect with organization members, stakeholders and projects. This doesn't have to be an intimidating or pointing-the-fingers process. Simply talking with people proactively about what has and hasn't been accomplished may very well rekindle the fire that will allow you to fulfill your vision. ★



Dear Kate Bolder:

E-mail your questions for Kate to center@byways.org with the words "Be Bold" in the subject line.

Dear Kate:

Our byway organization's members have a problem with our byway leader. She doesn't allow participation at meetings! She does all the talking and makes all the decisions.

The board has a range of skills and experiences, but we feel like our current leader doesn't see our value. I'm afraid we are losing interest and support for the byway organization.

*Signed,
Smart (but no one knows!)*

Dear Whiz Kid,

It's frustrating isn't it? While there are several ways to tackle this issue, here is one approach...

It may be helpful for the group to ask the byway leader about the role of the board and the responsibilities associated with being a member. What are the byway leader's specific responsibilities and accountabilities? You may ask her about what has gone well and what has gone wrong with members in the past. Be careful not to take it personally—it's about events in the past, not the present members. Listen to her concerns, and then quickly move on to discuss specific ways you can be more involved. It will be clear to her that you want to move ahead with action and not dwell on the past. Listen for the "what," not the "who."

You may find out that the board is really just a "rubber stamp" committee—nothing more, nothing less. You should be able to figure this out during the discussion about roles and responsibilities. If this is a formal Board

of Directors, there are legal implications of being a member.

It often helps to boldly ask questions about desired results, but avoid questions that put people on the defense. After all, you won't truly understand what your byway leader is thinking unless you ask. She may appreciate help and gladly share the glory. Maybe some shared work and successfully completed projects over the next several months will build trust and confidence in the team process you want to create.

A helpful resource for byway organizations is *Making the Grassroots Grow: Building and Maintaining Effective Byway Organizations*, a publication from the America's Byways Resource Center (available for download on www.bywaysonline.org). Sometimes it helps to bring in a concerned outside facilitator to get to the core of the problem and help the group agree on next steps. And don't forget to call on your Byways Resource Specialist—they're itchin' to help local byway groups be effective and achieve their goals.

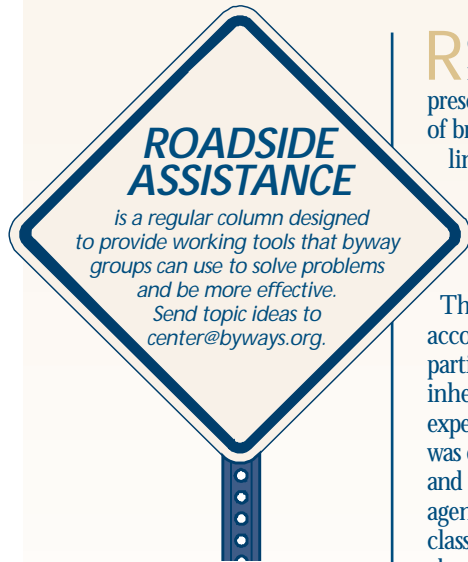
URSMRT,
Kate



Roadside Assistance

Alphabet Soup: A Layperson's Guide to the World of Transportation Acronyms

By Curt Pianalto, Byways Resource Specialist



Our Byways Resource Specialists are here to assist you. Find the Resource Center contact for your state on the Community Web site at www.bywaysonline.org/contacts/rc_contacts.html. Call us toll-free at 1-800-4BYWAYS, Ext. 5., or contact your Byways Resource Specialist directly:

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Recently I attended a Byway meeting where I listened to a presentation on the differences of bridge railing classification lingo between two official transportation agencies, AASHTO and NCHRP. (Not sure what these two stand for? Don't worry! They are explained on the accompanying table.) On this particular Byway, bridges are an inherent part of the visitor's experience. The presentation was direct, easy to understand, and included references to the agencies that created the bridge classifications. What amazed me about the presentation was the fact that it was not given by a transportation planner or engineer from a DOT, nor a professional transportation consultant. The presentation was succinctly delivered by a Byway grassroots volunteer who, on her own time, researched the material and consulted representatives from each of the agencies. She also developed a one-page handout "compiled for grassroots folk who normally don't speak bridge language" to help non-transportation people understand transportation jargon. Kudos to the Indiana National Road Association for its efforts to soften the transportation lingo for the layperson, as the group's efforts inspired this article.

In transportation, acronyms (words formed from the initial letters of a series of words) are used for government agencies, independent organizations, measurements, plans and technologies. You are probably already familiar with the DOT and FHWA acronyms. As someone who has spent a good deal of his life in transportation, I can tell you that the list of transportation acronyms is overwhelming. I can

only imagine how daunting it must be for someone being exposed to them for the first time. And while it is a good idea to have a general understanding of transportation lingo, it is not important to memorize every transportation acronym out there.

This guide is intended to be a resource for you as you work with byways, so keep it handy. But remember: this list is not exhaustive.

You are encouraged to visit the organizations' official websites to ensure accuracy. To find a specific website, try typing in the acronym or organization name on an Internet search engine. For a more extensive list of transportation acronyms, visit the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (alas, another transportation acronym – BTS) at http://www.bts.gov/publications/transportation_acronym_guide/ ★



“This guide is intended to be a resource for you as you work with byways, so keep it handy.”

ACRONYM	SPELLED OUT	DETAILS
BTS	Bureau of Transportation Statistics	Compiles, analyzes and makes accessible information on the nation's transportation systems; collects information on intermodal transportation and other areas; and enhances the quality and effectiveness of DOTs' statistical programs through research, the development of guidelines and the promotion of improvements in data acquisition and use
U.S. DOT	U.S. Department of Transportation	Serves the United States by ensuring a fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient transportation system that meets our vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future. The U.S. DOT has 13 main administrative programs, including the FHWA, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), National Traffic Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA), and others dealing with rail, pipeline, motor carriers, etc.
HTF	Highway Trust Fund	Ensures a dependable source of financing for the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways; a source of funding for the remainder of the Federal-aid Highway Program
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration	Coordinates highway transportation programs in cooperation with states and other partners to enhance the country's safety, economic vitality, quality of life, and the environment; a major administrative division of the U.S. DOT; National Scenic Byways is a discretionary program of the FHWA
ISTEA / TEA 21	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act	Federal legislation authorizing highway, highway safety, transit and other surface transportation programs from 1991-1997; followed by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), from 1998 to 2003
NHI	National Highway Institute	Training arm of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA); provides leadership and resources for the development and delivery of training and education programs to improve the quality of our nation's highway system and its intermodal connections
STP	Surface Transportation Program	Federal program providing funds to states and localities for projects concerning the National Highway System, federal-aid roads or public roads with regard to bridges, safety, car pools and bicycle/pedestrian issues
MUTCD	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices	Document issued by the U.S. DOT to specify the standards by which traffic signs, road markings and signals are designed and installed, including shapes, colors and fonts; all U.S. traffic control devices must generally conform to these standards
MPO / COG	Metropolitan Planning Organization / Council of Governments	Regional transportation planning and policy agency for urban areas with populations larger than 50,000; sometimes locally referred to as a COG
RDC / RPC	Regional Development (Planning) Commission	Regional multi-county planning and development organizations established by the federal government; many byways coexist with RDC/RPC organizations
ADT / AADT	Average Daily Traffic / Average Annual Daily Traffic	Regional multi-county planning and development organizations established by the federal government; many byways coexist with RDC/RPC organizations
LOS	Level of Service	Describes both intersection and free-flow traffic that indicates how traffic is moving; usually given a level A-F, with "A" being ideal and "F" being very poor or stand-still traffic
PCI / PQI	Pavement Condition/Quality Index	Measurement system used by engineers to determine the condition of pavement on specific roads
ROW	Right of Way	Usually wider than the roadway itself to allow for buffers between the road and adjacent land uses; sidewalks, trees, signs, swales and utilities are often placed here; every road has a right of way
V/C	Volume to Capacity Ratio	Measure of traffic on a road (expressed as volume) compared to its designed traffic-carrying capacity; a V/C ratio above 1.0 generally means there is too much traffic for that specific roadway
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials	Nonprofit, nonpartisan association representing highway and transportation departments; represents all five transportation modes; fosters the development, operation and maintenance of an integrated national transportation system
TRB	Transportation Research Board	Serves as an independent advisor to the federal government and others on scientific and technical questions of national importance; has several research divisions, including the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP)
TCM / TDM / TSM	Transportation Control Measures / Transportation Demand Management / Transportation Systems Management	TCM - strategies to achieve local carbon monoxide standards; TDM - strategies to reduce the number of single-occupant-vehicles on local roads; TSM - strategies to increase efficiency, safety and capacity (LOS) of a road without widening the road
TIP / RTP / STIP	Transportation Improvement Program / Regional (TIP) / Statewide (TIP)	TIP - document prepared by an MPO that lists projects to be funded with FHWA/FTA funds for the next one- to three-year period; STIP (STP) - statewide staged, multi-year, multimodal/intermodal listing of transportation projects that includes projects included in TIPs and RTPs
NHS	National Highway System	Approximately 160,000 miles (256,000 kilometers) of roadway important to the nation's economy, defense and mobility

A Conversation With...

Floyd Thompson National Program Leader, USDA Forest Service

1 *What is your background, and what led you to your current position as National Program Leader for the USDA Forest Service?*

From birth to my advanced studies at the University of Massachusetts and then Conway School of Landscape Design, I've been a product of central and western New England landscapes. I am an artist and a planner who finds great inspiration from freshly mowed green pastures rolling beyond rock-maple-framed vistas and old rock walls, piled there by some hopeful farmer in the mid 1800s.

I consider Frederick Law Olmsted one of America's greatest minds and a creative genius. His legacy inspired me to know and value a wild primitive landscape as well as the century-toiled cultural landscapes of my New England youth. Like many New Englanders, my family roots go back through the local landscape to early 1700. Many early family properties in the town I grew up in are still used as bed-and-breakfasts, family farm resorts or new business establishments. I have a volunteer spirit and have not only served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Chile's National Parks in Temuco, Torres Del Paines and Easter Island, but also in the National Volunteer Project in New Mexico and in my local church choir.

I am a landscape architect and recreation planner by training. This year I become a 30-year veteran of government service and proudly serve as the USDA Forest Service National Tourism and Byways Program Leader. I was led to the National Scenic Byways Program because of its potential to inspire people about the landscapes they experience while driving or during their short hikes off the roads set amongst cultural and natural history legacies. I have served 18 years in New Mexico landscapes, in leadership roles at the forest, region and as a District Ranger. I helped champion one of the Forest Service Chief's first National Forest Scenic Byways, Sandia Crest and Turquoise Trail Byway. I see the National Scenic Byways Program as a program that builds up America and rekindles a spirit of awe.

We are a nation that has discovered itself in tandem with a love affair for individual freedom expressed in an automobile and the open road. Even with the gridlock world of our metropolitan areas, the open road and personal experiences with the land through a scenic drive are still possible. The challenge is how to keep the cultural landscape practices alive so the land is preserved for farming, wood lots, maple sugaring and open spaces.

nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. As set forth in law, the mission is to achieve quality land management under the sustainable multiple-use management concept to meet the diverse needs of all people. The Forest Service motto, "Caring for the Land and Serving People," captures the spirit of our mission, which we accomplish through five main activities:

- Protection and management of natural resources on National Forest System lands.
- Research on all aspects of forestry, rangeland management and forest resource utilization.
- Community assistance and cooperation with state and local governments, forest industries and private landowners to help protect and manage non-federal forest and associated range and watershed lands to improve conditions in rural areas.
- Achieving and supporting an effective workforce that reflects the full range of diversity of the American people.
- International assistance in formulating policy and coordinating U.S. support for the protection and sound management of the world's forest resources.

National forests are America's great outdoors. They encompass

A similar challenge faces us today in communities surrounding National Forests, where land subdivisions and second-home ranches are consuming our byway landscapes and gateway portals. The challenge is about geo-tourism: conserving places, peoples and cultural geography. Byways address that challenge. Landscape corridor thinking and collaborative work is needed now more than ever, and the National Scenic Byways Program gives us this opportunity to work with communities to offer alternatives and adjust policies to conserve our "special places." It combines tourism economics with landscape conservation.

2 *Tell us about the overall mission of the USDA Forest Service and the history of the USDA Forest Service's National Forest Scenic Byways Program.*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service is a federal agency that manages federal public lands in 155 national forests, 20 grasslands and one tall-grass prairie. The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the

191 million acres (77.3 million hectares) of land, which is an area equivalent to the size of Texas. National forests provide opportunities for recreation in open spaces and natural environments. With greater numbers of people living in urban areas, national forests are becoming more important and valuable to Americans. A visitor can enjoy a wide variety of activities on national forests, including backpacking in remote wilderness areas, mastering an all-terrain vehicle over a challenging trail, finding spectacular views along a scenic byway or just relaxing along the banks of a stream. The National Forest Scenic Byways Program is an integral part of delivering the USDA Forest Service mission.

Professionals in the agency (primarily landscape architects and recreation planners) have been perfecting the art of landscape view-shed corridor planning for vegetation management since the 1970s. Activities then reflected a growing concern for the aesthetic and environmental quality of entire landscapes, which have come to also include the cultural practices and the historic context of these landscapes.

Research in the 1980s showed that driving for pleasure was the number one activity for recreational use of the these public lands, and what better way to meet and cooperate with our community partners than through serving this recreational activity?

Concurrently, in the late 1980s Congress was working on a major restructuring of how transportation planning would be organized for the Highway Trust Funds. The idea for highways as recreational tourism corridors helped develop the concept for a National Scenic Byways Program, iterated in 1991 ISTEA legislation under the Department of Transportation (DOT). The Forest Service had already developed a similar concept

for "forest highways" corridors, which were state-maintained or county roads traversing the National Forests System. The Chief of the Forest Service uses an administrative authority delegated from the Secretary of Agriculture to designate National Forest System lands along byway corridors.

Certainly, both the USDA Forest Service and the National Scenic Byways Program have had close mission alignment from the inception of their programs.

Today, the Forest Service is participating with the DOT in over a third of the National Scenic Byways in the system with technical expertise, community grants or as a tourism member of a destination marketing organization. The byways act as marketing themes for a whole landscape of communities and scenic attractions.

National forests provide opportunities for recreation in open spaces and natural environments. With greater numbers of people living in urban areas, national forests are becoming more important and valuable to Americans.

The interpretive planning that accompanies many byways' development efforts provides a special opportunity for the agency to deliver important conservation stewardship messages that inform visitors about ecosystem sustainability, historical and cultural landscapes, wildlife connectivity and even global warming. Exhibits, signing, auto tours and the like all bring the stewardship messages to the scenic-driving markets as these visitors actively enjoy their byway experiences. The benefits are

economic as well as social, enriching the tourism product of local communities while instilling knowledge about the unique heritage of the places people are driving through. Byways are a key part of delivering our mission to all people.

3 *How does the USDA Forest Service (and the National Forest Scenic Byways Program) work with America's Byways™ at either the local, state or national level to provide a seamless traveler experience?*

Nationally, the USDA Forest Service works with DOT byways, participating in travel shows and joint conference workshops, creating marketing efforts with Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) and others, sharing research, securing extra funding through DOT Federal Lands Highways and participating in many other activities. In particular, we are currently enhancing our National Forest Scenic Byways Program content on

www.byways.org to improve visitor travel planning activities to all National Forest Scenic Byways, which are those designated by the Chief (some are also state byways).

We are also working with DOT Federal Lands Highways to secure funds for recreation and tourism planning activities with states for existing and new byways networks, emphasizing access to backcountry scenic drives. We will be partnering with DOT and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on a new federal liaison support position at the America's Byways Resource Center in the near future.

Regionally, our byway program coordinators are working with individual state byway leaders and DOTs in a variety of ways. We support new byway feasibility studies for designation, corridor



Floyd Thompson,
National Program Leader,
USDA Forest Service

planning and grant requests for byways funds, work with individual projects that are within National Forest boundaries (also on "forest highways") as well as general help on highway signing efforts. Our agency makes a strong effort to link visitors to the America's Byways™ website at all our visitor information centers, ranger stations and on our regional/forest homepages. In addition to working with state DOT byways people, our staff works with other federal aid projects in Enhancements and also Federal Lands Highways' three division offices (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/flh/index.htm>).

Locally, we offer varying degrees of staff resources, depending on the level of involvement by each unit in National Scenic Byways designated within its zone of influence. In some cases, such as the West Cascades or the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byways, we have had major involvement in the development of the byway from inception. In other cases, such as the Historic National Road, we may only be an interested party. In cases where the Chief has designated the byway, such as in the Northern California area, we work directly with byway groups and local destination marketing organizations, like Shasta Cascades Wonderlands.

4 *How is the USDA Forest Service organized? What is the best approach for local communities and byway leaders to work with the USDA Forest Service?*

The USDA Forest Service is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has three primary branches: the National Forest System, Forest Research, and State and Private Forestry.

National Forest System

The National Forest System operates through nine geographical regions from Alaska to Puerto Rico. Most of the byways' contacts will be through these nine regions and their respective National Forest administrative offices. Primary staff contacts will be with the National Forest unit byway leader, who is usually a landscape architect, recreation planner, engineer or public affairs professional. Contacts should be requested through the Forest Supervisor if multiple districts are involved, or through a District Ranger for shorter byways in one locale. As an example, if a byway group is working on a byway designation near a National Forest unit, it is best to contact the Forest Supervisor directly and request support and possible active planning involvement in the byway's proposal at the start of the effort.

Forest Research

Forest Research is divided into the Northeast Area, Five Research Stations, the Forest Products lab and the institute for tropical forestry. It has four primary functional areas, two of which may be important to byway groups. First, the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program reports on trends and status of all forest conditions for both public and private forests. Since many of the byway corridors are forested lands, this program's data is of value to understand changing conditions in landscape health and conservation efforts needed to maintain scenic quality.

The program is managed by the Research & Development organization within the USDA Forest Service in cooperation with State and Private Forestry and National Forest System. Visit FIA (<http://www.fia.fs.fed.us/>).

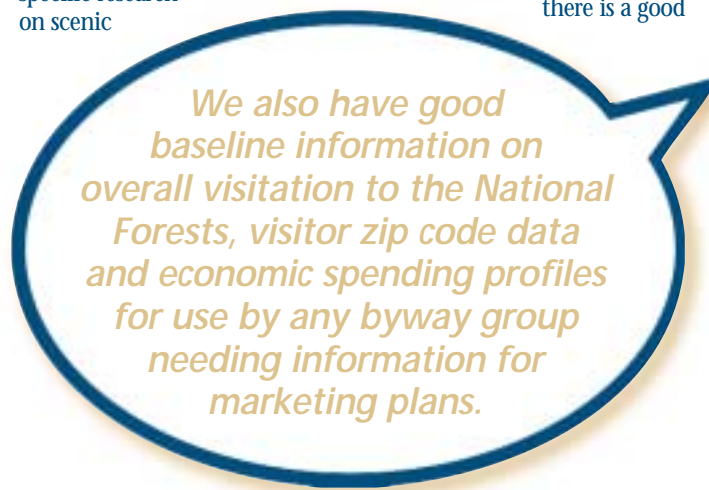
An example might include a byway group with diseased or dying trees in the corridor that need treatments or inventory for monitoring and evaluation. In these cases you should work with the State Forester in that state.

Second, Resource Evaluation and Use Research is where there is some good potential for more involvement from byway groups. Some evidence of this has been in work with scenic driving surveys through Ken Cordell's research at the Southern Research Station in Athens, Georgia. He is in charge of the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE). His site is an excellent one for recreation participation trend data and he has the ability to work with other groups to fund specific research on scenic

S&PF is a great group for technical help, but most technical requests will need to be made at the regional office level, since many forest staff resources have been depleted over recent years. Current work in Northern California is an example of leveraging local tourism industry efforts for a backcountry byway forest network with a regional rural community assistance grant and Federal Lands Highways planning support.

5 *What services does the USDA Forest Service offer that byways can tap into?*

In addition to the resources listed above we do have some excellent agency-prepared guides. Under "landscape management issues for road viewing-corridors," there is a good



byway participation. His website is <http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/trends/>. An example might include surveys of byway corridors statewide, where leveraged funds could be greatly expanded by use of existing expertise from NSRE ongoing survey work.

State and Private Forestry

State and Private Forestry division (S&PF) is where the Economic Action and Rural Community Assistance grant programs are housed, which have been of great value to many byways in the past—especially when combined with Resource and Development Council (RC&D) support.

For more information on these programs and other partnership resources, consult the National Forest Foundation partnership resources website: www.partnershipresourcecenter.org.

process inventory and evaluation of scenery known as the Scenery Management System (SMS) and a series of official Handbooks on Landscape Management. These can be obtained from the regional agency contacts or by calling the Washington, D.C., office for information on sources. We also have good baseline information on overall visitation to the National Forests, visitor zip code data and economic spending profiles for use by any byway group needing information for marketing plans. This National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) survey is not as reliable at the county level, but can be helpful for forest and statewide planning considerations. The Forest Service also appreciates any byway group that might like to help with volunteers to conduct the next round of NVUM survey

work. See the Web link for more information at <http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum/>.

Another good resource (if one is in the vicinity of a byway) is the staff in the form of interpretive specialists and planners at major visitor centers. Put them on your team if you have not already done so. If no Landscape Architect exists on a Forest, the Forest Engineer can also be an excellent resource for byway groups working with state transportation officials and looking to leverage funds with other federal programs. Roads are their primary focus and they have a wealth of technical resources of value to byway groups.

6 *If you could send one message to National Scenic Byways, what would it be?*

We are excited to work with our byway partners. Developing and maintaining a relationship with the local or regional Forest Service byway will generate the greatest results. The outstanding work on the San Juan Skyway in Colorado would not have happened without such a relationship formed with Forest Service employee Dick Ostergaard. The fantastic interpretive portals and exhibits developed along the Logan Canyon Scenic Byway would not be the award-winning products they are today without that relationship with employee Nancy Brunswick. Community support could not have happened to the same degree without Stacey Smith on West Cascades Scenic Byway in Oregon. I mention just a few for example, and you need to know there are many equally deserving Forest Service employees whose successful byway relationships resulted from byway groups taking the time to get to know them. You just cannot match that for making things happen along byways. If you need a national contact, please contact me here in D.C. at (202) 205-1423 or fthompson02@fs.fed.us; however, your best bet is the local National Forest employee with a passion for community service and byways. ★

Rock and Road! 2005

NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS CONFERENCE
Cruising the Road to Success!

CATCH YOUR INFORMATION STATION *Tune in!*

CLEVELAND, OHIO • OCTOBER 16-19

Make plans now for the National Scenic Byways Conference!

For those of you who have attended in the past, this is a time to see old friends and reconnect about byway projects. For those attending for the first time, it will be an opportunity to meet folks from other byways from throughout the country and learn what they have in common with your byway and how you fit into this larger byway community.

Throughout the history of hosting National Scenic Byways Conferences, we have asked you, the byway community, what you want to hear, see and do. Networking with byways, exposure to national experts and a chance to expand your knowledge are up at the top. We also can't forget some downtime and a little fun.

This year's conference is shaping up to offer just that. We have put together four dynamic days that should leave everyone filled to the brim.

We started with networking.

**Poster Sessions
BACK BY
POPULAR DEMAND!
See you there!**

The popular poster sessions will be back. In addition, expect to find some fun and creative ways to meet and talk

with new byways, including trading conference memorabilia and a little friendly competition.

Next we tackled exposure to new ideas and national experts. When our staff sat down for the brainstorming session to determine speakers and presentations, we started with one premise: this is an information-expanding conference. We aimed for exposure to a multitude of new ideas and top-notch speakers.

Participants can expect to have direct contact with national leaders in the fields of funding, visitor experience, organizations and corridor management.

We are even bringing you representatives from the program's major partners to talk directly to you about how and when your byway can tap their organizations. Bring your pad and pencil, and look forward to exchanging business cards.

The Cleveland area provided us with a fantastic canvas for creating "how-do-I-do-it" examples. Day-long and partial-day Applied Learning Workshops are aimed to give you an in-depth look at subjects you heard about in the classroom sessions and a chance to talk directly to byway people in the field. From urban byway issues to rural marketing and to GIS and GPS, there is something for everyone. The hardest part will be figuring out which Applied Learning Workshop to take!

This year, we will have the extra-special honor of welcoming the newest America's Byways™ into the byway community. The national designation will happen just a month prior to the conference and many of those designees will be attending. It is a fantastic time to celebrate new additions to the national collection and explore the roles we all play in the success of the National Scenic Byways Program.

A conference would not be a conference without some downtime. Ohio and Cleveland have given us a rich backdrop for celebrating Americana and savoring a little fun along the way. Rich revitalization, hip culture and great attractions like the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame will give everyone an opportunity to see Cleveland at its best.

So, please join us October 16-19 as we cruise the road to your success. ★

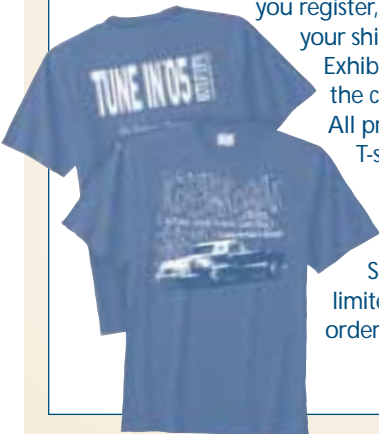
Rock and Road 2005 National Scenic Byways Conference Highlights

Official 2005 Rock and Road Tour Shirt!

Don't miss out on the first-ever National Scenic Byways Conference T-shirt, complete with a list of Ohio byways and conference sponsors. Purchase yours for only \$13 when you register, and pick up

your shirt in the Exhibit Hall at the conference.

All proceeds from T-shirt sales benefit the Ohio Canal Corridor. Supplies are limited, so order now!



Keynote Speaker Announced



Rudy Maxa

We are pleased to announce that Rudy Maxa, one of America's premier travel experts and host of the public television series, "Smart Travels: Europe with Rudy Maxa," will deliver the keynote

speech at Rock and Road 2005!

Rudy Maxa hosted the first four years of the public radio show "The Savvy Traveler." He is also an award-winning contributing editor for *National Geographic Traveler*, the author of two nonfiction books, and has contributed travel articles to publications such as *GQ*, *Forbes*, *USAToday.com*, *MSNBC.com* and *ABC.com*.

Thank you to our early sponsors!

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Forest City Enterprises, Inc.
- Ohio Canal Corridor
- Ohio & Erie Canalway Association
- Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition
- American Road Magazine
- USDA Forest Service

Thank you to our early exhibitor!

- Tour-Mate Systems Canada, Ltd.
- National Scenic Byway Foundation

Register online at
www.bywaysonline.org

2005 Calendar

Send calendar entries by the 5th of each month to center@byways.org

JUNE

June 2005

Great Outdoors Month

Nationwide

For more information, please visit:
www.greatoutdoorsmonth.org

June 10-12, 2005

Second Annual Greenway Days Festival
Seattle, Washington

Mountains to Sound Greenway
For more information, please visit:
www.mtsgreenway.org

June 30, 2005

Rural Heritage Development Initiative
Deadline for application: June 30, 2005

National Trust for Historic Preservation
For more information, please visit:
www.nationaltrust.org

JULY

July 20-23, 2005

*2005 Midwest Environmental
Education Conference*

Mason City, Iowa

For more information,
contact Carol Schutte
schutcar@miacc.edu or (641) 422-4319

July 27-30, 2005

TrailLink 2005

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota

For more information, please visit:
www.railtrails.org

AUGUST

August 27-30, 2005

NADO Annual Training Conference
Seattle, Washington

NADO Research Foundation
For more information, please visit:
www.nado.org/meetings

SEPTEMBER

September 26-28, 2005

*7th Annual American Indian
Alaska Native Tourism Conference*
Hollywood, Florida
GLITC, Inc.

For more information, please visit:
www.aianta.org

September 27-October 2, 2005

National Preservation Conference 2005
Portland, Oregon

For more information, please visit:
[https://www.nthpconference.org/
GeneralInfo/](https://www.nthpconference.org/GeneralInfo/)

OCTOBER

October 6-8, 2005

U.S. Cultural & Heritage Tourism Summit
Washington, D.C.

For more information, please visit:
www.uscht.com

October 7, 2005

Walk to School Day

Nationwide

For more information, please visit:
www.walktoschool-usa.org

October 9-12, 2005

43rd URISA Annual Conference

Kansas City, Missouri
Urban and Regional Information
Systems Association

For more information, please visit:
www.urisa.org

October 14-17, 2005

Land Trust Alliance Rally
Madison, Wisconsin

For more information, please visit:
www.lta.org/training/rally.htm

October 15, 2005

2005 Rock and Road Car Cruise
Cleveland, Ohio

For more information, please contact
Tim Donovan at (216) 520-1825

October 16-19, 2005

2005 National Scenic Byways Conference
Cleveland, Ohio

For more information, please E-mail
center@byways.org

October 20, 2005

State/FHWA Coordinator Workshop

Renaissance Cleveland Hotel

Cleveland, Ohio

For more information, contact
Bethaney Bacher at
bethaney.bacher@fhwa.dot.gov

October 26-28, 2005

TIA Marketing Outlook Forum

Seattle, Washington

For more information, please visit:
www.tia.org

NOVEMBER

November 4-8, 2005

CrossSphere Annual Convention
Detroit, Michigan

For more information, please visit:
www.crosssphere.com

November 8-12, 2005

National Interpreters' Workshop
Mobile, Alabama

For more information, please visit:
www.interpnet.com/niw2005/

November 29-December 1, 2005

RVIA 43rd National RV Trade Show
Louisville, Kentucky

For more information, please visit:
www.rvia.org

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Get Revved Up: 2005 Rock and Road Car Cruise

Cleveland, Ohio • October 15, 2005 • 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

If you're planning to attend the National Scenic Byways Conference, then come to Cleveland a day early for the 2005 Rock and Road Car Cruise! This 50s-themed car cruise, hosted and organized by Ohio Canal Corridor and the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition, will kick off at various Cleveland locations on Saturday, October 15. Classic cars will cruise the Ohio & Erie Canalway and meet for a final rally in Canal Basin Park, just minutes away from the conference hotel. Car enthusiasts will enjoy special events and photo opportunities along the route. For more information about the 2005 Rock and Road Car Cruise, contact Tim Donovan at (216) 520-1825. ★

SHARE YOUR NEWS!

Contact *Vistas* Editor:

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Communications Specialist/
Event Planner

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