



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service
FS-916

October 2008



Prepared in
partnership with:
Federal Highway
Administration
Federal Lands Highway
Washington DC Office

National Forest Scenic Byways Program Partnership Success Stories





National Forest Scenic Byways: A Catalyst for Forging Far-Reaching Partnerships

Scenic byways connect the public to destinations and special places. These designated roads traverse some of our country's most unique landscapes, noteworthy for their scenery and natural and cultural features. Planning for scenic byways requires a community conversation that brings many diverse partners together; byway implementation keeps that conversation going. Once a byway is designated, communities, businesses, governmental agencies, and nonprofit organizations work together as a byway organization to carry out a wide variety of projects that promote stewardship and benefit local economies.

The National Forest Scenic Byways Program is a success because it unites rural communities, empowers collaboration among diverse partners, and offers travelers a way to "make the journey as important as the destination."

This report highlights a few of the many success stories made possible through key partnerships along the byways and through funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), U.S. Department of Transportation, for byway planning and project grants.

Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway, Oregon



Connecting the American Public to Their National Forest System Lands

National forest scenic byways connect the American public to some of this country's most spectacular landscapes within our public lands. They are the gateways to access attractions such as hiking trails, overlooks, historic sites, waterfalls, wilderness areas, and wild and scenic rivers. The quality of their facilities and settings helps instill a sense of public stewardship for our natural and cultural resources. Partnerships with rural communities for collaborative planning on these corridors provide much needed funding and resources for many small gateway communities to market and conserve these special places.

The Chief of the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, can designate routes traversing National Forest System lands as national forest scenic byways. The first 10 national forest scenic byways were designated in 1989. In just 20 years, the system has grown to 137 national forest scenic byways that encompass over 9,000 miles of highways and roads on National Forest System lands. A majority of the 137 forest byways are classified as "forest highways" through a formal triparty agreement between the State departments of transportation, the Forest Service, and the Office of Federal Lands Highway. As a result, these byways qualify for Forest Highway Program funds and other FHWA funds.

National Forest Scenic Byways: Part of a Larger Byway Community

National forest scenic byways are part of a larger community that includes National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, State-designated byways, backcountry byways, and other local byway designations. Funding for the National Scenic Byways Program was first incorporated into the Intermodal Transportation and Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (ISTEA) of 1991, and has been continued since 2005 under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The FHWA uses this funding to provide grants to States and Indian tribes to carry out eligible projects on roads designated as scenic byways by States or Indian tribes and to develop byway programs.

The U.S. Secretary of Transportation designates National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads based on their outstanding scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archaeological, and recreational qualities. An All-American Road is considered a "destination unto itself," because it provides such an exceptional driving experience that travelers would make a drive along the highway a primary reason for their trip. The FHWA refers to the 126 National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads collectively as the America's Byways® collection.

Because almost half of the 126 roads designated as America's Byways® are located partially or entirely on National Forest System or other public lands, the Forest Service is a major partner with the FHWA, State departments of transportation, Federal land management agencies, and byway organizations in developing and promoting the National Scenic Byways Program.



Behind every good
byway is a good
partnership.



A woman stops to peruse the wares at a roadside stand along the Amish Country Byway, Ohio

Goals of the National Forest Scenic Byways Program

The goals of the National Forest Scenic Byways Program are to:

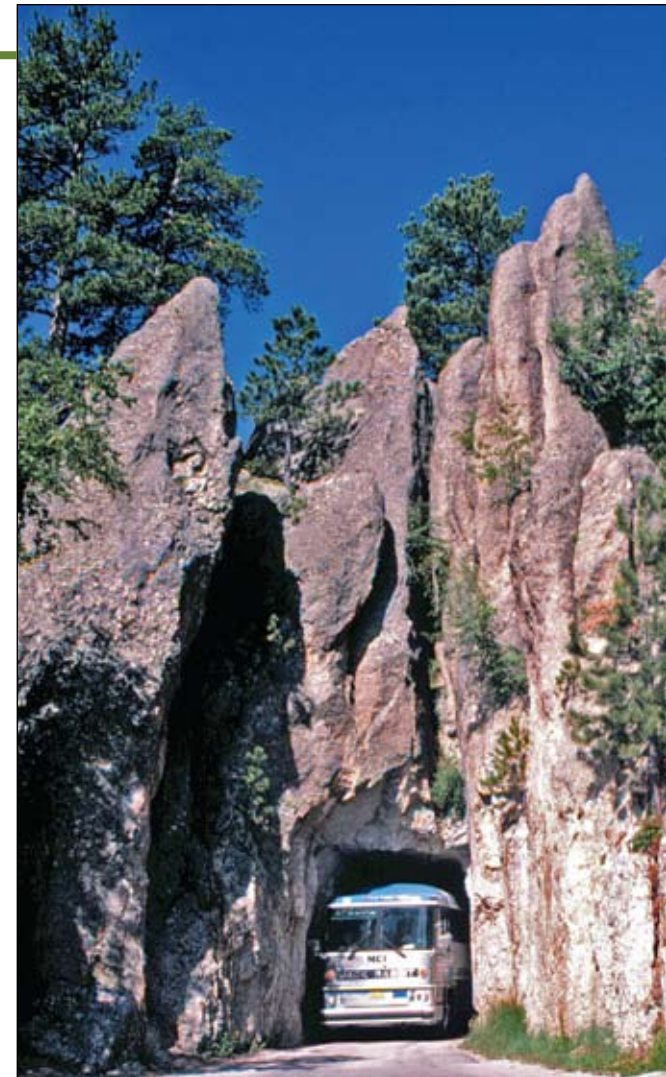
- Support and enhance rural community economic development.
- Showcase outstanding national forest and grassland scenery.
- Increase public understanding of national forests as a major provider of outdoor recreation.
- Increase public awareness and understanding of national forest activities and the importance of sustaining healthy, productive ecosystems.
- Ensure that people remain socially connected to public lands so they become better stewards of our natural resources.
- Meet the growing demand of driving for pleasure as a significant recreation use.
- Increase use of national forests by nontraditional users, including minorities and the elderly.
- Contribute to the Nation's overall scenic byways effort.

The National Forest Scenic Byways Program emphasis on promoting community tourism has been one of the most popular aspects of byway designation with rural communities. Through the relationships built amongst a diverse group of byway entities, designating a highway or road as a national forest scenic byway can be the catalyst to new marketing and funding opportunities available through the National Scenic Byways Program and State transportation agencies. In addition, the relationships built early-on result in long-term goodwill to foster future byway endeavors.



Visitors enjoy the fall colors along the Kancamagus Scenic Byway

The National Forest System includes more than 6,000 campsites and picnic areas; over 193 million acres of forests, lakes, ponds, and reservoirs open to recreational activities such as fishing, hunting, hiking, geo-caching, camping, rock climbing, and more; and 5,400 trailheads providing access to more than 143,000 miles of trails. Communities along national forest scenic byways serve as gateways and provide enhanced access to many of these public resources. These byways provide a way to educate visitors about the unique qualities and characteristics of each byway region.



Navigating a tunnel along the Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway, South Dakota (©Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway, 1996)

Two Funding Sources for National Forest Scenic Byways

1. The National Scenic Byways Program (HTBW)¹. The FHWA provides funds annually on a competitive basis for projects along national, State, and Indian tribe designated byways. Funds may be used for Scenic Byway Programs, corridor management plans, safety improvements, byway facilities, access to recreation, resource protection, interpretive information, and marketing programs. Only national forest scenic byways that are also designated as All-American Roads, National Scenic Byways, State scenic byways, or Indian tribe scenic byways are eligible for National Scenic Byways Program grants.

Since the beginning of the National Scenic Byways grants program in 1992, the Secretary of Transportation has awarded more than \$308 million for 2,450 byway projects located in all 50 States and U.S. Territories. In Fiscal Year 2007, the Department of Transportation awarded a total of about \$1.7 million to the Forest Service for 13 byway projects in 11 States. In addition, a total of about \$1.9 million was awarded to 13 States for 45 other projects associated with byway organizations working collaboratively with the Forest Service.

2. Each year since 2005, the Department of Transportation, through the Office of Federal Lands Highway, has allocated \$200,000 of **National Forest Scenic Byway Transportation Planning (HTFB)²** funds to the Forest Service. The Forest Service has used these funds as a primary source of funding for planning and development of the National Forest Scenic Byways Program. HTFB funds are especially important because many national forest scenic byways are not eligible for National Scenic Byways Program discretionary grant funds to States.

For the past 3 years, the Forest Service has used HTFB funds for projects such as developing corridor management plans, interpretive planning, wayside exhibits, byway organizational development, community outreach, Web site development, and production of brochures and other byway publications. Although the annual allocation of HTFB funding is relatively small, it serves as an important catalyst for byway partnerships.

¹HTBW—Federal aid grants to the States (Federal sites qualify) for National Scenic Byways Program under Section 162, Title 23 for qualified byways.

²HTFB—Federal Lands Transportation Planning Assistance Funding to agencies under Section 204, Title 23, Section 204 (h)(1) specifically to classified “forest highways.”

Front cover photo: Swan River NWR (Margaret Gorski); next page photo: Historic Route 66 through AZ (Mark Turner); back cover photos: Mt. Shasta (public domain); peregrine falcon (Tom Kogut). Copyrighted photos are used with permission of the National Scenic Byways Program Digital Library (www.byways.org). All other photos are public domain.



A visitor pauses at an interpretive site at Sparks Meadow along the Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway, Oregon



Byway travelers are often fortunate to spot local wildlife along the route (Alan Dyck)

Case Studies

Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway ~ Minnesota

Forest Heritage Scenic Byway ~ North Carolina

Kancamagus Scenic Byway ~ New Hampshire

Logan Canyon Scenic Byway ~ Utah

McKenzie Pass-Santiam Pass Scenic Byway ~ Oregon

North Shore Scenic Drive ~ Minnesota

Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway ~ South Dakota

San Juan Skyway ~ Colorado

Silver Thread Scenic Byway ~ Colorado

Crown of the Continent Geotourism Project

National Forest Scenic Byways & Backcountry Recreation Roads Project

National Scenic Byways Program Web Site



Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway

Minnesota Chippewa National Forest



Byway Designations

- ★ National Scenic Byway, 1996
- ★ Minnesota State Scenic Byway, 1994
- ★ National Forest Scenic Byway, 1989



Byway Snapshot

"The Edge" begins in Grand Rapids, Minnesota, and traverses through the Chippewa National Forest, and the rural Minnesota towns of Bigfork and Effie. This 47-mile byway winds past pristine lakes, mixed hardwood forests, swamps, and rolling hills. During autumn, the forest is adorned with red sugar maples, bronze oak trees, and golden aspen and birch. Although the Edge of the Wilderness offers some of Minnesota's most popular sporting and resort opportunities, including hiking, camping, fishing, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling, visitors will probably see more trees than people.



Birch decorate the edge of Pughole Lake

Helping Partners Come Together for a Cause

Marcell is a small town halfway along the Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway in the heart of the Chippewa National Forest. In 2001, the Marcell Ranger Station was closed in an effort to consolidate Chippewa National Forest administrative offices. The Forest Service wanted to keep a presence in the community and preserve the historic ranger station and other Civilian Conservation Corps era buildings. Byway partners and local community organizations—including the Chippewa National Forest—needed a way to better engage the traveling public with interpretive and environmental education programs and to provide information about services and attractions available to byway travelers.

In 2006 and 2007, the Chippewa National Forest received \$20,000 in National Scenic Byways Program grants to convert the ranger station into a “discovery center” that would meet these needs. Byway partners were instrumental in obtaining over \$400,000 in funding as a SAFETEA-LU High Priority Project to implement the effort.

Byway partners renovated the existing Marcell Ranger Station building into the Edge of the Wilderness Discovery Center. The center now offers recreation information and interpretive displays and serves as a wayside rest for byway visitors. The Highway 38 Leadership Board operates the discovery center in partnership with the Chippewa National Forest, Northern Itasca Joint Powers Board, Minnesota Department of Transportation, local governments, and many other partners.

“Byway projects are an opportunity to bring organizations and individuals together for a cause. Once people get involved they feel ownership for the byway and its assets.”

*Dennis Parker, Technical Services
Team Leader/Landscape Architect,
Chippewa National Forest*



*Site plan and architectural rendering of the
new Wilderness Discovery Center*

Forest Heritage Scenic Byway

North Carolina Pisgah National Forest



Byway Designations

- ★ North Carolina State Scenic Byway, 1990
- ★ National Forest Scenic Byway, 1989

Byway Snapshot

Looping for 65 miles through the mountain scenery of North Carolina, the Forest Heritage Scenic Byway intersects the Blue Ridge Parkway twice and connects visitors with heritage sites marking the beginning of modern stewardship forestry in the United States. Most of the byway is located within the Pisgah National Forest. Attractions include the spectacular Looking Glass Falls, the Cradle of Forestry in America heritage site, the historic Allison-Deaver house, and a network of trails that provide access into Shining Rock and Middle Prong Wilderness Areas and many other parts of the forest.



Cradle of Forestry in America

Improving Partnerships

One of the most visited sites along the byway is the Cradle of Forestry in America, which was once part of the George W. Vanderbilt's Biltmore Estate. Vanderbilt was the first private landowner in the United States to hire a forester. He selected Gifford Pinchot to restore and manage his vast forests, which became the proving ground for scientific forest management in America. The Biltmore Forest School, founded in 1898, trained many of the first leaders in the Forest Service.

Today, the old school lives on as the Cradle of Forestry in America, continuing the early vision of scientific forest management. The facility attracts more than 40,000 visitors annually. Educational programs reach nearly 10,000 visitors, including hands-on, curriculum-based instruction for school children; professional development for educators; and stewardship training for landowners. Pisgah National Forest works with the nonprofit Cradle of Forestry in America Interpretive Association and other partners to manage and maintain the visitor center, historic structures, and educational programs.

HTFB funding of \$30,000 provided seed money for the forest to expand its partnership with the interpretive association. The result will be an expanded Forest Heritage Scenic Byway interpretive plan, interpretive signage, ecotourism brochures, and educational programs and materials at the Cradle of Forestry. Perhaps most important, the funding will leverage other grants for continued success and sustainability of the byway and the Cradle of Forestry. Ultimately, this project will help the Cradle of Forestry draw on its roots to play a national role in forest conservation and education.

“Every byway includes a wish-list of projects—both major and minor. A good byway plan helps define the priorities.”

*Steve Hendricks, Landscape Architect,
Pisgah National Forest*

Planning Funds Spin Off Other Benefits

Planning activities made possible with the seed grant drew the Pisgah National Forest and the North Carolina Department of Transportation into further collaboration. Together, they are looking to the future of byway planning. The State plans to use the Forest Heritage Scenic Byway plan as a prototype to improve State byway scenic guidelines.

*“Look what we found!”
(Steve Kozlowski)*



*Pink lady slipper
(Deborah Veen)*



*Cathedral Ledge looks over the
White Mountain National Forest*

Kancamagus Scenic Byway

**New Hampshire
White Mountain National Forest**



Byway Designations

- ★ National Scenic Byway, 1996
- ★ New Hampshire State Scenic Byway, 1991
- ★ National Forest Scenic Byway, 1989

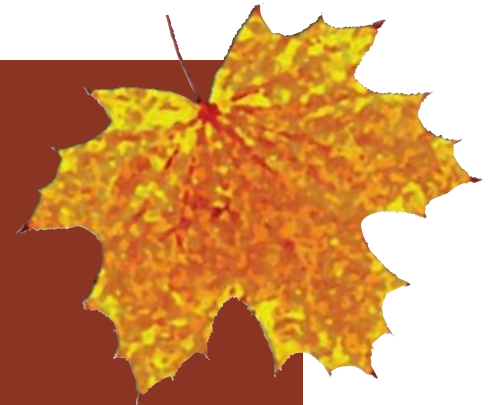


Byway Snapshot

The Kancamagus Scenic Byway follows a beautiful and breathtaking 34-mile drive through New Hampshire's White Mountains. Visitors know it as one of the world's most spectacular fall-foliage trips, but year-round natural beauty attracts 6 to 7 million visitors annually—more than Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks combined. The road passes vast forests, river gorges, the Forest Discovery Trail, and numerous historic sites, such as a quaint New England covered bridge and the Russell Colbath Homestead. Hiking trails, scenic overlooks, and other recreational opportunities encourage travelers to park their cars and experience this northeastern forest ecosystem firsthand.



Leaf-peepers snake along the Kancamagus Highway (Dennis Adams)



Fostering Interagency Partnerships

The entire route of the Kancamagus Scenic Byway runs through the White Mountain National Forest. The North Country Council, one of the key byway organizations, includes members such as community leaders, the Appalachian Mountain Club, White Mountain Attractions (hospitality and tourism), White Mountain National Forest, and many others. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation is a major byway partner, providing highway maintenance and working closely with the forest and byway organizations in an ongoing effort to improve roadway safety and alternative transportation opportunities, while reducing environmental impacts.

An example of this partnership is the recent redesign and renovation of the Rocky Gorge Recreation and Scenic Area. The renovation started in 2004 with the assistance of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. The White Mountain National Forest contributed funding and the services of its landscape architect for project design and visualization. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation provided construction documents, contractors, and contract administration. The resulting successful project moved the roadway and parking away from the fragile riverbank, provided safer entrance and egress from the site, improved stormwater treatment, and visually separated vehicle areas from the outstanding views of the gorge.

“When each partner brings their expertise to the table, it enhances the work of other partners and they get to shine in the public eye.”

*Ken Allen, Landscape Architect
White Mountain National Forest*

*Black bear
(Anan
Interpretive
Staff)*



Based on the success of this and other projects, the national forest and New Hampshire Department of Transportation have built a cooperative working relationship that encourages creativity and flexibility. Following realignment of the roadbed at Rocky Gorge, the national forest lacked funds to revegetate the side slopes and abandoned road prism from redesign of the new road. Knowing that the funds would be used appropriately, New Hampshire Department of Transportation was able to combine National Scenic Byways Program grant funds with another approved Forest Service project so that the forest could accomplish the revegetation project, as well as erect fencing along the river to reduce trampling and sedimentation. This work is to be completed during the 2008 construction and planting season.

*Rocky Gorge Recreation and Scenic Area
Renovation (Ken Allen)*



Fall colors embellish Logan Canyon

Logan Canyon Scenic Byway

Utah
Wasatch-Cache National Forest



Byway Designations

- ★ National Scenic Byway, 2002
- ★ Utah State Scenic Byway, 1990
- ★ National Forest Scenic Byway, 1989



Byway Snapshot

Located north of Salt Lake City, the Logan Canyon Scenic Byway follows the Logan River along State Highway 89 for 41 miles. The byway offers access to four-season outdoor recreation and numerous natural and cultural heritage sites. Most of the byway is located within the Wasatch-Cache National Forest. The byway brings locals and visitors to the shores of Bear Lake at the tiny town of Garden City—where the population swells to 750,000 during summer months as visitors gravitate to one of Utah's major recreational lakes. This canyon roadway also serves as a popular route to Yellowstone National Park.



Visitors receive a beautiful welcome to the Scenic Byway (Cache Valley Tourist Council)



Grant-Funded Projects Guide Visitor Experiences

HTFB planning funds and National Scenic Byways Program grants help byway partners accomplish projects to manage the influx of visitors and guide them to worthwhile experiences. An example is the kiosk development project, made possible with a National Scenic Byways Program grant through a cooperative agreement between the Wasatch-Cache National Forest, Cache and Rich counties, and the Utah Department of Transportation.

Informational kiosks have been designed for placement at key locations along the byway during the summer of 2008. The kiosks will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and will reach byway travelers even during off-hours when visitor centers in the gateway communities are closed. Interactive touch screens will offer directions, natural and cultural history interpretation, and information about services. The kiosks will also designate appropriate backroad motor vehicle routes that avoid sensitive areas and guide visitors toward local attractions important to local economies.

“If a byway is not a grassroots organization, it doesn’t work.”

*Lisa Perez, Conservation
Education Coordinator,
Wasatch-Cache National Forest*

Implementing Plans Leads to Other Successes

Implementing the byway plan is the current focus of Logan Canyon Scenic Byway partners. The byway committee includes representatives from the gateway communities, Cache and Rich counties, Wasatch-Cache National Forest, Utah Department of Transportation, State Institutional Trust Lands, and private groups and individuals.

In the process of implementing the byway vision, partners bring their individual needs, issues, and recommendations to the table. This collaboration often results in creative solutions to difficult situations that can carry on to other projects. For example, the Utah Department of Transportation, through its participation with byway interests, has gained a heightened awareness of the value of designing highway projects that are “soft on the landscape.”



Kiosks at overlooks provide after-hours information for gateway communities



An angler tests the waters at the 3rd dam

Obsidian slopes of the North Sister glow in the sun

McKenzie Pass-Santiam Pass Scenic Byway

Oregon

Willamette National Forest, Deschutes National Forest



Byway Designations

- ★ National Scenic Byway, 1998
- ★ Oregon State Scenic Byway, 1997
- ★ National Forest Scenic Byway, 1989



Byway Snapshot

The 82-mile McKenzie Pass-Santiam Pass Scenic Byway is a journey through a land of contrasts. Visitors pass the highest concentration of snowcapped volcanoes and associated glaciers in the lower 48 States. Ancient lava fields provide a reminder of the violent volcanic activity that built the Cascade Range. From these higher elevations, the byway descends to forested areas, dominated by ponderosa pine east of the Cascade summit and Douglas fir to the west. The McKenzie Pass-Santiam Pass Scenic Byway is entirely contained within the Willamette and Deschutes National Forests.



An interpretive mural fills an exhibit along the Scenic Byway

A Proving Ground for Planning Funds

The McKenzie-Santiam was one of the first byways to benefit from HTFB funds. The resulting comprehensive byway plan paved the way for creating a destination byway, linked numerous existing natural and cultural resources, and detailed a rough-hewn, Cascadian design style that drew on native materials.

*Indian paintbrush
(Teresa Prendusi)*



More recently, restoration of the popular Dee Wright Observatory was made possible with HTFB planning and enhancement funds. This “peak-finder” observation building was constructed of lava rock by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The Forest Service created a plan to stabilize the site and develop universally accessible features, while retaining the structure’s original historic character. The Oregon Department of Transportation was an important partner in improving the parking area and highway interface.

HTFB funds were also instrumental as seed money for including a scenic byway orientation portal in the upgrade and renovation of the McKenzie River Ranger Station. National Scenic Byways Program grants and partner contributions provided funding for implementation. The National Association for Interpretation, Eugene Water and Electric Board, Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni Association, and other partners contributed to development of interpretive exhibits. Working with local school districts, the McKenzie Arts Forum designed and built an educational water feature.

HTFB planning funds also helped develop an interpretive gateway facility to enhance and manage public access to the Fish Lake Remount Depot, a historic guard station where riders changed horses. Volunteers donated many hours of labor in return for learning historic maintenance and restoration skills.

Catalyzing Creative Solutions

Projects funded through the National Scenic Byways Program grants and transportation planning funds have been the catalyst for continued successful collaborations with the Oregon Department of Transportation. The department has been flexible and creative in retaining the historic winding road corridor of Oregon State Highway 242 during highway reconstruction and maintenance projects.

“Forest Service Scenic Byway Transportation Planning funds allowed us to develop a long-lived byway development plan that doesn’t sit on a shelf. All of our successes are closely tied to that effort. The byway plan allows us to reach out and touch both existing and future partners, linking volunteers and partners to the bricks and mortar projects that they are eager to accomplish.”

*Stacey Smith, Scenic Byway
Coordinator, Willamette
National Forest*



*The newly remodeled
McKenzie Ranger Station
welcomes byway travelers*



*The Dee Wright Observatory was recently restored
with HTFB funds (Dennis Stilwell)*



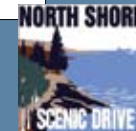
North Shore Scenic Drive

**Minnesota
Superior National Forest**



Byway Designations

- ★ All-American Road, 2002
- ★ Minnesota State Scenic Byway, 1997/1999/2000
- ★ National Forest Scenic Byway, 1989



Byway Snapshot

The North Shore Scenic drive is a 154-mile journey along the majestic shoreline of Lake Superior, the world's largest freshwater lake. From its starting point in Duluth, Minnesota, the byway passes through tourism-dependent small towns, historic sites and resorts, as well as eight State parks and the Superior National Forest. Within the national forest, the byway offers access to more than 2,000 lakes and rivers and opportunities to canoe, boat, fish, and camp. Hiking, biking, and skiing trails are abundant. Camping, picnicking, and riding snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles are popular recreational activities.



*White water cascades over
Gooseberry Falls (Chuck Kochmann)*

Split Rock Lighthouse is a highlight along the North Shore Scenic Drive (Chuck Kochmann)

Funding Opens Doors to Collaboration

The North Shore Scenic Drive Council (Council) is comprised of citizens and government agency representatives working together to advance the economic benefits of byway travel and improve the quality of the route, while preserving its cultural, social, and natural integrity.

A major project of the council in 2006 was to revise and update the North Shore Scenic Drive brochure. Byway visitors were requesting more detailed information. In addition, an existing out-of-date brochure did not mention the Superior National Forest and the 3 million acres of year-round recreation opportunities located on National Forest System lands.

The Forest Service, through FHWA, provided \$9,000 of HTFB funds for the project. A participating agreement between the Forest Service and the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) was signed in June 2006. ARDC is a regional development commission that supports the mission of the council.

This collaborative partnership to develop and print the North Shore Scenic Drive brochure included the following government agencies and organizations:

- **Explore Minnesota Tourism**—Noncash contribution of high-quality photos along the North Shore Scenic Drive.
- **Iron Range Resources Board**—Noncash contributions, including layout and design of the brochure.
- **Arrowhead Regional Development Commission**—Contribution of \$28,000 for printing.
- **Superior National Forest**—Contribution of \$10,500 for layout and design of the brochure.
- **North Shore Scenic Drive Council**—Provided overall logistical and technical support.

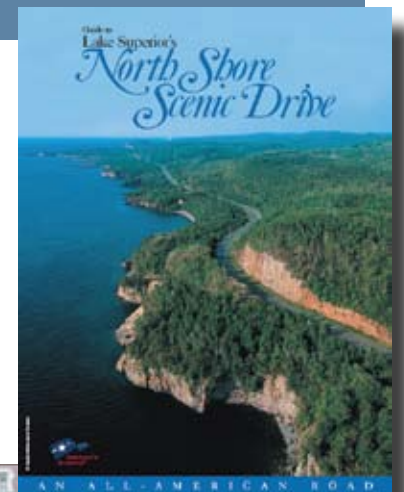
The resulting full-color brochure gives detailed information on the Superior National Forest, eight State parks, one national monument, visitor centers, historic sites, points of interest, and private resorts, ski areas, lodges, and other accommodations. The brochure meets the needs of byway travelers, promotes economic development for the many rural communities that depend on tourism along the north shore of Lake Superior, and connects citizens to the national forest and other public lands.

Lasting Benefits

The brochure project proved to be a catalyst for the North Shore Scenic Drive Council to show that it could get something done in a short period of time. Now that the group has strengthened its partnership, it will be able to keep the brochure up to date and incorporate new ideas and information in future editions.

“National Forest Scenic Byway Transportation Planning Funds helped the Superior National Forest participate in a meaningful financial way with byway partners to develop this much-needed visitor guide.”

*Dennis Lula,
Superior National Forest*



Period-dressed servants welcome visitors to Glensheen, a turn-of-the-century mansion located on Lake Superior (© Duluth Convention and Visitors Bureau and Seaquest Photography)

Cyclists ride through the gray peaks and dark ponderosa pine of the Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway

Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway

**South Dakota
Black Hills National Forest**



Byway Designations

- ★ National Scenic Byway, 1996
- ★ South Dakota State Scenic Byway, 1991
- ★ National Forest Scenic Byway, 1991



Byway Snapshot

The roads of the Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway spiral through the rocky crags of the Black Hills National Forest, Custer State Park, and Mount Rushmore National Memorial, providing access to some of the most beautiful landscapes in South Dakota. The byway is a fitting tribute to its namesake, Peter Norbeck, who had the vision to build the roads needed to bring people close to these natural wonders. One of America's premiere conservationists, Norbeck played key roles in protecting areas within the Black Hills of South Dakota and establishing Badlands National Park and Grand Teton National Park.



Climbing is one of the most popular activities along the byway (Ron Olson)

Managing Recreation

With 66 miles of road winding through cliffs and spires, it's no wonder that the byway is known as the gateway to rock climbing in the Black Hills. However, rock climbers share the landscape with sensitive plants and animals, and climbing access routes traverse easily eroded soils.

In 2006, \$10,000 in HTFB funds provided the seed money for public agencies and local climbing groups to develop a rock-climbing project area management plan. Building on that success, partners developed a brochure that profiles climbing areas and history and educates visitors about regulations intended to protect the landscape. Custer State Park hired the graphic artist, climbing groups and agencies provided text, and the Black Hills National Forest financed brochure printing through a separate National Scenic Byways Program grant.

The partnership continued with a successful 2007 National Scenic Byways Program grant proposal. The new project will expand an existing rock-climbing trailhead, improve user-defined trails, and—in cooperation with the South Dakota Department of Transportation—remove a parking area hazard. A portion of the trail system will provide access for persons with disabilities to view rock climbers in action and access the rock-climbing routes.

Expanding Accessibility

Improved accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the goal of a series of projects funded through the National Scenic Byways grant program. At the Horsethief Lake day-use area, these grants helped construct a boardwalk with fishing platform and a trail connecting the day-use area to the campground. The grants also provided funds needed to convert an old highway to a fully ADA accessible trail—one of the few in South Dakota's Black Hills. Parking lot improvements will provide 10 accessible van parking spaces. Along the southern segment of the byway, grant funds helped convert the Bismarck Lake day-use area to a fully accessible facility, including picnic tables, restrooms, boardwalk, and fishing access.



Bison crossing on the byway (© Neil Li, 2006)

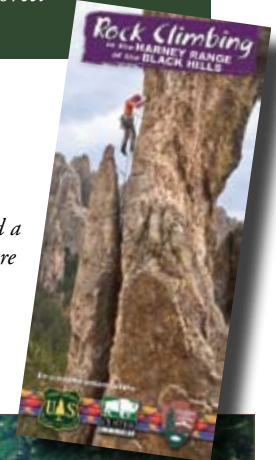
For more information, visit the Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway Virtual Tour at:
<http://peternorbeck.americasbyways.net/>

“The availability of National Forest Scenic Byway Transportation Planning funds provided the catalyst for byway partners to work cooperatively toward resolving natural resource issues in this rock climbing area along the Peter Norbeck Byway.”

*Stephen Keegan, Landscape Architect
Black Hills National Forest*

*Partners produced a
climbing brochure*

*An accessible fishing trail was
constructed at Horsethief Lake
(Stephen Keegan)*



*Autumn coats the shoulders of the
San Juan Mountains (© Robert Reinhard)*

San Juan Skyway

Colorado

San Juan and Uncompaghre National Forests



Byway Designations

- ★ All American Road, 1996
- ★ Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway, 1989
- ★ National Forest Scenic Byway, 1988



Byway Snapshot

The 236-mile San Juan Skyway in southwest Colorado spans elevations from 6,200 feet to over 11,000 feet. It passes through five distinct life zones equivalent to ecosystems found from Alaska to Mexico. The landscape encompasses high ranching country, broad river valleys, miles of aspen-covered slopes, and high peaks. The skyway passes the entrance to Mesa Verde National Park, site of world-famous ancestral Pueblo cliff dwellings, and brings visitors to the doors of historic mining towns and tourist destinations.



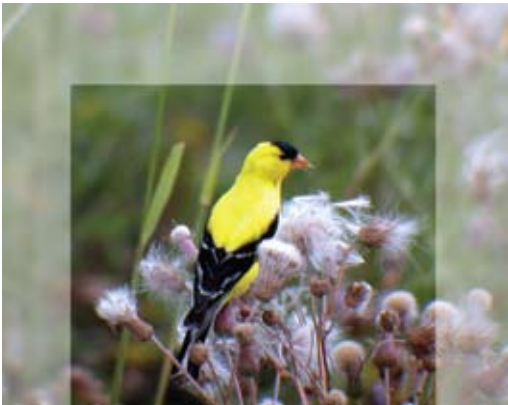
Grants Leverage Millions

In the face of increasing growth pressures, San Juan Skyway stakeholders developed a vision to preserve and enhance the scenic, natural, historic, and agricultural heritage resource qualities that led to this byway's national recognition. Over the last several years, these stakeholders have raised in excess of \$30 million for a variety of successful land conservation and historic preservation initiatives and byway improvements. National Scenic Byways Program grants have been used as important matching dollars for this fundraising effort.

Funds have been used to permanently protect over 10,000 acres through fee simple acquisition and conservation easements, develop positive working relationships with a variety of property owners throughout the corridor, and develop and upgrade campground facilities and winter and summer recreational trails and trailheads.

The San Juan Skyway Initiative provides substantial and significant conservation of open space by protecting working ranches, important wildlife habitat, unique Colorado landscapes, and regional historic and tourism assets. Phase I of the Skyway initiative started in 1998 with the formation of the Red Mountain Task Force. Two national forests, as well as counties, historical societies, the Trust for Public Land, Fort Lewis College, and other partners, gathered to focus on land conservation on Red

Mountain. One success led to another, and, in 2003, the Skyway coalition initiated extensive spatial analysis and mapping in order to further refine high-value resource lands in other Skyway landscape corridors. The analysis, mapping, and community priorities established the basis for other phases of the project, which still continue.



Gold finch along the San Juan Skyway (Randy Roberts)

“Byways are more than lines on a map. They can be a tool for community planning and a way for communities to accomplish things that need to be done. Financial support for byways ensures that the byways—and the benefits that accrue from them—don’t languish.”

*Ken Francis, San Juan Skyway
Office of Community Services*

Hay bales lie scattered below the snow-tipped San Juan Mountains of the Dallas Divide (© Robert Reinhold)



Clear Creek Falls thunder down a gorge (Sally Pearce)

Silver Thread Scenic Byway

Colorado
Grand Mesa, Uncompaghre, Gunnison,
and Rio Grande National Forests



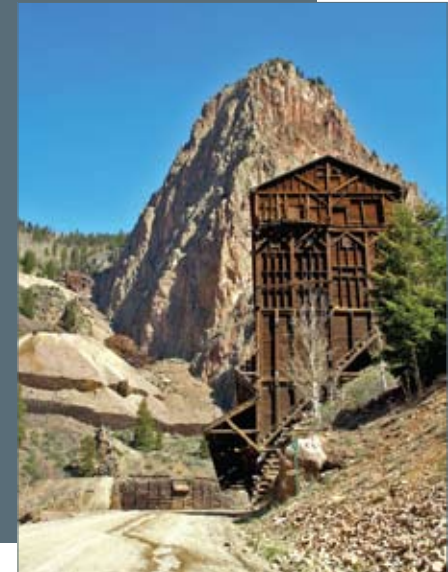
Byway Designations

- ★ Colorado State Scenic Byway, 1990
- ★ National Forest Scenic Byway, 1990



Byway Snapshot

The Silver Thread Scenic Byway is a 75-mile drive between Lake City and South Fork, Colorado, and offers natural beauty amid a history forged at the height of the State's mineral rush. This route was once a thoroughfare for prospectors and entrepreneurs, boasting towns of thousands of people and thriving businesses. Today, the highway still attracts visitors with alluring vistas, recreational opportunities, and abandoned mines and boomtowns. Five of Colorado's "fourteeners"—mountains that reach above 14,000 feet—mark the skyline. The town of Creede offers numerous attractions, including the historic mining district and the Creede Repertory Theater.



Commodore Mine just outside the town of Creede (Sally Pearce)

Going the Extra Mile for Quality Design

North Clear Creek Falls is the most-photographed waterfall in Colorado and a major attraction along the Silver Thread Scenic Byway. However, the access trail, restrooms, and viewing area were outdated and in disrepair. Forest Service Capital Improvement Project Funds were available, but inadequate to meet both ADA standards and Built Environment Image Guide (BEIG) objectives for Forest Service facilities. The BEIG promotes sustainable designs built from locally harvested, renewable materials and stresses a rustic architectural style that reflects the natural and cultural landscape.



Penstemon (Teresa Prendusi)

A series of National Scenic Byway Program grants—as well as the contributions of byway partners—provided the funding needed to go the extra mile for designing and building facilities that meet both ADA and BEIG guidelines at the North Clear Creek Falls viewing area. Local stonemasons and other crafters brought their expertise to the project. The result is a showcase area for the Silver Thread Scenic Byway.

In addition, \$5,000 in HTFB funding has helped an effort to extend the byway in an area that crosses the Old Spanish Trail. The Forest Service used the funds to hire a graphic artist to develop a milepost brochure, which includes the new section of byway and interprets the historic trail.

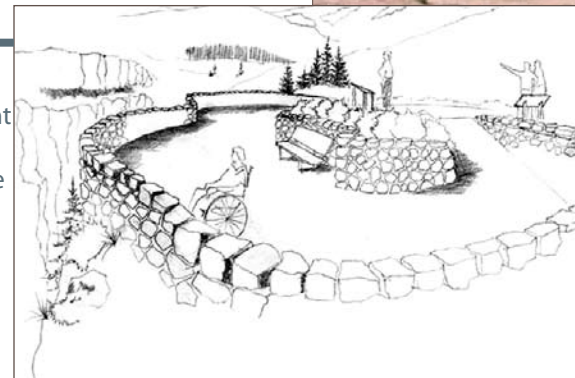
“Silver Thread Scenic Byway partners have all the passion it takes to develop and maintain a byway. What we lacked was the funding. We wouldn’t have a byway without the National Scenic Byways grant program and the HTFB funds.”

*Kelly Ortiz, Landscape Architect,
Rio Grande National Forest*



Funding for the Future

National Scenic Byways Program grants and 10 years of HTFB funds have helped byway partners interpret the most significant sites along the byway, develop a byway marketing plan, and forge lasting byway and community partnerships in this remote section of Colorado. These funds have put the rural byway on solid footing in terms of planning and implementation.



Conceptual drawing of viewing area reconstruction

Current conditions at the North Clear Creek Falls do not provide a quality visitor experience



Crown of the Continent Geotourism Project

Regional Snapshot

More than 100 years ago, conservationist and author George Bird Grinnell coined the phrase “Crown of the Continent” to refer to the rugged peaks, plunging valleys, native prairie, and sparkling waters where the Rocky Mountain Range intersects the United States-Canadian border. The Crown of the Continent covers more than 10 million acres in northern Montana, southeastern British Columbia, and southwestern Alberta. This region is one of the most diverse and ecologically intact temperate ecosystems in the world.

Geotourism MapGuide Principles

- A “sense of place” creates a type of tourism that emphasizes the distinctiveness of its locale, benefiting both visitor and resident.
- Local businesses and civic groups work together to promote and provide an authentic visitor experience.
- Residents discover their own heritage and how things that are ordinary to them may be of interest to outsiders.
- Travel businesses do their best to use the local workforce, services, and products and supplies.
- Destination-savvy travelers seek out businesses that emphasize the character of the locale. Tourism revenues in turn raise local awareness of the value of local assets.



*Logan Pass, Glacier National Park, Montana
(Margaret Gorski)*

Supporting a New Concept in Sustainable Tourism

The National Geographic Society Center for Sustainable Destinations Geotourism Initiative is a new approach to tourism that “sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.” The initiative supports businesses that provide products and experiences reflecting that unique character as a way of raising awareness and stimulating people to take action to preserve it.

The center is working through the National Parks and Conservation Association to bring together six national forests, the National Park Service, tourism agencies, and other local agencies and partners to work on the Crown of the Continent Geotourism Project. Together, they are creating a Geotourism MapGuide for the Crown of the Continent region. Forest Service participation in this project was made possible, in part, with HTFB funds through the Montana Scenic Loop organization.

Creating a Geotourism MapGuide is a continuing community-based process that invites dialogue among all stakeholders: community leaders, public land managers, food and hospitality sectors, native peoples, conservation and civic groups, historic preservation societies, artisans and artists, eco-tour operators, visitors and others. Through workshops and other methods, stakeholders nominate sites for the MapGuide, including wildlife and scenic viewing spots, recreational trails, local foods, historic districts, unique businesses and places to stay, and community festivals and traditions. In addition, the project highlights stewardship efforts that sustain and enhance the region’s character of place.

Lasting Benefits

Access to HTFB funds is particularly important for byway and geotourism efforts in Montana because currently there is not an active State scenic byway program that can direct National Scenic Byways Program grant funds to local byway efforts. In the case of the Geotourism project, HTFB funds helped to open a community conversation about the value of scenic resources and public lands that would not have been possible otherwise.

More information

- **Crown of the Continent**—<http://www.crownofthecontinent.net>
- **National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations**—http://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable/about_geotourism.html
- **Montana Scenic Loop**—<http://www.montanascenicloop.com>

“Geotourism goes beyond making just a tourism map. The process brings together all the players who benefit from and manage tourism resources to raise awareness about the importance of protecting those resources that sustain us and make this area special and different from anywhere else in the world.”

*Margaret Gorski,
Developed Recreation Program Leader,
Forest Service Northern Region*



National Forest Scenic Byways & Backcountry Recreation Roads Project

**Northern California and southern Oregon
Klamath, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta-Trinity,
Six River and Winema National Forests**

Byway Snapshot

Thousands of miles of paved and unpaved backcountry roads lace the landscape administered by the Forest Service. Built primarily for resource management and access to trailheads and other recreational areas, backcountry roads bring people closer to important—and often overlooked—natural and cultural heritage sites.

Recognizing the untapped potential of these roads, the Forest Service teamed up with the Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association to designate and promote 10 backcountry recreation routes in northern California and southern Oregon—a region known for vast open spaces, scenic beauty, and outdoor recreation opportunities. The routes are accessible by sport utility vehicles and offer the byway traveler opportunities for adventure-based recreation, such as hiking, mountain biking, fishing, camping, canoeing, and driving for pleasure within the backcountry of seven national forests.



Backcountry Routes: A New Twist on Scenic Byways

The Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region worked with the Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association (SCWA)—1 of California's 12 nonprofit Destination Marketing Organizations—to pilot the Backcountry Recreation Road Project. A cooperative agreement between the two organizations and \$15,000 of HTFB funds awarded in 2006 allowed the planning to begin.

Forest Service staff worked with seven national forests to nominate potential backcountry routes in the Shasta-Cascade region. SCWA provided in-kind contributions to survey each route and to map points of interest, natural and historic features, road conditions, and public safety issues. Based on this inventory, 10 routes were selected for the Backcountry Recreation Roads project.

HTFB funds were also used to develop a full-color brochure with maps of each route. The association is developing a podcast for backcountry byway travelers. The routes will be marketed through the California Welcome Center located off Interstate 5 in Anderson, California.

The Backcountry Recreation Roads project meets a number of important needs:

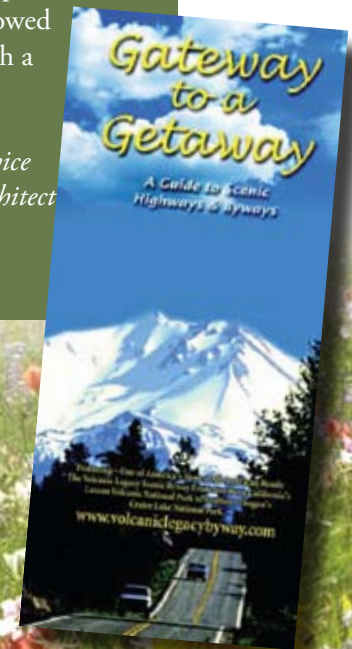
- Tourists with sport utility vehicles will have access to identified backcountry routes for safe, off-the-beaten-path adventures.
- Rural communities will benefit from sustainable tourism and promotion of their communities as "gateways" to national forests and other public lands.
- By identifying roads that offer access to national forest lands in a socially and environmentally responsible manner, the Forest Service can highlight the need for funding to provide maintenance for public use.

Drawing on Proven Partners

A small amount of National Forest Scenic Byway Transportation funds supported planning for this project. The Forest Service leveraged the value of these planning funds by partnering with the Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association to market and promote the backcountry routes.

"The success of this project is built on a couple of previous successes. First, the Eastern Sierra pioneered a similar project several years ago, and we built our project on their model. Second, the Forest Service and the Shasta-Cascade Wonderland Association have had an enduring relationship since the mid-1990s that allowed us to get a lot done with a small budget."

*Trini Juarez, Forest Service
Region 5 Landscape Architect
and Recreation Planner*



*Seasonal wildflowers decorate the byways and
backcountry roads (Rose Lehman)*

National Scenic Byways Program Web Site

The National Scenic Byways Program Web site (<http://www.byways.org>) is the premier source of information about scenic byways in the United States. FHWA launched the Web site in 1996 as a way for the traveling public to plan their journeys on byways designated through the National Scenic Byways Program.

One of the first tourism Web sites on the Internet, <http://www.byways.org>, has evolved from a simple online inventory to a cost-effective byway marketing tool that helps create a sense of identity for the America's Byways® collection and each byway community.

A byway visitor experiences the open road through the heart of South Dakota (© South Dakota Department of Tourism/Photography)



Funds Pave the Way for Expansion

HTFB funds were used in 2005 and 2006 for posting national forest scenic byways on the <http://www.byways.org> Web site. The Forest Service entered into a sole-source contract with Utah State University in the amount of \$60,000 over 2 years to perform Web site design, cartography, and other services necessary to post all 137 national forest scenic byways on the Web site. The goal of the project was to provide a seamless, one-stop online resource for the byway traveler with maps and directions, visitor information, photographs, and other information about national forest scenic byways.

The National Scenic Byways Online (NSBO) team researched and compiled information about all 137 national forest scenic byways and worked closely with Forest Service byway managers to ensure that the information posted on the national Web site was complete and accurate. The Forest Service now uses <http://byways.org> exclusively as the official Government Web site for information about the National Forest Scenic Byways Program.

The effort by the Forest Service led to the addition of the 54 national back country byways designated by the Bureau of Land Management. NSBO also is working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to highlight the linkages between the America's Byways® collection and national wildlife refuges. They have also posted State and locally designated byways on the Web site.

NSBO maintains relationships with over 600 byway organizations from the full collection of byways in order to keep the information on <http://www.byways.org> accurate and up to date.

Long-Lasting Benefits

The work leveraged with the HTFB funds proved to be a critical turning point in making <http://www.byways.org> the "one-stop shopping center" it has become today. In addition, <http://www.byways.org> has helped position all scenic byways as important gateways to national forests and other public lands.



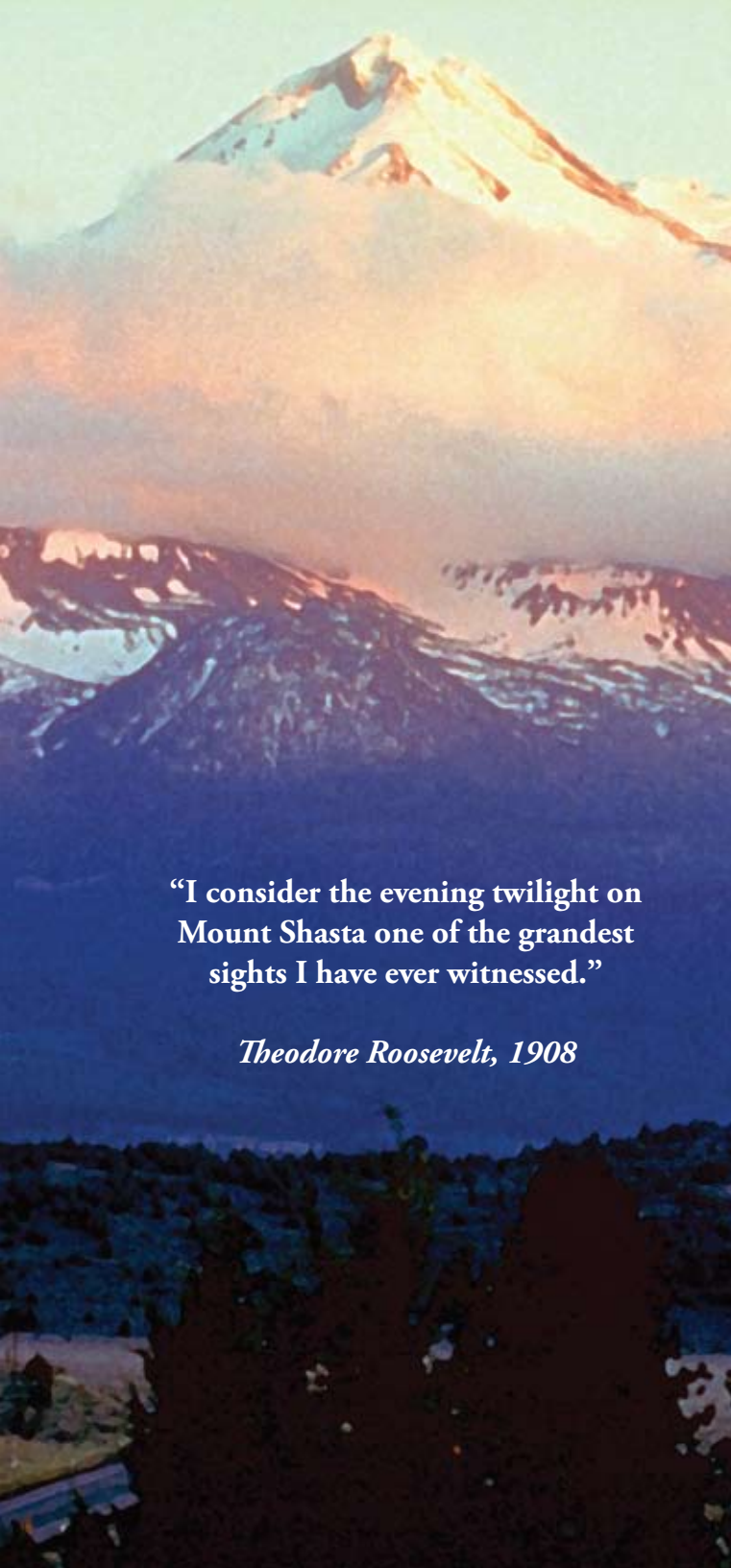
Photos, maps, and information on visitor services are all available at <http://www.byways.org>

“The success of this Web site is due to FHWA’s leadership and funding, which has enabled us to work closely with local byway programs, ensure accuracy of the Web site’s content, and help the byway communities feel like this is their Web site.”

*Stephen Clyde,
Project Manager
Utah State University, NSBO*

Visit Byways on the Web

- For travelers and media:
<http://www.byways.org>
- For grants, nominations, forums and national marketing:
<http://www.bywaysonline.org>
- For education and resources:
<http://www.bywaysresourcecenter.org>



“I consider the evening twilight on Mount Shasta one of the grandest sights I have ever witnessed.”

Theodore Roosevelt, 1908

National forest scenic byway projects range in scope from corridor management planning to renovation of historic sites, new visitor facilities, interpretive waysides, scenic overlooks, site identification signs, marketing plans, and other projects. ***Federal Lands Highways Transportation Planning Assistance funds have made an invaluable contribution to these projects and have also leveraged grant opportunities available through the FHWA National Scenic Byways Program competitive grants.*** These two funding sources have been the catalyst for the many outstanding community-based tourism development efforts highlighted throughout this report.



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.