

# VISTAS



AMERICA'S BYWAYS™

MARCH/APRIL 2004

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## Byways for Everyone: Make Sure Your Byway Is Accessible

By Janet Zeller, USDA Forest Service, National Accessibility Program Manager

**W**hy is accessibility so important? It's the numbers. The Census Bureau tells us that one in five people in the U.S. has a disability that significantly limits one or more of their major life functions. Over the past dozen years that number has been increasing by over one million each year. Add to those figures the quickly aging population and it becomes clear that not only is accessibility important today, it will be critical to the future use and enjoyment of facilities and programs on America's Byways™. Of the 55 million people who have a disability, only 8.4 million use wheelchairs or other mobility devices.

People with other disabilities are less noticeable, including those who have loss of hearing, limited vision, heart or breathing limitations, and developmental disabilities. People with disabilities want to be able to enjoy recreation experiences along with their family and friends. When one person in a group of travelers has a disability, the entire group will seek out and use only the accessible programs and facilities. The good news is that all people can share in Byway experiences when universal design is an integral part of the planning, design and implementation of our Byways.



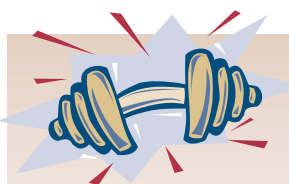
Visitors share a discovery.

*The good news is that all people can share in Byway experiences when universal design is an integral part of the planning, design and implementation of our Byways.*

Oh, yes, there is also the law. For federal agencies and the dollars they invest, the 1968 Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) requires that all facilities built by, for, or on behalf of a federal agency must be accessible. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that federal agency programs and facilities be accessible to people with disabilities. State and local governments and businesses that are open to the public are covered under the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires their programs and any new construction to be accessible. So, yes, accessibility does have the hammer of the law, but beyond being a requirement, providing equal opportunity for all people in an integrated setting, with independence and dignity, is just good customer service.



Universal design along the San Juan Skyway, Colorado.



**Register For  
 Your 2004  
 Power Workshop  
 Now—See Page 11  
 For Details!**

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## Roadside Reflections by Michelle Johnson, Deputy Director, America's Byways™ Resource Center

### Our Great Outdoors

This time of year, we all start looking out our windows and long to get outside—especially those of us who live in northern climates. While I love each of the four seasons, I look forward to spring and summer with the most excitement because their arrival means I can play outdoors with sunny skies, green grass and warm breezes. Walking with the kids and the dogs through the neighborhood. Taking picnics to the beach. Swimming at the lake. Biking along a wooded trail. Ah, the active days of summer.

And speaking of recreating in the great outdoors...

### Partners Outdoors 2004

In January I participated in Partners Outdoors 2004, an annual conference organized by the American Recreation Coalition (ARC). Many of you recognize ARC as one of our best friends and champions of the National Scenic Byways Program. You should also know that ARC is a national leader in recreation with many successful initiatives that have built public-private partnerships to enhance and protect outdoor recreational opportunities and resources. In addition, ARC also conducts annual research on recreational trends. Their most recent research shows a disappointing downward trend in participating in outdoor recreation.

Check out page 4 for a detailed report of the initiatives developed to encourage people to choose public lands as a source for recreation. You'll also find out where to get a complete copy of the recent research.

### Public Health and Public Lands

It seems like everyday we see news reports on health issues relating to diet and exercise. The Surgeon General and the Center for Disease Control regard this as a public health crisis, citing the increasing number of individuals who don't exercise or who are obese. Several federal agencies have an answer for you: Meridian 2004: Initiatives in Public Health and Recreation. This initiative is supported by a federal interagency working group consisting of representatives from the Department of the Interior, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of the Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Transportation. In the first week of June, Meridian 2004 will kick off a summer of recreational activity by demonstrating how partners can promote healthier lifestyles through recreational activity. And, to make this even more interesting, one of our Byways, the Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway (Minneapolis, Minnesota), will be featured

throughout the event. The event's organizers hope that other communities will host similar events to promote outdoor recreational activity as a healthy part of daily life. See the article by White House Fellow Michael Suk on page 7.

### Take Pride in America

For most of us, it's easy to get excited about summer and outdoor excursions. In addition to getting yourself outside, there are ways to get your Byway out, too. Check out the great opportunities to partner with *Take Pride in America* (page 5). This group offers lots of suggestions for outdoor events to promote your Byway and the communities and public lands along the road.

### Great Outdoors Week

One last bit of "outdoor" information to share. Great Outdoors Week 2004 is June 7-11. Sponsored by the American Recreation Coalition, Great Outdoors Week highlights the invaluable contributions active outdoor recreation makes to Americans' health and quality of life, and the role of the nation's magnificent parks, forests, refuges and other protected lands that provide diverse and accessible recreation opportunities. Check out [www.funoutdoors.com](http://www.funoutdoors.com) for more information or call ARC at (202) 682-9530.



Michelle Johnson, Deputy Director  
America's Byways™ Resource Center

Your Byway connects visitors to the great outdoors in many ways. While you plan your own recreational activities this summer, think about inviting visitors to discover your Byway as a gateway to outdoor adventures. You might find new Byways partners, such as biking trail associations or bird-watching groups. And you'll help encourage Americans to explore recreational activities for better health as you share your Byway's unique story.

P.S. Don't forget to exercise your mind too! Our **2004 Power Workshops: Strong Training for Byways** are on their way to a convenient location near you. Check out [www.bywaysonline.org](http://www.bywaysonline.org) for details and registration form. Questions? Call Jeanine Buck, Registration Manager, 800-4BYWAYS, ext.5 or e-mail [jbuck@byways.org](mailto:jbuck@byways.org). ★



"America's Byways protect our heritage, connect travelers to America's treasures and bring business to communities across the country," said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta at the debut event for the Mobil Travel Guide America's Byways series. "These routes are the roads to the heart and soul of America."

## Mobil Travel Guide Introduces America's Byways Series

For the first time, *Mobil Travel Guide* is partnering with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Scenic Byways Program to release the America's Byways™ series, showcasing America's greatest drives, including in-depth archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic information.

From the Historic National Road on the East Coast to Hells Canyon Scenic Byway in Oregon and Loess Hills Scenic Byway in-between, America's Byways demonstrates the depth and breadth of scenery in the U.S. The four-part series,

which includes All-American Roads, Midwest, Mountain Region, and West Coast, gives travelers detailed information on each road, along with things to see and do, as well as Mobil Star-rated places to stay and eat along the way.

"It's quite common for families to load up their car for a vacation and travel down a major interstate, without even realizing that a slice of American history is just a few miles away," noted Larry Dustin, president of *Mobil Travel Guide*. "The America's Byways series gives travelers a different way to travel, experiencing the beauty and diversity of America."

Since its founding in 1958, *Mobil Travel Guide* has served as an advocate for travelers looking for information about hotels, restaurants, and travel destinations. Using an objective inspection and rating process, *Mobil Travel Guide* provides recommendations to consumers, enhancing the quality and value of their travel experiences.

Learn more about the *Mobil Travel Guide* and National Scenic Byways Program partnership in the next issue of *Vistas*. ★



USDA Forest Service Visitor Center at Mt. St. Helens, Washington.

### Universal Design for All People

“Universal design” means designing programs and facilities to serve all people, regardless of the user’s size, physical, sensory or mental abilities, or language skills in an integrated setting that is a safe, efficient, comfortable and inviting environment.

To reach this universal design goal, accessibility must be integrated into the development process from the beginning. The interpretive plan must share the message in a variety of formats: visual, audio and “hands-on.” To ensure the site, program opportunities and facilities are universally designed, include an accessibility specialist on the interpretive planning and the site/facility development teams. Keep in mind that the level of development should not be expanded solely for accessibility. However, all new construction or reconstruction must be accessible in accordance with the current accessibility guidelines\*.

At existing facilities, have an accessibility specialist evaluate the accessibility and help develop plans for the needed improvements. Often small changes—some grading on a pathway, a little work on a threshold, lowering a 36” height of the information counter, moving items out of the aisles in a sales area, etc.—can make an area accessible.

### Program Accessibility

Historic buildings often pose more of a challenge. The structure is legally required to be made accessible, unless that action would result in “substantial impairment” to significant features of the historic property. If the facility can’t be made accessible without negative impact, access must still be provided to the program at that facility.

A program can be defined as the reason people visit that structure. So, first identify the program. For example, at a lighthouse, the program opportunities may include viewing the scene from the top of the tower or learning about the

structure’s history, or understanding life as the keeper of the lighthouse. If accessible entrance to the structure cannot be provided without negative impact to the structure’s historic aspects, provide an exterior walkway including panels replicating the tower view, the history, and life in the lighthouse. At other structures, a video tour may be possible. Whatever alternative programs are developed, they must be provided in the most integrated setting.

### Print Material Criteria

Criteria for accessible print materials include high-contrast color, non-shiny paper, emphasis on graphics and minimum of 12 point sans or simple serif font. Byway audio tours should also be available in audio-described versions as well as in an accompanying brochure.

Criteria for orientation maps include high-contrast colors, emphasis on graphics rather than text, maximum centerline height of 36 to 48 inches, and approachable within 2 inches. Interpretive signs follow the same criteria, and by utilizing 3/30/3 design\*\*, these signs are accessible to all, including



3/30/3 creates approachable interpretive signs.

visitors with limited ability to read English. Visitor center exhibits must meet the same criteria, and all controls must be operable with one closed fist. To be sure you are on track, the Smithsonian Institute Accessible Exhibits Checklist is a great tool located at [www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility](http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility).

Before visitors arrive, they often seek accessibility information. Post the accessibility details on your Web site (make sure your Web site meets accessibility standards as well). On printed materials,

include: “Accessibility information available at” then list: telephone numbers, Web site address, and any other sources of this information.

One final tip: Don’t use the word “handicapped.” Since the 1990 ADA, the correct terminology is only “a person with a disability” and “accessible.”

Now it’s your turn. You can make the difference in ensuring all people can share in the joy of America’s Byways.



Accessible spotting scopes on Spirit Lake Memorial Highway, Washington.

### Notes:

Numerous resources for making programs and facilities accessible are available on the USDA Forest Service Accessibility Web page at [www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility](http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility)

The Federal Highway Administration’s publication, *Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access, Part 2, Best Practices Design Guide*, is available at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalk2/index.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalk2/index.htm). Hard copies are available as well. To order, see [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalk2/index.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalk2/index.htm).

\* Accessibility guidelines for facilities are available at the U.S. Access Board Web site: [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov).

\*\* 3/30/3 design of signs was developed by Michael Gross and Ron Zimmerman and is detailed in their book *Signs, Trails and Wayside Exhibits: Connecting People and Places*. Signs using this design provide access for the reader in the first 3 seconds to catch attention. In the next 30 seconds, the reader scans the information. If at that point the reader wants to learn more, in the final 3 minutes, the reader digests the rest of the information. This format incorporates universal design because it provides approachability

*A program is accessible when all people can gain the information and experience, and do so with independence, integration and dignity. There are four key questions to ask about each aspect of the program, materials, exhibits, sites and facilities:*

1. Can a person who has a mobility impairment access and participate in the program or exhibit along with everyone else?
2. Can a person who is blind or has low-vision access and participate in the program or exhibit along with everyone else?
3. Can a person who is deaf or hard of hearing access and participate in the program or exhibit along with everyone else?
4. Can a person who has a learning disability access and participate in the program or exhibit along with everyone else?

If the answer to all four questions is “yes,” then the program is accessible. If the answer is “no” in some aspect, you’ll know what and where you need to improve.



## Partners Outdoors 2004 Takes on Key Issues

*Contributed by the American Recreation Coalition*

Leaders in the recreation community from eight federal agencies, state governments, key nonprofits and recreation companies large and small met for four days at the Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort near Salt Lake City, Utah, as participants in Partners Outdoors 2004. This annual brainstorming and action session was co-hosted by the Recreation Roundtable and federal recreation-providing agencies. Special guests included USDA Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth, National Park Service Director Fran Mainella and *Take Pride in America* Executive Director Marti Allbright. The theme of the session, the thirteenth of these annual meetings, was “Opening the Doors Wider at America’s Public Lands – Our Natural Health and Fitness Centers.”

Participants analyzed new national research, including Roper ASW’s

Outdoor Recreation in America 2003 (see below for a link to download the entire report) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s research on physical activity in America. They also heard presentations about key federal initiatives and local efforts designed to make the benefits of recreation more accessible to portions of the American public not currently receiving their fair share of the benefits derived from recreational activities on public lands. The session also allowed participants to see firsthand the public-private partnership at work in Little Cottonwood Canyon between Snowbird, Alta Ski Area and the Wasatch-Cache National Forest—a partnership that successfully hosts an estimated two million recreation experiences annually. Snowbird operates on a combination of private land and national forest lands covered by a long-term permit.

A major focus of discussions was the impact of electronic leisure pursuits on outdoor recreation. Although surfing the Internet, playing computer games and enjoying other electronic activities compete with traditional outdoor recreation for available time and funds, participants concluded that potential exists for harnessing these same new technologies both to enhance recreation experiences and to improve recreation management efforts. Participants also developed plans for increasing the contribution of outdoor recreation to Americans’ health, including efforts to support Meridian 2004, a national event scheduled for June 2004, focusing on the relationship between outdoor recreation and public health.

Managers from four additional ski areas operating on the Wasatch-Cache National Forest, including Snow Basin, site of key 2002 Olympic skiing events, provided special insights on meeting urban recreation needs.

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To download the research conducted by Roper ASW for The Recreation Roundtable, check out: [http://www.funoutdoors.com/roper\\_recreation\\_2003.pdf](http://www.funoutdoors.com/roper_recreation_2003.pdf)

Source: American Recreation Coalition and The Recreation Roundtable ★

### *Partners Outdoors 2004 concluded with a series of recommendations, including:*

- 1) Public and private organizations should continue and expand programs like WOW (which introduces camping to urban children) and CAST (which provides fishing opportunities for disabled and disadvantaged children) to reach out to portions of the American public not currently receiving their fair share of the benefits derived from recreational activities on public lands—from seniors to minorities to those whose health is at risk;
- 2) Public and private recreation interests should create an Outdoor Recreation Technology Task Force coordinated by the Recreation Roundtable that will actively seek out means to develop and test applications of new technologies to enhance outdoor recreation experiences and improve recreation management;
- 3) Partners Outdoors sponsors should continue and expand efforts to fully utilize available federal and state recreation assistance programs on public lands;
- 4) Federal and state agencies must expand the capability to successfully use volunteers on public lands and encourage additional volunteerism through the *Take Pride in America* initiative; and
- 5) Recreation community leaders should take an active role in Meridian 2004 and related efforts to maximize recreation’s contribution to the health of the American people.

Information presented at Partners Outdoors and more details on the recommendations will be shared with federal agency leadership and with recreation industry organizations by members of the Partners Outdoors steering committee, which includes representatives of the sponsoring organizations.



# Byways Should Embrace *Take Pride in America*

Contributed by the American Recreation Coalition

Many people don't realize that America's federally managed public lands comprise one-third of our nation. It's a fact. Our parks, forests, lakes, rangelands, rivers, historic and cultural sites—as well as many byway corridors—are all a part of this great legacy belonging to all citizens. Now, a national partnership has been forged to promote responsible use of these areas and to “seek, support and recognize” volunteers who work to improve America's public lands. The *Take Pride in America* program is part of the President's USA Freedom Corps call to service, and offers “citizens and communities an opportunity to demonstrate local pride, initiative, and stewardship.”

Take Pride was established initially in 1985, and now the U.S. Department of the Interior re-launched the program to be bigger and better than ever. Today's program involves hundreds of partners, including federal, state and local governments, conservation and recreation organizations, youth groups and top national corporations and organizations.

## **TPIA Offers Byways Opportunities**

Byways should be active partners in *Take Pride in America*. *Take Pride in America* will help you recruit volunteers to collect trash along the Byway and construct and rehabilitate key features along the Byway, including interpretive kiosks and parking areas.

Volunteers play an important role in many activities along Byway routes, from roadside and stream clean-up drives to planting or clearing vegetation, from trail building to facility facelifts. They are an important link to creating a spirit of community support for the Byway, and perform important,



*The place to start is at the TPIA Web site: [www.takepride.gov](http://www.takepride.gov). The Web site explains the many facets of the Take Pride in America program.*

routine tasks for very little cost. Participation in *Take Pride in America* helps to provide a structure to increase the number of volunteer projects and volunteers available, and provides exciting incentives for your Byway volunteers, including Presidential awards, special discounts from top recreation companies and more.

The place to start is at the TPIA Web site: [www.takepride.gov](http://www.takepride.gov). The Web site explains the many facets of the *Take Pride in America* program. You can create your personal Record of Service, and get information about ordering TPIA materials and more. One of the most exciting new products is the *Take Pride in America* Volunteer Guide for your

volunteers. The Volunteer Guide is both a resource book and a special thank-you gift, with coupons and premiums as well as information about the public lands and future volunteer opportunities.

## **Grand Rounds Hosts TPIA Activities**

The Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway in Minnesota has already committed to playing a role in *Take Pride in America* through the important Meridian 2004 event. In the first week of June, five federal departments and many public and private partners will meet in Minneapolis to highlight the connection between recreation and good health. The two-day event will include a major *Take Pride in America* volunteer activity on day one, with young

and old volunteers at work on locally, state- and federally administered public lands.

On the volunteer action day, work projects are planned at locations along the Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway, a perfect kick-off for a new partnership between Byway managers and *Take Pride in America*. These volunteers will gather at the conclusion of the day for a celebration and accounting of their efforts and will be greeted and feted by Interior Secretary Gale Norton. She will presage the messages and the actions planned for the following day, when 25 to 50 innovative programs designed to boost physical activity through outdoor recreation participation will be showcased at an outdoor venue. The Surgeon General of the United States and multiple Cabinet officials, key Minnesota elected officials and others, including officials of major medical and health organizations, will help emphasize the importance of these efforts directed to improve the health of employees and customers, neighbors and members. Moreover, plans will be announced to recognize additional “best practices” programs that assist the goals of the HealthierUS program, emphasizing good choices in lifestyles and eating habits.

## **TPIA Supports America's Legacy**

America's collection of scenic byways is a unique and diverse addition to our national legacy of protecting and enhancing lands and places of special beauty and meaning for the enjoyment of all our citizens. We encourage you to see how the *Take Pride in America* program can begin to play a role in your efforts to assure this legacy continues. ★



# Head Outdoors for Health

## “Exploring the Active Lifestyle” Study Results Released

Credit: Harris Interactive®. Exploring the Active Lifestyle. Reprinted with permission.

**A** new national study just released by Outdoor Industry Foundation conducted by renowned research firm Harris Interactive®, based in Rochester, New York, found that Americans who participate in at least one outdoor activity on a regular basis reap mental and physical health benefits. The study, *Exploring the Active Lifestyle*, shows that outdoor activities greatly enrich lives by reducing stress levels and connecting people with family and friends. Harris Interactive researchers also found that people are more likely to be active throughout their lives if they start outdoor activity at a young age.

### Outdoor Participation – The Natural Solution to the Obesity Crisis

Outdoor participants are proactive about their health, and outdoor activities are part of their healthy lifestyle. Harris Interactive results show:

- 79% of participants are proactive about their health
- 50% of participants participate in outdoor activities as the main way they get their exercise
- 15% cited a desire to lose weight as their reason for starting outdoor activities after a lapse in involvement

### The Outdoors Is a Natural Cure for the Blues

The research shows that almost 90% of Americans age 16 and older feel that getting outdoors reduces their stress levels and leaves them with a sense of accomplishment. The findings are especially significant given that many experts attribute high stress levels and low self-esteem to depression.

The Harris Interactive study shows that participants are involved in outdoor activities for more than just the physical benefits and that they recognize the importance of the emotional benefits of participation.

Harris Interactive results show:

- 88% enjoy the feeling of accomplishment when participating in an outdoor activity
- 88% feel the natural setting allows them to escape pressures of everyday life
- 79% believe it keeps them feeling young
- 76% feel it allows them to connect with themselves

### Outdoor Recreation Strengthens Family Relationships – Families that Play Together, Stay Together

Due to the emotional benefits, participating in outdoor activities is a lifelong experience that people want to share with others, especially family members. In addition, the majority of people participating feel that active outdoor activities strengthened their family relationships. This is an important finding in a generation where almost 50% of the population is divorced.

Harris Interactive results show:

- 79% feel that experiencing outdoor recreational activities together has strengthened their family relationship
- 55% would like their children to experience more outdoor recreational activities

### Secret to Success? Start Young!

The key to being a lifelong active outdoor participant is to start young. Participation in human-powered outdoor activities is an ingrained behavior. Research shows that 90% of current outdoor enthusiasts have been participating since they were young. Starting at a young age teaches children to love and appreciate the outdoors. The personal challenge and health benefits are what keeps them participating throughout their lives.



Harris Interactive results show:

- 90% of active adult participants started between the ages of 5 and 18
- The average age Americans start their favorite activity is 18 years old
- 41% cited parents/guardians/family members as the number one influence for getting involved in outdoor recreation
- 33% cited friends and peers as big influencers
- Personal challenges and health benefits are what keep people active throughout their lives
- There's a very good chance that if a person becomes involved in one activity, that they will be interested in trying other activities, thus raising their activity level overall throughout their life

### Barriers to Being Active

The largest barrier to participation in outdoor activities is time, not lack of interest, even for young adults.

Harris Interactive results show:

- Time commitments related to school, children and household maintenance are the major reasons non-participants under the age of 44 have lapsed from their outdoor activities
- The 45+ age group are more likely to cite physical health reasons, injury and “just don't enjoy outdoor activity anymore”
- The biggest lapse in outdoor involvement takes place between ages 25-44, single or married and with or without children

*Hiking, biking and camping have stood the test of time. They have the greatest longevity of any of the human-powered outdoor sports.*

- Even though people aren't involved in outdoor recreation anymore, 24% state that they would like to get back into it at some point in the future

### How to Get Started – It's Never Too Late!

The following are what most people feel are effective ways of getting their children, and themselves, more active:

- Turning off the TV
- Involvement in school programs and outdoor clubs (especially for parents who are busy)
- Parent organized activities (time together with children)
- Joining an outdoor recreation group that organizes regular outings
- Organized work/employer-sponsored activities

### Most Popular, Affordable and Easily Accessible Activities

The three activities that were consistently cited in the Harris study as the most popular, affordable and easily accessible activities are:

- Hiking
- Biking
- Camping

Hiking, biking and camping have stood the test of time. They have the greatest longevity of any of the human-powered outdoor sports. In addition, people who enjoy these activities are more likely to also try other sports such as climbing, downhill skiing, snowboarding, kayaking, cross-country skiing, trail running and snowshoeing. ★



# America's Public Lands and Waters: Gateways to Better Health

Michael Suk, MD, JD, MPH, White House Fellow, US Department of the Interior

Hardly a day goes by that we are not reminded of the fact that Americans are becoming less active and more obese. Recently, the Surgeon General of the United States and the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention labeled obesity as the chief health problem in the United States—looming larger than even smoking and tobacco use. Resulting from a sedentary lifestyle, this public health epidemic in obesity often leads to significant chronic health problems such as diabetes, heart disease and bone loss among the nation's youth and adults. Preventable chronic diseases such as these cost our nation and citizens billions of dollars in medical care expenditures and decreased quality of life.

**A 1996 comprehensive report from the Surgeon General found that people who engage in regular physical activity benefit from:**

- Reduced risk of premature death
- Reduced risk of heart disease
- Reduced risk of hypertension, colon cancer and non-insulin dependent diabetes
- Improved muscle strength, joint structure and function
- Weight loss and favorable distribution of body fat

Yet, the sedentary lifestyle and unhealthy American diet have produced an epidemic of obesity.

## Launching America's HealthierUS Initiative

In June 2002 President Bush launched the HealthierUS Initiative, based on the premise that increasing personal fitness and becoming healthier is critical to achieving a better and longer life.

The President's HealthierUS Initiative uses federal government resources to alert Americans to the vital health benefits of simple and modest improvements in physical activity, nutrition and behavior.

In support of HealthierUS, the Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Army signed a Memorandum of Understanding. The agreement established a Federal Interagency Work Group on Public Health and Recreation with representatives from the seven federal land and water management bureaus and four federal health promotion agencies.

The agreement recognizes that the diverse recreation opportunities provided on public lands and waters play an important role in meeting the physical activity objective of HealthierUS. Public lands are an asset as places for physical activity and should be viewed as a resource for health promotion.

In November 2003, the heads of the seven federal land and water management agencies further pledged to explore collaboration possibilities for creating a seamless system of services. Among its commitments, the agencies pledged "to increase public awareness of and the value of our public lands and waters with the objectives of increasing outdoor recreation participation among all Americans with an emphasis on our youth."

Collectively, the seven land and water agencies manage nearly one in three acres of land in the United States and receive nearly a billion visits per year. These numbers are staggering, particularly when viewed in the context of the unprecedented opportunity to raise public awareness of the importance of physical activity, while promoting recreational activities that are fun, diverse, and easy!



Providing access to places for physical activity such as national, state and local parks and byways increases the level of physical activity in a community.

## Increasing Public Park Access

Strong evidence shows that when people have access to local, regional, state or national parks, they are more physically active. In a study published by the CDC in 2001, creation or enhanced access to places for physical activity led to a 25.6 percent increase in the percentage of people participating in physical activity on three or more days per week. Beyond the physical benefits, contact with the natural world also improves psychological health, according to research.

Community-based programs frequently include parks and recreation center activities to benefit youth and geriatrics, prisoners, citizens with developmental disabilities or special education students. Local and regional parks and recreation centers are uniquely positioned to meet the everyday needs of citizens. Americans also take great pride in their national parks. Preserving federal land and waters is vital to maintaining our natural landscape and resources, as well as our national heritage. Importantly, the vast spaces afforded by national parks also allow for more rigorous physical activities, including hiking, climbing, kayaking, and camping to name a few.

Our public lands and waters play a vital role in a HealthierUS. Scientific public health evidence from the Guide to Community Preventive Services shows our public lands are a proven asset. Providing access to places for physical activity such as national, state, and local parks and byways increases the level of physical activity in a community.

## Meridian 2004 Summer Kick Off

This year, the summer outdoor recreation season starts in the first week of June with Meridian 2004: Initiatives in Public Health and Recreation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Other similarly themed summer celebrations will follow throughout the summer, from National Trails Day during the first week of June to National Public Lands Day on September 18.

Meridian 2004 is a public media event to kick off new or reinvigorated programs and partnerships that promote recreational activity and volunteerism on public lands and waters.

Because integrated strategies and action plans can have a positive effect on changing individual behaviors, this country's public lands and waters can be the gateway to better health for all Americans! ★

# Talladega Scenic Byway



Credit: Joe Watts

**Byway Length:** 29 miles

**Driving Time:** 1.5 hours

**Designations:**  
National Scenic Drive,  
Forest Service 1989

State Scenic Byway 1992

National Scenic Byway 1998

**History:**

Something good comes out of everything. The Great Depression created a lot of hardship and poverty in Alabama and the United States. But it also saw the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps. The CCC workers built thousands of miles of roads and trails, renovated historic buildings, planted trees, and started building 800 state parks. The Talladega Scenic Byway was one of those projects.

Originally referred to as the Sky Way Motor Way, even in 1936, when the first 17 miles of the roadway were completed, it was recognized that it would be one of the most beautiful drives in Alabama. The winding, scenic drive to the top of Mount Cheaha (Alabama's highest peak at

2,407 feet) was reconstructed in the late 1970s, and now provides a link between the nearby town of Heflin and Alabama's Cheaha State Park.

**Natural and Scenic Qualities:**

Contained entirely within the Talladega National Forest (also created in 1936), the Talladega Scenic Byway offers an exceptional window into Alabama's treasured natural resources. From rock outcroppings and outstanding views to numerous species of bird, including the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, and many of Alabama's common wildlife, this area has become a favored vacation destination for many Alabamians.

Following along the ridges of mountain ranges, the Byway dips and turns through areas of spectacular scenic beauty. There are five overlooks and pull-offs located along the corridor, providing ample space for visitors to safely pull over and enjoy the natural beauty. In addition to the pull-offs located along the Byway, Cheaha State

Park sits atop Mount Cheaha and provides an excellent spot for a picnic, a tasty lunch in the lodge restaurant (come for the food, but you'll stay for the view) or even an extended vacation in the main lodge or one of the chalets or mountain cabins.

In spring, the mountains are alive with blooming azaleas, hydrangeas, dogwoods and a host of wildflowers. In fall, the Byway usually sees its most traffic, as motorists cruise along the most renowned fall foliage drive in the area. Each day at sunrise and sunset, the overlooks attract locals and visitors alike.

**Historic and Cultural Qualities:**

In addition to the actual roadway construction project, the CCC erected fire towers, stone bridges and built much of what became Cheaha State Park, Alabama's oldest continuously operating state park. In 1938, the CCC also built a dam out of large stones hand placed in cement, creating Lake Chinnabee—visible from

Talladega Scenic Byway continues on pg. 9



Credit: Joe Watts

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# (Alabama)

Talladega Scenic Byway continued from pg. 8

the Byway and a popular destination in summer. There is a great deal of stonework throughout the corridor, adding to the special qualities of the drive.

## Recreational Qualities:

This is one of Alabama's premier destinations for outdoor recreation—from biking the corridor to camping in one of the many improved or primitive campsites to hiking more than 100 miles of trail. Running alongside the byway (well away from the road in most places, but with lots of connections) is the Pinhoti Trail, the longest hiking trail in Alabama at 102 miles. Eventually, it will likely be the southern terminus of the famous Appalachian Trail, providing an unbroken footpath from Alabama to Maine.

In addition to the Pinhoti, there are several other trails that tell the story of the area and provide outstanding linkages to the Byway. Most famous among them is the 6-mile Chinnabee Silent Trail that passes by several scenic waterfalls. While the name suggests the trail's tranquility, it honors Boy Scout Troop 29 from the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, which constructed the trail from 1973-1977.

Cheaha State Park is the major destination for those using the Byway. The park offers a hotel, restaurant, campground, picnicking, cabins, a group lodge and a country store.

## Projects and Administration:

A corridor management plan (CMP) was completed in April 2002. This plan outlines a number of goals, including making the corridor more bicycle-friendly, lowering the speed limit, providing crosswalks in popular areas, adding ADA-accessibility to all overlooks and creating additional visitor facilities, such as kiosks that interpret the CCC role in the Byway.

There is not an active corridor advocacy group located along the Byway, but many people throughout Alabama care deeply for the Talladega Scenic Byway. They work hard to keep it a successful corridor. A grant has been applied for to maintain and improve the overlooks and fulfill the less costly CMP recommendations. ★



Credit: Joe Watts



Credit: Joe Watts

## Coming and Going



Welcome,  
Curt Pianalto

Curt Pianalto joined the staff at America's Byways Resource Center in March 2004. As a Byways Resource Specialist, Curt will provide technical assistance, information, training, contacts and support to local byway groups. Previously, he worked as a transportation planner for the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Committee, which is the Duluth (Minnesota) area's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Curt holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Urban-Regional Studies with a minor in Political Science from the University of Minnesota-Duluth (UMD). Currently, he is working towards a Master's of Business Administration (MBA), also from UMD. Growing up, Curt lived in eight different states and gained an appreciation for each of their unique characteristics. He loves experiencing new sights, and is excited to be part of the Resource Center.

## Goodbye, Cheryl Newman

Cheryl Newman, a Byways Resource Specialist with America's Byways Resource Center, has accepted a new position in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Cheryl joined the Resource Center when it opened five years ago. We thank Cheryl for her dedication and contributions to scenic byways and wish her the best of luck! ★

## Announcing NSB Community Web Site, Version 5.0

Come explore our new program Web site! Last October, when the National Scenic Byway Web site (<http://www.byways.org>) was completely redesigned to promote the America's Byways™, all program support features were moved to <http://www.bywaysonline.org>. Now this "byway community" Web site has been redesigned as well and is ready for business.

The new community Web site is similar to the traveler Web site in look and layout. Tab bars provide a quick means of browsing the major sections. You can backtrack using the "breadcrumbs" feature, or track down specific information with a streamlined general Search. Sidebars supplement the main content of most pages, highlighting additional features and providing handy "hooks" to services such as News and Contacts. (See Figure)

Located in the upper right of every page, the Search feature lets you probe several sections of the Web site at the same time. The redundancy and inefficiencies that plagued the previous Web site have been eliminated. Your results are now organized into five categories: Web site pages, people and contacts, publications and documents, photos and images, and funded projects. Several categories let you use advanced features to refine your search. The discussion forums are a brand new feature in the Sharing Ideas section. Unlike mailing lists, which disperse conversations among separate e-mails, the forums make it easy to follow entire discussions by displaying them in one place in sequence.

Also, this feature does not propagate viruses, fill your Inbox with "spam" or send you large attachments. To protect the integrity of the discussions, the forums are moderated.



With the new Resource section, finding the right document or photo is considerably easier. You can browse online resources by topic or search for them by keyword. An Advanced Search feature lets you filter your search by file type, image content and other characteristics. A topic can include subtopics, documents (e.g. *Vistas* articles), collections of multimedia objects (for example, photos, presentations, etc.), and links to relevant information on other Web sites. This section is constantly expanding. The more resources we can put online, the more helpful this feature will become.

We welcome your contributions and your suggestions.

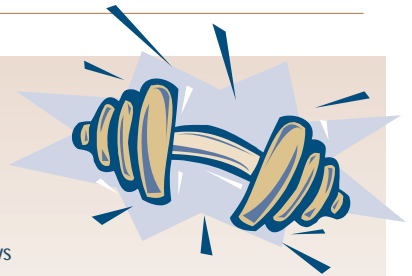
The Contacts section has been simplified. Contact information for the program, states and America's Byways™ is easier to find and print. To find someone's contact information, enter a full or partial name into the Search for People field, and choose an output format for the results: simple telephone listing, address directory or full details.

We welcome feedback and suggestions for enhancements. This is your program Web site; help us make it useful for you. ★

# Register Today for the 2004 **POWER** Workshops

Workshops are limited to 80 people, so don't delay! There is still time to register, but the remaining seats are filling up fast. Registration fees will be waived for State Scenic Byways Coordinators and for up to four representatives from each nationally designated Byway. Don't miss this exciting learning opportunity.

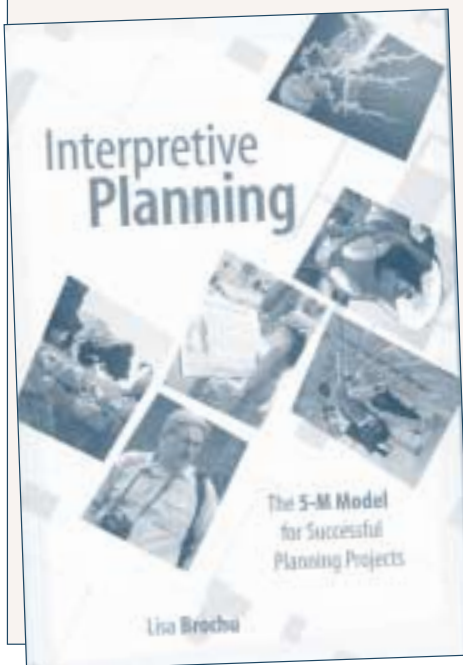
Visit [www.bywaysonline.org](http://www.bywaysonline.org) more information, and return your registration form today!



Questions? Contact:  
Jeanine Buck  
[jbuck@byways.org](mailto:jbuck@byways.org)  
218-625-3310  
1-8004BYWAYS, Ext. 5,  
then press 4

DATE	LOCATION	PRIORITY REGISTRATION DEADLINE	GENERAL ENROLLMENT OPENS
April 20-22	Charlotte, North Carolina	<i>General enrollment now open</i>	<i>General enrollment now open</i>
May 11-13	Colorado Springs, Colorado	<i>General enrollment now open</i>	<i>General enrollment now open</i>
May 18-20	Duluth, Minnesota	<i>General enrollment now open</i>	<i>General enrollment now open</i>
June 15-17	Columbus, Ohio	April 29	April 30
August 3-5	Boise, Idaho	June 17	June 18

## Off the Shelf



### *Interpretive Planning: The 5-M Model for Successful Planning Projects*

*By Lisa Brochu*

Author Lisa Brochu specializes in interpretive master planning, interpretive writing and training. In her book, she discusses the 5-M Model for Successful Planning Projects.

The 5-M Model includes:

- **Management**

The "nuts and bolts" associated with running the interpretive operation. Includes mission, goals, policies, issues and operational resources such as budget, staffing and maintenance.

- **Message**

The ideas that will be communicated to the visiting public. Includes theme, subtheme and storylines based on resource, audience, and management and considerations.

- **Market**

The users and supporters, both current and those who might have an interest in the subject or site in the future; the implications of targeted market segments; and market position.

- **Mechanics**

The large- and small-scale physical properties that have some effect or influence on what is being planned.

- **Media**

The most effective method(s), given the mechanics of the situation, for communicating messages to targeted market segments in support of management objectives. ★

# 2004 Calendar

Send calendar entries by the 5th of each month to [center@byways.org](mailto:center@byways.org)

## 2004

### APRIL

**April 1-3, 2004**

**2004 Semi-Annual Meeting:  
Treasures of the River  
Mississippi River Parkway Commission**  
Dubuque, Iowa


For more information, please visit  
[http://www.mrpmembers.com/download/  
Preliminary\\_Program.doc](http://www.mrpmembers.com/download/Preliminary_Program.doc)

**April 3-6, 2004**

**2004 Conference of  
Northeast Association of State  
Transportation Officials (NASTO)**  
Washington, D.C.

For more information, please contact  
Ms. Viola H. McIver  
(202) 438-1515 or e-mail:  
[viola.mciwer@dc.gov](mailto:viola.mciwer@dc.gov)

**April 20-22, 2004**

**2004 Power Workshops:  
Strength Training for Byways  
Regional Training Event**   
Charlotte, North Carolina  
For more information,  
please contact Jeanine Buck  
E-mail: [jbuck@byways.org](mailto:jbuck@byways.org) or visit:  
[http://www.bywaysonline.org/community/  
center/workshops/](http://www.bywaysonline.org/community/center/workshops/)

**April 22-25, 2004**

**Preserving the Historic Road  
in America Conference  
National Trust for Historic Roads**  
Portland, Oregon  
For more information, please visit  
<http://www.historicroads.org/omaha.htm>

**April 23-25, 2004**

**Conserving a Sense of Place  
Midwest Land Trust Conference**  
Concourse Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin  
For more information, please visit  
[http://www.lta.org/training/lct\\_mw.htm](http://www.lta.org/training/lct_mw.htm)

**April 24-28, 2004**

**TIA International Pow Wow**  
Los Angeles, California  
For more information, please visit  
<http://www.tia.org/PowWow/>

**April 24-28, 2004**


**APA 2004 National Planning Conference**  
Washington, D.C.  
For more information, please visit  
[http://www.planning.org/  
2004conference/index.htm](http://www.planning.org/2004conference/index.htm)

### MAY

**May 3-7, 2004**

**2004 Department of the Interior Facilities  
and Asset Management Conference  
The Planning, Design, Construction  
and Maintenance Council**  
Orlando, Florida  
For more information, please visit  
<http://www.doi.gov/conference/facilities/>

**May 11-13, 2004**

**2004 Power Workshops:  
Strength Training for Byways  
Regional Training Event**   
Colorado Springs, Colorado  
For more information,  
please contact Jeanine Buck  
E-mail: [jbuck@byways.org](mailto:jbuck@byways.org) or visit:  
[http://www.bywaysonline.org/community/  
center/workshops/](http://www.bywaysonline.org/community/center/workshops/)


**May 13-16, 2004**

**Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Festival  
National Signature Event**  
For more information, please visit  
[http://www.lewisandclark.state.mo.us/  
calendar/natsig.asp](http://www.lewisandclark.state.mo.us/calendar/natsig.asp)

**May 15-23, 2004**


**National River Cleanup Week  
America Outdoors**  
Knoxville, Tennessee  
For more information, please visit  
<http://www.national-rivercleanup.com>

**May 18-20, 2004**

**2004 Power Workshops:  
Strength Training for Byways  
Regional Training Event**   
Duluth, Minnesota  
For more information,  
please contact Jeanine Buck  
E-mail: [jbuck@byways.org](mailto:jbuck@byways.org) or visit:  
[http://www.bywaysonline.org/community/  
center/workshops/](http://www.bywaysonline.org/community/center/workshops/)

### JUNE-JULY

**June 15-17, 2004**


**2004 Power Workshops:  
Strength Training for Byways  
Regional Training Event**   
Columbus, Ohio  
For more information,  
please contact Jeanine Buck  
E-mail: [jbuck@byways.org](mailto:jbuck@byways.org) or visit:  
[http://www.bywaysonline.org/community/  
center/workshops/](http://www.bywaysonline.org/community/center/workshops/)

**June 27-July 5, 2004**

**Grand Excursion 2004  
Upper Mississippi Bike Ride**  
Rock Island, Illinois to  
Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota  
Mississippi River Trail, Inc.  
For more information, please visit:  
<http://www.mississippirivertrail.org/>

### AUGUST

**August 3-5, 2004**

**2004 Power Workshops:  
Strength Training for Byways  
Regional Training Event**   
Boise, Idaho  
For more information,  
please contact Jeanine Buck  
E-mail: [jbuck@byways.org](mailto:jbuck@byways.org) or visit:  
[http://www.bywaysonline.org/community/  
center/workshops/](http://www.bywaysonline.org/community/center/workshops/)

### SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

**September 17-21, 2004**

**AASHTO Annual Meeting**  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
For more information, please visit  
[http://assetmanagement.transportation.org/  
tam/aashto.nsf/docs/F1835419B9CA539685  
256D3400642210?opendocument&Current  
Category=Event%20Calendar](http://assetmanagement.transportation.org/tam/aashto.nsf/docs/F1835419B9CA539685256D3400642210?opendocument&CurrentCategory=Event%20Calendar)

**September 28-October 3, 2004**

**Restore America: Communities  
at a Crossroads - National Preservation  
Conference 2004**  
Louisville, Kentucky  
For more information, please visit:  
<http://www.nthpconference.org/GeneralInfo/>

**October 29-31, 2004**

**Land Trust Alliance Rally**  
Providence, Rhode Island  
For more information, please visit:  
<http://www.lta.org/training/rally.htm>

### NOVEMBER

**November 16-20, 2004**

**An Interpreter's Voyage  
NAI National Interpreter's Workshop**  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
For more information, please visit:  
<http://www.interpnet.com/niw2004/>

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