

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Florida's A1A Scenic Byway to Celebrate Removal of Billboards

BUNNELL, Fla. – Northeast Florida's route A1A, a designated National Scenic Byway, is about to get more scenic with the removal of 10 billboards along four miles of the famed roadway. The billboard removal will kick off with a ceremony at 3 p.m. Monday, January 13 on the west side of A1A, just south of Jungle Hut Road, where county commissioners will use ropes to pull down one of the condemned billboards.

The billboard removal is the result of a 20-year effort by County government and citizen volunteer to preserve breathtaking views as a source of local pride. A driving force behind the effort is the Friends of A1A, a nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to preserving, promoting and enhancing the byway.

"Scenic America commends Flagler County leaders, the Friends of A1A and everyone who worked so hard to see this vision of a billboard-free byway become a reality," said Mary Tracy, president of Scenic America. "They have set an extraordinary example for citizens around the country who want to beautify their roadways and communities but fear the task is too difficult. Flagler County and the A1A Byway are showing that it can be done!"

A drive along this section of A1A gives one a glimpse of old Florida, before theme parks and gated communities dotted the state. Parts of the road bisect one of the largest remaining swaths of oak hammock forest in all of coastal Florida. Two adjacent properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the area is void of corporate franchise design.

"The A1A Coastal and Scenic Byway is such a treasure along our coastline," County Commission Chairman George Hanns, said. "We need to do everything we can to restore the natural scenery of the area."

In 2002, 72 miles of the coastal highway, from St. Augustine into Flagler County was designated a National Scenic Byway. For the 10 billboards along the roadway, Flagler County invested \$80,000. "It was money well spent to preserve this beautiful piece of Florida," Hanns said.

Photo Opportunity: This event will provide an excellent opportunity for photographs during the felling of the billboard, including before/after comparisons.

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Scenic America is the only national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing the visual character of America's roadways, communities and countryside.