The National Scenic Byways Program

In the early 1990’s, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) created and designated a scenic byway corridor in the state of Alabama. The National Scenic Byways Program, established by Congress in 1991, recognizes historic, scenic and culturally important roads, all of which promote economic development and tourism in communities around the country. Alabama boasts four National Scenic Byways and seven State Scenic Byways, showcasing the state’s diverse natural beauty and rich history. Initially, byways were implemented and utilized by the governor and state legislature. By 1998, an active citizenry developed a program to help citizens identify and designate additional byways.

Key points:

- The Barbour County Governor’s Trail was designated by state legislature to honor those from the county who later went on to be governors of the state.
- In 2017, travelers spent over $14.3 billion in Alabama.
- Every $113,843 of the $14.3 billion dollars in travel-related expenses in Alabama fuels one job within the state.
- A recent National Scenic Byway Foundation survey showed that 44 state scenic byways in 24 states are prepared to seek designation as a National Scenic Byway.

National Scenic Byways in Alabama:

- Alabama’s Coastal Connection (1)
- Natchez Trace Parkway (2)*
- Selma to Montgomery March Byway (3)*
- Talladega Scenic Drive (4)

State Scenic Byways in Alabama:

- Appalachian Highlands Scenic Byway (5)
- Barbour County Governors’ Trail (6)
- Black Belt Nature and Heritage Trail (7)
- Black Warrior River Scenic Byway (8)
- Leeds Stagecoach Route (9)
- Lookout Mountain Parkway (10)
- Tensaw Parkway (11)
Lookout Mountain Parkway was ranked by Reader’s Digest as one of the most scenic drives in America.

Five Rivers Resource Center is one of the many attractions along Tensaw Parkway.