



SCENIC AMERICA

Sign Control News

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FHWA Moves To Restore HBA, But . . .

For the second time in three months, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has taken bold action to enforce the Highway Beautification Act (HBA) of 1965. On May 8, 1992, the FHWA issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making in the Federal Register to request public comment in implementing the removal of all remaining non-conforming billboards along federal highways.

Said Sally Oldham, President of Scenic America, "The Notice of Proposed Rule Making demonstrates that the FHWA remains committed to enforcing the Highway Beautification Act and protecting the scenic integrity of America's roadsides."

FHWA's move to enforce the HBA is in response to billboard reforms passed last year as a part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). ISTEA made funds available for billboard removal for the first time since 1983. In March the FHWA directed states to put the federal funds to use in enforcing the removal of the remaining 92,000 non-conforming billboards which violate the HBA.

The vast majority of the 92,000 non-conforming billboards required to be removed over the next two years are

located in scenic and rural areas along interstate and primary highways. Others do not conform to the HBA because they exceed spacing requirements.

The Notice of Proposed Rule Making asks for public comment on four specific options to carry out the removal of nonconforming billboards. The options outlined by FHWA would: (1) require the immediate removal of non-conforming billboards; (2) require re-

moval of non-conforming billboards after two years; (3) require the removal by 1997; or (4) allow states to remove billboards without any specific deadline.

Scenic America strongly supports the two-year removal of all nonconforming billboards along federal highways. Public comments must be received by the FHWA on or before July 7, 1992. SA

. . . Shuster and Symms Offer Amendment to Gut HBA Enforcement

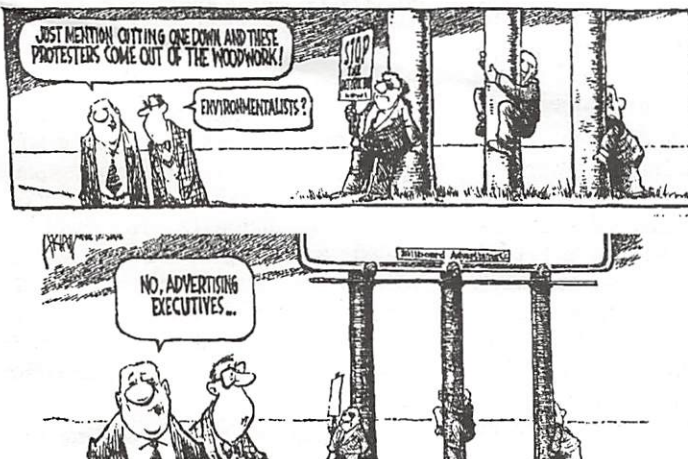
Billboard reform may have been dealt another serious blow by Congress. The billboard lobby's hired guns, Rep. Bud Shuster (R-PA) and Senator Steve Symms (R-ID), have inserted an amendment into an emergency appropriations bill aimed at undoing recent reforms of the Highway Beautification Act (HBA). The amendment has been approved by a House-Senate Conference Committee and is awaiting a vote by the full House and Senate before proceeding to the President's desk.

The Shuster-Symms amendment was inserted late in the evening to an emergency appropriations bill, that's primary purpose is to provide funding for urban areas following the Los Angeles riots. Shuster and Symms used the confusion surrounding the bill as an opportunity to undermine billboard reforms passed last year as a part of the Intermodal Surface

tation Efficiency Act. In a rare move, Shuster, a member of the House of Representatives, personally lobbied for the amendment on the Senate floor.

Not surprisingly, Shuster and Symms have been two of the biggest recipients of the billboard industry's largesse over the years. Last year Shuster received over \$112,000 in industry contributions for his unopposed re-election bid. Symms took approximately \$20,000 in campaign contributions for his 1992 re-election bid before deciding last year to retire. The industry also received a boost from House Public Works Chairman Robert Roe (D-NJ) and Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV). Roe and Reid received \$32,100 and \$31,350, respectively, from the billboard lobby in 1991.

If the amendment is made law by the President, federal funds will still be available for the removal of nonconforming billboards. However, the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) plan to speed the removal of nonconforming billboards over the next two years will be sharply curtailed. Scenic America and the environmental community will continue to press FHWA and state departments of transportation to remove billboards in scenic areas and in localities that ban new billboard construction. SA



Reprinted with permission of Robert Ariail, The State, Columbia, South Carolina

President's Message: SA Tackles Broadened Agenda

"To Preserve and Enhance the Scenic Character of America's Communities and Countryside" SA Mission



Scenic America's staff has been very busy responding to your requests for information about ISTEA funding and programs, and providing assistance regarding

your communities' signage issues. Meanwhile, Scenic America's Board of Directors has been working on a strategic plan to guide our efforts over the next few years. This effort, which has been made possible by a grant from the Beldon Fund and generous support from a member of our Board, has proved to be a fascinating experience for those involved.

The mission statement cited above is the working statement presented by the Strategic Planning Committee to the Board of Directors at our May Board meeting. It reflects the Board's decision, made last year, to broaden Scenic America's program and advocacy efforts.

The strategic plan should be completed in the fall of this year, but the discussions flowing from it are already influencing our work. This year Scenic America's staff is working in four program areas, all related to the mission

statement above: billboard control, scenic highway programs, on-premise signage issues, and tree preservation.

Our new video, *Signs, Signs*, has received rave reviews from many of you and will be distributed by Scenic America and through several of our partner organizations to reach a broad audience. The video addresses control of both billboards and on-premise signage. Its focus on the perspectives of business persons and of local, community-elected officials reflects the makeup of the audience we are seeking to reach. We've updated several of our fact sheets for distribution with the video.

We are responding to requests from all over the nation regarding scenic highway programs and the use of transportation enhancements funding for scenic resource preservation under ISTEA. You'll note elsewhere in this newsletter that the application deadline for scenic highway program funds is August 14.

With an eye to the scenic contributions of trees in enhancing community character, we have contracted for a new publication on tree preservation. This manual identifying the most effective local tree preservation ordinances will be published jointly by Scenic America and the American Planning Association (APA) as a part of APA's Planning Advisory Service Report series.

Finally, we will continue to work closely with officials of the Federal Highway Administration on the implementation of ISTEA. Their aggressive and commendable stance for removal of illegal and nonconforming billboards along federal aid highways has resulted in a flood of positive response, although the inevitable reactive response of the billboard industry surfaced as well.

Scenic America's staff is pleased to be able to support your outstanding efforts to preserve the scenic qualities in your own communities. We look forward to working with you to protect America's scenic resources. SA

Scenic America Heads STPP Transportation Enhancements Working Group

The Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP) is a network of more than 100 diverse organizations, coalitions, and grass roots groups whose goal is to develop a national transportation policy that better serves the environmental, social, and economic interests of the nation. The 19-member steering committee, which includes Scenic America, developed a detailed statement of purpose and complementary policies for the "Four Es" of transportation: economic competitiveness, energy efficiency, environmental quality, and the enhancement of communities.

Sally Oldham, SA, chairs the Transportation Enhancements Working Group. The group works closely with FHWA to monitor and safeguard the intent of ISTEA legislation as FHWA develops its implementation guidelines. Immediately following the passage of ISTEA, the group developed and submitted a guidance document to FHWA. Most of the recommendations regarding transportation enhancements were incorporated in FHWA's April 24, 1992,

guidance document. Three key points were: (1) the ten eligibility categories listed in the bill have been established as exclusive categories, not as illustrative; (2) states will be required to document their enhancements expenditures; and (3) enhancements funds are not to be used for mitigation activities.

Sally Oldham states that this is the group's "biggest achievement. It will affect very substantially how FHWA implements the enhancements program. It establishes the basic parameters for implementation." Sally Oldham moderated a transportation enhancements workshop, a discussion of policy and process for the enhancements program, at the March 30-31 ISTEA conference held in Washington, DC. Her panel included James Lighthizer, Maryland's Secretary of Transportation; Elizabeth Parker, U.S. DOT; Eugene Cleckley, FHWA; Dave Gendall, FHWA, Region II; and Hal Hiemstra, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. SA

See page 8 for associated article on ISTEA conference.

Suggestion Box

In keeping with Scenic America's newly broadened mission statement, we think it's time to rename SIGN CONTROL NEWS. There are a few names circulating among staff (Panorama, Prospects, Perspectives, Scenic America News, The Landscape, Viewpoints, Vistas, Voices of Scenery), but we'd like your input. Call, write, or fax your suggestions by August 1 (202) 833-4300 or FAX (202) 833-4304.

News From Around the Nation . . .

COURT OKAYS LOGO SIGNS IN MISSOURI

In a unanimous decision, the Missouri Supreme Court ruled that state highway officials can continue to erect logo signs along state highways, dismissing complaints from the Missouri Outdoor Advertising Association, Inc. (MOAAI) that logo signs along interstate highways are an improper use of state motor-fuel tax money. To the contrary, the court found that erecting logo signs is a legitimate part of building and maintaining a highway system.

MOAAI argued that the logo signs, which generally cost less to advertise on than billboards, compete unfairly. State highway officials disagree. Says Wayne Muri, chief engineer for the state Highway and Transportation Department, "I think the logo program as we see it now does have a solid future." Muri is apparently not alone in this view; approximately 40 other states have implemented similar logo sign programs.

PITTSBURGH COUNCILMAN PROPOSES BILLBOARD FREEZE

Declaring that the "proliferation of billboards in the city of Pittsburgh has reached an unacceptable level," City Councilman Jim Ferlo introduced a bill that would freeze the number of billboards in the city at its current level

(more than 1,400). Pittsburgh has become a sanctuary for outdoor advertising signs, prompting one visiting advertising executive to label the city an "excellent billboard town."

In 1987 billboard foes came close to toughening sign control laws, but ultimately left the regulations untouched. But now, backed by a Finance Department report which found that only 31 percent of the billboards completely conform to the zoning code, Ferlo wants to cap the number of billboards and impose a 60-day moratorium on accepting new applications while more permanent controls can be explored. City Planning Chairman Tom Armstrong agrees that Ferlo's bill is a "good idea," adding, "It's too bad it wasn't done 20 years ago."

ACKERELEY IN HOT WATER ON BOTH COASTS

Ackereley Communication, one of the largest billboard companies, is doing battle on both coasts to preserve its outdoor advertising empire. By maintaining and posting illegal signs, Ackereley continues to take up the valuable time of local enforcement officials. Cities and towns are taking on the industry giant with increasing success.

In Seattle, Washington, Ackereley has agreed to remove 31 illegal billboards by the end of May. According to city officials, almost all the illegal signs are one half of a pair of signs. In each

case a second billboard was added to a structure approved for only one sign.

Residents of Billerica, Massachusetts, are tired of looking at three dilapidated Ackereley billboards that greet motorists entering their town. "It's nothing but a glorified dump," says Cathy Fleurant, a longtime North Billerica resident. After repeated calls, the city condemned the billboards as "unsafe structures" and ordered their immediate removal. Threatened with the removal, Ackereley elected to begin repairing the signs. But residents insist that repairs are no longer enough; says Fleurant, "I don't care if they fixed one billboard. This company has a proven track record that it can't and won't maintain them." City officials expect to pursue the matter in court.

LEGAL SPECTERS HAUNT BUFFALO

A Buffalo Common Council proposal to require annual billboard permit fees has been sent back to committee but may be considered again in late June.

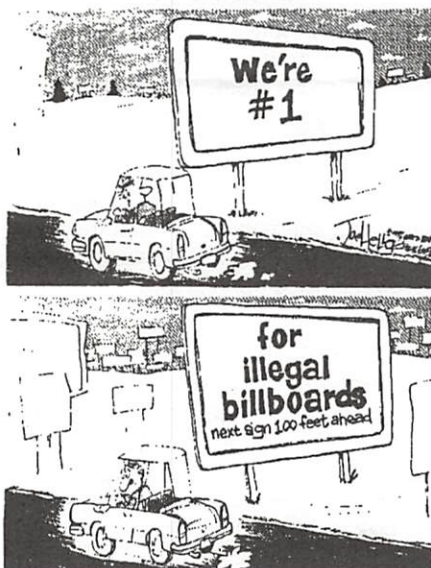
Penn Advertising bought the delay by claiming the provisions unconstitutional. Moreover, they intimated that passage would result in legal action against the city.

HIGH COURT: RALEIGH: 2, 3M: 0

The U.S. Supreme Court has again refused to overturn Raleigh's 5 1/2-year amortization ordinance. 3M-National Advertising challenged the ordinance in 1989, six years after its passage, claiming it was a taking of private property without just compensation.

Just three years before, Naegele Outdoor Advertising brought suit on almost the same grounds. Naegele challenged the city to U.S. Supreme Court and lost.

In the case of *National Advertising vs. City of Raleigh*, the city argued that 3M-National's claim was mute because the statute of limitations had expired. Since the Court refused to hear the case, many remaining billboards may come down this summer, and an important precedent discouraging challenges to amortization ordinances years after passage remains intact. SA



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Transportation Enhancements Funds 1991-1997

Ten Enhancements Categories Confirmed

On April 24, 1992, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued specific guidance which clarifies that the ten separate transportation enhancement activities identified in Section 1007(c) of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Act (ISTEA) are **exclusive and not illustrative of various "types"** of activities which might be funded as transportation enhancements.

The ten categories of enhancements-eligible projects are:

1. Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles;
2. Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites;
3. Scenic or historic highway programs;
4. Landscaping or other scenic beautification;
5. Historic preservation;
6. Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals);
7. Preservation of abandoned railroad corridors (including conversion and use for pedestrian or bicycle trails);
8. Control and removal of outdoor advertising;
9. Archaeological planning and research; and
10. Mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff.

It is anticipated that many projects will be a mix of elements, both eligible and noneligible for enhancements funds. In the case of a historic site acquired and developed with an interpretive center for local history, the historic site purchase and development would qualify as an enhancement activity. The environmental analysis, site planning, design, and construction activities necessary for implementing these qualifying activities are also eligible for funding. Enhancements projects are not limited to areas of new road work; any road or highway that has received FHWA funds is eligible. The enhancement project must be "within the area served by" the federal aid dollars.

ISTEA sets aside approximately \$3 billion in funding from 1992 to 1997 for transportation enhancements. The en-

hancements funds apportioned for FY92 total \$353 million, with specific funding for each state established. These funds are available for the year in which they were apportioned plus three years.

Enhancements funding requests for well-developed projects with strong consensus support (from DOTs, MPOs, and others) may still be funded in 1992. FY92 closes September 30, 1992, and DOTs review their obligation authority each August. Applications that need further development technically or more time to build coalition support may be

more successful in obtaining support in FY93.

To be funded, enhancement projects:

- must be listed on the state DOT's approved transportation improvement plan (TIP); and
- must **either** enhance a proposed TIP-listed project **or** be a stand-alone project (one that is listed on a metropolitan-area transportation program and supports the metropolitan plan, at least on a policy level). SA

Scenic America Celebrates Ten Years

In ten years Scenic America has completely redefined the national billboard debate in this country.

By 1982 the billboard industry had transformed the Highway Beautification Act (HBA) into the Billboard Protection and Compensation Act. A few of the low lights...

1977: The Federal Highway Administration allows states and the billboard industry to enter into agreements enabling the industry to cut publicly owned trees in order to improve billboard visibility.

1978: Congress votes to outlaw billboard amortization along federal-aid highways whether or not the billboards are removed pursuant to the HBA.

1982: The industry nearly amends the Highway Beautification Act by changing its purpose from, "To provide for scenic development and road beautification of the Federal-aid highway systems," to, "To promote communication through the outdoor medium"; and by mandating that publicly owned trees be cut in order to improve the visibility of privately owned billboards.

The amendments are defeated by a firestorm of public protest.

In mid-1982 a group of citizens disgusted with the failure of the Highway Beautification Act decided to reform it. They formed the National Coalition to Preserve Scenic Beauty, dedicated to that task.

That organization -- now known as Scenic America -- has begun to undo 25

years of billboard industry lobbying.

Scenic America has won notable victories in Congress and from the Bush Administration, which lay the foundation for a positive future.

1990: The Federal Highway Administration reverses its 13-year-old policy allowing the billboard industry to chainsaw publicly owned trees to improve billboard visibility. Scenic America helps repel industry efforts to overturn this new policy.

1991: In its version of the transportation bill, the Bush Administration includes virtually all of the HBA reforms favored by Scenic America.

1991: Scenic America achieves the first positive reforms of the HBA since its passage. And in 1992, aggressive HBA enforcement by the Federal Highway Administration further revitalizes the Act.

Pressed by the Bush Administration on the one side and many Congressional billboard opponents on the other, today the industry finds itself struggling to maintain its current position.

Moreover, Scenic America's aggressive local level campaigns and educational efforts have helped to create a groundswell of grassroots support for stricter billboard controls.

In 1982 the billboard industry seemed free to gut the Highway Beautification Act. Today, Scenic America has turned the tide and is taking the offensive in scenic resource preservation efforts. SA

Scenic Byways

Preserving a Part of America's Heritage

"[A] traveler who misses the journey misses about all he's going to get---a man's observations and curiosity, they make and remake him."

William Least-Heat Moon, author of *Blue Highways, A Journey into America*, recalls his father's words.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) has generated a great deal of interest in scenic byways. The bill included an \$80 million national program for scenic byways, allocating \$10 million in grant funds for fiscal years 1992-94. ISTEA lists types of projects for which states can apply for funding. The act also calls for the creation of a Scenic Byways Advisory Committee to develop designation criteria, and operations and maintenance standards for a national scenic roads program. Fourteen million dollars are allocated annually for fiscal years 1995-97 to implement the new national program.

What are scenic byways?

Scenic byways (or highways) are roadways that provide an enjoyable and relaxing experience for travelers. Unlike primary roads and interstate highways which emphasize direct, efficient travel routes, scenic byways are typically secondary roads having significant cultural, historic, scenic, geological, or natural features. The corridor often includes vistas, rest areas, and interpretive sites in harmony with the scenic character of the road. Scenic byways exist through state, multi-state, and federal programs for public use. Approximately 35,000 miles of scenic highways have been designated.

Why should we have scenic byways?

Scenic byways aid communities by attracting tourist revenue to the local economy. The Department of Transportation's National Scenic Byways Study estimated that \$1 billion is generated nationwide in tourist money by scenic byways programs. Americans say that driving is one of their favorite forms of recreation. Scenic byways provide travelers with the opportunity to get off the beaten path and experience portions of America's unique heritage. The designation and protection of scenic byways is a way to preserve America's beauty and heritage for everyone to enjoy.

What scenic byways programs currently exist?

Twenty-six states have legislated authorizations for some form of scenic roads program. Eight additional states have programs authorized solely by the state's executive branch. Moreover, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, and the National Park Service have all established their own scenic byways. Many states have cooperatively designated interstate byways, such as the Great River Road, which passes through the ten states of the Mississippi River Valley, and the Old West Trail, which runs through the Dakotas, Montana, Nebraska, and Wyoming. Strong state scenic byways programs establish clear designation criteria, require a corridor management plan by local governments, and include techniques to protect scenic resources. The 1990 U.S. DOT National Scenic Byways Study recognized the states of California,

Colorado, New York, North Carolina, Utah, and Washington for outstanding elements of their scenic byway programs.

The new national scenic byways standards may differ from existing programs in most states. Each state may need to re-evaluate their standards in light of new federal guidelines.

What criteria should be used in the designation of scenic byways?

- Byways should have significant features of scenic, natural, cultural, historical, and/or archaeological importance.
- Byways should be protected by land use controls in order to protect the scenic character and visual quality of the byway.
- A local management plan should be developed for the entire scenic corridor.



Photo by Alexander Calhoun

- Byways should have strong local support that is coordinated with relevant agencies and organizations within the community.
- Citizen participation in scenic byways programs is important to developing support.
- Byways should provide for relaxing routes of travel, and designation should not detract from the road's safety.
- States should establish an overall master plan of scenic byways to be designated.

What tools are being used to protect roads designated as scenic byways?

There are many tools available to help protect scenic byways. The choice of specific tools and the degree of implementation of these tools vary widely among the states. There are six areas in particular on which to focus a developing state scenic byways program.

• Develop a corridor management plan

In California the procedure for achieving official designation of scenic highways includes the requirement that local jurisdictions prepare and adopt a program to protect and enhance the appearance of the scenic corridor. California's Streets and Highways Code states, "The standards for official scenic highways shall also require that local government agencies have taken such action as may be necessary to protect the scenic appearance of the scenic corridor, the band of land generally adjacent to the highway right-of-way, including but not limited to: (1) regulation of land use and intensity (density) of development; (2) detailed land and site planning; (3) control of outdoor advertising; (4) careful attention to and control of earthmoving and landscaping; and (5) the design and appearance of structures and equipment."

• Establish a tree protection policy

Trees are very important to the scenic beauty and character of roadways.

Therefore, tree protection should be an integral part of any scenic byways program. Tree and vegetation removal should only be considered in special circumstances. For example, Wisconsin's Administrative Code limits trimming of tree branches and shrubs only, "When necessary for safety or protection of the traveling public." Selective pruning may be considered to preserve important historic vistas. These are the only instances when any selective tree cutting on scenic roads should be considered.

• Establish outdoor advertising controls

Control of outdoor advertising is an important part of maintaining the scenic quality of the roadside. California has a requirement prohibiting off-premise signs in rural settings. Vermont considers all of its roads scenic and bans billboards throughout the state. It is recommended that provisions for outdoor advertising control be included as part of a statewide scenic byways program rather than depending on local ordinances to control billboards on scenic roads.

• Provide for scenic easements

States should provide the process to buy and/or accept gifts of land and easements along scenic roads. Acquiring easements along scenic byways will preserve the scenic character of the roadway while retaining private ownership of the land. Massachusetts has an Open Space Program which makes funding available to acquire scenic easements or parcels adjacent to public ways in order to "preserve, restore, or enhance" outstanding vistas and landscapes. Arizona has the ability to acquire scenic easements as a part of its overall Scenic Byways Program.

• Encourage strong local participation and coordination with relevant agencies

Protection of the scenic road will be enhanced if public participation is a part of the process. Connecticut's program has several strong points. Before any alterations can be made on a designated

road, a notice must be published announcing a public comment period which allows time to analyze the changes. Public notification also encourages the DOT to be more responsive in designing a policy. Utah's Scenic Byways and Backways is a joint program of the Association of Governments, Bureau of Land Management, FHWA, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Utah DOT, Utah Travel Council, and Utah Travel Region. All participants share funding, program implementation, and direction responsibilities. This has allowed the partnership to establish a sound system with the public's interests in mind.

• Develop operations and maintenance standards

Connecticut has provisions to protect against activities that would threaten the character of scenic byways. These include any reviews of road widening, as well as "guardrail, paving, changes of road grade, straightening, and removal of stone walls or mature trees." Regulations also detail roadbed construction, cross drainage, vegetation, sign, and winter maintenance. Wisconsin's Rustic Roads Program has similar maintenance provisions to ensure that "public travel by auto, bicycle, or hiking for recreational enjoyment" still preserves "the rustic qualities of the route."

How can protection of scenic roads be enforced?

States with the power to de-designate scenic byways hold an important tool for protection of the road's scenic status. Once a road achieves successful scenic byway designation, its advocates will continue to monitor changes that may cause loss of designation. The ability to de-designate ensures protection of scenic byways by threatening loss of scenic designation, which in turn would cause a loss of tourism and economic development. Many states with scenic byways programs have this control, including Arizona, New York, and Wisconsin. SA

From Scenic America's Bookshelf . . .

• **SIGNS, SIGNS: THE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY SIGN CONTROL \$19.95***

This videotape is designed as a tool for citizens, business owners, planners, and public officials to spread public awareness about the importance of strong sign controls. Efforts to control signs in Raleigh, NC; Holland, MI; and Houston, TX are highlighted.

*1-5 videos, \$19.95 each; 6-10, \$15.95 each; 11 or more, \$12.95 each; P&H \$3.00 first video, \$1.50 each additional video.

• **A LEGAL HANDBOOK ON BILLBOARD CONTROL \$15.00**

An indispensable guide to billboard regulation. Shows how to prepare and pass a strong ordinance. Discusses the Highway Beautification Act, state billboard control efforts, and issues in state and constitutional law. Describes indus-

try tactics. Includes recommended ordinance provisions.

• **TECHNICAL BULLETINS \$5.00 each**

This series of six bulletins are excerpted from the *Economics of Preserving Community Character*. The bulletins can be used to advocate and measure the economic values to individuals and communities of improving community appearance.

Trees Make Cents. Documents numerous case studies which demonstrate the positive influence of tree and landscape protection on property values and other economic measures. Five valuation methods are discussed.

On the Value of Open Space. Documents several case studies which clearly demonstrate the economic benefits of open space. Also analyzes methods to preserve open space.

Watch for the release of additional bulletins this summer on *Parks and Views*, *Wetlands*, *Historic Preservation*, and *Commercial Districts*.

• **CITIZENS HANDBOOK ON ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO BILLBOARD ADVERTISING \$4.95**

Documents the problem of billboards targeted at inner-city residents and sets out an action plan for mobilizing citizens to do something about it. Includes a step-by-step guide to curbing advertising in your neighborhood or town.

• **GIFT OF THE JOURNEY VIDEO \$19.95***

Lady Bird Johnson and William Least-Heat Moon, author of *Blue Highways*, describe ways in which scenic country roads and urban parkways can be identified and protected.

• **TO ORDER**

Send a check or money order for the total plus \$3.00 postage & handling (unless otherwise noted) to Scenic America, 21 Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

There are many other titles available -- please ask for more information.

SA Staff: Coming and Going

A fond farewell--

After more than two years of excellent work, **Robert Bonnie** has resigned to enter the graduate program in Environmental Management at Duke University, Durham, NC. Robert's contributions in press, policy, and technical assistance over the years have contributed greatly to SA's success.

Two new staff members--

Our new office manager is **Paula Miller**. Previously she was the Executive Secretary for the Synod of South Atlantic, Jacksonville, Florida. Her experience and cheerfulness are a very welcome addition to the office. Paula has resettled in Falls Church, Virginia, with her family. Her duties will include bookkeeping, maintaining the membership base, and overall administration.

Mary Ann Lasch, our new director of programs, is a registered landscape architect, with degrees from the University of Wisconsin and Harvard Univer-

sity Graduate School of Design. She has worked for the design firm of Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum and for Friendswood Development Company. Experienced in community design guidelines, tree preservation, visual assessment, and landscape architecture, her duties include direction of the technical assistance program; development and distribution of new products, including *Signs*, *Signs*, and the tree preservation report. Mary Ann is working on a series of technical information pieces about state and national scenic byways programs. SA

Signs, Signs Video Raves

In the first month of its release, *Signs*, *Signs* is proving very popular with Scenic America members, community planners, landscape architects, and others. Some sign control advocates ordered ten or more copies to distribute to their city council, county commission, or state board of transportation. ORDER TODAY!

Scenic America, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, is the only national group devoted solely to preserving and enhancing the scenic character of America's communities and countryside. If you want to work to protect the quality of the scenic environment, you can join Scenic America by contacting us at 21 Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036 (202) 833-4300. Individual memberships begin at \$20. Organizational and municipal memberships are \$50 for local and state agencies and \$100 for national agencies.

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Scenic America Sign Control News is a publication of Scenic America and is available free to its members.

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Conference Spotlights ISTEA's New Directions

Dale McKeel, Scenic North Carolina

Attending the March 1992 "New Perspectives, New Partners, New Programs" symposium was much like visiting a new car dealership in late September: adjectives were tossed around with reckless abandon. Various speakers called ISTEA a "tremendous opportunity," "a whole new ball game," and "a new way of looking at life." One speaker even called the act "the institutional equivalent of a sex change operation."

Beneath all the banter, one message was clear: ISTEA does present a new way of thinking about transportation in this country. But another message was also clear: for ISTEA to work, each of us must become more involved in the transportation planning process.

For instance, the enhancements funds in ISTEA represent a tremendous opportunity for all Americans concerned about our scenic environment. These funds can be used for such things as rail-trails, bikeways, scenic easements, historic preservation, and billboard control and removal. Maryland Secretary of Transportation James Lighthizer warned that we must prevent the use of

these funds for traditional highway expenditures. "We must guard jealously this money," he said, "or it will disappear in a heartbeat."

How can we become more involved in the transportation planning process? One way is to make contacts with transportation planners at the local, regional, and state levels and ask, for instance, about plans for the use of enhancements funds. Another way is to find out from regional and state transportation agencies how the overall citizen participation process will be redefined to meet the new goals set by ISTEA.

Finally, there is a need to form partnerships similar to the Surface Transportation Policy Project among environmental and historic preservation groups at the state and regional levels. Some groups have already sponsored state or multi-state meetings similar to the symposium in Washington. Such meetings provide an opportunity to learn more about the provisions and implementation of ISTEA, and can be the first step in forming coalitions focused on the impact of transportation on communities and the environment. SA

New Perspectives, New Partners, New Programs

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) was the topic of a two-day workshop, March 30-31, in Washington, DC.

Jointly sponsored by the Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP) and the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the conference was attended by more than 270 members of the environmental community, local and regional planners, officials of U.S. DOT, and 19 state transportation departments. The conference sessions addressed the basics of ISTEA, new partners in planning, transportation enhancements, state and local issues in relation to flexibility, and flexible design standards.

Fall Workshop Planned

On October 16, 1992, Scenic America will host a workshop in Washington, DC, for those interested in creating or developing a state or local scenic organization. Contact Mary Ann Lasch for further details.

JOIN SCENIC AMERICA YES, I WANT TO HELP SAVE OUR SCENERY!

_____ \$20 Regular Individual Membership _____ \$35 Associate Membership _____ \$60 Contributor

_____ \$100 Sponsor _____ \$50 State or Local Organization _____ \$100 National Organization

Please accept my tax-deductible contribution of \$_____ in addition to my membership.

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