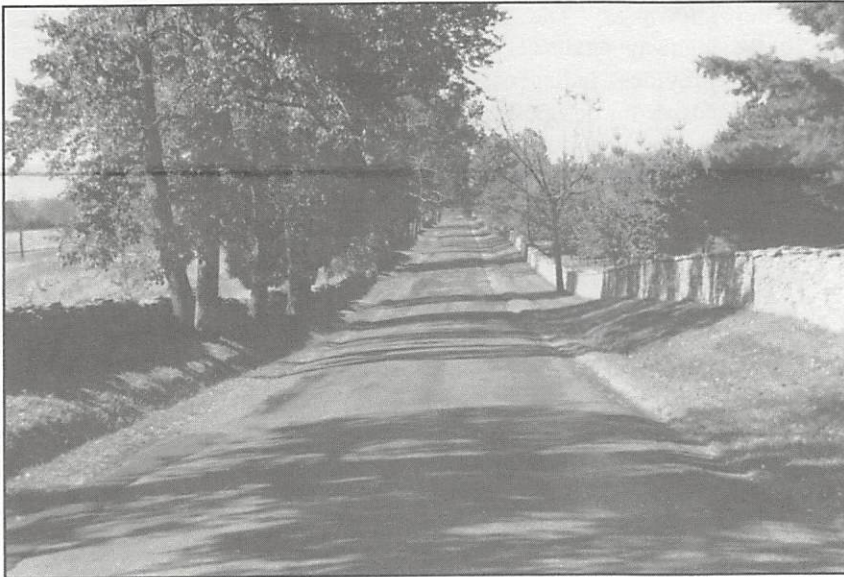




Local Activists Score Road Design Wins



The Snickersville Turnpike Association has won one key battle to preserve the road, but others remain.

On The West Coast – Saving Scenic Route 1

By Chris Thollaug

In a major victory for scenic byways, on November 5, San Mateo County, CA, residents approved Measure T, a voter initiative that authorizes construction of a tunnel on coastal Highway 1 south of San Francisco, in place of a 4.5 mile highway through a state park.

Highway 1 is the coastal road best known for the Big Sur section, just south of San Mateo County.

Devil's Slide is a precarious 200-yard section of road that has dropped 47 feet since construction in 1936. As part of a proposed six-lane freeway down the California coast, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) adopted in 1960 an inland bypass of Devil's Slide. While plans for the freeway were dropped in the 1970s, the inland bypass was resurrected by Caltrans following a road closure in the winter of 1983.

Local residents and activists claimed that the bypass was environmentally irresponsible. The bypass would have done serious harm to certain endangered species habitats, and it would also have significantly damaged the scenic character of the roadway. Bypass opponents pointed to a short tunnel as the preferred alternative, since the tunnel proposal is much less damaging to other resources.

Challenged in court, the bypass project languished until another slide in the winter of 1995 closed the road for five months and motivated the community to take action.

Snickersville Turnpike Fight Yields Historic Victory

By Jane R. Smith

The Snickersville Turnpike Association (STA) is a group of citizens formed in April, 1994 to protect and preserve historic Snickersville Turnpike, one of the oldest roads in the United States.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) planned to widen, straighten and "improve" the turnpike, thereby cutting a 28-foot swath through the historic countryside, destroying Civil War stone walls and trees.

But the STA has thus far prevailed, and VDOT has agreed that the first 1.7 miles will be a uniform 19 foot travel way, with

one foot of paved shoulder on either side. To the traveler, however, the shoulder will appear to be grass. These dimensions are quite similar to the road's existing alignment.

The next possible battles are over Hibbs Bridge, a historic stone arch bridge which VDOT has proposed replacing with a standard concrete bridge, and other sections of the road where the 19 foot travel way would require the removal of stone walls and trees.

That an inexperienced citizens' group could oppose the most powerful institution in Virginia — the Virginia Department of Transportation — was unprecedented. The success of the STA is the result of citizens united by a common purpose to protect their homes and their communities.

Please see *Snickerville*, page 3

Please see *Devil's Slide*, page 3

New Law Heralds A New Era In Road Design



By Meg Maguire,
Scenic America President

"The most powerful institution in our state."

"Accountable to no one."

Activists sometimes describe their state departments of transportation in such less-than-flattering terms. But recent developments are beginning to make roads our servants rather than our masters, and DOTs our partners, rather than our dictators.

This issue of *Viewpoints* features two road projects where citizens have effectively organized to prevent damaging road expansion, at least so far: Snickersville Turnpike in Virginia and Devil's Slide on coastal Highway 1 south of San Francisco, CA. From Corridor H in West Virginia to Rt. 128 in Sonoma, CA, Scenic America offers support and encouragement to citizens to identify the places they love and defend those places from excessive road building. While this informal support network is important, it's not enough.

We need systemic change. We cannot expect citizens — with full-time jobs, children, financial worries, real lives — to spend every waking moment poring over highway plans. The road design process must be friendlier to ordinary citizens in ordinary communities.

Of all the manuals in our office, none has greater impact on America's highways and communities than A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets, better known as "The Green Book." To the highway engineer, "The Green Book" provides indispensable guidance and standards for designing safe and efficient roads. To citizens struggling to preserve the scenic or historic qualities of a cherished road, "The Green Book" has too often become a symbol of rigid road design resulting in roads that are too costly, too wide, and too destructive of important natural and scenic resources. Last year, as Congress designated the 160,340 mile National Highway System, Scenic America successfully fought for "flexible design standards." The language in the NHS bill is simple:

"A design for new construction, reconstruction, resurfacing... of a highway on the National Highway System (other than a highway also on the Interstate System) may take into account... (A) the constructed and natural environment of the area; (B) the environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, community, and preservation impacts of the activity; and (C) access for other modes of transportation."

This language is also profound. It has lead to a cooperative effort including the Federal Highway Administration, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Scenic America, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the National Park Service, to produce Designing Highways for Our Communities and Countryside, hailed as the "Companion Guide" to the AASHTO "Green Book."

The Big Picture

Designing Highways is scheduled for publication in early 1997. We're excited that this readable, informative guide will be available to help highway designers and citizens develop a common frame of reference about road design that respects our sense of place. Featuring many outstanding roads and parkways, the book shows that it is possible to make our roads safer without destroying everything else that we value. Hats off to Jane Garvey, Deputy Administrator of FHWA, for breathing life into the simple NHS language!

The lesson? Hang in there — grit and perseverance do matter. And, now more than ever, it's possible to demand — and get — roads that respect the special character of our communities and countryside.

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

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Snickersville Turnpike Victory

SNICKERSVILLE, from page 1

But while we were initially determined to fight VDOT's plans, we also knew that we had to take the initiative. Instead of letting VDOT tell us what they were going to do, we needed to tell VDOT what was in the best interest of the citizens and the community.

Inexperienced we were, but we set out with a determined community effort. We undertook a poll of all property owners on the turnpike as to what should be done with the road. The result: 98% said it should be resurfaced and restored, not destroyed. We conducted our own extensive traffic survey to determine the types and numbers of vehicles that traveled the road.

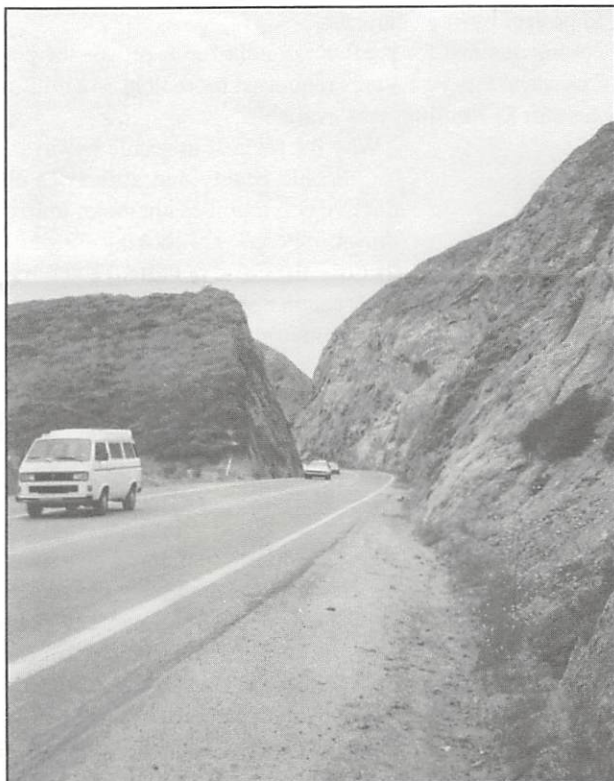
We rallied people by flyers and telephone calls to attend the public hearings where we had organized speakers that covered every topic from road safety to historic preservation. We held public awareness programs from a Civil War re-enactment on the turnpike at the Civil War monument in August 1995 to a recent patriotic demonstration at Hibbs Bridge on Nov. 6, 1996. The press reported these doings and we thus gained support from the entire county.

So far, so good. But VDOT has not given up. Neither have we. We intend to make the words of our constitution ring true: "We are a government of the people, by the people and for the people." We the people should not be dictated to by an

institution that we support with our tax dollars. The citizens need to remind government and the institutions that government represents that they are not a law unto themselves. They are responsible to the citizens. Hopefully the efforts of the Snickersville Turnpike Association can inspire other groups to do the same.

Jane R. Smith is a member of the Board of Directors of the Snickersville Turnpike Association, a citizen organization which has successfully preserved the Snickersville Turnpike in rural Virginia from inappropriate widening. This effort is one of a series in Virginia's Piedmont region to ensure the region's road system contributes to the well-being of area communities.

California Coast Protected



Cars headed south on Route 1 through Devil's Slide.

Devil's Slide, from page 1

Citizens collected 35,000 signatures to give the voters another option at Devil's Slide — a tunnel. A Devil's Slide tunnel had first been proposed by the Sierra Club in 1973, but Caltrans failed to seriously consider the alternative until, responding to public pressure, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) ordered Caltrans to do so in 1995.

The \$2.6 million FHWA study released shortly before the election confirmed that a tunnel was feasible, prudent, safe, environmentally sound, and no more expensive than the proposed bypass.

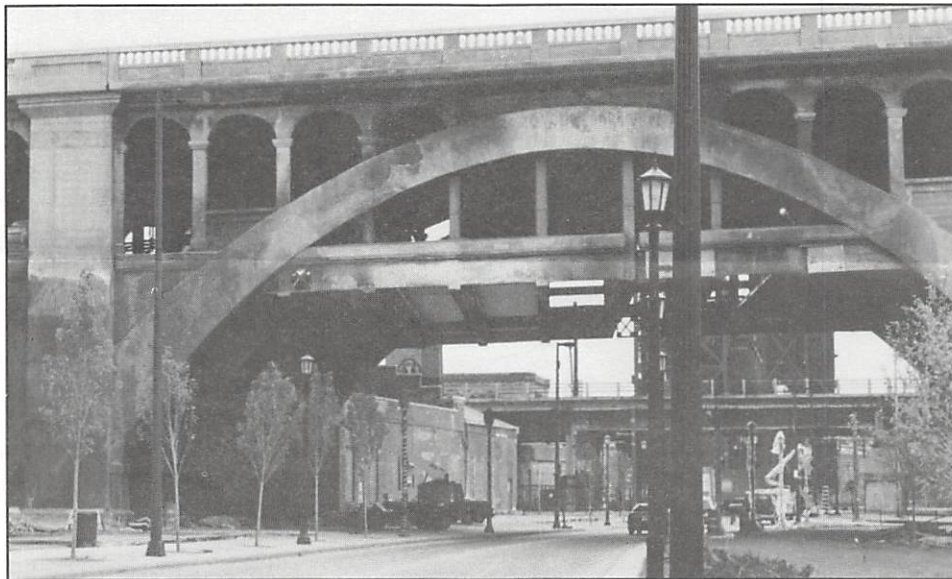
Voters responded by giving Measure T a 74% plurality. Shortly after the election Caltrans announced its intention of abandoning the bypass and proceeding with environmental review of the tunnel. We commend Caltrans on that decision.

Scenic America endorsed Measure T, a position consistent with its 1996 designation of coastal Highway 1 between Half Moon Bay and Santa Cruz (just south of Devil's Slide) as one of the nation's top ten scenic byways. Highway 1 at Devil's Slide is an extraordinary scenic resource that will be preserved by a safe, state-of-the-art tunnel. Measure T culminates a thirty-year battle by volunteers committed to protecting this stretch of the California coast, for all of us to enjoy. If you visit San Francisco be sure to drive down and see why!

Chris Thollaug is a member of the Sierra Club and has worked actively to preserve this section of Route 1 for several years.

On Capitol Hill

Byways Program Maps A Sustainable Future



Scenic America has been active in helping activists preserve the Ohio and Erie Canal Scenic Byway. This is Veteran's Memorial Bridge, near the byway's northern terminus.

On September 24, 1996, over a dozen Congressional staff, as well as representatives from the US Department of Transportation, National Park Service, other government agencies, and public interest groups joined Congressmen Sam Farr (D-CA) and Jim Oberstar (D-MN) in Rayburn House Office Building to celebrate the end of one long journey and the beginning of another.

They were all there to celebrate the designation of the first 20 roads to the new national scenic road system: 14 National Scenic Byways and six All-American Roads.

And they were there to reaffirm their commitment to the continued health of a National Scenic Byways Program designed to identify, protect, and promote the most scenic roads in America — a commitment that may well be tested in the coming reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA).

ISTEA created the first National Scenic Byways Program, which, with its modest funding of \$80 million over the six-year life of ISTEA, has helped to jumpstart scenic byways conservation. Under this voluntary program, two dozen states have established or revised byways programs, and efforts to conserve and promote the beauty of these

roads are up — after years in which byway programs did little or nothing to protect byway character.

Burgeoning demand for the federal grant funds proves the popularity of byways; this year states requested more than \$42 million, but only a scant \$14 million was available.

National Scenic Byways

- Tioga Road/Big Oak Flat Road, California
- Grand Mesa Scenic and Historic Byway, Colorado
- State Route 169, Connecticut
- Merritt Parkway, Connecticut
- Ohio River Scenic Route, Indiana
- Creole Nature Trail, Louisiana
- Edge of the Wilderness Scenic Byway, Minnesota
- Eastshore Drive, Nevada
- Pyramid Lake Scenic Byway, Nevada
- Kancamagus Scenic Byway, New Hampshire
- Seaway Trail, New York
- Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway, South Dakota
- Cherohala Skyway, Tennessee
- Highland Scenic Byway, West Virginia

Why the interest in scenic byways?

Scenic beauty and attractive, distinctive communities are major tourism draws. "People are looking for places that are clean and pristine," noted travel researcher Stanley Plog. The continuing popularity of states like Oregon, Maine, Vermont, Hawaii, and Alaska comes as no surprise.

Moreover, driving for pleasure is Americans' second-favorite leisure time activity. In fact, studies in California, North Carolina, and elsewhere demonstrate that traveler spending on and near scenic byways creates thousands of American jobs and generates billions of dollars in tourism expenditures.

Yet America the Beautiful is disappearing day by day. Even as we do more to preserve historic buildings, parkland, and environmentally sensitive properties, we are losing the surrounding landscapes that help to define these places and give them meaning.

Please see **Scenic Byways**, page 5

National Byways Program Sweetens ISTEA

SCENIC BYWAYS, from page 4

Ironically, tourism — an industry that accrues enormous benefits from the preservation of our distinctive scenic and historic heritage — often does the most damage to that heritage. More tourists bring more demand for services which bring more — and often poorly planned or uncontrolled — development, which degrades scenic and historic landscapes. It can be a vicious circle.

The challenge for communities seeking to develop tourism is how to do so without selling their soul. The solution: careful planning to identify, promote — and preserve — their distinctive resources. That's where scenic byways, like historic districts and heritage areas, come in.

Scenic byways can provide myriad benefits: community cohesiveness, economic growth, enhanced livability, and an improved handle on the ways in which roads and development affect communities. ISTEA helps communities to realize these benefits by encouraging a process known as "corridor management planning." Corridor management plans are simple. Byways stakeholders, such as residents, officials, and business people, work together to identify the

ways in which conservation and development can coexist. They identify critical resources, threats to those resources, conservation strategies, and marketing techniques. In other words, they give communities what one byway activist calls "a roadmap to the future."

National Scenic Byways Program Facts

■ **Program type:** A designation program, with 20 roads currently designated, 14 as National Scenic Byways and six as All-American Roads. In addition, the program includes an \$80 million grant fund, with grants awarded on a competitive basis for projects to identify, preserve, and promote scenic byways, and to develop state scenic byways programs.

■ **Reauthorization:** ISTEA must be reauthorized by September 30, 1997; scenic byways will be considered in this context.

■ **Byways fact:** Scenic byways generate more than \$1 billion in tourist spending annually.

■ **Byways quote:** "Tourists come to Tennessee to see the scenery, not the billboards." — former Governor Lamar Alexander.

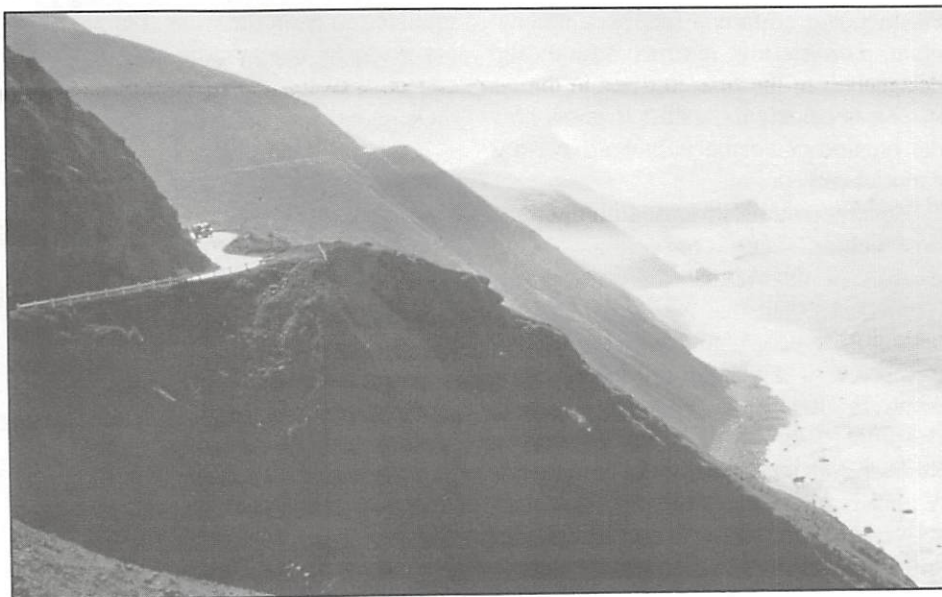
But scenic byways advocates should not assume that the Congress will recognize the many benefits of byways. The repeated attempts by the billboard lobby to obtain free rein to blight byways demonstrate the persistence of this industry — and the apparent inability of some legislators to recognize that scenic conservation is the necessary prerequisite to successful scenic byways.

Any weakening of the scenic byways program — a distinct possibility — will render it worthless. A program that does not preserve — as well as promote — scenic byways is a program that is doomed to failure in both respects.

It will be critical in the coming months that scenic conservationists and byways advocates communicate this message to their representatives in Congress.

All-American Roads

- **Selma to Montgomery March Byway,**
Alabama
- **Pacific Coast Highway,**
California
- **San Juan Skyway,**
Colorado
- **Trail Ridge Road/Beaver Meadow Road,**
Colorado
- **Natchez Trace Parkway,**
Mississippi, Tennessee,
Alabama
- **Blue Ridge Parkway,**
North Carolina



Route 1 along the Big Sur Coast — south of Devil's Slide — has been named an All-American Road.

Symposium Speakers Move Toward Scenic Century

On November 14-15 at the Georgetown Inn in Washington, DC, Scenic America convened a symposium, "O, Say, Can You See: Foundation for A Scenic Century." Undertaken with generous support from the Fleming Charitable Trust, the symposium brought together Scenic America's Board of Directors and staff with 10 invited guests, well-respected experts in different fields, to address the future of scenic conservation. Major discussion areas included: the importance of scenic conservation, the trends affecting the scenic environment, and communicating the "scenic" message.

Some panelists addressed the importance of scenic conservation. Author and essayist Charles Little argued that Scenic America's mission is a moral imperative and a matter of patriotism. Jonathan Rowe of the San Francisco-based organization Redefining Progress, noted that feedback mechanisms — for example, the nerves in our hands — are critical to our ability to understand and respond to our surroundings. The Gross Domestic Product, our country's feedback mechanism, completely ignores social and environmental costs of economic activity. We need new indicators to show how the erosion of scenic values affects our national well-being.

Several panelists focused on the message behind scenic conservation. Gail Chehak of the Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest noted that Native Americans believe that people and places are truly connected — a variation on the Scenic America message. Keith Runyon, Opinion Editor of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, noted that economically disadvantaged people are not very active in scenic conservation issues. To build a national constituency, Scenic America must deal squarely with this fact. The Rev. Alpha Brown, Pastor of Brightwood United Methodist Church in

Washington, echoed this thought. While alcohol and tobacco advertising are "hot button" issues in the inner city because they affect kids — a plus for billboard control efforts — "attractive communities" may find less support because people have other priorities.

Others also saw message targeting as important. Dorothy Jacobson, Director of Sponsored Programs at the National Geographic Society, spoke of the need for Scenic America to do research to understand who our audiences are and what messages they want to hear. Jon Jensen, Program Officer at the Gund Foundation in Cleveland, noted that there is some discontinuity and misperception of Scenic America's mission. His suggestion: Translate our message, build partnerships and coalitions, and find the easy wins.

Finally, several panelists addressed key trends affecting the beauty of the natural and built environment. Advertising executive Margaret Coughlin suggested that advertising is moving in ways that are consistent with our objectives. She said that mass-communication is on the wane, that advertisers want to reach more targeted audiences; that the over-commercialization

of the Olympics has created a backlash within the advertising industry; and that corporate leaders are increasingly attuned to the needs of corporate social responsibility. Chip Newell, President of the Donohoe Development Company, noted that the best way to affect development was to affect demand, and he saw three major trends emerging: the institutionalization of real estate, with cautious Wall Street-types driving new development; a new frugality in development brought on by downsizing and the demise of "trophy builders"; and an aging population that will continue to demand second homes. Mary Griffith, VP and Director of Marketing Communications at National City Corporation, a bank holding company, noted that her bank was using outdoor advertising less. However, from her point of view, the most important trend affecting our long-term support is that corporate philanthropy is likely to focus more on critical social issues.

This symposium was a critical step in Scenic America's efforts to shape our May, 1997, conference in Baltimore, and the ultimate goal: a thriving national scenic conservation movement.

SYMPOSIUM LAYS FOUNDATION FOR "SCENIC CENTURY" CONFERENCE

Building off our recent symposium, Scenic America's 1997 conference, "O, Say Can You See.... Leadership for a Scenic Century," is the second element in a year-long process to build a national scenic conservation movement.

What: "O, Say Can You See.... Leadership for a Scenic Century."
When: May 11-14, 1996.
Where: Radisson Lord Baltimore Hotel,
20 W. Baltimore St.,
Baltimore, MD 21201
(410) 539-8400.

Purpose: To identify, energize, and educate Americans concerned about scenic beauty and community appearance.

For more information: Call Scenic America, (202) 833-4300.

Scenic America Introduces New Publications

Scenic America is pleased to announce the printing of two new publications: "Warning: Signs - Billboards, Signs and Traffic Safety" and "Government Reports: Highway Beautification Act Has Failed." These new items provide critical information to all concerned about billboard blight.

The first of these, entitled "Warning: Signs- Billboards, Signs, and Traffic Safety," is a survey of the previous research conducted in this area. This work demonstrates that most of the previous research has shown that billboards, by distracting motorists, can, in fact, contribute to traffic accidents. However, no work has been done on the connection between billboards and accidents in nearly twenty years. This summary makes clear that researchers must revisit this issue, which has critical implications not only for traffic safety but also for the ability of communities to control visual pollution.

The second, "Government Reports: Highway Beautification Act Has Failed," reviews US government agency reports, between 1984 and 1991, and shows that the Highway Beautification Act has not lived up to its intended purpose. The fact sheet explains why the HBA has failed to control

billboards. In fact the HBA allows gigantic billboards to be erected in rural and scenic areas, hinders their removal, allows thousands of publicly owned trees to be destroyed each year, and is poorly enforced. Our new fact sheet explains what the ramifications of this are, why the HBA has been degraded and how it could be made to work again. This fact sheet should serve to enlighten anyone concerned about billboard blight.

Together, these new publications are an important addition to Scenic America's repertoire about billboards on America's highways.

■ Author Charles Little Offers "Hope for the Land"

Charles Little's *Hope for the Land* argues for adding a new dimension in land-use ethics: aesthetics. This is more than a book that strongly urges a reconsideration of our past and present land-use philosophies. It is a travelogue through various landscapes, physical and mental. Drawing on a wealth of experiences throughout the country, and the land-use philosophy of Aldo Leopold, he makes an eminently readable case for a re-evaluation of our current policies and attitudes toward the land.

Taking a humanistic approach to land use, he introduces the actual people affected by and affecting the land. Among the anecdotes that enliven this book are his personal quest, inspired by a magazine article, for Vermont milk farmer Deane Hoisington. From what he found at that road's end to the waning Post-Reconstruction dreams of black farmers articulated by Calvin King, the vanishing of a rural culture and way-of-life is also documented. The lives of urban people who have a sense of 'placelessness' are also described. The land is the basis for community, both in the physical sense and on another plane. New Jersey's Pine Barrens and Adirondack State Park in New York State are cited as successful examples of successful managing of what he calls 'living landscapes.'

The United States is still without a national land use program. Absent this, the best way to act upon the moral duty to preserve the land is through local strategies. Little makes his argument based on the writings of political philosophers like John Locke, Thomas Jefferson - and Woody Guthrie, to boot. Like Guthrie's body of work, Mr. Little's conveys great truths and meaning, yet with a vernacular poetic sense with universal appeal. And now, this book is available from Scenic America!

New Materials Available from Scenic America

21 Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202/833-4300 - Fax: 202/833-4304

"Hope for the Land", by Charles Little.....	\$24.00	_____
"Warning: Signs - Billboards, Signs and Traffic Safety".....	\$3.00	_____
"Government Reports: Highway Beautification Act has Failed".....	FREE	_____

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Appeals Court Upholds Baltimore Ordinances

Last issue, we reported that the Supreme Court had thrown into question the validity of alcohol and tobacco billboard ordinances. Now a new decision offers hope for community and anti-smoking and -drinking activists.

On November 14, the 4th US Circuit Court of Appeals voted 2-1 to uphold Baltimore's bans on most outdoor advertising for alcohol and tobacco. The bans were immediately appealed by Penn Advertising, Anheuser-Busch, and ad industry groups.

Community and anti-smoking activists hailed the decision, and the Food and Drug Administration, which is pushing to tighten tobacco restrictions (including tough controls on tobacco billboards), also welcomed it.

The two judges who voted to uphold the ordinances cited two key reasons: 1) marketers have other places to advertise to their target markets; and 2) the City Council's finding of a correlation between alcoholic beverage advertising and underage drinking was reasonable.

Stay tuned.

PARTING SHOT...



OAAA recommends that its members "...continue to assert the right to reject creative content that is in poor taste, misleading, sexually explicit or overly suggestive." - OAAA Code of Advertising Practices.

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

Citizen Membership: ☐ \$25 ☐ \$35 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ Other \$ _____

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