



SCENIC AMERICA

Viewpoints

Winter '97-98, Volume 14 No.3

OUTREACH, MESSAGE KEYS FOR '98

Our April Highway Beautification Act press conference with Sen. Jim Jeffords (R-VT), speaking, and Rep. John Lewis (D-GA) is just one example of our recent outreach efforts.



For many of us, a New Year's resolution is little more than a goal we're not going to meet.

But half the fun comes not from the doing -- what's fun about, say, a diet? -- but from the imagining. We like to imagine ourselves as slimmer, smarter, more well read.

For nonprofits like Scenic America, strategic plans are our version of New Year's resolutions. A strategic plan is our way of imagining ourselves as slimmer or smarter. Of course, we have a Board of Directors charged with making sure we actually do what we resolve to do -- a crucial difference between an organization and a person.

As you know from earlier editions of *Viewpoints*, Scenic America is currently in the midst of a strategic planning process. First came the "Vision for a Scenic Century," last November's symposium and the principles of scenic conservation. Then came May's conference, "O, Say, Can You See... Leadership for a Scenic

Century."

Next comes the "Strategy for a Scenic Century."

But in the meantime, we decided to poll Scenic America's staff to learn their New Year's resolutions for the organization. (President Meg Maguire's thoughts can be found on the next page).

The results: a little humor, some seriousness, a few snippets of thought, even some verse (though doggerel might be a better word).

But, more important, the staff resolutions closely mirror each other and focus on two general issues: outreach to scenic conservation advocates and message dissemination.

Many saw outreach as important. One staff member put it succinctly: that Scenic America's material, at least, should be provided to the "good guys" in every community or state where there is debate about scenic conservation. Another noted the need for Scenic America to "increase our capacity" to provide technical assis-

tance on a variety of issues, including billboard control, scenic byways, and "smart growth" responses to sprawl. A third called more simply for Scenic America's having "greater ability" to inform people about the value of scenic conservation.

Most creative was a poem listing a series of improvements to the landscape -- billboards replaced with trees, improved franchise design -- and concluding, "And all of these wishes would happen today/ Because Scenic America helped communities find their way."

Others noted the importance of our affiliate network and called for it to grow.

What we say, and to whom we say it, were also cited as areas of focus for the coming year.

Recalling that "the people perish for lack of vision," one staff member said, "My greatest hope for Scenic America... is that we impart in the people of America our vision..."

Since we all know intuitively that

see "Outreach, Message," pg. 5

In this Issue... Scenic America Looks Ahead to '98

MOVING TOWARDS A SCENIC CENTURY

by Meg Maguire, President, Scenic America



When I first came to Scenic America, I looked forward to working with a talented staff, an active Board of Directors, and a committed membership to found a national scenic conservation movement.

Boy, was I wrong...

Not about the staff, Board, or membership. No, indeed, I am continually amazed by the persistence, dedication, and effectiveness of

The Big Picture

all three.

My mistake, you see, was in thinking that Scenic America's job was to found a scenic conservation movement.

That's not our job.

It's not our job because there already *is* a scenic conservation movement.

From anti-billboard activists to scenic byways advocates, from smart growth proponents to folks fighting badly placed cellular communications towers -- there are already untold thousands of Americans fighting for a more scenic America.

But for every one person who fights billboard blight, another hundred assume that billboards are the inevitable price of progress. For every person protecting a scenic road, a hundred passively lament the crudscape that's ruined what used to be beautiful scenery.

And, all too often, even the hardy people who are actively working to conserve scenic beauty are unaware of others doing the same thing.

In other words, there is a scenic conservation movement; it's just not yet apparent.

So at one level, Scenic America's job is simply to make the scenic conservation movement aware of its own existence. Beyond that, we strive to reach out to all Americans to tell them about the importance of scenic conservation. And we fight against those things -- government policies, personal attitudes, or corporate structures -- that foster the degradation of America the Beautiful.

We're already making great strides. The circulation of this newsletter, for example, is higher than ever before. Our conference was a great success, and our burgeoning array of publications provides clear, useful, and timely information on a variety of topics. Through our projects in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Virginia, we're providing hands-on assistance to scenic conservationists.

Identifying activists through our news clip service, we've also begun to reach out to even more scenic conservationists, including many who have never heard of Scenic America before.

And our state affiliates network -- one of the most exciting aspects of our work -- has grown to include six "Scenics" with six more associate "Scenics."

Our media relations work scored significant coverage this past year and will be a focus of our work in the coming year. Through articles in major publications -- *Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, and others -- and in more specialized ones -- *The Journal of the American Planning Association* and *Public Policy and Marketing* -- we're working hard to reach audiences new and old alike. And we're upgrading our research efforts, so we'll have more exciting products like "The Highway Beautification Act: A Broken Law" in the coming years.

Of course, we'll continue our dogged work to reform the Highway Beautification Act and to fight for other federal policies that protect and promote scenic beauty.

Scenic America is a small organization. We can't be everywhere. But more and more I realize that we don't need to be everywhere.

Our information needs to be everywhere. Our network needs to be everywhere. But we, Scenic America, we don't need to be everywhere.

Because other folks in the scenic conservation movement already are. SA

SCENIC AMERICA IS...

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

Roberta M. Henderson, *Chairman*

Meg Maguire, *President*

Frank Vespe, *Vice President - Policy and Communications, Editor*

Ray A. Foote, *Vice President - Program Development*

Anna El-Eini, *Policy Associate*

Deborah Myerson, *Program Associate*

Wendy Taylor, *Development Associate*

Djuana Waters, *Office Manager*

Susan Kidd, *Georgia Scenic Byways Project Director*

Wanda Seguin, *Georgia Scenic Byways Project Assistant*

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All photos: Scenic America unless credited.

ACT NOW TO PROTECT SCENIC PROVISIONS**ISTEA WILL BREW FOR SIX MORE MONTHS**

On November 12, the House and Senate reached accord on a six-month extension of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). The existing ISTEA expired on September 30.

Both houses had sought full reauthorizations of the bill, but their plans foundered. House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bud Shuster (R-PA), disappointed with the money allotted for transportation under the balanced budget agreement, pushed a three-year ISTEA bill -- which would spend all five years of allotted transportation funding in three years.

House leaders refused to allow debate on the potentially budget-busting bill -- the bill's advocates claimed it would not break the balanced budget agreement, while the leadership maintained it would



The long, bumpy road to ISTEA reauthorization; scenic conservationists hope the final bill will help keep roads like this scenic.

JOIN THE SCENIC ACTION NETWORK

The *Scenic Action Network* helps you to get your message to Congress about the need to protect the scenic character of your community and the countryside.

As a *Scenic Action Network* member (*Scenic America members join free!*), you will receive monthly updates on current legislation in Congress with information on how you can influence national policy. *Members of Congress do listen to you.* When they know that their constituents are speaking out for scenic conservation they are much more likely to care about these issues, and to take action to protect scenic resources.

Scenic Action Network members can help make scenic conservation a national priority by letting Congress know that Americans nationwide want to preserve and protect scenic America. Your Representatives and Senators need to hear from you!

Join our Scenic Action Network today to protect scenic America!!

Contact Anna El-Eini at Scenic America 21 Dupont Circle, NW, Washington DC 20036. (202) 8334300. email: scenic@scenic.org

-- and the House subsequently passed a six month extension of the current program, through the end of March, 1998.

The Senate's proposed six-year reauthorization also ran aground. S. 1173 became caught in the wrangling over campaign finance reform, which prevented the bill from receiving consideration. Faced with the expiration of federal transportation funds, the Senate also extended the program for six months.

Both the six-month extension and the original House and Senate bills continue valuable scenic conservation programs.

The six-month extension contains \$7 million for scenic byways -- half the current annual funding. Meanwhile, the House bill, HR 2400, contained \$30 million annually for scenic byways, more than doubling the program's current annual funding. S. 1173 contained \$116 million over six years for scenic byways, an average of over \$19.3 million per year. Both bills maintain the existing balance between conservation and economic development, and both preserve the ban on the construction of new billboards along designated

byways.

Both the six-month extension and the full bills also continue funding for transportation enhancements, with funding rising to about \$560 million annually (from about \$400 million) under the Senate bill and between \$550 and \$700 million under the House bill. HR 2400 also creates a new transit enhancements program.

The bills retain ISTEA's focus on community involvement and conservation.

Senate leaders intend to move S. 1173 immediately after the Senate reconvenes in January. Several contentious issues may be on the table, including funding amounts and shares and environmental issues. Meanwhile, House leaders will wait for the federal budget to be adopted before moving forward.

While the original bills represented strong steps for scenic conservation advocates, much can still change. We must keep telling Congress that beauty matters if we hope to protect our scenic heritage. SA

On Capitol Hill

STATE BILLBOARD BATTLES LOOM IN '98



Faced with growing billboard blight and disappearing scenic vistas, activists in Michigan and elsewhere are fighting back against the billboard lobby.

Billboard control efforts are in full swing around the country, and 1998 promises to be an exciting year. For some communities, controlling billboards means passing a local sign ordinance. For others, like Columbia, Missouri, state law forbids local communities from regulating billboards. So controlling billboards means having to change state law. In Alaska, one of four billboard-free states in the country, a new state law that chips at the ban has drawn public outrage. Here are some major campaigns coming up in the new year.

Scenic Missouri's Save Our Scenery (SOS) campaign is sweeping across the state. Frustrated by the state Assembly's continuing refusal to allow local governments to regulate billboards, Scenic Missouri is taking billboard reform to the people with a petition drive to change state law by referendum. SOS received a big boost after a recent survey showed that the overwhelming majority of Missourians think there are too many billboards in Missouri. And as Scenic Missouri nears the referendum target of 120,000 signatures by July 1st, Karl Kruse, Scenic Missouri's Director and Scenic America Board member, tells us that he's confident they'll reach 180,000 signatures by March!

Scenic Missouri is also working with a Scenic Byways Advisory Committee to develop pilot scenic byways programs in Missouri.

For more information contact: Karl Kruse at Scenic Missouri, 5650A South Sinclair, Columbia MO 65203. (573) 446-3129. E-mail: scenicmo@tranquility.net

Scenic Michigan State Senator Leon Stille (R-Spring Lake) is championing Scenic Michigan's cause by sponsoring legislation in the state legislature that would increase local government control of billboards, ban cutting of public trees for billboard visibility, and prohibit new billboards in rural areas. In addition, the new legislation promotes expansion of the highly popular and effective logo sign program. Scenic Michigan's campaign to reform billboard law in Michigan in 1998 has received widespread support since the release of a new survey that shows that most people in Michigan think there are too many billboards in the state, and want new billboard construction stopped.

For more information contact: Scenic Michigan, 2101 Wood Street, PO Box 30235, Lansing MI 48909. (517) 371-1041. E-mail: mtanton@freeway.net

Alaskans Against Billboards With the January 1st deadline rapidly approaching, the Alaska Center for the Environment is right on track to collect the 24,000 signatures needed to call a referendum to repeal the "billboard bill" passed in the State Assembly last year. The law sparked a huge controversy in billboard-free Alaska by permitting commercial off-premise signs for the first time ever. Although there is a size restriction of eleven square feet, and the billboards have to be 800 ft. from the roadside, that this law allows off-premise signs of any kind in a state that previously prohibited all such signs may represent a foot in the door for the billboard industry. Public opinion was overwhelmingly against the bill, and Alaskans Against Billboards are confident they can win a referendum to reinstate a billboard ban in 1998.

For more information contact: Michelle Keck at Alaskans Against Billboards, Alaska Center for the Environment, 519 West 8th Avenue, Suite 201, Anchorage AK 99501. (907) 274-3621

Other places facing the challenge of billboard control at the state level next year include Virginia and Utah. Stay tuned for more news next year on all these campaigns. SA

SCENIC AMERICANS TAKE TO THE ROAD

Autumn kicked off with Scenic America staff members speaking in several states, spreading the word on scenic conservation -- and looking to continue those efforts next year.

September started the busy season with Meg Maguire traveling to Colorado, where she spoke on scenic preservation and smart growth at the Rocky Mountain Land Institute's annual retreat.

In St. Petersburg, Florida, Frank Vespe spoke at the National Conference of State Legislatures. Some 150 legislators from around the country heard his talk on how billboard control and scenic conservation are good for tourism.

Frank continued to Savannah, Georgia, where he spoke at the National Land Trust Rally. There, he participated in a

panel on the reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), talking specifically about scenic byways and transportation enhancements.

Also in September, Meg and Anna El-Eini were guest speakers at the Garden Club of Virginia's Conservation Workshop in Richmond. Meg and Anna spoke to conservation chairs of local chapters about the need to protect Virginia's scenic beauty and the potential for stopping new billboard construction in Virginia.

In October, Ray Foote spent a week in Iowa. In Dubuque, he presented Scenic America's "Community Choices for a Scenic America" slide show to the Rotary Club. The Dubuque *Telegraph Herald* gave strong coverage to Scenic America's positions on

community development.

Wendy Taylor has made several appearances representing Scenic America and Earth Share at combined Federal Campaign events. These events provide opportunities for federal employees to make gifts to organizations like Scenic America through payroll deduction.

Finally, at the end of October, Deborah Myerson presented "Lobbying for the Nation's Quality of Life" at the Tahoe Workshop, "Establishing the Worth of Scenic Values," in Nevada. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, EDAW, Inc., and the U.S. Forest Service jointly sponsored the Workshop.

Would you like a Scenic American to speak to your group? Contact us at (202) 833-4300. SA

Volunteer Spotlight on...

Dan Clemmer



If you're a member of Scenic America, you've probably noticed great recent improvement in our monthly publication, *The Grassroots Advocate*.

That's thanks to Dan Clemmer.

In his other life, Dan is Director of the US Department of State Library, which is our nation's oldest federal library.

He is a frequent writer and speaker on the preveservation of rare books, historical documents, and electronic information. He reports that his love for our nation's beauty stems from his childhood in southeast Tennessee, where he lived within sight of Cherokee National Forest and the Appalachian Mountains.

"Dan's work on the *Advocate*, as well as other projects, is a tremendous boon to our efforts to bring the scenic message to an ever-broader constituency," said Scenic America president Meg Maguire.

Want to help Scenic America? Give us a call at (202) 833-4300, or e-mail us at scenic@scenic.org

Thanks, Dan! SA

Outreach, Message...

continued from p. 1

attractive surroundings uplift us, another staffer plaintively hoped that Scenic America might "get elected officials to say the word 'beauty' without flinching or apologizing" -- an acknowledgment that might then get beauty worked back into the public policy realm.

Others focused on the mechanics of the message. One called for wider distribution of our materials, improved visual quality of new publications, and the creation of a web site. Another called for the Scenic America message, in the form of articles or quotes in larger articles, to reach 250 million Americans in the coming year.

Most, if not all, of these resolutions are achievable. Efforts to improve the look of our publications and to create a web site are underway. Our media relations efforts have improved.

We've also undertaken significant new outreach to scenic conservation advocates in recent months and are working hard to grow our affiliate network.

It won't be easy to accomplish all of these worthy goals, but it will certainly be worth the effort. Ultimately -- and unlike most people we know -- Scenic America just might accomplish its New Year's resolutions. SA

SCENIC AMERICA, BLM FORM BYWAYS PARTNERSHIP

by Michelle Dawson

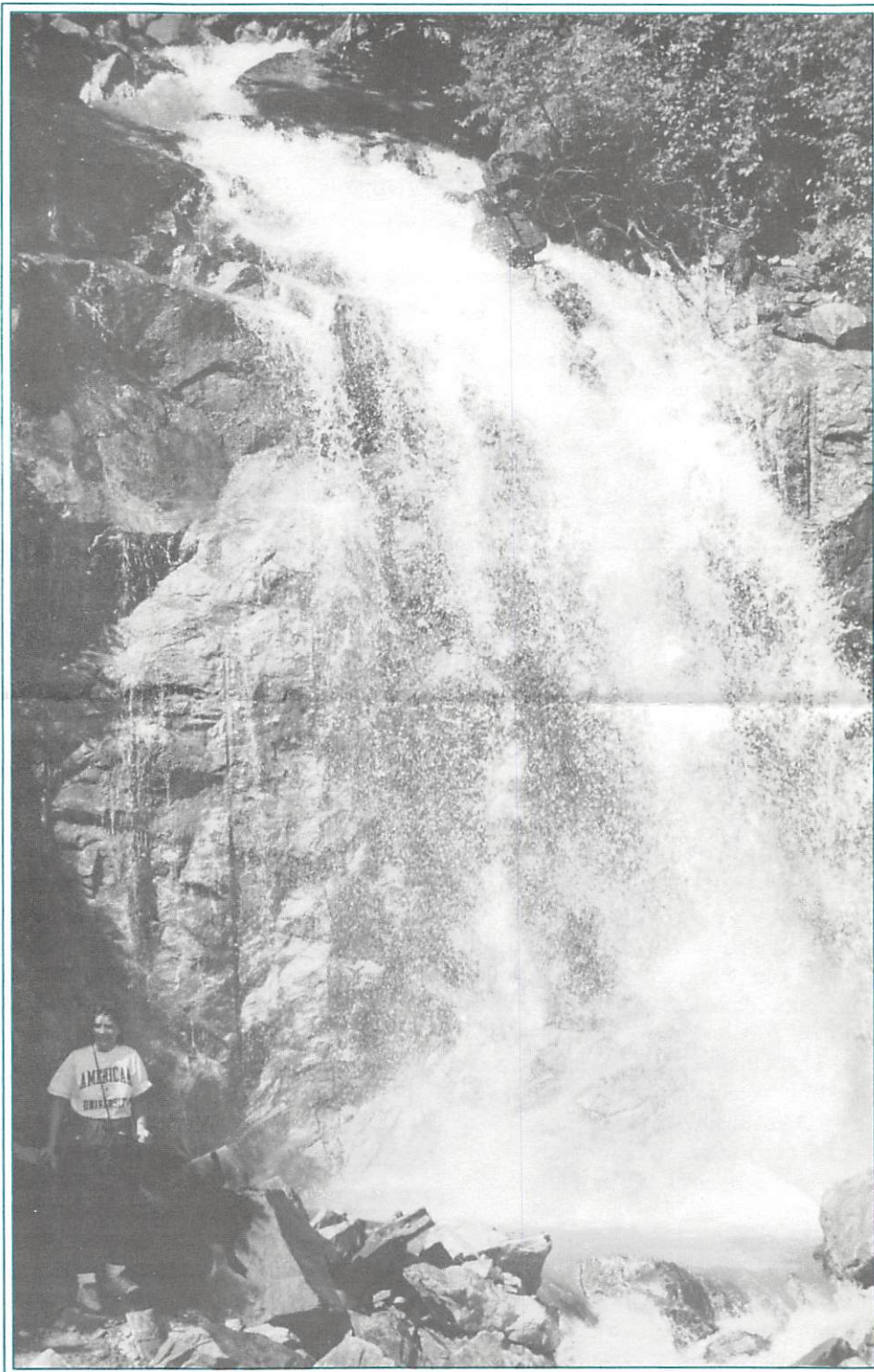
Partnership/Marketing Specialist, Recreation Group, Bureau of Land Management

To celebrate the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) 50th Anniversary, Scenic America joined the BLM in a Golden Partnership Agreement and identified eight of the Bureau's 64 Back Country Byways, as "Beautiful Byways." These byways showcase America's great outdoors in all its spectacular beauty and offer exciting and challenging opportunities for the public to enjoy fun and adventure exploring the best of the West. Scenic America President Meg Maguire signed the BLM Golden Partnership Agreement at the BLM's birthday bash, on July 18, 1996, in the historic Department of the Interior Building, in Washington, D.C.

This Golden Partnership spotlights the critical importance of protecting these picturesque ribbons of routes stretching across America's West and underscores the various recreational opportunities available to millions of Americans "taking the roads less traveled." The Golden Byways identified by Scenic America include Black Hills, Arizona; Alpine Loop, Colorado; Gold Belt, Colorado; Garnet Range, Montana; Red Rock Canyon, Nevada; Galcie/Helgate, Oregon; Grave Creek to Maria, Oregon; and the Pony Express Trail, Utah. Each of these byways travels through a rich mosaic of historic sites, ancient landscapes, and scenic vistas where an incredible variety of plants and animals thrive. The BLM Colorado's Alpine Loop, for example, follows the roads built by miners over 60 years ago. The byway passes through old mines, and mining camp ruins, tram lines, and "spooky" ghost towns.

Since celebrating the BLM's 50th Anniversary, Scenic America and the BLM are in the process of entering into a formal, long-term Memorandum of Understanding to establish a framework of cooperation for promoting the conservation and enhancement of the scenic, historic, and cultural landscapes of the 265 million acres of public lands administered by the BLM. This formal partnership agreement will be signed by the BLM's new Director, Pat Shea, and Scenic America President Meg Maguire.

SA



Scenic America and BLM have joined together to protect the scenic roads and vistas that draw millions of visitors annually to the West.

New Books Advocate Scenic Conservation

Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities

By Jim Howe, Ed McMahon, and Luther Propst for The Conservation Fund and The Sonoran Institute, Island Press, 1997, 165 pages.

Coauthored by Scenic America Board member and former President Ed McMahon, this book examines gateway communities -- the towns and cities surrounding national and state parks, wildlife refuges, historic sites, and other public lands -- and the strategies that some are using to manage rapid growth. Based on interviews and an extensive survey of gateway communities, the authors share the lessons and tools they learned from communities which are successfully balancing quality of life, the environment, and economic development. According to the authors, "If there is one theme underlying this book, it's that

preserving what's special about America's communities and landscapes doesn't have to jeopardize local economic well-being." Through numerous examples and in-depth case studies, the authors demonstrate how gateway communities can strike a balance if they plan ahead and involve the entire

For Your Bookshelf

community in the planning process. This book is an essential guide for anyone concerned about their growing gateway community.

Saving America's Countryside: A Guide to Rural Conservation, Second Edition

By Samuel Stokes, A. Elizabeth Watson, and Shelly Mastran for The National Trust for Historic Preservation, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, 447 pages.

Saving America's Countryside is full of case studies and practical tools for preserving community character. Eight years ago, the first edition was hailed as the comprehensive guide for protecting the natural, historic, scenic, and agricultural resources of rural communities from the sprawl development chewing up the landscape. The updated and expanded second edition chronicles both the progress and setbacks in rural conservation over the last eight years. The authors address the current threats faced by rural communities and the rural landscape. In addition to new case studies, the authors have added a chapter on balancing economic development and rural conservation and a new section on heritage tourism. This book is for anyone looking for information on how to organize a rural conservation program, inventory the community's resources, work with local government, set up a land trust, and much more. SA

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Quantity _____

Saving America's Countryside -- \$26.00

Quantity _____

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add \$5.00 _____

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Please make checks payable to Scenic America. Thanks!

'Power of the Individual' is Key To Scenic Conservation

"We are not powerless," even in the face of creeping ugliness. We do have choices.

Only seven weeks before his untimely death on July 4, Charles Kuralt spoke those words to participants at our first national conference. Kuralt reminded us that individual commitment to protecting America's scenic places is critical. "I am persuaded of this with all my heart, ordinary Americans want a beautiful country."

Indeed, it is exactly that spirit which infuses Scenic America's work. When we succeed, it is because we have tapped the power of individuals who care about our issues. The citizen in Monroe, NC, or Chicago who fights to end the plague of billboards in their hometowns. The small, volunteer groups in Ohio working to preserve the special byways that tie together their towns. Activists who are keeping the world-famous Pacific Coast Highway scenic. And so many others acting on the knowledge that they are not powerless. Yet all this, ultimately, comes back to you, our

members and friends.

Your year-end gift helps *people in your state and across the country*. Sending in your contribution envelope today means we can provide the critical, timely information these people need. It means we can strengthen our state affiliates. It equips us to tell even more people that they possess the power to preserve the scenic beauty of their countryside and communities. Also, if you give \$100 or more now, we can match your contribution under a special challenge grant, thus doubling the impact of your support.

Closing his address, Kuralt observed that "Scenic America and its allies, I think...can find a lot to be confident about and reassured about." That confidence comes easily if we review our long list of victories at the local, state, and federal levels and the rising numbers of requests for our assistance. But less reassuring is the realization that in 1998 we continue to face stiff challenges and well-financed opposition: an increasingly aggressive billboard

industry and rapid loss of our scenic countryside to unplanned development.

Your gift today helps us meet the New Year "confident and reassured." This is the perfect time to undergird our work because your support can go twice as far: give \$100 or more today, and we will receive an equivalent matching sum from the R.K. Mellon Foundation. It's a great investment in America's scenic beauty.

We all want a beautiful country. To have it we rely on the power of the individual. And that means we're relying on you. Please return your contribution envelope now to help us meet the coming challenges head-on.

If you would like a copy of Charles Kuralt's full address, please indicate that on the special reply envelope when you return your year-end contribution. Thank you. SA

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

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

Organizational Membership: ☐ \$50 Local or State Organization ☐ \$100 Regional or National Organization

Name _____ Tel. _____

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