

# Scenic America Viewpoints

www.scenic.org

FALL, 2000



## Scenic America Announces "Last Chance Landscapes 2000"

### New Report Lists Nation's Landscapes Most Threatened by Billboards, New Roads, Other Symptoms of Sprawl

On Monday, November 20 at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, Scenic America released its second annual report naming ten *Last Chance Landscapes 2000*. These endangered landscapes are places of beauty or distinctive community character with both a pending threat and a potential solution.

"Thanksgiving draws us to the people and places we love, to traditions we keep year after year. More Americans travel on the Thanksgiving weekend than at any other time of the year. So this is a good time to reflect on both the promise and the reality of 'America the Beautiful,'" said Meg Maguire, president of Scenic America.

Maguire said that unplanned growth is overrunning rural landscapes and draining America's cities and towns. New and poorly designed roads and strip malls are paving over farmland and historic sites; billboards litter the nation's roadsides; and wireless telecommunication towers

puncture communities and scenic vistas.

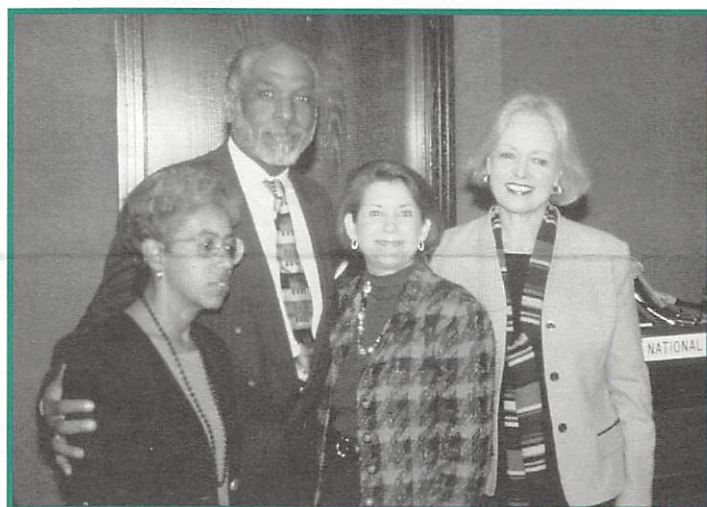
The *Last Chance Landscapes 2000* report lists places nominated by local individuals or groups ranging from the Verdugo Mountains in southern California to Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke Ranges in western Massachusetts. Scenic America's report proposes remedies for each threat. *Last Chance Landscapes 2000* includes a scenic roadway, open space in metropolitan areas, historic towns, and other places treasured for their natural beauty or distinctive character. This year, for the first time, Scenic America has named an entire state, Colorado, as a Last Chance Landscape.

#### THE LAST CHANCE LANDSCAPES 2000 ARE:

##### Oakmont View V Property (Verdugo Mountains), Glendale, California

*Threat: Residential Development of Unique Open Space*

Once part of a large Spanish



(L-R) Dianne Dale of the Frederick Douglass Gardens, Inc., and Frederick Douglass IV, great-great grandson of the famed civil rights leader, here with Kathy Whitmire, chair of Scenic America's Board of Directors, and Meg Maguire, president of Scenic America, spoke at the press event for the release of *Last Chance Landscapes 2000*.

land grant, the 238-acre Oakmont View V property is located on the north slope of the Verdugo Mountains in Glendale, California. This unique open space inside the city is in danger of development, including massive grading of the ridgelines. There is a opportunity to preserve this landscape as a regional park.

##### Ravalli County, Montana *Threat: Billboard Blight*

Ravalli County lies in the heart of the Rocky Mountain region of southwestern Montana. The threats to this beautiful landscape include increasing billboard blight along Highway 93, insensitive highway expansion, and hazardous, unregulated growth.

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Without a county planning commission or effective growth management, Ravalli County is in danger of losing its outstanding scenic and historic resources.

## The State of Colorado

*Threat: Growth and Development Pressures That Threaten to Destroy Its Distinctive Character and Visual Environment*

Millions of words have been written about the beauty and rugged grandeur of Colorado. It's one of the reasons so many people have moved to this western state in recent years. Colorado has five of the ten fastest growing counties in the country, and population growth in the state is expected to continue at a staggering rate for the next 20 years. Because of its beauty and open spaces, Colorado faces growth and development pressures that threaten to destroy its distinctive character and visual environment. But Coloradans love their state, and are taking steps to preserve its beauty.



The winding, scenic State Highway 131 travels through the narrow valley along the Kickapoo River between Ontario and Rockton, Wisconsin.

## Upper Mississippi River Blufflands Region

*Threat: Development Pressures in a Scenic, Historic, Multi-State Area*

The unique beauty of the Upper Mississippi Blufflands region of Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois is different from any other areas in these states. In addition to the scenic qualities of the Blufflands, the area contains historic towns, important archaeological sites, small working farms, and rare ecosystems. The region is experiencing tremendous pressure from residential development and resource extraction, and needs a regional strategy to protect its special qualities.

## State Highway 131 between Ontario and Rockton, Wisconsin

*Threat: Paving and Widening of a Scenic Road*

Meandering through the rolling hills of southwestern Wisconsin's Ocooch Mountains, the two-lane State Highway 131 travels through countryside that is home to diverse wildlife and is one of the only preserved unglaciated landscapes in the world. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) plans to reconstruct State Highway 131 through the Kickapoo Valley as an arterial thorough-

fare, threatening the rich scenic, natural, recreational, and archaeological resources along the roadway. Designating the road as a state scenic byway and WisDOT's implementation of a more context-sensitive highway design can preserve the beauty of the State Highway 131 while allowing visitors and residents to continue to enjoy the corridor's outstanding resources.

## Erin Township, Washington County, Wisconsin

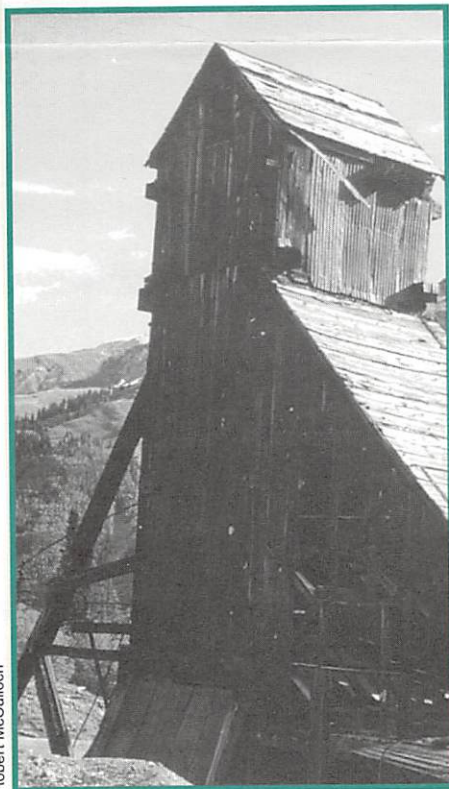
*Threat: Suburban Sprawl in a Rural Landscape*

This small, picturesque town of less than 3,500 residents is surrounded by farmland and rural scenic roads. Located at the headwaters of the Little Oconomowoc River in southeastern Wisconsin, and encompassing four pristine lakes, Erin Township is threatened by insensitive road expansion, sprawl from neighboring metropolitan areas and possible annexation by larger communities. It will take a strong effort by town residents to stop sprawl from permanently changing their way of life.

## Springfield, Illinois

*Threat: Billboard Blight in an Historic City*

Springfield, the home of President



Robert McCulloch

Hundred-year-old mining structures like the Yankee Girl in the Red Mountain Mining District of Colorado are threatened by development.



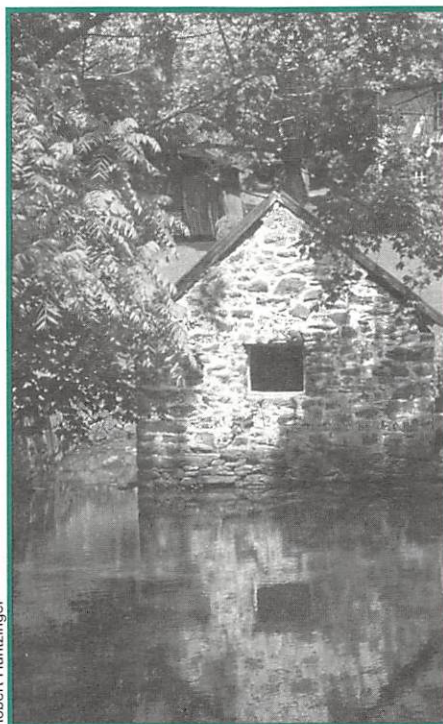
Abraham Lincoln, is the capital of Illinois. A growing city, proud of its history, Springfield's scenic and historic character is threatened by the billboards that line its streets and highways. A prohibition on the construction of new billboards, and a reasonable amortization period to remove existing billboards, will help restore the charm of this historic city.

### **Cooks Creek, Springfield Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania**

*Threat: Residential Development in a Pristine Watershed*

Cooks Creek is a pristine watershed in a scenic and historic area of Springfield Township, Pennsylvania. The rural valley through which Cooks Creek flows contains prime active farmland, an important agricultural resource in the state. The watershed's ecosystem is threatened by residential development. Residents and conservation groups are working to protect the scenic and natural beauty of this landscape.

Robert Huntzinger



**Cooks Creek in Bucks County, Pennsylvania is a pristine watershed threatened by accelerating suburban development.**

### **Poplar Point, Anacostia, Washington, DC**

*Threat: Development of Waterfront Open Space in Metropolitan Area*

As one of the last large undeveloped parcels in the city of Washington, DC, Poplar Point on the Anacostia River is a beautiful waterfront site. Local officials are looking for areas to develop in previ-

ously neglected parts of the city, and Poplar Point is threatened by several proposed developments. Greenhouses once used by the Architect of the Capitol remain on the site and could be rebuilt for environmental research and education programs. Local community groups want



**These greenhouses at Poplar Point in Washington, DC have served as a flower and tree nursery for both the Architect of the Capitol and the Washington, DC government.**

to preserve Poplar Point as a memorial park in honor of Frederick Douglass for the benefit of residents and visitors.

### **Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke Ranges, Western Massachusetts**

*Threat: Sprawling Residential Development*

Visible from as far away as Hartford, Connecticut and Brattleboro, Vermont, the Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke Ranges are a dominant landscape feature of the Connecticut River Valley in western Massachusetts. Native Americans considered the mountains a sacred site, and European settlers extolled the beauty and majesty of this landscape. Inappropriate development threatens both Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke ranges. Conservation and zoning actions at the local and state levels can help preserve the mountains.

"This report highlights 10 places across our land that typify problems we see in dozens of other places," said Maguire. "But for every problem there is a solution which other communities have adopted, showing once again that change is inevitable but ugliness is not."

The *Last Chance Landscapes 1999* report listed places ranging from the South Coast Foothills in southern California to Walden Woods in Massachusetts, including a scenic highway, coastal lands, historic towns, a state park, and other places treasured for their natural beauty or distinctive character. The 2000 report includes an update on citizen action to protect these places.

"Americans want to save natural beauty, protect open space, and live in well-designed communities," continued Maguire, referring to the numerous state and local growth-related ballot initiatives on November 7, 2000 ballots. "People everywhere need to look around, identify what they love, and demand better scenic conservation and land-use practices as their communities grow."

**For more information on the Last Chance Landscapes program, visit our website at [www.scenic.org](http://www.scenic.org). Scenic America will send out a call for nominations for Last Chance Landscapes 2001 in February, 2001. We invite you to send in your nomination by June 1, 2001.**



# THE BIG Picture

## Winners and Losers

BY MEG MAGUIRE, PRESIDENT

Nov. 7 brought good news, bad news .... and plenty of post-election news. Ballot initiatives to save open space, fund mass transit, mandate growth management, and stop new billboard construction met with mixed results. So who are the “winners?” the “losers?”

In the win-win column count Reno, NV as a win for citizen advocates and a win for the visual character of Reno. As reported in these pages, **Citizens for a Scenic Reno** organized a superb campaign to prohibit the construction of new billboards and 57 percent of the voters approved the measure. The going was tough. The citizens spent under \$10,000 and the industry spent hundreds of thousands of dollars. Just weeks before the election, the billboard industry sued Doug Smith and other organizers for \$2.5 million dollars in “damages” and tried to keep the measure off the ballot. The judge dismissed the action and gave the voters a chance to tell the industry that Reno has enough ugly outdoor advertising, thank you very much.



In the lose-lose column count Missouri. In the most daring statewide billboard control effort in our history, **Scenic Missouri** narrowly lost the Save Our Scenery initiative by 49 to 51 percent. SOS spent \$1.3 million; the billboard industry spent over \$4 million to spread the colossal lie that the initiative would cost Missouri taxpayers \$500 million dollars. This is a big loss for the citizens of Missouri, a state with three times as many billboards as any of the eight neighboring states. While the billboard industry reports with smug satisfaction that they “won,” look at the lengths to which they had to go, the money they had to spend, and the lies they had to tell to “win!”

Fortunately, all is not lost in Missouri. Karl Kruse, a long-time Scenic America board member and recent Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, plans to modify the proposal to make clear that it will not cost the taxpayers and take it to the state legislature early next year. Missouri should count — and recount — its blessings for citizens like Karl who

love the state and cherish its beauty.

In the lost-won column count St. Paul, MN. Last year **Scenic Minnesota** spent less than \$10,000 to the billboard industry's \$500,000 on a campaign to stop new billboard construction, declare them all to be a nuisance, and bring them all down within five years. While this toughest-of-all possible measures lost, the margin was narrow — 47 to 53 percent. Did defeat stop Brian Bates and his hardy workers? Not at all. Recently they won an impressive billboard control victory in the city council.

The ten *Last Chance Landscapes 2000* featured in this issue represent another battlefield where the winners and losers are yet to be determined. In each of these places citizens are fighting the disease of haphazard sprawl development before it consumes the host. We hope that, by shining a national spotlight on pending threats and potential solutions, Scenic America can help citizens take action to preserve the places they love.

There are some things worth fighting for, win or lose. The good news is that citizens throughout this country believe that America the Beautiful is worth the fight.

## Election 2000

*The November 7 elections brought good news and bad news to scenic conservationists.*

### Stricter protection for trees in Duval County, FL

On November 8, 2000, the Florida Times-Union reported that, by an overwhelming margin, Duval County voters approved a referendum to set stricter rules when builders remove trees during the development process.

“The voters of Jacksonville have spoken loud and clear that they really want a better Jacksonville in all respects,” said Bill Brinton, co-founder of Citizens for Tree Preservation Inc. and Scenic America board member. “I think it sends a good message to anyone considering Jacksonville as a place to live and locate

their business.”

The Northeast Florida Builders Association and other builders say the new rules are unconstitutional and have already filed a lawsuit to seek a permanent injunction against them.

*continued*



## Election 2000

continued

### Victory in Reno, NV!

Citizens for a Scenic Reno won a resounding victory over billboard blight in their city. Voters there passed a ballot initiative that prohibits the construction of new billboards by 57 to 43 percent. Despite a last ditch effort by the billboard industry, the Daily Sparks Tribune said that "Reno voters deserve a big pat on the back for seeing through the propaganda of the billboard industry."

In March, 2000, after working with the billboard subcommittee of the Reno City Council for months to limit the number and location of billboards, Doug Smith and Citizens for a Scenic Reno began collecting signatures to put a citizen's initiative on the November ballot to prohibit the construction of new billboards in Reno. Later, the Nevada Outdoor Media Association filed a competing initiative petition to allow new billboards in previously off-limits areas of Reno. In July, that petition drive was halted when the billboard industry pulled out of the heated contest. Later, the industry filed suit against Citizens for a Scenic Reno to stop the initiative, but the judge ruled in the Citizens' favor on each item.

Doug Smith, chairman of Citizens for a Scenic Reno, said that the election result

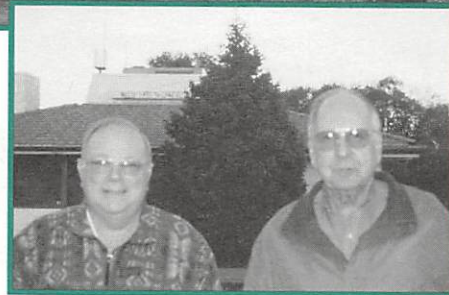
**TOP RIGHT:**  
Reno is a beautiful city located on the Truckee River in western Nevada.

**BOTTOM RIGHT:**  
Bill Holhut and Doug Smith were instrumental in Reno's victory over the billboard industry on November 7.



shows that "the little guy can take on big business and win."

Congratulations to Doug and all of the Citizens for a Scenic Reno for their hard work, courage, and dedication to preserving the beauty of their community!



### One step back in Missouri

In a painfully close decision, Missouri voters defeated Proposition A by 51 to 49 percent, which would have prohibited the construction of new billboards on Missouri's federal-aid highways, prevented tree cutting, and returned billboard control to the localities. For more on Missouri's Save Our Scenery campaign, see page 6.

On December 7, 2000, National Public Radio aired a nationally broadcast story by member station KSMU in Springfield, MO on the billboard blight on Missouri's roads. Karl Kruse and Meg Maguire spoke.

## The Trust for Public Land Honors Smart Growth Communities



On December 7, 2000, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) named seven states and counties as national models of using land conservation as a smart growth strategy.

Each year, as part of its Greenprint for Growth Initiative, TPL recognizes states and communities that are using land conservation to promote smarter growth. Greenprint Gallery 2000 highlights seven states and counties where voters and legislators passed important conservation funding initiatives this year. The communities are: Broward County, Florida, Gallatin County, Montana, the states of Illinois and Missouri, Gwinnett County, Georgia, the state of Ohio, Westchester County, New York, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Greenprint Gallery 2000 recognizes these rapidly growing areas as leaders in seeking ways to guide growth and protect valuable natural resources. Details of these smart growth models are featured on the Trust for Public Land's new web site at [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org).



Scenic America President Meg Maguire, Save Our Scenery (SOS) Campaign Chairman Karl Kruse, and Janice Schach, president of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) sign a proclamation in support of SOS 2000 at the ASLA's annual meeting in St. Louis, MO.





*"We don't want to put billboards in scenic places. We never have."*

— Nancy Fletcher, president of Outdoor Advertisers Association of America (OAAA) in the Atlanta Constitution, November 8, 2000

*I think that I shall never see,  
A billboard lovely as a tree.  
Indeed, unless the billboards fall,  
I'll never see a tree at all.*

— Ogden Nash, 1934



## Proposition A defeated, but the fight against billboard blight in Missouri is not over!

It has been several weeks since Proposition A's unexpected and disappointing loss. As you can imagine, this has been difficult for everyone involved. As a pragmatist, I always realized that we could possibly lose, but with such strong polling data, including the St. Louis Post-Dispatch tracking poll ten days before the vote that put us up fifteen points, I just couldn't imagine it.

It should be clear to all, and several newspapers have already editorialized to this point, that there is broad support for billboard reform in Missouri. In fact, I firmly believe that a majority of Missourians supported Proposition A, but enough were overwhelmed and confused by the \$4 million opposition campaign of gross distortions and outright lies that, in the end, victory slipped from our grasp.

However, there is a silver lining. There is much to celebrate and be optimistic about. For example:

- **1,074,895 people voted to stop further billboard pollution**, return billboard

control to local communities and end the current practice of allowing billboard companies to destroy trees on public property – in Missouri, of all places. Such an outpouring of support for billboard reform has never before occurred in this country.

- **Despite probably the most aggressive, dishonest and expensive opposition campaign on an initiative in Missouri's history**, the measure lost by a tragically slim margin (51 percent vs. 49 percent).

- **Proposition A won in every urbanized county**, typically by healthy margins – with a few exceptions, these are the areas of Missouri with the greatest billboard blight. We won in the City and County of St. Louis, in all metro St. Louis counties of St. Charles, Jefferson, and Franklin; in Warren, Boone, Camden (Lake of the Ozarks), Greene (Springfield area), Jackson, Clay and Platte counties. We even won in rural Christian County (the horribly polluted drive to Branson), and in rural Montgomery County, where billboard blight along I-70 is beyond

belief, we lost by only 122 votes!

I have received dozens of phone calls, letters and e-mails expressing outrage and sadness at the defeat of Proposition A. Yet every one of these communiqués encouraged us to keep fighting for Missouri's scenic beauty. Many of our supporters have already suggested that Proposition A gave us the ability to make a strong case for reform to the Missouri General Assembly next year. Naturally, this will require the continued support of Missourians who care about the future of Missouri's natural scenic beauty.

Despite a slim loss at the ballot box, we have made tremendous gains and have built the base for a victory someday soon.

*Karl Kruse*

Karl Kruse  
SOS Campaign Director



# More Than \$7 Billion Committed to Open Space Protection

## 82 Percent of Referenda Passed

Voters on November 7, 2000 overwhelmingly approved ballot measures to fund open space protection in 2000, according to the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL). The Trust for Public Land worked with scores of communities to develop such ballot measures and put them to voters. LTA is tracking the results of conservation referenda around the nation.

Preliminary results collected by the LTA show that 141 of 165 open space ballot questions passed in 2000, providing more than \$6.9 billion in new funding for land conservation. In most of these referenda, voters approved tax increases to pay for land conservation.

"There may not have been a big majority for Democrats or Republicans, but there's a very big majority for protecting open space," noted LTA Public Policy

Director Russ Shay. "Clearly, people are tremendously concerned about what their communities will look like in the future, and they are very willing to invest their tax money to protect parks, farms, forests and fields."

The 2000 results reflect the public's continuing support for open space protection. LTA has been tracking election results for conservation measures for the last three years. In 1999, voters passed 90 percent of the 102 referenda, authorizing more than \$1.8 billion in local taxing authority and bonds for open space preservation. In 1998, voters passed 84 percent of 148 referenda across the country, providing approximately \$8.3 billion to open space protection.

During this election season, the Trust for Public Land worked with 54 communities on local and state ballot measures, providing research services, technical

assistance and campaign support through its Public Finance Program. Forty of these communities passed growth management measures on November 7, generating \$3.3 billion to protect parks and open space.

"Voters across the country have demonstrated real commitment to preserving open space in their communities," said Ernest Cook, director of TPL's Public Finance Program. "We are seeing strong support for measures that provide financing for parks and open space even in places where tax measures for other purposes have failed."

A state-by-state listing of referenda results is available on the Land Trust Alliance website at [www.lta.org](http://www.lta.org). For more information on the Trust for Public Lands' Public Finance program and how it helps communities nationwide raise local dollars to protect parks and open space, visit their website at [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org). ■

## Delaware Enacts State Scenic Byways Legislation

In July 2000, Governor Thomas Carper signed Delaware's new scenic byways program into law. While Scenic America's model state scenic byways legislation formed the basis of Delaware's legislation, the Delaware billboard control language was weaker than that which the model statute recommends.

Citizens along the Kennett Pike, one of Scenic America's 1999 Last Chance Landscapes, hope the Pike will become Delaware's first state scenic byway. A state scenic byway designation is required for application to the National Scenic Byways Program, the ultimate goal for the Kennett Pike.

Scenic byways provide communities with important opportunities for preserving their byway corridor's resources and for balancing economic development with conservation. Corridor management planning, an integral part of most state scenic byways programs and a requirement of the National Scenic Byways Program, helps communities along the byway plan for future growth and development while protecting and enhancing the byway's intrinsic scenic, natural, historic, cultural, recreational, or archaeological resources.



Kennett Pike, DE

About 45 states and the District of Columbia have an active state scenic byway program, and there are a total of 524 state and national scenic byways. Of that total, 81 National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads cover over 11,000 miles of America's most beautiful landscapes from California to Maine.

Congratulations Delaware and good luck to the Kennett Pike!



# Having Your Cake – and Sharing It Too

**S**haring with others, both individuals and charities, can be a source of great satisfaction. The surprising thing is that you can have your cake and share it too. You may find you can actually give *more* for *less* cost through careful planning of the timing and form of your gift.

No one should give more than he or she can afford to give. And we don't want you to give more than you can afford. You and your family clearly come first. Nevertheless, with the prevalence of substantially appreciated securities in the portfolios of many members, the opportunities for "beneficial sharing" (normally called planned giving) have never been better.

You can benefit Scenic America while benefiting yourself and your family at the same time. Many people shy away from planned giving because it is associated with estate planning or personal financial planning or some other overall plan. But it need not be. A modest excursion into planned giving can be undertaken without creating an overall plan.

The concepts of planned giving are surprisingly simple; it's the choices that are complex. First, you want to provide financial help to individuals and/or charities [*who*]. Second, you have a time frame in mind (e.g., money needed for college, money needed for retirement, money needed for a capital campaign) [*when*]. Third, you have a few "building blocks" of tax savings concepts to reach your goals [*how*].

Let's examine the following two simple examples:

- You have some highly appreciated securities that yield little income; and
- You want to help a teenaged granddaughter with college expenses now, and you want to contribute to Scenic America at some point.

One solution is a charitable remainder trust that will provide

your granddaughter with four years of a fixed amount of income. After four years, the principal passes to Scenic America. Because the trust will last only four years, a large percentage of the current value of the securities will be deductible as a charitable contribution on your income tax return.

OR

- You have some highly appreciated securities that yield little income, and
- You would like more income for yourself or a relative, but you want to contribute to Scenic America at some point.

One solution is a charitable remainder trust that will provide up to 20 years of income. After your death, the principal passes to Scenic America. A percentage of the current value of the securities will be deductible as a charitable contribution on your income tax return.

## More Americans Making Bequests and Other Planned Gifts, Study Finds

The November 2 issue of *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* reported that 11 percent of Americans say they have already earmarked money in their wills or created another type of planned gift. This is in contrast to a comparable 1992 study which found only six percent in this category. The increase is accompanied by a similar rise in the use of legal or financial advisers for giving decisions.

Are you in this 11 percent? A bequest to Scenic America would ensure that we can continue our mission for years to come.

*For additional information on bequests or other forms of planned giving, please contact Henry Hoff at 202-543-6200 or [hoff@scenic.org](mailto:hoff@scenic.org) and see your tax or legal adviser.*

## Scenic America Calls On U.S. Secretary of Transportation to Halt Cozy Partnership with Billboard Industry

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Billboard Campaign Called A "Disaster In the Making"

**O**n November 9, 2000, Scenic America called on U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary Rodney Slater to halt immediately the partnership between the billboard industry and the U.S. Department of Transportation which regulates that industry. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of DOT has signed an agreement with the billboard

industry to use massive billboards on major highways to discourage aggressive driving.

Citing studies that billboards distract drivers and can cause accidents, Scenic America President Meg Maguire called the partnership "a traffic disaster in the making." "The Outdoor Advertising Association of America brags that billboards' 'sheer physical size allows for eye-stopping, bigger-than-life illustrations,'" said Maguire.

"Common sense says that billboards on America's highways are not a good medium for safety messages. There are many other ways to reach and discipline reckless drivers."

Safety studies on billboards have concluded the following:

- "There is a positive correlation between the existence of signs and accident rates." *Federal Highway Administration Commercial Electronic Variable-Message*



*Signage (CEVMS) Report, 1980.*

• "The basic concept of roadside advertising conflicts with one of the fundamental principles of safe driving." *Faustman, D. Jackson. Study of Relationship Between Advertising Signs and Traffic Accidents on U.S. 40 Between Vallejo and Davis, California. 1961.*

• "No empirical studies are necessary for reasonable people to conclude that billboards pose a traffic hazard, since by their very nature they are designed to distract drivers and their passengers from maintaining their view of the road." *Major Media of the Southeast v. City of Raleigh, 621 F.Supp. 1446, aff'd 792 F.2d 1269 (4th Cir. 1986).*

Maguire also called the partnership a blatant conflict of interest. "The DOT is supposed to regulate the billboard industry. This close and visible partnership is another example of cozy corporate and government relationships the American public abhors."

The Highway Beautification Act directly charges the Department of Transportation, through the Federal Highway Administration, with regulating the billboard industry. A standard practice in the billboard industry is to donate space for worthy causes in order to improve its public image and nullify regulatory oversight and public opposition. In July, 1982, the billboard industry publication, *Signs of the Times*, commented that "it would be difficult for the mayor (or other politicians) to sponsor anti-billboard legislation or ordinances if he/she has been actively using outdoor advertising for their own projects."

Maguire commented, "The Department of Transportation has certain key responsibilities: one is to regulate; another is to ensure highway safety. The NHTSA partnership with the billboard industry shows DOT is doing neither very well. During his tenure, Secretary Slater has presided over reform in many aspects of transportation policy. In the remaining months of the Clinton Administration, the Secretary should terminate the strange alliance with the billboard industry before it results in a traffic, regulatory, or public relations disaster." ■

## Scenic America 2000 Affiliate Workshop: Leadership for the Twenty-First Century

### *Affiliates join Scenic America's staff and Board of Directors in Washington, DC*



**Kathy Whitmire and Meg Maguire present Scenic America's Lifetime Achievement Award to Karl Kruse, executive director of Scenic Missouri and chairman of Missouri's Save Our Scenery (SOS) 2000 Campaign.**

**O**n Saturday and Sunday, September 23 and 24, 2000, representatives from Scenic America's state and local partners from around the country met at the Hyatt Arlington in Rosslyn, Virginia, across the Potomac River from the Nation's Capital. From Maryland to New Mexico, from Minnesota to Florida, our partners took the opportunity to meet and learn from one another.

Representatives from 18 of Scenic America's 23 partners attended the training event. Session topics included billboard basics, fighting tree cutting and anti-amortization bills, lobbying at the local and state level, and smart growth, franchise design and scenic assessment. Other topics included media matters, funding your work, building your board, and an open discussion on how the scenic conservation movement should grow. Paul Rosa of the Harpers Ferry Conservancy and Dale McKeel of Scenic North Carolina led a session on taming telecommunication towers, while Karl Kruse of Scenic Missouri, Doug Smith of Citizens for a Scenic Reno, and Brian Bates of Scenic St. Paul gave attendees invaluable advice on state and local ballot initiatives. ■

## Aesthetics on the Agenda

**T**om Vosburg of Fort Collins, CO, Scenic America President Meg Maguire and former Scenic America board member Chris Duerkson, managing director of Clarion Associates of Colorado LLC, offered a presentation on Aesthetics, Community Character and the Law to a packed auditorium at the annual meeting of the American Society of Landscape Architects in St. Louis. The attendees rated the session "Excellent" and many said it was the best session of the meeting. All of the presenters used slides and real-life examples to illustrate these important issues that make a big difference in our quality of life. ■

## Scenic America Viewpoints

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.

**Kathryn J. Whitmire**, Chair  
**Meg Maguire**, President  
**Henry Hoff**, Development Director  
**Mary Houser**, Communications Director  
**Djuana Joseph**, Office Manager  
**Deborah L. Myerson**, AICP, Program Director  
**Tom Pelikan**, Policy Director  
**Hannah Sears**, Office Assistant  
**Steven Strohmer**, Program Assistant  
**Wendy J. Taylor**, Organizational Development Director  
**Carrie Walkley**, Development/Membership Assistant

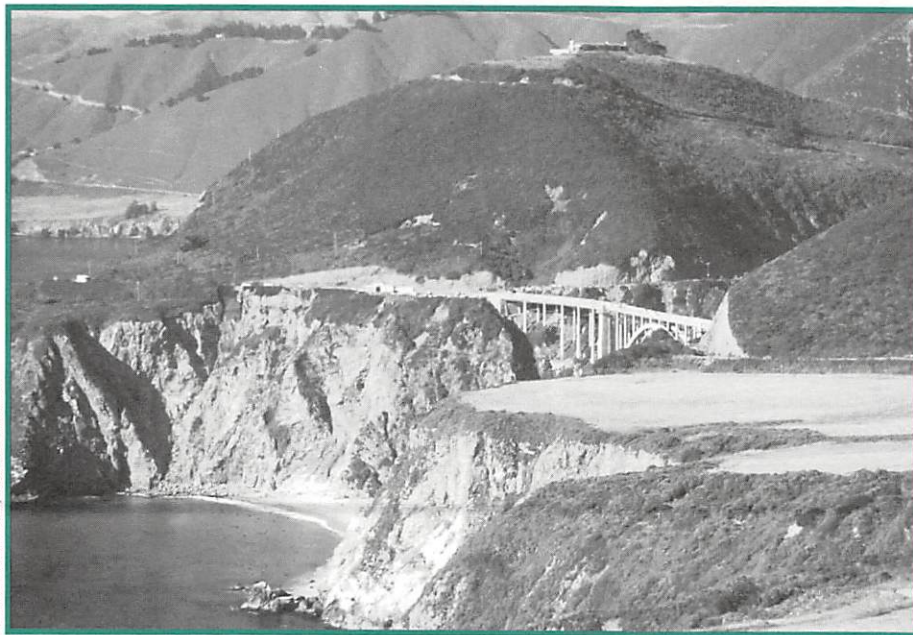
*Viewpoints is a publication of Scenic America and is available free to its members. Individual memberships in Scenic America cost \$25.*

All photos: Scenic America unless credited.



# Launching the Scenic Conservation Planning Pilot Workshops

*Adapted from an article that was first published in Vistas (Nov/Dec 2000), the monthly newsletter of the National Scenic Byways Resource Center. The Center is a joint venture of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission and the Federal Highway Administration. Contact the Center at 800-429-9297, ext. 5 (phone), 218-529-7553 (fax), or center@byways.org.*



Steven Strohmeier, Scenic America

Route 1, Big Sur Coast Highway (California)

Scenic America is collaborating with the National Scenic Byways Resource Center to create a scenic conservation planning process for designated scenic byways, in an effort sponsored by the Resource Center. The Resource Center will publish this process in a manual for scenic conservation planning on scenic byways.

A two-day workshop for byway stakeholders to examine the needs and challenges for preserving the visual quality of the byway and begin formulating a Scenic Conservation Action Plan is an essential element of the process. Byway groups will use the action plan in conjunction with their corridor management plan to protect the roadway's important visual resources.

This fall, the Resource Center and Scenic America field-tested the planning

workshops with two selected scenic byways: the Crowley's Ridge Parkway in Arkansas and the Big Sur Coast Highway in California. The results from the pilot workshops will help revise the draft manuals for final publication. In addition, representatives from these two byways will provide one-year updates on their projects in a session on scenic conservation planning at the 2001 Portland Conference.

Below, the leaders from each of these byways share why they wanted to participate in this project and what the results of the workshop have been thus far.

**Crowley's Ridge Parkway**  
**Ruth Hawkins, Executive Director,**  
**Arkansas Delta Byways**

Crowley's Ridge Parkway, designated a National Scenic Byway in 1998, is a 200-

mile route that runs through eight counties in Eastern Arkansas. The Crowley's Ridge Parkway Partners participated in the scenic conservation workshop to address major concerns such as gravel pit mining, clear-cutting of hardwood forests, soil erosion, proliferation of junkyards, and the spread of deadly kudzu, as well as to identify other threats to the scenic quality of the byway.

Participants in the workshop for Crowley's Ridge Parkway included representatives from city and county governments along the ridge, as well as other community leaders from the eight counties along the byway. In addition to known major concerns, participants identified new visual quality issues during the workshop, including the growing number of wireless towers, the need for context-sensitive highway design, and utility company tree-topping practices. According to one participant, "Hearing about accomplishments in other counties was helpful and gave us ideas."

As part of the post-workshop scenic conservation planning, workshop participants will facilitate general public meetings in each of the eight counties where participants will form scenic conservation task forces for each of the eight counties on the Crowley's Ridge Parkway. The task force reports will become part of an overall scenic conservation plan that also will serve as a handbook for each county.

**Big Sur Coast Highway: Aileen Loe,**  
**Project Manager, Caltrans**

The Big Sur Coast Highway is a 75-mile section of the Route One, Pacific Coast Highway in California. The route was designated an All-American Road in 1996 and extends roughly from Carmel to San Luis Obispo. The highway's location, literally on the edge of the continent, is geologically unstable. During periods of storm damage, there is pressure to open the road quickly while minimizing the



impact on the environment. At times, byway supporters see these highway maintenance practices as a threat to the scenic qualities of the corridor.

A revised Coastal Highway Management Plan (CHMP) plan for the Big Sur Coast Highway is in development to address threats to the visual quality of the corridor. The stakeholders involved in the development of the CHMP include agencies from all levels of government, elected officials, non-governmental organizations and community members. As part of the Big Sur CHMP effort, Caltrans has formed a Scenic & Habitat Conservation group as one of five working groups for collaborative problem solving. Many representatives from the Scenic & Habitat Conservation group, along with others interested in protecting the corridor, participated in the two-day workshop.

As part of the workshop, participants took photos of the corridor and categorized the images as attractive places and landscapes, eyesores, landscapes at risk, or landscapes that have been successfully protected. One participant commented that the exercise was, "very productive and gave participants a solid feeling of contribution to the process." This group will continue working to develop specific actions to continue the scenic conservation planning effort.

Scenic America and the National Scenic Byways Resource Center are encouraged by the results from the pilot workshops. The Resource Center expects to publish the scenic conservation manual early next year. The Resource Center also looks forward to helping other byways preserve the visual quality of their corridor. Aileen Loe of Caltrans summed up the benefits of the scenic conservation planning process well when she said, "Effective scenic conservation planning is best accomplished by those having the greatest knowledge and the greatest connection to the place — the byway community. . . The scenic byways program empowers those who are most passionate about the places they know and call home." ■

# Save the Date!

## Scenic Summit for America's Communities, Countryside, and Public Lands April 21-24, 2002 in Denver, CO

Scenic America and EDAW, Inc. invite you to participate in a national agenda-setting conference to protect our scenic heritage. Citizen activists, preservationists, landscape architects, land use and transportation planners, architects, engineers, and anyone concerned with protecting our magnificent scenic heritage should plan to attend this important event.

The beginning of a new century offers an opportunity to focus on protecting the beauty of America's landscapes and set a national agenda for scenic conservation.

Few national conferences have addressed visual resources. The first national landscape conference in Incline Village, Nevada in April of 1979 was a seminal event that helped energize landscape professionals from around the country. Then, in May 1997, Scenic America's "O Say Can You See...: Leadership for a Scenic Century" conference brought together a national cross-section of scenic conservation activists to focus on building a scenic conservation movement.

"Scenic Summit for America's Communities, Countryside, and Public Lands" will draw on professionals and citizen activists to discuss the challenges for protecting the visual environment, to examine the tools and management techniques now available, and to create a strategic action plan for the future of scenic conservation.

## A Strategic Action Plan to Protect Our Visual Environment

The most important objective of this conference will be to establish a strategic action plan for protecting our visual environment at the national, state, and local levels. We will learn about and discuss a wide range of topics concerning aesthetics, including:

- Beauty and the Human Spirit
- Valuing Aesthetics in Our Society and Economy
- Scenic Stewardship Through Law and Policy
- Maintaining Landscape Integrity
- Managing Landscape Impacts
- Preserving and Enhancing Community Character

## A Vision for the 21st Century

The beginning of a new century offers an ideal opportunity to set a national agenda for scenic conservation and to truly make a difference in the way we plan, the way we make decisions, and the way we care for our communities, countryside, and public lands.

## Conference Goals

- Highlight the importance of aesthetics in the built and natural environments;
- Provide new opportunities for collaborative dialogue and information exchange;
- Provide an international perspective on scenic conservation; and
- Call for national standards and policies to protect scenic resources.

## Scenic America Affiliate Meeting To Follow

The day after the conference, Scenic America Affiliates, Associates, Cooperating Organizations, and other interested parties will meet to discuss how to take what they have learned back home to spark new commitments to scenic conservation in their state-wide efforts. *Check for updated information at [www.scenicsummit.org](http://www.scenicsummit.org)*

## 2001 NATIONAL URBAN FOREST CONFERENCE TO BE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

### Investing Natural Capital in Urban Places: A Green Revenue Stream for Metro America 2001 National Urban Forest Conference September 5-8, 2001, Washington, DC

American Forests, the nation's oldest non-profit citizen conservation organization, will host its 2001 National Urban Forest conference in Washington, DC in September, 2001. The conference will highlight scientific research that documents the value of tree cover as part of urban infrastructure, computer technologies that analyze data and calculate these benefits, and tools to change public policies.

Registration and exhibitor materials will be available in January 2001 on American Forests, website at <http://www.americanforests.org> (click on Trees, Cities, and Sprawl, then on 2001 conference). For registration or exhibitor information, contact Kasey Russell at [kaseyrussell@citynet.net](mailto:kaseyrussell@citynet.net) or call her at (304) 345-7578. For logistics and program information, contact Cheryl Kollin, director of the American Forests, Urban Forest Center, at [ckollin@amfor.org](mailto:ckollin@amfor.org). ■



# Helping Communities Win the Telecommunications War

**P**icture the following scenario: One day you notice several people with clipboards walking around a small piece of property that your neighbor owns behind your home. A few weeks later, you find a construction crew putting the final touches on a giant 150-foot tall wireless telecommunications tower, just inches from your backyard. Enraged, you call your local council representative, as well as the company that built the tower, who tell you: "If people want to use their wireless phones then we have to put up that tower in that spot and at that height. We have no choice."

*Think it can't happen?*  
**Think again.**

In 1996 Congress passed the landmark Telecommunications Act to encourage the development of new wireless telecommunications technology. This act gave wireless companies broad powers to build service networks, often catching local government officials off guard. Towers began to sprout up in sensitive areas such as scenic viewsheds, residential neighborhoods, and historic districts. Many times, the industry told communities that the Telecommunications Act gave them the right to put up towers wherever they wanted. However, companies do have choices about wireless telecommunication tower sites, and communities can regulate the appearance and placement of towers to protect the community's scenic quality and prevent local landscapes from looking like giant pin-cushions.

Scenic America's new Action Guide, *Taming Wireless Telecommunications Towers*, dispels the myths surrounding the placement of wireless towers and gives communities the tools to create strong ordinances that limit the visual impact of towers. *Taming Wireless Telecommunications Towers* explains the options in draft-



ing a wireless tower ordinance, provides model legislation, and cites examples of successful ordinances from around the country.

*Taming Wireless Telecommunications Towers* explains the technology behind the siting of towers and the various strategies communities can use for reducing the visual impact of towers, including requiring the use of "stealth" technology. Stealth technology involves disguising wireless telecommunications transmitters as common everyday items such as trees, flag poles, church steeples, and lamp posts. By requiring wireless telecommunications companies to employ innovative techniques like stealth technology as part of a strong tower ordinance, communities can protect their distinctive local character and unique beauty.

*Taming Wireless Telecommunications Towers* is available from Scenic America for \$8.00 plus shipping and handling by calling (202) 543-6200 or from our new secure online bookstore at [www.scenic.org](http://www.scenic.org)



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