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JUNE 2007

SCENIC AMERICA PRESENTS FIRST VISUAL ESSAY ON SCENIC ISSUES

Scenic America is pleased to present our first  [Click here to launch the essay](#) in a series of visual essays, in which we will examine a wide variety of scenic issues. In this episode we take a look at the encroachment of commercialism and advertising in our urban places, and ask what this growing threat means for our historic cities and their residents. [Click here](#) to view the essay and be sure to have your volume up, as the piece is narrated by Scenic America President Kevin Fry. If you have a comment about the presentation or have ideas for issues you would like to see addressed in future essays, please [email us](#).

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Good News From Philadelphia: In an update to a [story](#) we brought you last month, Philadelphia's transit authority has decided to [withdraw its proposal](#) to wrap two stories of its downtown headquarters with advertising. Scenic America and Philly-based [SCRUB](#) spoke out against the proposal and are pleased with the authority's action.

SCENIC CONSERVATION SYMPOSIUM A SUCCESS IN LAKE TAHOE

Scenic America and Scenic Nevada recently  [Lake Tahoe](#) partnered to present *Protecting Place: A Scenic Conservation Symposium*, in Lake Tahoe, Nevada. The event was a huge success and drew close to 100 participants from the public, private, and educational sectors.

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Held at the visually inspiring [Edgewood Tahoe](#) facility along the waters' edge, the symposium represented a broad partnership with many agencies at both the national and local level. The symposium featured presentations by noted professionals from around the country on topics ranging from protection of community character, to the importance of the dark sky environment, to context sensitive roadway design.

IN THE NEWS:

Illinois Township Rejects Tollway Billboards...

John Singlaub, Director of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, kicked off the presentations by sharing what the unique character of Lake Tahoe's scenic environment means to local residents, businesses, and tourism, as well as what his agency's role is in protecting this unique natural resource.

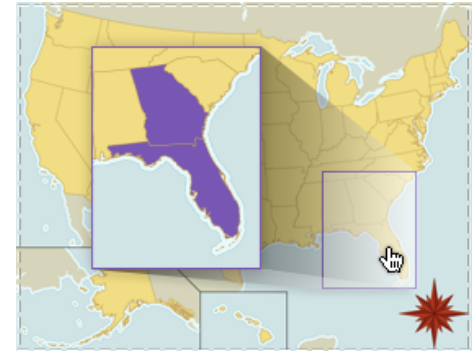
Cell Tower Debate Expected to Heat Up in Washington, Connecticut...

Jonathan Tourtellot, Director of National Geographic's [Sustainable Destinations](#) program spoke about the geotourism concept as way of balancing the promotion of and protection of special place destinations such as Lake Tahoe. Brad Cownover, Scenic America's Director of Conservation Services and lead organizer of the event, said a key premise for the symposium was to take advantage of the Lake Tahoe setting to help raise awareness of the need for a national scenic conservation movement.

Preservation Group Seeks to Shield East Coast Land...

Cownover said, "Organizations such as Scenic America must create a more informed constituency for visual values across our country. Everyone instinctively, intuitively appreciates the positive visual qualities of the places in which we chose to live, but those assets are at risk of becoming a disappearing

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resource if they are not documented and protected. We hope that symposiums such as this one can help elevate scenic conservation as a political issue of social and electoral significance."

The event was co-sponsored by the American Society of Landscape Architects, the United States Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, the League to Save Lake Tahoe, the University of California at Davis, and the Tahoe Environmental Research

Center.

A complete post-symposium report will be available to the general public in the near future; check [our website](#) for updates.

SCENIC AMERICA CONDUCTS BYWAYS WORKSHOP IN NEW YORK STATE

Brad Cownover, Scenic America's Director of Scenic Conservation Services, recently completed the first of six scenic conservation workshops being held on nationally-designated scenic byways over the next few years. As part of a contract with the [America's Byways Resource Center](#), Scenic America works with the local byway to tailor a 2-day workshop on scenic conservation issues pertinent to the communities along the corridor.

The recent workshop was conducted on the [Mohawk Towpath National Scenic Byway](#) in Schenectady, New York. Cownover worked directly with Curt Pinalto from the Byways Resource Center and Eric Hamilton, the local byway leader, to plan and organize the workshop. Participants were introduced to the concepts of scenic conservation planning, methodologies for visual assessment of the byway, and common scenic issues and strategies.

The workshops are intended to be a catalyst for the local byway to begin down a path to creating its own scenic conservation plan. Next up in the series of workshops will be the [Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway](#), near Santa Fe, New Mexico, in September.

POWER CONSUMPTION OF DIGITAL BILLBOARDS SCRUTINIZED

Clear Channel Digital Billboard

In May, a [syndicated column](#) by the highly regarded journalist Neal Peirce revealed that electronic billboards "consume 4,800 watts of electrical power per square yard per hour."

Recently, [Citizens for a Scenic Florida](#) conducted an informal study of the power drain of digital versus standard billboards and found that electronic signs consume over 15 times the amount of electricity as regular billboards. They compared the power consumption of a double-sided regular billboard with a double-sided billboard that had one digital face and one regular face, and found that the electronic face used an average of 334.2 kWh per day, compared to the 22.1 kWh required to light the regular face with flood lamps each evening/night. If the board had been equipped with two digital faces, as some are, the results would have been even more startling.

With a growing focus in this country on energy consumption and climate change, this is yet one more reason communities should prohibit the construction of these unnecessary and wasteful energy hogs. Stay tuned, as Scenic America will be doing more research on the subject and bringing you our findings.


QUESTIONS/FEEDBACK:

Do you have questions about Scenic America or story suggestions for Scenic Overlook? Send an email to: ashburn@scenic.org.

SCENIC AMERICA

1634 I Street NW, Suite 510
Washington, DC 20006
Phone (202) 638-0550
Fax (202) 638-3171
scenic@scenic.org

VANCOUVER GROUP BATTLES PROPOSED ELECTRONIC BILLBOARDS

[Citizens for Responsible Outdoor Advertising](#) (CROA), a  Vancouver Skyline group based in Vancouver, British Columbia, has organized to oppose a plan by the Squamish Nation to erect 13 electronic billboards on their reserve lands around Vancouver.

CROA chair Wayne Hunter told Scenic America that his group is using our [publication on electronic billboards](#) as one of their primary tools for explaining the issue to

officials and to the public. With electronic billboards exploding into the public realm at a frightening pace, we expect that many more people will be uniting to fight back and protect their communities. If you'd like a copy of our publication, [download a PDF](#), or [click here](#) to request some free copies be sent your way.

Speaking of our friendly neighbors to the north, don't forget about [IllegalSigns.ca](#), a terrific site run by some concerned citizens of Toronto who are doing battle with that city's myriad illegal signs draped across the public realm.

Change is inevitable. Ugliness is not.