



## Get Local



November 2007

### Turquoise Trail Byway sees big hurdles and big rewards on the road ahead

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This past September, approximately 50 individuals met to discuss the visual character of the [Turquoise Trail Byway](#) in northern New Mexico. The gathering was part of a scenic conservation workshop planned for the byway in conjunction with the [America's Byway Resource Center](#) and Scenic America. Attendees included representatives from municipalities along the byway, state and federal agencies and interest groups, and key business and community organizations.



*Turquoise Trail - photo by Larry Valtehas*

The goal of the workshop was to begin the process for creating a scenic conservation action plan that would build on the existing corridor management plan for the byway. The workshop was organized around four basic steps involved in scenic conservation planning - beginning with engagement of partners and ending with the development of strategies and actions to manage visual quality.

Scenic America makes the news:

**More digital billboards creeping into driver's view**

**(Be sure to watch the fantastic video piece that accompanies the article above!)**

**Opinions harden in St. Paul billboard debate**

**Savannah Morning News editorial: Keep it Safe**

During the workshop, participants learned about the steps involved in scenic conservation planning through a series of presentations related to scenic principles, issues, strategies, and methods for visual assessment. Large group and breakout group discussions were used to help facilitate interaction among those in attendance.

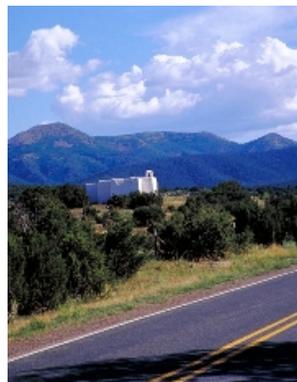
Quote of the Month

**"Taxpayers can only dream that every law that Congress passes works as well as the 1965 Highway Beautification Act."**

Participants journeyed along the byway in order to assess the byway's visual quality, potential threats, and possible opportunities for enhancement. As part of this trip and subsequent discussions, participants were asked to identify features they felt either contributed to or detracted from the byway's visual character. This process is the first step in completing an action plan for the entire 62 miles of the byway.

~ The Outdoor Advertising Association of America, from a press release of that year, titled *"The Highway Beautification Act: A Law That Works!"*

The workshop was led by Brad Cownover, Scenic America's Director of Scenic Conservation Resources. He has prepared a preliminary findings report for the Turquoise Trail Byway workshop, which you can [download here](#) as a PDF document. Check back on [our website](#) for the final report, which will be posted in the coming weeks.



*photo by Larry Valtehas*

Scenic Trivia Question

**New analysis debunks billboard industry's digital sign safety studies**

**Q:** What special honor did Lady Bird Johnson receive from Scenic America in 1990?

**A:** Lady Bird was the recipient of Scenic America's first ever "Lifetime Achievement Award," which was presented at the Citizen Conference on Sign Control, held in Washington, DC in October, 1990.

 Digital Billboard GIF

poses no safety threat to the motoring public.

Now, an objective, expert analysis of the studies has been prepared for the Maryland State Highway Administration by Jerry Wachtel, a highly regarded traffic safety expert. His report is extremely critical of the conclusions, methodology, and biases of both studies and effectively debunks them. [Click here to download](#) the report as a PDF document.

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This past July saw the release of [two industry-sponsored studies](#) which concluded, to no one's surprise, that digital billboards are no more likely to cause traffic accidents than conventional billboards. The billboard industry has since cited the studies numerous times as evidence that the proliferation of digital billboards

#### Scenic Ohio announces scenic awards

Scenic Ohio recently presented their 2007 Scenic Awards at the Ohio Statehouse Atrium. Awards were presented to the following:

**The City of Reynoldsburg - Mayor Robert McPherson**, for the revitalization of the city's commercial corridors.

**The City of Akron - Mayor Don Plusquellic**, for the design and building of Ohio's first vegetative sound wall.

**The Ohio Historical Society and Ohio National Road Association**, for the Ohio Historic National Road Design Handbook.

**The City of Cincinnati and the Hillside Trust of Greater Cincinnati**, for the Cincinnati Scenic View Study.

"The award winners demonstrate how intelligent and cost-effective attention to our scenic environment can make an important contribution to the livability of our state," said Christine Freitag, Chairperson of Scenic Ohio. "We want these communities to be seen as models for what should be happening throughout Ohio."

For more information about the awards and the recipients please visit the [2007 Scenic Awards page](#) on the Scenic Ohio website.

#### Kansas City billboard ordinance upheld

Good news from [Scenic Missouri](#) where the new Kansas City billboard ordinance has finally taken effect. The billboard industry was attempting a [last-ditch effort](#) to collect signatures on a petition to bring the ordinance before voters, but their efforts fell well short of the required number. The Kansas City Star writes [in this editorial](#) that the new ordinance will result in a cleaner-looking city and raise the quality of life for its residents.

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