

*Scenic*America



Annual Report

2019
2020



*Scenic*America

Incorporated in 1982, Scenic America is the only national nonprofit organization that works to preserve and enhance the visual character of America's roadways, countryside, and communities. We accomplish this mission through national, state, and local advocacy efforts, outreach, and education of the public, media, and policymakers, and the support of our state and local affiliates.

Dear Friends,

Since starting at Scenic America three short years ago, It has been my goal to create a virtuous cycle, where increased fundraising leads to programmatic success, which in turn inspires increased fundraising that funds more programmatic success...you get the picture. We're doing that.



If you look at page 14 of this annual report, you will see that our income was \$355,078 in fiscal year 2017. And here we are, ending fiscal year 2020 with our income tripled to \$939,849.

We are raising more money because we offer an excellent return on investment. So as much as I'm proud that our fundraising has tripled, I'm even prouder that our programmatic impact has grown exponentially.

Just look at this amazing list of accomplishments in the last year:

- In September 2019, the Reviving America's Scenic Byways Act was signed into law by the president. This is the first time in our history that Scenic America authored legislation that was passed into law by Congress.
- In August 2020, the president signed the Great American Outdoors Act into law, fully funding the Land and Water Conservation fund and supporting the National Parks and other federal lands.
- Our work on the Moving Forward Act, which passed the House in June 2020, has been a smashing success. We secured \$325 million in funding for the National Scenic Byways Program, supporting the undergrounding of utility wires, and securing nonprofit representation on the Dig Once Task Force.
- We beat the billboard industry in a straight-up fight in Congress, killing an amendment that would have completely gutted Lady Bird Johnson's Highway Beautification Act and fueled massive billboard proliferation across the country.
- Working with Scenic Walton, we hosted the best-attended and most successful Scenic Symposium in our history.

Our staff also expanded this year to include specialists that are incredibly talented in their field, including Policy and Program Director Nathan O'Neill and Vice President for Communications Rebecca Aloisi.

It is also worth noting that these achievements came during a year fraught with challenges. To claim such unprecedented victories in the midst of a global pandemic, widespread civic unrest, and under very fractious government leadership is truly remarkable.

You can see it has been quite the year for us. This is only possible because of the support of friends like you. Whether you invested your money, your time, or your efforts into Scenic America, we hope that you share our enthusiasm for your returns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Falzone". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" and last name "Falzone" clearly distinguishable.

Mark Falzone
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Chapters and Affiliate Network

Scenic America has 46 active chapters and affiliates. The chapter model, introduced in 2019, indicates an increased level of coordinated outreach, advocacy, and fundraising efforts between the national and local organization. The number of chapters increased in 2020 and we expect more growth in the future.

Scenic America strives to serve as the national leader of this coalition; we work hard to provide guidance and resources while our chapters and affiliates carry out on-the-ground work where it's most effective: at the local level. Scenic chapters and affiliates also act as resources for us and each other, creating a nationwide network of experts and advocates who support and amplify the work of each other.



CHAPTERS

Coalition for a Scenic Los Angeles
Scenic Missouri
Scenic Pittsburgh
Scenic Tennessee
Scenic Walton

AFFILIATES

Citizens for a Scenic Florida
Citizens for a Scenic Spokane
Citizens for a Scenic Wisconsin

Scenic Alabama
Scenic Arizona
Scenic Austin
Scenic California
Scenic Chatham
Scenic Clearwater
Scenic Colorado
Scenic Comal County
Scenic Dallas
Scenic Delaware
Scenic Fayette County
Scenic Ft. Worth
Scenic Galveston

Scenic Georgia
Scenic Hill Country
Scenic Houston
Scenic Illinois
Scenic Jacksonville
Scenic Kentucky
Scenic Knoxville
Scenic Lafayette
Scenic Massachusetts
Scenic Miami
Scenic Michigan
Scenic Nevada
Scenic North Carolina

Scenic Oceanside
Scenic Ohio
Scenic Philadelphia
Scenic Pinellas
Scenic Rapid City
Scenic San Antonio
Scenic San Diego
Scenic St. Petersburg
Scenic Texas
Scenic Utah
Scenic Virginia
Scenic Washington



An Extraordinary Year in Extraordinary Times

While we celebrate Scenic America's accomplishments, programs, and successes in this FY 2019-20 annual report, it is important that we also acknowledge the significant global and national events that have affected our lives and livelihoods during the past year.

The COVID-19 global pandemic will leave lasting impacts on our health, economy, society, and well-being for months and years to come. As cities and states grapple with recovery plans, decreased revenues and increased expenses for local and state governments will make our work even more necessary. We can continue to provide resources and support to government agencies so that important projects and programs will not be delayed while the government tends to critical issues. Furthermore, we have a unique opportunity to capitalize on Americans' renewed interest in exploring parks, gardens, and open spaces, rallying more supporters to our cause.

In addition to the public health crisis that defined 2020, we must also acknowledge the deep pain and frustration felt by people across the nation as a result of racist violent acts in our communities. Earlier this summer, the staff and leadership of Scenic America issued a statement asserting the organization's solidarity with the #BlackLivesMatter protestors and others demanding change.

By taking such a stand, Scenic America affirmed its commitment to creating a more beautiful nation for all people and all communities, ensuring equitable access to parks, scenic byways, and economic opportunities that come along with these benefits. The battles we fight—against urban blight, intrusive advertising, and environmental degradation—often take disproportionate tolls on disadvantaged communities. As a leading national nonprofit, Scenic America must work proactively to address these, and other, ongoing concerns, ensuring that a more scenic America is not only possible, but necessary and just.





Beauty is Good for Business

Scenic America and Scenic Walton Host Symposium

Scenic Walton and Scenic America proudly co-hosted more than 120 planning officials, elected officials, developers, business owners, and activists from around the country at the “Beauty is Good for Business” symposium in Walton County, Florida, on October 24-25, 2019. This symposium broke records in the number of attendees, number of chapters and affiliates represented, and in sponsorship funds raised. To open the conference, keynote speaker Louisiana Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser shared how the state’s new “Feed Your Soul” marketing campaign incorporates the state’s Scenic Byway system into its visitor message by detailing 19 distinct routes for visitors to explore on their next road trips.




The following day, attendees were welcomed with messages by video from U.S. Representative David Cicilline of Rhode Island and U.S. Senator Susan Collins of Maine who talked about the importance of the Scenic Byways bill they sponsored. A panel of professionals then discussed the economic benefits of scenic byways and highways.



The symposium also included in-depth discussions and panel presentations on a variety of topics, including the placement of utilities underground, a key area of focus for Scenic Walton and many other localities. Experts provided information on the costs of undergrounding, while officials from cities around Florida touted the benefits their jurisdictions have reaped from related projects.

In another session, officials from nearby Pensacola discussed how implementing scenic initiatives downtown has led to economic success for local business owners and an improved economy for the city in general. The symposium then concluded with an expert panel of developers and business owners discussing billboards, signage, and lighting.

During the symposium, Scenic Walton also unveiled a new Annual Excellence Award program, honoring developers, volunteers, and elected officials for their contributions to Walton County. The gathering ended with a tour of South Walton and lunch at beautiful Eden Gardens State Park.

Scenic Walton hopes to build on the success of this year's program to host similar events in the future. 



More Victories for Scenic Walton

Since hosting its highly successful 2019 symposium, Scenic Walton has scored other victories. In the past few months, the organization has worked to advance the construction of a pedestrian underpass in Inlet Beach and has also expanded its board to include new members concerned about cell tower installation.

Furthering its goal to make the county safer for pedestrians and cyclists, in July 2020 Scenic Walton secured local officials' support for an underground underpass in Inlet Beach. Scenic Walton leaders arranged for designs to be drawn and urged a business owner to donate the land needed for the project. As a result of Scenic Walton's efforts, county commissioners voted unanimously to approve the county's funding of its share of the project, which will be led by the Florida Department of Transportation. The project is slated for completion in early 2022.

In May, when discussions emerged about the installation of cell towers around the scenic corridor, local residents concerned about the visual impact formed a 5G Small Cell group and later issued a call for volunteers from the community. Recognizing the opportunity to tap into this community energy, Scenic Walton added two members from this group to its board, thereby strengthening its position on this issue.

Scenic Walton is proud of its accomplishments and looks forward to working with the community and elected officials to further its mission.



| Moving Forward Act Passes the House

On July 1, 2020, H.R. 2, the Moving Forward Act, passed the House by a vote of 233-188 – marking a huge victory for Scenic America and all those who care about our nation’s scenic resources.

This bill includes funding for more than \$1.5 trillion in infrastructure projects, such as roads, bridges, schools, housing, and transit systems, over the next five years. Throughout the bill’s review and amendment period in June, Scenic America staff and supporters worked tirelessly to ensure that scenic

priorities were included in this historic legislation – and that bad billboard amendments were defeated.

The Moving Forward Act brings about major wins for the cause of scenic beauty, securing funding for the National Scenic Byways Program for the first time in eight years, with a total of \$325 million over five years. After a 10-year hiatus, the Scenic Byways Program began accepting nominations in the spring of 2020 following passage of the 2019 Reviving America’s Scenic Byways Act. New National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads are expected to be announced in late 2020. Scenic America is grateful




to its allies in the Scenic Byways Coalition who helped make this victory possible.

Another scenic priority, the undergrounding of public utilities, also made enormous progress under this bill. Thanks to Scenic America's efforts, funds allocated to the \$25-billion-per-year National Highway Performance Program may be used for burying utilities underground, thereby mitigating the cost to communities of recurring damages from natural disasters. In addition, the legislation facilitated the creation of a Dig Once Task Force to encourage the undergrounding of broadband. According to the legislation, membership on this task force may include "one representative from a public interest organization."

As the legislation neared the finish line, Scenic America helped fend off a late amendment to allow a billboard to be placed anywhere "within 200 feet of a highway." This was a direct attack by the billboard industry on the legacy of Lady Bird Johnson's Highway Beautification Act, but Scenic America and our supporters swiftly mobilized to defeat

the amendment. The House Rules Committee rejected it definitively.

At the time of this annual report's release, the Senate is working on its own surface transportation bill, S. 2302, which includes funding for gateway communities and encourages native plants as part of the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP), and which has no pro-billboard measures. Once passed, these two bills will go to a conference committee. The Senate will act on their legislation either in late 2020 or early 2021. If the 2020 elections bring about a change in party power in either chamber of Congress or the presidency, the process will likely start over. However, a surface transportation bill will eventually pass.

We are grateful to the supporters and friends who helped make these huge victories possible, laying the groundwork for more legislative triumphs in the future. 

The Great American Outdoors Act Becomes Law

On August 4, 2020, a conservation dream became reality as President Donald Trump signed the Great American Outdoors Act into law.

This historic signing affirmed a legislative victory won earlier this summer, when on June 17 the Senate passed the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), which provides full and permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and secures major funding toward maintaining our national parks and other federal lands. The GAOA passed the Senate by a wide bipartisan 73-25 margin. The GAOA will provide \$900 million a year to the LWCF. Fully funding the LWCF has been a top priority for Scenic America and other LWCF Coalition Partners.


The LWCF has supported the creation and maintenance of national parks, national wildlife refuges, national battlefields, and national forests – as well as state and local land conservation, water conservation, parks, trails and sports fields in every state. In 2019 the LWCF was permanently reauthorized, but it still lacked the funding badly needed to address the almost \$11.9 billion maintenance backlog in our national parks and other federal lands.

The GAOA will fund the repair and improvement of trails, roads, bridges, water systems, and more. Under the bill, \$1.9 billion in additional funds per year will be set aside to fund priority deferred maintenance projects in federal fiscal years 2021-2025. Of that, 70% will be allocated to the National Park Service, 15% to the U.S. Forest Service, and 5% each to other federal agencies.



“Scenic America was a key member of our coalition as we worked together to get the Great American Outdoors Act over the finish line.”

- Emily Douce, National Parks Conservation Association

Neglect of our national parks has not only impacted millions of visitors, it has also limited the economic benefits that surrounding communities receive from providing services to those visitors. With COVID-19 already impacting those communities—and prompting a renewed interest in visiting parks and open spaces—this funding could not come at a better time. This legislation has been a decade in the making, and Scenic America congratulates its supporters and coalition partners who helped to secure this significant victory. 



Scenic America Wins ASAE Advocacy Award




In recognition of its work to secure the passage of the “Reviving America’s Scenic Byways” Act, Scenic America received a 2020 Power of A Gold Award for advocacy from the American Society of Association Executives.

The award is one of the highest distinctions presented by the American Society of Association Executives, a national organization that represents more than 7,400 associations and 46,000 employees. Scenic America is one of five esteemed organizations to receive this year’s honor.

“Congratulations to Scenic America on being named among the very best organizations that go above and beyond their tax-exempt purpose to improve society

and our quality of life in America and abroad,” said ASAE President and CEO Susan Robertson. “This has been a very trying year for associations, but even amid a months-long pandemic, associations are proving that positive change can happen.”

On receiving the award, Scenic America President Mark Falzone acknowledged the contributions of supporters throughout the country. “This award isn’t just Scenic America’s,” he said. “It belongs to every person who wrote their legislator; every senator and representative who lent their support; and to all the other organizations and people who worked to pass this legislation.”

A full list of winners can be viewed at thepowerofa.org/awards. 

Deepening Our Partnerships:

Project Green Schools

This year Scenic America has continued its partnership with Project Green Schools to develop new educational tools and promote scenic conservation in the classroom.

Based in Plymouth, Massachusetts, Project Green Schools is a mission-driven organization that seeks to develop the next generation of environmental leaders through education, project-based learning, and community service. The Project Green Schools Membership program has created a national network of students, educators, and administrators who are working to integrate conservation learning into their classrooms, and Scenic America is helping shape this emerging curriculum.

We are building on past success in the creation of learning materials, especially the pioneering work of David Dunn and the Dunn Foundation, who helped create our ViewFinders program. Scenic America is now developing new ways to engage students. Our newest tool is Agents of Discovery, an augmented reality app that lets students use their computers and smart phones to explore the world around them to learn about how scenic beauty impacts their lives. The app overlays text, visual information, and educational challenges on top of live camera output on a phone or tablet. State and national parks throughout the country have started using Agents of Discovery as a new way to interact with the environment and enjoy an enhanced educational experience. Scenic America is working to create new “missions” with the app, which are designed to foster knowledge of scenic conservation issues, and to challenge users to understand the impacts of scenic management decisions. In an era of remote learning, alternative education tools like this have never been more important or needed.



Scenic America's partnership with Project Green Schools includes the integration of high-quality education content with the new Agents of Discovery platform. Our partnership will also call for the deployment of the new education materials to targeted schools within the Membership network. With Project Green School's help, we will track the implementation and outcomes of the scenic conservation curriculum. Within a few months, students in these schools will be using Scenic America's lesson materials to explore scenic conservation in their local communities.



Learn more about this exciting initiative at scenic.org/projectgreenschools. 

New Staff Members Join Scenic America Team

As Scenic America grows in both size and scope, the organization has welcomed two new industry leaders to guide its research, policy, communications, and outreach efforts.

Nathan O'Neill joined Scenic America in May 2020 as the Policy and Program Director. Previously, he worked with The Climate Mobilization, where he helped advance the Climate



Emergency movement. He also served as a graduate research associate for the Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs, where he conducted National Science Foundation-funded research on watershed management and other policy issues. During his tenure at Indiana University, he also taught courses in public management, environmental policy, and American politics.

Nathan has held research and regulatory affairs roles at organizations such as Cummins Inc., The Council of Great Lakes Governors, and The Institute for Alternative Futures. Early in his career, he helped complete a comprehensive carbon emissions inventory for the City of Indianapolis. He also previously worked in Washington D.C. for the advisory services firm The Corporate Executive Board.

Nathan earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science from DePauw University and holds master's degrees in International Relations from AGSIRD Paris, and Public Affairs with an Environmental Policy Concentration from Indiana University. Since joining Scenic America,


Nathan has integrated research into our advocacy work and has helped develop new policy positions. He is also undertaking a major research project to map billboard locations across the US and analyze their impacts on local communities. New resources like this will help Scenic America grow and achieve new scenic conservation milestones.

In August 2020, Rebecca Aloisi joined the Scenic America team as Vice President for Communications. In this capacity, Rebecca oversees strategic communications and marketing for Scenic America, with a focus on growing brand awareness, expanding and further engaging our audience, and deepening our impact on the critical issues that drive and inspire our mission. Since joining Scenic America, she has implemented plans to promote new marketing and communications assets and grow our email audience in support of a new strategic communications plan.



Prior to joining the Scenic America team, Rebecca served as vice president for marketing for George Washington's Mount Vernon, where she implemented new marketing and communications strategies and guided public relations outreach for key events.

Her professional experience also includes a long tenure at Destination DC, Washington, DC's official tourism marketing organization, where she worked as director of communications.

Rebecca holds an undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and an MBA from the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business. 

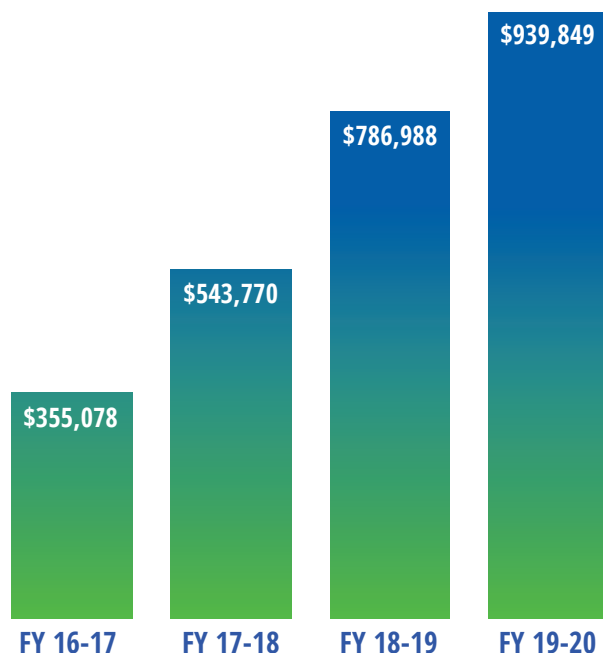
Scenic America Posts Another Year of Growth

In a year fraught with challenges, including a global pandemic, civic unrest, and a divisive political climate, Scenic America posted another year of impressive growth, as income neared \$1 million—almost tripling its total in just 3 years.

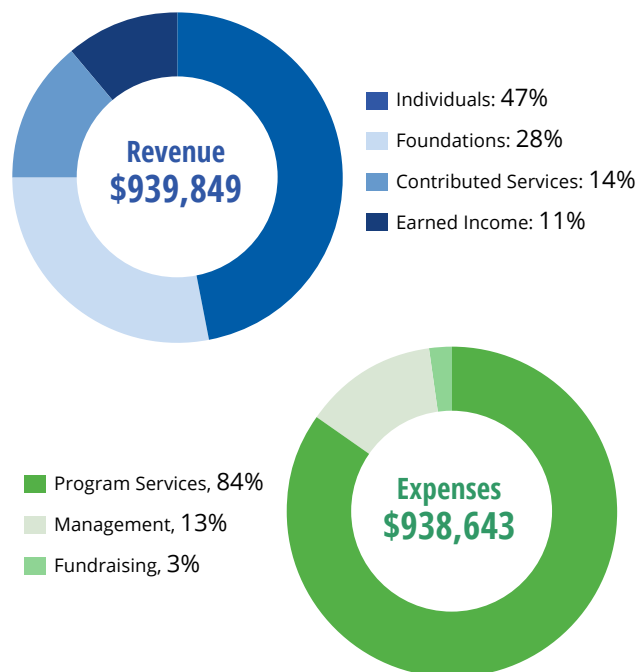
In turn, Scenic America has used this income to grow its investment in programs and resources that further advance its mission, providing both new donors and long-time supporters an impressive return on investment.



TOTAL INCOME



FINANCIALS: FISCAL YEAR 2019-20





But our work is not done. Every day, we learn of new threats to the scenic beauty we strive to preserve and protect. To continue to grow and advance our mission in a challenging political environment, we rely on contributions from individuals and corporations who share our vision for America the Beautiful. Thank you for your continued support.

Your contribution will assist Scenic America in our mission to help citizens safeguard the scenic qualities of America's roadways, countryside and communities. You can support Scenic America by making a donation at www.scenic.org, by mailing a check to the address below, or by arranging a stock donation.

Scenic America

727 15th Street NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005-6029

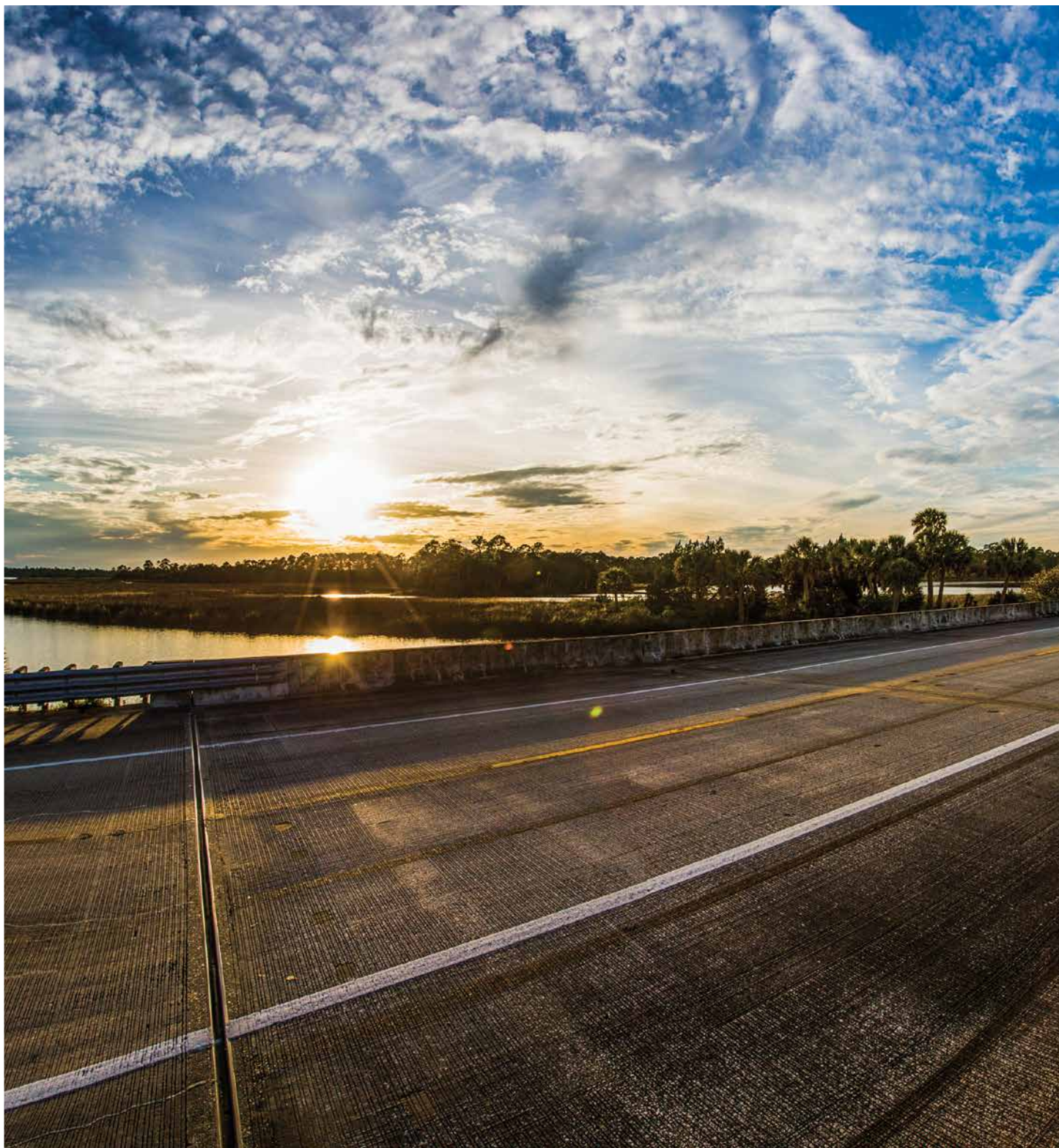
All contributions are 100% tax-deductible. To make a gift of appreciated stock or to learn about estate planning please contact Mark Falzone at 202-792-1301.



One of the simplest and most efficient ways to support Scenic America is by donating at work through Earthshare, a network of more than 400 local, state, national and international environmental and conservation organizations. To learn more, visit them online at earthshare.org, call them at: 1-800-875-3863 or contact Scenic America at 202-792-1300.



Scenic America is an A+ rated member of the Better Business Bureau.



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