ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM

The National Scenic Byways Program, established by Congress in 1991, recognizes historic, scenic, and culturally important roads, all of which promote economic development and tourism in communities around the U.S. There are more than 1,200 byways in all 50 states.

The Virginia General Assembly passed the State Scenic Highway and Virginia Byways Act in 1966 in response to the Virginia Outdoors Plan (officially the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan). Since the program’s creation, over 3,500 miles of road have been designated. Virginia’s byways include both state and national designations. The extensive byways system is managed by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).

KEY POINTS

- Virginia has a total of 227 scenic byways, including 5 national scenic byways and 222 state scenic byways.
- 67% of residents said they enjoyed driving as a way to connect with nature, according to the 2018 Virginia Outdoor Plan.
- The Blue Ridge Parkway, much of which is in Virginia, drew 14.7 million visitors spending $1.1 billion in local gateway regions, supporting 15,900 local jobs, according to a 2018 NPS study.
SCENIC BYWAYS IN VIRGINIA

ALL-AMERICAN ROADS
1. BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
2. COLONIAL PARKWAY
3. GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL PARKWAY

STATE SCENIC BYWAYS
FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION ON VIRGINIA’S 222 STATE BYWAYS, VISIT THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PAGE

NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS
4. JOURNEY THROUGH HALLOWED GROUND BYWAY
5. SKYLINE DRIVE

VIRGINIA BYWAYS PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE STATE’S MOST SPECTACULAR PUBLIC LANDS INCLUDING:
> 1 NATIONAL PARK
> 24 STATE PARKS
> 3 NATIONAL HISTORIC PARKS
> 2 NATIONAL FORESTS
> 2 NATIONAL MONUMENTS

All scenic byways exhibit one or more of six core intrinsic qualities — scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, or natural. For a road to be named a national scenic byway, it must first be designated a state, tribal, or federal agency scenic byway. Once achieving that, a road may apply for national scenic byway designation, but its intrinsic quality must be of regional significance. All-American Roads are the very best of the national scenic byways, demonstrating at least two intrinsic qualities of national significance.