



SCENIC
AMERICA

National Scenic Byways Program: IOWA

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.

In **Iowa**, there are three national scenic byways and 11 state scenic byways. The Great River Road Byway was conceived by Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes in 1938, and the Iowa portion became an All-American Road in 2021. The Loess Hills Scenic Byway runs through several communities and circulates millions in revenue as well as generating thousands of jobs. The Loess Hill Alliance was started in 1999 as a part of a conservatory effort by the community to declare it a National Landmark.

Key Points

- Iowa has 14 scenic byways, including three national scenic byways and 11 state scenic byways.
- Domestic traveler spending in Iowa in 2017 was \$8.5 billion and generated over \$507 million in sales tax receipts. Scenic byways also helped support 70,000 tourism-related jobs in Iowa.

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Iowa is home to
14 scenic byways



Iowa Travel Industry Facts

- > Supports 70,000 jobs
- > \$507 million in sales tax receipts from tourism

Images: Loess Hills Scenic Byway credit: Wikimedia commons (top), Great River Road (column)



Scenic Byways in Iowa

ALL-AMERICAN ROADS

1. GREAT RIVER ROAD

NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAYS

2. LOESS HILLS SCENIC BYWAY
3. LINCOLN HIGHWAY HERITAGE BYWAY

STATE SCENIC BYWAYS

4. COVERED BRIDGES SCENIC BYWAY
5. DELAWARE CROSSING SCENIC BYWAY
6. DRIFTLESS AREA SCENIC BYWAY
7. GLACIAL TRAIL SCENIC BYWAY
8. GRANT WOOD SCENIC BYWAY
9. HISTORIC HILLS SCENIC BYWAY
10. IOWA VALLEY SCENIC BYWAY
11. JEFFERSON HIGHWAY HERITAGE BYWAY
12. RIVER BLUFFS SCENIC BYWAY
13. WESTERN SKIES SCENIC BYWAY
14. WHITE POLE ROAD

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.



Iowa byways provide access to the state's most spectacular public lands including:

- > 1 National Historic Site
- > 63 State Parks
- > 1 National Monument
- > 5 State Forests
- > 3 Wildlife Areas



Images: Loess Hills Scenic Byway credit: Tony Webster (top), Herbert Hoover National Historic Site (bottom)