America’s Byways®
2021 Designations

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Cover Images:

- **Top Left:** Image Title: Tunnel - used with permission of Utah Office of Tourism, Matt Morgan.
- **Top Right:** Image Title: Salem Co. Historical Buildings - used with permission of Jane Morton Galetto.
- **Bottom Left:** Image Title: Easternmost Point yields First Sunrise - used with permission of DownEast Acadia Regional Tourism.
- **Bottom Right:** Image Title: WI Great River Road Bluff to Road to River - used with permission of Jay Olson-Goude.
Foreword

At the FHWA, we are dedicated to ensuring that America’s transportation system improves the quality of life for all of our communities. We celebrate the diverse experiences that each community’s roadways offer: providing spaces to explore, recreate, reflect, and learn in all corners of the country. This year, we celebrate the reemergence of the National Scenic Byways Program, a grassroots, collaborative effort that recognizes selected roads throughout the United States of America for their outstanding and unique historic, cultural, natural, archaeological, recreational, and scenic intrinsic qualities.

Communities across the United States came together to identify the intrinsic qualities they want to preserve, promote, and protect along America’s most exceptional roadways. They took action, recruited stakeholders, organized their efforts, and submitted nominations to the National Scenic Byways Program for well-deserved recognition.

We are pleased to recognize the forty-nine new designations of All-American Roads (AAR) and National Scenic Byways (NSB). It is a privilege to join the America’s Byways® collection. Each newly designated byway has a responsibility to the American people to tell its story and to provide an experience, like the designated byways before it. This collection of byways has brought visitors from around the world, and we are thrilled to see the program’s legacy continue.

We invite everyone to listen to the unique stories of these notable roads. There is something to capture your imagination, satisfy your curiosity, and enliven your spirit every season of the year. Come closer, explore, and celebrate all that America’s Byways® have to offer.

FHWA National Scenic Byways Team
Introduction

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has lead responsibility for the National Scenic Byways Program within the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

The National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) was first established under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. Under the NSBP, the U.S. Secretary of Transportation designates roads with outstanding qualities as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads under the America’s Byways® collection. Currently, there are 184 nationally designated byways – 150 National Scenic Byways and 37 All-American Roads across 48 States.¹

FHWA manages the nomination process to recognize roads for their national or regional significance based upon the six intrinsic qualities: scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, and natural intrinsic qualities. The specific criteria used in the nomination process for National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads is as follows:

- **All-American Roads:** To be designated as an All-American Road, the road or highway must meet the criteria for at least two of the intrinsic qualities. The road or highway must also be considered a destination unto itself. To be recognized as such, it must provide an exceptional traveling experience that is so recognized by

¹ Counting the total number of America’s Byways includes factoring in multi-jurisdictional byways, upgrades, extensions, and de-designations. For example, in some states Route 66 is a National Scenic Byway and in other states it is an All-American Road, therefore it is counted in both categories. However, for the total America’s Byways count, multi-jurisdictional byways are counted as one unified byway. Thus, the number of National Scenic Byways and the number of All-American Roads do not sum to 184.
travelers that they would make a drive along the highway a primary reason for their trip. The characteristics associated with the intrinsic qualities are those which best represent the nation and which may contain one-of-a-kind features that do not exist elsewhere. The significance of the features contributing to the distinctive characteristics of the corridor’s intrinsic qualities are recognized nationally.

- **National Scenic Byways:** To be designated as a National Scenic Byway, a road or highway must significantly meet at least one of the six intrinsic qualities. The characteristics associated with the intrinsic qualities are those that are distinct and most representative of the region. The significance of the features contributing to the distinctive characteristics of the corridor’s intrinsic quality are recognized throughout the region.

In addition to the designation of AAR or NSB, these byways can be considered multi-jurisdictional, where the byway traverses more than one jurisdiction (i.e., state, Indian tribe, or federal land). This booklet provides descriptions of these byways by state, but also acknowledges the 2021 designation of byways that traverse jurisdictions.

All applications were reviewed by FHWA NSBP staff. As defined in the Interim Policy for the NSBP, applications were also reviewed by a Nominations Review Team, composed of 8 subject matter experts —six from FHWA and two from the Department of the Interior— on Intrinsic Qualities; historic preservation, design, cultural resources, and visual impacts; tourism and economic development; highway safety; and federal lands and Native American history and culture. Nomination applications were also sent to the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture for consultation.

For the complete list of all designated byways and their intrinsic qualities, visit: [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/designations/designated_byways.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/designations/designated_byways.cfm)
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Multi-Jurisdiction

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Arkansas (AAR)
Illinois (AAR)
Iowa (AAR)
Kentucky (AAR)
Louisiana (AAR)
Minnesota (AAR)
Tennessee (AAR)
Wisconsin (AAR)

Historic Route 66
California (NSB)
Missouri (AAR)

Newfound Gap Road Byway
North Carolina (AAR)
Tennessee (AAR)

Palisades Scenic Byway
New Jersey (NSB)
New York (NSB)

Zion Scenic Byway
Utah and National Park Service (NSB)

There are existing multi-jurisdictional byways that were designated in prior years. These multi-jurisdictional byways reflect the portions of the byways that were designated in 2021. For the complete list of the 2021 designated byways, [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/designations/2021_designated_byways.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/designations/2021_designated_byways.cfm)
Great River Road National Scenic Byway
Arkansas

Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Arkansas presents a wonderful way to explore the rich cultural heritage of Arkansas’s eastern border. The mighty Mississippi River carries a special place in American Folklore, encapsulating transportation history, steamboat culture, and the setting of Mark Twain’s classic literature. The region has some of the most productive agricultural lands in the world, thanks to the Mississippi River’s alluvial flood plain, or the “Delta.” From spring through fall, fields along the Great River Road are a changing canvas. Cotton, the “white gold” that has been the mainstay of the Delta, dots the entire route beginning at the Arkansas-Missouri state line. The diverse genres of festivals and music, especially the blues, draw visitors year-round, as do the many historic and nationally significant sites located along this route.

Image Title: Big River Crossing - used with permission of Arkansas Tourism.

Image Title: Lakeport Plantation - used with permission of Arkansas Tourism.
California Historic Route 66, Needles to Barstow Scenic Byway
California

California Historic Route 66, Needles to Barstow Scenic Byway has maintained much of its original integrity as a part of the larger Historic Route 66. Named “The Mother Road” by John Steinbeck, Historic Route 66 is significant as the nation’s first all-weather highway linking Chicago to Los Angeles. This route was part of the first nationally designated highway system and exemplifies the transition of a transportation corridor from Native American footpaths to the Interstate highway. The gateway town to California Route 66 is Needles, which is well equipped to address traveler needs. Among the many historical sites is the restored El Garces Harvey House, the “Queen Jewel” of the Fred Harvey chain. Brightly painted murals, old gas stations, motels, and a regional history museum greet the traveler. Over 150 miles of Historic Route 66 are virtually undeveloped desert, very popular with motorcyclists seeking to experience the wide-open roadway and the scenic desert area. There are unique engineering and roadside features adapted to the difficult Mojave Desert conditions, including nearly 150 timber trestle bridges across desert washes, and berms to divert the water. Travelers along the California Historic Route 66, Needles to Barstow Scenic Byway can take in the long history of this route through the historic buildings and towns, and marvel at the vast and beautiful desert scenery.

Image Title: Route 66 desert scene - used with permission of U.S. Bureau of Land Management.
The Spanish Peaks micro mountain range is the centerpiece and theme of the Scenic Highway of Legends. It rises up like an enormous fortress giving these twin peaks the illusion that they are considerably higher than the 13,631-foot elevation. The Ute, Comanche, and Apache tribes considered these profoundly undisturbed landmarks to be the abode of the gods. Spanish and French trappers, gold seekers, hunters, settlers, and the U.S. military used them as a reference point as they traveled the Santa Fe Trail. The roadway features natural attractions such as San Isabel National Forest, Spanish Peaks Wilderness, Four Colorado State Wildlife Areas, the Gap at Stonewall, and Goemmer Butte. The Scenic Highway of Legends marks a crossroads of cultures, where diverse peoples have responded to the land’s power and beauty by protecting its intrinsic qualities. Travelers driving the road today are astonished by how profoundly undisturbed this land remains. This natural beauty evokes inexplicable feelings, like the mysteries and the legends told along the Scenic Highway of Legends.
The Silver Thread Colorado Scenic & Historic Byway is known for its incredible contributions to the nation’s silver mining boom as well as for some of the country’s most notorious outlaws. Creede was Colorado’s last silver mining camp with a wild and rambunctious reputation. Prior to the Silver Panic of 1893, about half of the nation’s silver was from Colorado, and with the discovery of silver in Creede, Colorado’s silver production increased exponentially. The Commodore Mine has been listed as one of Colorado’s Most Endangered Places, and was the site of the shooting of Bob Ford, the man that killed Jesse James. Other historical figures of this area include Calamity Jane, Wild Bill Hickok, Poker Alice, Bat Masterson, and Soapy Smith. This byway provides important access to the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and to the Old Spanish Trail which crossed what is now the Silver Thread Colorado Scenic & Historic Byway. Rising over 3,000 vertical feet in 55 miles before a dizzying descent into Hinsdale County, the road unveils the mysteries of the Mighty Rio Grande, and showcases historic and the archeological finds of early man and Native Americans. Isolated and exquisite, this road was once a footpath worn into the earth by Ice Age man. Thousands of years later, the Ute Indians used these trails to reach hunting camps, hot springs, and the sacred Wheeler Geological Area. Native American ancestral paths were widened and altered to become the Del Norte-Antelope Park Toll Road. This pay-to-ride stage line linked the supply station of Del Norte to the mines in Creede, Lake City, and over Stony Pass to Silverton. Today, this byway still acts as a reminder that this road not only winds up toward the sky, but also back in time.
Delaware Bayshore Byway
Delaware

Delaware Bayshore Byway allows travelers to escape the crowded, bustling highway of modern America and take in the majesty and power of Mother Nature in the wildlife areas and coastal communities of Delaware’s Bayshore. The northern portion of the byway is comprised of a series of cobbled historic roads that are known collectively as Route 9. This includes unique landscapes, including heavy industrial sites, forest, tidal and non-tidal marshland, areas of significant natural resources and wildlife habitat, historic farms and quaint villages, and working farms with cultivated fields of grain, corn, and soybeans. The southern portion of the byway is a continuation of Delaware’s unique coastal landscapes, made up of small historic coastal towns and communities surrounded by water, marsh, and farmland. The coastal landscapes are anchored inland by the thriving historic towns of Magnolia, Frederica, Milford, and Milton. This byway acts as a window to the nature and history of the 100-mile coastal area of Delaware’s Bayshore.
A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway
Florida

A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway is entrenched in American history, home to the first continuously inhabited city in America – St. Augustine, Florida. In addition, it is the site of the landing of Ponce de Leon in 1513 near Ponte Vedra. This byway offers visitors from around the world some of the greatest places to find culture, heritage, recreation, and scenic beauty. Whether you’re flying into major hubs like Jacksonville or Orlando and renting a car, or driving across the country to the Nation’s Oldest City, arriving on Florida’s Historic Coast puts travelers on the A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway, a true destination unto itself. This roadway inspires awe as travelers climb the St. Augustine Lighthouse steps, cross the Matanzas Inlet, or observe the spires of St. Augustine in the sunset. There’s something extraordinary about traveling along the A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway, knowing that this very place has attracted visitors from across the world to “La Florida” for over 500 years.
The story of the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor is one of history, culture, and opportunity. It spans the time from the very earliest inhabitants of Florida, as told by its parks and museums, to the founding of its many cities, as represented through the historic districts and historic properties that thrive in the region’s communities. Local organizations host festivals to keep the memories and traditions alive and engage the community in a celebration of its past. Native Timucua and Mayaca tribes of indigenous people were the first to interact with early explorers of the region. The Timucua, a historic regional tribe, referred to the St. Johns River as the “Welaka,” which means “River of Lakes.” The St Johns River and the connected series of lakes was the internal life line for centuries of tribes, settlers, travelers, and tourists. People as diverse as the Timucua, early Spanish and English settlers, plantation owners, Civil War supply runners, and 1800s steamboat tourists have utilized the St Johns River and surrounding region for profit, diversion, and survival.

Today’s travelers can enjoy the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor in many ways. Automobile drivers, bicyclists, and motorcyclists ride the corridor throughout the year enjoying its beauty and partaking in community events that celebrate the region’s heritage. Some still navigate the river’s waters in tour boats and kayaks – fishing, bird watching, or just experiencing the Spanish moss-covered trees. Others ride the byway experiencing oak canopied corridors and back-road adventures while following the path of native tribes and English and Spanish explorers. The byway embodies a unique blend of history, sophisticated contemporary culture, and gorgeous natural Florida.

Image Title: Blue Spring - used with permission of Florida State Parks.
Scenic Highway 30A
Florida

Scenic Highway 30A is an iconic two-lane highway in Walton County, Florida, where the natural and man-made environments co-exist to provide an experience unlike anything in the region. White sand beaches, conservation lands, cultural sites, and quaint historic beach communities dot the route, while providing visitors with a variety of attractions to choose from. The area is home to some of the region’s most pristine and well-preserved natural areas, with over 25,000 acres in conservation for the public to enjoy. These natural areas include sandy beaches, lush coastal pine forests, and sand dunes. Unique to the region are Walton County’s coastal dune lakes, an extremely rare natural occurrence that are only present in four other places in the world. Opportunities for adventure and outdoor recreation are limitless, with natural features accessible from any point along the corridors. Residents and visitors can spend their day swimming in the emerald waters of the Gulf of Mexico, biking to local shops and nearby cafes, hiking a trail in one of the many state parks, taking a unique tour of the coastal dune lakes, or just relaxing on a porch to take in the post-card-perfect view.
The Great River Road in Illinois features historic sites and rich cultures of regional, national, and international importance, as well as scenic vistas, parks, and outdoor recreation. Along the Mississippi River, travelers are exposed to extensive history, various cultures, natural wonders, the romance of the river, and the well-known Midwestern hospitality. The Mississippi has long been a national icon and has now gained international recognition as one of the world’s great rivers, becoming a destination for travelers from across the globe. In fact, five of the additional six National Scenic Byways in Illinois meet the Great River Road at some point, connecting the Illinois byway system.
Along the Whitewater Canal Scenic Byway in Indiana, visitors can hike nature trails, bike the state’s longest rail trail, canoe or kayak on the River, or go trout fishing at the base of the Brookville Dam. In the winter, head to Perfect North Slopes for snow skiing or tubing. When summer arrives, visit Brookville Lake for camping, boating, swimming, and skiing. Eat amazing fried chicken in the shadows of church spires in the German town of Oldenburg, enjoy live music and food in Richmond’s historic districts, or choose from the many other great restaurants available. Take walking tours through charming towns filled with antiques shops, wonderful museums, beautiful homes, and historic landmarks. Overnight lodging options abound from quaint Bed & Breakfasts to modern casinos. This byway connects the National Road Scenic Byway and the Ohio River Scenic Byway, all three of which were critical to the settlement of the Northwest Territory. The Whitewater Canal Scenic Byway offers visitors an amazingly rich palette of experiences.
Great River Road National Scenic Byway
Iowa

Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Iowa holds historical significance and scenic beauty. The history of American transportation is encapsulated in the Mississippi River: it provided a means of transportation for Native Americans; early explorers; military units (a Revolutionary War battle was fought in Dubuque, Iowa); northern European settlers and immigrants; and a full array of raw materials and finished goods. Indeed, the history of the Great River Road itself beginning in the 1930s and the formation of the Mississippi River Parkway Commission represent a bold historic approach to resource planning that can be viewed as a precursor for scenic byways. Approximately 130 historic resource sites are located along the Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Iowa and are listed in its inventory. The scenic beauty and visual character of places along this byway are in harmony – travelers can observe the beauty of the Mississippi River itself, dramatic bluff land views and vistas, rock outcroppings, agricultural fields and farmsteads, distinctive architecture, small town main streets, upland and floodplain forests, and more.
Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway
Iowa

The Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway connects visitors with the American journey by preserving and telling the story of the Lincoln Highway. Connecting 43 communities in 13 counties in Iowa, the 1913 Lincoln Highway was the first improved transcontinental road created with existing roads, Native American paths, wagon trails, and newly paved roads. The first gas stations, tourist camps, restaurants, and auto-related businesses catering to travelers appeared on this road, and it acted as a guide for road improvements across the nation. Some noteworthy places to visit include Tama Lincoln Highway Bridge, Reed-Niland Corner, and Preston’s Station Historic District. Iowa’s Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway has many original intact elements that are actively preserved and restored for generations to come.

Image Title: Lincoln Highway - used with permission of Jan Gammon.
Great River Road National Scenic Byway
Kentucky

The Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Kentucky holds the story of a route that plays a central role in the American story – it begins at the convergence of two of the continent’s great rivers, the Mississippi and Ohio. In North America, before its settlement by Europeans, rivers were the interstate highways that connected Native American settlements throughout the continent’s vast interior. The Mississippian or mound building culture is evident at Wickliffe Mounds State Historic Site, connecting the modern-day explorer on the Great River Road with other Native American mounds found throughout the Midwest. This area also provides a unique natural environment for a respite from the hustle and bustle of modern life. Travelers are drawn naturally to the breathtaking views from the bluffs at the convergence of the rivers. They are invited to relax and enjoy the area’s natural beauty at parks along the river, such as Columbus Belmont State Park, which was once known as “The Gibraltar of the West.” This state park was a fort during the Civil War, which saw some of the first action for the Union Army’s new Brigadier General, Ulysses S. Grant. The connection of this byway’s scenic views with their important history creates a sublime and meaningful experience for travelers.

Image Title: Mallard Duck - used with permission of Kentucky Mississippi River Parkway Commission.

Image Title: US51 (Great River Road) Bridge over Ohio River at Confluence with Mississippi River - used with permission of Kentucky Mississippi River Parkway Commission.
Old Frankfort Pike Historic and Scenic Byway
Kentucky

The Old Frankfort Pike Historic and Scenic Byway extends over 15 miles through a memorable historic landscape in Kentucky’s Bluegrass Region. Old Frankfort Pike invites the traveler on an extraordinary drive through miles of countryside that were once typical of the Kentucky Inner Bluegrass, but rarely survive today with such cohesion and integrity. Here, traditional diversified agriculture and the international equine industry thrive and coexist in a unique landscape that has evolved over the past 200 years.

Since early exploration and settlement, agriculture has dominated and transformed the Bluegrass Region. This notably distinct topographic and geological area, known as Karst, rests at the center of the state. The Bluegrass is a gently rolling plain of deep loam soils atop phosphate-rich limestone, wild with springs that flow for miles only to sink underground or disappear into caves. It is one of the richest agricultural areas in the world, known as the birthplace and home of the Thoroughbred horse.

Along its relatively short length, Old Frankfort Pike passes through six National Register Historic Districts, and passes by numerous individually significant historic properties. In all, thousands of historic buildings, structures, sites, and agricultural landscapes encompassing over 20,000 acres are contained within these distinctive historic areas and all are linked by the byway. This unusual and fortunate concentration of historic resources along Old Frankfort Pike elevates the scenic drive into a singular and unique experience.
Great River Road National Scenic Byway 
Louisiana

The Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Louisiana connects travelers with the mighty Mississippi, which brings more people together with its history, culture, and natural features than any other North American river and treasured road. The Louisiana portion of the multi-jurisdictional byway is the longest byway in Louisiana, and is indeed one of the most important corridors of archeology, history, culture, recreation opportunity, natural resources, and scenic beauty in the United States. More than 700 miles of public highways and streets connect leisure travelers – residents and visitors alike – with Louisiana’s rural towns, UNESCO World Heritage Site Poverty Point, Oak Alley Plantation’s iconic canopy of oaks, the State Capitol, New Orleans’ French Quarter, the history of the Louisiana Purchase, and all the local food, music, and amazing sights in between. The Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Louisiana brings it all together by delivering all the authenticity, stories, and experiences of more than 300 years of this country’s history and culture.
The Boom or Bust Byway tells the American story of the dramatic ups and downs in the oil and gas, lumber, transportation, farming, and entertainment industries. It encompasses America’s western expansion, which has a history of successes and failures, but nonetheless changed the American landscapes, history, and lifestyles. Western expansion displaced Native Americans who survived off the land, railroads split communities, and lumber barons plundered the forest and woodland resources to build new towns and large ornate houses to display newly found wealth. The discovery of oil and gas transformed America from an agrarian-based society into an industrialized country. This history also includes stories of American spirit, inventiveness, and resilience. Moreover, this byway tells both difficult and encouraging stories of the unbridled American journey that transformed the country from one industry to another and from one way of life to another.

The Boom or Bust Byway passes through rolling hills, tall pines, beautiful lakes and bayous. Oil derricks scattered in the meadows along the way are reminders of the state’s longtime ties to the energy industry and are memorialized at the Louisiana State Oil and Gas Museum in Oil City. Fields of cotton and tranquil cattle pastures reflect the ongoing agricultural industry. With the state parks, national wildlife management areas, refuges, forests, national recreational areas, and an array of local parks and recreational areas, the Boom or Bust Byway offers robust outdoor recreation opportunities. The Boom or Bust Byway is a magnet for history buffs and outdoor recreationists alike.
Bayou Teche Scenic Byway
Louisiana

The Bayou Teche Scenic Byway has long been recognized as a travel corridor to and through important cultural, historic, natural, recreation and scenic environments. Bayou Teche is the most famous and the most handsomely endowed bayou in the state, curling for miles through south central Louisiana. Through its resources, the Bayou Teche Scenic Byway tells nationally significant stories that celebrate the nation’s diverse heritage. Stories of the Bayou Teche Scenic Byway include Native American, Acadian, and Spanish descendants who inhabited this area and survived off the land.

The Chitimacha Indians named the area “teche,” which is a Chitimacha word meaning snake. The Chitimacha are internationally known for their beautiful and complex woven cane baskets. Some settlers became cattle ranchers or engaged in small-scale farming and fishing along the bayou’s banks. Anglo settlers coming into the region after the Louisiana Purchase established successful sugar cane plantations, lining the bayou with mansions of architectural note. Others became loggers and harvested the plentiful Cypress trees in the Atchafalaya Basin. As time passed, the occupations and trades of the settlers changed. Oil and gas were introduced and offshore oil rigs became places of work. Innovators and inventors settled along Bayou Teche to make use of the vast natural resources or to develop industries.

The Bayou Teche Scenic Byway tells stories of the values and beliefs that guide the daily lives and social interactions of the residents of the bayou. These values are the product of both a vibrant, underlying culture and the lived experiences of the inhabitants.

Image Title: Bayou Teche moss draped Bald Cypress - used with permission of New Iberia Parish Tourist Commission.
The Bold Coast Scenic Byway perches at the nation’s raw and rugged easternmost edge, a place of wild beauty with a history of human settlement dating back 12,000 years. Travelers can explore diverse recreation opportunities within breathtaking natural settings that provide a physical timeline of the Native American and settlement history that shaped America’s eastern seaboard.

Byway travelers can swim, bike, hike, paddle, and cruise their way through a coastal landscape created by molten lava then sheared off by grinding ice. Deep mossy forests and high coastal ledges contain rare or unusual habitats and species. Unspoiled rivers support wild Atlantic salmon. Night skies remain brilliant with stars. People harvest wild blueberries, as they have since glaciers receded. Descendants of early Passamaquoddy, founding settlers, and Revolution heroes keep our ancestry alive; here, history is celebrated, held sacred, and perseveres over time.

The Bold Coast Scenic Byway connects travelers with the nation’s last vestige of a natural resource-based maritime culture, where turning tides and changing seasons dictate daily life. Today, this byway connects a network of public conservation lands abundant with natural resources, coastal and riverine villages with well-preserved historic districts and working waterfronts, and the people that continue to inhabit, value, and depend upon these landscapes.

Byway travelers can stretch their legs on trails traversing bold coastlines shaped by glaciers, view the island where European explorers including Samuel Champlain first settled, visit the site of the first naval battle of the American Revolution, and paddle rivers that once transported native Americans, European explorers, and the “King’s pines.”
Katahdin Woods & Waters Scenic Byway
Maine

The Katahdin Woods & Waters Scenic Byway offers world-class outdoor recreational opportunities amidst spectacular scenery. Visitors of all experience levels can enjoy camping, canoeing, rafting, hiking, bicycling, fishing, snowmobiling, Nordic skiing, and epic wildlife watching. The grand forested landscape surrounding Katahdin is filled with lakes, ponds, streams, bogs, and the unspoiled West and East Branches of the Penobscot River. Byway travelers have exceptional access to these places through both public lands and Maine’s traditional public access over private lands.

The byway connects to the South Gate of Baxter State Park, where Katahdin, Maine’s highest peak, dominates the landscape. The mountain was designated as a National Landmark by the National Park Service in 1967. This natural wonder has inspired countless writers, poets, and artists for many years, one of the most notable being Henry David Thoreau. This byway passes between Ambajejus and Millinocket lakes, two of Maine’s largest, and also passes the towns of Millinocket and East Millinocket. These historic mill towns offer abundant services as well as recreational opportunities at local parks and trails. The museum, library, tourist information centers, shops, and galleries provide places where visitors can learn about recreation and the region’s lumber history.

The northern end of the byway is more remote and features the East Branch headwaters and the fishing and boating mecca, Grand Lake Matagamon. The northern section of Baxter offers great solitude, and the opportunities for wildlife watching and touring are especially great. Here, the byway connects people with Maine Public Lands, lake beaches, and great moose country.

The byway’s recreational resources for both mild and extreme outdoor recreation enthusiasts are nationally significant. Visitors can trace Henry David Thoreau’s footsteps, enjoy vistas painted by famous artists, or discover the wildness that inspired Roosevelt.
The St. John Valley Cultural Byway / Fish River Scenic Byway is a 134-mile roadway situated in the St. John Valley at the northeastern point of Maine alongside the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick and Québec. Travelers enjoy a captivating cultural journey in a pastoral river valley as they wind through small towns, fertile fields, and deep forest. In this rural corner of the nation, the traveler is welcomed with kindness and a gentle pace of life. They will come to know “chez nous,” which means our home, as a genuine place of simple living and distinct culture, shaped over centuries in one of the last frontiers of wild, undivided forestland in the nation.

Home to about 13,000 people mostly of French heritage, the byway’s unifying theme is culture; the international blend of French heritage as shaped by Acadian, French Canadian, and other cultural influences. In most parts of the byway, French is spoken in every day affairs, in churches, restaurants, and on the street – an evolved blend from sixteenth century France, Acadian and French Canadian, Wabanaki, and English. Located throughout the byway are 29 bilingual wayside exhibits that tell the story about first inhabitants and early settlement; the social fabric of language, family, and faith; the borderland and “land in between”; and of centuries-old traditions that endure.

The people in this region have been described as spanning two cultures and two countries. This makes for a distinct and rich byway experience. Travelers are enchanted as they drive the winding roads of this byway at any time of the year. They meet descendants of first settlers, hear Acadian music, see dark skies and nature’s haunting beauty, taste the fusion of old and new French recipes, and touch centuries-old hand-hewn logs and early tools that shaped the land. Immersed in the historically based culture of the St. John Valley, travelers come to know intimately what it means to be of this place.
Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway
Maryland

The Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway offers an epic journey through an unspoiled landscape that has shaped the lifestyles and livelihoods of generations of Watermen, shipbuilders, and farmers. This largely unchanged landscape makes it easy for visitors to imagine earlier times when goods were shipped to Baltimore in wooden barrels aboard schooners. The byway acts as a destination unto itself— it is the best way to travel through the extraordinary landscapes and waterscapes of the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay. The byway experience stretches from its upper Eastern Shore terminus – the picturesque Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, an engineering marvel and cultural boundary – to its lower shore recreational terminus at Smith Island, where it is easy to absorb the essence of where life flows with the tide.

The pleasures of the byway unfold in towns such as Chestertown, Easton, and Salisbury, which reflect early colonial settlements and their role as the country’s crucible of nineteenth century African-American leadership. The byway’s abundant beauty remains much as it was when the Nanticoke people, descendent groups of the Nanticoke tribe, inhabited these lands. The byway’s national significance is evident through its culture. Some Watermen have become Certified Chesapeake Bay Storytellers© and now offer guided tour excursions, where visitors can work the Bay by boat, capture its bounty, and have their meal served “dock to table.” Festivals and the Nanticoke Indian Pow Wow bring to life the distinctive cultural heritage of the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway. This byway is an outdoor adventurer’s dream, offering birdwatching, sailing, fishing, hiking, bicycling, and paddling on water-trails.

Image Title: Skipjack Nathan Lighthouse - used with permission of Jill Jasuta.
The Battle Road Scenic Byway
Massachusetts

The Battle Road Scenic Byway tells the story of the American Revolution and is home to literature, environmental, and technological revolutions that have shaped the American experience. Located in the Massachusetts towns of Arlington, Lexington, Lincoln, and Concord, the byway includes Minute Man National Historical Park and other attractions that encapsulate the American Revolution. During the nineteenth century, the byway was a hub for American literature, transcendentalism, abolitionism, and environmental conservation. Classic American authors including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Louisa May Alcott, Margaret Fuller, and Nathaniel Hawthorne all lived and wrote along this storied route and drew inspiration from its natural and cultural resources. American history, culture, literature, technology, and recreation all converge to make the Battle Road Scenic Byway a National treasure.

The Battle Road Scenic Byway is an international as well as an American tourist destination. Every year, well over a million people from around the world visit Minute Man National Historical Park, notable authors’ homes, museums, and other sites along the byway. Every April, scores of visitors gather at key battle sites to witness live reenactments of events that changed the course of our country’s history.
Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway
Massachusetts

The Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway celebrates the history, heritage, and natural beauty of an important regional travel route. The Mohawk Trail is steeped in local and regional history and acts as a microcosm of the broader history of the region. The route is a significant east-west travel route, following the walking route used by Native Americans to travel between the Hudson River and Connecticut River Valleys. Native Americans occupied the area approximately 12,000 years ago after the retreat of the last glacial ice sheets. Later, the European settlers used the route, and eventually altered it to support travel by horse and cart. As the use of automobiles increased, the route became more popular and the road was further improved.

The Mohawk Trail is historically significant as a byway because it was one of the first to be constructed as a scenic auto touring route in the early years of car travel. Byway travelers experience scenery and sites from several historical periods. There are historic villages, structures, and sites along the route that provide insights into the byway and broader regional history. The byway travels through some of the most beautiful scenic areas in Massachusetts, and stretches of the Mohawk Trail follow the Millers, Deerfield, Cold, and Hoosic Rivers. A significant section parallels the Mahican-Mohawk Trail, a former Native American trail linking the Hudson and Connecticut River Valleys. This original walking route is currently being reestablished as a recreational trail in Franklin and Berkshire counties.

Image Title: View Traveling though the Hairpin Turn - used with permission of Eugene Michalenko.
Old King’s Highway (Route 6A) forms the backbone of America’s largest historic district and is also one of the country’s most scenic corridors. The route is believed to have begun as a Native American trail, known as the Cape Cod Bay trail, which stretched from Plymouth to Provincetown. The roadway evolved into the principal east-west thoroughfare for early settlers on Cape Cod during the 1600s and was officially described in town documents as early as 1684. As such, it developed as a narrow, winding road through agricultural and undeveloped lands typical of the period. Residences, farms, and small villages were later established during the agricultural period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. With the rise of maritime activities in the eighteenth century, captains’ homes and commercial activities also developed along the route.

Today, hundreds of early homes and other historic structures continue to line the roadway. Scenic vistas of Cape Cod Bay and expansive salt marshes are among the striking natural features along the route. This roadway is a major tourist attraction due to its scenic and historic attributes, as well as its proximity to Cape Cod beaches and recreational attractions. A trip down this roadway takes the traveler through America’s largest historic district and eight National Register districts, and past dozens of National Register buildings, including early Cape Cod houses, sea captains’ homes, and Victorian buildings. In addition to the historic treasures, the natural beauty of the corridor provides a scenic backdrop with bayside marsh views, open vistas, cranberry bogs, and an extensive tree canopy framing sections of the corridor.

Image Title: Barnstable Harbor - used with permission of Chloe Schaefer.
Great River Road National Scenic Byway
Minnesota

Nowhere along its 2,552-mile course does the Mississippi River’s scenic landscape change more than on the Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Minnesota. The Great River Road follows the river as it matures through seven distinct landscapes, each with unique mystique, and over its only waterfall. Walking across the headwaters at Lake Itasca is an international bucket-list item. After percolating from Lake Itasca, the river follows a serpentine course to Brainerd, frequently twisting back on itself, leaving cut-off lands and oxbows. Contributing to the mystique is an ongoing blend of natural and human history, humans having lived along the river here for nearly 10,000 years, and indigenous communities retaining traditional lifestyles. As anyone who has canoed or kayaked this stretch will tell you, every twist and turn creates a new scenic view. The Mississippi’s headwaters include thousands of lakes, and the river dams and reservoirs are historically significant as part of the first national reservoir system in the United States. The incredible scenery Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Minnesota will create lasting memories for all of its travelers.
Historic Route 66 Missouri

Historic Route 66 in Missouri is not only a state byway, but also a linear community. This roadway is a complex and intriguing network of diversity to which the landscape, people, and communities contribute. The 465-mile route traverses the entire state of Missouri in an east-west direction from Illinois to Kansas. Travelers can view the 630-foot Gateway Arch that stands on the banks of the Mississippi river as a permanent public memorial to those who made possible the western expansion of the United States, particularly the great explorers, Lewis and Clark, and the hunters, trappers, frontiersmen, and pioneers who contributed to the territorial expansion west of the Mississippi. Historic Route 66 is landmarked with significant American history, historic cemeteries, a historic Courthouse, Forest Park, and famous businesses that sit among a dense foundation of commerce, trade, and recreation. Along this byway is a cultural tribute to the Trail of Tears Memorial. Travelers experience a journey of agricultural fields that give way to dramatic topography, historic highway rock cuts at Hooker Cut, and scenic vistas of lakes and river valleys adjacent to Mark Twain National Forest. Historic Route 66 holds the history and culture that many seek to preserve, protect, and promote for travelers’ education and enjoyment.
Lincoln Highway Scenic & Historic Byway
Nebraska

To travel along Nebraska’s Lincoln Highway Scenic & Historic Byway is to travel through America’s transportation history. Previously known as the “Great Platte River Road,” the Lincoln Highway Scenic & Historic Byway was traversed by Native Americans and the fur traders who first began exploring the west. The route was then used in America’s great westward migration: first by Oregon and Mormon Trail pioneers, then by the Union Pacific Railroad, and finally by America’s first transcontinental highway – the Lincoln Highway. Modern travelers will experience the small rural towns that developed along the route every six to twelve miles across the entire byway.

Nebraska’s contribution to the development of the Lincoln Highway cannot be overstated. In 1913, Central City became the first community in the nation to ratify the Lincoln Highway proclamation on the steps of the Merrick County courthouse, and modern day travelers can experience where this momentous occasion occurred. Grand Island’s “seedling mile” was the first in the state and the second in the nation to be completed, followed two weeks later by the seedling mile at Kearney. The original pavement of the seedling mile at Grand Island has been preserved, and both are marked with historical interpretive panels. In nearby Fremont, the longest seedling mile in the nation – six miles – soon followed and can still be traversed on Highway 30 between Fremont and Ames. Finally, the last link of pavement on US Route 30 was completed just west of North Platte and dedicated on November 6, 1935.

Across the byway, travelers will find numerous historical markers commemorating significant incidents along the highway. In addition to the dozens of original 1928 concrete Lincoln Highway markers placed by the Boy Scouts, there are reproduction concrete markers and utility poles painted with iconic red, white, and blue “L” emblems.
There is a place in America virtually untouched by the hand of man. The largest area of stabilized sand dunes in the western hemisphere, the Nebraska Sandhills, occupies nearly 20,000 square miles. In this timeless, windblown ocean of undulating dunes, native grass and vivid blue lakes, nature is still master of the land. Nebraska Highway 2, the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway, bisects this ancient ground, leading travelers to treasures that cannot be found anywhere else.

At the byway’s eastern end near Grand Island, an ancient rite of nature occurs. The largest gathering of cranes on Earth descends on the shallow Platte River in a stop-over on their annual spring migration northward. Hundreds of thousands of Sandhill Cranes make brilliant morning eruptions into the sky as they leave their nighttime river roost to feed. In addition to the spectacle of the cranes, a month later in April is the dance of the male Prairie Chicken and Sharptail Grouse. Like the cranes, these birds have returned to the same ground annually for centuries.

The Nebraska sky itself is another natural phenomenon visible from this byway. The sunrises are a kaleidoscope of color in a sky of blue, and with the lazy travel of cotton candy clouds or the ominous ones of an approaching storm, the sky is never the same one minute to the next. The sunsets provide a firestorm of color on the western horizon. The remote areas of the byway away from artificial light are some of the best places to experience dark skies, perfect for star gazing and astronomy of the best kind.

The Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway is where the wind blows, the stars glow, the rivers flow, and the grasses grow. Visitors leave with an immediate desire to return, a sense of rejuvenation, and the comforting feeling of knowing that there is still a wild, timeless place in the heart of Nebraska.
Bayshore Heritage Byway
New Jersey

The Bayshore Heritage Byway of New Jersey’s western shore guides visitors along the Delaware Bay through a rich mosaic of views typified by vast protected landscapes and historic villages. This byway tells the story of centuries of relationships between the people and their natural resources. Eleven historic districts – primarily villages – are nestled along the byway. In addition to traditional agriculture, Bayshore communities grew and thrived based upon natural assets including fishing; trapping; crabbing; oyster, clam, and caviar processing; shipbuilding; iron-making; milling; glass-making; and salt hay farming. It is the ongoing dependence on these resources that makes the region unique. Visitors to the Bayshore Heritage Byway experience the full breadth of the region’s rich cultural and architectural history. The byway has colonial period homes ranging from modest log buildings to the most elaborate eighteenth century patterned-brick houses in the US, built by Quaker descendants of the first permanent English-speaking settlement in the Delaware Valley. Visitors wind their way through open farmland and quaint villages, seeing ship captains’ homes and Victorian architectural influences, culminating in the elaborate seaside resort homes of Cape May.

Image Title: East Point Lighthouse - used with permission of New Jersey Department of Transportation.
The Palisades Scenic Byway in New Jersey connects New York City, the nation’s largest metropolitan area, to vast areas of protected parkland. This byway links travelers to the National Natural and Historic Landmark Palisades Cliffs and provides expansive views of the Hudson River. One cannot help but be awed by the scenery along the byway, as evidenced by the 250,000 visitors that use the New Jersey portion of the Palisades Scenic byway annually. Henry Hudson Drive and the Palisades Interstate Parkway are exceptional examples of thoughtfully designed roadways, constructed to the highest standards with the traveler in mind. Henry Hudson Drive is a beautiful winding, narrow roadway supported by hand-laid stone retaining walls as it traverses the wooden escarpment of the Palisades. The Palisades Interstate Parkway was designed as a linear park with the dual goals of protecting the land atop the cliffs from development and creating a scenic connection for travelers coming by the hundreds of thousands to the Palisades Interstate Park by steamboat and, later, across the George Washington Bridge. Together, the Henry Hudson Drive and the Palisades Interstate Parkway make up a magnificent byway that provides travelers with a connection to nature.
The Pine Barrens Byway traverses a landscape of sublime natural beauty, boasting rare pygmy pines, lakes and streams, and diverse biomes. Enveloped by pine forests, and on the margins of vast open fields, marshes, and bogs, visitors experience tangible stories of human adaptation to this unique environment. Here the traveler who will stop and linger along the byway will find stories of the nation: from Batsto Village nestled in the lush expanse of Wharton State Forest, whose furnaces produced cannonballs for Washington’s army, to the now quiet beauty of the Mullica River, which once buzzed with the activities of colonial privateers bound for the Atlantic. At the mouth of the Mullica, the traveler emerges from the forest, and is awed by the sun rising over the pristine and protected Great Bay estuary, and the quaint and irresistible charm of the Tuckerton Seaport.

The byway continues across salt marshes and small inlet bridges, paralleling the 47,000 acre Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. Leaving the coast, the traveler makes their way south again into the forest, passing the ruins of eighteenth and nineteenth century furnace and glass complexes along the margins of the federally designated Wild and Scenic Great Egg Harbor River. The byway leads the traveler through small towns and villages, paths leading to ancient cemeteries swallowed up now by state forests, and federally protected natural areas and wildlife management parks teeming with plant and animal life. If the traveler stops at a local eatery along the byway and asks the right questions, they may even hear a few eyewitness accounts of the Pine Barrens’ very own resident monster: The Jersey Devil, who is known to frequent spots along the byway. Pine Barrens lore is as natural as the land.

The Pine Barrens Byway takes visitors into (not just through) this biological, geological, hydrological, and historical wonder.
Western Highlands Scenic Byway
New Jersey

The Western Highlands Scenic Byway is a roadway that offers visitors beautiful scenery and year-round recreation. It is located in the northwest corner of New Jersey within Sussex County and the New Jersey Highlands. This area is part of a larger Highlands area that extends well into New York State and Connecticut to the north and east and into Pennsylvania to the south and west.

The byway crosses six miles of almost uninterrupted forest, highlighting the rugged beauty and habitat of the area, and connects to the Appalachian Trail. The byway’s loop affords visitors impressive views of the neighboring mountains and provides the byway access to resorts, parks, and wildlife refuges that offer recreation in all seasons.

Throughout the course of the year, there are many recreational activities and special events offered and celebrated along the Western Highlands Scenic Byway, including National Trails Day, the Vernon Trails Challenge, the Tri-State Trifecta Spartan Races at Mountain Creek, EarthFest Celebrations, Taste of Vernon, and hundreds of trails activities. Whatever the season, the Western Highlands Scenic Byway offers recreational opportunities for everyone, amidst some of the most beautiful panoramic vistas in the United States.

Image Title: Pinwheel Vista - used with permission of Eleanor Bortnick.
The Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway provides a window into American history. For 20,000 years our ancestors lived here as hunters and gatherers – nomads trailing the big game of our most distant memories. Over millennia of great change, they learned to domesticate their food sources and became the farmers who founded the towns that make this America’s archaeological heartland.

This region, and the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway, preserves culture and history, including sacred archaeological remains. Archaeological sites provide a direct link back to the stories that are still passed from generation to generation and provide a clue into the evolution of humans in the American Southwest. Prehistoric, Native American archaeology is abundant along this Byway. Travelers will find cliff dwellings and lost cities hidden in high canyons and rock art on sandstone slabs. Travelers can also experience a wealth of Anasazi history; archaeological, cultural, and historic sites; and the Chaco Canyon National Park and El Morro/El Malpais National Monument. The Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway transports travelers back thousands of years through archaeological sites and natural beauty.
Palisades Scenic Byway
New York

Palisades Scenic Byway in New York is a scenic drive that connects the nation’s most populous city, New York City, to nature. The opportunity for visitors to enjoy the scenic beauty of the byway was the primary motivation for the Parkway’s development and design, as a part of the historic New York State Parkway system. The Palisades Region in New York contains 120,000 acres of parkland that protects natural communities and serves the people who live in and travel to the region. The journey along the byway includes views of the New York City skyline, the Hudson River, the Hackensack River, and more. No other American byway has such a proximal relationship to a large population center, such as New York City, and a magnificent scenic destination. The sheer volume of visitors – numbering in the millions – is evidence of the area’s national and regional significance. The Palisades cliffs are a unique geological feature, defining the western edge of the Hudson River for nearly twenty miles from Nyack, NY down to Jersey City, NJ. The views to and from the Palisades are spectacular, and the geological formation is a National Natural Landmark. The road was thoughtfully aligned with the region’s natural topography to maximize prominent views; the woodland setting frames breathtaking views of the Hudson River, the George Washington Bridge, and the Manhattan skyline.
As the Newfound Gap Road Byway winds through the Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina, outstanding scenic vistas continue through its unique climate and vegetation range and breath-taking mountains. Just south of Newfound Gap, this byway brings travelers to Clingmans Dome, which is the highest peak in the Smokies. A paved half-mile trail climbs steeply from the parking area to a 45-foot-tall observation tower at the “top of old Smoky.” Travelers can continue their journey and stop by the Luftee, Swinging Bridges, Webb, and History Exhibit Overlooks to enjoy interpretive waysides and panoramic views of the surrounding mountains. As the roadway flattens, travelers enjoy views of the Oconaluftee River. This stunning freestone river parallels most of the route between its headwaters near Newfound Gap and the lower elevations toward Cherokee. Visitors may enjoy the picturesque view as the light filters through the birch trees and dense thickets of doghobble and rhododendron that cover over the riverbanks.

Newfound Gap Road offers visitors plenty of roadside spots for river access and fishing opportunities. Along this route, travelers can watch elk grazing in the large meadow near the visitor center and outdoor museum. After being reintroduced to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in 2001, elk have migrated toward Cherokee and the Oconaluftee River, and they can usually be seen very early in the morning and just before sunset. Newfound Gap Road not only provides visitors with carefully planned views of the landscape and access to many of the Park’s most popular facilities, it also serves as a window to different periods of history. The roadway’s vistas, vegetation, and stone masonry structures maintain the original feeling of the National Park Service’s rustic design.

Image Title: Luftee Overlook 3 Walton - used with permission of National Park Service.
The Hocking Hills Scenic Byway, established in 2004, takes travelers deep into the historic hills of southeast Ohio. The byway traverses hills and valleys and passes the six non-contiguous sites of the Hocking Hills State Park, Ohio’s natural crown jewels. The byway also passes historically significant sites and connects the Hocking Hills State Park sites – Cantwell Cliffs, Rock House, Conkle’s Hollow, Old Man’s Cave, Cedar Falls and Ash Cave – from north to south. The Hocking Hills State Park offers guided hikes and activities throughout the year at all the park sites. Along the trails, hikers are treated to sparkling waterfalls, prehistoric caves, and breathtaking scenic vistas. This byway also features the Village of Mound Crossing, built by the Hopewell Indians. Whether looking for a lovely country drive while visiting the Hocking Hills or a more active experience, the Hocking Hills Scenic Byway will exceed travelers’ expectations. Hocking Hills is a gem that people from all over come to see – it highlights the best natural beauty of the area with its sandstone rocks, dense forests, and unique local communities.
Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway
Pennsylvania

The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway winds through the Brandywine Valley, known for its strategic crossroads of commerce, agriculture, artistic creativity, and political thought. Evidence of the settlement and development patterns can be found throughout the byway region. Beginning in 1686, the first agricultural settlers established the patterns of the rural landscape that exist today along much of the byway. Many structures from these settlements, including the Barnes-Brinton House (1714), can be visited today, and many of the villages and hamlets are relatively unspoiled by modern development. This byway passes through the landscape where the Battle of Brandywine was fought in 1777, and many of the sites associated with this pivotal Revolutionary battle are still visible from the byway.

In addition, many structures that held meaning during the time of the Underground Railroad are located along the byway. The Longwood Progressive Friends Meetinghouse, built in 1854, was the forum for Lucretia Mott, William Garrison, and Frederick Douglas as they advocated for the abolition of slavery. The byway has also provided the subject for works of art by many artists including those of the Brandywine School of Art. Farmhouses, studios, mills, barns, springhouses, and other structures, represent the focus of this important American school.

The Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway is known for its climate, natural resources, and beauty. These days, visitors can travel the byway, take in the scenery, and learn about a place that is so pivotal in American history.
The Revolutionary Heritage Byway in Bristol, Rhode Island leads travelers through a quintessential New England town rich in history and culture that provides an unparalleled experience for the traveler. The byway is studded with historic homes, waterfront parks, and a distinct downtown listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 2009, the Town of Bristol was designated one of the National Trust for Historic Places Dozen Distinctive Destinations. In addition, the byway itself has many unique qualities. For example, the Revolutionary Heritage Byway has permanently changed the roadway’s center line to red, white, and blue for the entire length of the parade route, from the intersection of Chestnut Street to High Street and the entire length of High Street. This corridor is also part of the network of land and water trails that comprise the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail; wayfinding markers are located on Route 114 to indicate this trail and guide tourists. Mature trees line the Revolutionary Heritage Byway with gorgeous views of the Bristol Harbor and Narragansett Bay. On the byway, travelers experience a vibrant historic downtown with shops, restaurants, and museums and can experience the Nation’s oldest continuous Fourth of July celebration along the byway itself.
Great River Road National Scenic Byway
Tennessee

The Mississippi River in west Tennessee is home to the ebb and flow of American history across hundreds of years and cultural pillars that continue to influence and inspire its modern-day visitors. The Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Tennessee is a 185.5 mile collection of roads that meanders south, between the Mississippi River immediately west and the Chickasaw Bluffs to the east. When entering Tennessee from Kentucky, the byway cuts through a lush rural landscape in northwest Tennessee, an area complete with multiple tributary rivers and thousands of acres of cotton fields. As byway-goers move south through sloping, cycling-friendly terrain, they arrive in the City of Memphis, a destination rich with sites and traditions of the past and the vibrant tastes and sounds of the present.

The Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Tennessee is a byway of unparalleled historic and cultural abundance. One feature of note is the location of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. From that traumatic day, the site has been transformed into the National Civil Rights Museum, a powerful place of reflection and remembrance. Many sites along this byway include histories of the Civil War and the nation’s struggle for Civil Rights. Another notable feature is a collection of well-preserved cultural sites like Sun Studios, Graceland Mansion, and Stax Records. These sites are closely tied to names that continue to influence generations of music today – names like Elvis Presley, B.B. King, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, Roy Orbison, and more.

Reelfoot Lake is a visitor friendly natural area, with significant ecological diversity and quite a story to tell.

Image Title: ‘M’ Bridge at Twilight - used with permission of Tennessee Department of Tourism Development.
Newfound Gap Road is a 31-mile linear landscape that connects Gatlinburg, Tennessee to Cherokee, North Carolina. It forms a vital component of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park’s circulation system that is completely contained within the National Park’s boundaries. This roadway is often the first or primary means for visitors to acquaint themselves with the character of the National Park and its natural, recreational, and cultural resources.

While simply traveling the route is a recreational experience, there are countless opportunities for active recreation throughout the corridor. The Newfound Gap Road Byway holds a host of trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, and trailheads immediately adjacent to the roadway that provide access to natural and cultural features. Pull-offs and overlooks, located at regular intervals along the road, provide resting points as well as spectacular panoramic views of the landscape. The Tennessee portion of the byway brings travelers to the Sugarlands Valley, which allows visitors to stop and familiarize themselves with the National Park. As the road climbs along the north side of Sugarland Mountain, the river disappears, and the trees lining the road create a cavernous effect. The Campbell Overlooks provide spectacular views of Bull Head Peak and Mount LeConte. As the roadway continues to ascend, visitors are encouraged to stop at Chimney Tops Overlook to enjoy these iconic rock outcroppings. The picturesque setting is further enhanced by the steep slope on the right side of the road and exposed rock on the left, as well as a hairpin turn, the Chimney Tops Tunnel, and the Loop Over Bridge. Travelers can stop along the roadway to take hikes and then continue on the byway to ascend along pronounced curves to view beautiful overlooks. Travelers may take in scenic beauty and experience nature along the Newfound Gap Road Byway, and can continue the experience along this byway into North Carolina.
The landscape of the Northern Cumberland Plateau is one of mountain paths, winding trails, sacred hunting grounds, and rich timberlands. Each landscape is defined by its own distinctive geologic formations, natural characteristics, legendary characters, and history. Over the 150-mile length of the Cumberland Historic Byway, each one of these landscapes gives way to another, and forms what was, at one time, a hidden frontier in America.

This byway gives physical form to the legendary stories, people, traditions, and artifacts that are still embraced by those who live and visit the Upper Cumberland. The easternmost point of the byway begins in Cumberland Gap, Tennessee, and reveals how early migratory patterns of land animals paved the way for legendary long hunters, Daniel Boone and Elisha Walden, to cement their fate in folklore history. The small ‘gap’ identified by these men would later serve as the point of crossing for hundreds of thousands of settlers moving west into the regions that would become the states of Kentucky and Tennessee. Meanwhile, some one hundred and fifty miles west, in Celina, Tennessee, the convergence of the Obey and Cumberland Rivers would provide the transportation route necessary to supply virgin timber that would ultimately be used to construct the city of Nashville. The land in between these two points would become the backdrop for a one-of-a-kind British-American community in Rugby, TN; home to the most celebrated hero of World War I, Sergeant Alvin C. York; the birthplace of the ‘Father of the United Nations’, Nobel Peace Prize winning Secretary of State Cordell Hull; and landscape transformed by the promise of the New Deal, in Dale Hollow Lake and Standing Stone State Park.

The Cumberland Historic Byway links the Upper Cumberland Region, the Cumberland Gap, and the Cumberland River. This byway holds natural resources, unique geology, rich histories, and recreational activities for its travelers.
Norris Freeway, located near the heart of East Tennessee, is a byway steeped in American innovation history. This byway passes over Norris Dam, the location of which was selected by the Tennessee Valley Authority, to control the flooding in the Clinch and Powell River watershed. Beside flood control, there were a range of conditions that were to be addressed: the absence of electrical service in rural areas, erosion, and landscape restoration, and a modern road leading to Knoxville, the headquarters of the Authority and a supply center for dam building materials. This byway begins in Rocky Top (once known as Coal Creek) and heads southeast to the unincorporated community of Halls. Along the way, it crosses Norris Dam, runs by several miles of Norris Dam State Park, and skirts the City of Norris and that town’s watershed and greenbelt. Parts of Anderson County, Campbell County, and Knox County are traversed along the route. With the beautiful scenery of the Tennessee Valley and state parks, travelers along the Norris Freeway can marvel at the innovation of the Norris Dam.
Sequatchie Valley Scenic Byway
Tennessee

The Sequatchie Valley Scenic Byway runs through Marion, Sequatchie, Bledsoe, and Cumberland Counties, connecting one of the most picturesque and undisturbed regions of the United States. Hemmed in by Walden’s Ridge to the east and the Cumberland Plateau to the west, the Sequatchie Valley still bears the appearance of a highly productive agrarian landscape. Rich in history and offering many opportunities for outdoor recreation, agritourism, and regional folk culture, the Sequatchie Valley Scenic Byway is poised to become one of Tennessee’s most desirable destinations.

The Sequatchie Valley holds one of Tennessee’s most dramatic landscapes, its geographic and geological characteristics shaping its history and culture. The source of the Sequatchie River is near the Bledsoe/Cumberland County line at Grassy Cove, a National Historic Landmark. The Valley offers many enticing resources, though the scenic views are the top reason to travel the byway. The byway’s side roads offer opportunities for outdoor recreation on trails and the Sequatchie River, and the Valley tells the story of the mining history that was prevalent in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries and shaped the historic built environment in the Sequatchie Valley. Further, the byway offers opportunities to experience folk culture with festivals, hand-made crafts, farm-stands, and local restaurants with fresh-baked goods.

Image Title: Sequatchie Valley View - used with permission of Southeast TN Development District.
Zion Scenic Byway
Utah

Zion Scenic Byway showcases unparalleled scenery, sensitive natural resources, and diverse opportunities for outdoor recreation. Four unique communities are framed by Utah’s crown jewel - Zion National Park. This renowned landscape demonstrates a confluence of geology, climate, vegetation, wildlife, and human settlement that awes and exults all who enter.

This byway is part of the ancestral lands of the Virgin River branch of the Kayenta Anasazi, or northern Ancestral Pueblo people. These ancient inhabitants left petroglyphs carved along the corridor, along with the remains of dwellings and storage granaries. After 1000 A.D., the Southern Paiute people moved into the region from the west.

“Loogoon,” meaning the arrow quiver, is the Paiute’s name for the canyon. This name means “you go out the same way you go in” and hints at the sense of awe and trepidation that the canyon inspired. Later, Mormons explored the upper Virgin River valley for potential farm sites in 1858. By 1860, small Mormon settlements, along with their orchards and cotton fields, were sprouting up beside the Virgin River, and by 1863 crops were being cultivated on the floor of Zion Canyon itself.

The Zion Scenic Byway is a destination unto itself for recreational visitors from around the world. Annual visitation to Zion National Park continues to reach record numbers each year and, in 2018, exceeded 4.3 million visitors. Travelers along this byway enjoy activities such as hiking, road and mountain biking, fishing, river running, swimming, camping, picnicking, bird watching, Off-highway vehicle riding, and photography. The byway offers incredible opportunities, and scenic qualities are evident along every mile. With towering peaks, canyons, mesas, cinder cones, cliffs, and vivid colors, the Zion Scenic Byway offers some of the most beautiful and interesting vistas on earth.

Image Title: West Temple - used with permission of Zion Forever, Wade Wixom.
The Cascade Loop Scenic Byway delivers a smorgasbord of scenic views and unique experiences that cannot be experienced anywhere else. The Cascade Loop carries travelers through 440 miles of scenic wilderness, sweeping views, abundant wildlife, and outdoor adventure. Guests traverse misty, emerald green forestland, towering jagged alpine peaks, the steely blue waters of the Puget Sound, the immense Columbia River, and acres upon acres of orchards, vineyards, and farmlands. The Cascade Loop introduces guests to the North Cascades National Park – the most glaciated national park outside of Alaska – and offers access to an active volcano for photography or a full-on mountaineering expedition.

Most Cascade Loop visitors are from out-of-state and many visit from overseas as well. Travelers seek out the byway’s pristine beauty and authentic adventure opportunities that create lifelong memories that can be found nowhere else. The Cascade Loop is seen as “the great American road trip” – a place to experience environments and activities that truly define Washington State and the Pacific Northwest.
The Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Wisconsin is parallel to the Mississippi River, full of grandeur as a national and international landmark. The vistas are magnificent, even spiritual. The voices of early settlers and native peoples stimulate the senses to open the heart and eyes for present day experiences that lead to understanding and engagement. This byway is an adventure into the world of history and culture that connects the traveler to a rustic and welcoming lifestyle. The 250-mile byway is indeed a destination in itself: it flanks one of the world’s greatest rivers, which rambles along Wisconsin’s western border carving frontier history and picturesque River Towns from the bluffs of the Mississippi limestone. This is the Upper Mississippi and Wisconsin’s Bluff Country - distinctly relaxing and beautiful.

Recreational opportunities are plentiful, whether it be biking the Great River Road; fishing, boating, bird watching, hiking or enjoying the over 50 local parks, beaches, recreation areas and the 12 State and 4 National recreation features of the Great River Road National Scenic Byway of Wisconsin. The byway offers the visitor the opportunity to visit one of America’s unique Lock and Dam systems that supports the commercial waterway transportation system for barge traffic and boaters alike. In any season, whether the new green of spring, the white mantle of winter, the summer sunlight, or the amber hues of autumn, the Wisconsin Great River Road is a delight.
Door County Coastal Byway
Wisconsin

Door County Coastal Byway connects a multitude of unique natural and recreational attractions. For the Door County Peninsula in northeastern Wisconsin, a combination of geology, two major bodies of water, and geography create an ecosystem that is globally recognized for its diversity and its many rare and endangered species of plants and animals. These natural features provide travelers a wide array of active recreational options, from fishing and water-based activities to hiking and land-based activities. For those looking for a slower pace, the byway offers leisurely drives and parks with water views. The byway allows visitors to navigate and enjoy the more than 25 state and local nature preserves, plus the three state parks, ten county parks, and numerous local parks found along the byway. The charming coastal communities offer a wide array of visitor amenities along the byway.
Wisconsin Lake Superior Scenic Byway
Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Lake Superior Scenic Byway follows the shoreline of the largest freshwater lake in the world and provides access to the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore and abundant opportunities for recreation along the way. The route starts at the Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge near Ashland, where you begin to get a sense of the serenity that accompanies a trip along the byway. Along this byway is one of the longest stretches of publicly owned Lake Superior shoreline. A walking trail provides access to sandy beaches and views of the Apostle Islands. Along with the many recreational trails and activities, visitors can observe several buildings that are on the National Register of Historic Places. The Lake Superior Chippewa Reservation is located along this byway as well; these tribal lands encompass 22 miles of Lake Superior shoreline. Attractions include a resort and casino, campground, marina, and Frog Bay Tribal National Park. The byway curves around the South Shore of Lake Superior, where travelers pass farm fields and forested areas and then Meyers Beach, an access point to the sea caves. The byway brings travelers to the sandy beaches of the Port Wing Boreal Forest and hiking opportunities at Twin Falls hiking trail. The mouth of the Brule River, located within Brule River State Forest, is a world famous trout stream and wilderness area where five presidents have visited. The Wisconsin Lake Superior Scenic Byway holds an abundance of pristine natural features and recreational opportunities, making the byway an outstanding destination for all travelers looking for outdoor recreation and scenic beauty.
Flaming Gorge - Green River Basin Scenic Byway
Wyoming

A journey along the Flaming Gorge - Green River Basin Scenic Byway rides along high ridges with views of fifty miles or more in any direction. The road touches lightly on the landscape as it rolls, dips, and twists across a dry and impossibly big sky. The windswept land, alongside the emerald water of the Flaming Gorge Reservoir, is a splendid fishing and water recreation resource. Visitors may drive for pleasure across the byway and experience immense blue sky, brilliant white billowing clouds, multi-colored rock, and vast grasslands. This drive passes through the nationally significant Wyoming Basin, a specific physiographic region used by the National Park Service and geographers to organize the country’s landscape as influenced by geography, watersheds, and landforms. Even more striking than the ridges are the deep canyons carved in the landscape by millions of years of erosion by streams and rivers originating in the nearby mountains.

Recreational opportunities within the byway corridor are vast and dispersed. The Flaming Gorge Reservoir provides a nationally significant resource managed as the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area. Boating is popular on the reservoir, with stunning views of multi-colored canyons and spires set against the changing colors of the water. Fishing in the Green River and the reservoir is internationally renowned.

The natural landscape of the Flaming Gorge - Green River Basin Scenic Byway is vast with a largely unaffected and diverse habitat, making recreation plentiful. The drive itself across the expansive panorama of land and sky is awe inspiring, nationally significant, and worthy of All-American Road designation.