



# COLORADO'S SCENIC BYWAYS

## R E S O U R C E K I T

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Assessing Best Practices for Colorado  
Scenic and Historic Byways  
(May 2003)





# Assessing “Best Practices”

**For Colorado Scenic  
and Historic Byways**

# Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways



## Assessing “Best Practices” for Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways

*Prepared for*  
**The Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Commission**

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# COLORADO SCENIC AND HISTORIC BYWAYS PROGRAM

## INTRODUCTION

The Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Program, created in 1989, is a statewide partnership intended to provide recreational, educational, and economic benefits to Coloradans and visitors through the designation, interpretation, protection, infrastructure development and promotion of a system of outstanding touring routes in Colorado. There are now 24 designated Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways. Each byway has an organization, composed of representatives from federal and state agencies, county and municipal government, local historical societies, and other interested parties who are generally responsible for the promotion, protection, and interpretation of the byway. Some organizations are formally incorporated while others are loosely organized.

In 1999, the Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Program received a National Scenic Byways Grant to better understand how Colorado's scenic byway organizations were progressing with their byway efforts ten years later. Three individual consultants were retained by the Colorado Department of Transportation in 2000 to assist in this effort. The scope of work included reviewing all existing corridor management plans, conducting a written survey of all local byway organizations, and following up with an in-depth telephone interview with representatives of selected byways. The results of the year-long survey were presented at a statewide byways conference in 2002 and additional information was gathered.

The consultants focused their efforts on understanding the byway's successes and issues related to protection, interpretation, marketing and management of these important Colorado resources. The evaluation addressed how existing corridor management plans were being used, what was working and not working, and the types of activities byways were working on, both short term and long term. The end result is this "best practices" report with case studies and guiding principles.

When the program started back in 1989, most byways organizations were interested in promotion, so the early projects and activities were aimed primarily at developing brochures and providing tourist information. But times changed in Colorado during the 1990s as more people moved in and growth became a big issue – and byways organizations started to change their focus away from promotion and towards more resource protection. This also seemed to be the result of maturing byway organizations – they became more willing to tackle the harder issues like resource protection. The study confirmed what was suspected - that while some byways are still focusing on promotional activities, most are more concerned with preservation and protection issues.

The study also revealed a wide range of activity among byway organizations. Some seemed to be very aggressive and had a long list of projects both accomplished and in progress, while others were working with a more modest agenda and fewer projects. In an effort to identify the common threads, we looked at each byway organization, and found 14 of the 24 designated byways with the most projects have three similar elements:

- 1) A *big vision* of what they want their byway to be.
- 2) They are *focused* on their agenda.
- 3) And they have a *leader* – either a strong individual or a big collaborative that speaks through a single voice.

The ten byways with more modest agendas are generally missing one of these three elements: big vision, focus, and leadership. It is our hope that all byway organizations will use the information in this document to evaluate their own progress and make the necessary changes to take their byway organization to the next level.



# ***I. SUSTAINING COLORADO BYWAY EFFORTS***

There are 24 Colorado Byway organizations in the State of Colorado. The first Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways were designated in 1989. The more recent byway organizations include Lariat Loop (2002), Trail Ridge Road (1999), and Dinosaur Diamond (1998). As part of the 2001 Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways evaluation, the Byway evaluation team contacted eight byways to learn more about how they were sustaining their region's byway effort. The byways contacted included:

- Alpine Loop
- Colorado River Headwaters
- Gold Belt Tour
- Grand Mesa
- Highway of Legends
- San Juan Skyway
- South Platte River Trail
- West Elk Loop

**The sustainability of the local byway effort analyzed the following principles:**

## **A. BYWAY ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT (including administration);**

- 1. Understand who has a stake in your byway and involve them from the start.**
- 2. Establish a collective mission or vision for your byway.**
- 3. Clarify and document commitments from your byway partners.**
- 4. If there is not agreement on the problem, there cannot be agreement on the solution.**
- 5. Build local capacity.**
- 6. Network with other byway organizations and agencies.**
- 7. Identify and solidify a management team and a home for the byway organization.**
- 8. Develop an organization that sustains itself over the long haul.**
- 9. Honor and respect different values and decision-making processes.**
- 10. Actions speak louder than words.**

## **B. COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERING**

- 1. Understand people and politics.**
- 2. Identify who benefits.**
- 3. Learn to appreciate the legal parameters of each partner organization.**
- 4. Identify mutual interests.**
- 5. Define appropriate roles and responsibilities. (Develop written MOU's between partners.)**

**C. FUNDING (including promotion and marketing)**

- 1. Don't get hung up on project financing.**
- 2. Organize for success.**
- 3. Plan for sufficient funds.**
- 4. Look to multiple sources of funding, leverage your resources.**
- 5. Identify a longer-term financing plan.**

The following section highlights the best practices throughout the state for each of the above categories.



*Collaborative Partnerships: The Alpine Loop is also designated a BLM Back Country Byway. State designation is a pre-requisite for designation by federal agencies such as BLM and US Forest Service.*

## A. *Byway Organization and Management*

### **Background:**

The 24 Colorado Byway organizations range in structure from an IRS 501c3, tax-exempt organization to purely volunteer groups. The earlier byway organizations were typically initiated by local governments, BLM and Forest Service, and were oriented toward increasing tourism in the byway region. A few of the earlier byway efforts were also supported and organized through a local chamber of commerce or tourism board. More recent byways tend to come into the program with a stronger base of volunteers and organizational structure.

### **Principles:**

The structure and management of these earlier byway organizations has evolved since 1989. Byway organizations have shifted from agency dominated byways envisioned in the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) early "how to" documents, to those whose organizational and management practices are more tailored to local resources and that allow for partnering with on-going efforts in the local communities that the byway serves.

"Be sure to involve those who may not be in favor of the byway, those who may have problems or difficulties due to increased traffic or impact on their lands"... *Gold Belt Senic and Historic Byway*

The principles in this section summarize the organizational and management practices that have helped these organizations endure shifts in political support as well as financial hardships over the last 12 years. In many cases, these first steps need to be revisited periodically to ensure the organization is still on the right track.

#### **Principle # 1: Understand who has a stake in your byway and involve them from the start.**

Be sure to have diverse representation on your board and involved in byway projects. Do not limit yourself to just the Federal Agencies and Chambers of Commerce. Ask yourself—who has the power to make this project a success? Who has the power to prevent this project from being implemented? Who may not yet understand that they have a stake in the success of the byway? Throughout the planning process, engage all who have a serious interest in the outcome of the byway effort. Also keep other future partners educated on what your byway is doing. They may not be part of all meetings, but through email and newsletters, they can keep informed.

#### **Principle # 2: Establish a collective mission or vision for your byway.**

The following guidelines will help you develop a mission statement or vision for a preferred future unique to your byway.

- Think about including statements that encompass all aspects of your byway: the environment, the regional economy, and the people who travel or live adjacent to the byway.

“Working together as the Dinosaur Diamond Prehistoric Highway Partnership, we desire to enhance, promote and protect the dinosaur fossil and archeological resources of the Dinosaur Diamond Prehistoric Highway.”  
*Dinosaur Diamond Scenic and Historic Byway*

- Remember to keep your mission statement or vision concise – try to distinguish between your vision and your objectives.
- Make every effort to ensure that your mission or vision statements are specific to your byway by asking yourself if your byway mission statement would apply to other Colorado byways. If your answer is ‘yes’, you have more work to do. Your byway mission statement – what you are striving for the byway to become, should highlight the values of the region as well as the special, intrinsic qualities that make your byway a special road to travel.
- Your mission statement should specify the qualities, characteristics, and unique features that you wish to preserve and enhance. Some byway organizations have found it useful to consider qualities or characteristics that they do not want to see along their byway.
- Be direct and decisive. Often the true wisdom of a collective byway mission statement is lost in eloquent phrases.

*“Our focus and mission has shifted from simply attracting tourists to telling the story and significance of the Colorado River.”*  
**Colorado River Headwaters**



### **Principle # 3: Clarify and document commitments from your byway partners.**

It is important for your byway partners to fully understand their role in the activities of the byway. These can be outlined in the corridor management plan or by formal agreement. The West Elk Loop byway organization developed a resolution that was signed by the various communities and supporting partners of the byway prior to their designation as a Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway. The resolution stated that the signing organizations “agree to work cooperatively with involved cities, towns and counties to develop a long term plan to improve the scenic and historic character of the loop through signing and promotion.” (see Appendix)

The following are a few helpful hints from Colorado Byway organizations:

- *“Our Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with all the towns and counties along our byway has been invaluable...when someone stops participating, we remind them of their commitment.”*
- *“We have established a number of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU’s) with the USFS—it’s in a format that they are comfortable with and prevents us from having to negotiate the form and content of the agreement, if we follow their lead.”*
- *“All members of our byway have signed a ‘partnership plan’.*

**Principle # 4: If there is not agreement on the problem, there cannot be agreement on the solution.**

How you frame the issues that your byway is wrestling with has much to do with your collective ability to solve the problems your byway is facing. Make sure everyone who is part of your byway organization agrees on the purpose and possible outcomes that the byway corridor management process and plan involves. Most of the Corridor Management Plans have developed well-thought out goals and objectives, but few have clearly articulated and outlined the issues or problems they are attempting to address. State the problem and issues as simply and concisely as possible to avoid false expectations on the part of board members and stakeholders. A few other factors to consider:

- Agreement on the problem will be impossible if individual byway committee members or byway staffs are using the byway program to promote another agenda.
- Do not let potential projects or actions by State or Federal agencies totally consume your byway effort or take you off track. By agreeing on the problem, you can focus your efforts accordingly.



*“The FHWA’s development of an Environmental Impact Study for Guanella Pass involved a controversial decision to pave or not pave the byway. Thus, the early draft of the Corridor Management Plan for Guanella Pass was pre-occupied with this issue and did not fully address the intrinsic values that stakeholders wished to preserve.” Guanella Pass Scenic and Historic Byway*

## Principle # 5: Build local capacity.

Take advantage of opportunities to teach other organizations and agencies about the byway program. Ensure a healthy dialogue. Listen. Be open to new ideas and avoid strong positions that polarize those that you may wish to get involved in your byway effort.

- *“The old power structure in the region is dying off, we’re cultivating younger adults to step up to the plate.”*
- *“We have trained over eighty (80) volunteers- they help visitors hear and learn about our byway.”*
- *“We rotate our byway meetings from community to community. This helps us learn about communities along our byway. We have lunch...people look forward to the meetings.”*
- *“Make sure that those who promote the byway have accurate information about what the byway has and doesn’t have. This allows you to maintain your byway resources.”*

*“CDOT’s regional transportation director and a representative from the Cattleman’s Association attend our byway meetings as does staff from the regional council of governments, BLM, and the National Park Service.” ...Gold Belt Tour*

## Principle #6: Network with other byway organizations and agencies.

Our evaluation of the 24 existing Colorado byway organizations revealed that those byways with strong connections to existing agencies, particularly local governments—towns, cities, and counties—were most successful. Additionally, byway organizations that built upon existing organizational structures, rather than inventing yet another local non-profit, have ensured that their byway effort is an integral part of all land use management efforts in their region.



*Interpretive sign on the South Platte River Trail.*

*We have worked with trail organizations (North Fork Trails Network, Gunnison Country Trails Commission). We have also worked with a local Crystal River community group, and are beginning ties with the newly formed Gunnison Heritage Tourism Council. We are also attempting to set up a system where we will provide review of county planning issues that come before the various county planning commissions. ...West Elk Loop*

*“Get your management team built as soon as possible, then start dreaming.” ...South Platte River Trail*

**Principle #7: Identify and solidify a management team and a home for the byway organization.**

An organization is more than one person. Management of a byway also requires more than one person. Before you establish a management team, first ask: *Who and how will we maintain it?* Find a home for the byway effort— where will byway information be housed? Who will answer questions about the byway effort?

*“The local college serves as our institutional home and support. We have developed strong institutional relationships with strong players who share a similar interest and mission.”*  
...San Juan Skyway

**Principle # 8: Develop an organization that sustains itself over the long haul.**

The two most common complaints from the Colorado byway organizations were:

- Volunteer burn-out; and
- Need for a paid staff person to manage the byway effort.

*One challenge is accomplishing tasks to complete a project using volunteers. We get the job done, but it may take a little longer because there is no paid staff to “drive” the projects.*

Many of the more successful byway organizations that have sustained themselves over time recognize that informal relationships and collaborations with organizations holding similar goals and objectives helps ensure that individuals as well as partner organizations do not become ‘overtaxed’. Additional tools that have allowed many organizations avoid volunteer burnout and fill the gap when no funding is available for a full-time director include:

- Check in periodically with volunteers and agency representatives to ensure they are still interested and agree with the byway’s mission and philosophy.
- For those byways that cover a large geographic area, consider subchapters or subcommittees that address a section of the byway and allows volunteers in that sub region to move forward at a pace that meets their needs.
- While face-to-face committee meetings are essential for any organization, using e-mail correspondence can often lessen the frequency of these meetings.
- Avoid creating yet another bureaucracy, when one may not be needed. Look to sustain the organization by leveraging byway resources with the resources of existing agencies and governments.
- Barter services.



## What makes byway organizations work effectively?

- Good regular working relationship between partners.
- Relatively consistent vision of what we want the area to be.
- Good success at applying for and receiving grants and funding.
- Assigning a project manager to follow through on a given project.
- Common resource bases (information, vision, commitment, etc.)
- Desire to promote while preserving resources.
- Desire to reap economic benefits.
- Intelligent Board of Directors that work together now.
- A good mix of government and local residents.
- Adequate funding to do the good stuff.
- Good variety of representation on the board.
- Good liaison with government agency.
- Strong leadership.
- Volunteers.
- Organizational structure.
- Regional financial support.
- USFS commitment.
- Good mix of stakeholders--government, town, chamber, nonprofits.
- Commitment (recently renewed).
- Common vision--protect and preserve.
- Paid staff.
- Interested Board of Directors.
- State resources.
- Small board.
- Committed stakeholders--one in most of the communities.
- Committed Forest Service partners.
- Ongoing staff support via Fort Lewis College.
- The enthusiasm of the volunteers.
- The organization of the meetings.
- The interagency/interstate interaction.

*Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Survey Results 3/22/01*



**Principle #9: Honor and respect different values and decision-making processes.**

A number of byway organizations have had to come to terms with different values and decision-making cultures along the byway. Active participants in the byway organization may have different perspectives on how the byway should be used. The first step is to understand the motivation, interests, concerns, and values of all volunteers associated with each byway project.

*“[Representatives from] one end of our byway want lots of marketing, [representatives from] the other end are concerned about too much use...” Colorado River Headwaters*

The next step is to ensure that the decision-making process respects the culture of the community. This may result in more than one decision-making process along the byway.

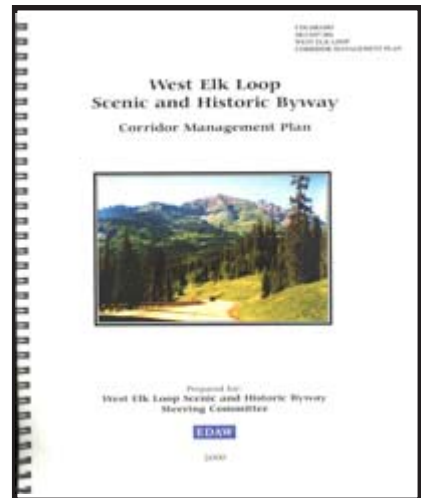
- Remember there is not one right decision-making process –avoid the cookie cutter mentality.
- Consider designing the decision-making process around the project at hand.
- Before settling on the appropriate process, clarify what each stakeholder and committee member already knows or needs to know to make an informed decision.
- Determine how many other organizations or agencies within your byway’s region have been discussing or participating in other forums that deal with byway concerns.

*“The greatest progress has been through the development of the CMP, and its recommendation to establish a process to address resource concerns within each county...we are beginning to contact each county to inform them of the issues important to the steering committee and to set up a working relationship...” West Elk Loop*

**Principle #10: Actions speak louder than words.**

Ensure that your decision-making process is action oriented. A course of action should be developed and implemented once you have completed your Corridor Management Plan (CMP). A “course of action” is a concise work plan that outlines:

- What will be done? In other words, what is the proposed action?
- Who is responsible for implementing the action?
- When can the action be accomplished?



- Where will the action be carried out? This should include both the geographic location as well as the location of those who are managing the project.
- Why is this a priority action?

This work plan should be revisited at least once a year to ensure that priority actions or projects are tackled first and to discuss if there are new resources or windows of opportunity that may allow implementation to occur sooner.

*“We have developed a checklist and timeframe for all of our projects.”*



*Lake San Cristobal - Silver Thread/Alpine Loop*

## ***B. Collaborative Relationships and Partnering***

### **Background:**

The creation of several federal scenic byway initiatives - the Bureau of Land Management's Backcountry Byways Program and the United States Forest Service's National Scenic Byway Program - at about the same time the State of Colorado initiated its Scenic and Historic Byway Program resulted in strong institutional relationships between local byway organizations and the federal land management agencies. Staff resources from both agencies helped byways form a local organization, a fundamental requirement of the Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Commission. In return, the Byways Commission included two routes BLM was proposing to their national byways program - the Gold Belt Tour (1989) and the Alpine Loop (1989) in the first round of state designations. The Byways Commission also grandfathered the existing USFS byways —San Juan Skyway (1988), Highway of Legends (1989), Peak to Peak (1989) into the Colorado program. A few years later, BLM helped with the designation of Unaweep Tabeguache (1991) and Los Caminos Antiguos (1992) byways.

*The USFS submitted three proposals to the Colorado Byway Commission without demonstrated community involvement and the Commission turned them down every time until they demonstrated they could work with the communities. Now as an organization, where the leaders are actually community people and the USFS is a partner, it is much stronger. . . **Grand Mesa Scenic Byway***

The inception of the Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Program and the Commission's requirement for a local byway organization comprised of area stakeholders has resulted in stronger ties to existing community efforts for most of the twenty-four Colorado byways. Our evaluation demonstrated that byways that do not rely solely on the federal agencies are much stronger than those who let the federal agency do all the work.



## Partners:

Over the last twelve years, byway organizations have established strong regional ties, built partnerships, and fostered collaborative relationships that have helped sustain byway organizations as well as specific byway projects and programs. The survey of the twenty-four Colorado byway organizations conducted in March of 2001 indicated that all of the byways collaborated with outside organizations on an on-going basis. Such collaborations included the following organizations or types of agencies:

- Western Colorado Interpretive Association
- Colorado Division of Wildlife
- Denver Rocky Mountain PBS
- Colorado Historical Society
- Bureau of Land Management
- National Park Service
- University of Colorado, Colorado Center for Community Development
- County Government and County staffs
- Municipal Governments and their respective staffs
- Regional and Local Museums
- Chamber of Commerce
- Region Councils of Government
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- US Forest Service
- Southwest Colorado Travel Region
- Local non profits -- historical, arts, and service groups
- Homeowners Associations
- Local Land Trusts
- Nature Conservancy
- Ft. Lewis College, Center of Southwest Studies

The following principles provide suggestions to strengthen and further develop collaborative relationships and partnerships:

### **Principle # 1: Understand people and politics.**

Byway projects that are actively supported by two or three interest groups have a higher chance of success than those projects that are simply supported by your own byway steering committee. Consider the following questions:

- Can you involve representatives from at least two of the following four sectors: public agencies (government), private concerns (local businesses, franchise establishments and corporations), non-profit organizations, and educational institutions?
- Are you willingly and actively seeking to include other interests in your project discussions?
- Have you included the ‘naysayers’? If not, is this cutting you off from criticism that will build a stronger byway effort and help to ensure the successful implementation of byway projects?

The byways that work best have equal partnerships between the federal agency and local stakeholders. The Gold Belt Tour is a good example of a byway that has support from all sectors. When they were developing their byway management plan, they put together an organization chart that showed how all sectors would be represented in the planning process. (See Appendix).

## **Principle # 2: Identify who benefits.**

A clear definition of regional as well as local benefit is attractive to potential supporters. Ensure that your byway project or program is easy to explain and understand.

- Shape your byway project to be compatible with other programs in the region and in local communities along the byway.
- Ensure your project helps to further implement adopted policies and regulations of State agencies, regional governments, and county and local governments.
- Make sure your byway project does not duplicate existing efforts. Rather, it should build upon or further existing efforts.

*Organizations active along the Mt. Evans Scenic and Historic Byway are engaged in working toward goals identified in the...Corridor Management Plan...Active partners include: United States Forest Service, Denver Mountain Parks, CDOT, Alpine Search and Rescue, Colorado Mountain Club, Sierra Club, Denver Botanic Gardens, the University of Denver, Clear Creek County Tourism Board, Colorado Division of Wildlife, National Audubon Society, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, Atlas Snowshoes, and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. **From: Mount Evans Scenic and Historic Byway...A Guide to Partnership***



*Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado sponsored a Trails Day at Mt. Goliath on Mount Evans Scenic Byway. Volunteers spent the entire day rebuilding sections of the trail.*

**Principle # 3: Successful partnerships require an appreciation of the legal parameters of each partner organization.**

Federal land management agencies, counties, cities, and towns may enter into partnership agreements. The legal instrument each organization may require will vary and each byway should avoid a cookie-cutter approach in developing agreements – look to use forms that partner organizations are already familiar with. Consider the following types of partnership agreements:

- Resolution passed by county or local government
- Cooperative agreements

Examples can be found in the Appendix at the end of this document.

**Principle # 4: Collaborative relationships and partnering arrangements require an identification of mutual interests.**

Interests and objectives of potential collaborative partnerships must be mutually shared by all parties. Thus, the first step in any potential partnering effort is the identification of mutual interest areas. In order for an effective partnership to be developed, prioritize those issues or problems that are shared among the potential partners.

- Closely examine the local context. A realistic appraisal of the local situation helps ensure that partnership objectives are attainable.
- Past experiences with partnership arrangements should be evaluated as a basis for forming new partnerships. Historic relationships within each region or community will determine the specific approach that must be taken to address any concerns.
- The objectives of any cooperative effort need to be defined at the outset of the partnership. The formation of the partnership should be a priority of top-level officials within agencies and organizations so that adequate staff and organizational resources are made available to the planned byway project or program.



*Byway organization meeting*

**Principle # 5: Collaborative partnerships require the definition of appropriate roles and responsibilities.**

With any collaborating organization or agency, it is essential that each partner understand two factors: organization and leadership.

- **Organization:**
  - All partnerships should be well organized and managed in a business-like manner.
  - Each partner should be held accountable to all parties involved.
  - A facilitator may assist in stimulating or fostering collaborative links where a history of cooperation is not present.
  - Document the partnership – roles, responsibilities, financial, and any other commitments.
  
- **Leadership:**
  - Capable leadership must be available for the negotiation and accomplishment of any partnership activity. This in turn ensures continuing commitment to the byway effort and adequate staff support to implement the project.
  - Leadership must understand and deal equitably with the needs and requirements of each collaborating agency.



*Meeting with consultants.*

## C. Funding

### Background:

The Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Program has received over \$9 million in federal funds, matched by more than \$4.3 million from local partners since the inception of the National Scenic Byways Program in 1991. Individual byways have received anywhere from \$ 60,000 to \$1,728,230 from this grant program since 1992. The largest single grant was \$653,040 to the San Juan National Forest to implement several projects on the San Juan Skyway. It is interesting to note that the San Juan Skyway organization was also able to take a very small \$39,000 Preservation Plan grant and leverage an additional \$9 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the most ever received for a byway implementation program. The smallest grant award of \$5,680 funded the printing of a brochure for the Pawnee Pioneer Trails.

The pool of funds available on an annual basis from the National Scenic Byways Program fluctuated during the first six years under ISTEA, but has remained relatively constant in the past six years under TEA-21 – around \$20 million. However, the amount of money awarded to Colorado each year has varied due to competition from around the country. In recent years, the Byways Committee has initiated a policy of submitting small grant projects--those less than \$100,000 in an effort to get more projects funded with the limited funds available.

### GRANT FUNDING FY 92-2002

<i>PROJECTS</i>	<i>FEDERAL</i>	<i>LOCAL MATCH</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
FY 92 13 projects	\$567,350	\$179,727	\$747,077
FY 93 14 Projects	\$700,135	\$297,800	\$997,935
FY 94 6 Projects	\$291,783	\$370,391	\$662,174
FY 95 10 Projects	\$508,110	\$158,090	\$666,200
FY 96 21 Projects	\$1,421,320	\$461,880	\$1,883,200
FY 97 11 Projects	\$1,463,949	\$393,937	\$1,857,886
FY 98 5 Projects	\$379,400	\$94,850	\$474,250
FY 99 16 Projects	\$1,853,482	\$546,120	\$2,399,602
FY 2000 4 Projects	\$681,246	\$263,744	\$944,990
FY 2001 11 Projects	\$497,840	\$143,960	\$641,800
FY 2002 17 Projects	\$686,121	\$1,463,322	\$2,149,443
<b>128 Total Projects</b>	<b>\$9,050,736</b>	<b>\$4,373,821</b>	<b>\$13,424,557</b>



## OTHER PROGRAM CONTRIBUTORS

With less federal grant dollars available, local byways have resorted to other State and Federal grant programs as well as local fundraising and entrepreneurial efforts to sustain the byway organization, continue to implement projects, and maintain improvements. While the Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway Program does not track the number of grants or amount of funding awarded to individual byway organizations that are not used as a match to National Scenic Byway funded projects, the 2001 Byway Evaluation Survey did indicate that the following agencies and organizations have awarded funding to local byway efforts:

- Great Outdoors Colorado Trust (GOCO)
- Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)
- Foundations (Gates, Bacon, etc.)
- State Historical Fund (SHF)
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- BLM and USFS
- Governor’s Smart Growth/Heritage Communities Program
- Watchable Wildlife (DOW)
- Colorado Council on the Arts, & National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)
- CDOT - Enhancement Funds

In addition to federal and state funds, the Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway Program has received a number of other contributions that benefit all Colorado byways.

- KUSA-Channel 9 for development of video – cost unknown (byway program did not have to contribute).
- Rocky Mountain PBS – to develop a series of videos, teacher guides, and web sites on 5 byways – cost, at least \$500,000.
- Denver Post/Total Petroleum for development of a marketing piece for free distribution – cost unknown (byway program did not have to contribute).
- Gates Foundation – \$145,400 total (\$25,000 grant to develop a statewide planning program; \$ 50,000 for foreign language brochure; \$28,000 to print statewide brochure; \$42,400 to hold planning workshops).

*Examples of PBS Products*



The most commonly identified need from all byways that responded to the survey was funding for paid staff and administration expenses. Presently the TEA-21 funds from the FHWA (through CDOT), are the main source of funds for most Colorado Byways. However, these funds can only be used for concrete “enhancement projects,” not for operating costs. Colorado Scenic byways that receive official designation as a ‘National Scenic Byway’ or an ‘All-American Road’ through the National Scenic Byway Program are eligible for a “seed grant” intended to strengthen a byway organization’s capacity to help implement the corridor management plan. These grants of up to \$25,000 are only available for up to 5 years and must be matched by the required 20%. The FHWA intends that these funds will enable the byway organization to identify and establish permanent funding sources to sustain the organization.

### **Principle # 1: Don’t get hung up on project financing.**

There is “one” in every crowd (and should be). That “one” is the person who asks very early in the process what it will cost to implement the project being considered. That person’s next comment after getting a “ball park” figure will be to ask how much money the byway currently has in its budget. Invariably, there is a dramatic difference between what you have and what you need. This should be considered a normal part of life, like eating and breathing.

If the project being contemplated is one that makes sense to the partners and communities, shows some real potential to benefit the byway, and is something that reasonable people can support, it should have a very good chance of success. The group will still have to work to raise the funds, but you can’t finish a successful project if the cost question stops you right at the beginning.

- Keep the focus on the long-term vision.
- Break down vision into doable projects and programs.
- Develop realistic cost and operating budgets.

### **Principle # 2: Organize for success.**

There are as many types of organizations as there are projects and people. One tax-exempt entity may operate (in practice) in a very different manner than other tax-exempt organizations. Find the organization and operating style that best fits your group and your projects. Some basics issues should be met including:

- Meeting all of the legal reporting requirements of your type of organization.
- Keeping consistent and accurate financial records and agendas/minutes of all meetings the group holds.
- Ensuring that you have the technical capabilities to meet the reporting requirements that come with Federal/State funds. This is essential.

The budget for the byway organization can be developed on an annual or project-by-project basis. This will depend partly on requirements of funders, partially on how many activities the organization takes on in a given year, and on the general nature of the group. Some will want to look at the budget as a year made up of a number of projects; others may have less ongoing organizational work and will want each project budget to stand alone.

Ask the following questions:

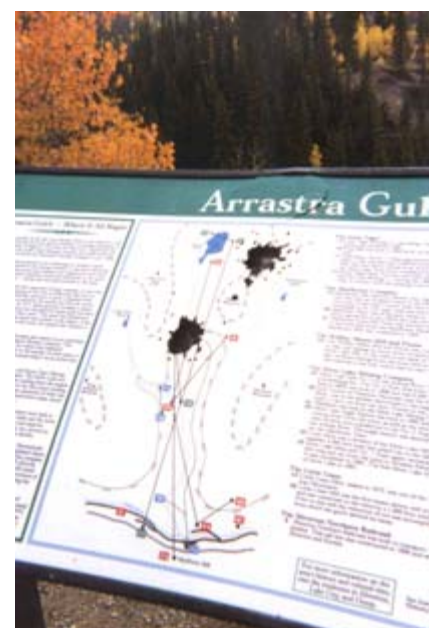
- Who will manage the finances?
- Do you have legal authority?
- Can you use an existing entity (city, county, interpretation association, non-profit, etc.) to handle the money, or, do you have to create your own?
- Fund recipients must be a recognized entity of the State of Colorado. This means it must be one of the following:
  - *Sole Proprietorship*
  - *Partnership*
  - *Corporation*
  - *Tax Exempt Organization*
  - *Governmental/Non-Profit*
  - *Association/Club*

### **Principle # 3: Plan for sufficient funds.**

Think through the financial needs to complete your project from inception through operations and maintenance. It is always easier to raise money to construct a project than to pay for long term maintenance and operation. Insufficient funding is a major contributor to program or project failure and could lead to a string of poorly implemented, poorly maintained, or incomplete projects. It is better to build upon successful projects than have poor, or partially completed efforts as a legacy.

- Budget for management, installation, distribution, repair, and maintenance.
- Budget for promotion, travel, meals, and subscriptions.
- Ensure that there are funds to operate and maintain after the initial grant.
- Staffing is always a key issue as is volunteer management.

*Interpretive sign damaged by bullet holes.*



#### **Principle # 4: Look to multiple sources of funding, leverage your resources.**

Don't just rely on National Scenic Byways Program grants as the flow of funds is unpredictable and it puts your byway's work in a situation where you come to rely on one source of funding. This reliance on one source will serve to limit your thinking about the project. It will also create a perception that the byway organization is a single-focus effort, funded by a single entity. If that perception is created, other potential partners will be much less likely to join the effort.

- Connect with other community or regional projects (county-wide trail systems, local land trusts, Fishing is Fun projects, regional and local events, chamber of commerce and economic development councils).
- Communicate with other organizations that have on-going projects in the area (ski groups, four-wheelers, fisherman and hunters, etc.).
- Look for the common threads that tie your efforts to others.
- Bring something to the table if you can – don't always be the one asking.
- Present byway information in numerous venues. (web site, brochures, interpretive signs, newsletters, slide shows, etc.)
- Development or expand membership funding.
- Look into developing products for sale (maps, books, cards, hats, shirts, etc.).
- Partnership with interpretive associations.
- Share space and products (visitor center in chamber of commerce office, etc.).
- Promotion materials that produce fees for their development and circulation (news print advertising, etc.).
- Look into yearly funding from lodging taxes (for promotion and marketing).



*Promotional products developed and sold by the Grand Mesa Scenic Byway Association*

## **Principle # 5: Identify a longer-term financing plan.**

Given the structure of most if not all of the byway organizations in Colorado, a permanent financing plan is unlikely. However, Colorado byways should be at the stage of developing a three (3) to hopefully five (5) year budget for their organization. A longer-term budget should at minimum address the following:

- Development of part-time to full-time staffing.
- Look into development of multi-year pledges.
- Delineate funds available to the organization on an annual basis. (Partners fees, membership, line items in city, county, chamber of commerce and economic development groups)
- Analyze the probability of funding and range of funds available from grants and donations on an annual basis.
- Identify contingency funding methods as well as a strategy—in other words, reliance on grants that are not in hand may leave you with serious operational and maintenance issues that cannot be ignored.
- For byway organizations that have not identified funding that can be counted on from year to year, flexibility is key. It will require far more strategic planning regarding project and program priorities.
- Conduct an annual cost and benefit analysis. If grant funds are dwindling from certain funders, have you developed programs or projects that reflect the reduction in grant dollars? Is it worth the organization's effort to chase grant funds if there is a low probability of receiving funds? Could your organizations energies best be spent elsewhere?
- Finally, few of the budgets reviewed through this evaluation were adequate. Consider in-kind services from local accountants or even municipal or county finance directors. Invest in simple accounting software which can at minimum provide you with profit and loss statements, balance sheet, cash flow analysis and expense budgets all of which allow you to compare actual expenses with budgeted amounts.



## **II. BYWAY EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION**

Education and interpretation are key elements of any successful byway. They express local character, bring enriching stories alive, build respect and understanding of an area's history and environment and instill memories that can last forever. Colorado's Scenic and Historic Byways illustrate many excellent approaches to education and interpretation. These diverse examples can be used to help each byway as they improve and update their education and interpretive programs.

### **Principles**

There are several principles that should be followed to create and sustain a viable education and interpretive program for Colorado's Scenic Byways. These principles were developed through interviews, site visits and the review of the education and interpretive materials from the following Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways.

- Alpine Loop
- Cache la Poudre – North Park
- Flat Tops Trail
- Frontier Pathways
- Gold Belt Tour
- Mount Evans
- South Platte River Trail
- Silver Thread
- West Elk Loop

### **THE PRINCIPLES FOR EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION:**

- 1. At the outset, develop an interpretive plan that focuses on the unique qualities of your byway.**
- 2. Develop diverse partnerships to create, implement, and sustain your interpretive programs and facilities.**
- 3. Create a diversity of interpretive methods and materials to meet different users' needs.**
- 4. Create high quality designs for all interpretive materials.**
- 5. Develop training programs for byway volunteers, staff and the local public.**
- 6. Establish a monitoring program to help you understand which education and interpretive programs are succeeding and why.**
- 7. Establish a sustainable maintenance program for all education and interpretive facilities.**

## A. Planning

**Principle #1:**                    **At the outset develop an interpretive plan that focuses on the unique qualities of your byway.**

A well-developed interpretive plan is important to the success of a byway. It establishes the framework and direction for future interpretive projects. The plan clarifies the themes for interpretation; defines critical education and interpretation projects; identifies partners and phases implementation. An interpretive plan should be developed early in the history of a byway and updated as needed. As quoted from a byway representative, “Our interpretive plan is so used it is worn to a frazzle. It’s eight years old and has been really useful.”

### *Guidelines*

- *Include diverse representation on your planning team and involve those constituents throughout the planning process. Include diverse user groups who own land along the byway as well as adjacent agencies, chambers of commerce and others.*
- *Follow the mission and vision statements established in the Corridor Management Plan. Build from the direction provided in that plan.*
- *Make sure the interpretive themes, policies and guidelines in your interpretive plan specifically express your byway. After implementing your interpretive plan the visitor should clearly understand why your byway is unique.*
- *Plan holistically. Be sure the interpretive plan includes information on how to interpret the natural, historic, cultural and scenic resources that make your byway special.*
- *Make sure the plan is action oriented. When the plan is complete you should have a clear idea of what you need to do, when it needs to be done, the steps you need to take to complete the tasks and general costs involved.*
- *Build support for the byway in the process of developing the interpretive plan. As the plan is forming develop an implementation program and establish a support group that will help you implement the plan.*

### *Example: Frontier Pathways*

Frontier Pathways Scenic and Historic Byway has a concise and well-developed interpretive plan. The plan establishes a clear focus or theme, interpretive topics, a

“Frontier Pathways Byway showcases the unique frontier meeting place of east and west; of low and high elevation; of more and less known territories -- and the natural and cultural pathways that connect these.”  
*Interpretive Theme*



needs assessment and recommended actions. It defines priorities, funding and potential partners. With this plan, byway representatives, whether old timers, who have been on the board for years, or new members, should have clear direction on how to proceed.

*Sample Interpretation Plans*



**Principle #2:      Develop diverse partnerships to create, implement, and sustain interpretive programs and materials.**

You must have strong partnerships to have a successful education and interpretive program. As stated by Colorado byway representatives:

- “You’ve got to build partnerships with other groups to have a successful interpretive program.”
- “Partnerships are the most important and most valuable relationships you can make.”
- “Sometimes it’s hard to coordinate everyone, but it’s a necessity.”

Partners help you implement the different elements of the interpretive plan, assist with distribution of materials, diversify expertise, expand resources and funds, maintain facilities and help ensure quality education and interpretation is sustained.

**Guidelines**

- ***Seek diverse partners. Recognize the importance of the chambers of commerce and adjacent government entities; also seek support from the public. Involve people from diverse professions that represent your byway (e.g., ranchers, miners, school teachers, natural resource specialists, historians, museum curators, business people and youth). Recognize that many agencies have professionally trained interpreters who have developed interpretive plans, implemented educational programs, managed visitor centers and created diverse interpretive media. Realize that chambers of commerce are used for distributing information and understanding marketing. Don’t limit your partners to entities within your byway. Recognize the benefits of partnering with adjacent or nearby byways.***
- ***Realize volunteers burn out and that you constantly need to recruit new people to sustain your program.***

**Examples: South Platte River Trail, Frontier Pathways/Gold Belt, Alpine Loop**

The ***South Platte River Trail Scenic and Historic Byway*** has successfully partnered with many other entities to implement its education and interpretive ideas. They worked with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), State Department of Local Affairs, Sedgwick County and the Town of Julesburg to develop an official State Welcome Center. Many locals took part in planning and developing the visitor center and other interpretive media. Local historians helped develop the wayside exhibits along the byway which the County maintains. In addition, the byway has over a hundred volunteers that help at the visitor center. The State Department of Local Affairs provides incentives to attract these volunteers. Volunteers who donate up to 100 hours of assistance are taken on a trip to special areas within Colorado. Besides attracting many volunteers this incentive provides a wonderful opportunity for people from different parts of the state to communicate and learn about other resource areas.

*Colorado Welcome Center  
in Julesburg*



***Frontier Pathways and Gold Belt Tour Scenic and Historic Byways*** have combined efforts to attract visitors from overseas who are interested in heritage tourism. They are linking byway resource areas and service facilities, such as local bed and breakfasts, to provide a personal, local experience to visitors. By combining byways they have a stronger tourism package and can more easily attract visitors interested in the history and local character of the region.

***Alpine Loop Scenic and Historic Byway***, like several other byways, has the benefit of dedicated government entities and chambers of commerce. The BLM developed an excellent interpretive booklet before the byway was designated and continues to partner with other entities to provide interpretive materials related to the byway. Diverse groups such as CDOT, Colorado Historical Society, BLM, US Forest Service and Lake City, Ouray, and Silverton chambers of commerce fund brochures and other interpretive materials.

### **Principle #3: Create a diversity of interpretive materials and methods to meet different users' needs.**

#### **Diverse Interpretive Packages**

Many different types of people use your byway. They range in age, education and interests. Some want to be deeply involved in experiencing the byway while others are quickly passing through the area. Some have school children while others are retired. You should make an effort to supply these diverse interest groups with interpretive materials that meet their needs. This will ensure that diverse groups gain an appreciation and understanding of your resources and the local culture. At the same time remember, "less is more". Implement the interpretive program step by step. Don't try to take on more than you can manage. Do a few projects well.

#### **Guidelines**

- *Develop a diversity of high quality education and interpretive materials and programs that reach the many different user groups that utilize the byway.*
- *Prioritize and phase interpretive projects so you can develop each material well.*

#### **Example: Frontier Pathways**

*Frontier Pathways Scenic and Historic Byway* has developed an incredible diversity of materials and programs and is constantly in the process of updating and creating new and innovative interpretive and educational materials. Some of their existing interpretive facilities and materials include main and focused visitor centers, roadside exhibits, a brochure, a booklet, a video and an audiotape. In addition, byway representatives give history programs in the schools, partake in local events and have a booth with several federal and state agencies at the State Fair. Currently, byway representatives are working on a partnership with the El Pueblo Museum, partnering to purchase the historic Goodnight Barn for an interpretive center, working with local youth, creating a new video in conjunction with PBS in Denver, developing a website and collaborating with the Gold Belt Tour Scenic Byway to jointly develop a heritage tourism program that attracts international visitors. To succeed in these endeavors they have created a multitude of partnerships and positive relationships with different groups and individuals.

*Interpretive sign developed with the US Forest Service and Colorado Division of Wildlife.*



## ***B. Types of Education and Interpretive Media and Programs***

There are many different types of education and interpretive media that you can use to help orient visitors and teach them about the resources along your byway. Each type of media has attributes and constraints. Carefully consider your byway's specific needs before deciding which interpretive media is best for your byway. One or two interpretive materials might adequately serve your byway. You do not have to invest in every different media type or program to successfully fulfill your education and interpretive needs. The following is a brief discussion of several types of education and interpretive media, guidelines to help you succeed in developing that type of material and examples of how that particular media has helped a Colorado Scenic Byway.

### ***VISITOR CENTERS***

Visitor centers, if carefully developed and maintained can be a vital asset to a scenic byway. They can also be expensive and consuming. Statistics show that use of many visitor centers is declining and that they can be a serious financial burden to owners. Realize that byways can often obtain space in a visitor center without having to be the prime manager and caretaker.

#### ***Guidelines***

- ***Partner with others to support, design, develop, staff and maintain a visitor center and related facilities.***
- ***Before investing in a visitor center be sure the facility is well located, highly visible, performs multiple duties and is economically sustainable.***
- ***Ensure that the main visitor center is located at or near the head of your byway. A main visitor center should provide a strong sense of entry to the byway and provide an opportunity for you to distribute information to visitors before they experience the byway.***
- ***Recognize that a main visitor center should focus on orientation and should inspire visitors to experience the resource. Do not expect a visitor to remain at a main visitor center for any length of time. The job of this type of visitor center is to provide information and encourage the visitor to take the time to experience the byway. Key themes should be introduced but do not need to be developed in detail. Interpretation should occur at a specific resource, such as a scenic overlook, a preserved ranch, a historic structure or town along the byway.***
- ***Recognize that support or theme-focused visitor centers/museums can help explain specific resource areas and should be considered key destinations along a byway. Support centers should be developed at or near theme-related resource areas. They should be used to explain specific resources. Visitors can be expected to remain in these areas for a while. Therefore films, multiple exhibits and special programs are appropriate.***

- *Where feasible, locate the visitor center near or in a community's downtown to strengthen that core area.*

***Examples: South Platte River Trail, Mount Evans and Silver Thread***

***South Platte River Trail Scenic and Historic Byway*** representatives consider the State Welcome Center the lynch pen for the byway. The facility is owned and maintained by CDOT and is one of eight welcome centers across the state. The facility is at the head of the byway, just across the river from the Town of Julesburg. It receives up to 700 visitors a day in the summer. The design is very well conceived both inside and out. The center jointly serves as a rest stop, a picnic area and an outdoor orientation and interpretive area. The community was involved in many respects of the design and continues to stay deeply involved in the center.

The ***Mount Evans Scenic and Historic Byway*** has two key visitor centers at the entry to the byway. One is a US Forest Service facility at the highway entry to the byway while the other is a Heritage Museum located nearby in downtown Idaho Springs. Both have exhibits and information on the byway. Byway representatives try to coordinate the two facilities to ensure both work as a unit and support each other. The Heritage Museum is a good example of a center that enhances a downtown. At the center the visitor can receive information on the entire byway; learn about many aspects of the community; and easily shop, eat and stay in town. The Heritage Museum also serves as an excellent place for community gatherings, which helps build local support and appreciation of area resources.

Another example of a successful downtown visitor center is in South Fork, at the south entrance to the ***Silver Thread Scenic and Historic Byway***. The community feels a great sense of pride for this center. Not only does the center provide information to byway visitors, but, at times, it serves as a community center, a meeting place and a landmark. The structure is maintained and staffed by the town and considered by the locals as a wonderful addition to the community.



*Silver Thread/Alpine Loop Visitor Center in Lake City*

The Lake City Visitor Center is unique since it serves both the ***Alpine Loop and the Silver Thread Scenic and Historic Byways***. The visitor center is at the head of both byways. The center provides space for the Lake City Chamber of Commerce, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the US Forest Service. Although exhibits are still being developed and interior space is being

rearranged, the center provides excellent “one stop” shopping for visitors. Guests can find out information and understand the resources and recreational opportunities along both byways.

### ***BROCHURES***

The purpose of a brochure is to succinctly provide critical information and guidance to visitors. They are considered indispensable to any byway. Most scenic byways provide an overall informational or route brochure. Brochures are also an excellent way to provide focused information related to a specific site or topic.



### ***Guidelines***

- ***Keep the brochure short and concise. Include only the most vital information (e.g., the route, key destinations/resource and recreation areas, local ethics, critical safety precautions).***
- ***Ensure that the brochure clearly expresses the unique qualities of your byway.***
- ***Include a map of the byway that clearly denotes the route and key destinations.***
- ***Make the brochure attractive yet inexpensive to produce. Plan to produce enough copies to serve the masses.***
- ***Recognize that the brochure may need to be updated every few years to reflect new styles, changing focuses of the byway or new byway facilities and destinations.***
- ***Develop a distribution plan and widely circulate your brochure. Ensure visitors have access to your byway’s brochure before reaching the byway, at the entry to the byway and as they experience the resource.***
- ***Develop specific brochures to inform visitors about a particular site, trail, or resource.***

### ***Examples: Frontier Pathways, Mount Evans, West Elk Loop, Alpine Loop***

***Frontier Pathways Scenic and Historic Byway*** has a beautiful four-color brochure that folds out into a poster sized document with an attractive centrally located map. Around the map are clearly numbered byway destinations with attractive color photographs. The brochure briefly describes facilities, museums, tips for travelers, information contacts and a summary description of the area’s natural and cultural resources. A centrally located section provides concise statements to encourage visitors to “tread lightly”.

The ***Mount Evans Scenic and Historic Byway’s*** 1995 brochure is an oversized four-color foldout. The brochure focuses on the centerfold map that indicates locations for winter and summer activities. Sometimes oversized brochures help your piece stand out amongst the mass of other brochures, however, they can be more expensive to produce and difficult to handle. Clear

readable maps are important, however, they often do not need topography and are easier to use if they are kept simple. But make sure visitors understand the use and the accuracy of your map. For example, some maps should not be used for hiking purposes. *Mount Evans Byway* representatives are redoing the brochure and are making a simplified map that can be removed from the brochure and placed in one's pocket for use along the byway. The Byway has good distribution with brochures available at Denver International Airport (DIA), visitor centers and many other Colorado visitor destinations. They also mail the brochure out to prospective visitors upon request.

*West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway* has simple two-color brochures for certain sections or zones of the byway. These guides effectively highlight key areas along specific areas of the byway. One of their brochures has a map on the cover with black and white photographs to identify key resources. This brochure was not expensive to produce and can easily be updated or reprinted as needed.

The *Alpine Loop Scenic and Historic Byway* has several excellent topic brochures. Some were completed in cooperation with several agencies while others were produced by the BLM. The Alpine Wildflower brochure is an attractive four-color brochure with beautiful photographs linked to concise descriptions of alpine plants. The Sound Democrat Mill brochure provides information for a unique self-guided walking tour through an historic mill. The brochure has excellent drawings and clearly illustrates the route through the facility with a clear description of each area. Safety and "leave no trace" information is also provided. This is an attractive brochure for a unique form of self-guided interpretation.

### **GUIDE BOOKLETS**

Guidebooks are good companion pieces to brochures. They are longer and provide more in-depth information than a brochure. Visitors who want to spend time along the byway and develop a deeper understanding of the area's resources appreciate these booklets. Follow the same guidelines used to develop a brochure with the realization that guidebooks will have more depth, be more expensive and will take more time and effort to produce. Develop a guidebook after the brochure is complete. Consider charging a small fee for the guidebook to offset costs and focus on the more serious byway visitor.



### ***Examples: Frontier Pathways, Alpine Loop, Silver Thread***

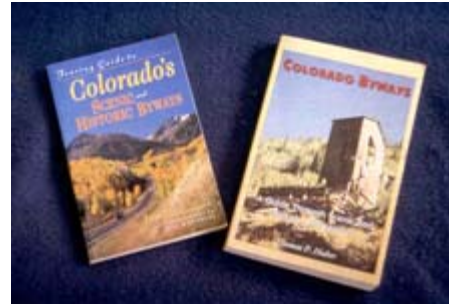
*A Traveler's Guide to the Frontier Pathways Scenic and Historic Byway* is a beautiful four-color piece that provides concise information on the key themes and destinations along the byway. Attractive sidebars provide interesting information ranging from the Ute creation story to area cattle brands.

The *Alpine Explorer* is a two-color booklet provided to visitors even before the byway existed. This popular document gives people adequate information so they can enjoy the resource and provides an ethics message. A four-color map is centrally located to direct visitors to specific locations along the route. The booklet currently costs \$2.50.

The *Silver Thread Historic Milepost Guidebook* is a four-color booklet, which uses the milepost markers along State Highway 149 to mark the points of interest. The book can be used in either direction, depending upon which end of the byway a traveler begins on. Historic photographs and sketches are used to illustrate the history of the byway and pullouts that have parking areas are noted as recommended stops. The byway group asks for a \$1.00 donation for the booklet.

## **BOOKS**

The production of a book takes a strong commitment of time and effort. You will need experts to assist in writing the book and funds for quality printing. While books are a wonderful way to assist local schools and build local pride amongst the few working on the document, sales and distribution may be difficult. Realize you may only be reaching a few people even though you are investing in a considerable effort.



## **Guidelines**

- *At the outset, recognize the commitment, the funds and the input necessary to produce a quality book.*
- *Consider developing of a book after you have a brochure and other programs that more easily reach a broader audience.*
- *Whenever possible, engage local writers, editors, graphic artists and publishers who have a deep sense of pride for the area.*
- *Determine your audience and marketing approach at the outset. Recognize that byway related books are usually more successful if they are written to reach a broad audience and are not highly technical. Be sure your distribution method is well developed so you are not left with boxes of unopened books after months or years of hard work.*

## **Example: West Elk Loop**

*Elk Mountain Odyssey, West Elk Loop Scenic/Historic Byway Guide* is a well written, attractive, two-color document that clearly defines each section of the byway. It provides an excellent background on the natural, historic and cultural resources and has wonderful historic photographs and highlighted stories. The cover is four-color with an attractive photograph that captures the qualities of the area (see photo, page 54). The primary goal of the publication is to educate residents about the importance of the area so they will support future preservation efforts.

## **COLORING BOOKS**

Scenic byway coloring books can help engage children in the area while teaching them about local resources. Although they do take some time, they do not have to be overly consuming and can be inexpensive to produce.



***Example: Mount Evans***

The ***Mount Evans Scenic and Historic Byway*** has a simple coloring book that has been very popular. It contains brief stories and drawings of key themes of the byway with games in the back. The byway has received many positive comments on the book. No fee is charged for the book but donations are accepted. A similar coloring book was created for the Guanella Pass Scenic and Historic Byway.

**WEBSITES**

Byway websites can be a valuable tool to attract visitors and build interest in your area. Some visitors plan much of their trip based on information from the web. All designated state byways are included in the state’s website. If you have national byway status you are part of the national byway website. In addition, byways partnering with federal entities can often tie to district websites. You also have the option to create your own site. Several byways have found that their websites have been highly popular and not only help draw the types of visitors they are trying to attract but also help them attract doctors and other needed professionals.

**Here are some byway websites:**

- [www.coloradobyways.org](http://www.coloradobyways.org)
- [www.byways.org](http://www.byways.org)
- [www.loscaminos.com](http://www.loscaminos.com)
- [www.rivertrailonline.org](http://www.rivertrailonline.org)
- [www.highwayoflegends.org](http://www.highwayoflegends.org)
- [www.sanjuanskyway.com](http://www.sanjuanskyway.com)
- [www.frontierpathways.org](http://www.frontierpathways.org)
- [www.grandmesabyway.org](http://www.grandmesabyway.org)
- [www.dinosaurdiamond.org](http://www.dinosaurdiamond.org)

***Guidelines***

- ***Determine the focus for your website. Recognize that your website can be more than merely a marketing piece. The web provides an excellent opportunity for you to stress the byway’s ethics and special resources.***
- ***Construct a simple website that is attractive and easy to use.***

***Examples: South Platte River Trail, Los Caminos Antiguos, Highway of Legends***

The ***South Platte River Trail Scenic and Historic Byway’s*** website has been very popular. They have had a huge response with up to 4700 hits in a day. This website is not commerce oriented but links to related business websites. The website focuses on history and includes specific stories with related music. They have had numerous people comment positively on this site.

The ***Los Caminos Antiguos*** website provides information on tours, places to go and stay, culture, an interactive map, and even a bibliography of suggested reading. They report an average of 9000 hits per month, with spikes in usage in May and September. After September 11, 2001 the website registered 28,000 hits and the usage stayed up in October.

In addition to providing an online tour of the byway, the ***Highway of Legends*** website also has information on current events, community services, links to other byway related sites, and membership dues, the byway mission statement, and the board of directors.

## WAYSIDE OR ROADSIDE EXHIBITS



*Vaughn Lake, Flat Tops Trail*

Byway representatives feel wayside exhibits are one of the most important means of education and interpretation along the byway. The exhibits are available to everyone any time, day or night; they are easy to maintain; they can quickly tell diverse stories; and they explain the important qualities of the byway. All byways should strongly consider having wayside exhibits.

### **Guidelines**

- *Hire professional exhibit designers and interpreters to help you design the wayside program and specific exhibits.*
- *Produce a wayside program to identify where the exhibits should go and the story that should be told on each exhibit.*
- *Ensure that the information you place on the wayside is accurate and authentic.*
- *Place waysides at the key resource but do not block critical views.*
- *Keep wayside exhibits to a minimum. Too many waysides clutter the landscape and confuse and overwhelm the visitor.*
- *Keep the exhibits simple and clear. Provide only short succinct messages with attractive graphics. Avoid creating a “book on a stick” which frustrates visitors and does not clearly express key messages.*
- *Place the waysides where the visitor can safely pull off the road and relax and enjoy the experience.*
- *Be sure that the long term maintenance of the wayside is established before the exhibit is built.*
- *Link wayside exhibits to other use areas such as trailheads and, where appropriate, provide other services such as picnic tables and restrooms.*
- *Recognize that sometimes one simple sign can significantly help with resource preservation. Sometimes an appropriately located wayside that explains why visitors should stay on trails, remain quiet or follow special regulations can help tremendously in reducing resource impacts.*

***Examples: South Platte River Trail***

The ***South Platte River Trail Scenic and Historic Byway*** has attractive, informative, well sited wayside exhibits. They hired a professional interpretive design firm to create the exhibits. They also had a professional writer, artist and technical expert. Local people provided strong guidance throughout the process. The waysides are along the scenic byway and at the welcome center. The county maintains the waysides. However, due to the high quality of the design they have found limited maintenance is needed. These exhibits help instill local pride and brought together many people within the area during the planning and design process.



*Interpretive sign, South Platte River Trail*

***TRAVELING EXHIBITS***

Traveling exhibits are a great way to make your presence known at conferences and trade shows without having to necessarily be present all the time. They can provide a visitor with a brief understanding of your byway, can be used as an interpretive tool, and help you get your educational message across in a concise and colorful manner. Depending on the style you chose, they can be updated to reflect current issues, and designed for specific audiences or changing seasons. Pitfalls to be aware of include high cost of shipping large displays long distances, storage of multiple filing cabinet-sized cases, and wear and tear on the graphics. Also beware of height – some of these displays require a 12-foot ceiling clearance in order to assemble, which may create problems in certain conference locations.

***Guidelines***

- *Have a clear understanding about when and where you want to place the exhibit.*
- *Consider not only cost but flexibility of design, storage needs and shipping requirements.*
- *For a more professional design, hire a qualified consultant.*

**Examples: UnawEEP Tabeguache, State Program, Gold Belt Tour**

The *UnawEEP Tabeguache* has a traveling exhibit developed by the Roybal Corporation. It has four magnetic panels that unroll and clip to a metal space frame with lights. It stands eight feet tall, twelve feet wide and less than two feet in depth. The space frame collapses and fits along with the rolled up panels into a single round carrying case weighing about 70 pounds. The plastic, translucent panels feature a map of the byway with photographs showing key stops along the byway. The byway group moves the display around between local museums and chamber offices. So far the only flaw is that the magnets tend to lose their power over time so the corners of the panels don't stay down as well. This type of exhibit may offer less flexibility in design than one with interchangeable photographs, although a second set of magnetic panels can be designed.



*State Byway Traveling Display*

The State Program also has a large traveling exhibit developed by the Condit Company. This exhibit stands eight feet tall and eight feet wide with a depth of about three feet and consists of twelve interlocking cloth covered panels - six on top, six on the bottom. Eight Velcro backed 2' x 2' photographs cover the two sides of the exhibit with a large 8' x 4' photograph cut into four panels in the center. Two halogen lights mounted at the top light the exhibit.

The exhibit panels lie flat in two rectangular carry cases with wheels and weighing about 120 pounds each. The exhibit also comes with a free-standing pedestal and brochure racks which attach to the panel walls. The Velcro photographs offer the ability to interchange photographs at any time. The disadvantage is the expensive shipping costs and the overall height. Exhibit areas with low ceilings make assembling the exhibit somewhat of a challenge.



*Gold Belt Exhibit*

The *Gold Belt Tour* developed a table-top exhibit, manufactured by the Condit Company and using the same cloth covered panels with Velcro photographs design as the State Program's exhibit. The *Cache la Poudre-North Park Byway* has a more simple folding table-top exhibit, with similar design: cloth covered panels to allow for interchangeable photographs mounted with Velcro.

## **VIDEO AND AUDIO TAPES**

Video and audiotapes provide yet another way to help visitors understand and appreciate the byway. Videotapes can be a good educational resource in schools and libraries and can be sent to specific user groups to attract them to your byway but in most cases, they do not seem to be working well. They are difficult to distribute and sell; they are difficult for visitors to use while they are in the area; and they are time consuming and often expensive to produce.

Some visitors really appreciate having audiotapes to explain specific resource areas and enliven their journey. However, the tapes often do not sell well, are difficult to distribute and go out of date. Like videos they can also be time consuming to produce.



CD's may be a better option than audio tapes since they are more adaptable and can more effectively be used on linear routes or routes with numerous entries. And more and more cars today come with CD players rather than tape players.

### **Guidelines**

- *Recognize the time, funds, and effort necessary to produce a quality video or audiotape.*
- *Engage quality film makers, speakers, and knowledgeable professionals to assist in the production of the tapes.*
- *Develop quality scripts before trying to produce the tapes.*
- *Ensure that audio tapes can be used both directions on a byway.*
- *Make the tapes simple and enticing. Personal stories help engage the user while overly technical and highly safety oriented tapes are less successful.*

### **Example: Flat Tops Trail, Frontier Pathways, Gold Belt Tour**

*Flat Tops Trail Scenic and Historic Byway* has a well produced audio tape with a quality narrative. Several different people represent different themes and life styles. The history, businesses, recreational resources and natural resources are well expressed. The tape is engaging and easy to understand. Time, effort and considerable thought went into its production. Tapes can be picked up by visitors at either end of the byway and returned at the opposite end. They have a good return rate and people appreciate the opportunity to use the tape while experiencing the byway.

***Frontier Pathways Scenic and Historic Byway*** has a quality video tape. The video has a well-formulated script, quality filming and good speakers. The story is not too technical or overly focused on safety regulations.

***Gold Belt Tour Scenic and Historic Byway*** has a high quality audio tape with excellent timing. It tells excellent local interest stories and captures your imagination as you travel along the route. The tape is also well timed so you do not need to keep stopping, fast-forwarding or adjusting the tape to meet your needs. The problem with the tape is that it was designed to be used in only one direction.

### ***PERSONAL PROGRAMS***

Personal interpretive programs can provide highly memorable interpretive experiences for visitors. Personal programs bring the unique resources and events of a particular area alive and provide personal interaction with visitors. At the same time, in order to have successful personal programs you must have a destination where visitors will take the time to listen and you must have well trained interpreters who develop quality presentations. Carefully evaluate if personal programs will work for your byway.

#### ***Guidelines***

- ***Be sure you have a place with a captive audience (e.g., campgrounds, downtown historic structures).***
- ***Ensure the interpreter is well-trained, good with people and develops a quality presentation.***
- ***Focus on topics that will interest the public, express your byway's ethic and lead to greater understanding and appreciation of your byway.***
- ***Partner with other entities who have interpreters on staff, whenever possible.***
- ***Include visuals and objects that can be handled by the audience.***

#### ***Example: Flat Tops Trail Scenic and Historic Byway***

***Flat Tops Trail Scenic and Historic Byway*** has successful interpretive programs. For example, they have interpretive talks at Trappers Lake, a destination camping area near the byway. The interpreters are USFS employees and volunteers with training in interpretation and education. The USFS is also considering working with a storeowner along the byway to provide additional interpretive programs. The store is historic and is the last place to buy supplies before reaching Yampa, which is twenty miles away. Campers also stay at the site.

### ***SCHOOL MATERIALS AND EVENTS***

Many of the byways have developed educational programs and materials that are used in area schools. These programs and materials are critical to the long-term success of the byway since they educate future generations about the importance of the byway and expose them to the

byway's resources. Byway representatives give special programs in schools, develop school kits for teachers and children and provide schools with books and videotapes.

Nearly all the byways either have special events or participate with others in special events. Special events are an excellent means to strengthen communities and build local pride. Many special events are directly tied to byway themes and help people experience the byway's natural, cultural and scenic resources in an unusual manner.



***Example: Flat Tops Trail Scenic and Historic Byway***

*Flat Tops Trail Scenic and Historic Byway* has a school kit that is primarily focused on natural resources. They are also in the process of developing a kit that focuses on the area's history. They envision that the kit will be self-use and be available all over the state. They hope to introduce a whole new generation to the byway in a fun and memorable way. Area interpreters also go to the schools, local clubs and groups to provide special programs on natural, cultural and historic resources of the area. Byway representatives also take part in numerous byway related events such as the Meeker Pageant and Annual Sheep Dog Days.

**Principle #4: Create high quality designs for all interpretive materials.**

All elements of the education and interpretive program should be well designed and carefully implemented. Your byway should exude a professional image and express the byway's local character. Several byways have done an excellent job of coordinating materials in a professional manner and expressing the local sense of place.

***Guidelines***

- *Develop a uniquely identifiable image that separates your byway from all other byways (e.g., a logo, photographic image, special type face, architectural style).*
- *As feasible, coordinate all your interpretive materials so that the visitor can quickly and easily recognize your byway.*
- *Engage professional architects, artists, writers, editors, performers and interpreters to assist you in developing interpretive materials. At the same time realize only locals can provide the information needed to illustrate the unique qualities of your place. They must be involved in any interpretive planning and design efforts.*

- *Recognize the level of effort and professionals needed to develop the interpretive piece and put together a quality, dedicated team from the start.*
- *Understand costs for developing the interpretive material or program at the outset to ensure your project is reasonable.*

***Examples: Frontier Pathways, South Platte River Trail***

***Frontier Pathways Scenic and Historic Byway*** has carefully coordinated all their interpretive materials. The brochure, travel guide, video and audiotape all have the same cover photograph. One can easily recognize the byway’s materials. At the same time each piece is carefully designed so that you can easily tell one interpretive piece from another. The byway’s materials are all of the highest quality. Everything is four-color and carefully crafted. The photographs are excellent and well integrated into the text and the filming of the video is high quality. The voices and script for the video and audio tape are clear and distinctive.

***South Platte River Trail Scenic and Historic Byway*** clearly went to a significant effort to develop quality interpretive materials and facilities. The Welcome Center architecture and the interior and exterior exhibits are well designed. Extra thought was given to integrate sculpture into the outdoor setting to further express the character of the place. Although the welcome center was not directly a byway project, it involved the same people that developed the byway and the locals consider it an integral part of the byway. The byway brochure was carefully designed and clearly expresses the unique qualities of the area. The logo of a galloping horseman quickly expresses the atmosphere of the place. Their wayside exhibits are nicely designed and well implemented. Visitors can easily tell that both these areas have a strong sense of local pride and considerable time was invested in developing their interpretive programs and materials.

**Principle #5:      Develop training programs for byway volunteers, staff and the local public.**

Local residents leave an impression every time they come in contact with a visitor. Visitors are guests to the byway and should be treated respectfully just as they should treat the area with respect. Training of staff, volunteers and service providers is critical to ensure that accurate information is distributed, ethics of the byway are instilled and that visitors are treated respectfully and, in turn, treat the byway with respect.

***Guidelines***

- *Ensure staff and volunteers learn appropriate customer service practices. Visitors should leave with a strong feeling that the local people are pleasant, friendly residents who deeply care about their area.*
- *Develop a program that ensures all staff and volunteers gain a basic understanding of the byway’s natural, cultural and scenic resources and appreciate the unique resources of the area.*



- *Realize that the same questions are often repeated by visitors and that basic answers to the most commonly asked questions is a good starting point for a training session.*
- *Whenever possible, include the general public in training programs.*
- *Realize that the physical presence of byway representatives in areas that are being abused or have user conflicts can significantly help reduce negative impacts.*



*Training session for byway volunteers, Cache la Poudre-North Park*

**Examples: Cache la Poudre – North Park, Alpine Loop, Mount Evans**

A highly affective training program was established for ***Cache la Poudre - North Park Scenic and Historic Byway***. Byway representatives worked closely with the US Forest Service to develop a volunteer “courtesy patrol” and “river ranger” program. The US Forest Service provided seasonal housing, trucks, boats and uniforms for the volunteers. The byway and the US Forest Service wanted a volunteer program that would help reduce resource damage and enhance visitor appreciation and respect for a heavily used and impacted area along the byway. They wanted volunteers to be friendly and courteous yet direct enough so visitors would understand that they needed to respect each other and the area’s resources. Two days of volunteer training were provided. The first day of training was open to the entire community. The program costs about \$8,000 to run. The US Forest Service funding for such programs has been reduced in recent years and the byway did not have adequate funds to institute the program during the 2002 summer. However they believe they will have sufficient funding to be able to run the program again in 2003.

***Alpine Loop Scenic and Historic Byway*** has a shared training program that they feel is not only successful but essential. The byway, chamber of commerce, BLM and US Forest Service have a joint volunteer training session each spring to ensure that all the agencies have coordinated information and that volunteers have the knowledge they need to be successful. The training program instills the concept of personal service, increases volunteers’ awareness of area resources and instills the byway’s ethics and users’ responsibilities. They train approximately twelve volunteers a year.

The Clear Creek Tourism Board provides hospitality training for a broad spectrum of volunteers and business people related to the *Mount Evans and Guanella Pass Scenic and Historic Byways*. The training is open to diverse groups and includes such entities as the US Forest Service, the Heritage Museum/Visitor Center and business people. An information book is also provided that was jointly developed by entities in the area such as Clear Creek County, Georgetown, Idaho Springs and the Clear Creek Economic Development Council. The training includes a bus tour of the resources, including the byways.

### ***C. Monitor & Evaluate***

**Principle #6:        Establish a monitoring program to help you understand which education and interpretive programs are succeeding and why.**

Byway representatives need to understand the successes and failures of their education and interpretive programs. Without this understanding it is difficult to know how to direct your resources in the future. Very few byways have established a monitoring system and they often do not know if education and interpretive media and programs are successful. All the byways have budget constraints and most feel that to create and implement a monitoring system is just too difficult.

#### ***Guidelines***

- *Partner with others to establish a monitoring system.*
- *Recognize that an educational and interpretative survey can be designed to provide other valuable information related to the byway.*
- *Involve local businesses in monitoring efforts and help them gather data that will assist them with their businesses.*

#### ***Examples: Cache la Poudre - North Park, Alpine Loop***

The *Cache la Poudre - North Park Scenic and Historic Byway* recently implemented two visitor surveys. They involved local business people, Colorado State University, US Forest Service and others to develop, implement, and tabulate the results. The courtesy patrol and river rangers implemented the survey. Volunteers and the University did data input, tabulation and report development. Local business people and the US Forest Service played a critical role in distributing the survey. Surveys were left all along the byway at public places and private businesses and resorts. The results have helped the byway more clearly understand the visitors and their needs.

In 1998, the *Alpine Loop Scenic and Historic Byway* Partners developed a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Land Management, the San Juan Mountain Association, and Arizona

State University's Department of Recreation Management and Tourism to conduct a customer survey of visitors to the byway. On-site surveys were administered to over 1200 visitors, and another 667 surveys were returned by mail. Six focus groups were held in nearby communities as part of the information gathering. The results are being used to develop a new management and interpretive program for the byway.



*The Alpine Survey revealed that the three communities are integral from the visitor's perspective. Partnerships and regional planning should provide a stronger and more appealing vacation and recreation destination.*

**Principle 7:           Establish a sustainable maintenance program for all educational and interpretive facilities.**

Any educational and interpretive facilities must be well maintained and updated as needed to enhance the scenic character of the byway. Educational and interpretive facilities that show deterioration such as decayed fencing, peeled paint, deteriorated pavement and walls or weather beaten signs all detract from a scenic byway. A maintenance program should be established to ensure facilities such as visitor centers, exhibits, pull-offs and restrooms are well maintained.

***Guidelines***

- *Establish a long-term maintenance program for each facility you plan to construct.*
- *Be sure the entity responsible for maintaining the facility is reliable and responsible.*
- *Design and construct facilities to minimize the need for long-term maintenance.*
- *Recognize, at the outset, that facilities will need to be updated; understand the life expectancy of each facility.*
- *Recognize that your partners along the byway can help install and maintain exhibits.*

**Example: Gold Belt Tour, South Platte River Trail, West Elk Loop**

Most of the interpretive signs for the ***Gold Belt Tour Scenic and Historic Byway*** are maintained by the BLM. However, the towns also maintain a few of the wayside exhibits. In some cases the towns have developed their own interpretive signs that work well with the byway. For example, the Town of Victor has completed interpretive signs that include mining equipment from the area and clearly express the local character and themes of the byway.

The wayside exhibits for the ***West Elk Loop Scenic and Historic Byway*** are maintained by the land manager where the facility resides. Therefore, different agencies maintain the wayside exhibits, and in one case a private landowner maintains a wayside exhibit. The public restrooms along the byway are maintained by the chamber of commerce from the town where the facility exists.

The welcome/visitor center for the ***South Platte River Trail Scenic and Historic Byway*** is maintained by CDOT and the wayside exhibits are maintained by Sedgwick County.

### **III. BYWAY RESOURCE PROTECTION & PRESERVATION**

Scenic byways are routes that offer travelers an opportunity to experience beautiful scenery as well as the cultural and natural riches of our country. Byway designation comes with the understanding that the byway’s resources—whether they consist of spectacular views, wildlife habitats, historic structures, or pristine landscapes—are irreplaceable resources that need to be protected and preserved to help the byway maintain the qualities that make it special and unique.

The dilemma of the disappearing countryside is not unique to Colorado. According to the USDA’s National Resources Inventory, the United States is losing 1.2 million acres of farmland each year to development, translating to 2 acres every minute. There is good reason to be concerned about potential threats to the land surrounding Colorado’s byways as well as the historic resources along the byways.

*Wet Mountain Valley, Frontier Pathways*



Colorado is experiencing some of the fastest growth rates in the nation, and growth pressures in Colorado along with the challenges of maintaining historic resources in remote locations are presenting challenges for Colorado’s scenic byways. Scenic Byways contacted included:

- San Juan Skyway
- West Elk Loop
- Peak to Peak
- Gold Belt Tour
- Pawnee Pioneer Trails
- Top of the Rockies
- Mount Evans

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN RESOURCE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION.**

**They are:**

- A. Know What You’ve Got. Identify and prioritize significant natural, cultural and historic resources on the byway.**
- B. Make People Care. Create an atmosphere conducive to resource preservation and protection.**
- C. Use “Carrots” and Sticks”. Identify preservation and conservation tools to protect valued resources.**

Colorado's byway organizations are placing increasing importance on resource protection and preservation. Survey responses from key Colorado byway stakeholders indicated that 10 of 20 Colorado byway organizations see "preserving and protecting byway resources" as the #1 objective for their byway out of a dozen options. Three more byway organizations ranked preservation as the #2 objective (behind interpretation and education) and still two more had it ranked third in importance. Thus for half (50%) of Colorado's byways, preserving and protecting resources is the byway organization's top objective, and for three-quarters (75%), preserving and protecting resources ranks as one of the top three byway objectives.

The increasing interest in resource protection also reflects a shift away from an emphasis on promotion for Colorado's byway organizations. As byway organizations have matured and as the impacts of unmanaged tourism have become evident, byway organizations have shifted their priorities to reflect a stronger preservation emphasis. Colorado's byways are finding ways to weave preservation and conservation messages into promotional and educational materials about their byway. There are a number of interpretive efforts along Colorado's byways that have been undertaken specifically to educate people along the byway about the value of their irreplaceable resources. The intent is to pave the way for future conservation efforts and help to avoid contentious preservation battles down the road.

In reviewing byway organization accomplishments to date, there are many more examples of byway interpretation and education projects than there are preservation or conservation case studies. This is not surprising, as most byways begin with concrete interpretive or educational projects that can be completed in a relatively short time frame, and which provide a tangible accomplishment that byway stakeholders can point to with pride as they build support for other byway efforts. As conservation and preservation efforts often require a long-term commitment, a critical mass of local support and a substantial budget (which is often more difficult to secure through traditional sources, such as the National Scenic Byway grants program), it often does not make sense to lead off with preservation projects.

These preservation and conservation challenges have generated a range of creative solutions from Colorado's byway organization, several of which are profiled below. By thinking ahead, identifying the most important resources and designing educational and preservation efforts to ensure that these resources are protected, Colorado's byway leaders are demonstrating that resource protection and preservation is one of the most important issues for their byways.

## ***A. Know What You've Got.***

### **Principle #1: Identify and prioritize significant natural, cultural and historic resources on the byway.**

It isn't possible to save everything, and in order to pick your preservation battles effectively, you need to have a good understanding of what your resources are. Which resources does the byway need to keep in order to retain the value of its intrinsic qualities, and which resources can be sacrificed to allow for inevitable development? It's a difficult question to answer, and one that is virtually impossible unless you have taken the time to prioritize your byway's resources.

***Example: Developing Criteria for Open Land Protection along the San Juan Skyway***

To evaluate open land preservation priorities, the *San Juan Skyway Scenic and Historic Byway* developed a two-tiered set of criteria including initial review criteria and final selection criteria. The initial review criteria includes 5 elements:

- **Location**  
The open land should be located within the byway corridor or be highly visible from the corridor. Preference is given to land that provides improved access to public lands, and open land with high recreational, interpretive, or natural/scenic values.
- **Meet Byway Objectives**  
Open land should meet the byway objectives of preserving scenic/natural values, protecting wildlife habitat, enhancing recreational opportunities or preserving historic landscapes
- **Property Size**  
Open land should be in parcels of 40 acres or larger, with exceptions made for outstanding scenic, natural, historic or recreational values; land that is part of a larger land protection initiative; land adjacent to other protected lands; or land that provides access to protected lands (such as trailheads and trail connections)
- **Urgency**  
Open land that has high potential for development, and land that is available right now.
- **Cost**  
Less costly properties have greater potential for being preserved as open space

In making final determinations about open land protection, two additional time-sensitive factors are taken into consideration. First, is the landowner cooperative? Second, is there a cooperative project sponsor who would be able to hold the land or easement, provide on-going stewardship monitoring, and assist with up front costs?



*Dallas Divide: San Juan Skyway*

***Example: Developing Criteria to Prioritize Historic Resources***

To help byway stakeholders focus their historic preservation efforts, the *San Juan Skyway* developed the following seven criteria to use in evaluating and prioritizing resources along the byway.

- CRITERIA TO EVALUATE HISTORIC SITES**
- The site is visible or easily accessible from the byway.
  - The structure is still standing.
  - The site is considered significant by one or more of the byway stakeholders.
  - The condition of the resource creates a sense of urgency.
  - The resource offers exceptional heritage education and interpretive opportunities.
  - Cooperation from the site’s owner or manager is expected, and
  - The necessary preservation and/or interpretive actions for each site are reasonable in cost.

***Example: Developing a Rating System to Rank Byway Resources***

In developing the corridor management plan for the *West Elk Loop Byway*, a rating system was developed to rank resources along the byway. The rating system takes into account ownership, existing management plans or review mechanisms, pressures or risks for the resource, and significance (including visibility, sense of place, uniqueness, sensitivity and recognition). The intrinsic qualities were rated using a numeric scale by the Byway steering committee, and the final results appear as a scale that ranges from “very high” to “very low.”

The first two criteria are often tied together, as the existing management plans or review mechanisms in place often reflect the land ownership. The plan includes a table that lists the agency management policies for the major federal and county landholders along the route. (See sample table in Appendix.) Under pressures and risks for the resource, five levels are identified from “very high (for lands that lack protection and that are facing strong development pressure) to “very low” (for lands that have permanent protection measures in place). Final priorities are made with strong public input.



*Before*

*Too late to save the Kohler Boarding House!*



*After*



Resources that rank highest in both the significance of the intrinsic qualities and the pressures or risks to that resource are then identified as the highest priorities for protection. Not surprisingly, the parcels that were ranked highest were those in private hands that were under consideration for development. The corridor management plan described several key parcels and included a topographical map of the byway that provides a color-coded view of the priorities for resource protection along the byway. As of July 2001, it was still too early to tell how effective the rating system had been, however Susan Hanson, the County Administrator for Delta County reported that in several cases, county planners had used the rating system to help evaluate development proposals that were coming in.

***Example: Identifying unwanted resources to NOT preserve***

Over time, all byways fall prey to a host of visual intrusions—signs, road barriers, unwanted pullouts and much more. These intrusions can detract from the natural, historic and scenic resources of the byway. To address these unwanted additions, the *Peak to Peak Byway* secured a federal byway grant to complete a “Visual Intrusion Reduction Plan.”

The study, completed in February 2002, includes an inventory of these unwanted visual intrusions and identifies strategies to mitigate their impact. Preliminary recommendations include a sign reduction effort to consolidate or eliminate unwanted signs, and suggestions about ways that CDOT can address intrusions as part of their ongoing maintenance of the road. In other cases, other funding may be required to make the desired improvements to the visual appeal of the byway.

The action plan includes recommendations in several categories, including signage & guardrails; pullouts, road intersections and wide shoulders; paving; design continuity elements and landscape enhancement projects. An implementation strategy identifies priority projects as well as potential funding sources.



*Peak to Peak Scenic Byway*

Sample recommendations in the plan include:

- Installing consistent roadway signage, delineators and reflectors in terms of size, color and placement.
- Painting the back of reflective signs black
- Painting guardrails a consistent “National Park Service” brown
- Replacing selected guardrails with rock-faced concrete guardrails of a rustic or historic design
- Eliminating and scaling down unnecessary pullouts
- Striving for uniform pavement type, width and texture as well as shoulder colors.

#### **DO’S AND DON’TS OF INVENTORYING RESOURCES**

- **DO** take the time to inventory your assets as one of the first steps in your preservation efforts.
- **DON’T** try to save everything. Use the inventory to focus your preservation efforts to have the greatest impact.
- **DO** develop criteria to help evaluate which resources to focus your efforts on.
- **DON’T** ignore the input of byway stakeholders in developing your priorities. You will need their support, so building consensus around priorities is critical.
- **DO** consider the ways in which you will be using your inventory to be sure that you are compiling all the information that you will need.
- **DON’T** forget to involve the public along the byway in identifying and prioritizing resources.

## ***B. Make People Care.***

### **Principle 2: Create an atmosphere conducive to resource preservation and protection.**

When the public has been educated about the importance of the irreplaceable resources along the byway and believes that it is important to preserve them, half the battle has already been won.

#### ***Example: Educating Landowners about open space preservation***

***Gold Belt Tour:*** The county open space division in Teller County knew that they would need to look at alternatives to outright land acquisition as an open space preservation tool. Teller County is small (22,000 people) and budget limitations made education and awareness a more feasible approach. Starting with a CORE (Community Oriented Resource Enhancement Fund) grant of \$2,500 in 1998 from the Trails and Open Space Coalition of the Pikes Peak Region, Kevin Tanski, Teller County’s Recreation Planner, put together an initial meeting for about a dozen stakeholders to begin to address issues of land protection and enhancement options. This group evolved into the

Rural Lifestyle Protection Group (later renamed the Rural Land Preservation Group (RLPG)).

The group formed its first Board in December 2001 and is working with the Palmer Foundation (a Colorado Springs based land trust) and the Teller County Division of Parks to secure a conservation easement for the development rights for a 320 acre parcel of land on the Johnston Ranch. The project was awarded a \$150,000 TEA-21 grant in June 2001 and a \$140,000 grant from Great Outdoors Colorado in December 2001. Teller County's success has led neighboring counties to look at RLPG as a model.

***San Juan Skyway:*** In San Miguel County, an open space commission has been established to educate landowners about estate planning options and the opportunities that conservation easements provide. While established as a county-wide open space program and not as an initiative of the *Skyway*, this commission directly benefits the *Skyway*.

***Example: Educating Visitors to Respect Private Land***

Almost all of the ***Pawnee Pioneer Trails*** is on private land, and when the byway was first formed, there was a great deal of discussion about the impact that designation would have on private property. To address this, the byway has developed a set of "visitor ethics" that will help visitors understand the area and minimize problems for both travelers and private property owners along the byway. This includes placing a prominent statement in the *Pawnee Pioneer Trails* brochure with recommended travel tips to help visitors avoid getting lost, running out of gas, or winding up on private property. The efforts seem to be working. According to Bob Rohn, a byway landowner, "Prior to and in the early days of designation, there was a fear of vandalism, and a fear that the byway would bring too many people to the area. The byway designation has been better than we anticipated, because there is less vandalism, the counties have gone out and improved the road, especially the cattle guard crossings, and people are more supportive of the byway".

**PAWNEEE PIONEER TRAILS TRAVEL TIPS**

- Start with a full tank of gas and a spare tire since services are unavailable in remote areas after business hours.
- Bring drinking water/appropriate clothing since weather conditions can change rapidly.
- Use binoculars to observe wildlife. Young animals and birds must not be disturbed.
- From March 1-June 30 the north overlook and cliffs near the Pawnee Buttes are closed to the public by the Forest Service for raptor nesting protection.
- Climbing on the Buttes and other cliffs is discouraged due to crumbling sandstone.
- Collecting artifacts, vertebrate fossils, arrowheads, or barn wood robs our heritage and is prohibited on Pawnee National Grassland.
- Take trash home or use the designated receptacles.
- Be alert for livestock on roads since much of the area is open range.
- Remain on the designated byway route to avoid trespassing on intermixed private lands. A map is recommended if visiting the Pawnee National Grassland.
- Avoid traveling the graveled routes during bad weather since they are dangerous when wet. See map for alternative routes.

**Example: Building Awareness of Visitor Impacts**

The high-altitude *Mount Evans* landscape is a fragile one, and visitors who stray from trails can unwittingly cause a tremendous amount of damage. Because of the proximity of *Mount Evans* to Denver and the large number of visitors who come to the byway, the ecosystems along the byway are especially at risk. To address this, byway stakeholders organized a snowshoe event in partnership with Atlas and Red Feathers, two snowshoe makers. The event was based in Idaho Springs but included guided snowshoe tours up in the *Mount Evans* area. As winter is a time when the byway is less traveled, it was a good opportunity to bring visitors in when the byway was not overflowing with visitors, and use the guided tours as an opportunity to include a lesson about the importance of being a sensitive visitor.



*Snowshoeing on Mount Evans Scenic Byway*

**Example: Balancing development issues with public support**

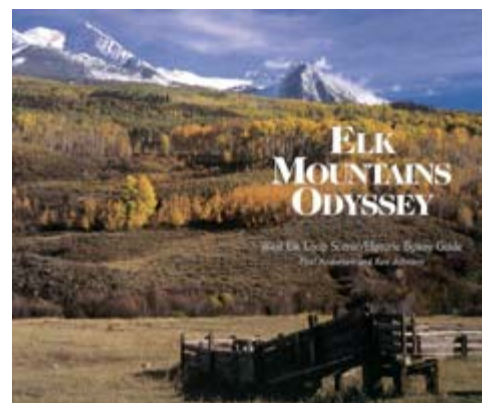
The *Top of the Rockies Byway* stakeholders realize that serving as a design review advocate has the potential unwanted side effect of alienating some citizens who live and work along the byway—people that the byway needs to continue to support byway efforts overall. To balance both roles, the byway tracks pending development issues and comes to meetings to advocate for the protection of the byway’s intrinsic qualities—but leaves it up to the local stakeholders to determine just how that should best be accomplished.

**Example: New Design Guidelines**

The town of Nederland along the *Peak to Peak Byway* secured a \$50,000 grant to develop guidelines for new construction in Nederland. While the guidelines carry no legal restrictions for property owners building in Nederland, the guidelines are helpful to educate property owners about how they can respect the local character as they construct new buildings.

**Example: Publications**

Stakeholders for the *West Elk Loop* secured a byway grant to produce a high-quality coffee table book on the history of the byway. The book is sold in local bookstores and interpretive centers, and a copy of the publication was provided to every elementary school classroom in the byway area. The primary goal of the publication was to educate residents about the importance of the history of the area so that they will support future preservation efforts.



***Example: Addressing Off-Premise Signs***

Despite legislation prohibiting off premise billboards, such as the Lady Bird Johnson Beautification Act, local opposition has long hampered efforts to bring back scenic vistas now broken by large roadside signage. A 1995 effort along the ***Gold Belt Tour*** proved that education and awareness can succeed where legislation has failed. A facilitator was brought in to discuss the issues with key byway stakeholders, including landowners, billboard companies and others. The goal was to come up with a way to reduce the number of off premise billboards along the Byway. Through voluntary efforts, several business owners offered to reduce the number of signs promoting their businesses. The year-long effort resulted in a reduction of off premise signs from 63 to 38 along this particular stretch of the byway.



*Gold Belt Tour Billboards*

**DO'S AND DON'TS OF PRESERVATION AWARENESS AND EDUCATION**

- **DO** take the time to educate people along the byway about the value of the irreplaceable resources along the byway.
- **DON'T** forget different audiences when spreading the word about the importance of the resources along your byway. “Preaching to the choir” won’t expand support for your byway. Consider public media, school programs, and targeted approaches to your opponents or the people whose support you need the most.
- **DO** send someone that your opponents respect to discuss preservation issues.
- **DON'T** assume that your job is ever done. As new people come into the byway, ongoing education efforts are important to maintain public support for preservation efforts.
- **DO** look for several different ways to get your message across. Many people will need to hear your message several times before you finally get through.

## C. Use “Carrots” and “Sticks”

### Principle #3: Identify preservation and conservation tools to protect valued resources.

Once you know which resources need your assistance and once you have built support for their preservation, it is time to find the best tools to help you protect the resource. Resources such as the *Byway Resource Protection Manual* can provide information about preservation and conservation tools that have been used effectively by byways.

#### OPEN LAND CONSERVATION

##### Example: Creating a Land Trust

##### *Top of the Rockies*

To protect the cultural, historic and scenic resources in Lake County, the county commissioners formed the Lake County Open Space Initiative (LCOSI). To provide the clout and reach that the effort needed, the commissioners brought in a range of local, state and federal partners, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Division of Wildlife, the Arkansas Headwater Recreation Area, State Parks and other community organizations.

The City of Aurora deeded a 60-acre parcel at the northern end of the 2100 acre Hayden Ranch to Lake County in 1999 which is currently being developed as Hayden Meadows Park, a gateway to the byway. Through LCOSI, a second 1200 acre ranch, the Hollenbeck Ranch, was purchased in 1999 for \$1.5 million by Lake County. This ranch includes a tremendous viewshed, wildlife habitats and migratory areas for deer, elk and waterfowl. As of the summer of 2001, LCOSI has helped to preserve a total of 8,600 acres as open space.



*Top of the Rockies/Hayden Meadows Park includes walking trail, fishing pond, and interpretive signs.*



### ***San Juan Skyway***

As much of the land in Montezuma County along the ***San Juan Skyway*** is in private hands, and as development pressures along the byway increased, byway stakeholders felt that a land trust was the best way to protect the scenic beauty of the byway while keeping the land in private hands. With help from a neighboring land trust, a board was formed in Montezuma County in 1999 as an all-volunteer organization to work with private property owners to secure conservation easements. In the first two years of operation, the Montezuma Land Conservancy has secured conservation easements for 2,800 acres of land in Montezuma County—including an 80-acre archeological easement, the first of its kind in Colorado.

### **Example: Scenic Conservation Overlay Districts**

The ***Top of the Rockies Byway*** has used scenic conservation overlay districts as a way to minimize the impact of development along the byway without restricting the kind of development that could take place. The scenic conservation overlay districts don't affect the use of the land, they restrict the look of new development. The width of the district varies from section to section, with the widest reach being 1,000 feet from the road right of way. The overlay district addresses setback from the right of way, building materials, signage and building height.

### **Example: Other planning tools for open land preservation**

A range of planning tools have been used along the ***San Juan Skyway*** to help open land preservation efforts. For example:

- In San Juan County, any new development within 1500 feet of the center line of the Skyway is required to be reviewed as a “conditional use,” and development permits are issued only if the proposed development meets the review criteria (preserving the natural integrity of the Skyway)
- In Ouray County, the comprehensive plan prohibits the subdivision of valley agricultural lands into parcels smaller than 35 acres. As a result, the valleys are still open with active agricultural practices.
- Ouray County has a “visual impact ordinance” which requires all land within 1 ½ miles of the Skyway not break the skyline, and that all developed land within one mile of the Skyway be visually screened.
- In San Miguel County, all development must be located at least 100 feet from the Skyway. In areas with special features, the enforced setback is 200 feet.
- In 1994, Telluride voters approved setting aside 20% of the town's surplus revenue towards purchasing open space.

### **Example: Purchasing Open Land Using Federal Funds**

The ***San Juan Skyway*** has helped to launch an ambitious effort to purchase between 10,500 and 12,000 acres of land in the Red Mountain Pass area. To make this effort possible, a volunteer task force brought the Trust for Public Land (TPL) on board to help negotiate land purchases. A video, brochure and web site were created to build support among potential funding sources for the land. Support from political leaders including Senators Allard and Campbell, Representative McInnis and Governor Owens, a successful case for federal funding was made.



*Dedication Ceremony on Red Mountain Pass recognizing the project partners.*

A \$5 million dollar grant was secured from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for FY01 along with another \$370,000 in grants from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), the Colorado State Historical Fund and the Colorado Department of Health. In addition, the U.S. Forest Service has allocated another \$4.6 million in funding from the FY02 Land and Water Conservation Fund which will be used to purchase additional land. Options were secured to purchase an estimated 5,500 acres of the 12,000 acres in the early fall of 2001.

The land was purchased and held initially by TPL, then sold to the U.S. Forest Service in the spring of 2002. As the Forest Service is only allowed to purchase land at the appraised value, the success of this effort depends in part upon the cooperation of property owners. “The most challenging aspect of this project is the scale” comments Ken Francis. “There are so many details involved in both the historic preservation projects as well as in the land acquisition deals”

#### ***Example: Purchasing Land Using Local Funds***

The federal funding that the *San Juan Skyway* was able to secure for the Red Mountain Pass project can often be elusive to secure. After trying unsuccessfully to secure federal scenic byway grant money to acquire a 250-acre at risk property along the *Peak to Peak Byway*, local stakeholders took the matter into their own hands and raised the entire \$500,000 purchase price locally. \$400,000 was raised from the town of Nederland and the final \$100,000 was raised through private donations. After the final payment is made, the land will be taken over by the Boulder County Open Space and used for light recreational use. According to Scott Bruntjen, “there’s a ‘fatal flaw’ in the federal guidelines that require a grant application to identify a property slated for acquisition in the grant materials. This creates two problems. First, once the owner knows of the interest in the property, the price goes up. Second, the process takes so long that the opportunity is usually gone by the time the grant award is announced.”

## **PRESERVING HISTORIC RESOURCES**

#### ***Example: Using Transportation Enhancement Funds for Historic Preservation***

At one of the gateways to the *Pawnee Pioneer Trails* in Fort Morgan, a historic 1922 bridge had been abandoned adjacent to the new bridge. While no longer in use, the Rainbow Arch Bridge was an unusual and attractive structure which had been listed on the National Register of Historic Places and as a Colorado Civil Engineering Landmark. The bridge is the only one of its kind in Colorado and one of the longest of its kind in the United States. Even before the byway was officially designated, local citizens led by Lyn Deal helped to secure \$595,000 in transportation



enhancement funds for a two-phased project to rehabilitate and interpret the bridge as a pedestrian bridge. Transportation funds were matched by \$155,000 from the city of Fort Morgan and the State Historical Fund at the Colorado Historical Society.



*Rainbow Bridge Dedication - Pawnee Pioneer Trails*

The restored pedestrian bridge was completed in 1996 and the overall project came in under budget. The historically sensitive restoration has won at least 5 state and national awards, and the bridge is currently well used by runners, walkers, cyclists and even as a place to get married.

#### **Example: Funding Partnerships for Historic Preservation**

To stabilize the historic Fall Creek Tram Terminal, *San Juan Skyway* stakeholders worked with the landowners (the Bureau of Land Management) to put together a funding partnership consisting of BLM, the National Scenic Byways grant program, San Miguel County and the Colorado State Historical Fund. BLM supervised a private contractor who completed the stabilization, and the site will now be interpreted for both the byway and the Galloping Goose trail that is being developed along the old railroad grade.

#### **OTHER PRESERVATION TOOLBOX IDEAS**

In addition to the preservation tools listed above, the *San Juan Skyway Historic Mining and Railroad Sites Preservation Plan* identifies several other kinds of preservation actions, including:

- **Building erosion control features**, such as excavating around a site or channeling water away from an endangered historic structure.
- **Installing interpretive and educational signage.** If visitors know more about the significance of a site, they will be less likely to vandalize it. Educational messages can help to prevent unintentional damage by letting visitors know what impacts their actions may have for the site.
- **Implementing sustainable site monitoring programs.** While staffing every historic site along a byway may not be a possibility, an active volunteer mentoring program is a cost-effective way to monitor historic sites.
- **Installing fencing.** As a last resort, endangered historic sites can be fenced to keep visitors out of the site. As fencing can often detract from the appearance of a site, other alternatives should be explored first, and if fencing is used, something like an inconspicuous black vertical bar fence will detract less than something more visible, such as a chain link fence.

### *Conclusion*

The importance of resource protection and preservation varies from byway to byway. For byways located primarily on federal land, preservation and conservation issues present less of an immediate threat than on byways where the surrounding land is owned privately. Even for byways where land is under federal ownership, there are issues of stewardship and the pressures placed on gateway communities.

A word of caution. Often people deal with land and building acquisition one step at a time, focusing primarily on just getting the land or property under protection. As a responsible steward of newly acquired land or a building, it is very important to consider both the up-front costs of acquisition as well as the long term maintenance costs. Transferring ownership to another more well-funded organization could be one way to avoid having to return a property if there are suddenly no maintenance funds. Another option, if an organization suspects that they may not have sufficient funds for ongoing maintenance, is to look at income producing opportunities for the property in question. Of course, it would be important to weigh the impacts of the income producing opportunity against the impact to the property.

Resource protection and preservation is one of the most important and long lasting contributions for byway stakeholders to make to their byway. If a byway loses irreplaceable resources, those resources are gone forever. The decisions (or lack of decisions) that byway stakeholders make today about their intrinsic resources will shape the future of the byway for generations to come.

# Appendix