

Inventory and Importance of Resources

Your Byway Corridor Management Plan and an Interpretive Plan should include an up-to-date inventory of your Byway's resources. These resources and their importance to your Byway will guide your plans for conservation and protection as well as for telling your story. Many byway projects and interpretation efforts are guided by byway resources that inherently need protection and are potentially affected (negatively and/or positively) by bringing more visitors to enjoy the resource.

Carrying Capacity of a Resource

According to McConnell and Abel, carrying capacity is the maximum number of individuals of a given species that an area's resources can sustain indefinitely without significantly depleting or degrading those resources.

For humans, especially visitors, carrying capacity is much more complicated. The definition is expanded to include not degrading cultural and social environments and not harming the physical environment in ways that would adversely affect future generations.

Conservation and Protection

The first step to conserving a resource is to know that it has the potential to be degraded or harmed adversely thereby reducing its enjoyment by future generations.

Using the Byway Inventory Worksheet for resources that you want to conserve or protect is a way to document the capacity of the resource. Using input from organizations and citizens representing the conservation and scientific community is important.

Byway Conservation Projects

Byway conservation efforts should be coordinated with many community organizations and citizens. The adage "Nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care" applies to the impact that knowledgeable organizations can make on com-

munity citizens who care deeply about protecting their resources.

The Conservation Trust for North Carolina has been focusing efforts on the Blue Ridge Parkway. You can read more about their efforts on their website at: <http://www.ctnc.org/protect/blue-ridge-parkway/>

Conservation Project Examples

Iowa Byways Conservation Interpretive Panels

Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation & Development worked with stakeholders across Iowa to design, fabricate and install 25 interpretive panels with weathering steel artwork along Iowa's Scenic Byways. The goal of the project was to develop a cohesive, statewide set of interpretive panels along Iowa's Byways to provide information and interpretation about how Iowa's agricultural producers are utilizing conservation systems throughout the state.

Scenic Byway Trail Easements

With funding from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Scenic Byways Program, Conservation Works is working with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to secure easements and develop trail and boat access points to the Connecticut River, and link the river with Mt. Warner, the New England National Scenic Trail, and the Bachelor Brook Conservation Area.

References

Example of a Byway Conservation Plan - <http://garna.org/byway-conservation-plan/>

McConnell, R.L. & Abel, Daniel C. Environmental Issues. <https://www.wou.edu/las/physci/ch371/lecture/popgrowth/carrying.htm>

Human Impact on the Environment & Environmental Impact on Humans, <http://www.fewresources.org/ecological-footprints--human-impact-factors.html>

Preparing for a Byway - Inventory and Inventory Resource Worksheets, Part 4, http://www.nsbfoundation.com/pdfs/4_Preparing_for_a_Byway.pdf