

FLORIDA SCENIC HIGHWAYS PROGRAM 2014 ANNUAL REPORT



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MISSION

Help Florida communities deliver high-quality experiences to visitors.

VISION

The Florida Scenic Highways Program promotes economic development, enhances quality of life, and conserves important resources.

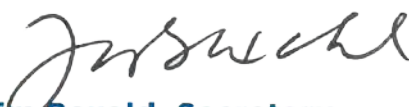


The Florida Department of Transportation welcomes the **Martin Grade Scenic Highway** as the state's **twenty-fifth designated Florida Scenic Highway**. There are now over 1,500 miles of scenic highways in thirty counties, including at least one in every FDOT District.

Five Florida routes are also designated as National Scenic Byways and one as an All-American Road by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. Since the program was launched in 1996, the Florida Scenic Highways collection has grown to become one of the finest and most extensive in the nation.

The program is one of the Department's most remarkable, and we're proud of the impact it's having on the economy, environment, and quality of life in Florida communities. In 2014, more than forty scenic highway projects were completed. We applaud the grassroots byway organizations that work tirelessly to make these projects and this program a success. These groups are outstanding stewards, and demonstrate extraordinary passion for **real places and real stories**.

We invite you to read more about their accomplishments in the pages of this report. Learn about the only place in Florida where you have to look *down* to bird watch, where there's a waiting list for heritage bus tours, and where your 5K finish will be rewarded with homemade pastries. And if you want to know more, we encourage you to visit their websites, follow them on social media, and most importantly, experience a Florida Scenic Highway!


Jim Boxold, Secretary
Florida Department of Transportation

FLORIDA SCENIC HIGHWAYS



- 1 A1A SCENIC & HISTORIC COASTAL BYWAY
- 2 BIG BEND SCENIC BYWAY
- 3 BRADENTON BEACH SCENIC HIGHWAY
- 4 BROWARD COUNTY A1A SCENIC HIGHWAY
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- 6 FLORIDA BLACK BEAR NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY
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- 23 TAMiami TRAIL - WINDOWS TO THE GULF COAST WATERS
- 24 THE RIDGE SCENIC HIGHWAY
- 25 WILLIAM BARTRAM SCENIC & HISTORIC HIGHWAY



Visit www.FloridaScenicHighways.com for detailed maps and visitor information.

Florida Scenic Highways • 2014 Program Overview

Program Activity

The purpose of the **Florida Scenic Highways Program (FSHP)** is to designate roads in order to help preserve and enhance the cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, natural, and scenic resources that lie within the roadway corridor. Florida communities also take advantage of scenic highway designation to improve local quality of life and enhance the experience of byway travelers.

The **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)** launched the program in 1996, and manages the **FSHP** with program staff supported by District Scenic Highway Coordinators in each of FDOT's eight Districts. The Scenic Highway Advisory Committee (SHAC) works in cooperation with program staff to strengthen program applications and management plans, and assist in policy development. A full listing of District Scenic Highway Coordinators and Scenic Highway Advisory Committee members can be found on the inside back cover of this report.

Program activity in 2014 included the review and approval of three applications to extend existing scenic highways. Applications from the **Green Mountain Scenic Byway**, the **Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway**, and **Scenic Highway 30-A** all provided compelling evidence that the route extensions are consistent in quality to the existing byways, and possess resources that will enhance the scenic highway and the overall visitor experience.



The **Byway Buzz** newsletter is published quarterly by volunteer Joan Bernat, and features program updates, byway stories, and events from across the state.



Draper Lake is located on Scenic Highway 30-A in the Florida panhandle. A five-mile extension was added to this scenic highway in 2014.

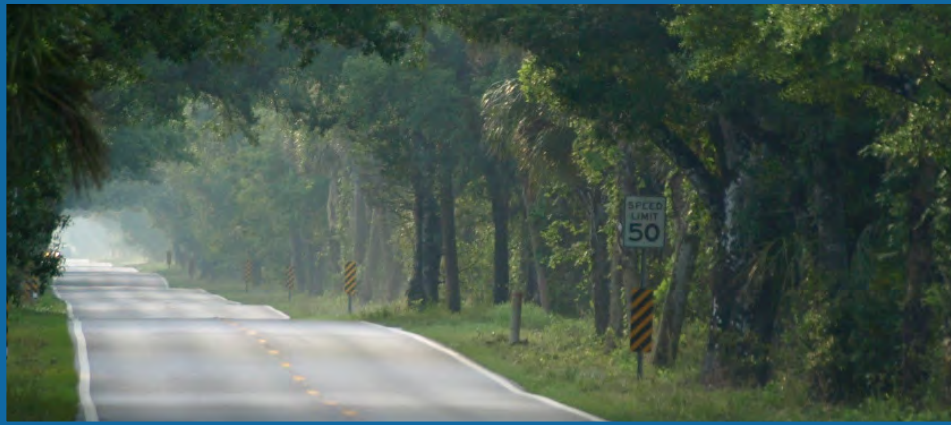


The **Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway** was extended thirty-eight miles to the north in 2014. The extension begins in the City of Titusville and encircles the northern end of the Indian River Lagoon.

Florida Scenic Highways • 2014 Program Overview

Program Activity

The final document review was also completed in 2014 to designate Florida's twenty-fifth byway, the **Martin Grade Scenic Highway**. Officially, the route is Martin Highway, County Road 714, but the locals simply call it "**The Grade.**" This historic twelve-mile road is shaded by a canopy of hundred-year-old oaks, and is surrounded by pastures, groves, swamps, and woods, just as it was when it was carved out of the wilderness by the region's earliest settlers.



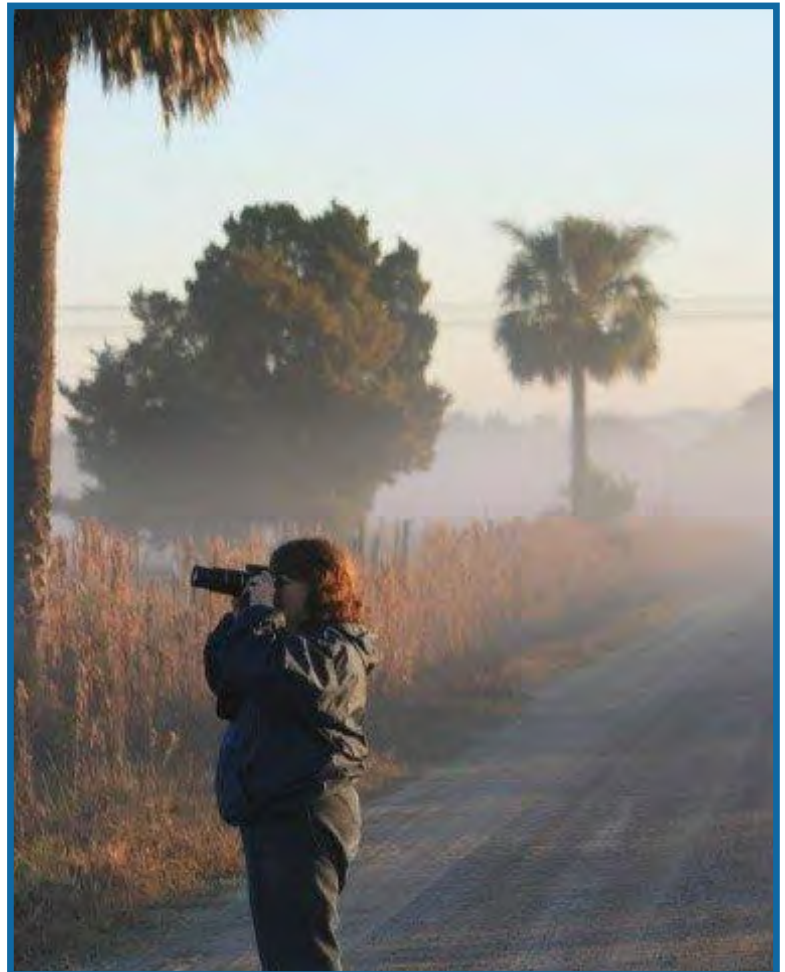
The Martin Grade Scenic Highway is Florida's twenty-fifth scenic highway. It is located in western Martin County between Lake Okeechobee and the Atlantic Ocean.

Program staff and the SHAC also reviewed and commented on corridor management plan updates submitted for the **Broward A1A Scenic Highway**, the **Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway**, and **Scenic Highway 30-A**.

Although these plans do not require program approval, comments and suggestions were offered to help improve the effectiveness of the documents as tools for the byway organizations.



An extension to the Green Mountain Scenic Byway was approved in May 2014. The scenic highway now links the historic downtowns of Winter Garden and Mount Dora.



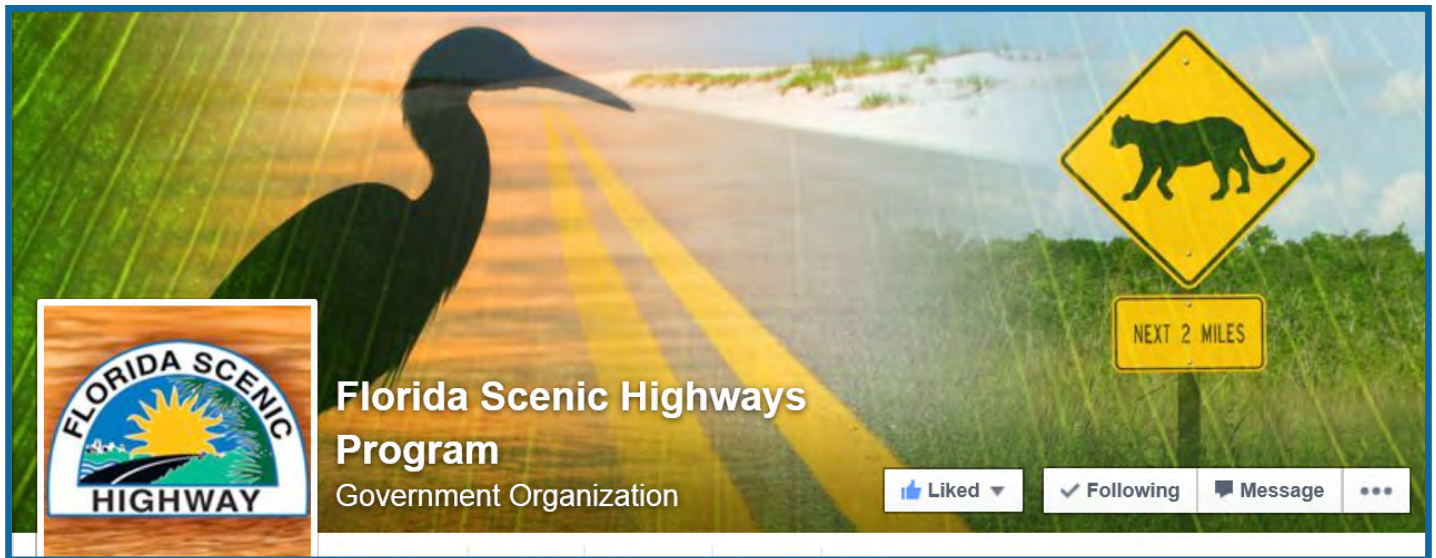
The Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail is located on the northern extension of the Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway.

Florida Scenic Highways • 2014 Program Overview

Program Activity

The Program office routinely responded to information requests generated by the **Florida Scenic Highways website** (www.FloridaScenicHighways.com) throughout the year.

Of these requests, approximately eighty percent were domestic inquiries, and the remainder international. Most were seeking suggestions for off-the-beaten-path driving routes, local attractions, and unique experiences. Many requested a map of Florida's scenic highways.



The Florida Scenic Highways Program staff manages Facebook and Twitter accounts for the program that promote all twenty-five of the state's byways.

In addition to the website, program staff also maintained a Facebook page, and more recently, a Twitter account for the **FSHP**.

Although the program's number of social media followers has been growing steadily, rapid growth is anticipated due to proposed changes in the Program's social media strategy.

Another focus of Program activity in 2014 was collecting feedback from scenic highway partners and communities about needed revisions to **FSHP** policy. The purpose of the policy update is to develop requirements that focus more on supporting economic development, protecting resources, and improving local quality of life.

Feedback was collected via surveys and a day-long discussion forum in Orlando for all scenic highway supporters. Overall, there was consensus that the **FSHP** designation process should be streamlined, and that post-designation program requirements (like the byway annual report) should be more meaningful.

The revised program requirements will be completed in 2015, and will usher in a new era for the **Florida Scenic Highways Program**.



30-A CMP Update: Scenic highway corridor management plan updates, like the one submitted by Scenic Highway 30-A in 2014, are reviewed by **FSHP** staff and the Scenic Highway Advisory Committee.

Florida Scenic Highways • 2014 Program Overview

Real Places. Real Stories. Real People.

Participation in the **Florida Scenic Highways Program** is entirely voluntary. Citizen groups seek designation to help promote and protect important resources, as well as implement projects that improve local quality of life and enhance the experience of travelers. The remainder of this report focuses on the accomplishments of the dedicated groups that work tirelessly to make this program a success – the byway organizations. The project information and photographs included were provided by these grassroots groups who are outstanding stewards of their special places, and demonstrate extraordinary passion for **real places** and **real stories**.

The incredible commitment and volunteer spirit of byway organizations is evident in the over forty-five scenic highway projects completed in 2014. These special projects generated an investment of over four million dollars in Florida communities. While some were physical projects like landscaping, interpretive kiosks, and trailheads, others were programs like litter cleanups, bus tours, or guided trail walks. Many of these projects are featured in the **Scenic Highway Milestones** section of this report.



Keys Litter Pick Up The passion of byway volunteers is always evident - even when collecting litter! Members of the Florida Keys Scenic Corridor Alliance participate in multiple litter control programs including Adopt-A-Highway.



Byway organizations are responsible for the long-term implementation of scenic highway management plans. The Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway organization uses local festivals and events to recruit new volunteers.



Guided trail walks are a program of the Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail. The walks are free of charge and guided by a local biologist.

Florida Scenic Highways • 2014 Program Overview

Real Places. Real Stories. Real People.

Although byway organizations are all unique, common themes emerge in their work. One of the most common is participation in litter control and prevention programs. **The Friends of A1A** took part in an International Coastal Cleanup event in September 2014. Eighty volunteers collected two hundred thirty-three pounds of trash along the eleven-mile section of the byway in Flagler Beach.

The **Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway**, **Palma Sola Scenic Byway**, and **Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway** organizations all participated in litter clean ups in 2014, and the **Florida Keys Scenic Corridor Alliance** not only participated, but set a goal of having all one hundred six miles of the byway adopted in the Adopt-a-Highway program. Litter-free communities directly benefit residents and visitors, as well as local businesses.



The Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway organization participates in quarterly cleanups of the two miles leading to the entrance of the Florida National Cemetery.

Litter Control & Prevention Programs Active on Florida Scenic Highways

- Adopt-a-Beach
- Adopt-a-Highway
- Adopt-a-Shore
- Great American Cleanup
- International Coastal Cleanup



The Friends of A1A partnered with other community organizations including the Hammock Community Conservation Committee, Matanzas High School Key Club, and Keepers of the Coast for the International Coastal Cleanup held on the byway in September 2014.



The Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Foundation sponsored a byway cleanup day in October 2014.

Florida Scenic Highways • 2014 Program Overview

Real Places. Real Stories. Real People.

Several byway organizations were also actively engaged in invasive and exotic species removal. Byway supporters in the Hammock community on the **A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway** recruit volunteers by proclaiming, “All you need is a pair of gloves, boots, and a pair of loppers if possible!”

Other byways reporting similar activities are the **Bradenton Beach Scenic Byway**, **Palma Sola Scenic Byway**, and the **Suncoast Scenic Parkway**. Plants frequently targeted for removal or replacement are the Brazilian pepper-tree, Australian pine, and Senegal date palms.



The Green Mountain Scenic Overlook and Trailhead opened to the public in October 2014. The overlook is now the primary access point to the North Shore Restoration Area for hikers, cyclists, and bird watchers.



The Spoonbills and Sprockets Cycling Tour is an annual event of the Friends of A1A.



The Suncoast Scenic Parkway routinely hosts cycling events for nonprofits like the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.



The Palma Sola Scenic Highway organization is actively involved in the Adopt-A-Highway and Adopt-A-Shore Programs.

Florida Scenic Highways • 2014 Program Overview

Real Places. Real Stories. Real People.

Most byway organizations in Florida are all-volunteer. These grassroots groups are supported in a variety of ways by local governments, tourism bureaus, businesses, and individuals. In 2014, byways increased emphasis on identifying new sources of funding and recruiting volunteers.

With sufficient manpower, it is possible to complete new projects and new programs. Many byway organizations have realized that an effective way to increase their capacity is to partner with other groups. Below are several examples of how byway organizations used partnerships in 2014 to benefit byway communities:

- **The Florida Black Bear National Scenic Byway** organization formed a three-MPO partnership (Ocala-Marion, Volusia, and Lake-Sumter) that will sponsor the State Road 40 multi-use trail. This is the last segment needed to complete the three-hundred-fifty-mile “Heart of Florida” Loop Trail in Central Florida.
- **The Florida Keys Scenic Corridor Alliance** supported efforts of the Friends of Old Seven as they sought funding to complete needed repairs to the Old Seven Mile Bridge from Marathon to Pidgeon Key.
- **The J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway** organization assisted the Penney Retirement Community with their Friends and Family Weekend in March 2014, and the byway’s volunteer coordinator assisted the Town of Penney Farms with a successful grant to renovate the public tennis courts. In turn, the retirement community underwrote the design of the byway’s 5K-run tee-shirts.
- **The Pensacola Bluffs Scenic Highway Foundation** assisted Pensacola City Parks with the Day of Caring for United Way by providing volunteers.



A1A Kids Ocean Day: The Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve hosted Kids Ocean Day in May 2014 for the Friends of A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway. The program treats students to a day of environmental education. (Photo credit: The St. Augustine Record)



The Florida Black Bear National Scenic Byway partners with the Barberville Pioneer Settlement to market and interpret the byway. In a special area of the museum dedicated to the byway, a framed HD video loops the 40-minute FBBSB video. There is also an interpretive panel, brochures, placemats, and other useful information about traveling the byway.

Florida Scenic Highways • 2014 Program Overview

Real Places. Real Stories. Real People.

Funding for byway organizations remains very complex. Without a dedicated source of state or national funding for byway projects or byway administration, byway groups must be innovative and resourceful. **Many byway organizations are diversifying their sources of revenue, and several byways reported funding success stories in 2014:**

- The **2014 Spoonbills & Sprockets Cycling Tour** held by the **Friends of A1A** was the most successful to date. For the first time, custom-designed cycling jerseys were available by pre-order and at the event. The signature jerseys are very distinctive, and were a huge hit with cyclists. Jersey sales significantly increased the total amount of money raised by the event.
- The **Broward A1A Scenic Highway** brokered an agreement to have the ten municipalities along the byway jointly fund the development of the byway's corridor management plan update. A total of \$38,000 was collected for this important project.
- **Lake County** signed a three-year, \$5,000 per year sponsorship agreement with the **Florida Black Bear National Scenic Byway**. The byway organization's goal is to have all four counties on the byway sign similar agreements, and will use the funding for byway programs like their mobile app.
- The **Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail** organization received a \$1,000 donation from a single private donor to support the construction of the Red Trail observation platform currently underway. The donor follows the activities of the organization, and has participated in one of the byway's popular guided trail walks.
- The **William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway** held a successful antique appraisal and bake sale event that required minimal overhead and met fundraising goals.



Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail organization observed an increase of users at Summer Pond and Boardman trailheads.



Friends of A1A Jersey: About seventy-five Spoonbills & Sprockets Cycling Tour jerseys were sold at the 2014 event. Profits from the jerseys helped the group exceed their fundraising goal for the event.



The Ridge Under Construction: New lighting, a sidewalk, and a multi-use trail are being constructed along The Ridge Scenic Highway in Haines City from US 17/92 to County Road 544.

Florida Scenic Highways • 2014 Program Overview

Real Places. Real Stories. Real People.

FSHP staff are currently researching reliable models to measure the direct economic impact of scenic highway designation. At the same time, byway organizations are being encouraged to identify alternative ways to measure success. The following are examples of how byway organizations have been able to document the impact of previously completed projects:

- Representatives of the **J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway** participated in an update of the Town Comprehensive Plan in 2010. Zoning changes made then have protected the interests of the scenic highway, and developers now make every effort to work in partnership with the byway organization to ensure the preservation of trees and other resources.
- The **Pensacola Bluffs Scenic Highway Foundation** was a partner in developing a plan to control erosion along the bluffs and methods to eradicate and replace invasive plants. The guidelines adopted with this plan are now used for all clearing projects along the bluffs.
- Members of the **Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail** organization have observed an increase in visitor use at two previously completed project sites: Summer Pond observation platform and trailhead sign, and the Boardman Pond trailhead sign.
- Bollards were installed at the **Palma Sola Causeway** in 2008 to prevent cars from being driven onto the shoreline and washing sand into the bay or Intracoastal Waterway. The bollards still allow access to the shore for boaters, anglers and other users, but the informal parking is no longer uncontrolled, and further erosion is being prevented.
- The **Friends of Scenic 30-A** were strong advocates for the construction of a pedestrian bridge over Western Lake. The bridge has made significant safety improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians traveling the corridor.
- The Town of Dundee on **The Ridge Scenic Highway** hosts numerous annual events and has noted increased community pride and higher attendance at events since designation.
- The **Florida Keys Scenic Corridor Alliance** constructed four informational kiosks in 2010 at four different locations. Actual visitor counts at the kiosk locations have increased yearly.



All ten of the municipalities along the Broward County A1A Scenic Highway contributed funding to complete an update of the byway's corridor management plan in 2014.

It is clear that scenic highway designation is having a positive impact on Florida communities. The following **Scenic Highway Milestones** section highlights additional success stories and accomplishments of Florida Scenic Highway organizations in 2014.



Man-Made Dune: A sand dune created by the City of Tampa on the Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway is helping stabilize the ever-eroding shoreline.

Scenic Highway Milestones

A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway

The **Friends of A1A** continue to excel at hosting successful fundraisers and special events that create greater awareness of the scenic highway and educate the community about fragile resources. In 2014, over two hundred students from St. Johns County public schools participated in **Kids Ocean Day** where they engaged in activities designed to spark an interest in the environment and a love of conservation.

Despite record-cold temperatures, the **Spoonbills and Sprockets Cycling Tour** in November 2014 was the most successful with two hundred thirty riders.

The byway organization also converted its existing cell phone tour to a free mobile app which expands the number of photos, videos and story lines that can be easily accessed by visitors to the byway. This conversion actually reduced the operating costs of this important visitor trip planning tool by fifty percent.

www.scenicA1A.org   

Florida Senate District(s): 6

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 17, 24



The **Friends of A1A** hope that Kids Ocean Day will provide local school children with a foundation of environmental consciousness and instill a desire to participate in conservation activities.



The **Big Bend Scenic Byway's wayshowing project** will help visitors find and discover more about important byway resources like the St. Marks Lighthouse.

Big Bend Scenic Byway

The **Big Bend Scenic Byway** organization committed all of its resources in 2014 to completing the **Wayshowing and Interpretive Plan** for the two-hundred-twenty-mile byway. This all-volunteer group held meetings and conducted site visits with engineers and state and local government officials to develop every detail of the plan, including the location of the kiosks, displays, and portal signage. The purpose of this massive project is to enhance the experience of the byway traveler, and improve the scenic highway's brand recognition. It is anticipated that the installation of wayshowing elements will begin in 2015.

www.floridabigbendscenicbyway.com  

Florida Senate District(s): 3

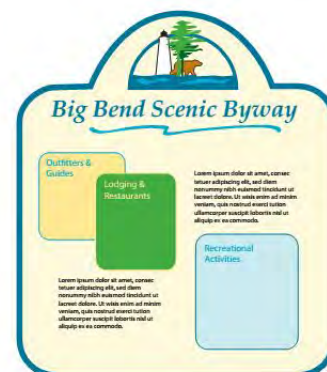
Florida House of Representatives District(s): 7, 8, 9



Site Approach Sign



Forest Trail Kiosk Panel



Coastal Trail Kiosk Panel

Bradenton Beach Scenic Highway

A primary goal of the **Bradenton Beach Scenic Highway** organization is to protect and enhance the natural features of the byway. The replanting of an existing roundabout and adjacent traffic islands on the scenic highway at the intersection of Bridge Street provided an opportunity to make aesthetic and safety improvements. The roundabout was originally planted with an exotic Phoenix reclinata palm and the usual exotic groundcovers. Disease and storms in the ensuing years steadily reduced the vegetation until nothing remained but an unhealthy remnant of the palm. The roundabout was replanted with native vegetation as an Arbor Day project in 2014. Exotic palms were also replaced with native landscaping in a second roundabout on Bridge Street near the byway. The roundabouts complement each other and add economic and environmental value for the many merchants and patrons on Bridge Street.

Florida Senate District(s): 26

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 71



The roundabout on the Bradenton Beach Scenic Highway at the intersection of Bridge Street was replanted with native vegetation as an Arbor Day project in 2014. The project was funded by the Bridge Street Merchants Association and Keep Manatee Beautiful.

Broward County A1A Scenic Byway

All ten of the municipalities along the **Broward County A1A Scenic Byway** contributed funding to support two major byway projects in 2014. The first was an update of the byway's corridor management plan. Public meetings were held to collect input on the plan, and several themes emerged including reducing sign clutter, improving safety, and promoting the history of the area. These issues were incorporated into the revised goals, objectives and strategies.

The second project funded by the ten-member collaboration was the development of a website for the scenic highway. The site is hosted by the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau. An interesting feature of the website is the "Getting Around" section that provides information about alternative forms of transportation available along the byway including bike rentals, trolleys, free shuttles, and rickshaws.

www.sunny.org/scenichighway/ 

Florida Senate District(s): 31, 33, 34

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 93, 94, 99, 100



Deerfield Beach 2014: Outdoor dining in Deerfield Beach on the Broward County A1A Scenic Byway.

Scenic Highway Milestones

Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway

The **Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway** organization continues to work closely with its outstanding partner organizations. In 2014, two noteworthy projects were completed by partners that include FDOT, the cities of Tampa and Clearwater, Hillsborough and Pinellas counties, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and the Westshore Alliance. The FDOT funded and installed over eight hundred palm trees along a five-mile stretch of the byway from the Pinellas/Hillsborough county line to Rocky Point Drive.

The City of Tampa, in partnership with Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful, created a sand dune along the shoreline west of the public beach area and installed interpretive signage, a bike repair station for the **Courtney Campbell Trail**, and native vegetation. These projects not only enhance the byway visitor experience, but also impact the quality of life for drivers who use the road every day, and local residents who take advantage of the recreational opportunities along the byway.

www.courtneycampbell.org

Florida Senate District(s): 17, 20

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 60, 67



The new bike repair station on the Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway includes a bike rack, tools, and an air pump.



More than eight hundred palm trees were installed on the Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway in 2014 to enhance the driving experience of byway visitors and daily users.

Florida Black Bear National Scenic Byway

In 2014, the **Friends of the Florida Black Bear National Scenic Byway** was instrumental in forming a partnership that will develop an eight-mile, shared-use, paved trail along State Road 40. This trail segment will complete the three-hundred-fifty-mile "Heart of Florida" Loop Trail in central Florida. Sections of the trail will use old rail corridors, and there are plans to recreate some of the old rail stations and stops to help tell the story of transportation modes within the corridor.

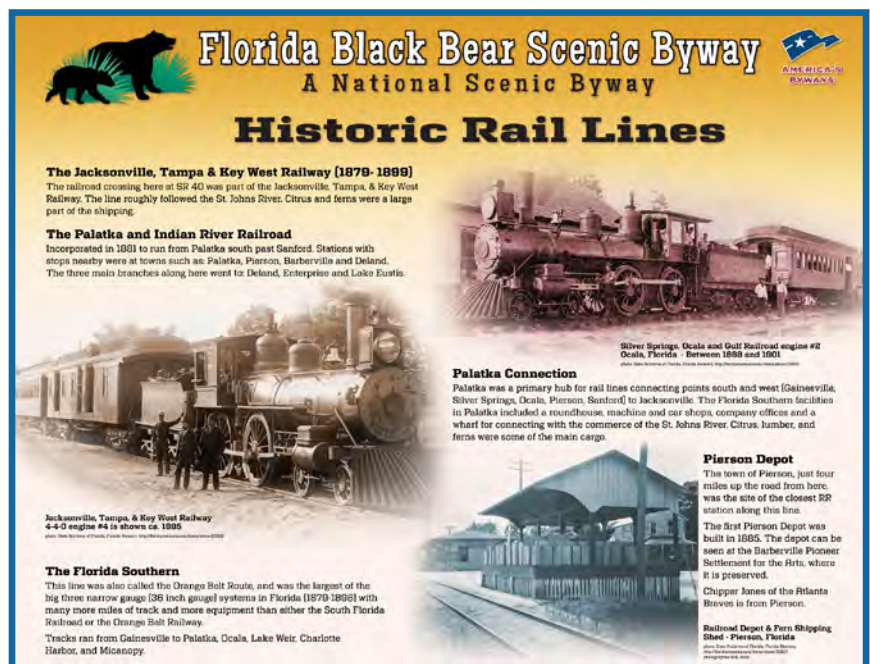
www.FBBSB.org

Florida Senate District(s): 6, 8, 11

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 31



The Florida Black Bear National Scenic Byway now has a permanent exhibit at the Barberville Pioneer Settlement that includes an HD video display with an interpretive frame looping the 40-minute FBBSB video.



This panel illustrates the interpretation of transportation modes planned for the State Road 40 multi-use trail project.

Scenic Highway Milestones

Florida Keys Scenic Highway All-American Road

The **Florida Keys Scenic Corridor Alliance** devoted a significant amount of time in 2014 to updating the byway's corridor management plan. The Alliance used this opportunity to review previous accomplishments and develop challenging but realistic goals for the future. Brand awareness of Florida's only **All-American Road** will be an emphasis moving forward for the organization.

The **Florida Keys Scenic Highway** serves as the sole means of highway travel for residents and visitors alike, and the Alliance is committed to serving as an advocate for highway safety. The Florida Department of Transportation's "Put It Down" safety campaign stresses the importance of driver safety through reduction of driver distractions. This program is fully supported by the Alliance who consistently promotes highway safety programs to their members and social media followers.

www.scenichighwayflkeys.com 

Florida Senate District(s): 39

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 120



Florida Keys Scenic Highway Alliance members participated in the sand art contest at Island Fest in Islamorada. Teams were assigned letters in the word "Island." Alliance members chose the "S" for "Scenic!"



Green Mountain Scenic Byway

An idea first doodled on a cocktail napkin became a reality in October 2014, when the **Green Mountain Scenic Overlook and Trailhead** opened to the public. The three-story overlook structure is perched on the side of a hill overlooking Lake Apopka and twenty thousand acres of wetlands. This location on the North Shore of Lake Apopka is one of the best birding sites in North America, with over three hundred fifty indigenous species recorded. This site on the **Green Mountain Scenic Byway** will now be the primary access point to the North Shore Restoration Area for hikers, cyclists, and bird watchers. The overlook brings attention to the area's scenic beauty, mountain-like topography and abundant wildlife while creating a sustainable ecotourism-based impact to the local area and the county as a whole.

A northern extension of the **Green Mountain Scenic Byway** was also approved in May 2014. The scenic highway now links the historic downtowns of Winter Garden and Mount Dora.

www.greenmountainbyway.org 

Florida Senate District(s): 11, 12

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 32, 44



The ribbon cutting ceremony was attended by local government representatives who recognize the potential economic impact of sustainable ecotourism.

Scenic Highway Milestones

Heritage Crossroads: Miles of History

The **Heritage Crossroads: Miles of History** byway organization worked with partners on two important programs in 2014. The Flagler County Historical Society conducted heritage bus tours along the ninety-two miles of the scenic highway, using the byway guide developed and provided by the byway organization. These tours are held twice a month, and because of demand, reservations are required and there is a waiting list! Byway leaders believe that the demand for these tours is a strong indication of the growing interest in the byway and the region's heritage.

The byway organization was also a major event sponsor of the **Flagler County Chamber of Commerce's Creekside Festival**. Like the bus tours, this event brings people together to celebrate the history and culture of Flagler County.

www.heritagecrossroads.org 

Florida Senate District(s): 6

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 24



The bus tours of the Heritage Crossroads Miles of History byway are also a fundraiser for the organization. Ticket revenue is shared between the byway and the Flagler County Historical Society.



The Creekside Festival is held at the historic Princess Place Plantation on the banks of Pellicer Creek. The event attracts more than twelve thousand people each year. The Heritage Crossroads: Miles of History byway is a major event sponsor.

Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway

The **Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway** was extended thirty-eight miles to the north in 2014. The extension begins in the City of Titusville and encircles the northern end of the Indian River Lagoon. It includes the last major undeveloped area along the east coast of Florida, as well as the exceptional environmental resources of the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, Canaveral National Seashore, and the sparsely developed northern reaches of the Lagoon. These resources not only complement the existing byway corridor, but also provide a unique solitude and beauty not often found elsewhere in the region.

The **Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway Coalition** also partnered with the Eau Gallie Arts District in 2014 to build an informational kiosk in the City of Melbourne. The kiosk provides byway information to travelers, and also information about local businesses to residents and visitors alike.

www.indianriverlagoonbyway.com 

Florida Senate District(s): 8, 13, 16, 32

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 27, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54



The Black Point Wildlife Drive is located along the thirty-eight mile northern extension of the Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway. This seven-mile drive includes twelve designated stops where visitors can view wildlife such as alligators, otters, bobcats, and hundreds of species of birds.



The Eau Gallie Arts District provided graphic input, and funding for materials and the contractor to install this informational kiosk on the Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway in Melbourne.

Scenic Highway Milestones

J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway

What this three-mile scenic highway lacks in distance, byway supporters make up for in enthusiasm! The **J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway** organization works in close partnership with the Town of Penney Farms and the Penney Retirement Community to pool and maximize resources. In 2014, they updated the byway's website and helped renovate the town's playground. In October, they also held the area's first-ever 5K run. By partnering with a Jacksonville running club, they were able to attract one hundred twenty-five runners to the event who were treated to fresh-baked muffins at the race finish!

www.jcpenneyscenichighway.org 

Florida Senate District(s): 7

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 19



Winners All! For anyone requiring homemade pastries as motivation, the next Penney Farms Historic 5K Run is scheduled for October 31, 2015.



JCP Website Updates to the byway website allow the Scenic Highway Coordinator to keep the site up to date with meeting notices, event information, and newsletters.

Martin Grade Scenic Highway

The **Martin Grade Scenic Highway** is Florida's twenty-fifth and newest Scenic Highway. Just half an hour west of Stuart lies this beautiful road that time seems to have forgotten. Officially, it is the Martin Highway, County Road 714, but the locals simply call it "The Grade."

This historic twelve-mile road is shaded by a canopy of hundred-year-old oaks and surrounded by pastures, groves, swamps, and woods, just as it was when it was carved out of the wilderness by the region's earliest settlers. It is the shortest distance between the maddening crowds of today's twenty-first century Florida urban lifestyle and the serene rural existence of an earlier era.

The **Martin Grade Scenic Highway** is located in western Martin County, between Lake Okeechobee and the Atlantic Ocean. It is approximately two hours from Orlando, Tampa, and Miami, and only one hour from West Palm Beach.

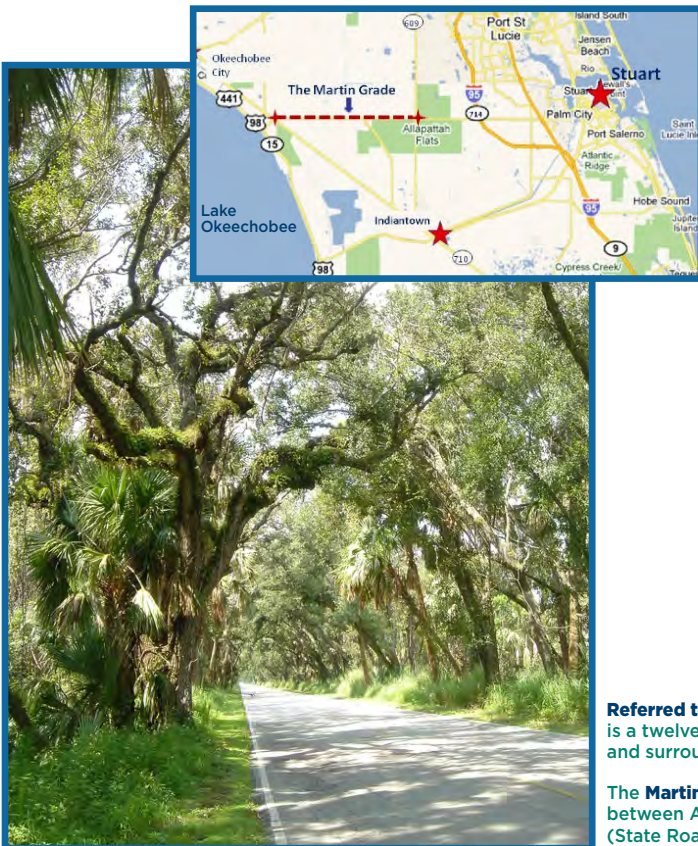
www.martingrade.org 

Florida Senate District(s): 21

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 82

Referred to by locals as "The Grade," Florida's newest scenic highway is a twelve-mile road shaded by a canopy of hundred-year-old oaks and surrounded by pastures, groves, swamps, and woods.

The **Martin Grade Scenic Highway** is Martin Highway (County Road 714), between Allapattah Road (State Road 609) and Warfield Boulevard (State Road 710).



Scenic Highway Milestones

Old Florida Heritage Highway

The Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park continues to be a popular stop for visitors on the **Old Florida Heritage Highway**. The byway organization is currently working in close partnership with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Alachua County to renovate the interior and exterior of the visitor center at the Preserve, which hosts approximately twenty-five thousand visitors per year. New interior exhibits will be more hands-on and kid friendly, further enhancing the visitor experience. These renovations are expected to be completed by December 2015.

The **Old Florida Heritage Highway's** 2014 Annual Meeting and Fish Fry was once again a very well-attended community event. A new raffle that included homemade jams and jellies was added as a fundraiser this year.

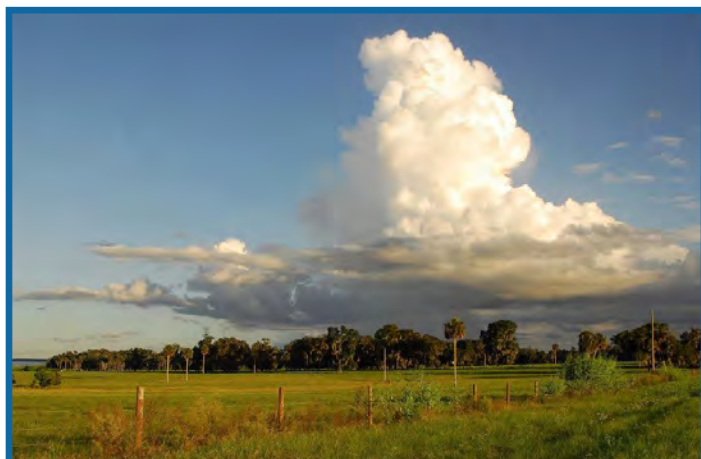
www.scenicUS441.com 

Florida Senate District(s): 7, 8

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 20



Bison: Many of the twenty-five thousand visitors per year to the Payne's Prairie Visitor Center are treated to this view of bison grazing the prairie.



This scenic vista of Orange Lake near Evinston from the Old Florida Heritage Highway is a local and visitor favorite.

Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail

Twice a year, the **Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail** offers professionally guided walks along one of the many trails on the byway. The walks last for about two hours, and focus on native plants, wildlife, and the natural history of the landscape. The walks are free of charge, and the local biologist who leads the tours donates his time to the byway organization.

These guided walks have been an educational program of the **Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail** since 2008, and many participants are repeat customers! Byway leaders know from participant feedback that these walks are highly educational, and enhance the knowledge and appreciation of the byway and its scenic resources. Participants are generally from the area, but some travel greater distances to enjoy the trails and beautiful canopied roads.

www.ormondscenicloopandtrail.com

Florida Senate District(s): 6

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 24, 25



The trail walks offered on the Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail are announced in emails to the group's mailing list and in local newspapers. The trail walk program is well matched to the capacity of the small, all-volunteer Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail byway organization, and accomplishes its goal of implementing educational programs.

Palma Sola Scenic Highway

The **Palma Sola Scenic Highway** organization is actively engaged in litter cleanup and prevention programs. The entire four-and-a-half-mile length of the scenic highway is assigned to Adopt-A-Highway groups, and five Adopt-A-Shore groups conduct quarterly cleanups coordinated by Keep Manatee Beautiful. These routine volunteer cleanups have resulted in a reduction in the amount of litter collected on an annual basis.

In addition, new aluminum cigarette bins and litter prevention signs were installed at the **Palma Sola Causeway** pavilions and other public beaches on Anna Maria Island. The new cigarette bins replace those originally installed in 2009 as part of a program designed to educate citizens about the environmental impacts of improper disposal of cigarette litter. Data collected before and after the bins have been installed indicates their effectiveness at reducing cigarette litter, which means cleaner trails and beaches for residents and visitors.

Florida Senate District(s): 26

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 71

The **Palma Sola Scenic Highway** organization planted geiger trees along the byway for Arbor Day 2014.



New aluminum cigarette bins have been installed on the Palma Sola Scenic Highway. Cigarette butts have topped the list in pounds collected at all International Coastal Cleanups since they were added to the data cards in 1990.

Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway

Old Chimney Park on the **Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway** is an important historic resource. During the Civil War, soldiers looted and burned the Hyer-Knowles Planing Mill that once stood on the site as they retreated from Pensacola. The only thing left standing was the chimney, and it still remains today. The **Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway Foundation** was instrumental in getting the chimney listed on the National Register of Historic Places and a proclamation ceremony celebrating the designation was held in April 2014.

On the same site, the **Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway Foundation** also constructed an interpretive kiosk. Using construction plans borrowed from the successful **Florida Black Bear National Scenic Byway** kiosk program, the Foundation purchased the materials and recruited a local Boy Scout troop to construct the kiosk. Visitors now have access to a detailed history of the sawmill that once stood on the site.

www.pensacolascenicbluffs.org

Florida Senate District(s): 2

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 1, 2



Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway Foundation members celebrate accomplishments and welcome new members at the annual meeting and Ice Cream Social.



The new interpretive kiosk at Old Chimney Park on the Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway was constructed by a local Boy Scout Troop.

Scenic Highway Milestones

River of Lakes Heritage Corridor

In 2014, a National Scenic Byways Program Grant was used to complete a collection of new marketing materials for the **River of Lakes Heritage Corridor**. The centerpiece is a new website that emphasizes the byway's new tagline, **"There's More to Florida."** A brochure was also developed, and forty thousand copies printed. To complete the collection, a thirty-minute byway video was produced. In an innovative move, a local county council member negotiated an agreement to play the video on continuous loop in the baggage claim area of the Daytona Beach International Airport, where over half a million passengers pass each year.

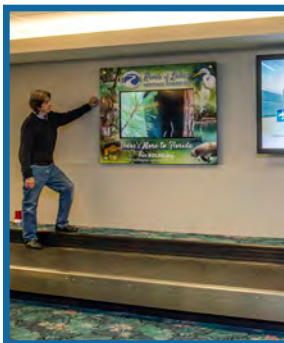
www.ROLHC.org  

Florida Senate District(s): 8, 10

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 24, 26, 27



River of Lakes Heritage Corridor board members and nearly two hundred guests attended the premiere of the byway's new marketing video. The event was held at the historic Athens Theater in Deland.



The River of Lakes Heritage Corridor HD video loops in an installation at the baggage claim area of the Daytona Beach International Airport.



Scenic Highway 30-A

In January 2014, a five-mile extension was added to **Scenic Highway 30-A**. The **Friends of 30-A** believe that the diverse nature and concentration of the natural, historic, and recreational resources along the County Road 393 extension will enhance the overall experience of visiting the byway.

The byway extension was timed to coincide with the update of the byway's corridor management plan, which also occurred in 2014. Several new initiatives were included in the updated plan, including: hosting visioning meetings with community organizations, citizens, and local governments to review strategies on economic development; encouraging Walton County to continue to enforce native vegetation preservation regulations; and coordinating with the Walton County Planning Department to develop a heritage tree preservation ordinance.

www.friendsofscenic30a.com 

Florida Senate District(s): 1

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 5

The Bayou Arts Center is located on the County Road 393 extension of Scenic Highway 30-A, and offers an extensive list of activities including nature trails leading to Hogtown Bayou and the St. Francis Chapel (pictured) and wildlife cemetery.



The Chocatawachee Bay is part of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and is located at the northern end of CR 393, Scenic Highway 30-A's newest extension.

Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway

In early 2014, the **Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway** organization held a ribbon-cutting event to celebrate its designation as Florida's twenty-fourth Scenic Highway. The ceremony was held at Dade Battlefield Historic State Park, and was well attended by state dignitaries, local government representatives, and community members. In a nod to the area's rich ranching history, the **Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway** organization chose "**Cow Chip Bingo**" as a fundraiser at Sumter County's 2014 "Beef and Boogie Festival." The enthusiasm and creativity of this byway group was recognized by the Sumter County Chamber of Commerce who awarded them the 2014 Non-Profit of the Year award.

www.SumterByway.com 

Florida Senate District(s): 18

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 33



Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway leaders accept the 2014 Non-Profit of the Year award from the Sumter County Chamber of Commerce.



A ribbon-cutting and designation celebration was held for the Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway at the Dade Battlefield Historic State Park on January 25, 2014.

Suncoast Scenic Parkway

The **Suncoast Scenic Parkway** was designed to provide a memorable scenic experience for travelers. In an effort to continually maintain this experience, the byway organization supports efforts to expand and enhance the ongoing wildflower planting program and exotic and invasive plant removal. The Suncoast Trail on the west side of the Parkway enables non-motorized travel through this same linear greenway of preserved native vegetation and topography while providing connections to an ever-increasing number of shared-use trails, recreation and nature parks, and other destinations. The **Suncoast Scenic Parkway** organization also works closely with several community nonprofit organizations like the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation to hold cycling events on the trail.

Florida Senate District(s): 17, 18

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 34, 35, 37, 64



The Suncoast Trail on the west side of the Suncoast Scenic Parkway is designated as a National Recreation Trail, Millennium Trail, and is an important component of Florida's system of greenways and trails.



The forty-two-mile Suncoast Scenic Parkway and Trail provide a safe, convenient, and enjoyable opportunity for travel and outdoor fitness for West Central Florida.

Scenic Highway Milestones

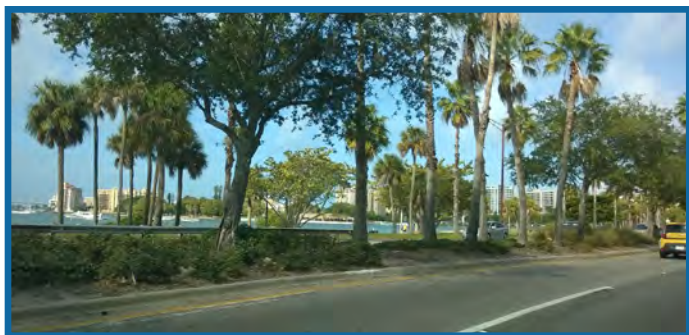
Tamiami Trail – Windows to the Gulf Coast Waters

During 2014, the **Tamiami Trail Scenic Highway Committee** was primarily focused on improving the overall appearance of the scenic highway. Volunteers worked closely with Manatee County to improve landscape maintenance for a fourteen-block section of the scenic highway, and have advocated for the landscaping of newly-installed pedestrian safety islands. In addition, the Committee completed an assessment of the Florida Scenic Highway signs along the sixty-three-mile route. As a result of this assessment, the committee will make recommendations for relocation of some signs to more appropriate locations. New banner signs were also installed in downtown Bradenton to highlight events and attractions along the scenic highway.

www.mympto.org/tamiami-trail

Florida Senate District(s): 19, 26, 28

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 70, 71, 72, 73, 74



The **Tamiami Trail Scenic Highway Committee** partnered with Manatee County to increase landscape maintenance on the byway.



The **City of Bradenton and Realize Bradenton** lead efforts to install banner signs along the Tamiami Trail Scenic Highway to highlight events and attractions.

The Ridge Scenic Highway

Since 2008, the 39-Mile Scenic Highway Yard Sale has been held on the first Saturday in November along **The Ridge Scenic Highway**. The event was created to raise community awareness of the scenic highway, and to encourage tourism in the byway's small towns - and it's working! Local governments, residents, and other partners work together to promote and staff the event that continues to grow each year. Local business owners report seeing a dramatic increase in business during the yard sale. Many "new" yard-sale customers become repeat customers. The byway organization also launched a new website in 2014, and has been working on increasing its social media presence.

www.ridgescenichighway.com 

Florida Senate District(s): 14, 21

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 41, 42



The **Ridge Scenic Highway board members**, seen here sporting the official "39-Mile Yard Sale" t-shirts, receive high praise from visitors for hosting this well-organized event.



The **Crooked Lake Sandhill Trail** is in the Babson Park Area of The Ridge Scenic Highway.

William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway

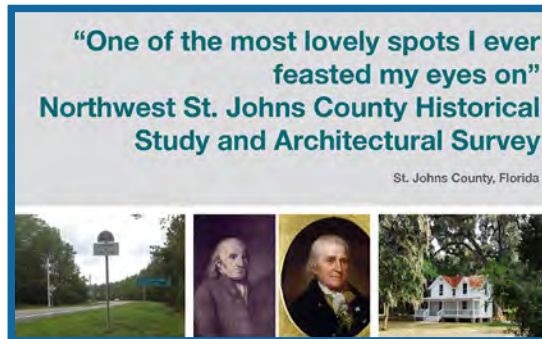
The **William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway** organization completed two important projects aimed at preserving the history of the corridor and the heritage associated with naturalist William Bartram's travels. The **Northwest St. Johns County Historical Study and Architectural Survey** traces development of the area from Native American trails into the scenic roadway of today. Data in the study will help inform decisions on issues such as pursuing National Register designation for historic resources.

The second project was the development of a series of lesson plans for the St. Johns County School District based on the history of the region. The lesson plans are beautifully designed and recommended for grades four through eight. Topics include William Bartram's travels, northeast Florida's involvement in the Civil War, and life in 1930s St. Johns County. The lesson plans are currently in classrooms and byway leaders are anxiously awaiting feedback from local teachers.

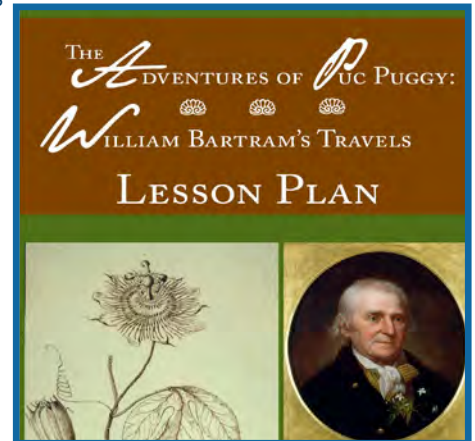
www.bartramscenichighway.com 

Florida Senate District(s): 6

Florida House of Representatives District(s): 17



The **Northwest St. Johns County Historical Study and Architectural Survey** is a historical review of the northwest quarter of the county and an architectural assessment of certain historic buildings on or near the William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway.



This lesson plan focused on naturalist **William Bartram's travels** is designed for fourth through eighth graders, and was developed by the William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway organization.



GARRY BALOGH INSPIRING EXCELLENCE AWARD

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

- Margaret Mead

Few people demonstrate a belief in this sentiment better than Garry Balogh. Garry has served as the District Scenic Highway Coordinator for FDOT District Five since the **Florida Scenic Highways Program** began in 1996. In that twenty years, Garry has been fully engaged with the byway organizations in his district providing his advice and expertise, and literally working side by side with byway volunteers at meetings and events. To say that he goes above and beyond is an understatement. He believes in the organizations he mentors, and believes the work they do will have lasting impacts on the places they love and call home.

In gratitude for his service and anticipation of his retirement in 2015, the **Garry Balogh Inspiring Excellence Award** was created as the highest honor bestowed by the **Florida Scenic Highways Program**. The award will recognize the leadership, innovation, stewardship, and inspiring achievements of an individual or organization that have made a significant and lasting impact on one or more scenic highways, scenic highway communities, or the statewide program.





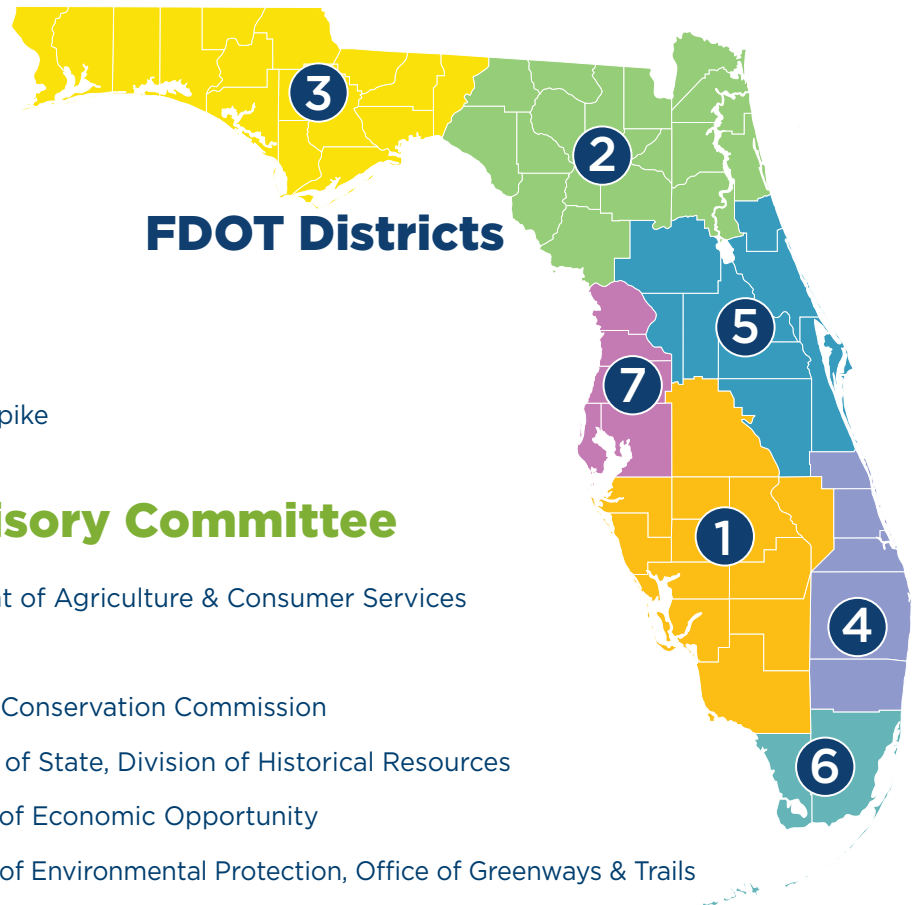
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- **Jennifer Fierman** | District 4
- **Garry Balogh** | District 5
- **Kirk Hoosac** | District 6
- **Lori Marable** | District 7
- **Steffanie Workman** | Florida's Turnpike



Scenic Highway Advisory Committee

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- **David Dodd** | Visit Florida
- **Anne Glick** | Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
- **Robert Jones** | Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources
- **Matt Preston** | Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
- **Brian Ruscher** | Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways & Trails
- **Brian Telfair** | Federal Highway Administration
- **Dale Allen** | Florida Greenways & Trails Foundation



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