



FLORIDA SCENIC HIGHWAYS PROGRAM

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



INTRODUCTION

A note from our Program Coordinator, Dean Stoddart



Hello, and welcome to our 2022 **Florida Scenic Highway Program (FSHP)** annual report. I'm pleased to present our 2022 Annual Report highlighting achievements and the State-of-the-State of our program. This past year has been one of transitions and improvements as we adjust to internal staff changes, revitalizations of our byway organizations, new photos and videos of our byways, and new exposure of our program on the Florida Channel. We can also boast that the **FSHP** received a grant from the Federal Highways Administration National Scenic Byway Grant program!

As I look forward, I'm excited about the future of the **Florida Scenic Byway Program** and new initiatives on the horizon. Such initiatives include a closer working relationship with several other State programs (Greenways and Trails, Great Florida Birding Trail, Florida Paddling Trails, Florida Main Street), seeking opportunities for growth as the National Alternative Fuel Corridor begins to take shape through our byways, and updating our **FSHP** handbook.

Thank you for your interest in our program!

Dean Stoddart, September 2023

Front Cover: William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway

Back cover, top photo: Big Bend Scenic Byway

Back cover, lower photo: Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway



PROGRAM PURPOSE AND MISSION

Following the creation of the National Scenic Byway Program in 1991, the Florida Department of Transportation established the **Florida Scenic Highways Program (FSHP)** in 1996 to protect and promote the intrinsic resources of the state. The program is largely a grassroots movement, utilizing community-based support to bolster resource protection and economic development in the regions the byways encompass. Local governments, volunteers, and businesses play an essential role in the success of the program.

As of 2022, 27 byways across the state are formally designated as Florida Scenic Highways for their scenic, archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, and recreational value. These intrinsic resources are considered representative and uniquely characteristic of an area, instilling an inherent value to the byway. Of the 27 Florida Scenic Highways, six are designated National Scenic Byways and two are designated All-American Roads, the “gold standard” for scenic byways. The byways are an invaluable resource and provide rich benefits to Florida residents and visitors alike.

Emerging from the tail-end of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2022 represented an opportunity for the **Florida Scenic Highways Program** to return to some semblance of normalcy. The Annual Meeting took place, allowing the **FSHP** community to gather for professional development and networking events. The Building Better Byways Conference was established, with the inaugural event drawing attendees from more than 12 states and setting a new precedent for collaboration within the program. The Garry Balogh Inspiring Excellence Award was awarded to Georgia Turner, the Executive Director of the West Volusia Tourism Advertising Agency, to honor and celebrate her dedication to promoting the status of the scenic byways. Five byways applied for a National Scenic Byway Grant, one of which awarded \$650,000 in grant funding to Green Mountain Scenic Byway. 2021 National Scenic Byway designation celebrations postponed by the pandemic were finally held. The past year demonstrates the resiliency of the **Florida Scenic Highways Program** and the dedication of the people who make it happen.

The 2022 Florida Scenic Highways Annual Report is an opportunity to highlight the endeavors of the byways and recognize the hard work and dedication of the volunteers behind these successes. Each Florida Scenic Highway is responsible for completing a Byway Annual Report, which touches on the projects, programs, and events completed in 2022, as well as ongoing projects the byways seek to accomplish. This report represents the accomplishments of the entire program, and is emblematic of the commitment, passion, and expertise that drives the success of **Florida Scenic Highways Program**.

Big Bend Scenic Byway



Real Places. Real Stories.™

MISSION

Help Florida communities deliver high-quality experiences to visitors.

VISION

Promote economic development, enhance local quality of life, and conserve important resources.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Letter From Dean	1
Program Purpose and Mission	2
Florida Scenic Highways Designations	4
2022 Florida Scenic Highways Map	5
Program Contribution at a Glance	6
Statewide Contribution	6
2022 Program Highlights	8
Statewide Annual Meeting	8
National Scenic Byway Grants	9
Florida Crossroads Documentary	11
Garry Balogh Inspiring Excellence Award	12
New National Scenic Byway and All-American Road Designations	13
Individual Byway Accomplishments	14
A1A Ocean Islands Trail	14
A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway	15
Big Bend Scenic Byway	16
Bradenton Beach Scenic Highway	16
Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway	17
Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway	17
Green Mountain Scenic Byway	18
Halifax Heritage Byway	18
Heritage Crossroads: Miles of History	19
Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway	19
J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway	20
Martin Grade Scenic Highway	20
Old Florida Heritage Highway	21
Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail	21
Palma Sola Scenic Highway	22
River of Lakes Heritage Corridor	22
Scenic Highway 30A	23
Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway	23
The Ridge Scenic Highway	24
William Bartram Scenic and Historic Highway	24
Other Program Benefits	25
National Scenic Byway Foundation	25
Scenic Highways Advisory Committee (SHAC)	25

FLORIDA SCENIC HIGHWAYS DESIGNATIONS

ID	SCENIC HIGHWAY	REGION	DISTRICT	STATE DESIGNATION	NATIONAL DESIGNATION	ALL AMERICAN ROAD DESIGNATION
1	Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway	Panhandle	3	4/24/98		
2	Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway	Central	4	6/13/00	NSB (2002)	
			5			
3	Bradenton Beach Scenic Highway	Central	1	4/17/01		
4	Old Florida Heritage Highway	Northern	2	6/7/01		
5	Florida Keys Scenic Highway	Southern	6	6/22/01		AAR (2009)
6	A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway	Northern	2	1/17/02		AAR (2021)
			5			
7	Tamiami Trail - Windows to the Gulf Coast Waters	Southern	1	12/19/03		
8	Palma Sola Scenic Highway	Central	1	5/28/04		
9	Green Mountain Scenic Byway	Central	5	7/19/04		
10	The Ridge Scenic Highway	Central	1	2/16/05		
11	Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway	Central	7	5/23/05		
12	William Bartram Scenic and Historic Scenic Highway	Northern	2	10/31/05		
13	Indian River Lagoon - Treasure Coast Scenic Highway	Southern	4	12/14/05		
14	Suncoast Scenic Parkway	Central	Turnpike	8/18/06		
15	Big Bend Scenic Byway	Panhandle	3	11/14/06	NSB (2009)	
16	Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail	Central	5	7/9/07	NSB (2009)	
17	Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway	Central	2	4/9/08	NSB (2009)	
			5			
18	Lemon Bay / Myakka Trail Scenic Highway	Southern	1	4/9/08		
19	Scenic Highway 30A	Panhandle	3	4/9/08	NSB (2021)	
20	Heritage Crossroads: Miles of History	Northern	5	11/19/08		
21	River of Lakes Heritage Corridor	Central	5	3/12/09	NSB (2021)	
22	Broward County A1A Scenic Highway	Southern	4	7/20/09		
23	J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway	Northern	2	4/30/10		
24	Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway	Central	5	5/2/13		
25	Martin Grade Scenic Highway	Southern	4	1/28/15		
26	A1A Ocean Islands Trail	Northern	2	7/26/16		
27	Halifax Heritage Byway	Central	5	10/5/20		

2022 FLORIDA SCENIC HIGHWAYS COLLECTION



PROGRAM CONTRIBUTION AT A GLANCE

Statewide Contribution

The individual byways of the **Florida Scenic Highways Program** accomplished several impactful projects throughout 2022. The 27 byways contributed nearly 2,500 volunteer hours to 56 projects, with an average contribution of about 44 hours per project. The hours dedicated to programs, projects, and events resulted in increased community engagement, organizational development, and increased awareness for the **Florida Scenic Highways Program**. 2022 also presented a unique opportunity for the byways and their volunteers by way of the Federal Highway Administration's reintroduction of the National Scenic Byway Grant. Each of the byways had the opportunity to submit grant proposals to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for consideration. Of those submitted, FDOT hand selected the strongest proposals to be advanced as official National Scenic Byway Grant applications. The projects submitted for grant funding ranged from installation of multi-use trails to the construction of scenic overlook towers. Five Florida Scenic Byways were selected by FDOT to apply for the grant, and one byway was awarded funding.



2,446

**VOLUNTEER HOURS
CONTRIBUTED**



44

**AVERAGE HOURS
CONTRIBUTED
PER PROJECT**

56

**TOTAL
PROJECTS
COMPLETED**



As a grassroots initiative, volunteers are the backbone of the program, and their time, hard work, and dedication are at the heart of its success. Volunteer hours are the lifeblood of the program and exemplify the spirit of community that is an integral aspect of the **Florida Scenic Highways Program**.



2.07

**AVERAGE PROJECTS
COMPLETED PER BYWAY**

5

**NATIONAL
SCENIC
BYWAY
GRANT
APPLICATIONS**

1

**NATIONAL
SCENIC
BYWAY
GRANT
AWARDED**

\$650 THOUSAND

IN GRANT FUNDING AWARDED

2022 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Statewide Annual Meeting

The **Florida Scenic Highways Program (FSHP)** held its Statewide Annual Meeting on March 29th, 2022. The meeting was attended by approximately 70 representatives from organizations such as the **Florida Scenic Highways Program**, Scenic America, and the National Scenic Byways Program. Attendees heard presentations from speakers from various organizations, including FDOT, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the National Travel Center.

The Statewide Annual Meeting provided an opportunity for representatives from the FDOT and the volunteers from individual byway organizations to gather for networking opportunities, educational seminars, professional certification assistance, and leadership training. The conference also featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway's designation as an All-American Road, a prestigious national designation. The Byway was officially designated an All-American Road in 2021, but a celebration of the achievement had been postponed a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ceremony provided an opportunity for the **FSHP** community to celebrate the hard work and dedication exhibited by the A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway organization and the program as a whole.

The Statewide Annual Meeting was a great success and reinforced the community's commitment to the program. The meeting fortified the sharing of knowledge and best practices for the program while also allowing each district and byway to share their successes and challenges. This was an excellent way to bring the program together to not only recognize the programs achievements but provide training opportunities and sessions to make the next year even better.



District Scenic Highways Coordinators during the Statewide Annual Meeting in St. Augustine, Florida.

NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY GRANTS

In early 2022, the Federal Highway Administration announced the availability of \$22 million in grant funds under the National Scenic Byways Program for activities related to construction, planning, maintenance, sustainability, accessibility, and security. The grant funds were made available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, legislation enacted in late 2021 to invest in various aspects of the United States' infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and transportation. The law allocated \$350 billion for Federal highway programs from 2022 to 2026, enabling the restoration of the National Scenic Byways Grant. This grant has not been offered since 2012, resulting in significantly less opportunities for leveraging grant fundings for byways across the country over the past decade. The return of this grant provided the **Florida Scenic Highways Program** with a unique opportunity to pursue funds specifically earmarked for scenic byway projects. During this grant cycle, five Florida Scenic Highways projects were selected by FDOT and submitted applications for over \$2.1 million in funding. These projects ranged from rebranding and marketing endeavors to a scenic overlook. The projects were ambitious in nature and served to propel the scenic highways towards meeting their individual goals and benefiting the program. This was a significant undertaking and required many of the byways to work tirelessly to obtain required information related to cost estimates, community and official by in, project schedule, and detailed narratives highlighting the benefits of the project. While only one of the grant applications was successful during this round of funding, this information gathering exercise will be valuable in the future as more grants become available. Nationwide, each state received one award with the exception of Iowa, which received two awards. The awards made to the **FSHP** program were consistent with those of other states.

Green Mountain Scenic Byway applied for \$650,000 in grant funding to finance a 40-foot addition to the Lake Apopka Scenic Overlook. The scenic overlook, originally financed through a 2011 National Scenic Byway Grant, has had its scenic view of Lake Apopka obscured by growing vegetation. Planning for a tower addition began soon after construction, and the 2022 National Scenic Byway Grant Application provided the Byway with a prime opportunity to secure funding for the project. Green Mountain Scenic Byway was successful in their pursuit of this grant and was awarded \$650,000 in 2023.

The J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway utilized the 2022 National Scenic Byway Program grant cycle to apply for grant funding to finance repairs and resurfacing of the highway's loop road. The loop consists of three roads that provide a scenic side route that brings travelers to points of interest along the Highway. \$428,440 was requested to finance the project.



Artist rendering of the completed addition to the Overlook at Lake Apopka



The J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway

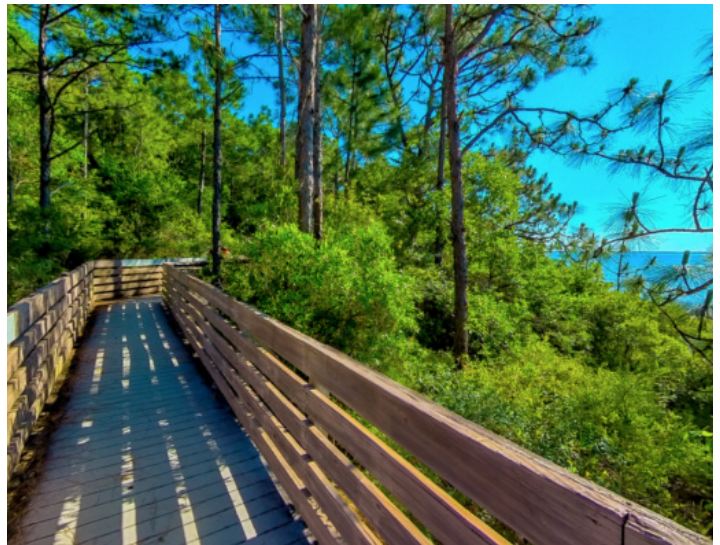
The A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway submitted one project for consideration under the National Scenic Byway Grant. The project was a marketing endeavor to rebrand the Byway as an All-American Road, a designation the Byway achieved in 2021. The grant would fund a new website, travel map, brochure, digital byway tour, and a promotional video. To finance this project, \$60,000 in grant funding was requested.

Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway requested \$505,600 in funding from the National Scenic Byway Program to finance the creation of a 1.25-mile multimodal sidewalk along the Highway. The path, which would connect existing sidewalk infrastructure, would increase connectivity along the Highway for bicyclists, pedestrians, and other multimodal transportation users. The sidewalk would allow for recreational use of the Highway for non-motorists and increase safety for bicyclists and pedestrians along the corridor.

Martin Grade Scenic Highway utilized the 2022 National Scenic Byway Program grant cycle to apply for grant funding to finance a historic tree canopy restoration project. The Highway is named for the “Grade,” a historic canopy road dating back to the early 1900s. The project would focus on the restoration of the tree canopy, which in recent years has suffered in health due to climatic impacts, invasive species, and additional stressors. The Highway requested \$474,000 in grant funding to finance the project.



Ribbon-cutting to celebrate the new All-American Road status



Bay Bluffs Park, Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway



Martin Grade Scenic Highway

Scenic Highway	District	Project Name	Requested Amount	Awarded?	Amount Awarded
Green Mountain Scenic Byway	5	Lake Apopka Scenic Overlook Addition	\$650,000	Y	\$650,000
J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway	2	Repairs and Resurfacing of Scenic Highway Loop	\$428,440	N	-
Martin Grade Scenic Highway	4	Martin Grade Historic Canopy Restoration	\$474,000	N	-
Pensacola Scenic Bluffs	3	Scenic Highway Sidewalk Project	\$505,600	N	-
A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway	2 and 5	Rebranding and Marketing Project	\$60,000	N	-
Total	-	-	\$2,118,040	-	\$650,000

FLORIDA CROSSROADS DOCUMENTARY

In 2022, *Florida Crossroads*, a PBS documentary that highlights the people, places, and events shaping the state of Florida, aired three episodes focusing on scenic byways in Florida. **The Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway**, **Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway**, and **Green Mountain Scenic Byway** were featured in the documentary series. The episodes provided an immersive exploration of the scenic byways' diverse landscapes, rich history, and vibrant culture. Interviews from byway coordinators and community stakeholders offered unique perspectives on the byways' contributions to the state's heritage and how the byways have helped Florida's communities flourish. The documentary celebrates Florida's natural wonders and dives into how the Florida Scenic Byway Program is dedicated to safeguarding the state's natural resources.

<https://thefloridachannel.org/videos/florida-crossroads-florida-scenic-highways-and-byways-central-region/>



Florida Crossroads Documentary, WFSU Public Media/PBS



Florida Crossroads Documentary, WFSU Public Media/PBS

Garry Balogh

Inspiring Excellence Award

2022

The **Garry Balogh Inspiring Excellence Award** represents the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a member of the **Florida Scenic Highways** volunteer community. The award, named for past FDOT District 5 (D5) Scenic Highway Coordinator Garry Balogh, is given each year to a member of the byway community who best embodies Garry's dedication to the **Florida Scenic Highways Program**. Award recipients are recognized for the positive impact their leadership, passion, innovation, and commitment they have had on the program.

The 2022 recipient of the **Garry Balogh Inspiring Excellence Award** is **Georgia Turner**, the Executive Director of the West Volusia Tourism Advertising Authority (WVTAA) and technical advisor to the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor (ROLHC) and the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway (FBBSB). Georgia was nominated for the award on behalf of the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor, a nomination that was supported by the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway.

Georgia's dedication to the region is widely recognized. Her role as the Executive Director of the WVTAA has allowed Georgia to play an active role in the tourism development of West Volusia, something that she is deeply dedicated to. Her approach is holistic, believing that the success of the region is dependent on the success of the byways and vice versa. Georgia's love for the community drives her passion and dedication to the development of the region, and she continuously goes above and beyond to broadcast the merits of West Volusia and the scenic highways.

Georgia's contributions to the **Florida Scenic Highways Program** are vast. Currently serving as a technical advisor to the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor and the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway, Georgia utilizes her expertise in advertisement to bolster the cultural and economic impact the byways have on the surrounding communities. This past year, Georgia and the WVTAA contributed \$10,000 to the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor Board so that an updated promotional brochure could be created that would draw more visitors to the region. The WVTAA also maintains a webpage dedicated to the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor and the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway so that information regarding the activities of the byways can be disseminated to interested residents and visitors. To further promote the byways, a series of videos were created by the WVTAA that feature information about ROLHC and its significance. Georgia and the WVTAA work diligently to promote the byways and expand their reach.

The WVTAA has also supported the ROLHC in furthering its national status. In 2019, the WVTAA assisted the ROLHC with the development of a National Scenic Byway application. In early 2021 the byway received word that they had been selected by the Federal Highway Association to become a National Scenic Byway, an honor made possible by Georgia's passionate contribution. Georgia and the WVTAA have been instrumental in the success of River of Lakes Heritage Corridor and utilize their expertise to bring new opportunities to the program.

Georgia's dedication to the **Florida Scenic Highway Program** demonstrates the incredible achievements that can be accomplished through passion, dedication, and commitment. The partnership she facilitates between the WVTAA and the **Florida Scenic Highways Program** highlights the mutual benefits that can be achieved through collaboration. The **Florida Scenic Highways Program** is honored to highlight Georgia's hard work and dedication by presenting her with the 2022 Garry Balogh Inspiring Excellence Award.



Georgia knew Garry Balogh well, having supported the community's efforts to designate and support byways when he was the coordinator for D5, so this award was especially moving for her.

NEW NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY AND ALL-AMERICAN ROAD DESIGNATIONS

Two Florida Scenic Highways hosted ceremonies to celebrate designations awarded during the COVID-19 pandemic. The River of Lakes Heritage Corridor held a community event to celebrate their 2021 designation as a National Scenic Byway. The event, which took place at the Enterprise Museum in Deltona, brought members of the Byway organization and community leaders together to celebrate the Byway's significant achievement. The A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway celebrated their 2021 designation as an All-American Road at the 2022 Building Better Byways Conference in St. Augustine. The celebration featured a ribbon-cutting event and an official dedication. Conference attendees were able to celebrate the designation alongside members of the Byway's organization.



National Scenic Byway Foundation, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Scenic America, local tourism partners, political leaders, and members of the community were present to support Scenic & Historic A1A's celebratory ribbon-cutting.



INDIVIDUAL BYWAY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



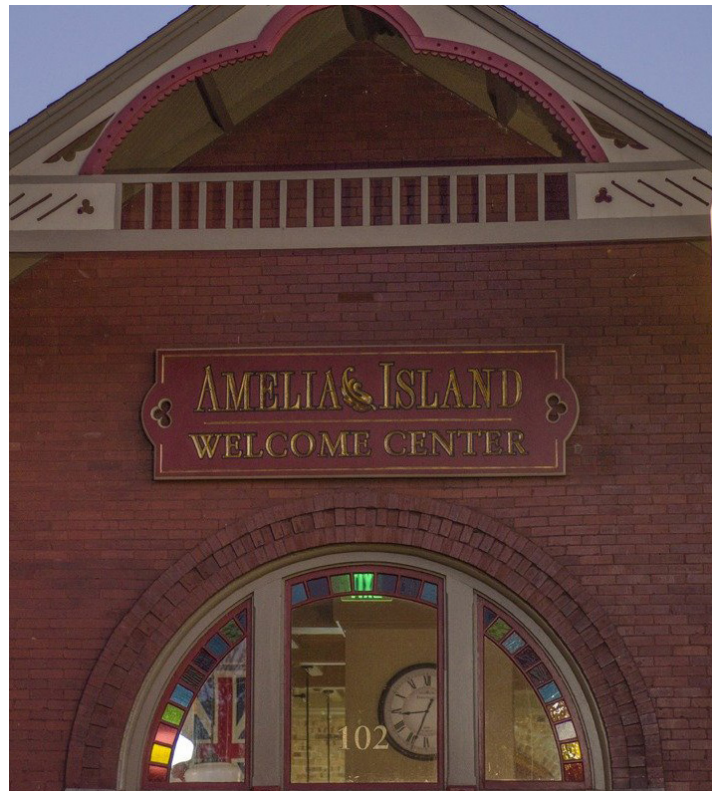
Each year our byway organizations prepare a Byway Annual Report (BAR) that details their past year's achievements. These BARs are submitted to their FSHP District Scenic Highway Coordinators who organizes and confirms the information, and then forwards to the FSHP Program Manager. These excellent reports are then used to showcase the accomplishments of the Florida Scenic Highway Program and are combined below! This year we had 20 byways submit BARs describing their organizations activities, completed projects, fundraising efforts, public outreach and all the things our byways do in support of the Florida Scenic Highway Program. It is important to note that all our byways are made up of volunteers who give not only their time and expertise, but also their full throated enthusiasm. Here we recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of the 2022 Florida Scenic Highways Program Byway Organizations.



A1A Ocean Islands Trail

A1A Ocean Islands Trail held a series of programs throughout 2022. The A1A Super Scenic 150-mile Garage Sale, hosted in partnership with A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway, Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail, and the Halifax Heritage Byway, brought shoppers to the Byway. Byway volunteers helped solicit goods to sell and handed out brochures to attendees interested in learning more about the Byway. The brochures distributed were designed by the Byway organization to reintroduce the organization and its goals to the community. The updated design features corridor limits, Byway history, and information on the Florida Scenic Highways Program.

2022 also saw the creation of a new Byway organizational structure for A1A Ocean Islands Trail. A central executive committee was established, and steps were taken to ensure that all corporate certifications remained in place, allowing for the Byway to maintain its status as a Florida Corporation and an IRS-recognized non-profit. The Byway also collaborated with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) to help implement organizational resiliency solutions. Grant funding was awarded to the Byway and NEFRC to evaluate examples of successful byway organizations, explore the context of the surrounding counties, discover public-private partnership opportunities, and to determine possible funding sources for the Byway organization.





A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway

The A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway hosted the 2022 Building Better Byways Conference in collaboration with local community partners and Friends of A1A. As part of this conference, the National Scenic Byway Foundation offered a two-day paid training for byway-affiliated attendees. The inaugural event offered networking opportunities, education, professional certifications, and leadership training for industry professionals and byway leaders and volunteers. The conference also included an official ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the Byway's 2021 designation as Florida's second All-American Road, a celebration that had been delayed a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The conference was a resounding success and refocused community attention on the importance of the byways. As a result of the conference, 15 people received their official Byway Leader Certification. In addition to these events, the Florida Scenic Highways Program's Statewide Annual Meeting took place during the conference, providing an opportunity for byway leaders and district coordinators to meet to discuss the achievements and goals of the program.

Several other programs were also observed in 2022, including the 10th Annual Spoonbills and Sprockets Cycling Tour and the 14th Annual Super Scenic 150-mile Garage Sale. Both fundraisers succeeded in raising money for the Byway organization, while also increasing community involvement and awareness of the Byway's mission. Kids Ocean Day, a student education event hosted by Friends of A1A, was attended by hundreds of students from local Title 1 schools. The students were able to attend educational workshops with environmental organizations to learn more about the importance of the natural environment and the Byway's mission of preserving it. Byway volunteers further achieved their goal of environmental conservation through quarterly litter cleanups, including the post-4th of July Mega Beach Cleanup sponsored by the Ocean Conservancy.

The A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway took advantage of the Federal Highway Administration's 2022 reintroduction of the National Scenic Byway Grant by applying for the grant with FDOT for funding of a rebranding and marketing project.





Big Bend Scenic Byway



The Big Bend Scenic Byway focused their efforts in 2022 on continuing to pursue the Wayshowing and Interpretive Exhibit Panel and Signage Project as it progresses through bid and construction phases. The project, which is funded through a 2011 National Scenic Byway grant, will feature 64 exhibit panels, 32 approach markers at exhibit and portal sites, and the redesign of primary and secondary portal signs at entrance kiosks. The byway continues to coordinate with Leon County and the Florida Department of Transportation



on this project through a supplemental agreement and a construction bid package.

The Big Bend Scenic Byway has also been working to rebuild its Byway Management Authority and reestablish relationships with member entities. 2022 marks the first time that the Byway has held quarterly meetings since the COVID-19 pandemic, a success brought about by the organization's recent restructuring efforts.



Bradenton Beach Scenic Highway

In 2022, Bradenton Beach Scenic Highway partnered with the City of Bradenton Beach to renew the City's status as a Tree City USA. The certification, which specifies core standards of urban forestry that a city must maintain, is an important indicator of a city's commitment to tree management. The City of Bradenton has been a member of Tree City USA since 2011.

The Highway furthered this commitment to urban forestry by undertaking a beach access enhancement project at 102 Gulf Drive. On Arbor Day, the Highway planted ten horizontal cocoplums, seven sabal palms, and three green buttonwoods at the beach access site. The installation of these native tree species provides an ecological benefit, contributes to the scenic nature of the Highway, creates shaded beach access, and celebrates the City's designation as a Tree City USA.





Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway

Courtney Campbell Scenic Highway partnered with Keep Tampa Bay Beautiful and the City of Clearwater in 2022 to conduct several beach and Highway cleanups. The cleanups, which drew hundreds of volunteers from several organizations, collected staggering amounts of litter. In 2022, a combined 20,575 pounds of trash was collected.

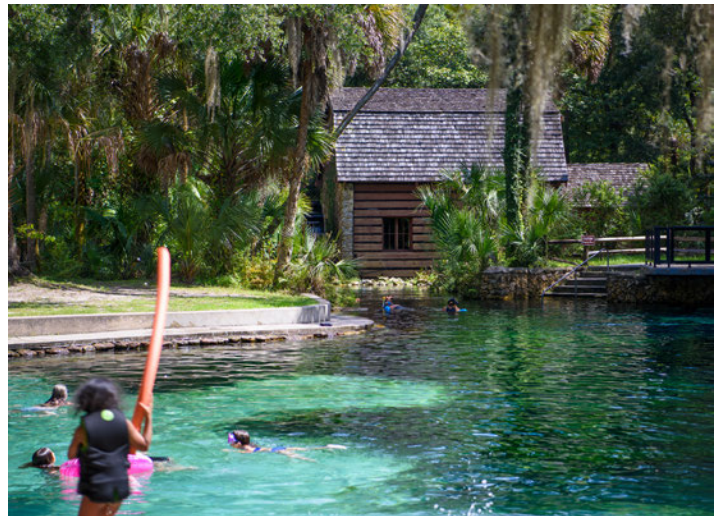
The Highway notes that volunteers are crucial to the success of these cleanups, especially after high-traffic events such as the 4th of July. These cleanups create a sense of responsibility and stewardship that encourages residents to interact with the natural environment around them, something that the Highway has been promoting since its inception.



Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway

The Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway used 2022 to engage and educate community members. A Community Bus Tour Program was developed that offered 4-hour tours of the Ocala National Forest to residents of the Lakeview Terrace Life Care Community. The tours were led by Byway Chair and certified forester Jim Thorsen, and featured discussions from a black bear expert and a local naturalist. Participants were educated on the ecosystem of the Ocala National Forest and the species that call it home. The Byway also installed a brochure display table at the Juniper Springs Recreation Area in the Ocala National Forest to educate visitors about the importance of the ecosystem and the black bear.

The Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway developed promotional materials to extend the reach of the byway and bring attention to upcoming events. A virtual newsletter was developed that features minutes from the Byway organization's bimonthly meetings to keep the community informed and engaged with the events of the Byway. The Byway was also featured in Florida Crossroads, a Florida Channel documentary series that highlights the people, places, and events shaping the state. The Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway was one of three byways selected to be featured in the documentary series. Jim Thorsen and Gudron Benson, Director of Barberville Pioneer Settlement, were interviewed about the importance of the Byway.





Green Mountain Scenic Byway

In 2022, the Green Mountain Scenic Byway ambitiously applied for a National Scenic Byway Grant to fund an additional overlook tower at Lake Apopka. The existing tower, which was originally funded through a 2011 National Scenic Byway Grant, was constructed to provide a direct view of Lake Apopka near a popular trailhead located just off the Byway. The surrounding vegetation has flourished, causing the view to become obstructed. After extensive planning to add an additional scenic tower, Green Mountain Scenic Byway and FDOT submitted an application for a National Scenic Byway Grant. Green Mountain Scenic Byway had the only successful application and was awarded \$650,000 for the new overlook tower.

The Byway also focused heavily on advertisement and engagement in 2022. Green Mountain Scenic Byway was one of three byways featured in Florida Crossroads, a Florida Channel documentary series dedicated to highlighting the people, places, and events shaping the state. Greg Gensheimer, Byway Chair, and Jennifer Hunt, Oakland Nature Preserve Director, were interviewed regarding their thoughts on the Florida Scenic Highways Program and the value that byways bring to communities. The Byway also developed a brochure that can be used to meet the goals of their engagement plan. The Byway hopes that this will familiarize the community with their mission of preservation, protection, and community education.



Halifax Heritage Byway

Florida's most recently designated scenic highway, the Halifax Heritage Byway, was designated in October of 2020. Inducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Byway organization had a limited volunteer base and struggled to achieve a firm organizational structure. The Byway finalized its organization structure in 2022 by filing its Articles of Incorporation to receive a formal Florida Business designation. The organization also opened a bank account, the first step in its goal of becoming an IRS-recognized non-profit. The Byway looks forward to continuing to develop as an organization while positively impacting the community.



Byway Organization Highlights



Heritage Crossroads: Miles of History

In 2022, Heritage Crossroads Scenic Byway focused heavily on projects and partnerships that promoted the historic and cultural aspects of the Byway corridor. A service-learning partnership between the Byway and Daytona State College was facilitated by Nancy Duke, Byway Chair and Daytona State College History Professor, and engaged a variety of students on different topics pertaining to the history of the Byway. Duke presented this partnership at the Florida Scenic Highways Program Statewide Annual Meeting in March to discuss the impact of the program and the importance of utilizing the community's youth in a volunteer capacity. This year, students at Daytona State College were tasked with creating a children's book about the Byway and the history of Flagler County. The resulting book will be published and sold to fundraise for the Byway organization. The Byway believes that integrating students into community-based volunteer projects makes them better stewards of the community's history.

The Heritage Crossroads Scenic Byway also partnered with the Flagler County Tourist Development Council and over 50 arts, cultural, and heritage organizations to form the Flagler County Cultural Council. The council seeks to build unity among member organizations, engage in advocacy and education, and to provide resources that support the arts

and humanities in Flagler County to enrich the lives of residents and visitors alike. The hope of the council is that the unity between organizations will enable each organization to leverage grant funding that individual organizations may not be eligible for.



Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway

In 2022, Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway focused on strengthening relationships internally and with partner organizations. A guest speaker series was developed to educate Byway Coalition members and other community partners on a range of topics pertaining to the Byway. Additionally, Byway board members attended the Sebastian River Area Chamber of Commerce Partner Meeting to present on the economic value that a Scenic Highway designation can have on the local economy. The Byway also participated in Mobility Week, a cooperative effort between FDOT and various partner agencies, to promote awareness of safe multimodal transportation choices in the region. The Byway utilized this opportunity to disseminate information and engage community members in the region.





J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway

J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway used 2022 to train staff for the Penney Farms Historical Museum. Created in partnership with the Town of Penney Farms and the Penney Farms Historical Society, the museum tells the rich history of the town and the J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway. Volunteers were trained to sort stored artifacts, change museum displays, conduct historical research, and present to visitors. The training bolstered the museum's volunteer force, allowing for the museum to extend its hours. Located just a block from the Highway, the museum allows residents and visitors to learn more about the history of the J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway and the Town of Penney Farms.

J.C. Penney Memorial Scenic Highway and FDOT applied for a National Scenic Byway Grant in 2022 to fund repairs and resurfacing of the Highway's loop. The loop redirects travelers from the main street of the scenic highway towards points of interest in the historic town. The Highway aimed to secure grant funding to repair various age-related deficiencies in the road.



Martin Grade Scenic Highway

In 2022, in conjunction with FDOT, Martin Grade Scenic Highway utilized an established partnership with Martin County and Keep Martin Beautiful to pursue a grant opportunity through the National Scenic Byway Program 2022 grant cycle. The grant application sought funding for maintenance and improvements to the historic tree canopy along the length of the Highway. The Highway aims to enhance and preserve its tree canopy to maintain the natural and aesthetic value of the vegetation. Martin County identified specific areas along their corridor needing tree maintenance and replacement of trees to preserve the scenic qualities of their byway.



Byway Organization Highlights



Old Florida Heritage Highway

With the help of FDOT and the Alachua County Growth Management Department, the Old Florida Heritage Highway continued reorganization efforts in 2022. After designation as a Florida Scenic Highway in 2011, a citizen group operated as the informal executive organization until 2018 when the group dissolved. The Highway was inactive until 2021, when the Alachua County Growth Management Department partnered with FDOT to establish a formal organization. These efforts continued into 2022. This past year, a survey was conducted to gain feedback from local highway advocates, and virtual coordination calls took place to further solidify the goals of the organization. A community stakeholder meeting took place in November 2022 in the Town of Micanopy, where participants reaffirmed their commitment to the Highway and selected an executive committee to lead the organization. The Florida Business status of the Highway was also renewed and a work plan for 2023 was established that reflects the Highway's original mission of preservation, protection, and education. The Old Florida Heritage Highway is looking forward to what the future holds for their organization.



Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail

Highlighting the natural beauty of the Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail was paramount to the Byway organization in 2022. A seminar on the history of Bulow Creek State Park that discussed the history of the land was offered, and a spring nature walk in Bulow Creek State Park featured a local plant pathologist and Master Arborist who described the history and ecology of the area. In the fall, another nature walk took place in North Peninsula State Park at Smith Creek Landing, this time hosted by a Florida Master Naturalist. Participants were educated on the natural dynamics of a coastal ecosystem and the importance of preservation.

Ormond Scenic Loop & Trail participated in the Super Scenic 150-mile Garage Sale in partnership with the A1A Scenic & Historic Byway, the Halifax Heritage Byway, and the A1A Ocean Islands Trail. This event featured a day-long sale that included over 100 sites along the Byway. More than 150 shoppers attended and helped raise funds for the Byway's organization.





Palma Sola Scenic Highway

Palma Sola Scenic Highway undertook several projects in 2022 to enhance the physical condition of the Scenic Highway and its associated corridors. Working with the Manatee County Natural Resources Department, the Scenic Highway assisted with restoration and upkeep projects involving public amenities at Robinson Preserve. Rusted hardware was replaced on pedestrian bridges, boardwalks, an observation tower, and pilings were wrapped with a heavy-duty plastic liner to protect the wood from marine worms. At Perico Preserve, the Scenic Highway supported the Manatee County Natural Resources Department in an invasive plant species removal project. Using a grant from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Uplands Program, 32 acres of the preserve were treated for invasive species, allowing native species to thrive. Additional projects included the reorganization of parking at the Anna Maria Island bridge. In partnership with FDOT, the Scenic Highway installed ropes and bollards to prohibit trailer-hauling vehicles from parking on the bridge. The Scenic Highway continued its regular maintenance activities, participating in quarterly litter cleanups with Adopt-A-Highway and Adopt-A-Shore groups to keep the Scenic Highway beautiful and litter-free. Finally, Palma Sola Scenic Highway sought to extend the byway through FDOT processes and was successful in this initiative.



River of Lakes Heritage Corridor

River of Lakes Heritage Corridor started the year off with a celebration of their National Scenic Byway designation. The Byway received a formal designation in 2021 but delayed a community celebration due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was held at the Enterprise Museum and included members of the Byway organization and community leaders. As one of two byways selected for a National Scenic Byway designation in Florida, the event aimed to highlight the magnitude of the designation and recognize the hard work of the Byway volunteers.

The Byway hosted a series of programs aimed at increasing community involvement in Byway activities. With assistance from the City of Orange City and the West Volusia Tourism Advertising Agency, the Byway developed a new informational brochure and map that will be available at Visit Florida Welcome Centers throughout the region. A guest lecture series was developed to increase community attention on the Byway. The series titled “Along Our Corridor” offered lectures on the history of the Byway, the various communities it passes through, and the heritage of the region.

River of Lakes Heritage Corridor announced the 2022 winner of the Garry Balogh Inspiring Excellence Award. The award, established in 2015, is the highest distinction that a member

of the Florida Scenic Highway community can receive. 2022 winner Georgia Turner, Executive Director of the West Volusia Advertising Authority and technical advisor to the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway and the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor, was recognized for her commitment to the program and the passion she brings to the work. The award serves to honor those who go above and beyond to serve the program and aims to inspire others in the community.



Byway Organization Highlights



Scenic Highway 30A

2022 brought new talent and ideas to the Scenic Highway 30A executive board. Funding for Friends Corner is currently being obtained for landscaping and design, with the Walton County Tourism Development Council committing \$50,000 towards planning and development that will allow the organization to apply for additional outside funding. Friends Corner, located at the intersection of Eastern Lake Road and Scenic Highway 30A, will feature a gazebo complete with informational materials about the Highway and its intrinsic resources. Other projects in motion include the Scenic Overlook Pilot Project that seeks to create a scenic overlook for viewing the Coastal Dunes Lakes. The project will select a single site as a pilot location and then potentially expand to additional locations in the future.



Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway

Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway volunteers focused their attention in 2022 on creating a lasting legacy for the Byway. Working in collaboration with the Sumter County Preservation Society, the Byway succeeded in securing a National Register of Historic Places designation for Wild Cow Prairie Cemetery. The small cemetery, located in rural Sumter County, is home to 44 burials dating from 1849 to 1925. The cemetery is a remnant of Pemberton Ferry, a community dating back to the 1840s. Members of the Sumter County Historical Society and the Byway organization worked to rehabilitate the cemetery after it had fallen into disrepair, and successfully cataloged 16 marked and 28 unmarked burial sites in the process. This designation is considered a significant achievement as it furthers Scenic Sumter's goal of historic preservation.

Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway was featured in Florida Crossroads, a Florida Channel documentary series aimed at highlighting the people, places, and events shaping the state. The documentary series partnered with the Florida Scenic Highways Program to highlight individual byways. Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway was one of three byways selected for feature in the series. Dawn Cary, Byway Chair, and Jim Veal, owner of Pana Vista Lodge, were interviewed. The documentary provided an opportunity to share information about the Byway, its history, and its mission.

Additional programs that kept the Byway busy in 2022 include the Fish-in-the-Pan fishing tournament and the Clays-2-Raise skeet shooting tournament. These events attracted various participants and succeeded in raising funds for the Byway's operations budget. Other endeavors focused on maintaining the state of the Byway, including the Sumter County Adopt-A-Highway Program, which collected over 100 pounds of trash from the during various litter cleanups in 2022.





The Ridge Scenic Highway

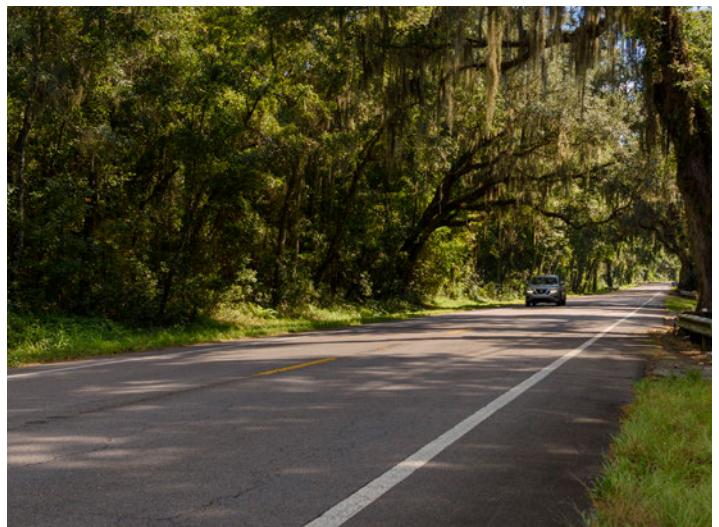
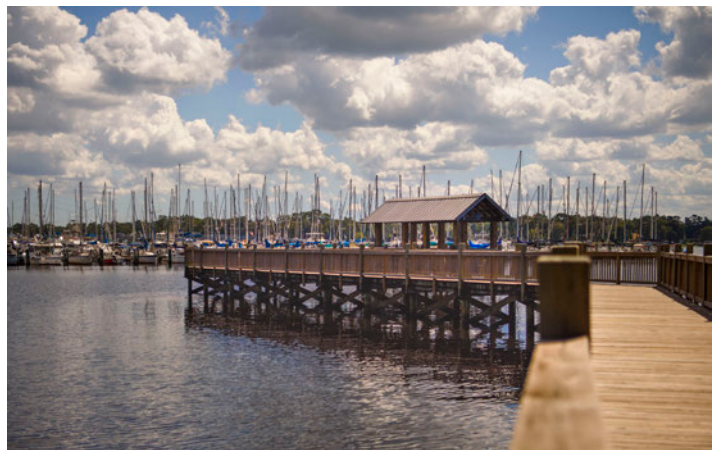
The Ridge Scenic Highway hosted a 39-Mile Yard Sale in partnership with the City of Lake Wales to attract visitors to the area, promote the Highway, and bring economic opportunities to the region. Proceeds from the sale went towards the Ridge Scenic Highway Corridor Management Entity to fund future endeavors. It is estimated that several thousand people attended the event, raising over \$700 for the Highway organization and bringing attention to local businesses and institutions.



William Bartram Scenic & Historic Highway

The William Bartram Scenic and Historic Highway organization attended various local events throughout 2022 to meet face-to-face with community members to raise awareness about the Highway. The organization attended the Bartram Bash, the St. Johns River Bartram Frolic, and the Alpine Groves Christmas Celebration. For each event, the Highway had a display with an informational brochure and map. Participating in local events allowed the Highway to meet organization goals related to community engagement and education.

The William Bartram Scenic and Historic Highway organization also hosted a one-day workshop to review the mission, goals, objectives, and vision of the Highway. The organization reworked its mission statement and set a 2023 priority goal of recruiting additional volunteers and members, something that they hope to accomplish through a new recruitment package distributed throughout the community.



2022 HIGHLIGHTED AFFILIATES



Cyclists on Green Mountain Scenic Byway

National Scenic Byway Foundation

The National Scenic Byway Foundation provides support and guidance on a range of topics pertaining to scenic byway best practices. The Florida Scenic Highways Program maintains a membership with the National Scenic Byway Foundation to access marketing support, receive information about grants and funding opportunities, and have access to a network of other scenic highway professionals.

Scenic Highways Advisory Committee (SHAC)

The State Highway Advisory Committee (SHAC) is an advisory committee dedicated to the Florida Scenic Highways Program. The SHAC is comprised of representatives from several state agencies, including Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). The SHAC assists the program by reviewing state byway applications, providing technical guidance, informing program policies and procedures, and provide guidance on administrative initiatives such as byway extensions. The SHAC is instrumental in the smooth operation of the Florida Scenic Highways Program and ensures that industry best practices are implemented.

FDOT DISTRICT MAP AND FSHP LEADERSHIP

Florida Scenic Highways Program Coordinator

Dean Stoddart | Florida Department of Transportation

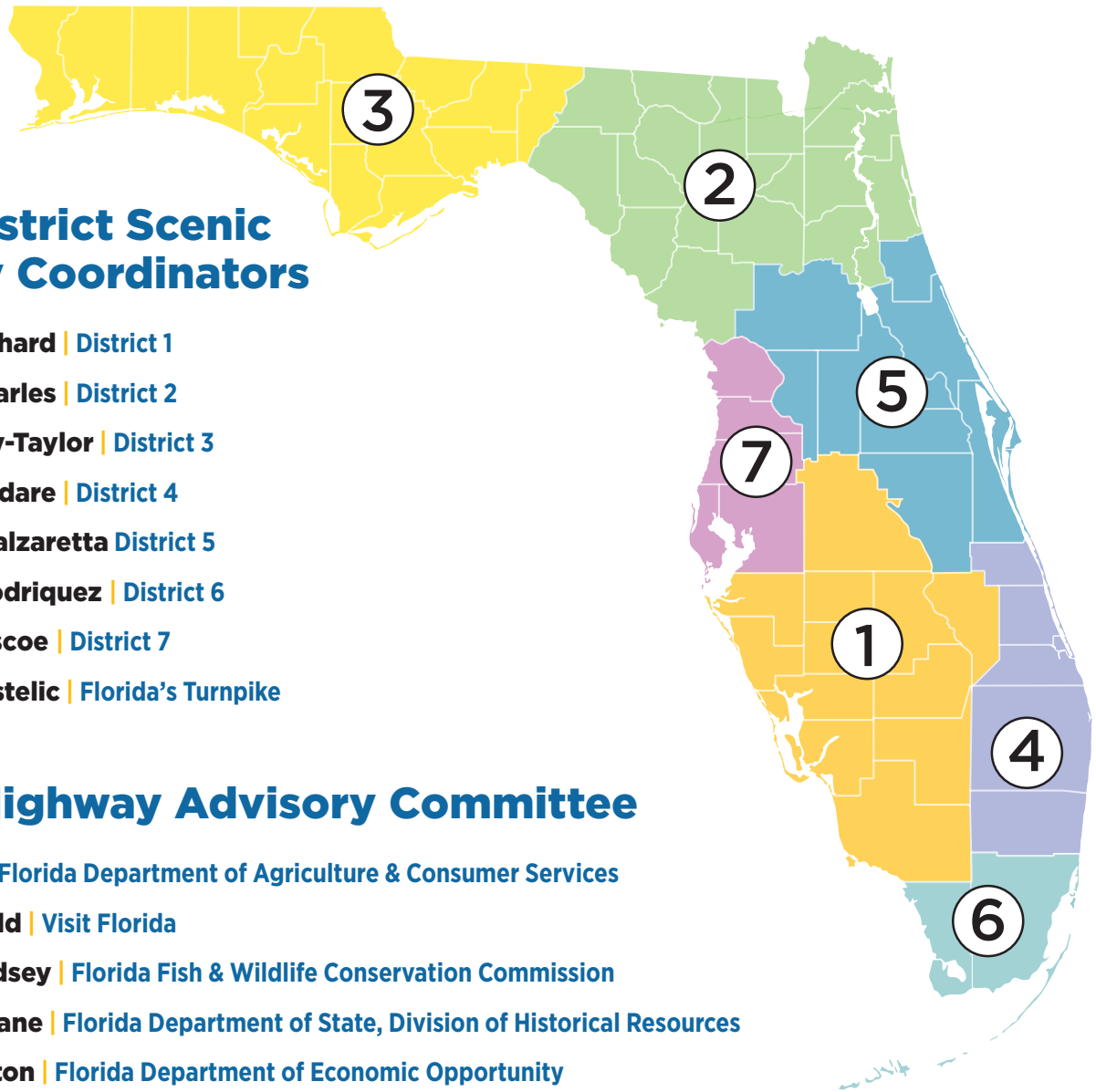
FSHP contact email: info@floridascenichighways.com

FDOT District Scenic Highway Coordinators

- **Darryl Richard** | District 1
- **Janice Charles** | District 2
- **Zena Riley-Taylor** | District 3
- **Kaylee Kildare** | District 4
- **Claudia Calzaretta** | District 5
- **Monica Rodriguez** | District 6
- **Roger Roscoe** | District 7
- **Daniel Kastelic** | Florida's Turnpike

Scenic Highway Advisory Committee

- **Bin Wan** | Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
- **David Dodd** | Visit Florida
- **Jerrie Lindsey** | Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
- **Alissa Lotane** | Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources
- **Matt Preston** | Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
- **Britney Moore** | Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways & Trails
- **Brian Telfair** | Federal Highway Administration



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