

Whose Footsteps Will You Follow?

Whether you drive the Glenn Highway or hike into the Talkeetna Mountains, you may be following the routes of fur traders, coal miners, and gold seekers. Collectively these trails are known as the Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail System.



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Fur Traders

The Copper River Athna and Suxtna Dena'ina traveled the Native routes to trade and hunt. The Athna exchanged copper and inland furs for the Dena'ina's maritime goods (such as sea mammal fat and walrus) and eventually for European goods. The trail led to the emergence of a bilingual Native community in the mountains. These "Differna Mountain People" became valuable trade interpreters.

1898



Gold Seekers

Placer gold miners were already prospecting on Carbon Creek when Gustavus J. Cassner blazed a packing trail from Knik to Haska Creek in 1898. Cassner was on a mission to find an "All American Route" to the upper Yukon gold fields. In 1913, hundreds of prospectors reached to new strikes in the Nelchina region. In response, the trail was widened and extended into the area.



Coal Miners

Coal miner Frank Watson widened Cassner's trail into a 2-track road in 1905. The U.S. Navy bought Watson's coal claim and operated a mine in Chickaloon from 1911 to 1923. The Navy's interest in Chickaloon coal became a catalyst for the construction of a local railroad spur.

1942



Sightseers

Today the Glenn Highway allows sightseers to enjoy the surrounding beauty from the comfort of their vehicles. The road incorporates parts of the historic trail, with views of the Matanuska River — a winter fur trading route once used by Alaska Natives.

The history resources of the corridor present great opportunities for interpretation, such as the panel above



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Implementing the SCENIC BYWAY PARTNERSHIP PLAN

A plan without an implementation strategy is an exercise in futility. For a plan to do its job, there must be a mechanism in place to ensure that the vision, goals, and objectives of the plan are being carried out. This planning process has been designed to have the Partnership Board's opinions, thoughts, desires, and vision for the corridor embodied in the Corridor Partnership Plan. This makes the Partnership Board the guardians of the plan and puts them in a pivotal role in its implementation over time.

Parties Responsible for Plan Implementation

While the Partnership Board plays a pivotal role in plan implementation, it is not the only party responsible for ensuring the objectives of the plan are being met. Individuals or agencies that may or may not be represented on the Partnership Board will carry out most of the plan objectives. Plan implementation will require cooperation from Alaska DOT, Alaska State Parks, Native tribes and organizations, Chambers of Commerce, Municipality of Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna Borough planners, and other agency or individual representatives as appropriate.

Individual Responsibilities

Each individual who has a role in plan implementation has the responsibility to attend meetings and participate actively, be well prepared for meetings, and respect the rights and opinions of other meeting participants. Without the individual, the plan cannot be implemented. Thus, it is critical that this grass-roots level of implementation responsibility is addressed.

Partnership Board Responsibilities

The Partnership Board acts as the administrative entity to help implement the byway plan. This group will oversee grant application processes, act as a resource for developers on the byway, identify significant issues along the byway to be addressed over time and, if needed, establish special sub-committees to look at issues in detail and/or regionally. The Partnership Board will be required to meet semi-annually and to prioritize enhancements along the byway for grant application.

Agency Responsibilities

The main agency responsible to the Byway in the long-term is Alaska DOT. The Alaska DOT is the sponsoring agency of this effort and will continue to play a strong role in facilitation of

Photo courtesy of HDR

Implementing the Scenic Byway Partnership Plan



meetings and grant applications. They are intimately involved with all aspects of the byway from its maintenance to ensuring safe access to enhancements to multi-million dollar realignments. Safety and capacity improvements will not be compromised, but consideration will be given to corridor enhancements such as interpretive sites, waysides, and scenic pulloffs. Once designated an All American Road, Alaska DOT has accepted the responsibility for ensuring the qualities of the byway are appropriately considered when making decisions that impact the highway. The Alaska DOT has designated a byway coordinator and planners for this highway whose role it will be to coordinate DOT decisions with byway interests.

Other agencies will play responsible roles on occasion for the Glenn Byway. An example of this is the Matanuska Glacier State Recreation Site. It is operated and maintained by Alaska State Parks. If an issue arose about the wayside such as expansion of the campground or trails system, they would be the appropriate agency to approach with the idea. The same will hold true of visitor centers and Chambers of Commerce for promotional materials developed and distributed for the Byway.

On-Going Public Participation in Byway Development and Implementation

Since the Byway is a public facility, it is important to allow the public to have input into the byway enhancement and decision making process. All Partnership Board meetings will be well advertised, open to the public with outreach to recruit new members.

Partnership Board as an Advisory Body

For the Byway to remain viable, it needs to have a structure and organizational framework left in place once the All American Road designation effort is completed. It will be the responsibility of the Partnership Board to continue the work of the byway, coordinating with Alaska DOT to ensure that road projects enhance the scenic and historic qualities of the byway, working with developers to help enhance the character of the byway, and working with Alaska DOT to develop and prioritize grant applications for brochures, interpretation,

development and enhancement projects and marketing on an annual basis.

It is important to emphasize the Partnership Board can only make recommendations. It has no authority to dictate public or private land-use policy. It can offer suggestions, but it cannot mandate public policy or enforce its ideas on property owners or public agencies.

Developing Grant Applications

One of the primary responsibilities of the Partnership Board will be to develop an "Ideas List" for potential grant funding. The Ideas List will be based on the Vision Statement and Goals and Objectives of the Corridor Partnership Plan, byway themes and grant funding limitations. The Partnership Board will also be asked to prioritize those ideas prior to grant development and submittal. Partners will also be asked to review draft applications and give input to the various grant applications to ensure they maintain, protect, and enhance the byway.

Establishing Guidance for Land Development and Outdoor Advertising along the Byway

The Partnership Board has no direct authority over land development in the byway corridor. However, in choosing themes for the byway, and being local, each partner member is aware of the byway character along each segment. Partnership Board members can be a resource to developers in providing information about what the All American Road designation is and how their development could, if they choose to, enhance the historical, cultural, and natural setting along the byway. Alaska has the most comprehensive voter-approved outdoor advertising regulations in the nation. Billboards and offsite advertising are simply not allowed.

Partnership Board as an On-going Entity

The Partnership Board for the Glenn Highway All American Road will be at the heart of its on-going success as a nationally designated All American Road. This group was formed initially through a nomination process where the affected Mayors were asked to nominate people they thought would well represent the interests of the byway and community. This core group

Glenn Highway National Scenic Byway Corridor Partnership Plan



has been instrumental in the development of this Partnership Plan, but as word about the byway nomination process began to spread to residents and other interested parties along the byway, interest in the Partnership Board has increased as well.

To ensure that the byway enhancement process continues to be a grass roots process, the Partnership Board has been opened up for all those interested in attending meetings and helping to shape the future of the byway. This is an important way in which the Alaska DOT, as the sponsoring agency, can keep the door open for all interested parties, and ensure that the decisions that are being made about the byway and its enhancement are done so in an open forum.

Alaska DOT Assistance in Meeting Preparation

As the sponsoring agency, the Alaska DOT will be instrumental in preparing for the Partnership Board meetings. Alaska DOT staff will arrange for the meeting location, provide meeting hand outs, do any copying that is necessary, assist in preparing draft and final grant applications, provide needed staff assistance to coordinate meeting times, places, and dates, inform Partnership Board members of agency issues on the byway, and generally support the on-going activities of the Partnership Board. This will include planning for Partnership Board meetings and including support in the annual budgeting process for the Alaska DOT Central Region.

Advertising of Meetings and Continuing Outreach

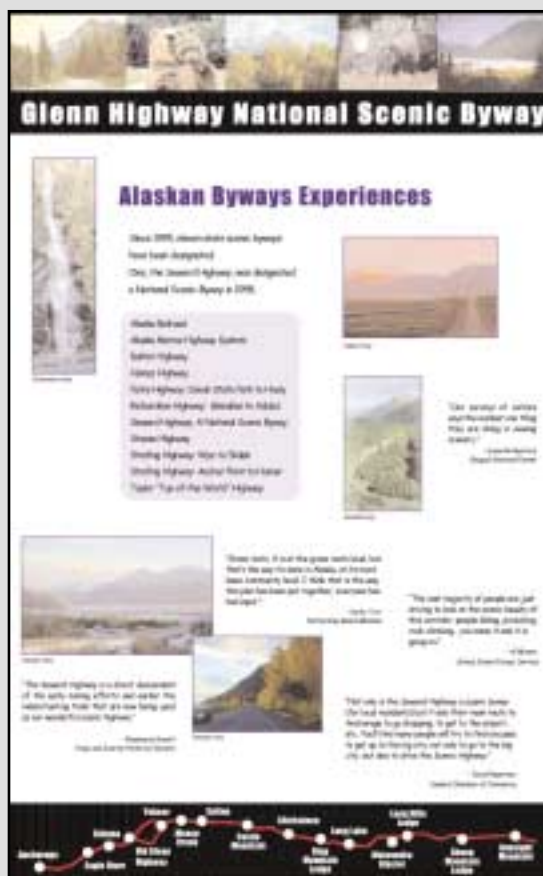
Finally, Partnership Board meetings will be advertised for public attendance, and other continuing outreach efforts will be implemented. One such effort would involve putting the Alaska DOT Scenic Byway Coordinator's position title, phone number and e-mail address in promotional materials to get feedback on the Byway, and to give the public an opportunity to comment on what enhancements could be implemented on the Byway.

DOT's Ongoing Role

SUPPORTING THE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

As this effort moves forward, the Alaska DOT, as the sponsoring organization will provide support, information, and coordination.

The early stages of the Partnership Board's effort, for example, were aided by information provided by DOT to help explain the National Scenic Byway Program to the public, including the information board below on Alaska's State Scenic Byways Program.



Implementing the Scenic Byway Partnership Plan

