
CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN
for the
RIDGE & VALLEY SCENIC BYWAY



*Chattooga, Floyd & Walker Counties,
Georgia*

Final Report
February 2003

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Georgia*

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Prepared For:

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Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan

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Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan

Executive Summary

A journey along the picturesque valley roads of the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway is an experience that alludes to historic rural mountain life. Located in the Armuchee Ridges, the Byway is nestled among lush valleys that offer scenic roadside views. The 51-mile route traverses two-lane county roads, state highways, and a portion of a four-lane federal highway in Chattooga, Walker, and Floyd counties in Northwest Georgia. Accompanying the scenic beauty of the region is the rich heritage of historic settlement patterns, remnants of which are still visible today. A rich agricultural history is still evident in the rural farmsteads and pastures located along the route, while the role that the US Forest Service (USFS) and the Civilian Conservation Corps played in the conservation of the land is also visible throughout the byway corridor. The area has long been a rural recreational refuge with the byway providing direct access to numerous outdoor experiences.

What is a Scenic Byway?

A scenic byway is a public road on which people generally enjoy traveling that also reflects the intrinsic qualities of the area. Intrinsic qualities can be scenic forests and mountains, communities, historic landmarks, or recreational resources that make the area unique. A byway can consist of more than one road and include developed and undeveloped areas, public and private landholdings. Scenic Byway refers not only to the road itself, but also to the corridor through which it passes. Preparing a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for such a road provides an organizational structure that can help local residents appropriately manage the corridor, protecting those qualities that make it exceptional while making improvements that will further enhance the area.

A scenic byway will be designated as such on a local, state, or national level through legislation or some other official designation. The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway is designated as a Georgia Scenic Byway and also as a National Forest Scenic Byway. These programs support the activities of local communities as they work together to create a vision for the Byway, identify those qualities that make it exceptional, and develop a plan that will improve a visitor's experience with the Byway. This is a voluntary, grassroots program that recognizes outstanding roads and provides resources to the local byway organization to help manage and promote the intrinsic qualities that make traveling the Byway a unique, rewarding experience.

What is a Corridor Management Plan?

The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway was designated as a State Scenic Byway in 1992 and earlier as a National Forest Scenic Byway in the 1980s. Designation as a scenic byway increases awareness of the corridor as a travel destination. A corridor management plan (CMP) provides for the conservation and enhancement of the scenic byway as well as the promotion of tourism and economic development in the region. A CMP is a requirement for the designation of all Georgia Scenic Byways. Since the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway was "grandfathered" into the state Scenic Byway Program, a CMP is now being written. Good planning is essential to a successful byway, and the comprehensive CMP addresses many issues ranging from assessment of intrinsic qualities to interpretation of those qualities to pedestrian and vehicular safety. This planning process involves local communities and creates a vision for how the Byway will be promoted and goals and objectives for long-term management of the Byway.

The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan

The vision statement for the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway reflects the values of the byway as well as the inherent qualities that make it a tourist destination worthy of protection:

Experience the best of Northwest Georgia along the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway. Drive quiet valley roads; hike and horseback the ridgelines; find a quiet place to rest along a clear-running stream. Drop by a century-

old country store for a cold drink, a bag of peanuts, and tips on the best local fishing spots. Byway travelers have direct access to Northwest Georgia's unique collection of recreational resources and amenities, agricultural landscapes, and historic sites and crossroads settlements.

The Corridor Management Plan reveals more of the varied history of the beautiful Ridge and Valley region, making it clear why this route was designated a Georgia Scenic Byway. The 51-mile route provides an exceptional experience as it embodies a truly rural experience through mostly agricultural land. Scenic vistas from Johns Mountain, The Pocket, and Keown Falls Recreation Area allude to the rich geological, historical, and cultural heritage found throughout the area. The Byway further enhances opportunities to explore local communities and places of interest, increases tourism, and contributes to the local economic base in the process. The overall goal of the plan is to broaden the travel experience by telling the Byway's story through enhancements that make the scenic road safer, more comfortable and accessible and provide a more rewarding experience to all travelers as well as local residents.



Illustration 1: *A Roadside Stream is one of the Many Scenic Features along the Byway.*

The intent of this plan is to balance conservation and development. The CMP identifies ways to improve road safety while minimizing traffic impact, ideas for improving signage, and suggestions for promoting both natural and scenic resources. Finally, the plan suggests ways to link the Byway with local attractions adjacent to the route. The Advisory Committee is a group of local citizens that has worked in conjunction with the US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (US Forest Service) and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) in the development of this CMP. This group is the official steward of the Corridor Management Plan. The Advisory Committee provides a structure around which improvements and agreements can be reached for long-term management and improvement of the Byway. This task includes the development of goals and objectives that will ensure quality byway development in the future.

The Advisory Committee identified the following strategies to establish on-going promotion of the Byway while protecting the resources that make it a distinctive route.

- Expand opportunities for people to experience and learn about the natural and cultural history of the Ridge & Valley region.
- Support projects and initiatives that build on local efforts to protect livability and expand economic activity through the promotion of nature- and culture-based economic and tourism development.
- Promote a safe and pleasant experience for *all* users of the Byway.
- Support efforts to improve access to recreational amenities while protecting the Byway's most important natural, scenic, and cultural resources.
- Encourage public and private investments that improve the visual quality of the roadside environment.
- Encourage regional cooperation, stewardship and economic development through Byway-related partnerships.
- Encourage Byway considerations in existing and future land use plans and development regulations for the region.

Fourteen Points of a Corridor Management Plan

This CMP provides an effective management strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway's intrinsic qualities as well as economic development and the promotion of tourism along the route. The fourteen points that every CMP addresses are listed below with a brief explanation of each. Where each point is addressed in this CMP for the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway is noted in brackets following each point.

- *A map identifying the corridor boundaries and the location of intrinsic qualities and different land uses within the corridor.* [Figures located in Appendix A]
- *An assessment of such intrinsic qualities and of their context.* [Sections 3.1 and 3.4]
- *A strategy for maintaining and enhancing those intrinsic qualities.* The level of protection for different parts of the byway can differ, with the highest level of protection afforded those parts that most reflect the intrinsic values. [Section 4.0]
- *A schedule and a listing of all agency, group, and individual responsibilities in the implementation of the corridor management plan.* This includes a description of enforcement and review mechanisms, including a schedule for the continuing review of how well those responsibilities are being met. [Section 6.1]
- *A strategy describing how existing development might be enhanced and new development accommodated while still preserving a byway's intrinsic qualities.* The strategy could include land management techniques as zoning, easements, and economic incentives. [Section 3.2.6]
- *A plan to assure on-going public participation in the implementation of corridor management objectives.* [Section 6.0]
- *A general review of the road's safety and accident record to identify any correctable faults in highway design, maintenance, or operation.* [Sections 3.2.5 and 3.2.2]
- *A plan to accommodate commerce while maintaining a safe and efficient level of highway service, including convenient user facilities.* [Sections 3.2.6 and 4.4]
- *A demonstration that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible, and a plan for making improvements to enhance that experience.* [Section 4.1.5]
- *A demonstration of compliance with all existing local, State, and Federal laws on the control of outdoor advertising.* [Section 3.2.4]
- *A signage plan that demonstrates how the State will insure and make the number and placement of signs more supportive of the visitor experience.* [Section 4.2]
- *A narrative describing how the scenic byway will be positioned for marketing.*[Section 4.7]

- *A discussion of design standards relating to any proposed modification of the roadway. This includes an evaluation of how the proposed changes may affect the intrinsic qualities of a byway corridor. [Sections 3.1.2 and 4.2]*
- *A description of plans to interpret the significant resources of a scenic byway. [Section 5.0]*

What Next?

The Corridor Management Plan recognizes and interprets the spirit of the area that makes it a popular tourist destination. The plan demonstrates that scenic, natural, historic, and cultural qualities can be conserved and enhanced while implementing compatible economic development activities, ensuring that visitors and residents alike can travel this special route for years to come. The unifying thread throughout this process is the Ridge & Valley Byway itself, its historic past, its present state, and what it will mean in the future to corridor residents, local communities, and travelers. The Byway provides access to many exceptional experiences and treasured resources that distinguish this route as a Georgia Scenic Byway.

Funding is available through grant applications to undertake eligible projects for the purpose of:

- Making safety improvements to accommodate increased traffic and changes in the types of vehicles using the highway, due to such designation.
- Construction along the scenic byway of facilities for the use of pedestrians and bicyclists, rest areas, turnouts, highway shoulder improvements, passing lanes, overlooks, and interpretive facilities (within or immediately adjacent to the right-of-way).
- Improvements to the Scenic Byway that will enhance access to an area for the purpose of recreation, including water-related recreation (enhance existing access to recreation).
- Protecting historical, archeological, and cultural resources in areas adjacent to the byway (properties that contribute to intrinsic qualities of the Byway).
- Developing and providing tourist information to the public including interpretive information about the Scenic Byway.

1.0 Introduction

The land bounded by the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway has long been a rural environment, with scattered crossroads communities throughout the area. The roads that run through the Ridge and Valley region have played important roles in Georgia's History. SR 136 was used during the Civil War as the route of the Atlanta Campaign of the Tennessee Army that eventually merged with the Army of Ohio and Cumberland before heading south towards Atlanta. By the early twentieth century, vernacular farmhouses and agricultural outbuildings dotted the landscape; this continues to hold true today as modern development mingles with remnants of the past.

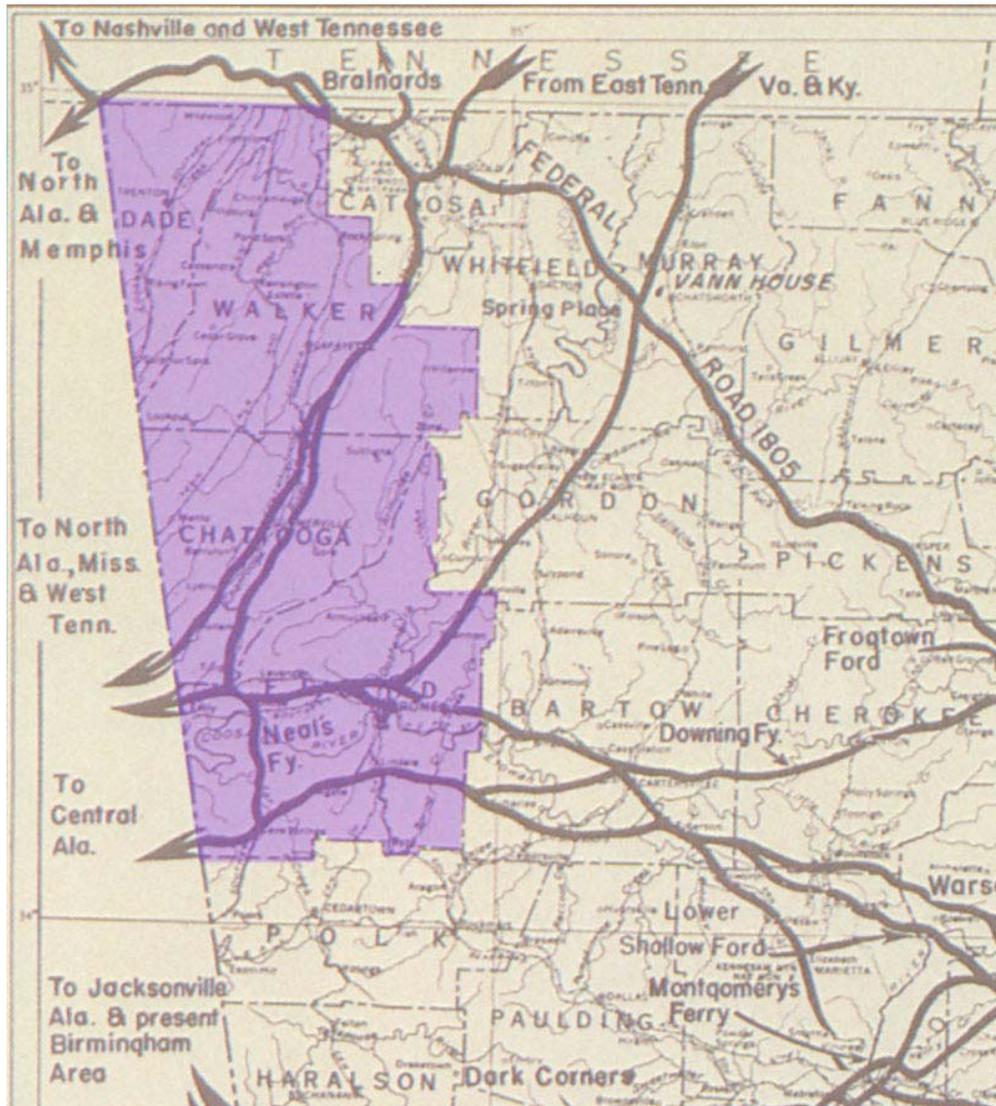


Illustration 2: Georgia Early Roads and Trails Circa 1730 – 1850. Byway Counties are Delineated in Blue. Map courtesy of GDOT.

In the 1930s, development in the area was still limited. One private citizen saw the potential to preserve natural areas surrounding the Valley region. Mrs. Beulah Shropshire Taylor of Summerville, Georgia, was interested in acquiring fire protection for Taylor's Ridge and nearby mountains. Her recognition of the importance to protect and preserve the unique natural features of the region led to the US Forest Service's purchase of the land in 1937.

By the time the land was acquired for protection, it had been timbered and burned for many years. As previous generations had done before them, private landowners burned their fields, debris, and forested tracts of land to clear out undergrowth. Fires often became uncontrolled and destructively burned forested tracts of land. Additionally, the close proximity of the land to the railroad and larger populated areas such as Dalton and Rome, Georgia, and Chattanooga, Tennessee, resulted in heavy timber production. Logging, combined with unmaintained burning left the timber cover on the upper slopes and ridge tops extremely thin. As a result of these destructive practices, the land held little value economically by the mid-1930s.

After purchasing the land, the US Forest Service began a program of land management. New management practices would reestablish wildlife habitats and timber reserves while conserving existing natural resources and meeting recreational needs of the surrounding area. In 1939-1942, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) established work camps in the district and began building roads, foot trails, fire towers, and wiring the fire towers for telephone service. The first fire tower was erected on Johns Mountain, with six others eventually built along the ridges in the district. The CCC camp in The Pocket was converted into a recreational area after the work crews left the area. CCC work crews also constructed recreational amenities at Keown Falls and Johns Mountain as well as a hiking trail near Taylor's Ridge.

As part of US Forest Service's land management practices, soil erosion measures were implemented on former mining tracts, the thinned slopes and ridges were reforested with pine seedlings, and a timber management plan was introduced. The period of 1940-1985 brought about improved fire management and timber harvesting practices that allowed wildlife habitat and watersheds to regenerate. These advances also provided enhanced recreational opportunities within the region. Youth work crews over the years have established additional recreational amenities throughout the Ridge and Valley Region.

In the valleys, where private landholdings are clustered along the Byway, farming is no longer as evident as it once was. In the 1920s-1940s, many farmers left agricultural work for steady-paying jobs in the Dalton mills. As a result, large farm tracts were often subdivided into smaller residential lots and new houses were built. This evolution of settlement patterns is evident along the Byway where modern houses on small lots are juxtaposed with original farmstead structures.

Today US Forest Service land adjacent to the byway affords a variety of recreational opportunities. The US Forest Service land comprises about twenty percent of the property along the Byway. The balance is in private ownership, which includes residential, commercial and institutional developments.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this project, as stated in the application for funding from the Transportation Enhancement (TE) program of the Georgia Department of Transportation, is "to develop and implement a Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for the purpose of maintaining the scenic, historical, recreational, cultural, natural, and archeological characteristics of this byway corridor, while providing for the accommodation of increased tourism and the development of related amenities," 23.U.S.C. 162(c)(2). The plan must incorporate the fourteen components of corridor management planning, which are included in the Federal Highway Administration's interim policy for the National Scenic Byways Program published in the *Federal Register* on May 18, 1995 and explained in the Executive Summary of this report. The US Forest Service served as the facilitator in this project by completing the application for funding. Once the application was approved, the US Forest Service administered the project and also provided staff time as an in-kind match.

The existing byway was designated in the late 1980s under the US Forest Service Scenic Byways Program, but there was no funding with the designation for improvements, preservation, or protection. For that reason, the development of a CMP was envisioned as a way to develop a plan to guide future development along the Byway. A major intent of this effort was to bring local, state and federal government agencies, local civic groups, and residents together to “document in maps and text the vision for their scenic byway and to articulate specific strategies for promoting, protecting, and developing the qualities that make the byway scenic.”

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Approach

The goal of the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan is to provide a guide for the future preservation, protection and enhancement of this significant roadway corridor. The intent of the plan is to facilitate improvements, while also conserving the unique character of the Byway. By providing attainable goals and visions for the future of the Byway, the CMP details an implementation strategy that will ensure the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway’s legacy for generations to come.

The consultant team of The Jaeger Company, Mary Means and Associates, Inc., and Wilbur Smith Associates approached the plan by inventorying and analyzing the qualities that characterize the Byway as scenic. Recommendations were developed with input from the general public at public meetings held February 5, 2002; March 12, 2002; and August 26, 2002. Formal presentations at these public meetings provided background information on the project as well as existing and future issues and opportunities as they relate to the promotion of the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway. Additionally, an Advisory Committee comprised of area representatives with an interest in the Byway was formed. This committee met before each public meeting and held an additional work session on June 11, 2002. Input from interested citizens at public meetings as well as the Advisory Committee was incorporated into the final Corridor Management Plan.

1.2.2 Sources of Information

The various inventory maps used for the Corridor Management Plan were created using information provided by a number of public agencies. GIS (Geographic Information System) models and USGS (United States Geologic Survey) topographical maps were used to create the *Physical Characteristics* and *Land Cover* maps, illustrating the topography, vegetation, and area hydrology. The Coosa Valley Regional Development Center (RDC) provided the data used to create of the *Existing Land Use* map, *Future Land Use* map, and the *Ownership/Recreational* map. The *Historic Resources* map was created by plotting the position of historic sites compiled from the various county historic surveys, located at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Historic Preservation Division (HPD). The US Forest Service provided a variety of computerized information including physical characteristics of the Byway as well as ownership and recreational sites data.

1.2.3 Field Surveys

The Jaeger Company completed a preliminary analysis of the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway in January 2002. An overall analysis was made concerning the location of notable views and historic structures, as well as notation of potential issues, such as problems in way-finding and intrusive signage. More in-depth field survey work was carried out to identify the six intrinsic qualities of the Byway. Completed in February 2002, one team surveyed the scenic intrinsic qualities, while a second team identified the intrinsic qualities of natural, historic, cultural, archeological, and recreational resources. Sites identified as reflecting the intrinsic qualities were mapped using USGS quad maps. Notes were also made concerning the identified

site's ability to express the intrinsic quality. Additional site visits were made to obtain or confirm information throughout the duration of the study.

The consultant team from Wilbur Smith Associates conducted the transportation analysis. A field survey was conducted in January 2002 with traffic count information obtained from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). The existing roadway was analyzed in field and conditions relating to the shoulder width and type, the grade of the road, and the level of the terrain, were recorded. Representatives from Mary Means and Associates assisted in field surveys of the Byway and also participated in all of the public open houses and Advisory Committee meetings.

2.0 Vision and Goals

Vision and goal statements—developed and refined during Advisory Committee work sessions and public workshops—guide planning for the Byway. The vision statement provides a “big picture” description of the Byway and the resources to which it provides access. The statement highlights the area’s uniqueness and significance and explains how the Byway links special places, resources, and experiences. The goal statements establish broad targets to guide the development of CMP strategies. The goals were developed after a discussion of the issues and opportunities found along the Byway at the March 2002 public sessions. A listing of the issues and opportunities follows:

2.1 Issues

Nonhistoric Developments and Intrusions

- Areas of nonhistoric development, around the Villanow Store, on Floyd Springs Road and GA 156
- Cell towers (one currently on US 27)

Comprehensive Plan/Future Land Use

- Byway not reflected in future land use plans

Signage

- Inconsistency in signage throughout the Byway
- Lack of adequate directional signage for the Byway
- Billboard scale signage on US 27
- US Forest Service Amenities not well-marked

Interpretation

- Lack of awareness about the Byway from the adjacent communities
- Lack of interpretation of historic sites and resources

Roadway Conditions

- Safety Issues – improper pavement marking for access roads and pull-offs
- Safety Issues – horizontal and vertical deficiencies
- Rumble Strips on US 27 are not conducive for bicycle use
- Lack of shoulder along roadways in eastern section of byway

2.2 Opportunities

Organization

- Establish a Byway advocacy group to promote the Byway and implement the Corridor Management Plan
- Networking with other potential byways

Marketing

- Link the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway to other nearby byways through regional marketing efforts

Recreational/Leisure Amenities and Views

- Improvements to existing “Points of Interest” – addition of interpretative materials
- Create public parking at points where Pinhoti Trail crosses the Byway
- Develop additional amenities for cyclists – specified cycling routes, bike lanes, parking
- Develop picnic site at intersection of Furnace Creek and Everett Springs Road
- Open Narrows Picnic area
- Small roadside parks on western section with picnic areas and opportunities to enjoy the views
- Link to Taylor’s Ridge Overlook Park

Residential Development

- Encourage guidelines for buffering development along the ridgelines and in the valleys

Interpretation and Education

- Informational signage available at pull-offs and Points of Interest explaining the view or the significance of a nearby Point of Interest
- Develop informational pamphlets that provide a brief synopsis of the history of the area relating to agriculture, settlement, community development, US Forest Service and Civilian Conservation Corps
- Develop material for children relating to the history of the area – this can be in the form of coloring or cartoon books

Roadway Enhancements

- Create signage that alerts the traveler of an approaching overlook or Point of Interest
- Bridge types – replace Jersey barrier parapet bridges with a bridge type that enhances the visual experience

Economic Development

- Master Plan for potential commercial development along US 27, providing support services for the Byway
- Potential cycling business to rent bikes and provide shuttle service between SR 136 to the north and US 27 to the south

Gateway Development

- Gateway opportunities at strategic locations along the Byway

2.3 Vision for the Byway

Experience the best of Northwest Georgia along the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway. Drive quiet valley roads; hike and horseback the ridgelines; bike the valleys; find a quiet place to rest along a clear-running stream. Drop by a century-old country store for a cold drink, a bag of peanuts, and tips on the best local fishing spots. Byway travelers have direct access to Northwest Georgia’s unique collection of recreational resources and amenities, agricultural landscapes, and historic sites and crossroads settlements.

Byway communities, in partnership with individual property owners, farmers, conservationists, the US Forest Service, and the Georgia State Parks system (a division of the Department of Natural Resources) reinforce

the Byway as a popular regional destination and an example of resource-sensitive economic development. Byway partnerships focus on three major issues: (1) improving access to resources, (2) introducing and interpreting natural and cultural history, and (3) promoting linkages between the region's unique resources and destinations.

2.4 Plan Goals

- Expand opportunities for people to experience and learn about the natural and cultural history of the Ridge & Valley region
- Support projects and initiatives that build on local efforts to protect livability and expand economic activity through the promotion of nature and culture based economic and tourism development
- Promote a safe and pleasant experience for *all* users of the Byway
- Support efforts to improve access to recreational amenities while protecting the Byway's most important natural, scenic, and cultural resources
- Encourage public and private investments that improve the visual quality of the roadside environment
- Encourage regional cooperation, stewardship and economic development through Byway-related partnerships
- Encourage Byway considerations in existing and future land use plans and development regulations for the region

3.0 Inventory and Analysis

3.1 General Character

The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway is 51-miles in length and completes a closed circuit along a mix of two-lane county roads and two- and four-lane state highways. It passes through three counties in northwest Georgia - Chattooga, Walker, and Floyd. Beginning in Floyd County at the intersection of US 27 and SR 156, the Byway proceeds ten miles northwest along US 27 to the intersection with Gore-Subligna Road. The Byway proceeds northeast on Gore-Subligna Road for eight miles until reaching the community of Subligna. The Byway then follows the north fork onto East Armuchee Road and proceeds for ten miles to the intersection with SR 136 in the community of Villanow. The Byway then heads east on SR 136 for one half mile before reaching Furnace Creek Road/Pocket Road. The Byway continues south three miles along Furnace Creek Road/Pocket Road before reaching the intersection with Everett Springs Road. Turning onto Everett Springs Road, the Byway proceeds several miles south to Floyd Springs Road, then continues south along Floyd Springs Road to SR 156. From SR 156, the route continues southwest three miles to complete the loop at US 27.

3.1.1 Natural Characteristics

The Ridge and Valley province of the Appalachians is a continuous formation running from northeast Alabama, into northwest Georgia, and terminating in New York State. The long, low ridges characteristic of the province lie in a northeast-southwest orientation (*Illustration 3*). Between these ridges are broad, open valleys of rolling pastures and agricultural fields. To the west sits the Cumberland Plateau; the Blue Ridge and Piedmont are to the south and east.

The Scenic Byway is located in a sub-district of the Ridge and Valley known as the Armuchee Ridges. The Armuchee Ridges is an uncommon geomorphic feature to Georgia, covering less than 1% of the state. Ridges in this district are rather narrow and rise anywhere from several hundred to 1000 feet above the valley floor. The folding of the rock layer has created the hills and valleys of this province. In addition, valleys have formed from the erosive action of streams upon shale and limestone. Ridges composed of resistant materials such as sandstone rise higher in elevation than those less resistant to erosion such as shale.

The dominant ridges in the area include Taylor's Ridge, Little Sand Mountain, Johns Mountain, Calbeck Mountain, and Horn Mountain. Many of the ridges are capped with Red Mountain sandstone, a rock that is fairly resistant to erosion. Johns Mountain, a sandstone ridge rising 600 to 800 feet above its surroundings, extends north from Armuchee Creek to Furnace Creek. Seams of coal interspersed among shale and sandstone can be found in Little Sand Mountain, a ridge just north of US 27. Knox dolomite, a light colored limestone found in the valleys north and west of Johns Mountain, is valuable for its iron ore, manganese, and other minerals. The soils derived from Knox dolomite are very fertile; the more common Floyd shales yield a much thinner soil layer (*Figure 1: Physical Characteristics and Corridor Boundaries*).

The watershed overlaying the byway is bordered by Taylor's Ridge to the west and drains south and east into the Oostanaula River. Armuchee Creek, which runs south through Haywood Valley, and Little Armuchee Creek to the west are the primary waterways west of Johns Mountain. Johns Creek, to the east of Johns Mountain, and several smaller watercourses drain separately into the Oostanaula River.

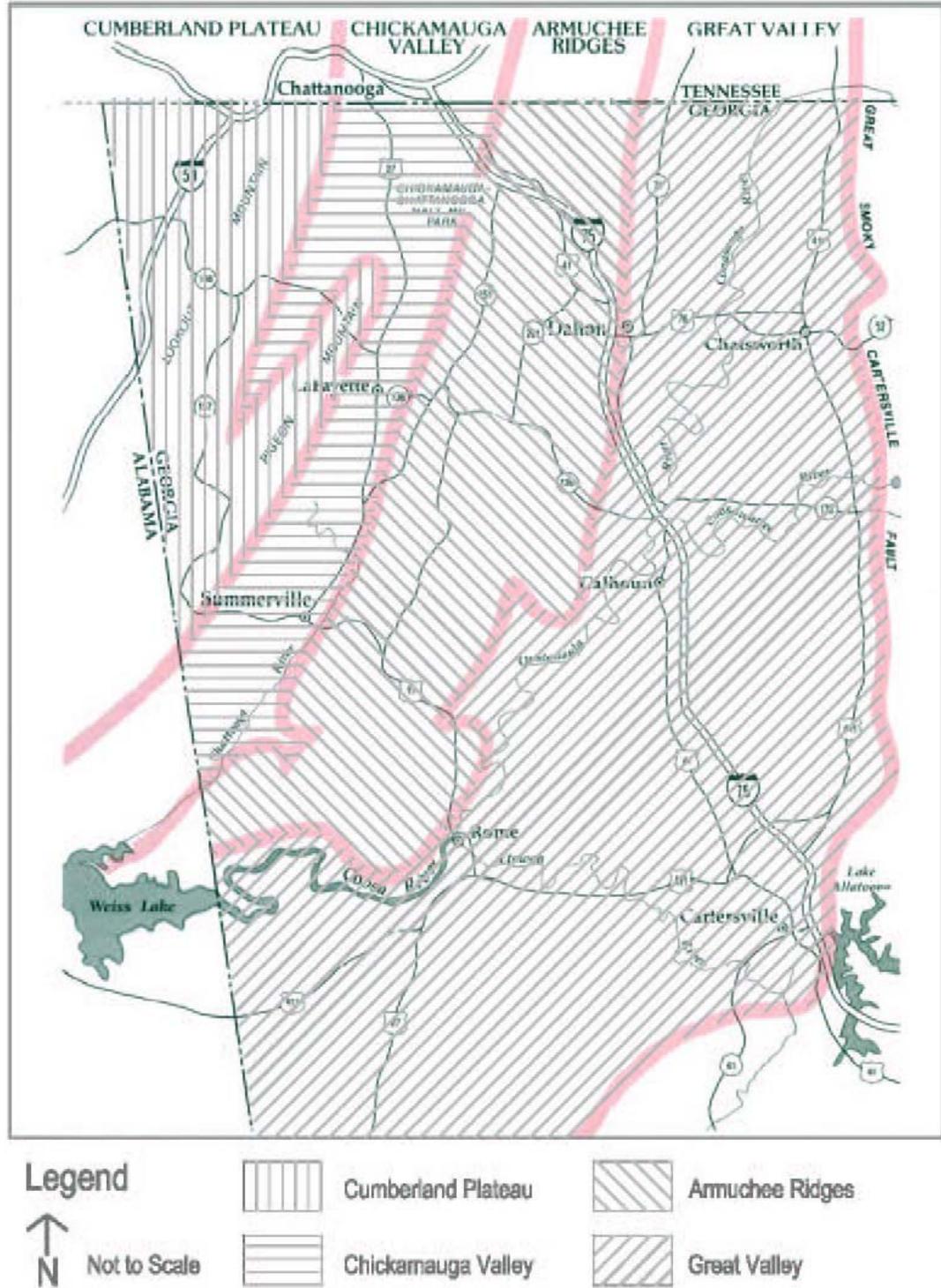


Illustration 3: Physiographic Map of the Byway Area (from *GA Conservancy Guide to North Georgia Mountains*)

3.1.2 Land Cover

The Armuchee Ridges district is primarily rural and characterized by agriculture and woodlands in the valleys and second-growth forests on the ridges (*Figure 2: Land Cover*). US Forest Service-owned land along Taylor’s Ridge, Johns Mountain, and Horn Mountain supports stands of oak, hickory, and pine. Mesic forest species can be found along stream valleys and in coves of north and east facing directions. Along Pocket Road in Walker County, mature stands of pine are managed for timber. Lesser evergreen and mixed forest exists throughout the valley. Abandonment of agriculture and timber harvesting has resulted in successional forest growth along Gore-Sublinga Road, Floyd Springs Road, and US 27. Wetlands are scarce, but occur in the vicinity of West Armuchee Road and US 27.

The majority of agricultural land is used for pasture and hay production. Row crops are cultivated to a lesser extent and are found primarily along the western end of the Byway. Low-density residential development occurs within the valleys, but reaches a higher density along Floyd Springs Road.

3.1.3 Recreational Characteristics

The majority of the route, along and inside the Byway, is privately owned. Small family farms and residential developments are scattered throughout (*Figure 3: Ownership/Recreational Sites*). *Table 1: Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway State Parks and Recreation Sites* is a breakdown of recreational areas and various parks located on and/or near the Byway with information regarding the various activities and features each provides.

Portions of the Johns Mountain ridgeline are protected under the stewardship of the US Forest Service. The US Forest Service also owns Taylor’s Ridge, located to the west. The Johns Mountain Wildlife Management Area crosses Furnace Creek Road and extends east as well as south towards the intersection of Everett Springs Road and Floyd Springs Road.

US Forest Service recreational sites are located along Furnace Creek Road and Everett Springs Road and several private sites are located along Floyd Springs Road. The Pinhoti Trail crosses the Byway on East Armuchee Road just above the Chattooga and Walker County border and Furnace Creek Road at the entrance to the Keown Falls Recreational Area.

Table 1: Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway State Parks and Recreation Sites

Recreation Area	Camping	Fishing	Hiking	Picnick-ing	Mtn Biking	Horse-back Riding	Swim-ming	Facilities*	On Byway
Arrowhead Lake and Fish Hatchery	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Berry College Wildlife Management Area and Refuge	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Cloudland Canyon State Park	YES**	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO
Crockford-Pigeon Mtn. WMA	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO

Recreation Area	Camping	Fishing	Hiking	Picnick-ing	Mtn Biking	Horse-back Riding	Swim-ming	Facilities*	On Byway
Fort Mountain State Park	YES**	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Johns Mountain Recreation Area	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES
Keown Falls Recreation Area	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Lake Marvin	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
The Pocket Recreation Area	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
James H. "Sloppy" Floyd State Park	YES**	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO
Rocky Mountain Recreation Area	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES
Pinhoti Trail	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES

*Facilities including restrooms and/or drinking water. **Cottages and/or a lodge are also provided.

3.1.4 Cultural Characteristics

Area attractions located near the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway are a reflection of the various historic, cultural, and artistic themes that make the north Georgia Mountains and the Ridge and Valley region unique. The area surrounding the Byway offers numerous opportunities to enjoy specialty shopping. Many of the towns selected have commercial districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places and visitors can choose from gift shops, antiques stores, and galleries specializing in regional handcrafted items and local art. Aside from the recreational areas identified along the Byway, additional public parks and recreation areas have also been identified as an element of area attractions. These sites are illustrated and listed in the attached graphic and chart (*Figure 4: Area Attractions* and *Table 2: Area Attractions and Cultural Characteristics*). *Table 2* highlights the museums and historic sites with brief descriptions of the significance of each. The *Calendar of Events (Table 3: Calendar of Local Events)* illustrates the wide variety of regional artistic, cultural, sporting, and historical activities visitors to the region may enjoy.

**Table 2: Area Attractions and Cultural Characteristics
Near The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway**

Museums and Historic Sites

You can find these sites numbered by city or town on *Figure 4: Area Attractions* as open red triangles: Sites * are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Sites ** are National Historic Landmarks.

1. **Adairsville**
 Adairsville (Western and Atlantic) Depot*
 Depot played a role in the Great Locomotive Chase during the Civil War
 Barnsley Gardens*
 Ruins of an Italianate-Gothic house that was occupied by Union troops
2. **Calhoun**
 Calhoun Depot
 Built in 1852 on the Atlanta & Chattanooga Railroad line
 Harris Arts Center
 Houses the Roland Hayes Museum and an art gallery
 New Echota Cherokee Capital State Historic Site*
 Established as the capital in 1825 with numerous historic buildings
3. **Cartersville**
 Allatoona Pass Battlefield
 Civil War battlefield that has an interpretative trail and markers
 Cartersville Depot
 Used during the Civil War; a portion serves as a visitor's center
 Cooper's Iron Works*
 Remaining blast furnace from an important 19th-century iron supplier
 Etowah Historical Foundation Museum
 Museum of Bartow County history
 Etowah Indian Mounds Historic Site**
 Site contains six earthen mounds that date between 1000 AD and 1550 AD
 William Weinman Mineral Museum
 Geology museum with exhibits on the region's history of mining
4. **Cassville**
 Atlanta Campaign Pocket Park at Cassville
 One of five pocket parks built by the WPA in the 1930s with a relief map illustrating the battle
 Cassville Confederate Cemetery
 Contains the graves of 300 Confederate soldiers
 Noble Hill-Wheeler Memorial Center
 An African-American Rosenwald school built in the 1930s; now serves as a cultural center
5. **Chatsworth**
 Chief Vann House Historic Site
 Built in 1804 by the Cherokee Chief James Vann; now used as a museum
6. **Chickamauga/Fort Oglethorpe**
 Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park*
 First major Civil War battlefield established as a memorial in 1892
 Gordon-Lee Mansion*
 Used as a hospital during the Battle of Chickamauga
 Lee and Gordon Mill*
 One of the oldest mills in Georgia
 Sixth Calvary Museum/Historic Barnhardt Circle at Fort Oglethorpe*
 Museum on a former parade field
7. **Dalton**
 Atlanta Campaign Pocket Park at Rocky Face Ridge*
 Another park built by the WPA with a relief map illustrating the battle
 Confederate Cemetery and Monument*
 Contains 421 Confederate graves and an 1892 monument

- Crown Gardens and Archives*
Housed in the old Crown Cotton Mill office building
- Dug Gap Battle Park
Contains Civil War stone breastworks
- Dalton (Western and Atlantic) Depot*
Played a role in the Great Locomotive Chase during the Civil War
- 8. Euharlee**
Euharlee Covered Bridge*
Built in 1886 by well-known bridge builder Washington King, son of another bridge builder and freed slave, Horace King
- 9. Kingston**
Kingston Confederate Museum and Kingston History Museum
Museums pertaining to life in Kingston before and after the Civil War
Kingston Confederate Cemetery*
Contains the graves of 250 Confederate soldiers
Kingston Depot*
Antebellum depot used during the Civil War
- 10. Lafayette**
John B. Gordon Hall*
Built in 1836 and used as an academy
McLemore's Cove*
Site of Confederate attempt to capture Union troops during the Civil War
- 11. Lookout Mountain**
Rock City
Across rural lands are the signs proclaiming one should see Rock City; the popular tourist attraction began in the 1930s
- 12. Resaca**
Resaca Battlefield and Atlanta Campaign Pocket Park
Site of major battle of the Atlanta Campaign and a WPA built park
State of Georgia has purchased approximately 600 acres for a future state park
Resaca Confederate Cemetery
Located to the north of the battlefield site
- 13. Ringgold**
Atlanta Campaign Pocket Park at Ringgold Gap
WPA built park with relief map illustrating the Battle of Ringgold
Old Stone Church Museum*
Built in 1849 and retains its original alter and pews; now used as museum
Ringgold (Western and Atlantic) Depot*
Played a role in the Great Locomotive Chase during the Civil War
- 14. Rome**
Chieftains Museum**
Housed in the 1794 home of Cherokee leader Major Ridge, the museum displays artifacts relating to Native American history
Myrtle Hill Cemetery*
Contains over 20,000 gravesites, including a Confederate soldiers section
Oak Hill and Martha Berry Museum
Museums relating to Berry College and its founder, Martha Berry
Rome Area History Museum
Illustrates the cultures that together created the area
Rome Historic Districts*
Listed in the National Register

15. **Rossville**
 Chief John Ross House
 A two-story log house built in 1797
 Lake Winnepesaukah
 Amusement park dating from the 1920s; among the rides is a early 20th century carousel from Atlanta
16. **Summerville**
 Camp Juliette Low*
 Established by Juliette Low in the early 1920s, the camp is no longer connected with the Girls Scouts
 Paradise Gardens
 Renowned folk artist Howard Finster's garden created by his paintings, sculpture, and found objects
17. **Tunnel Hill**
 Clisby Austin House
 Antebellum house used as a hospital during the Battle of Chickamauga
 Tunnel Hill (Western and Atlantic) Depot
 Depot was constructed in 1848
 Western and Atlantic Railroad tunnel
 Built in the 1850s, the stone tunnel is the oldest in the south
18. **Varnell**
 Prater's Mill*
 Built in 1855 as a gristmill, the site was also used as a camp by both sides during the Civil War
19. **Walaska**
 Funk Heritage Center: Bennett History Museum and Appalachian Settlers Village
 Museum focuses on the history of the southeastern Indians and Appalachian settlers with a recreated early settlement with various 19th century buildings and period demonstrations

Specialty Shopping

The area surrounding the Scenic Byway offers numerous opportunities to enjoy specialty shopping. Many of the towns listed below have commercial districts listed in the National Register where travelers can chose from gifts shops, antique stores, and galleries that specialize in regional handcrafted items and fine art. Sites are indicated on *Figure 4: Area Attractions* as blue pentagons:

1. Adairsville
2. Cartersville
3. Cave Spring
4. Dalton
5. Kingston
6. Ringgold
7. Rome
8. Summerville

Georgia State Parks, Private Recreation Sites, and Federal Recreation Sites

The following Georgia State Parks and Recreation Areas are indicated on *Figure 4: Area Attractions* as pink circles:

- Berry College Wildlife Management Area and Refuge, Rome
- Crockford-Pigeon Mountain Wildlife Management Area, Lafayette
- Cloudland Canyon State Park, Trenton
- Fort Mountain State Park, Chatsworth

- James H. “Sloppy” Floyd State Park, Summerville
- Johns Mountain Wildlife Management Area
- Rocky Mountain Recreation Area, Rome
- Summerville State Fish Hatchery, Summerville
- Zahnd State Natural Area, Walker County

The following privately-owned recreational opportunities that are open to the public have been identified on *Figure 4: Area Attractions* as blue squares:

- Camp Aquilla
- Camp Cherokee
- Camp Juliette Low
- Valley View Ranch Camp
- Calhoun Elks Golf Course
- Creekside Golf Course
- Summertree Golf Course
- Lake Winnepesaukah
- Morrison Campground
- KOA Campgrounds in Calhoun, Ringgold, and Cartersville
- Family Leisure RV Resort, Adairsville

The following Federal Recreation Areas have also been identified on *Figure 4: Area Attractions* as yellow squares:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Cohutta Wilderness Area | • Pinhoti Trailhead at SR 136 |
| • Houston Valley ORV Area | • Pinhoti Trailhead at SR 100 |
| • Johns Mountain Overlook | • The Pocket Campground |
| • Keown Falls Day Use Area | • Rich Mountain Wilderness Area |
| • Lake Conasauga Campground | |

***Table 3: Calendar of Local Events
Near the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway***

Events selected reflect various historical, cultural, and artistic themes:

April

Atlanta Steeplechase, Cartersville
North American Beaulieu Classic Equestrian Event, Chatsworth

May

1890’s Days, Ringgold
Battle of Resaca, Resaca
Finster Festival, Summerville
Kudzu Cook-Off Festival, Dalton
Mayfest on the River, Rome
Prater’s Mill Country Fair, Varnell

June

Battle of Pickett’s Mill, Dallas
Cave Spring Arts Festival, Cave Spring

July

Pops in the Park at Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park, Chickamauga/Fort Oglethorpe

Van House Days, Chatsworth

August

Cherokee Days of Recognition, Red Clay Park Dalton

September

Battle of Tunnel Hill Civil War Reenactment, Tunnel Hill

Big Cedar Arts and Crafts Festival, Cave Spring

Labor Day at The Post in Historic Barnhardt Circle: Fort Oglethorpe

Prater's Mill Country Fair, Varnell

Roselawn Arts Festival, Cartersville

October

Chiaha Harvest Fair, Heritage Park Rome

Coosa Valley Fair, Rome

The Great Locomotive Chase, Adairsville

November

Heritage Days, Rome

December

A Moravian Christmas, Chatsworth

Carols and Candles of Christmas Past, Oak Hill Rome

Coosa River Christmas, Rome

3.1.5 Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use map illustrates the location of US Forest Service-owned land and the distribution of residential sites in relation to commercial and industrial sites (*Figure 5: Existing Land Use*). Large areas of parks/recreation/conservation land characterize the eastern end of US 27. Also, long segments of residential property and pockets of commercial use border the north and south sides of the Byway. After passing through unused and undeveloped land, the western end of US 27 becomes dominantly agricultural with smaller areas of residential property.

Agricultural land is also found to the north along Gore-Subligna Road and East Armuchee Road with very few residential properties. After crossing the Chattooga/Walker County border, land use switches to primarily parks/recreation/conservation uses. Residential properties are limited to the area directly along the Byway and to roadways outside the Byway route. One pocket of commercial property is found at the intersection of East Armuchee Road and SR 136. This mix of public and private use continues along SR 136 to the intersection of Furnace Creek Road and Everett Springs Road.



Illustration 4: View of Patchwork of Agricultural Land in the Valley from Johns Mountain

After turning south onto Everett Springs Road, the route travels through Johns Mountain Wildlife Management Area. Residential properties to the south of US Forest Service-owned land are of varying age; they increase in density with proximity to the intersection of SR 156 and US 27. A small area of commercial development is located near Floyd Springs Road. To the west and beyond these residential properties are US Forest Service-owned land and agricultural and forestry uses extending southeast of the Byway route.

3.1.6 Future Land Use

The Coosa Valley Regional Development Center's future land use plan seeks to promote agriculture and forestry in unused and undeveloped areas along US 27 and concentrate commercial development at major crossroads, such as Gore (*Figure 6: Future Land Use*). The plan calls for an increase in residential development along the east and west sides of Gore-Sublinga Road as well as on interior roads of the Byway. No significant land use changes are planned in Walker County along the aforementioned portions of the Byway, nor are there any significant land use changes anticipated along the eastern section of the Byway.

3.1.7 Historic and Archeological Characteristics

Historic resources located along or in close proximity to the Byway illustrate the developmental history of the area. Surviving historic buildings and structures provide a visible link to past land uses. As the Ridge and Valley region of northwest Georgia was settled, subsistence agricultural practices developed into small and large family-operated farms that depended on locally operated mills and gins to refine raw materials. Small and large-scale iron ore mining operations as well as insensitive fire practices scarred the land, making it of little economic value by the 1930s. The process of reclamation and forest management by the US Forest Service embodies the more recent past of the area. Scattered private land holdings exist along the valley roads as they have for many years, while the high ridges are now under the protection of US Forest Service as part of the Armuchee Cohutta Ranger District, Chattahoochee National Forest.

Historic resources identified along the Byway illustrate how agriculture, mining, and the US Forest Service efforts have shaped the region's history. Along the Byway one finds examples of vernacular early-twentieth houses and agricultural outbuildings that portray the story of how the land was used historically. Historic resources such as the recreational amenities constructed by the CCC are tangible links to the region's heritage and past settlement patterns.



Illustration 5: Remnants of the Area's Agricultural Past Exist along the Byway

Historic resources have been inventoried using several sources, which are reflected on *Figure 7: Historic Resources*. These include historic sites surveyed by the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, noted on the map as pink circles with the following number system—C-# (Chattooga County sites); WA-# (Walker County sites); and FL-# (Floyd County sites). These sites were identified in surveys that were carried out several years ago. To address the gap in identification that these outdated surveys created, additional surveys for historic resources that are 50 years old or older (built prior to 1952) were carried out as part of the project. These newly identified sites are marked with blue circles on the map. Additionally, a few historic sites were added through information from the US Forest Service, which are shown as pink squares. The route of the Atlanta Campaign Trail and the location of some resources such as historic churches and cemeteries are also included on the map.

3.1.8 Scenic Characteristics

A visual analysis of the scenic qualities of the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway was conducted to identify those locations that are of a particular scenic value and have special visual appeal (*Figure 8: View Analysis*). Natural features and man-made structures were considered for their ability to enhance the visual experience along the road.

Through roadside observation, special note was made of views that would be visible to passing motorists. Each view was photographed and its extents correlated to a USGS quad map. While in the field, the relative quality, distance, and breath of the views were determined (*Table 4: Visual Analysis and Views*). “View Cone” symbols were used on the map to illustrate the range of views – extended, moderate, or short – and the width of views – expansive, wide or focused. Views were noted as to whether they were year-round or seasonal. Seasonal views were also noted for clearing where significant vegetative growth obstructs potential views. Visually appealing structures or natural features immediately adjacent to the road were designated as “Points of Interest.” Photographs associated with each of the views are included in the appendix to this report (*Appendix B*).

Table 4: Visual Analysis and Views: Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway - February 25, 2002

(See Figure 8: View Analysis for locations)

View #	Distance	Breadth	Seasonal	Clearing necessary	Quality	Other observations
1	short/med.	expansive			excellent	meadow/fields, Johns Mtn very prominent
2	medium	narrow			average	view to next ridge, telephone poles distracting
3	short	narrow			good	Villanow Store
4	long	expansive			excellent	newly built homes distract in the middle ground
5 pan	short/med.	moderate			good	no development visible
6	short/med.	expansive			excellent	pasture in foreground, no development visible
7	long	narrow		yes	good	pinetrees in foreground block view to distant ridge
8	medium	moderate			good	tree nursery in foreground, Haywood Valley
9 pan	short/med.	expansive			good	barn in foreground, broomsedge meadow, ridge behind
10	short	narrow			good	Sublinga community, historic homes
11	medium	moderate			good	view to ridge
12	short	narrow			good	Italianate structure
13 pan	short/med.	moderate	some areas	yes	excellent	successional meadow, no development
14	short/med.	moderate			average	barn in foreground, pasture at inner curve, highly visible
15	medium	moderate			average	pasture in foreground, forested ridge backdrop
16	medium	expansive			good	horse pasture in foreground, forested ridge backdrop
17	medium	narrow			average	surrounding businesses distracting, distant ridge
18	medium	moderate			average	large sign, patchwork of lawn and forest
19	short/med.	moderate			average	cell tower by road, meadow in foreground, forested ridge
20	long	expansive	yes	streamside veg.	excellent	agricultural fields to distant forested ridge
21	short/med.	moderate			good	successional meadow, no development, background ridge
22 pan	short/med.	moderate			good	env. education center, distant view to Turkey Mtn.
23	short/med.	moderate			average	view of home and next ridge facing west
24	long	moderate	partial screen	no	good	decid. trees in foreground, view parallel to ridge and valley
25	short	narrow			excellent	decaying barn, mature decid. trees
26	short	narrow			good	mature decid. trees near road
27 pan	medium	expansive			average	large shed and home in midground, ridge in background
28	med./long	expansive			good	pasture, view north along ridge, partial allee along road
29	medium	moderate			good	mid-succession pines in foreground
30	short	narrow			excellent	road follows stream in a steep forested valley
31	medium	narrow	partial screen	no	excellent	view through gap to Johns Mtn.
32	short/med.	expansive			good	entrance to Natl. Forest, farmstead in foreground
33	medium	narrow			good	view to Johns Mtn. facing south
34	short	narrow			good	open canopy of mature pine in valley
35	short/med.	narrow			good	open canopy of mature pine, Johns Mtn. framed by pines

3.1.8.1 Scenic Byway Corridor Management Prescription for US Forest Service Lands

In 1995, all Forest Service lands were mapped for visual quality. All areas adjacent to, and up to one-half mile, from the roadway view shed on USFS land were mapped as Scenic Class 1 or 2. The Scenic Integrity Objectives set forth in the Plan Revision for the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest are high for Scenic Byway Corridors. A High Scenic Integrity designation refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character “appears” intact. This shows management direction for Scenic Byway Corridors adjacent to Forest Service land.

The Management Prescription for the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway was created to manage the corridor in a manner that provides visitors enjoyment of outstanding scenery of natural and cultural landscapes along a well-maintained road. The emphasis is to provide quality scenic views in recreational and roadside settings. The landscape along the Byway is generally pastoral in appearance and travelers observe vistas with scenic integrity. The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Prescription would be focused on protecting and showcasing the scenic, natural, historic, and cultural resources that were the basis for the corridor being designated.

The Corridor Management Prescription for the Byway encompasses the following:

- The prescription area is easily accessed and designed primarily for scenic driving.
- Facilities along the route consist of the roadway; overlook areas; interpretative signs; and informational boards.
- Signs would identify trails or recreation areas along, or adjacent to, the corridor.
- Views along the Byway would be natural in appearance. Natural-appearing managed change would occur, but only in areas where it is necessary to maintain an open view.
- Road corridor improvements and interpretive facilities will complement the surrounding natural landscape.
- Streams within the corridor would be periodically inventoried and monitored on a sample basis to characterize larger scale conditions or trends and to monitor for adverse effects. Management activities will be coordinated with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.
- A landscape management plan with screening, feathering, and other vegetation management techniques will be required to mitigate the visual and other impacts from new, upgraded, or reauthorized utility corridors or communication sites.

Coordination with nearby communities and private property owners through land use planning, zoning, and scenic easements will help to ensure complementary land use management of private land holdings within the scenic corridor.

3.2 Transportation

The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway is located approximately ten miles north of the Rome and six miles east of Summerville in northwest Georgia. It is a 51-mile loop through the Armuchee Ridges of the Chattahoochee National Forest. The Byway is surrounded by residential properties, farmland, and forested land. Fishing, hunting, picnicking, and camping facilities are provided in the nearby Keown Falls Scenic Area, The Pocket Recreation Area, and Johns Mountain Overlook and Wildlife Management Areas.

The Byway crosses through the counties of Floyd, Walker and Chattooga. US 27, State Highways 156 and 136, and several rural county roads comprise the main routes of the Byway (*Figure 9: Transportation Analysis*). In this element of the study, the Scenic Byway is broken into nine segments for the purpose of traffic operational analysis. An inventory of these segments is presented in *Table 5: Inventory of Study Corridors*:

Table 5: Inventory of Study Corridors
(See Figure 9: Transportation Analysis)

ID #	Segment	From	To	County	Area Type	Dist (miles)
1	US 27	Chattooga/Floyd County Line	SR 156	Floyd	Rural	3.2
2	SR 156	US 27	Floyd Springs Rd	Floyd	Rural	2.4
3	Floyd Springs Rd	SR 156	Rosedale Rd	Floyd	Rural	1.0
4	Floyd Springs Rd	Rosedale Rd	Everett Springs Rd	Floyd	Rural	6.2
5	Everett Springs Rd	Floyd Springs Rd	Floyd/Walker County Line	Floyd	Rural	6.9
6	Pocket Rd	Floyd/Walker County Line	SR 136	Walker	Rural	6.5
7	SR 136	Furnace Creek Rd	E. Armuchee Rd	Walker	Rural	2.1
8	E. Armuchee Rd	SR 136	Concord Rd	Walker	Rural	1.7
9	E. Armuchee Rd	Concord Rd	Richardson Rd	Walker	Rural	1.6
10	E. Armuchee Rd	Richardson Rd	Walker/Chattooga County Line	Walker	Rural	3.2
11	Sublinga/Villanow Rd	Walker/Chattooga County Line	Haywood Valley Rd	Chattooga	Rural	2.0
12	Sublinga/Villanow Rd	Haywood Valley Rd	CR 325	Chattooga	Rural	1.3
13	Gore Sublinga Rd	CR 325	CR 29	Chattooga	Rural	3.2
14	Gore Sublinga Rd	CR 29	US 27	Chattooga	Rural	5.0
15	US 27	Gore Sublinga Rd	Farmersville Rd	Chattooga	Rural	1.7
16	US 27	Farmersville Rd	Chattooga/Floyd County Line	Chattooga	Rural	2.8

To inventory the existing Byway conditions, a field survey was conducted in January and February of 2002. Traffic count information, taken in the Year 2000, was obtained from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). A summary of existing roadway, traffic and signage conditions are provided in this section. Other issues, such as marking and circulation at pull-off areas, are briefly addressed in this section. All recommendations are summarized in Section 4.0.

3.2.1 Roadway Conditions

In general, the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway is a two-lane rural roadway with an average of 4-ft wide grass shoulders. The segments along US 27 are four-lane divided roadways with an average of 6-ft paved shoulders. The Byway is an uncontrolled access facility and is functionally classified as a rural principal arterial, rural minor arterial or rural major collector, depending on the location. The Byway surface is in excellent condition, and the speed limit ranges from 35 to 55 mph along the length of the corridor. *Table 6: Physical Characteristics of the Scenic Byway* details the physical characteristics of the Byway for the segments defined in *Table 5*.

Table 6: Physical Characteristics of the Scenic Byway

ID #	No. of Lanes	Lane Width (ft)	Posted Speed (mph)	Functional Class	% of Passing Zones	Shoulder Width (ft)	Shoulder Type	Horizontal/ Vertical Deficiencies Observed
1	4	12	55	Principal Arterial	Divided	4 – 8	Paved	No
2	2	11	55	Major Collector	20	3 – 5	Grass	No
3	2	10	45	Major Collector	40	0 – 4	Grass	Yes
4	2	10	45	Major Collector	35	3 – 5	Grass	Yes
5	2	10	40	Major Collector	20	N/A	Grass	Yes
6	2	10	35	Major Collector	25	2 – 8	Grass	Yes
7	2	10	55	Minor Arterial	20	4 – 8	Grass	No
8	2	10	45	Major Collector	20	0 – 5	Grass	No
9	2	10	45	Major Collector	40	0 – 5	Grass	No
10	2	10	45	Major Collector	40	2 – 6	Grass	No
11	2	10	45	Major Collector	75	2 – 6	Grass	No
12	2	10	35	Major Collector	60	0 – 5	Grass	No
13	2	11	45	Major Collector	75	2 – 8	Grass	No
14	2	11	45	Major Collector	80	2 – 8	Grass	No
15	4	12	55	Principal Arterial	Divided	4 – 8	Paved	No
16	4	12	55	Principal Arterial	Divided	4 – 8	Paved	No

Much of the Scenic Byway is located on level terrain with good sight distance; however, for segments 3 through 6, moderate grades exist. Horizontal and vertical deficiencies are observed at several locations along these segments, and passing opportunities are limited as a result. Narrow lanes with no shoulders were also observed along segment 5. Lower speed limits have been established to institute more reasonable and safe speeds at certain locations along these segments; however, there are a number of other locations that may also warrant a lower posted speed limit. Additionally, installation of guardrails at certain sections along segment 5 may be helpful to prevent vehicles from leaving the traveled way and entering the steep slopes adjacent to the river.

3.2.2 Review of Roads' Safety and Accident Records

The most recent year for which GDOT has accident data is out-of-date (1996). GDOT is currently performing an overhaul of their data system. Records can be obtained directly from GDOT once the system has been updated.

3.2.3 Existing Traffic Conditions

Traffic counts for the Year 2000 obtained from GDOT are presented in *Table 7*. During the field survey, the percentage of heavy vehicles along the Scenic Byway was observed to be small. As indicated in *Table 7*, the current traffic volumes vary from about 200 vehicles per day (expressed as Average Daily Traffic or ADT) to about 12,000 vehicles per day. Within this range of volumes, the Levels of Service along the Scenic Byway vary from “A” to “B”. The Level of Service (LOS) is a criterion used to describe how well a given roadway is able to handle traffic volumes. LOS grading ranges from A to F, with LOS A providing the best service and LOS F representing the unacceptable driving (stop and go driving and unspecified delays).

Table 7: Traffic Counts of Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

ID #	Segment	Segment Description		2000 ADT ² (vehicles per day)	LOS ¹
		From	To		
1	US 27	Chattooga/Floyd County Line	SR 156	11,933	A
2	SR 156	US 27	Floyd Springs Rd	3,300	B
3	Floyd Springs Rd	SR 156	Rosedale Rd	1,259	B
4	Floyd Springs Rd	Rosedale Rd	Everett Springs Rd	514	A
5	Everett Springs Rd	Floyd Springs Rd	Floyd/Walker County Line	360	A
6	Pocket Rd	Floyd/Walker County Line	SR 136	179	A
7	SR 136	Furnace Creek Rd	E. Armuchee Rd	2,300	B
8	E. Armuchee Rd	SR 136	Concord Rd	948	A
9	E. Armuchee Rd	Concord Rd	Richardson Rd	860	A
10	E. Armuchee Rd	Richardson Rd	Walker/Chattooga County Line	820	A
11	Subligana Vallionow Rd	Walker/Chattooga County Line	Haywood Valley Rd	760	A
12	Subligana Vallionow Rd	Haywood Valley Rd	CR 325	1,122	A
13	Gore Subligana Rd	CR 325	CR 29	1,043	A
14	Gore Subligana Rd	CR 29	US 27	1,038	A
15	US 27	Gore Subligana Rd	Farmersville Rd	11,524	A
16	US 27	Farmersville Rd	Chattooga/Floyd County Line	10,800	A

¹Capacity is calculated using the Highway Capacity Manual method. It is assumed 50/50 directional distribution, 2 percent of trucks, and the peak-to-daily ratio of 0.10.
²Data obtained from GDOT

3.2.4 Signage

Signs are intended to facilitate traveler safety, establish orientation, and inform the public about the natural and recreational resources adjacent to the Byway. Based on their functions, the signs along the Byway are classified into four categories: Byway signs, direction signs, interpretation signs, and regulatory signs. Regulatory signs include speed limits, route number, street names, mileposts, and warning signs. Regulatory signs are installed and maintained by GDOT.

The quality and effectiveness of signs are an issue along most roads, and the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway is no exception. Finding an appropriate middle ground where commercial signage is allowed to attract potential business in a way that does not disrupt or overpower the scenic quality of the byway experience is the goal of regulating signage along the Byway.

Title 23 of the United States Code provides that no new forms of outdoor advertising may be erected along any highway on the Interstate System or Federal-aid primary system that has been designated a scenic byway. Prohibited forms of outdoor advertising are broadly defined as sign structures or messages advertising a business located in another location that are visible from a designated portion of the route. The definition includes all sorts of outdoor signs, displays, devices, figures, paintings, billboards, and advertising structures. On-premise commercial signs, official traffic control or directional signs are not subject to prohibition. This series of roads and highways is in compliance with all existing local, state, and federal law on the control of outdoor advertising.

3.2.4.1 Byway Signage

Byway signage reminds the travelers that they are on a designated Scenic Byway. Properly designed and positioned Byway signs keep travelers informed and increase the pleasure of the driving experience. Currently, National Forest Scenic Byway signs are presented along the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway.



Illustration 6: Byway Signs

Along the route, the Byway signs are placed at most access points around the major junctions, and at certain locations between the major junctions. While much of the Byway is adequately signed, there are locations where additional Byway signs are warranted:

- a) SR 156 before turning into Floyd Springs Road;
- b) Gore-Subligna Road before turning into US 27; and
- c) Gore-Subligna Road/East Armuchee Road from US 27 to SR 136.

Another issue related to the Byway signage is an inconsistent design of the directional arrows as illustrated in *Illustration 6*. 2000 MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) standard (Section 2H.04) indicates that recreational and cultural interest area symbol signs shall be square or rectangular and shall have a white symbol or message and white border on a brown background. Thus, the background color of the arrow sign should be changed to brown, and the arrow color should be changed to white. In addition, it is recommended that a uniform size of the designated Byway sign be employed.

3.2.4.2 Directional Signage

Directional signs help orient motorists, and provide directions to points of interest. They include destination guide signs and symbol signs. Some examples of directional signs along the Scenic Byway are shown in *Illustrations 7A and 7B: Directional Signs*:



Illustration 7A: Directional Signs



Illustration 7B: Directional Signs

The main issue associated with the directional signs located along the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway is the inconsistency of sign design. As shown in *Illustration 7C*, different background colors were employed to direct and inform motorists to points of interest. 2000 MUTCD standards (Sections 2H.04 and 2H.09) suggest that destination guide signs be rectangular with a white legend and border on a green/brown background, or trapezoidal with a white legend and border on a brown background; and symbols signs shall be square or rectangular in shape and have a white symbol or message and white border on a brown background. All the directional signs should be checked with 2000 MUTCD standards. To a driver unfamiliar with the Byway route, the current inconsistency of directional signage causes confusion and disorientation. It is recommended to apply a unique, consistent pattern for all the directional signs along the Scenic Byway. In addition, directional signs with faded background color should be replaced.

Another issue is that directional signs are insufficient along the Byway. Insufficient directional signs cause travelers to miss points of interest, or result in erratic movements into and out of attraction and recreational areas such as the Visitor Information area. No signs are provided on the roadside before entering the following points of interest:

- a) The visitor information area;
- b) “Camp Sydney Dew” from the southbound direction;
- c) “Wildlife Interpretive Trail” from the southbound direction; and
- d) “Pitcher’s Pond Fishing Area”.

Posting directional signs along the Scenic Byway several hundred feet away from the entrances of the above points of interest would help reduce travelers’ confusion and improve safety in these areas. If necessary, supplemental directional signs could also be installed at major junctions of the Byway, orienting

travelers towards major points of interest. GDOT does not install signs for private businesses, with the exception of a general campground sign if the business is located off the main roadway.

Another issue relates to the location of directional signs. Field survey indicates that some signs are posted in only one direction of the Byway. Travelers arriving from the other direction cannot view such signs easily. To solve this problem, it is recommended either that the existing sign be enlarged so that travelers in both directions can easily read and identify the upcoming point of interest. Another option would be to add additional directional signage in both directions.



Illustration 7C: Example of Directional Sign Location

It is recommended that the camera symbol shown in *Illustration 7B* be replaced with the text “Johns Mountain Overlook”. As Johns Mountain Overlook is one of the points of interest listed in the tourist guide, travelers are more likely to look for directional signs that identify the area by name. The existing camera symbol is very easily ignored by travelers and does not adequately demarcate the point of interest as Johns Mountain Overlook.

3.2.4.3 Interpretative Signage

Interpretative signage along the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway informs visitors of the opportunities to witness wildlife in its native surroundings, to experience the varied terrain of northwest Georgia, and to hike trails in scenic areas such as Keown Falls and The Pocket. Interpreting these and other intrinsic qualities along the Byway is the key to helping visitors fully understand and appreciate the Byway’s resources. Along the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway, two interpretative signs are currently provided on the roadside and are shown in *Illustration 9: Interpretive Signs*. Since the focus of this section of the report is transportation related issues, the contents and design of interpretative signage have not been examined. Circulation and safety issues at these locations are explored in Section 3.2.5.



Illustration 7: Interpretive Signs

3.2.5 Marking, Circulation and Pedestrian/Bicyclist Safety

Currently, double solid yellow lines are marked on the Scenic Byway at some access roads to recreational facilities and pull-offs. *Illustration 10* is taken at the access road to the Wildlife Interpretive Trail. It is recommended to break the double solid yellow lines at access points to recreational areas and pull-offs. The white lane markings in front of these access roads should also be broken.



Illustration 8: Example of an Access Road

No circulation signs (Enter/Exit) or arrows are provided at access roads and pull-off locations. Safety might be improved at such locations if Enter/Exit signs as well as directional arrows were provided to guide the travelers. In addition, provision of marked parking spaces at such areas may also contribute to vehicle safety. Directional signs added to the pull-off areas could be any design with clear orientation information. Any Regulatory or directional signs located on public roads within recreational or cultural interest areas must conform to the standards of the 2000 MUTCD. Besides the improvement of markings and circulations, increasing the turning radii and/or adding transition zones at certain access points would enhance safety and provide a more pleasurable driving experience.

Currently, one section of SR 136 near Villanow is included in the state bikeway system. Additionally there are three existing bicycle routes used by local bike clubs of 30, 60, and 100 miles that include portions of the Byway. Although the Byway roads are narrow with limited shoulders, the low traffic volume makes biking these portions of the Byway an enjoyable experience. However, shared bike road signage is recommended to alert motorists of potential cyclists on the roadway.

3.2.6 Plan for Accommodating Commerce

The rural nature of the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway is one of the main reasons it provides such an exceptional experience. Farming remains a viable economic engine in the region, not only for its agricultural production but also as a scenic asset that contributes to the overall quality of life. As the population of the region grows, the need for commercial services will increase. Protecting the rural character of the Byway corridor will become increasingly important. Although it is not possible, nor required, to freeze the corridor in place as it is today, it is important to recognize and better understand the qualities that make driving along this rural route interesting and visually appealing. Developing conservation strategies for the rural land as well as planning for the anticipated increase in area commercial services will help ensure that the Byway maintains its rural character while continuing to meet the needs of the regional population. Since much of

the land along the Byway is privately owned, partnerships between conservation groups and local property owners are imperative.

Local governments should consider incorporating goals and objectives related to the rural nature and scenic quality of the Byway corridor when updating or instituting county zoning regulations and land use policies. Refinements to public regulations can offer incentives as well as protective regulations, but voluntary conservation techniques can be equally effective. Conservation easements could be donated to an established land trust, or a new land trust could be created specifically aimed at preserving the rural character of the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway. A conservation easement provides a tax benefit for the landowner while protecting the Byway corridor view shed.

Growth in the region should not be stunted because of the presence of a scenic byway. Rather, steps should be taken to ensure that development is undertaken in a way that is effective in protecting the rural nature of the corridor. New development, public and private, should be assessed for its potential impact on the scenic quality of the Byway. Regional planning efforts should promote development projects that preserve open agricultural land and protect landscape features and view sheds. Several strategies described below can avoid, minimize, or mitigate anticipated impacts of new development.

Parceling out large agricultural tracts into roadside frontage lots for residential or commercial development can greatly detract or completely obscure the view from the road. Screening new development behind existing trees or topography can help maintain an open-feeling corridor. Establishing setbacks for development that retain the rural feel of the road frontage is another technique. Cluster development should be encouraged in an attempt to preserve high quality views and productive agricultural land. Shared driveways cut down on the number of interruptions to the rural vista. Local regulations would need to be adapted to allow interior development or “flag lots” that are linked to the public road through deeded rights-of-way.

Controlling development along areas of the Byway where pressure for “strip commercial” type development is essential. Creating regulations to ensure that construction, land use, signage, grading, and native vegetation removal are sensitively handed. This would require adopting stronger standards for limiting or buffering new roadside development in the local zoning ordinance. Clustering commercial development at nodes around major intersections would leave other parts of the Byway open and relatively undeveloped.

Traveling the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway should remain a rural experience. Roadside commercial development need not provide vast quantity of support services. Numerous recreational facilities adjacent to the Byway already offer public facilities and the future Taylor’s Ridge Overlook Park will have amenities as well. For additional information on any of the land use policies mentioned in this section, consult resources listed in the Bibliography in *Appendix E*.

3.3 Identification of Byway Sections

The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway has been divided into four sections based upon physical characteristics and roadway type. These sections have been used as a basis for assessing the intrinsic qualities of the byway.

3.3.1 US 27 Section

The US 27 section of the Byway is a four-lane highway with a grassed median. The road is mostly level but drops off slightly to the north and south, providing views of the ridgelines to the north of the road. This route links Rome to Summerville and Lafayette and is a mix of modern commercial and residential properties.

3.3.2 SR 136 Section

State Route 136, a two-lane state highway linking Lafayette and Calhoun, is the most northerly section of the Byway. This section is situated atop a slight ridge with a valley dropping off on the south side of the road. As the road travels east, the ridgetops are brought closer into view.

3.3.3 Western Section *(Includes Gore-Subligna Road and East Armuchee Road)*

Gore-Subligna Road and East Armuchee Road define the Western Section of the Byway. The rural two-lane county roads travel north through the valley and pass family farms, churches, and crossroads communities set against a backdrop of rolling pasture and forested ridges. This section of the Byway allows the traveler an experience alternating from cleared valleys to forested ridges. Toward the northern end of the section, the road rhythmically bends and curves, hugging the side of the ridge, as it overlooks the valley to the west.

3.3.4 Eastern Section *(Includes Furnace Creek Road, Everett Springs Road, Floyd Springs Road and SR 156)*

The eastern section of the Byway also consists of rural two-lane county roads, but the landscape it traverses is quite different from the Western Section. Whereas the Western Section consists of broad, open views, the Eastern Section passes through a narrow, forested valley, occasionally opening to reveal small pockets of open fields. Nevertheless, the top of the ridgeline is never too far in the distance. Only towards the south end of the section along Floyd Springs Road and SR 156 does the valley open up.



Illustration 9: US Forest Service Land Parallels the Byway.

3.4 Assessment of Intrinsic Qualities

The National Scenic Byways Program defines intrinsic quality as “features that are considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of an area.” These intrinsic qualities are determined by the particular combination of resources along the Byway that help to define its character, appeal, and interest differentiating the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway from other roadways in the area. Although not always quantifiable, intrinsic qualities are essential, underlying characteristics used to promote the Byway experience to visitors. The National Scenic Byways Program defines six intrinsic qualities that provide the basis for Scenic Byway designation: archeological, cultural, historical, natural, recreational, and

scenic. These intrinsic qualities are what make the Byway experience unique and distinctive and will be considered in their context.

The entire length of the Byway provides spectacular scenic views of the area's natural topographic features—long parallel ridges with broad valleys in between. Historic and cultural elements are found in the vernacular architecture and small family farms along the Byway. These resources provide a glimpse into the daily lives of those who settled into the area and tell the story of how the land was cultivated. Those traveling the Byway have a wide variety of recreational opportunities including hiking, picnicking, camping, and fishing.

The natural qualities of the Byway are expressed through the formation of ridges such as Johns and Sand Mountains that stand in sharp contrast to the broad, open valleys below. The natural formation of the ridges and valleys, Keown Falls, and the natural phenomenon of The Pocket characterize the broad scale topography of the area. Broad, lush valleys with a backdrop of forested ridges contain a diversity of plant communities adapted to the microclimates of the mountains and valleys providing travelers with a diverse visual experience on the Byway. The Pinhoti Trail, which crosses the Byway, allows for a more in-depth examination of the area's natural features.

Presently, no archeological sites have been identified along the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway. However, several sites located on or in close proximity to the Byway are worth noting for their archeological potential. To the north of SR 136 is the Civil War battle site at Dug Gap, containing a portion of a Confederate stone wall. Located near the Floyd/Walker County border is the former community of Zone (now part of the Johns Mountain Wildlife Management Area). While no visible physical evidence of Zone remains, archeological investigation could yield information about early settlement practices.

Because the scenic, cultural, historical, and recreational qualities along the length of the Byway are so varied, the route will be broken down into the aforementioned sections so that these qualities can be addressed more specifically.

3.4.1 US 27 Section

While the expanse of the four-lane highway is somewhat distracting, US 27 features significant scenic views of Sand Mountain and Johns Mountain with pastoral valleys used for cattle grazing in the foreground. Most notable of the views is a long and expansive view across Amuchee Creek to agricultural fields and a distant forested ridge (*View # 19 in Appendix B*).

Historic and cultural aspects of the Byway are not of particular significance along this section. A few scattered houses from 1930-1950 are found along this section but they are not architecturally significant. Structures on US 27 between Armuchee Creek and Perry Road appear to be older, though most of the houses on the spur appear to date from the late 1950s to 1960-1970. All of the bridges in this section have been recently replaced with barrier type balustrades (New Jersey barriers), which detracts from the rural scenic quality of the Byway. Additionally there is a cell tower located along this section that is visible from the Byway.

Several crossroad communities are located in this section, though few remnants remain today. An exception is the community of Gore at the intersection of US 27 and Subligna Road. Gore is comprised of two nonhistoric gas stations dating from 1980 to the present, an electrical power station, and a vacant concrete block commercial building attached to what appears to be a rear gabled structure. The front section may be an addition to an earlier commercial building dating from approximately 1950. Further west on US 27 is the U-shaped Summerville Motel (with a pool) dating from ca. 1945-1955.

3.4.2 SR 136 Section

The SR 136 Section is noted for its scenery, especially the views across valleys and of structures deemed “Points of Interests”. The road follows a ridgeline curving and bending to the east from the intersection of SR 136 and East Armuchee Road. This route heads towards the ridges and provides glimpses to the south of the valley below. Most notable is an especially expansive view of the valley to the south of SR 136 with Johns Mountain prominent in the distance (*View # 1 in Appendix B*).



Illustration 10: Villanow Country Store

Cultural and historic resources are well exemplified by the Villanow Country Store, situated on the northwest corner of the Byway at the crossroads community of Villanow. While there has been recent residential and commercial development in the surrounding area, the Villanow Country Store is a significant historic feature, though there have been several additions to the exterior. The store dates from the mid-nineteenth century and is constructed of hand-made bricks. The front-gable building retains its original one room interior with original store shelves. The store has served many community functions during its existence, including a courtroom, local meetinghouse, and a community gathering spot for the exchange of stories. The store is an excellent example of a very early rural country store.

Examples that convey the history and culture of the area to travelers are less notable to the east along SR 136. A small graveyard, known as the White Cemetery, holds the graves of many of the area’s earliest residents. Tom White Road is located across from the cemetery on the south side of SR 136. The road dips into a valley and while there are many non-historic houses here, a few do appear to date from an earlier time period and help to illustrate the development of this area. Also of historic significance is the role of SR 136 during the Civil War. This road was the route of the Atlanta Campaign of the Tennessee Army as it headed south towards Atlanta.

The Byway along SR 136 does not display any recreational qualities but does provide an alternative route to the Keown Falls Recreation Area, bypassing the intersection of SR 136 and Furnace Creek Road. This alternate route crosses through a valley characterized by rolling hills and pasture.

3.4.3 Western Section *(Includes Gore-Subligna Road and East Armuchee Road)*

The Western Section boasts many scenic views of pasturelands and interesting architecture, set against Johns Mountain to the east and Taylor’s Ridge to the west. Especially notable views are that of a

successional meadow (*View # 13 in Appendix B*) and another looking east across pasturelands to a forested ridge in the distance (*View # 6 in Appendix B*).

Agriculture has shaped most of the cultural landscape of the Western Section. Many examples of early twentieth century vernacular architecture, ranging from double pen homes and a possible dogtrot house, to several two-story I-house building types, are found along this section of the Byway. Evidence of the agricultural history is found in the historic barns and other outbuildings dotting the landscape. Near the intersection of Gore-Subligna Road and Johnson Road is a Georgia Centennial Farm, designated as such for being a continually operating farm by the same family for over a century. The Centennial Farm is an educational opportunity, not only for agriculture, but also for its late-nineteenth century architecture.

Sublinga, a crossroads community located at the convergence of Gore-Subligna Road and West and East Armuchee Road, has an interesting cultural history relating to its name. An early settler who received much opposition to his suggestion of naming the community his family name, Underwood, named the town. Therefore, he suggested the Latin name Subligna, created by combining *sub*, meaning “under” in Latin, and *lignum* meaning “wood,” ultimately achieving the name he had desired. Today, only a few historic buildings remain in the community, including several commercial buildings and the mid-twentieth century Subligna Junior High School gymnasium. A wood clapboard building located at the center of the junction appears to date from the early twentieth century and, while its use is unknown, based upon its location, it may have been a commercial building.

One recreational activity located directly on the Byway is access to the Pinhoti Trail crossing East Armuchee Road just north of the Chattooga/Walker county border. Other recreational opportunities exist adjacent to the Byway to the north along West Armuchee Road at the Narrows Picnic Road. This road crosses Strawberry Mountain and leads to a picnic and hiking area developed by the CCC from the nearby Pocket Camp. The US Forest Service closed the Narrows Picnic Area at an unknown date.

3.4.4 Eastern Section (*Includes Furnace Creek Road, Everett Springs Road, Floyd Springs Road and SR 156*)

The Eastern Section of the Byway follows several roads as it makes its way south to intersect with US 27. Along the way are views of densely forested and open valleys with agricultural fields and pastures. The view from the Johns Mountain Lookout Tower reveals the natural beauty of the valley below and the ridges in the distance. Keown Falls is another opportunity to view the natural beauty of the area surrounding the Byway.

The most notable scenic view is that of a historic barn surrounded by mature deciduous trees. This view is a reflection of the small pockets of settlement found along the Eastern Section of the byway (*View # 25 in Appendix B*). Another scenic view is provided of the road as it closely follows Johns Creek through a steep, forested valley within the Johns Mountain Wildlife Management Area (*View # 30 in Appendix B*). A framed view of Johns Mountain is apparent through a narrow gap (*View # 31 in Appendix B*).

The cultural and historic qualities of this Eastern Section relate to various themes and histories. While there are not any outstanding or unusual examples of building architecture, the settlement patterns within the valleys are still clearly illustrated by existing buildings and land uses. Interpretative opportunities can be found in the crossroad communities, the agricultural history of the valleys, the effects of mining in the region, and finally, the role and duties of the US Forest Service and the CCC.

One of the first communities encountered when traveling south on Everett Springs Road is an area known as The Pocket. Not long after the Land Lottery of 1820 opened the area up to settlement, there were many farms located across the surrounding valley, as well as mills and cotton gins. Today, only a few early twentieth century houses and barns remain. The Pocket Cemetery dates from the early nineteenth century and contains the graves of many early settlers. While little remains, collectively the houses and associated

outbuildings, The Pocket Cemetery, as well as a few other small family cemeteries, reflect the settlement and land use within the valley.

Just south of the US Forest Service-owned land, woodland gives way to a broad, cleared valley where several early twentieth century vernacular farmhouses are scattered. While there has been recent residential development in this area, signs of the early agricultural history of the region are still evident. Immediately off the Byway is the historic community of Everett Springs which also has a cemetery.

Further south are several small communities such as Floyd Springs. A historical marker at Floyd Springs details its association with the Civil War. Several churches and vernacular houses, though altered, are found in the surrounding area of this crossroads community. While there are a significant number of non-historic buildings, it is still possible to discern from the settlement pattern that this was a crossroads community.

After passing numerous recent residential buildings, the Byway comes upon a small area of modest early twentieth century houses at the intersection of SR 156 and US 27 and in the community of Armuchee.

While the Western Section of the byway is noted for its agricultural history, the Eastern Section is noted for its association with the US Forest Service and the CCC. A primary reason the US Forest Service purchased land in North Georgia was to conserve natural resources in response to the effects of the mining and logging industries. Mining operations were found throughout the region and had a major impact on surrounding communities both economically and physically. A pre-Civil War blast furnace was built near the present day intersection of Furnace Creek Road and Everett Springs Road (Pocket Road). Partially destroyed during the Civil War, it stood twenty feet high and twenty feet square at the base. Approximately sixty feet from the blast furnace was a dam constructed on Furnace Creek. Today, there is a concrete culvert-like structure to the southeast corner of the intersection, though it may be unrelated to the blast furnace.

The CCC established a camp in 1939 at the area known as The Pocket, and these workers helped the US Forest Service in replanting and reseeding the forest, building new roads and bridges, and installing telephone lines. Recreational areas were also developed, such as at the aforementioned Narrows Picnic Area and later at The Pocket Camp when CCC service ceased in 1942. Today, only the foundations of the camp buildings remain, but enough remnants exist to illustrate the life of a CCC enrollee.

Many recreational opportunities exist along the Eastern Section of the Scenic Byway. The Johns Mountain Lookout Tower offers hiking to the tower, and a trail to Keown Falls Recreation Area. Picnicking can also be enjoyed at both sites. The Pocket Recreation Area provides hiking trails, picnic tables and camping sites. Throughout the Johns Mountain Wildlife Management Area, numerous pull-offs allow for passive recreational activity. Lake Marvin and Arrowhead Lake allow fishing, while private campgrounds such as Camp Sidney Dew and Camp Gazelle Dew offer outdoor recreational activities for children.

4.0 Recommendations: A Strategy for Maintaining and Enhancing Intrinsic Qualities

4.1 Existing and New Development Enhancement Strategy

Improvement opportunities along the Byway include a variety of design proposals to enhance the appearance of the corridor, while also promoting greater use and enjoyment by pedestrians and bicyclists. Recommendations have been graphically illustrated as well as described more fully in the following narrative (*Figure 10: Recommendations*). New development should preserve the intrinsic qualities of the corridor.

4.1.1 Gateway Opportunities

The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway would benefit from the placement of gateways at several key locations along the roadway. Many tourists arrive in the area with little or no information about the region and can easily miss the ample opportunities to learn about the rich cultural history or enjoy the numerous recreational activities available to them. A gateway would provide signage and directional information about the route and its features. By identifying these gateways with appropriate new signs and landscape features, visitors would experience a heightened sense of arrival at the entry points to the Byway. Identification would also help tourists find their way.

Proposed sites for these priority gateways are shown on the map as gold stars and are at the following locations:

- Pinhoti Trail Trailhead on SR 136
- Taylor's Ridge Overlook Park (future gateway)
- Gore: Intersection of US 27 and Gore Subligna Road
- Villanow Store on SR 136

The proposed gateway at the future Taylor's Ridge Overlook Park is not directly located on the Byway. However, this gateway feature would be located along US 27, at Mack White Gap, approximately one mile away. Signage here would help guide tourist traffic off of the heavily traveled corridor and onto the Scenic Byway. The location of other proposed gateways at Gore and Villanow may require the acquisition of private land or an easement agreement in order to appropriately accomplish the intended goals.

4.1.2 Secondary Gateway Opportunities

Other potential sites for gateways would not serve as major entrance features, but rather as directional features to assist travelers when making turns along the Byway or directing visitors to the Byway. These secondary gateway opportunities would be less formal and consist of wayfinding signage and landscape improvements. Potential secondary gateway opportunities were noted at the following locations:

- The community of Subligna
- The intersection of SR 136 and Furnace Creek Road
- Vicinity of Evertt Springs
(to guide visitors through Everett Springs instead of along Lover's Lane)
- The intersection of SR 156 and Floyd Springs Road
- The intersection of US 27 and SR 156



Illustration 11: Directional Signage is lacking at this Secondary Gateway intersection of Furnace Creek Road and SR 136. Visitors could easily miss this Byway turn.

4.1.3 Points Of Interest Improvements/Opportunities

Access to Points of Interest along the Byway is via pull-offs and access roads. Recommended improvements to these areas include the addition of interpretative features and signage to enhance the Byway experience. In addition, several new pull-off opportunities were noted during the field survey for vista opportunities.

Points of Interest are indicated on *Figure 10: Recommendations* and include:

- Pinhoti Trailhead at East Armuchee Road
- Pinhoti Trailhead at SR 136
- Future Taylor's Ridge Overlook Park

4.1.3.1 New Pull-offs or Points of Interest

Potential scenic view pull-offs were noted as appropriate at the following locations:

- Sublinga Cemetery
- East Armuchee Baptist Church

Both locations are situated on the west side of East Armuchee Road and offer sweeping views of the valley with the mountains as a backdrop. It is also interesting to note that the East Armuchee Baptist Church is directly west of the Johns Mountain Overlook. Since these new pull-off opportunities are situated on privately owned property, public/private partnership agreements/easements would be required for their future development.



Illustration 12: Overlook atop Johns Mountain



Illustration 13: East Armuchee Baptist Church

4.1.3.2 New Pinhoti Trailhead

A new trailhead for the Pinhoti Trail should be considered at the East Armuchee Road crossing of the trail. Since most US Forest Service sites are situated in the northeast corner of the Byway, a location here would expand US Forest Service holdings into another area. It would also provide public land in an area of the Byway where little exists. The development of this trailhead would require the acquisition of private property and the development of the trailhead facility. This area is within the Proclamation Boundary of the US Forest Service.

4.1.3.3 US Forest Service Pull-off Improvements

Pull-offs in the US Forest Service-owned portion of the Byway along Pocket Road should be improved. Many makeshift pull-off areas exist in the stretch of road along The Pocket. Several of these areas are unsurfaced and are dangerously close to the nearby creek. A singular, consolidated parking area could help

alleviate some of the informal roadside parking patterns. Signage indicating scenic vistas, picnic areas, and points of interest along this route should accompany this parking.



Illustration 14: *This overlook at the Entrance to US Forest Service Land could be enhanced with More Substantial Surfacing and a Small Picnic Area.*

4.1.4 Pinhoti Trailhead Parking Lot at SR 136

One area that serves as a gateway to the Byway from the north is the Pinhoti Trail Parking area. This lot provides access to the trail for hiking, mountain biking and equestrian use. Landscaping would greatly enhance the parking lot, allowing this area to become a gateway feature. As a premier destination, this area is a priority for future improvements.

4.1.4.1 Existing Conditions – Pinhoti Trailhead Parking Lot

The parking lot located adjacent to SR 136 is a hillside expanse of gravel and mostly devoid of vegetation. The lot provides ample parking for equestrian trailers. However, it is difficult to differentiate parking areas from drive lanes. Gravel size is extremely large, hard to maneuver upon, and unfriendly to both pedestrian and equestrian environments.

Recommendations for lot improvements include a native planting restoration for the banks surrounding the lot and improved circulation patterns and surfacing.

4.1.4.2 Proposed Design – Pinhoti Trailhead Parking Lot

A plan has been developed to illustrate the proposed design (*Figure C-1: Pinhoti Trailhead Parking Lot Re-Design*). A reduced version of this plan is included here in the text with a larger version included in *Appendix C* with the cost estimate.

The proposed plan retains the framework of the existing parking lot, since it appears to function well. Although landscaping will not totally hide the large expanse of gravel, tree and shrub plantings within the circular median area and around the perimeter would enhance the overall appearance of the parking lot. The use of native plants would help to restore the aesthetic, structural, and functional characteristics of the original plant community which once existed in this location. The lot is shown with a concrete curb, intended to provide a border that will assist in retaining the graveled surface. The concrete curb also assists in delineating the desired flow of traffic and in designating parking spaces. Two accessible parking spaces are shown near the circular drop-off zone, placed immediately adjacent to the trail. The trail has also been redesigned to flow around the perimeter of the parking lot, avoiding pedestrian and vehicular conflicts. A crosswalk is needed (and shown) where the trail crosses SR 136 to further enhance pedestrian safety.

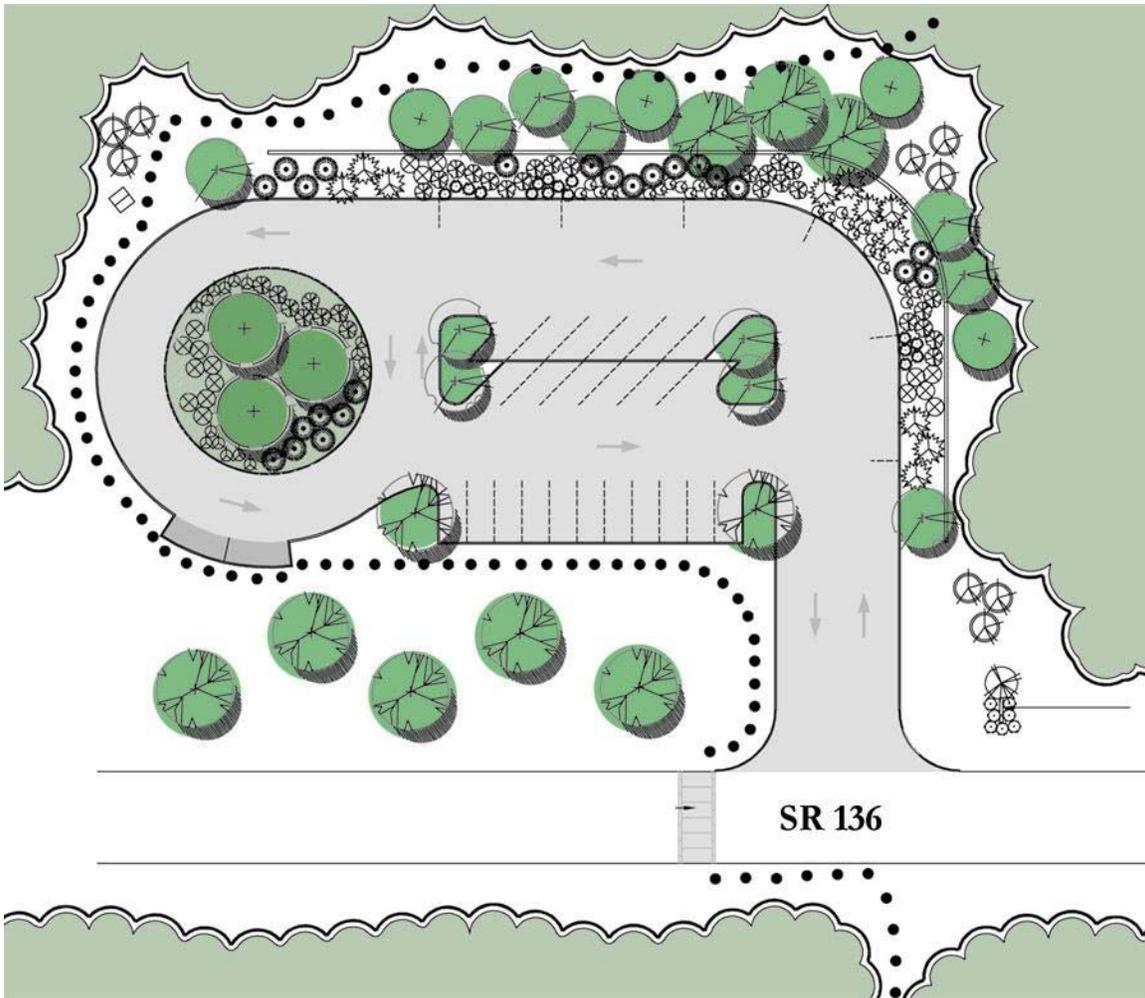


Illustration 15: Pinhoti Trailhead Parking Lot Re-Design

4.1.5 Enhancing the Road

To retain the scenic character of the Byway, it is important to consider context-sensitive design. This type of design equally assesses safety, mobility, aesthetics, and the preservation of those intrinsic qualities that make the route a unique travel experience. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) provide the basis for road design standards. In 1997 FHWA published *Flexibility in Highway Design*; a manual that illustrates how context-sensitive design can be incorporated into road projects without compromising safety.

Preserving the character of a scenic byway and reinforcing its distinction from other roadways is imperative. Safety (both vehicular and pedestrian), mobility, and aesthetics should be considered as physical changes are made along the Byway. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) played a major role in the management of this area. The CCC constructed roads, built fire towers, and carried out a number of improvements that are part of today's public park land. Extending the rustic aesthetic of the CCC to other byway designs would provide continuity along the entire route. Roadside maintenance and landscaping practices can greatly influence the view from the road. The following recommendations should serve as a basis for context-sensitive design along the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway.

This plan recommends:

- A “CCC-theme” of rustic design should be used as a guide in future improvements.
- All improvements should be designed as complementary to this natural setting.
- Exotic species should be removed along the roadway. A pallet of materials for improvements should include both native landscape plants as well as vernacular materials such as native rock and wood.
- Match cut slopes with the shape of the adjoining topography.
- The number of directional and regulatory signs should be adequate to help travelers find their way but not so prolific as to distract from the driving experience. It is suggested that the backs and posts of all signs be painted brown in order to reduce the high level of visual contrast created by unpainted metal signs backs and posts.
- Consider replacing standard galvanized guardrails with one that better blend in with the natural setting. Colored or rusted galvanized steel provides less visual contrast. Steel-backed wood guardrails similar to those found on the Blue Ridge Parkway could also be used. Any effort to reduce visual contrast should in no way compromise traveler safety.

4.1.6 Byway Signage

The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway has the distinction of being classified as both a US Forest Service Designated Byway and a Georgia Scenic Byway. The current signs along the Byway only note the USFS designation. This plan recommends the creation of a new byway signage program that:

- incorporates a graphic system whose components include way finding markers, directional markers, gateway identifiers, and interpretative panels for pull-offs;
- enlists the skills of a graphic designer to create a complementary color scheme and new logo design for the Byway;
- uses a typeface design without the logo for way finding and directional signs; and
- reserves the tasteful use of the two logos on the occasional interpretative panel along with an explanation of the honor of two designations.

The new logo could then be used not only on signs, but also on other products that would “sell” the Byway to the public– brochures, driving tours, tee-shirts, caps, etc.

4.2 Transportation Recommendations

In order to improve the safety and enhance the pleasure of the driving experience along the Scenic Byway, recommendations are provided to correct current roadway deficiencies, Byway signage, roadway markings, and circulation in pull-off areas. Problems and corresponding solutions are summarized in *Table 8: Transportation Recommendations*. The State of Georgia Department of Transportation should make the number and placement of signs more supportive of the visitor experience. The following signage plan provides signage recommendations on how this can be accomplished.

4.2.1 Textured Crosswalks at Pinhoti Trail Crossing Points

The Byway is fortunate to have the Pinhoti Trail bisect it, providing a pedestrian link through the center of the Byway. Recognizing the important role the Pinhoti Trail plays in recreational use in the area and the need to protect pedestrians, mountain bikers, and equestrians when the trail crosses a public roadway, the creation of distinctive crosswalks is recommended. The plan proposes adding two crosswalks of textured concrete to the Byway at trail crossings on East Armuchee Road and Pocket Road. An additional painted crosswalk should be added at the Primary Gateway at the trailhead parking lot at SR 136, described previously in this report. The use of a contrasting color and textured material will alert motorists that they are

entering a pedestrian zone and hopefully slow the speed of the traffic, thus providing a safer crossing for trail users. Additional approach signage, reduction in speed, and caution signs should also be added.

Table 8: Transportation Recommendations

Issue	Location	Proposed Modification
Horizontal and Vertical Alignment	Floyd Springs Rd from SR 156 to Everett Springs Rd	add warning signs, such as limited sight distance, reduced speed, etc.
	Everette Springs Rd from Floyd Springs Rd to Pocket Rd	add warning signs, such as limited sight distance, reduced speed, etc. add guardrail to prevent vehicles from entering the steep slope
	Pocket Rd from Everett Springs Rd to Furnace Creek Rd	add warning signs, such as limited sight distance, reduced speed, etc.
Byway Signs	SR 156 before turning left into Floyd Springs Rd	add Byway Signs with a left arrow
	Gore Subligna Rd before turning left into US 27	add Byway Signs with a left arrow
	Gore Subligna Rd/E. Armuchee Rd from US 27 to SR 136	add Byway Signs
Direction Signs	towards "Visitor Information" pullout	add Visitor Information and arrow signs from both directions
	towards "Camp Sydney Dew"	add Camp Sydney Dew and arrow signs to direct southbound travelers
	towards "Wildlife Interpretive Trail"	add Wildlife Interpretive Trail and arrow signs to direct southbound travelers
	towards "Pitcher's Pond Fishing Area"	add Pitcher's Pond Fishing Area and arrow signs
Sign Inconsistency	Several Locations	comply with 2000 MUTCD standards apply unique pattern (shape and color)
Improper Marking	at entrances of most recreational facilities and pullout areas	break double solid yellow lines
		break white lane markings
Uncontrolled Circulation	"Visitor Information" pullout	add Enter/Exit and/or directional arrows
	Wildlife Interpretive Trail Access Rd	add Enter/Exit and/or directional arrows; mark parking lot
Obscure Signs	Johns Mountain Overlook Sign	replace camera symbol with the text "Johns Mountain Overlook"

4.2 Bikeways

The Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway is a favored route of recreational cyclists. Several groups currently offer scheduled bike rides along portions of the byway. Portions of the Byway were also included as part of the 2002 BRAG (Bike Ride Across Georgia) route.

A local cycling club, the Coosa Valley Cycling Association, Inc. and Bob's Cycle Shop of Rome, sponsor annual rides along the byway of varying distances – 30 miles, 60 miles, and 100 miles, which are described below:

- 30 mile – This ride begins outside the boundaries of the Byway and uses only one section of a byway road, the segment of Floyd Springs Road between SR 156 and Everett Springs Road.
- 60 and 100 mile – Both of these rides likewise begin outside the Byway, but use the following byway roadways: all of Everett Springs Road and Pocket Road before turning on SR 136 for a short distance and then turning at Villanow Store and traveling on East Armuchee Road. The route leaves the Byway at Haywood Valley Road.

The Southern Bicycle League's Atlanta chapter, which sponsors over 1,000 rides annually in the metro area, recently completed a ride that followed the entire Byway. Led by David Crites, the former coordinator of DOT's Scenic Byway Program, about seventeen cyclists began at the Arrowhead Public Access Day Use Parking Lot and followed the entire route in a clockwise direction. Images from this August 2002 ride are included as *Illustrations 19 – 22* with a map of the route shown in *Illustration 23*. The ride through the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway was described as a "real gem" and drivers were noted to be "considerate of bicycle use."

Since only a small segment, the SR 136 section of the Byway, is part of the state's designated byway, improvements to provide bicycle facilities must come from other initiatives. Although the roads are narrow, the traffic volume on most of these roads is so low that biking conditions are not considered hazardous.

This plan recommends:

- Shared bike lane signage should be placed along roads that make up the byway routes to promote safety and to warn motorists of the potential for cyclists.
- Marking the routes with signage at major turns and/or marking the routes with symbols on the pavement would assist cyclists unfamiliar with the routes.
- A pamphlet with a map and detailed description of route options and Points of Interest along each route should be created and available for distribution.
- Work with GDOT on designating the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway as a state bicycle route.
- Promote the Pinhoti Trail as a mountain bike opportunity.



Illustration 16: *Bicyclists on East Armuchee Road, Johns Mountain in Distance (Photo by David Crites 8.31.02)*



Illustration 17: *Bicyclists at the Villanow Country Store (Photo by David Crites 8.31.02)*



Illustration 18: Bicyclists at The Pocket (Photo by David Crites 8.31.02)



Illustration 19: Bicyclists Avoiding Rumble Strip on Roadside (Photo by David Crites 8.31.02)

RIDGE AND VALLEY SCENIC BYWAY

🚲 BY BICYCLE 🚲

- Route is 51 miles long
- Route can be ridden in either direction
- Distances shown are miles between turns
- Scale: 2 in = 1 mi
- Easy to miss turns have an arrow

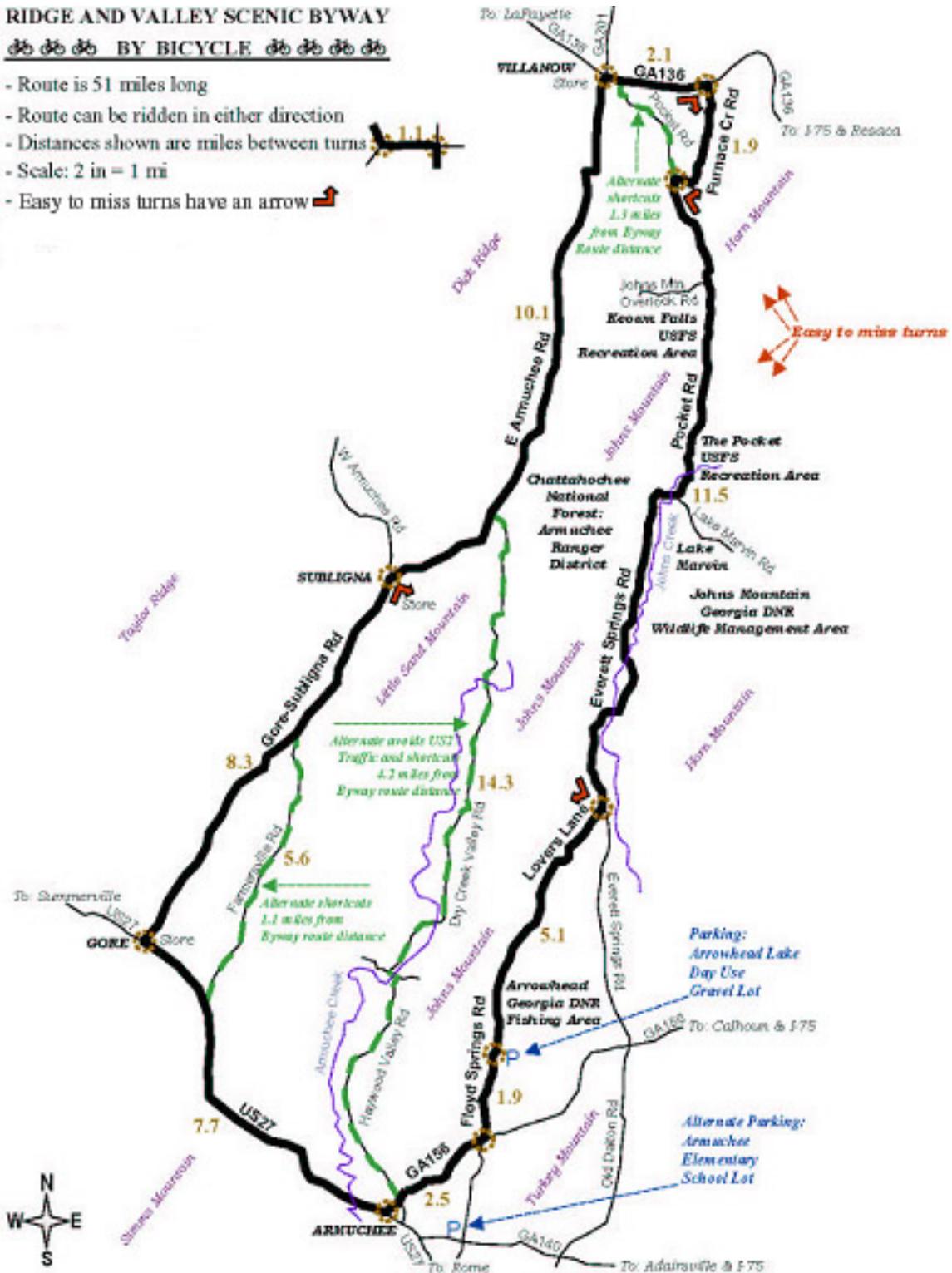


Illustration 20: Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway Bicycle Map - (Map by David Crites)

The suggested route for bike use has been shown on *Figure 10: Recommendations* map as a Preferred Route and also as a Secondary Route.

4.3.1 Preferred Bike Route

The Preferred Route extends along the entire east side of the Byway, turns onto SR 136 (the state designated bikeway) for a short distance, turns at Villanow Store and travels south on East Armuchee Road before intersecting with Dry Creek Valley Road/Haywood Valley Road. Off the Byway, this route continues until intersecting with SR 156 to form a loop. The distance of this preferred route on the Byway is 33.2 miles and off the Byway for 12.8 miles. This plan suggests the creation of shared bike lanes, 4' wide on each side of the roadway, which is the minimal width allowed by current safety standards. The narrow dimensions of the existing right-of-way are the rationale for these minimum standards.

4.3.2 Secondary Bike Route

The balance of the Byway not part of the Preferred Bike Route is noted as a Secondary Bike Route. A shared road bikeway could easily be established on the 7.5-mile segment along US 27 by using the existing shoulder. Removal of the "rumble strips" and repaving is all that would be required. The 9.4-mile segment of the proposed Secondary Bike Route on Gore-Subligna Road has a wide roadway and a gracious right-of-way, allowing the easy addition of a shared bike facility.

4.4 Future Visitors' Center: Taylor's Ridge Overlook Park

A scenic overlook and historical park is currently proposed in conjunction with the construction of a new Summerville-Trion Bypass roadway in Chattooga County. The route and design of the proposed bypass will create a new intersection near the summit of Taylor's Ridge at Mack White Gap between existing US Hwy 27 and the new four-lane road. The elevation of this point provides a panorama of the Ridge and Valley district. The proposed park is situated adjacent to exiting US Forest Service land, connecting the Pinhoti Trail with the proposed park site.

Chattooga County has received funding through the Transportation Enhancement (TE) program from GDOT to begin acquisition of the parkland using local matching funds. Future funding is planned to complete improvements at the park, to include an overlook structure, restrooms, a self-guided visitors' center with maps and promotional and interpretive information, parking, and walkways to connect the various park elements to each other and to the adjacent US Forest Service lands and the Pinhoti Trail.

This future Overlook Park offers an opportunity to serve as a Visitors' Center for the Byway. Information about the Byway would be appropriate at this location and would offer visitors other travel options to consider. Envisioned currently as an unstaffed facility, the involvement of byway interests may result in the availability of staff, possibly volunteers, to man the future facility. The project is now considered a county project, since Chattooga County has been the only sponsor to date. Involvement from byway interests could expand the support base for the project as well.

4.5 Establishment of a Byway Organization

A byway organization would be an asset in promoting and preserving the special qualities that make this byway unique. An organization would need to be created through a partnership between the three counties in which the byway is located; the US Forest Service, as owner of twenty percent of the land along this byway; and other private interests, comprising the balance of ownership. There are other groups outside this area who would likely be supportive of a byway organization, such as the bicycle groups that already have discovered this byway.

This plan recommends:

- County governments and tourism officials, such as chambers of commerce, and US Forest Service representatives should explore the formation of a byway organization.
- A director of such an organization might come from existing tourism groups and at the beginning be a part-time position. Depending on the success of the program, the organization could grow into a permanent group with a full-time director.
- A blend of local, state and federal public monies and private funds would likely be the most realistic option to fund the organization.
- Involve private landholders along the Byway in the byway organization to better protect the unique qualities of the route.

There is also the potential that a regional byway network, described below, could result in a byway organization for the system of byways. A director in this case might serve in a “circuit rider-type” capacity for all our byways. There are again no obvious funding sources, but with more byways the interest in such an organization would be enhanced.

4.6 Establishment of a Regional Byway System

As *Figure 12: Potential State Scenic Byways* shows, there is a potential for the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway to be a part of a regional byway system. Several other byways in the vicinity are currently under consideration for state byway designation. These include the following: (1) the Cohutta-Chattahoochee Scenic Byway in Whitfield and Murray Counties; (2) the Lookout Mountain Parkway; and (3) Burnt Mountain and Amicalola Falls Byway. These roadway systems are in close enough proximity to potentially form a regional system.

This plan recommends the creation of a regional byway system. There is much to be gained in the creation of a regional byway system, particularly the interest and involvement of more people in the success of a byway program. A regional byway system would be worthy effort to pursue particularly if a byway organization is officially established for the Ridge & Valley and is in place to guide a program.

4.7 Marketing a Byway

The following are recommendations for a marketing plan for a byway. A marketing plan should:

- guide future activities along the Byway
- provide information on the types of amenities that are needed
- create opportunities for successful business ventures in the future as well as additional public improvements,
- look at roles and opportunities for both the public and private sectors
- create the Byway’s identity
- provide guidance to the Byway organization in setting priorities
- include background data on the Byway, such as population and economic data, which could be used in future grant applications for public investments and loan applications for private investments.

4.7.1 Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway Marketing Position

The primary themes more fully developed in Section 5.3.1 have been created with public input from open house meetings and with Advisory Committee input. It is recommended that a marketing plan be constructed around the Primary Themes, using the Sub-Themes to help provide a framework for concepts.

These themes are:

- Settling the Ridge & Valley
- Beyond the City Lights
- A Legacy of Stewardship

5.0 Interpretation

5.1 Telling Stories: Introducing and Interpreting the Byway's Special Qualities

"Hidden" is a word commonly used to describe the condition of the Byway's historic, cultural, and recreational resources. While abundant, the region's most significant resources and interesting qualities can be hard to locate and, once found, difficult to understand and appreciate.

This section of the Corridor Management Plan (CMP) introduces ideas for the development of an interpretive framework for the Byway as well as strategies designed to 1) strengthen the Byway's role as gateway to the region and 2) improve local capacity to interpret and celebrate the unique history and culture of the region and the communities, recreation opportunities, and natural areas to which it provides access.

5.1.1 Interpreting Resources

All along the Byway are rich and lively stories about the region's past and present—the resources, the residents, their way of life, and the evolution of regional history. These stories illuminate the special qualities of the Byway's resources. Sharing these stories through interpretation—communicating factual information in an interesting and engaging manner—enables residents and visitors to truly understand and appreciate this region.

Interpretation also provokes us to ask questions. What makes us unique? How are we the same? How is life here different for us than it was for our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents? How will it be different for our children? Why are these remnants of our past and present—buildings, landscapes, and livelihoods—so important that we must protect them for our future? Answering these questions is an integral part of deciding what the future of the region should be.

This area is no longer isolated. Growth and change are occurring, people are visiting and moving here. These visitors and new residents may have little knowledge or connection to the region's heritage. Everyday, communities in the region respond to these changes by making decisions that evaluate factors such as economic development, land use, conservation, and safety. Interpretation and education can help to build a common understanding and framework for local decision-making. Interpretation provides means for retaining the stories about our heritage and to share them with others. Thus, bringing local stories to life through interpretation and education is a high priority of the CMP. *A History of the Armuchee Ranger District: 1936-1986* by Tom Fearington provides an excellent historical overview of the area while *Interpreting Our Heritage* by Freeman Tilden offers general guidance on interpretation methods. A more complete list of sources to consult is located in *Appendix E*.

5.1.2 Develop an Interpretive Framework

At the most basic level, an interpretive framework should accomplish the following:

- Identify the local stories, how they fit into a larger context (the region, the nation), and their relevance in the modern world.
- Find and repeat a core message that residents and visitors will remember, making sure that regardless of the sites or events attended that the message is conveyed.
- Outline a strategy for telling those stories through the creation of interpretive signs, exhibits, maps, touring routes, and brochures.
- Identify partners and their roles in conveying the stories.

An interpretive framework for the Byway should contain a strategy for interpreting resources for the benefit of local citizens as well as visitors. The framework should make the Byway experience accessible, compelling and coherent. It should enrich residents’ understanding of their home while simultaneously increasing community pride. The framework also should provide for the creation of programs for residents, while motivating people to visit attractions, to learn more, and to see places where events actually happened. In developing the framework, attention must be paid to the important interrelationships between the interpretive themes, intent, target audience, and potential audience.

A major component of an interpretive framework is the themes or messages. The themes are used to identify stories that connect people with the history of the region. These themes are analogous to a set of sheet music that helps to maintain the melody and tempo. Local heritage sites (e.g. individual communities and museums) each play their own instrument and impart their distinct sound, yet the sheet music (themes) helps to ensure a harmonious whole.

5.1.3 Interpretive Themes and Sub-themes/Topics: Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

The primary themes provide the “big picture” perspective on the Byway—it’s broadest, most universal messages. These help provide a framework for the telling of diverse though interconnected stories of the region’s landscape, economy, culture, and history.

Table 9: Interpretive Themes

Primary Themes	Sub-themes/Topics
Settling the Ridge and Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Heart of Community: Crossroads & Country Stores - Living off the Land: Farming, Timbering, & Mining - Early Settlement: Native American & Early Settlers - Civil War Era: Mid-Century Community Life
Beyond the City Lights: Recreation, Reflection & Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evolutions in Use: Early Recreation (CCC) to Current Demands - Reconnecting: The Enduring Attraction of Rural Areas & Natural Landscapes
A Legacy of Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Native American & Early Settler Practices - Reestablishing the Forests: The Early Years of the US Forest Service - Conservation “Classroom” - Caring for the Land: Individual Stewardship

5.1.3.1 Settling the Ridge and Valley

This is a very broad theme organized around the relationship of man to the natural environment, focusing on the numerous ways landscape and geology have shaped the development of prehistoric and historic communities in the entire Ridge and Valley region. Under this theme, stories of prehistoric settlement and movement would be described, and possibly contrasted, with patterns of settlements of settlers and more recent residents. For early settlers, materials could describe how settlements grew up along the valley roads in relative isolation from one another and the region’s urban centers, and how country stores and churches served as the community’s cultural hubs. (To greatly over simplify, communities in the rural Georgia – dating from the mid nineteenth and early twentieth century – exhibit one of a few basic town forms: county seats, rail road towns, or crossroads communities. In the Ridge and Valley region, several examples of crossroad settlements exist (with varying degrees of integrity). This theme could also include stories of Civil War troop movements and skirmishes and the effects of the war on the region’s family’s and communities.

5.1.3.2 Beyond the City Lights: Recreation, Reflection & Renewal

This theme focuses on the region's recreation resources and the roles they play as local and regional amenities. Stories would focus on the range of recreational activities supported in the area—from hiking, biking, and horseback riding to fishing, hunting, and camping—as well as the physical and spiritual benefits enjoyed by users of these resources. Interpretive materials would seek to answer questions about the value of access to natural areas, scenic views, clean streams, and other important local and regional recreation amenities. Tracing the development of area recreational opportunities from early Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) efforts to establish recreational amenities up through modern recreational outlets would be conveyed in this theme.

5.1.3.3 A Legacy of Stewardship

This theme focuses on past, present, and planned institutional (US Forest Service, CCC, DNR) and individual (Centennial Farms, low-impact practices, private environmental and agricultural education) efforts to conserve sensitive resources. Part of the story would focus on the US Forest Service's establishment of the National Forest and its evolution into an important provider of recreation opportunities and a partner in conserving the region's natural beauty while reinforcing local economies and quality of life. In general terms, interpretation could help the public to understand how the US Forest Service organizes and manages the forest resource and the role management areas play in the agency's mission. The institutional perspective should be balanced with stories of individual and private acts of stewardship, including examples of sensitive farming practices and preservation of local history.

5.2 Strengthen the Byway's "Brand" Identity

While interpretive themes provide a structure around which to organize information, they do not provide a marketable visual identity. Strengthening the Byway's identity is a key step in improving its function as a gateway to the region's unique resources and locations. Day-to-day users, seasonal visitors and newcomers should be encouraged to think of the Byway as more than simply a means to get from one point to another. Visitors and residents alike should be persuaded—through careful investment and sensitive promotion—to appreciate the Byway as a local resource worthy of careful management and stewardship. An identity program assembles information in a unique format that signals cohesiveness, quality, consistency, and accuracy for those experiencing the Byway. Once an identity is established, Byway advocates need to look at how best to promote the identity.

Recommendations for a branding/graphic identity program are:

- create a marketable visible identity
- form a cohesive graphic design that is bold, simple, and incorporates the Byway themes
- make the branding applicable in a variety of settings and formats
- reflect the uniqueness of the region
- use a uniform system of icons, designs, and colors

Byway communities have an abundance of printed material and brochures relating to the region's significant resource. This surplus of materials makes it extremely difficult and confusing for the visitor to understand the complete Byway story. There is no over-arching graphic design system that strongly ties the Byway together and communicates a consistent image of the area to the traveler. A branding/graphic identity program therefore, would be used to orient visitors to the area, help identify and link various resources within the Byway area, and accomplish this task in a comprehensive, uniform and coordinated fashion. The overall brand and identity should call up strong images as well as build expectations.

A successful branding program should consist of the following elements:

- logo/brand development,
- typefaces,

- symbols,
- signage (way-finding, entryway),
- exhibits/interpretive panels, brochures (interpretive/programmatic),
- stationary,
- web page, and
- maps.

5.3 Tools for Creating and/or Expanding Interpretive Programs

5.3.1 Maps, Guides, and Itineraries

Once the Interpretive Framework is complete and the “brand” established, a series of maps, guides, and itineraries for the Byway should be prepared. Maps, guides and itineraries should not only physically orient people to the region; they should also help orient people to stories of the region. One way to accomplish this goal is to develop maps, guides, and travel itineraries that are organized by theme, rather than geography.

5.3.2 Audio Tours

High quality audio driving tours, using tapes or compact discs, are a relatively inexpensive means to make the Byway resources more accessible. The tours should be a series of stories about the region that make it come alive (along the lines of a National Public Radio style format) rather than a description of the route. For example, the stories could describe a day in the life of a farmer with an evocative description of the production of crops from seed to table. Local residents—a farmer, waiter, and naturalist—could serve as the storytellers. The voices of people from the past—an early settler or CCC worker—could mingle with voices of the present—a Forest Service ranger talking about wildlife or a farmer talking about his crops—to present an exciting and diverse introduction to the region. The tapes or compact discs should follow the interpretive themes through a combination of narration, sound effects, and songs.

A system for distribution of the audio tours should be established prior to the development of the tour itself. Ideally there would be one or two locations where visitors could “check out” an audio tour in a manner similar to checking out a library book. A deposit could be given in exchange for the audio tour cassette or compact disc, which would then be refunded at the completion of the tour. If a visitor chose to keep the audio tour, the deposit would be surrendered. The Taylor’s Ridge Overlook Park gateway would be one potential location for distribution, although at this time it is not anticipated that the area will be staffed. Another feasible option would be to enter into an agreement with the Villanow Store as an audio tour distribution site.

5.3.3 Interpretive Installations

Interpretive exhibit signs make topics come to life through active visitor involvement and relevance to everyday life. Interpretive panels tell a story in an ordered fashion while bringing artifacts and stories to places where the people are. Opportunities exist for providing interpretive experiences along the Byway, at trailheads and picnic sites, and in town centers near the Byway. Small-scale pull-offs—whether through improvements to existing ones or development of new ones—are an important component of interpretation.

5.3.4 Local Guides

Increasingly, historical sites and museums are finding that visitors are more interested in the lives of people from the past and present, rather than individual artifacts. A program involving local guides or interpreters who tell the story of the Byway would be one way to effectively enhance the traveler experience by offering context, historical background, and local flavor. This could take the form of an annual or biannual festival or “heritage day” where interpreters would be stationed at strategic points along the Byway to relate the region’s cultural heritage to travelers. Alternatively, local guides could be available to conduct group tours on a contract basis. Generally, tours along the Byway would be self-guided in nature.

Some of the best guides would include local resident volunteers. These are the individuals who know the area well, and are familiar with the stories. Careful selection of local guides is necessary to ensure a consistent, meaningful message. The selection of guides should be related to the topic or site. The guiding profession is seasonal for the most part, so finding highly recommended professional guides may be difficult.

There are a variety of training opportunities available to tour guides including courses, seminars, handbooks and videos. There are numerous publications that can be used in training guides like the *Handbook for Guides* produced by the World Federation of Tourist Guides Associates. This handbook contains topics such as guiding people with special needs, guiding the youth and keeping their interest, and guiding the elderly. In addition to the academic training of guides, a series of shadowing exercises with experienced guides is highly recommended to learn additional presentation techniques. Before training occurs, guides should be encouraged to make a commitment for a period of one to two years.

6.0 Implementation

This section of the corridor management plan provides (1) guidelines for dividing responsibility for implementation, (2) order-of-magnitude cost estimates for recommended projects, and (3) identifies realistic potential funding sources. All cost estimates presented in the implementation program are in current 2003 dollars.

6.1 Implementation Roles Defined

The US Forest Service has to date played a major role in promoting the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway, but in the creation of an Advisory Committee to guide the development of this plan a variety of other groups have become involved, including government agency representatives, tourism professionals, and private business concerns. In the implementation of this plan, it is important for these additional parties to begin to play a more significant role in promoting and protecting the byway. The following is a summary of the roles to be played by each entity or organization in implementing recommendations contained in the Corridor Management Plan (CMP). A list of contacts is located in *Appendix D*.

6.1.1 Byway Organization

A beneficial outcome of this plan's recommendations would be the creation of a byway organization. Since there are limited sources of funding for such an organization, establishing it will be a challenge.

A byway organization with a full-time director would assume the major leadership role for promoting and preserving this byway. With a nonprofit status, such an organization could assume lead roles in supporting public and private sector improvements along the byway, in coordinating project funding and the administrative aspects for team building, and serving as a liaison, insuring that activities undertaken are consistent with the CMP program recommendations. The byway director could coordinate and approve applications for grants relating to infrastructure, pedestrian and bikeway improvements and will be the point-of-contact with public agencies, including the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) for transportation and thoroughfare improvements. For more information on this subject, see the National Scenic Byways website, www.byways.org.

The Advisory Committee established for the CMP has had an integral role throughout this study. This group could be reconstituted as the board of directors for the byway organization. This cross section of representatives could be further expanded to include additional members. This group could continue in their advisory role, providing direction to the byway director and serving as liaisons between their respective organizations and the byway group.

6.1.2 US Forest Service

The US Forest Service has a "vested" interest in this byway due to the federal landholdings along the byway. The US Forest Service owns approximately 20 percent of the land along the byway. Though this amount of land may seem small, the US Forest Service owns most of the ridgetops in this area, thus controlling much of what a visitor experiences from the Byway. The US Forest Service is committed to a continued role in the future of the Byway, but invites other interested parties to join with them. In the future, the US Forest Service would play a supportive role to the byway organization in carrying out the CMP's recommendations. The US Forest Service would also assist in their continued efforts to manage the forests that surround the Byway and make this federal land accessible to the public.

6.1.3 Local Government Officials

The county governments of Chattooga, Floyd and Walker and the municipalities located within these counties have important roles to play in insuring the success of the Byway. Local land use policies administered by these governments are important tools in the protecting the Byway. A comprehensive approach to land use policies along the byway should be coordinated between these governments. Also, the use of local public monies as well as competing for other state and federal monies by these governments could assist in improvements along the Byway. All three county governments as well as several of the municipalities should be present on the Byway organization governing board.

6.1.4 Chambers of Commerce/Tourism Representatives

The region's private tourism interests are represented through local chambers of commerce and tourism agencies. These groups also have an important role to play in the future success of the Byway. Representation on the byway organization governing board will again insure their support and involvement.

6.2 Cost of Proposed Projects

The total cost for all of the recommended projects for the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway CMP is almost \$6.7 million. These costs are shown in *Table 10* with projects divided into three major sections with subtotals for each. Sections include: (1) Landscape Architectural Improvements; (2) Transportation Improvements; and (3) Promotion and Marketing. A detailed cost estimate was developed for the Pinhoti Trail Parking Lot Re-design, which is included in *Appendix C*. Projects are listed with a short description and costs are based on number of units and unit costs.

**Table 10: Project Costs
Ridge & Valley Corridor Management Plan**

Project	Description	#	Unit	Unit Cost 2003 dollars	Total Cost	Subtotals
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IMPROVEMENTS						
Primary Gateways						
SR 136 @ Pinhoti Trailhead	Major Sign & Landscape Plantings	4	Ea	\$15,000	\$60,000	
SR 27 @ Future Site Taylor's Ridge Overlook Pk						
Gore at SR 27 & Gore-Subligna Road						
Villanow Store @ SR 136						
Secondary Gateways						
Gore at SR 27 & Gore-Subligna Road	Minor/Directional Sign & Landscape Plantings	7	Ea	\$10,000	\$70,000	
Subligna						
Villanow Store @ SR 136						
SR 136 and Furnance Creek Road						
Vicinity of Everett Springs						
SR 156 and Floyd Springs Road						
US 27 and SR 156						
Points of Interest						
New Pull-offs		2	Ea	\$30,000	\$60,000	
Subligna Cemetery	Roadway Access Improvements, Parking, Benches, Trash Receptacles, Info/Interpreive Signage - Prop. Acquisition Not Included					
East Armuchee Baptist Church						
New Pinhoti Trailhead	Parking, Trash Receptacles, Signage - Prop. Acq. Not Included	1	Ea	\$150,000	\$150,000	
US Forest Service Pull-Offs						
Improvements to Existing Pull-offs	Estimate 3 Pull-offs; Defined Parking, Signage	3	Ea	\$30,000	\$90,000	
SR 136 @ Pinhoti Trail Head	Toilet w/o water service-vault	1	Ea	\$35,000	\$35,000	
Creation of New Pull-off	Parking, Signage, Benches, Trash Receptacles	1	Ea	\$135,000	\$135,000	
Pinhoti Trailhead Parking Lot Re-design	Detailed Cost Estimate - Appendix C	1	LS		\$197,215	
Right-of-Way Landscape Improvements	30' each side of roadway - priority in USFS lands					
Eradication of Exotic Species		12	Mi	\$21,180	\$254,160	
Roadside Native Wildflower Plantings		12	Mi	\$150,000	\$1,800,000	
New Byway Signage						

Project	Description	#	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Cost	Subtotals
Design of New Byway Wayfinding Sign/Logo	Incorporation of All Designations - State/USFS	1	LS	\$20,000	\$20,000	
Fabrication and Placement of New Signs	Metal Signs & Metal Post	15	Ea	\$3,000	\$45,000	
Replacement Signs for Future Use	Metal Signs & Metal Post	10	Ea	\$2,500	\$25,000	
New Signs to Designate USFS Rec. Sites	Standard USFS Signage	5	Ea	\$2,500	\$12,500	
TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS						
Sign Inconsistency	Comply with MUTCD Sindrds - Roadway Signs - Metal Sign/Posts	10		\$2,500	\$25,000	\$5,426,000
Pavement Markings	Remove Existing/Repaint with Broken Lines at Entrances to Recreation Areas/Enter & Exit & Directional Arrows	1	LS	\$20,000	\$20,000	
Crosswalks	Textured Concrete Crosswalk to contrast with Roadway Paving at Pinholi Trail Crossings on Pocket Rd & Armuchee Rd	2	EA	\$7,500	\$15,000	
Preferred Bikeway	Add Bike Lane (4' wide ea. Side of Road) to east side of byway (SR 156, Floyd Springs Rd, Everett Springs Rd., Pocket Rd, & Furnace Creek Rd) (total 22.8 mi); SR 136 (total 1.9 mi); and west side of byway and (E. Armuchee Road to Haywood Valley Rd) (total 8.5 mi.)	34	Mi	\$115,000	\$3,910,000	
Secondary Bikeway	Add Bike Lane (4' wide ea. Side of Road) to west side of byway - Gore-Subligna Road (total 9.4 miles)	9.4	Mi	\$115,000	\$1,081,000	
Secondary Bikeway	Establish Bike Lane each side of road on US 27 by removal of the rumble strip and repaving	7.5	Mi	\$50,000	\$375,000	
PROMOTION AND MARKETING						
Interpretation					\$310,000	
Interpretive Plan for Byway	Consultant Fee to Create Interpretive Program - Themes, Signage & Narratives	1	KS	\$35,000	\$35,000	
Maps, Guides & Itineraries	Design & Printing (10,000 copies)	1	LS	\$50,000	\$50,000	
Self-Guided Tours	Audio Tapes & CD - Design & Production	1	LS	\$25,000	\$25,000	
Marketing Plan		1	LS	\$50,000	\$50,000	
Organization						
Full-time Director - Office Space	Program Support for 3 Years	3	Yrs	\$50,000	\$150,000	
ADDITIONAL PROJECT						
Taylor's Ridge Overlook Park	DOT & Chattooga County Project					
GRAND TOTAL						\$8,689,875

2008 & 2009 CHATTOOGA COUNTY RECREATION SURVEY
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6.3 Potential Funding Sources

There are numerous funding sources that have potential applicability to the implementation of the CMP projects. At the federal and state level, these funding sources typically take the form of grants and matching grant programs. At the local level, funding sources can include portions of local special purpose local option sales taxes, donations, and public/private partnerships. Several private foundations offer grants for projects related to improving byways.

6.3.1 Federal Funding Sources

There are several Federal programs that offer realistic funding potentials for CMP projects. These include Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds; US Forest Service monies; the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF); and the Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program.

6.3.1.1 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

The law creating the National Scenic Byways Program, states that grants can be made to “implement projects on highways designated as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, and State scenic byways.” Eligible activities in the National Scenic Byway Discretionary Grant program include state programs, corridors management plans, safety improvements, byway facilities, access to recreation, resource protection, interpretive information, and marketing. A number of the projects recommended in this CMP would be eligible activities under this program.

There are other FHWA programs that might also be applied to projects along a scenic byway. Each of these programs has its own eligibility and selection criteria that are established by law, by regulation, or administratively. Some of these programs that might be a potential source include:

- Bridge
- Corridor Planning and Development and Border Infrastructure (Corridors & Borders)
- Innovative Bridge Research and Construction
- Public Lands Highways
- Scenic Byways

6.3.1.2 US Forest Service

The US Forest Service currently uses portions of its federal allocations to complete projects along or in close proximity to the Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway. Many of the projects recommended in this plan would likely be eligible for consideration for future US Forest Service funds. This source, like many federal programs, is undergoing scrutiny as funding levels drop, so the potential amount that could be available is not known.

6.3.1.3 Land & Water Conservation Fund

The Land & Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF), administered by the Department of the Interior has been an unstable source of funding for recreation system improvements over the past decade. The L&WCF provides 50% matching grants that can be used for land acquisition and site development. The program is administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and is highly competitive. This source might be possible for the pull-over improvement projects recommended in this plan.

6.3.1.4 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (TE)

The United States Congress enacted ISTEA in 1991. A subcategory and mandate of this act was to establish a National Scenic Byways Program. This Act was re-authorized for an additional six-year period as TEA-21, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, and re-authorization is again pending. Funding is available for the acquisition and development of greenways, bikeways and pedestrian trails, provided that

proposed projects can emphasize the alternative transportation potential of these type facilities, and not solely their recreation value.

The Transportation Enhancement (TE) program provides approximately eighty percent of project planning, design and development funding, with the remaining twenty percent being contributed by the applicant. The TE program is administered by the Georgia Department of Transportation. Applications take approximately two years for approval and funding. The next round of TE applications is anticipated at the end of 2003 or early in 2004, assuming the program is reauthorized at the federal level. This program is extremely competitive and usually balanced among Congressional Districts.

This source of funds has been used for several byway projects in the State of Georgia, including partial funding for the development of this CMP. This source of monies might be particularly appropriate for use in funding the bikeway improvements, gateway enhancements, the pedestrian crosswalks, and landscape improvements.

6.3.2 State Funding Sources

At the State level there are several programs that are applicable to funding CMP improvements. These include: the Heritage 2000 (H2000) Program; the Local Development Fund (LDF); Georgia Greenspace Program (GGP); the Recreational Trails Program (RTP); the Recreation Assistance Fund (RAF); the Governor's Discretionary Fund (GDF); and the Line Item Appropriation.

6.3.2.1 Heritage 2000 Program

The Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Natural Resources administers the Georgia Heritage 2000 Program. The program offers matching funds on a statewide competitive basis to local governments for rehabilitation of Georgia/National Register-listed historic properties. Grant applications must be for properties either listed on, or eligible for the Georgia Register. Funding can be used for stabilization, rehabilitation or restoration. The maximum grant request is \$25,000 and a forty percent match is required. Grant applications must be submitted by July 1 and awards are usually announced in September. These funds could be utilized for improvements to historic resources along the byway, including landscape features such as the Logan Turnpike.

6.3.2.2 Local Development Fund

The Local Development Fund (LDF), administered by the Department of Community Affairs provides 50 percent matching grants that can be used for enhancement activities. The maximum grant award is \$10,000, and funding cycles are approximately every six months. These funds would have applicability for additional development of recreation sites, or planning or development of new pedestrian-related amenities.

6.3.2.3 Georgia Greenspace Program

Senate Bill 399 establishes a framework for preserving community greenspace within developed and rapidly developing counties and their municipalities. This program designates funds for the acquisition of land contributing to the conservation of land that can be used for informal recreation and natural resource protection. To qualify, a local government must formally adopt a program to permanently protect 20 percent of its net land area. Along the Byway, partnerships with local governments might make this fund applicable in additional public land acquisition for passive recreation.

6.3.2.4 Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The RTP is a federal program that is funded through the Federal-Aid Highway program, which is presently being re-authorized. Since its inception ninety projects have been funded throughout Georgia. State funding levels have fluctuated over the past several years, ranging from a low of \$401,000 in 1996 and 1997 to just over \$1.3 million in 2001. The program is administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

6.3.2.5 Governor's Discretionary Fund

The Governor's Discretionary Fund is a grant program for the funding of small improvements to recreation facilities. It is administered by the Department of Natural Resources and provides 100 percent financing up to a project limit of \$25,000.

6.3.2.6 Line Item Appropriations

This program is funded through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and is applicable to improvements to existing facilities. Recently, there were approximately \$8 million dollars appropriated in this program. Projects must first be identified by the local legislative delegation and approved by leadership of the State House and Senate before being submitted to the Governor's staff for approval. The Byway organization with the involvement of local governments could develop a comprehensive project that might seek this type of funding.

6.3.3 Local Funding Sources

There are also additional funding options available to cities and counties that might be used for byway related projects.

6.3.3.1 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)

SPLOST programs provide funds for improvements to local infrastructure and for expansion of the recreation systems. Voters are typically presented with a list of potential projects to be funded through adding a percent to the county sales tax. Byway projects could become a part of a SPLOST proposal.

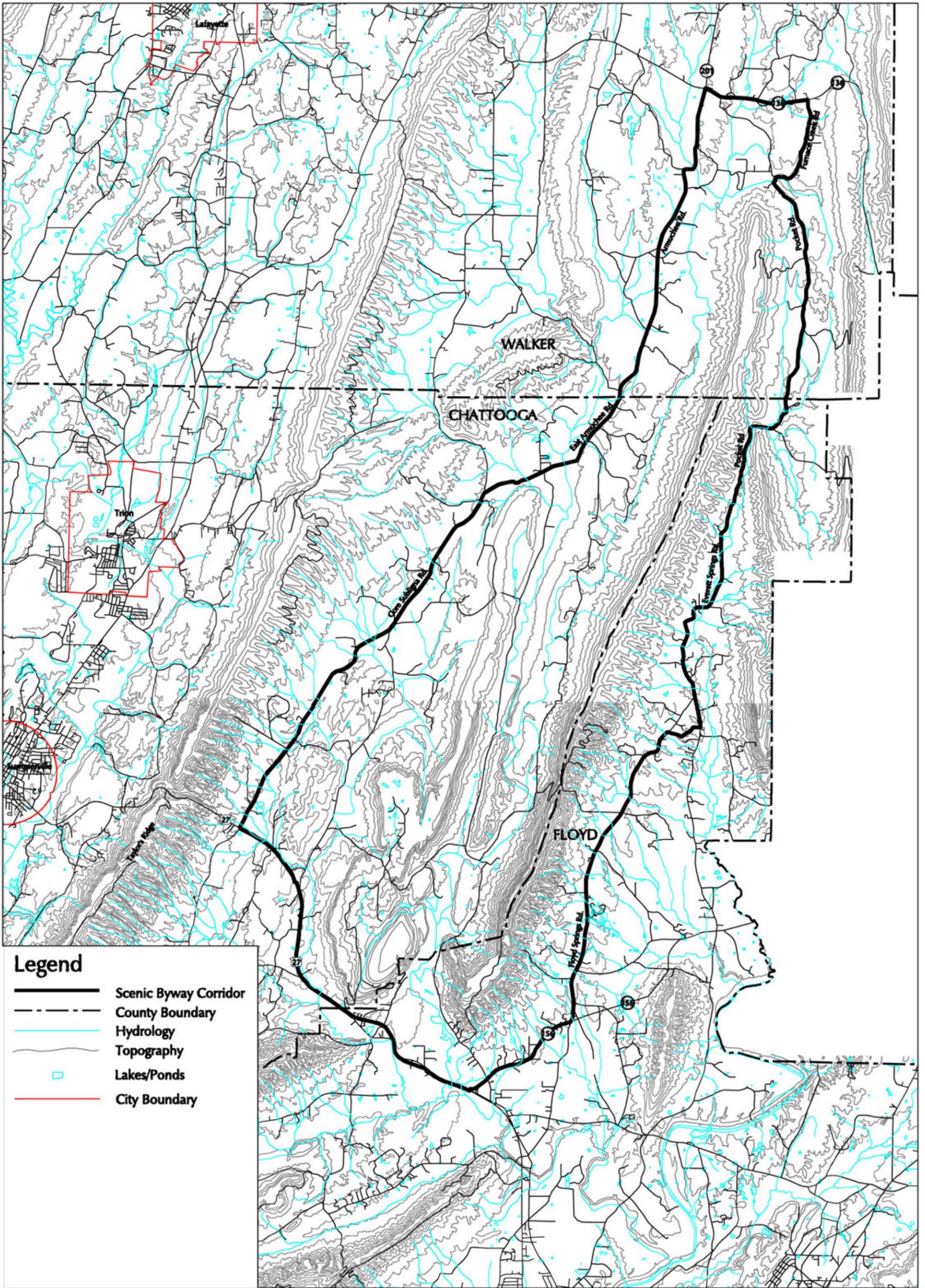
6.3.3.2 Donations

Donations are an additional means of funding local projects. Residents of many Georgia communities and local businesses routinely donate land, money and in-kind services that can be translated into parks, signage, landscaping and other projects identified in the CMP recommendations.

6.3.3.3 Public/Private Partnerships

One of the most efficient means of implementing projects is through development of public/private sector partnerships. Such opportunities should be explored along this Byway.

Appendix A
Figures



Legend

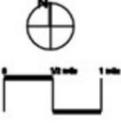
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-  County Boundary
-  Hydrology
-  Topography
-  Lakes/Ponds
-  City Boundary



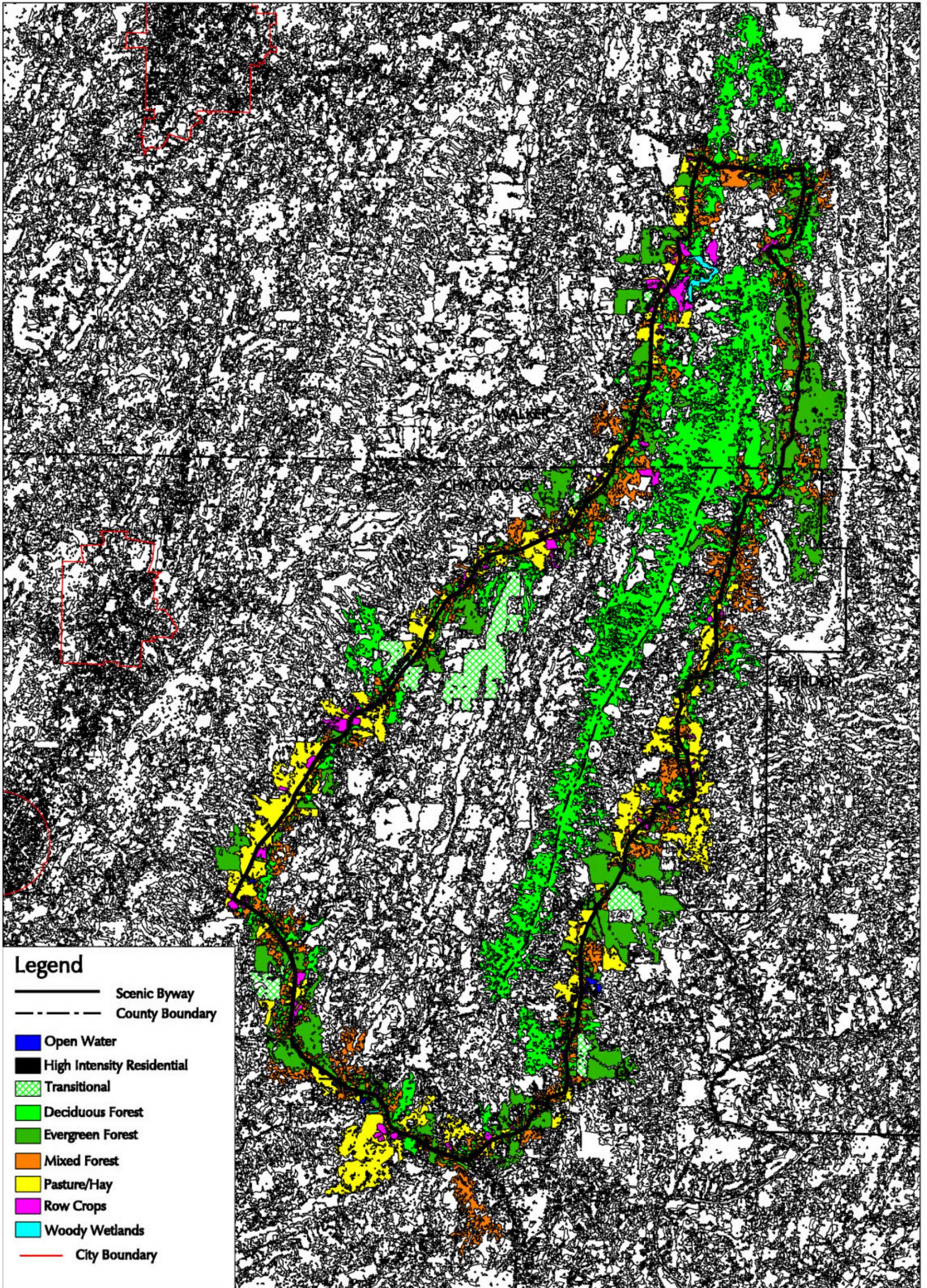
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 USDA-Chattahoochee National Forest

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway
 Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties

DATE: 11/11/11
 SCALE: 1"=1 MILE
 DRAWN: J.M.
 CHECKED: M.M.



PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS
 Figure 1



Legend

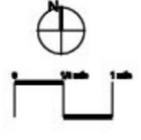
- Scenic Byway
- - - - - County Boundary
- Open Water
- High Intensity Residential
- Transitional
- Deciduous Forest
- Evergreen Forest
- Mixed Forest
- Pasture/Hay
- Row Crops
- Woody Wetlands
- City Boundary



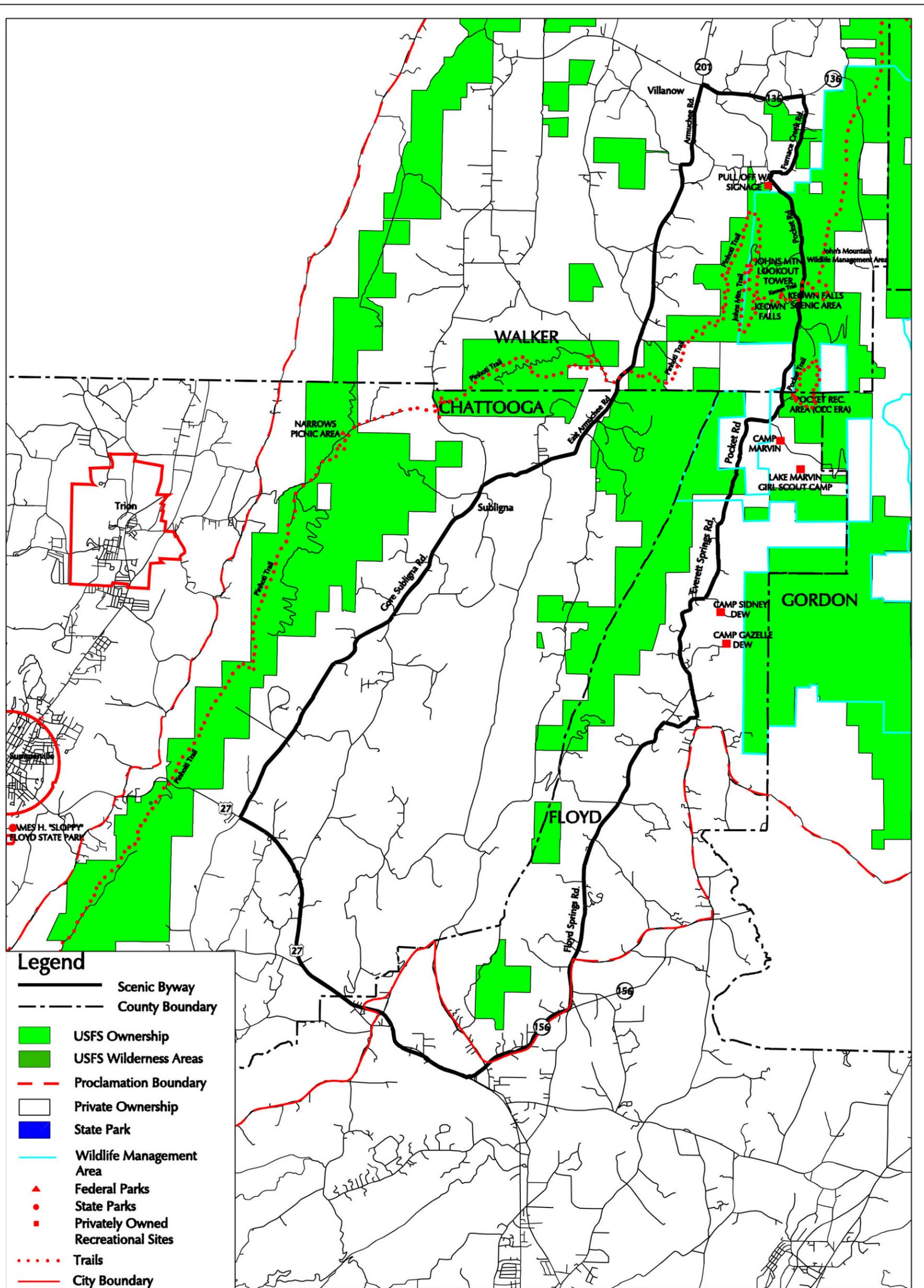
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Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway
 Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties

Date:	11/11/2011
Author:	AMC/ML
Project No.:	2011-001
Scale:	1:10,000
Drawn:	ML
Checked:	ML



LAND COVER
Figure 2



Legend

- Scenic Byway
- County Boundary
- USFS Ownership
- USFS Wilderness Areas
- Proclamation Boundary
- Private Ownership
- State Park
- Wildlife Management Area
- Federal Parks
- State Parks
- Privately Owned Recreational Sites
- Trails
- City Boundary

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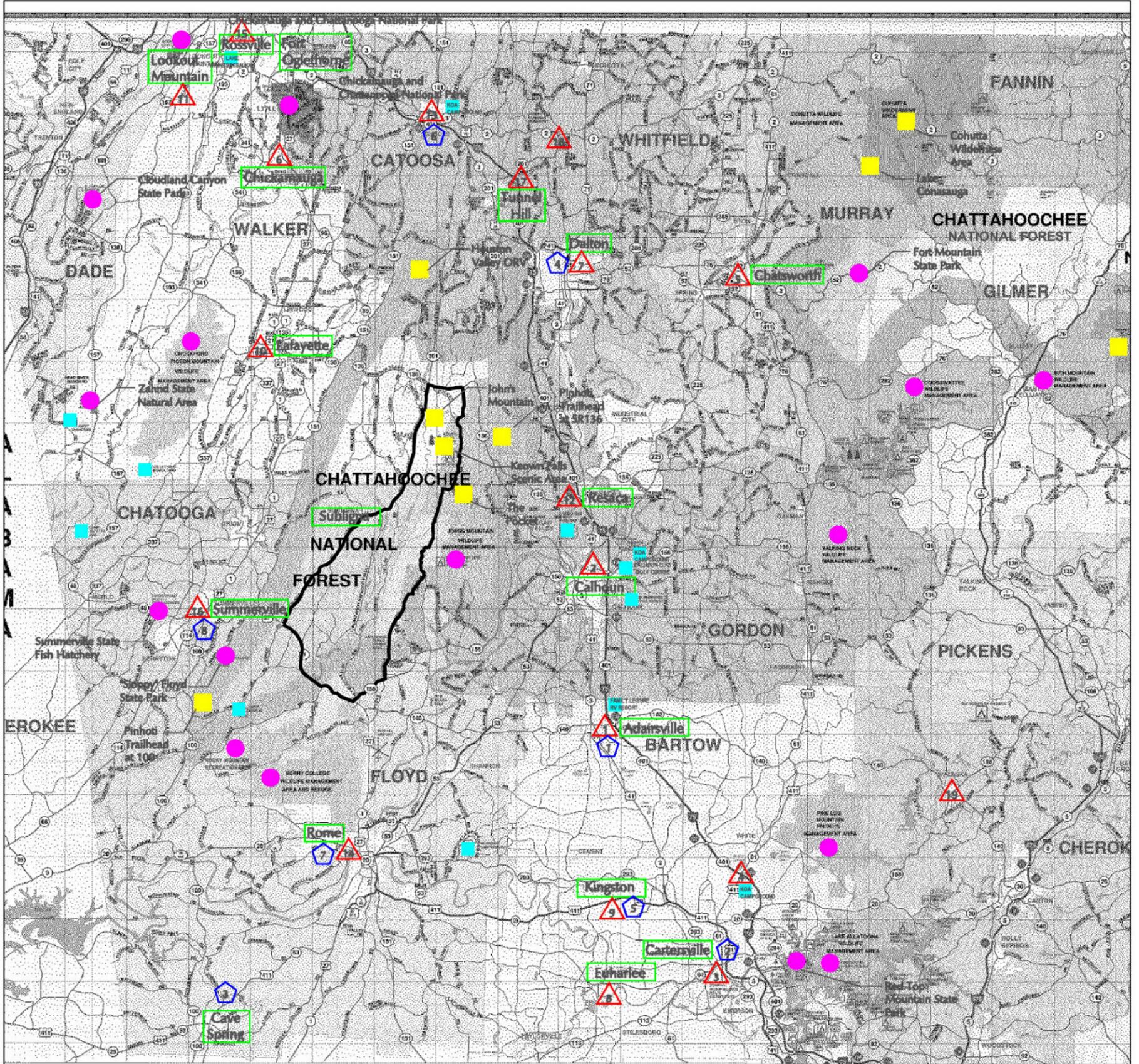
Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties

Date	1/20/2011
Revision	1
Project	11000
Scale	1" = 1/2 mile
Drawn	JM
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**OWNERSHIP/
 RECREATIONAL
 SITES**
 Figure 3





Legend

-  Museum and Historical Sites
-  Specialty Shopping
-  Town
-  State Parks and Recreation Sites
-  Federal Recreation Areas
-  Privately Owned Recreation Areas
-  Scenic Byway

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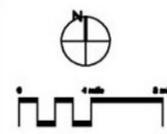
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Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

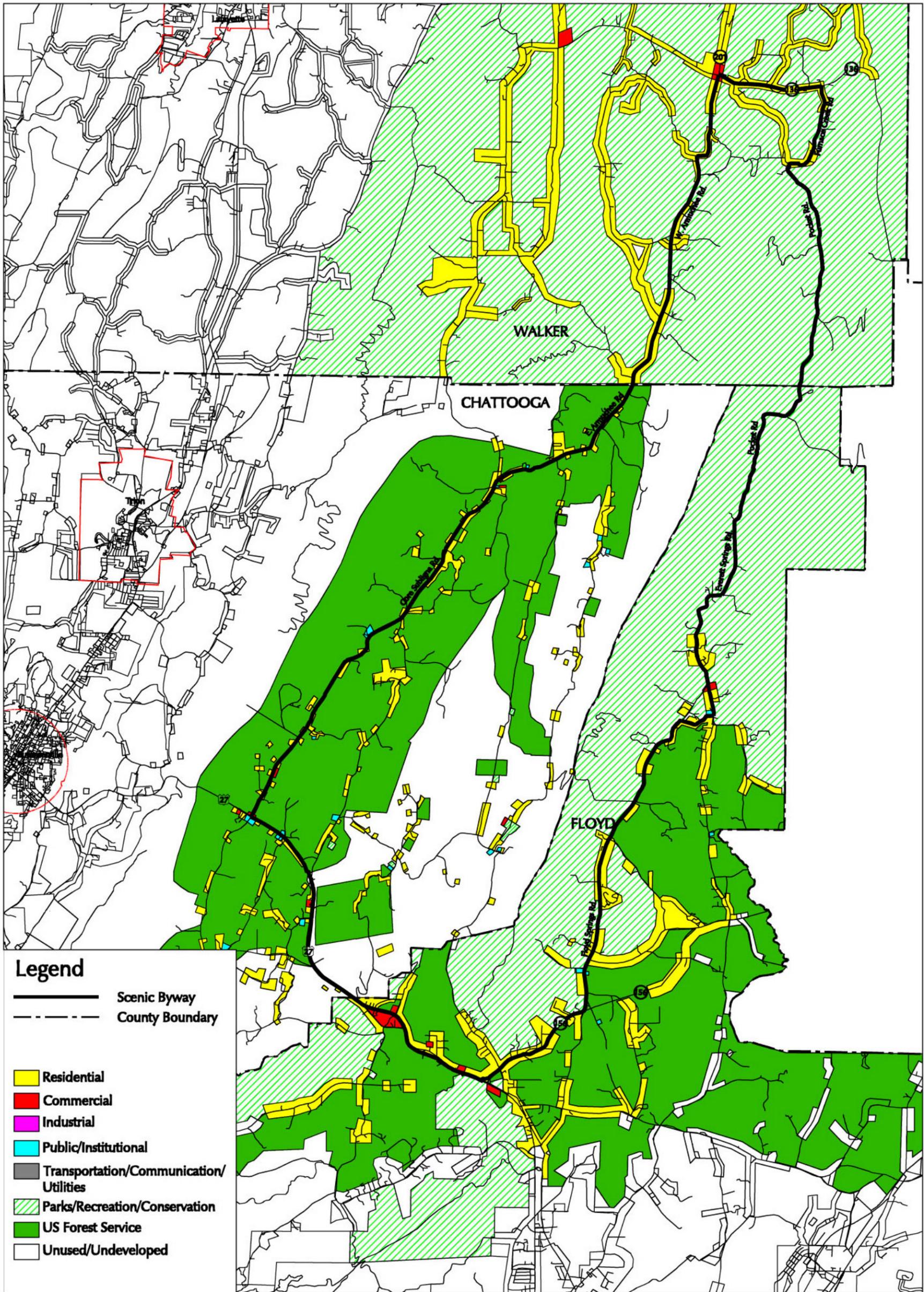
Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties

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 Project: 11111
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**AREA
 ATTRACTIONS**
 Figure 4





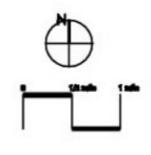
- Legend**
-  Scenic Byway
 -  County Boundary
 -  Residential
 -  Commercial
 -  Industrial
 -  Public/Institutional
 -  Transportation/Communication/Utilities
 -  Parks/Recreation/Conservation
 -  US Forest Service
 -  Unused/Undeveloped



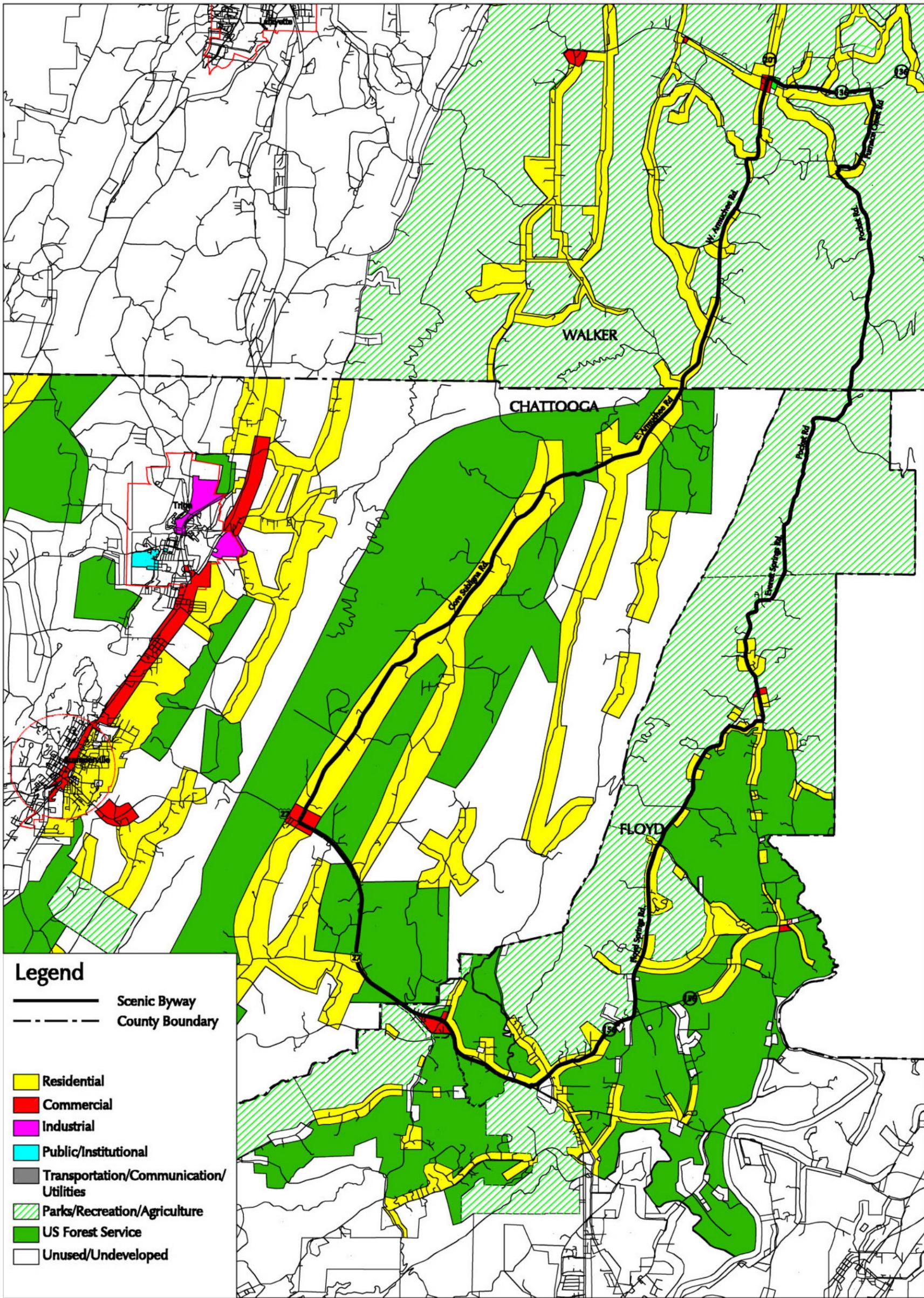
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 Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties

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EXISTING LAND USE
 Figure 5

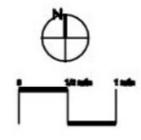


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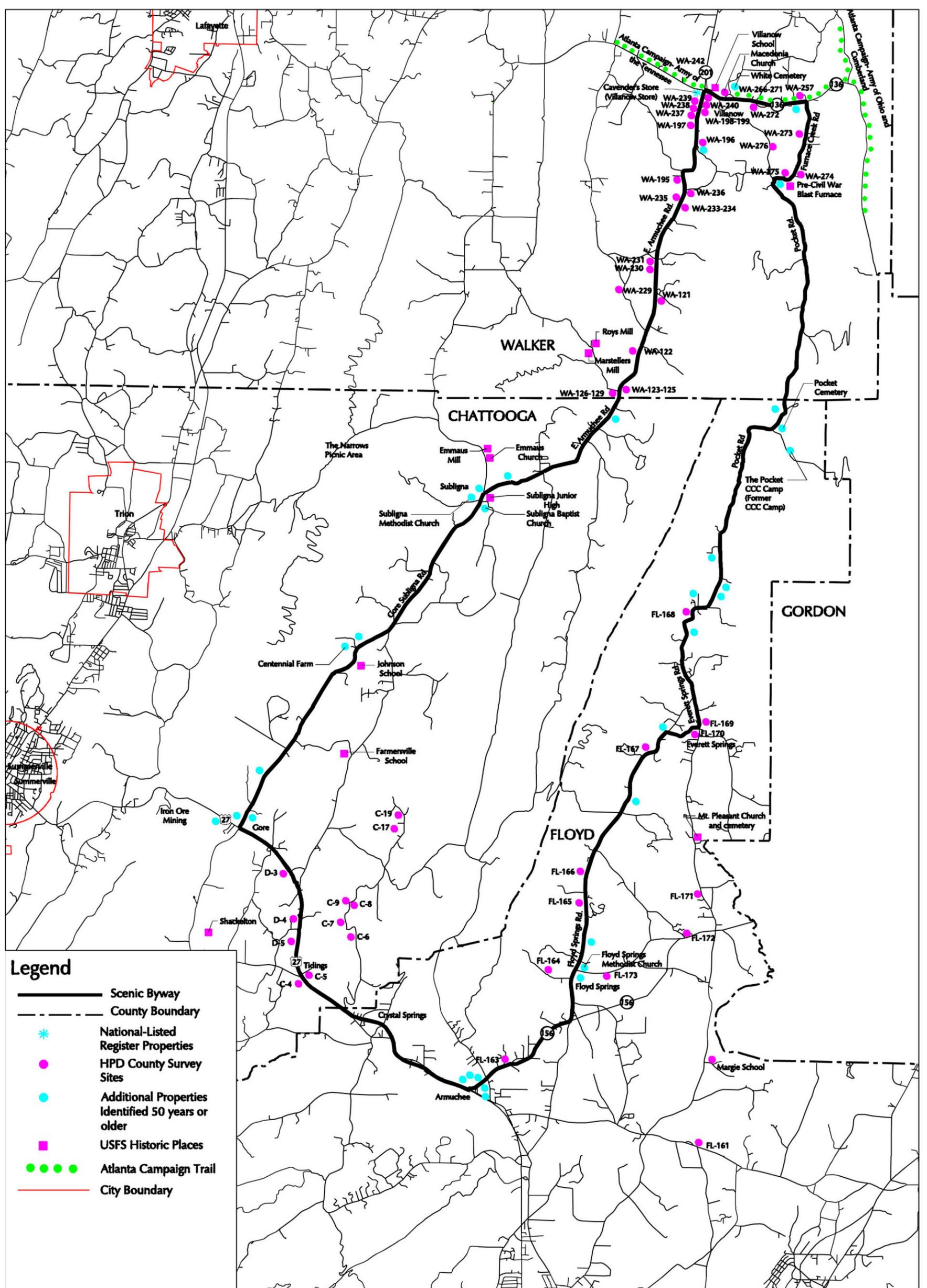
Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties

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 Version: 1.0
 Project: R&V
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 Checked: MCM



FUTURE LAND USE
 Figure 6



Legend

- Scenic Byway
- County Boundary
- National-Listed Register Properties
- HPD County Survey Sites
- Additional Properties Identified 50 years or older
- USFS Historic Places
- Atlanta Campaign Trail
- City Boundary



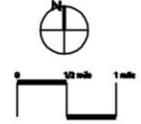
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Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

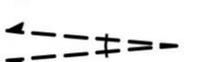
Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties

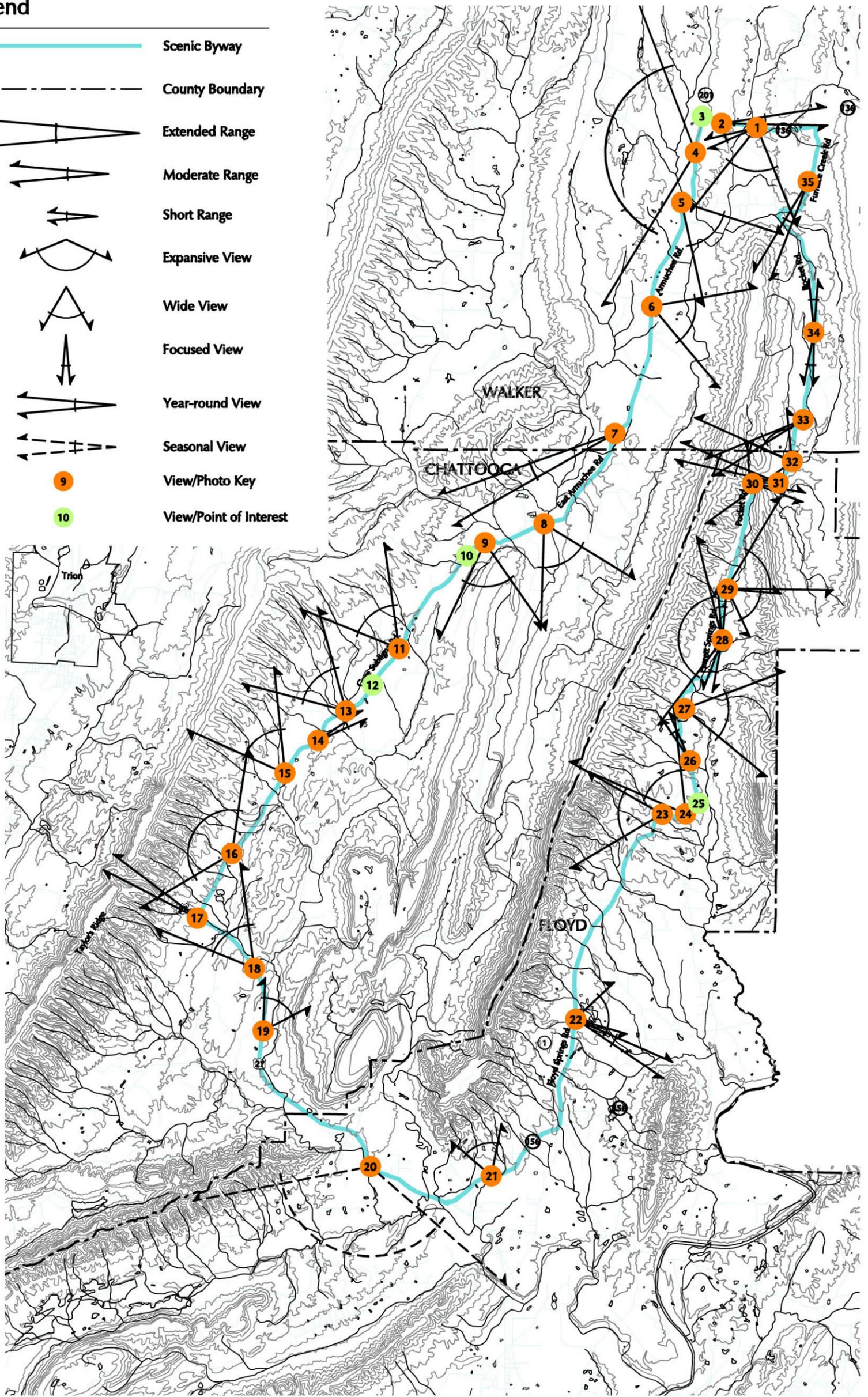
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 Project No.: 2011-001
 Scale:
 Drawn: JMM
 Checked: JMM



HISTORIC RESOURCES
 Figure 7

Legend

-  Scenic Byway
-  County Boundary
-  Extended Range
-  Moderate Range
-  Short Range
-  Expansive View
-  Wide View
-  Focused View
-  Year-round View
-  Seasonal View
-  View/Photo Key
-  View/Point of Interest

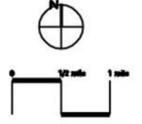


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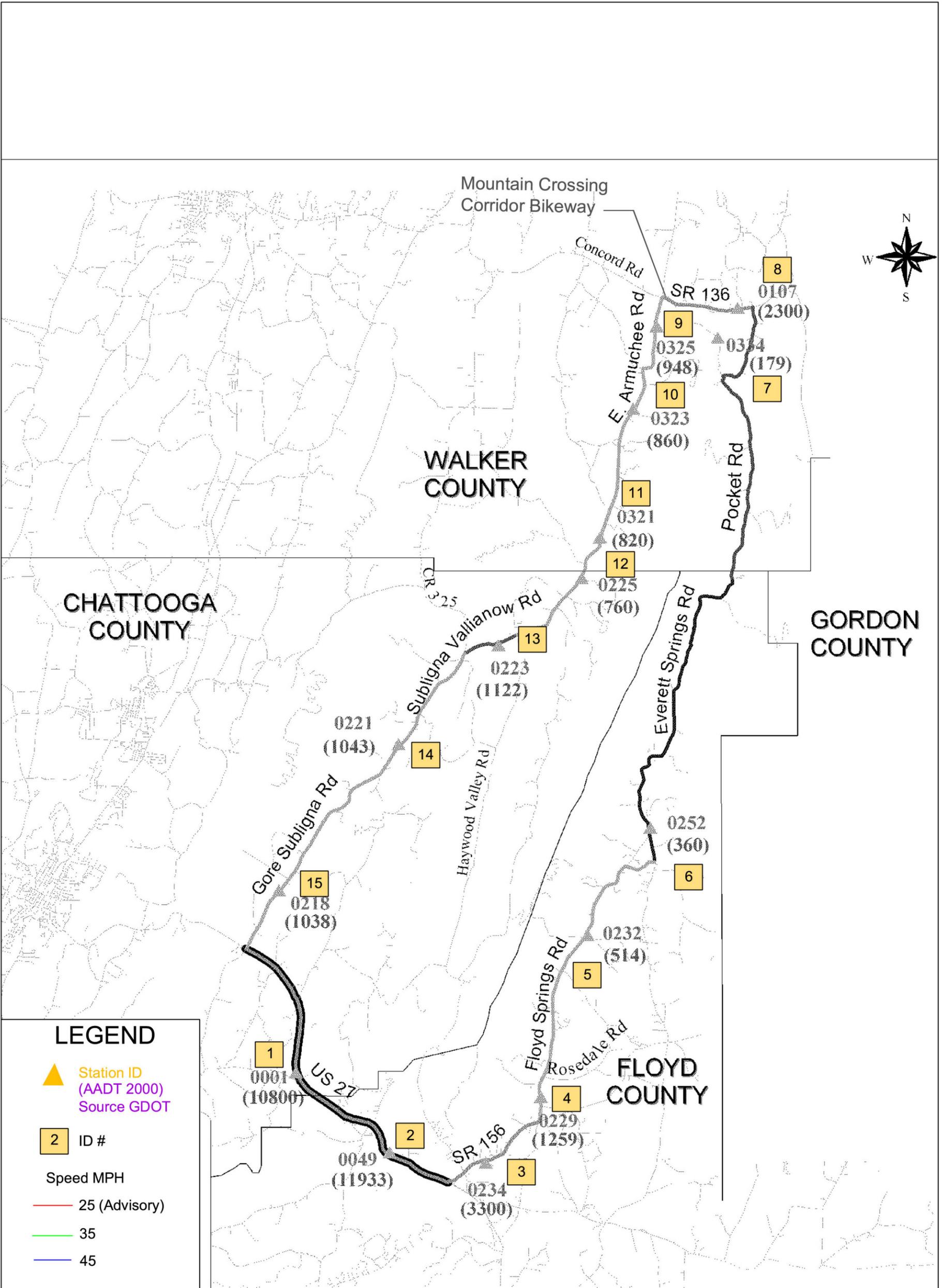
Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Chattooga, Floyd, and Walker Counties

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 Revision:
 Project No: 5881
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 Checked: JMM



VIEW ANALYSIS
 Figure 8



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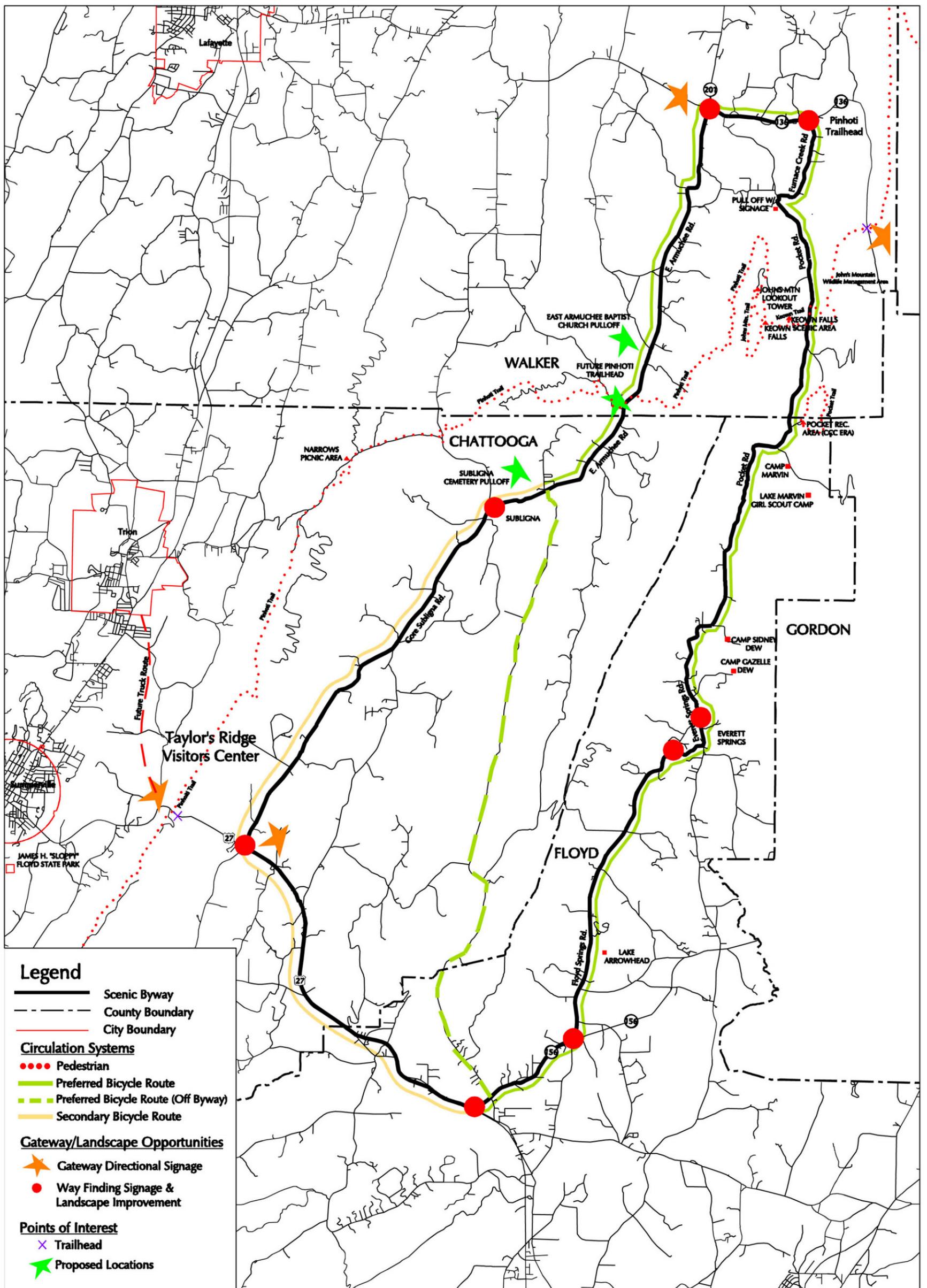
Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties

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Revised:	
Project No.:	2008
Scale:	
Drawn:	
Checked:	



TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS
 Figure 9

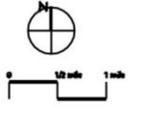


Project Consultants
 The Jaeger Company
 Mary Means and Associates
 Wilbur Smith Associates
Project Sponsor
 USDA-Chattahoochee National Forest

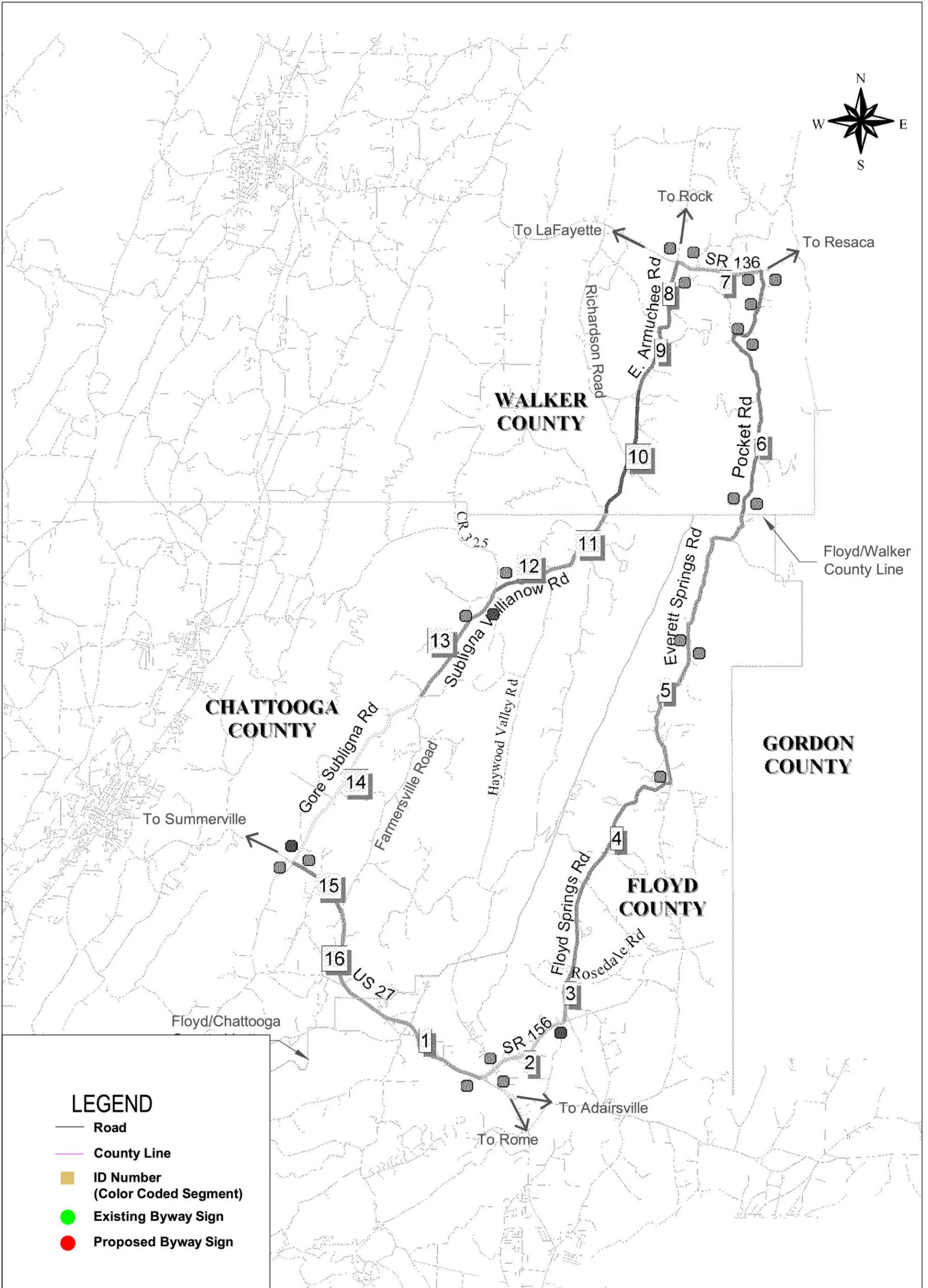
Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties

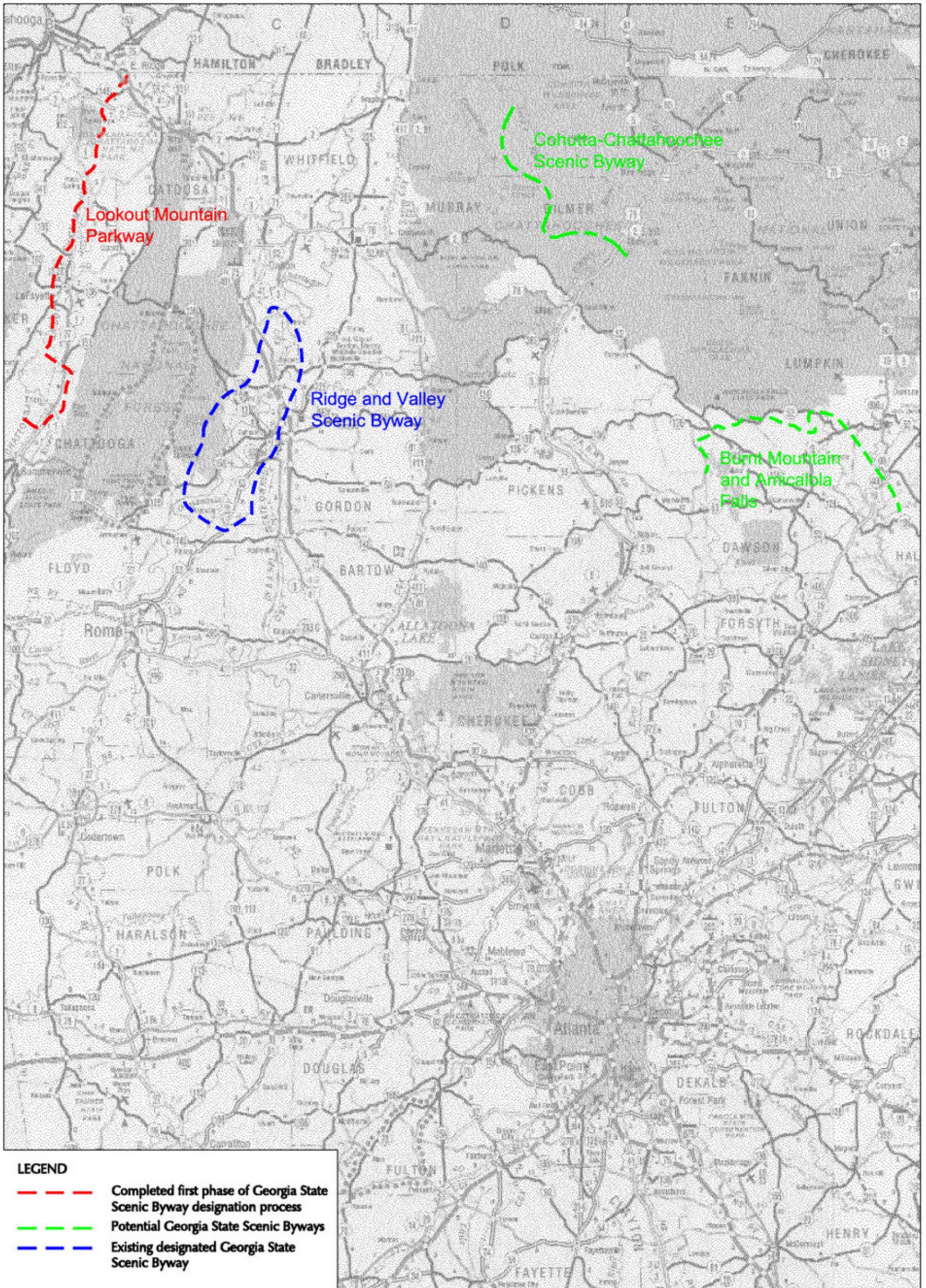
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 Reviewer: [blank]
 Project No.: 8888
 Scale: [blank]
 Drawn: [blank]
 Checked: [blank]



RECOMMENDATIONS
Figure 10



 <p>Project Consultants The Jaeger Company Mary Means and Associates Wilbur Smith Associates Project Sponsor USDA-Chattahoochee National Forest</p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties</h3>	<table border="0" style="font-size: small;"> <tr><td>Drawn: []</td></tr> <tr><td>Reviewed: []</td></tr> <tr><td>Project No: []</td></tr> <tr><td>Scale: []</td></tr> <tr><td>Date: []</td></tr> <tr><td>Checked: []</td></tr> </table>	Drawn: []	Reviewed: []	Project No: []	Scale: []	Date: []	Checked: []	<p style="margin: 0;">TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Figure 11</p>
Drawn: []									
Reviewed: []									
Project No: []									
Scale: []									
Date: []									
Checked: []									



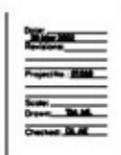
LEGEND

- - - Completed first phase of Georgia State Scenic Byway designation process
- - - Potential Georgia State Scenic Byways
- - - Existing designated Georgia State Scenic Byway



Project Consultants
 The Jaeger Company
 Mary Means and Associates
 Wilbur Smith Associates
Project Sponsor
 USDA-Chattahoochee National Forest

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway
 Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties



POTENTIAL STATE SCENIC BYWAYS
 Figure 12

Appendix B
Photographs of View Analysis

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations

Note: Photos 1-35 were taken in winter (February 28, 2002)



Photo #1A



Photo #1B

VISUAL ANALYSIS
Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway
Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #2



Photo #3

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #4



Photo #5



Photo #6

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #7



Photo #8

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #9



Photo #10

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #11



Photo #12



Photo #13

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #14



Photo #15



VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations

Photo #16



Photo #17



Photo #18

VISUAL ANALYSIS
Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway
Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #19



Photo #20

VISUAL ANALYSIS
Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway
Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #21



Photo #22

VISUAL ANALYSIS
Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway
Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #23



Photo #24

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #25



Photo #26



Photo #27

VISUAL ANALYSIS
Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway
Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo # 28A



Photo #28B

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #29



Photo #30

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



Photo #31



Photo #32



Photo #33

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway

Refer to *Figure 8: View Analysis* for photograph locations



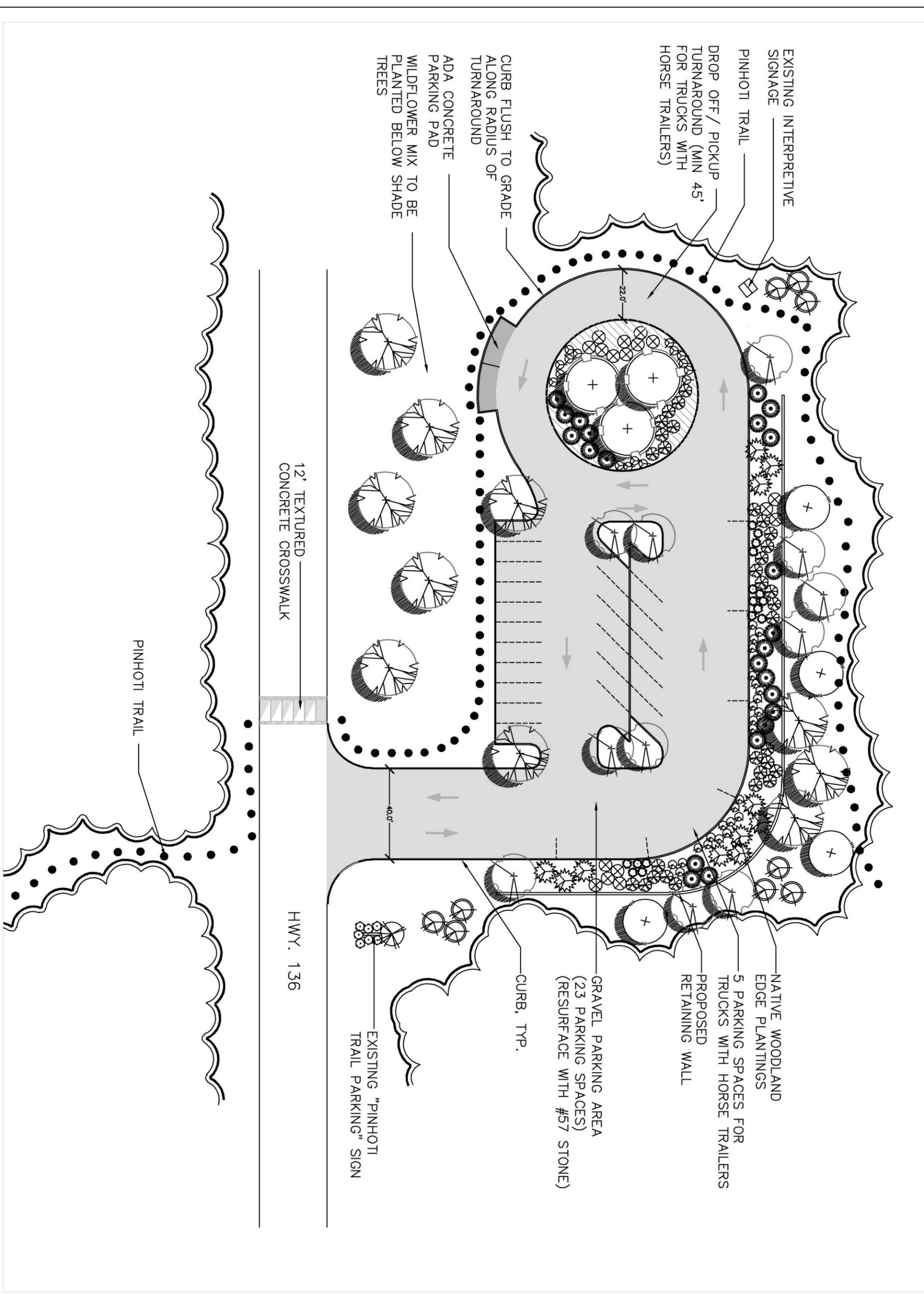
Photo #34



Photo #35

Appendix C
Pinhoti Trailhead Parking Lot Redesign

Pinhoti Trial Parking Lot						
The Jaeger Company						
Cost Estimate 1/3/03						
<i>ITEM</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>QTY</i>	<i>UNIT</i>	<i>UNIT COST</i>	<i>SUB-TOT</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
DEMOLITION						10,988
Gravel removal	Removal of existing gravel	3,250	sy	\$ 1.75	\$5,688	
Tree & stump removal	Selective tree clearing for wall	1	ls	\$ 5,000.00	\$5,000	
Sign removal/relocation/reset	1 sign	1	ea	\$ 300.00	\$300	
SITE CONSTRUCTION						169,714
Grading		1	ls	\$ 1,500.00	\$1,500	
#57 stone - 4" depth		311	cy	\$ 35.00	\$10,885	
Concrete Curb - 6"		1,445	lf	\$ 10.00	\$14,450	
Concrete paving - 6"	Paving for ADA parking	325	sf	\$ 4.50	\$1,463	
Crosswalk paving-stamped concrete	12' wide	40	sy	\$ 140.00	\$5,600	
Interpretive Signage	Replace existing signage	3	ea	\$ 500.00	\$1,500	
Signage		6	ea	\$ 300.00	\$1,800	
Striping - ADA parking		8	lf	\$ 2.00	\$16	
Landscape timber retaining wall	325' length x 8' -10- height (average)	325	lf	\$ 300.00	\$97,500	
Install Toilet w/o water-service vault		1	ea	\$35,000	\$35,000	
LANDSCAPE MATERIALS						25,789
Canopy trees	3" cal.	13	ea	\$ 400.00	\$5,200	
Understory trees	2" cal.	24	ea	\$ 300.00	\$7,200	
Shrubs	5 gal.	146	ea	\$ 24.00	\$3,504	
Perennial plantings	18" o.c	250	ea	\$ 7.00	\$1,750	
Wildflower mix		0.28	ac	\$ 4,500.00	\$1,260	
Mulch	4" depth	55	cy	\$ 25.00	\$1,375	
Pinestraw	50 bales	50	ea	\$ 10.00	\$500	
Topsoil	12" depth	200	cy	\$ 25.00	\$ 5,000	
TOTAL						206,491
				Contingency 15%		30,974
						237,465



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 Mary Means and Associates
 Wilbur Smith Associates
Project Sponsor
 USDA-Chattahoochee National Forest

Ridge & Valley Scenic Byway
 Chattooga, Floyd and Walker Counties

Date:	11/15/2011
Scale:	AS SHOWN
Project No.:	2011-001
Drawn:	AMC
Checked:	MLK

0 40 80 160

PINHOTI TRAIL PARKING LOT RE-DESIGN
 Figure C-1



Appendix D
List of Contacts

List of Contacts

Contacts for Scenic Byways

Scenic Byways Program Office

Federal Highway Administration
HEP-10, Room 3222
400 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20590
Phone: 202.366.2071 or 800.429.9297
Fax: 202.366.7660

American Recreation Coalition

1225 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202.682.9530
Fax: 202.682.9529

National Scenic Byways Resources Center

227 West First Street, Suite 610
Duluth, MN 55802
Phone: 218.529.7551 or 800.4.byways
Fax: 218.529.7553

Georgia Scenic Byways

Office of Planning
Number 2 Capitol Square
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
ATTN: Scenic Byways Program
Phone: 404.651.7603
Fax: 404.657.5228

Contacts for Recreational Trails

Federal Highway Administration

400 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20590
Phone: 202.366.5013
Fax: 202.366.3049

Coalition For Recreational Trails

1225 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202.682.9530
Fax: 202.682.9529

Grants Project Officer

*Department of Natural
Resources
205 Butler St SE, Suite 1352
Atlanta GA 30334-9043
Phone: 404.656.6536
Fax: 404.651.5871*

Georgia Pinhoti Trail Association

P. O. Box 1362
Tucker, GA 30085-1362

Contacts for Transportation Enhancements

**Federal Highway
Administration**

400 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20590
Phone: 202.366.1598
Fax: 202.366.3049

**National Transportation
Enhancements
Clearinghouse c/o The Rails
to Trails Conservancy**

1100 Seventeenth Street NW, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 888.388.6832 or 202.463.0641

**Georgia Department of
Transportation**

Transportation Planning, Data and Intermodal
Development Division
Paul Mullins, *Director*
No.2 Capitol Square, S.W. Room #127
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Phone: 404.656.0610
Fax: 404.656-0584

Appendix E
Glossary and Bibliography

Glossary

archeological	visual evidence of the unique customs, traditions, folklores, or rituals of a no-longer existing human society
corridor	the road or highway right-of-way and the adjacent area that is visible from and extending along the highway; the distance the corridor extends from the highway could vary with the different intrinsic qualities
corridor management plan	a written document that specifies the actions, procedures, controls, operational practices, and administrative strategies to maintain the scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological, and natural qualities of the scenic byway
cultural	distinctive expressions of local community life
gateway	planned landscape/signage feature along a byway that gives travelers a heightened sense of arrival
historic	the legacy of human past; it can include concrete objects such as buildings as well as less tangible artifacts like traditional farming patterns or settlement patterns
intrinsic quality	the six criteria (scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological, or natural) qualities for considering a byway “scenic”; all scenic byways embody one, most embody more than one
natural	opportunities to experience landscapes and ecosystems
regional significance	characteristics that are representative of a geographic area encompassing two or more states
recreational	features that are traditionally associated with outdoor recreation
resource	any individual element that is a positive addition to a scenic byway
scenic	visually beautiful or interesting, whether natural or human-made
scenic byway	a public road having a special scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological, and/or natural qualities that have been recognized as such through legislation or some other official declaration; the terms road and highway are synonymous; scenic byway refers not only the road itself but also the corridor through which it passes
viewshed	everything in all directions than can be seen from the byway

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