

Route 100 VERMONT BYWAY

Corridor Management Plan

Proposal for Route 100

Route 100 follows the Mad River through one of Vermont's most unique and well-known regions, the Mad River Valley. With its classic agricultural traditions and rugged natural features, this mountain valley landscape is quintessential Vermont. Views of the Green Mountains towering over historic villages and barns, the roaring Mad River, distinctive architecture and covered bridges, bustling communities, and exceptional recreational opportunities characterize this route. This highway is the backbone of daily life for the byway communities, providing key access to residents and visitors who use the Valley's rich resources. In recognition of these values, the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, the Mad River Valley Planning District and the towns of Granville, Warren, Moretown, Fayston and Waitsfield are in the process of preparing a proposal to designate Route 100 a Vermont Byway, from the intersection with Route 100B south to the end of the Granville Gulf. The byway proposal seeks to establish a coordinated plan to enhance and promote the highway corridor and the many resources found within it. Designation as a Vermont Byway provides a formal way for Vermont communities to identify, conserve, and promote roads that have special qualities and resources, and then to make improvements along the corridor that benefit and sustain the byway and community interests. If designated, funds may be available through the National Scenic Byways Program to facilitate activities that support initiatives along the corridor, including preservation, transportation, and economic development. This designation proposal recognizes the value and potential of Route 100 as a Vermont Byway.



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Origins of Vermont Scenic Byways

In 1993 the state established the Vermont Byways Program using federal funds from the National Scenic Byways Program. The national program gives states "wide latitude" in defining their own ways of participation and Vermont has tailored its program to meet the objectives of its towns. The Vermont Byways Program aims to integrate growth management, economic development, and transportation investments while preserving the state's exceptional scenic, cultural, historic, and recreational qualities.

Vermont's Working Landscape: The Mad River Valley

As Route 100 travelers pass through the Valley, they are following an important north-south thoroughfare in this remote region. Yet more importantly, they are driving through main street communities, as Route 100 goes from one historic village to the next. The highway has existed in this manner since as early as 1807 when it was first surveyed as the Mad River Turnpike. The route provides unique opportunities for residents and visitors alike to access the variety of resources in the corridor from scenic views to swimming holes.



The visual experience along the byway is outstanding. The Mad River twists and turns, roaring from snowmelt in the spring and calming in the summer to form pools and gravel bars. Steep banks expose the river's impact on the underlying bedrock. Green in the summer and sparkling white in the winter, fields and meadows roll out from historic barns to the wild, glacially carved mountains that extend skyward on either side of the valley.

The story of the Valley's history is alive in the nationally recognized villages and districts made up of buildings and covered bridges dating back to the region's original settlement. While many old farms have been turned into inns or other businesses, the working landscape is still evident and vibrant in the area. The Mad River Green Farmer's Market is full of fresh local produce during the summer months, and farmers open their fields to recreational users during the winter. Sugaring shacks continue to boil maple syrup and grazing cows maintain meadows for open, spectacular views.

Route 100 also provides plentiful recreational opportunities. The region is well known for its two major ski areas. The Mad River, surrounding mountains, and open fields are also popular and easily accessible recreational resources. Swimming holes just off Route 100 are some of the best in the state. Public and private landowners have come together to create an extensive trail system that is used for hiking, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, or just a short walk along the river. These opportunities attract and relate people to the Route 100 corridor.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

A Public Meeting will be held on **March 23, 2006 at 7:00 pm** at the **Waitsfield Elementary School** to discuss the byway proposal, what we've learned so far, to develop the next steps, and to formalize committee leadership.



Byway Objectives

The Vermont Byways Program establishes a process to identify, conserve, and promote roads that have special qualities. Local and regional objectives for the Route 100 Byway include:

☞ **Community Enhancement:** Maintaining the character of the valley by highlighting and addressing areas that need improvement, strengthening local economies, and educating residents and visitors alike. This objective should address the interests of landowners, businesses and local residents along the byway to create a locally defined corridor management plan.

☞ **Preservation:** Planning for the preservation and protection of important resources that are unique to the corridor through the creation of management strategies and plans. These plans should address the long-term goals for the corridor and provide continuity into the future.

☞ **Recreation:** Providing improved access by encouraging a coordinated approach to the management of existing resources and development of new ones. This could include work on the Mad River Path system or a look at bicycle use in the Byway. Improving information distribution, signs, and parking should also be addressed.

☞ **Promotion:** Encouraging local and regional partnerships that serve residents and attract visitors and providing appropriate amenities for the public. This should include continued work on effective and integrated advertising that reaches beyond the Mad River Valley. Amenities could include redevelopment of the Top Gas station as a central place for tourist information and for local advertising opportunities.

☞ **Transportation:** Supporting mobility and safety improvements and facilitating various travel options. This should address traffic patterns through the byway villages including pedestrian/vehicle interactions, curb cuts, and village sidewalk systems.

Consideration and Benefits of Byway Designation

A number of considerations will guide development of the Byway and if designated, clear benefits will be seen in local communities and the region:

☞ The Byway program is designed to be a *citizen based and community oriented* initiative, addressing the needs and concerns of all local Byway residents and users.

☞ The Byway program promotes *local and regional collaboration* between public and private sectors to address common issues. Since the Route 100 Byway crosses through several towns, management and protection strategies will benefit from collaboration.

☞ The Byway program *does not have regulatory power* and designation does not require changes to property owner rights and zoning.

☞ The designation is *flexible*. The Byway program encourages communities to choose a theme and purpose for their byway that is *locally defined*.

“The Valley is a magical place and I now recognize what a lucky individual I am to have the privilege of growing up here. I would like to come back in 20 years and have my children see it the way I see it now ~ beautiful.”

~ Emily Norton, Warren, age 14; from *Kicking Stones Down a Dirt Road*, page 15

☞ Conservation and management *incentives are seen at the local level*, rather than by upper-level

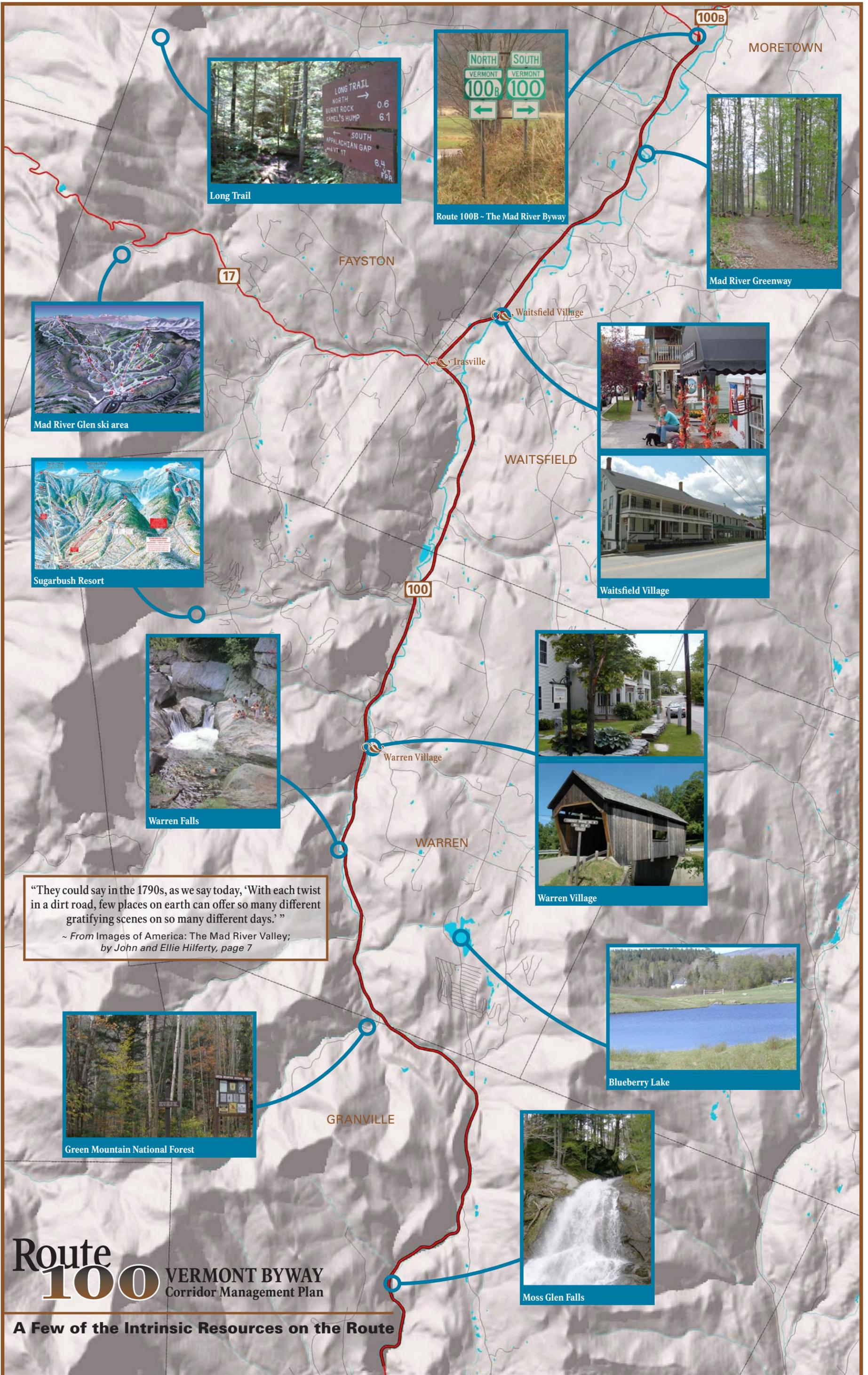
government. -If designated by the state, the Route 100 Byway would become eligible for *federal funding* from the National Scenic Byways Program. The funding could be used at the local level for a number of related improvements.

☞ Byway programs can *set in motion regional initiatives* and plans that are already under consideration for transportation, environmental planning and economic development.

☞ Byway designation serves as a *promotional tool* at the local, state and national level. The program automatically ties into state and federal advertising programs that are already in effect, with the federal program targeting national as well as international visitors.

What can you do?

The Vermont Byways Program emphasizes the value of local leadership and the importance of voluntary participation and grassroots work in support of the byway. The participation of local businesses and residents in the planning and promotion of the byway is essential. Local citizens, public officials, and property owners can attend byway planning meetings and work with local governments and organizations to support the byway project.



Long Trail



Route 100B - The Mad River Byway



Mad River Greenway



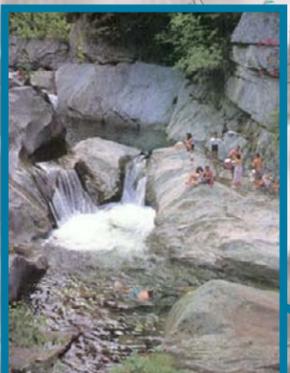
Mad River Glen ski area



Sugarbush Resort



Waitfield Village



Warren Falls



Warren Village



“They could say in the 1790s, as we say today, ‘With each twist in a dirt road, few places on earth can offer so many different gratifying scenes on so many different days.’ ”
 ~ From Images of America: The Mad River Valley;
 by John and Ellie Hilferty, page 7



Blueberry Lake



Green Mountain National Forest



Moss Glen Falls

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A Few of the Intrinsic Resources on the Route