

SUPERIOR NATIONAL FOREST SCENIC BYWAY

ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2008

THE BYWAY ORGANIZATION

The Byway Task Force has not appointed officers. Activities are coordinated by Mary Somnis, Tourism Marketing Coordinator for Iron Range Resources. Members and interested persons include:

Bob Bartholomew	Business owner, Aurora/Hoyt Lakes
Tim Campbell	Regional Manager, Explore Minnesota Tourism NE Region
Mike Forsman	St. Louis County Commissioner
Tom Gillach	Citizen, Aurora/Hoyt Lakes
Alan Goodman	Lake County Highway Department Engineer
Carl Kunnari	Toimi School Center
Carlene Perfetto	Citizen, Silver Bay
Marlene Pospeck	Mayor, Hoyt Lakes
Cheyenne Denny	Iron Range Tourism Bureau
Mary Somnis	Iron Range Resources Tourism Marketing Coordinator
Jim Welch	Hoyt Lakes Development Corp
Curt Antilla	East Range Joint Powers Board
Lee Radzak	Manager, Split Rock Lighthouse Historic Site
Mark Conley	America's Byways Resource Center
Mary Hess	Mayor, Aurora
Patrick Kelley	City Council, Silver Bay
Richard Tokarczyk	Lake County Historical Society
Steve Kuennen	US Forest Service, Laurentian District Ranger
Tim Engrav	US Forest Service
Cavan Fitzsimmons	US Forest Service
Judy Ness	US Forest Service
Duane Lula	US Forest Service

PURPOSE, PLAN AND VISION

To cooperatively increase the economic impact of tourism in the region and to improve the quality and safety of the route itself, while promoting the intrinsic qualities of the area.

MARKETING SUMMARY

Since the last report:

- A brochure map with a self guided tour of recreational sites along the Byway has been reprinted and distributed.
- Byway is online at www.superiorbyways.com along with the North Shore Scenic Drive, Skyline Parkway and the Gunflint Trail Scenic Byways.
- Byway is online at www.exploreminnesota.com with other Minnesota Scenic Byways.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

- Byway is featured in Iron Range Tourism Bureau (IRTB) advertising and marketing. IRTB received a scenic byway grant from Explore Minnesota Tourism for a direct mail project featuring the byway.
- Byway is featured in editorial in Lake Superior Magazine Travel Guide 2008.
- On June 14, 2008 a Ribbon Cutting was held to celebrate the completion of the Toimi School Wayside Rest. The program included Lake County Commissioners Paul Bergman and Dr. Tom Clifford, Toimi School Committee members Carl Kunnari and Louise Anderson, area resident Hugo Hellman (delivering a Finnish dedication), USDA Forest Service Laurentian District Ranger Steve Kuennen, Iron Range Resources Commissioner Sandy Layman and Minnesota State Representative David Dill. Tours of the school with coffee, cookies and conversation followed the program.

PROGRESS REPORT ON PROJECTS

- Toimi School Wayside Rest construction utilizing Scenic Byways funds has been completed. This provides for public rest room facilities at approximately the mid-point of the route. Further effort will be made at this site by Lake County to provide interpretation of the historic Finnish settlement here. The Toimi School Historical Committee is reviewing the potential of summer staffing for the school site to provide additional interpretation.
- Lake County is constructing a curve in the road near Silver Bay, replacing a turn at that point. This eastern portion of the Superior National Forest Scenic Byway was reconstructed in 2007-2008 near Silver Bay to provide a new bituminous surface and paved shoulders.
- Byway offers new "Circle Tour" opportunities for northeastern Minnesota travel. Local tourism organizations are promoting itineraries for group and individual travelers.
- Iron Range Resources staff has provided creative and production of the printed piece. Iron Range Resources is the point of contact for distribution of the piece.