

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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White Pass Scenic Byway is Designated as a National Byway

Chehalis, Wash. October 19, 2009 - The National Scenic Byway Foundation announced on October 16, 2009, a new national designation for the White Pass Scenic Byway. According to the Foundation, the White Pass Scenic Byway is one of 42 new designations for the America's Byway Program from across the nation. Collectively, there are 193 such designations in the United States and only seven in Washington, including Chinook Pass Byway, Coulee Corridor Scenic Byway, International Selkirk Loop, Mountain to Sound Greenway (I-90), Stevens Pass, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Maree Lerchen, board president, went to Washington DC on Friday to accept the official designation. She stated, "Aside from the honor and recognition of this coveted designation, we are now in a more favorable position to compete for future USDOT Federal Highway Administration grants. The White Pass Scenic Byway will also be included in the international marketing efforts from the National Scenic Byway Foundation. This is important to enhance the travelers experience and for the continued economic development of Lewis County." Lerchen acknowledged the dedication and commitment of many partners who helped establish this byway program since 2002.

The US Forest Service is a key player on the byway. Much of the byway is on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and Wentachee National Forest lands. The location between three major

mountain peaks, Mt. Adams, Mt. Rainier National Park and the Mt. St. Helens National Monument distinguishes this byway as one with unique character and prominence. The diverse landscape from the lakes district to river valleys into the foothills and alpine cascade mountain climate to the arid steppe of Eastern Washington provides a cross section of Washington state geography and geology.

In addition to the recent designation, the byway board of directors is currently working on a community gateway sign project funded for \$241,870 this year by the Federal Transportation Enhancement Program. These funds are earmarked for constructing and erecting two major gateway signs at the east (Naches) and west (Mary's Corner) end of the byway. This grant will also provide for signs in six locations along the byway. Communities receiving these signs are: Mossyrock, Morton, Randle, Packwood, Naches and the summit of White Pass.

On October 9, 2009, the White Pass Scenic Byway also received notice they have been chosen to receive \$82,000 from Federal Highways to install wayfinding signs in the byway communities. The grant is being matched by local funds of \$20,000 for the project. These traveler signs will help direct travelers off the byway and into their communities.

For more information about the National Byways Designation and grants as well as the National Scenic Byway Foundation press release, please visit:

www.byways.org/learn/

www.byways.org/press/

For information regarding the White Pass Scenic Byway, please visit:

www.WhitePassByway.com

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