

**Delaware Nature Society
Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway
Project Summary**

Background

Most scenic roads designated as state scenic and historic highways involve a single road corridor. The Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway includes twenty-eight secondary roads in northern New Castle County that form an interconnected and interdependent network closely linked to the Red Clay Creek and its watershed area. This watershed-based planning effort is unlike any other scenic byway designation in the United States and puts this region at the forefront of innovative byway and watershed management efforts.

The network is bounded on the north by the Pennsylvania state line, on the east by the Kennett Pike (Route 52), and on the south and west by the Lancaster Pike (Route 48/41). The roads of the Red Clay Valley are not a simple grid, but a complex network that conforms to the contours of the land and the Red Clay Creek.

The Delaware Nature Society's nomination of twenty-eight roads in the Delaware portion of the Red Clay Valley into the Scenic and Historic Highways program created the state's second designated byway. With the goal of designation achieved, the focus of our staff and our Steering Committee has transitioned to long-term stewardship of the Byway's most valuable qualities, emphasizing conservation and preservation.

Timeline

January 2004	New Castle County provided DNS with Community Planning Grant
April 2005	DelDOT approved nomination application and designation of Byway
May 2005	DNS convened Steering Committee
May 2006	DNS convened a Context Sensitive Design Subcommittee
July 2007	Draft Corridor Management Plan and appendices completed
August 2007	Steering Committee review of draft Plan
September 2007	Public workshop at Ashland Nature Center
November 2007	Submission of Corridor Management Plan to DelDOT
January 2008	Final approval of the Corridor Management Plan by DelDOT

Vision

The Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway is a singularly unique combination of roads and hills, trees and streams, rock outcroppings and historic structures that together offer an experience like no other in the State of Delaware. Traveling the Byway's 28 roads in Delaware and adjoining Pennsylvania provides an understanding and appreciation of the scenic, natural and historic qualities of this unique landscape.

The vision of this effort is to ensure the preservation and conservation of the irreplaceable resources that together form the Red Clay Valley and its Scenic Byway. This will be accomplished through:

- Emphasizing conservation options
 - Landowners – conservation easements and land stewardship
 - New Castle County – sensitive land use planning
 - DelDOT – context sensitive design
- Restoring and enhancing resources where appropriate
- Creating and/or promoting incentive programs
- Inspiring the public through education and outreach
- Enhancing partnerships

Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Strategies

The Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan contains an extensive list of goals, objectives and resource preservation and management strategies that are intended to be acted upon over several years. The phasing of activities is intended to prioritize implementation efforts so that work can be accomplished in a timely and efficient manner.

Ongoing and Year 1 Strategies

These initial projects and strategies are intended to solidify the standing of DNS as the Coordinating Agency, organize the Byway Management Committee, and establish the Byway as a geographic area for which conservation and preservation efforts are underway. A complete list of these projects and strategies can be found in the Corridor Management Plan; examples include:

- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with DelDOT
- Coordinating landowner contact efforts with local land trusts
- Hosting community workshops/events
- Creating multi-media outreach materials
- Furthering dialog with the Kennett Township Land Trust and S.A.V.E. to extend the Scenic Byway designation into Pennsylvania.

Partners

A wide variety of planning partners have provided valuable guidance and technical support for the Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway, among them: local organizations, governmental agencies, businesses, legislators, and private individuals. It is anticipated that such partners will continue to be involved in the management of the Byway and in implementation of Byway projects. The following entities have served on the Steering Committee or been project sponsors for this effort:

- New Castle County
- Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)
- Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO)
- Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC)
- Delaware State Office of Historic and Cultural Affairs
- Red Clay Valley Association
- Brandywine Conservancy
- Historic Red Clay, Inc.
- Red Clay Reservation
- Wilmington and Western Railroad
- Mt. Cuba Center
- Preservation Delaware
- Delaware Greenways, Inc.
- Center for the Creative Arts
- The Yorklyn Planning Group
- The Chesapeake Bay Girl Scouts Council
- Delaware Center for Horticulture

In addition, several individuals, some of whom are Byway residents, have devoted their skills and expertise to this effort and their continued involvement is encouraged.

Through attendance at more than twenty meetings, Steering Committee and Subcommittee members donated over 300 hours of volunteer service through the corridor planning process. In addition, volunteers from the committees took hundreds of photographs throughout the Byway to compile a photolog for the Corridor Management Plan and create a library of images for future projects such as brochures, websites, and publications.