



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal Highway  
Administration

# Memorandum

410.11

Subject Scenic Enhancement Initiatives

Date

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From: Associate Administrator for Engineering  
and Program Development  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Reply to  
Attn of

HRW-12

To Regional Federal Highway Administrators

The preservation of the environmental and scenic quality of our Nation's highways concerns us all. The President's policy goal of improving the environment requires that we reevaluate our role in protecting and enhancing the highway environment. We are exploring several options to meet the President's policy goal, including a study of the feasibility of a scenic byways system. However, we believe certain actions should be taken now.

First, we are rescinding our March 15, 1977, memorandum permitting vegetation clearance to improve the visibility of outdoor advertising signs. We recognize that maintenance of highway rights-of-way for safety and other highway operations is a State responsibility. However, to clear vegetation solely to improve the visibility of signs subject to removal under the Highway Beautification Program is not environmentally responsive. It is Federal Highway Administration policy to be sensitive to environmental concerns, therefore such vegetation clearance can no longer be endorsed. Direction should be provided the Division offices to assist the States in rescinding their existing vegetation clearance agreement and/or permit program.

Our second initiative is to encourage States to retain, rather than dispose of, excess property that could be used to restore, preserve, or enhance the scenic beauty and quality of the highway environment in accordance with 23 CFR 713.304(d). In this context, retention has a project related benefit. Such benefits could include scenic vistas, wetlands (both present and potential) and preservation of wildlife habitat. States should thoroughly evaluate their excess property inventories and classify such property accordingly.

Please ensure that all States are promptly advised of the foregoing.

  
Anthony R. Kane