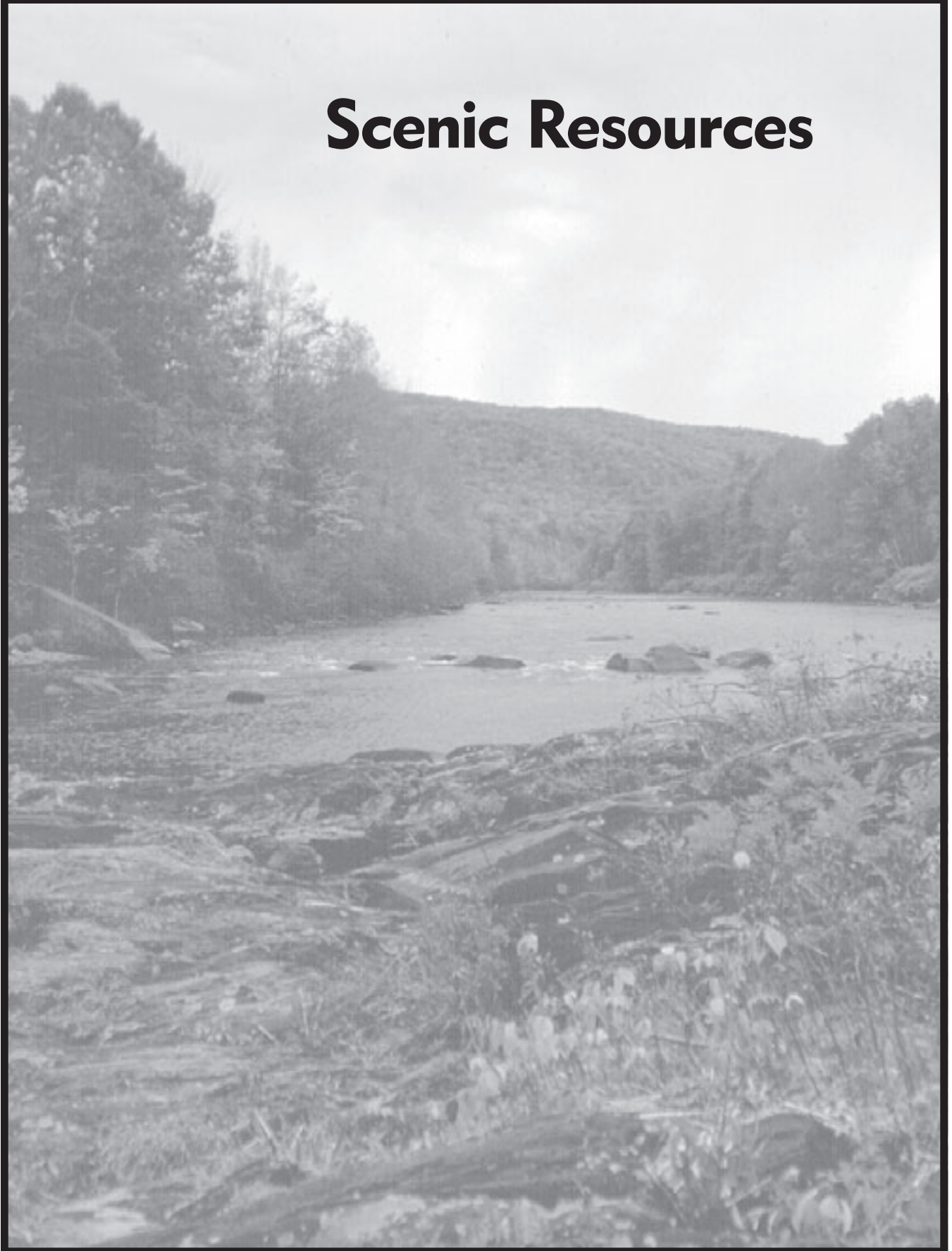


Scenic Resources



TO ASSESS the scenic resources of the Byway, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) staff traveled the road and systematically rated the landscape along the Byway corridor and the long-range views. The scoring system is based upon a very similar landscape assessment procedure used by the FRCOG to assess the scenic resources along the Route 112 corridor and the Connecticut River Scenic Byway corridor. Some modifications were made to suit the different characteristics of the Mohawk Trail. The assessment procedure is described below.

Step 1

To assess the scenic resources of the Byway, the corridor was divided into “visual segments” which share common visual characteristics as determined while driving along the length of the byway. The following six categories were used to divide the byway into “visual segments”: Farmland/Open Land (defined as crop fields, orchards, hayfields, pasture land, and non-forested open land including recreation areas); Forest (defined as forest land including both mature and successional); Village/Town Center; Developed Land (including residential subdivisions, commercial development and industrial areas); Scattered Development; and Summit (areas where the dominant visual characteristic is a panoramic view).

For visual segments that have two different characteristics, for example residential development along one side of the road and agricultural land with a historic farm house on the other side, the evaluator made a judgment about which is the dominant visual feature. Each “visual segment” was evaluated every ½ mile according to the procedure detailed in Step 2 and a separate Scenic Assessment Evaluation Form for each of these ½ mile sections. The “visual segments”

were sequentially numbered using the following format: the regional planning commission identifier/visual segment number/category (for example FRCOG/1/ farmland).

Step 2

Each ½-mile segment within the larger “visual segment” was evaluated twice, once driving west and once driving east, using the Scenic Assessment Evaluation Form. All features, both scenic and detracting, along each side of the ½-mile road segment were noted for the ranking. Scenic features received a +1, and detracting features received a -1. In addition, for the topography landscape features, all topography that could be seen from the byway, not just topography within the ½-mile study area was noted. This accounts for the many long-range views that can be seen from the Byway. For example, if a farm field were present with a mountain range in the background, both flat and mountainous would receive a +1. These figures were added together for either a west or east directional total. After the same assessment was completed in the opposite direction, the two directional totals were added together and divided by 2 to give a “segment score.”

Step 3

The “visual segment” score was calculated by adding the total score from each of the Scenic Evaluation Forms completed (one for each ½-mile section) within that “visual segment, and dividing by the number of ½-mile sections within the particular “visual segment”. For example, if a particular “visual segment” is six miles long, 12 Scenic Evaluation Forms would be filled out, and these 12 segment scores would be averaged to calculate the visual assessment score. The “visual segment” was then ranked based on the following categories:

- Outstanding (Score Range: 7 or greater)
- Distinctive (Score Range: 5 - 6)
- Noteworthy (Score Range: 3 - 4)
- Average (Score Range: less than 3)

Scenic Assessment of the Franklin County Region

The Franklin County section of the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway is 21.9 miles long. This section was divided into twenty-three visual segments. The segments begin at the rotary at the intersection of Route 2, Interstate 91 and Route 2A in Greenfield and are described sequentially from east to west, ending at the Charlemont/Savoy town border.

SEGMENT 1

Commercial Development

From the rotary at Route 2, Route 2A and Interstate 91 in Greenfield to the Mohawk Trail sign located ½ mile west of the rotary (mile 0 to mile .5)

Characteristics

This ½-mile segment is located in Greenfield and has concentrated high traffic generating commercial devel-

opment on both sides of the road. There are entrances/exits to the commercial establishments on both sides of the road, which include several fast food and family style restaurants, two grocery stores, a large scale warehouse price club store, an office supply store, motels and numerous other retail stores.

Issues

- This segment has a concentration of commercial development within a small area with a lot of separate access locations on Route 2. While it is positive for the commercial development to be concentrate in this location close to Interstate 91, the many entrances/exits creates a visual jumble and a confusing traffic configuration.

SEGMENT 2

Scattered Commercial Development

From the “Mohawk Trail” sign in Greenfield located ½ mile west of the rotary at Routes 2, Routes 2A and Interstate 91 to a small pull off area located ½ mile west of the Long View Tower and Gift Shop (mile .5 to mile 1.5)

Characteristics

This 1-mile segment is located in Greenfield and has scattered commercial development within a forested area. On the north side of this corridor segment is the Long View Tower and Gift Shop with both long and panoramic views towards Greenfield and to the north. To the south is a steep, wooded incline with scattered commercial and residential development sites. West of the Long View Tower there is a wooded area on the north side of the corridor with rock outcroppings abutting the road.

Issues

- In some areas, the steep slopes on the south side of the road have been cleared of vegetation. The lack of veg-



A view of Greenfield and beyond from the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway at the Long View Tower.

- etation is a negative landscape feature, and has the potential for erosion.
- To the west of the Long View Tower there is a vacant building that disrupts the panoramic view to the north.

SEGMENT 3

Forest

From small pull off area located .5 miles west of the Long View Tower and Gift Shop to JED's (mile 1.5 to mile 2.6)

Characteristics

The landscape of this 1.1-mile segment is characterized by forest with steep slopes and rock outcroppings on each side of the road. JED's is an historically significant structure as it was part of the 1920s auto-tourism era.

Issues

- Existence of historically significant architectural structure from the 1920's auto-tourism era that is in need of some repair.

SEGMENT 4

Scattered Development

From JED's to the Auto Electric Specialist Shop located approximately .3 miles east of Peckville Road (mile 2.6 to mile 3.0)

Characteristics

This .4-mile segment has scattered development sites within a forested area.

There is a wooded area of wetland to the north of the road.

Issues

- None

SEGMENT 5

Forest

From the Auto Electric Specialist Shop to Peckville Road (mile 3.0 to mile 3.3)

Characteristics

This .3-mile segment consists of a small area of forest. The trees are not as mature and dense as those encountered in the previous forested segment. There are not visible signs of development from the road.

Issues

- None

SEGMENT 6

Scattered Commercial Development

From Peckville Road to Skinner Road (mile 3.3 to mile 5)

Characteristics

This segment is characterized by scattered development, which includes a farm stand, cemetery, antique store, a small grocery/convenience store, small golf course, and a coffee shop located within a forested area. A number of

tourist oriented gift shops, including a basket store and antique are located within this segment. Roadside cottages, known as the “Orange Glow Cottages” are remnants of the auto-tourist era. The westernmost part of this segment has some residences with business such as a veterinary clinic and an antique store.

Issues

- Again, there are some structures that are of historic significance to the era of auto-related tourism that are in need of repairs. These structures do not appear to be in use at this time.
- Parking areas for some commercial uses are located close to the road and very prominent, which can negatively impact the scenic nature of the road.

SEGMENT 7

Farm/Open Space

From Skinner Road to Little Mohawk Road (mile 5 to mile 5.4)

Characteristics

There is a large old farm to the south at the easternmost end of this segment with rolling hills and fields. There is a tourist-oriented trading post gift shop. The vegetation changes at this point along the corridor and is lower than that encountered to this point. The site of the congregational church and the first settlement area of Shelburne are located to the north of the road. When traveling eastward the church steeple is visible.

Issues

- An old barn located on the north side of the road is in need of some repairs.

SEGMENT 8

Scattered Development

From Little Mohawk Road to Mercy Anderson Road (mile 5.4 to mile 5.8)

Characteristics

The landscape of this segment is characterized by scattered development. There is a mix of commercial and residential development. There is an area of forest to the south of the road.

Issues

- None

SEGMENT 9

Forest

From Mercy Anderson Road to the All Around Tile store (mile 5.8 to mile 6.1)

Characteristics

This short segment begins at the top of the rolling hill with a spectacular view to the west that is framed by steep slopes with rock outcroppings and the mature forest that abuts the road. The large rock outcroppings and forest on each side of the road create a tunnel effect.

Issues

- None

SEGMENT 10

Farm/Open Space

From the All Around Tile store to the mailbox labeled Kingdom Hall on the North side of the road (mile 6.1 to mile 7.4).

Characteristics

There are a few commercial sites located at the easternmost end of the segment including a school bus storage yard, which is very visible from the road. There is open land to the south with a long and panoramic view of the field with some scattered development and wooded area to the north. At the westernmost end of the segment there are woods to the north and a view of the valley and picturesque field to the south.

Issues

- There are cabins on the south side of the road that are a negative visual feature and are in need of improvement.



A spectacular view of the Deerfield River.

- The school bus storage yard is large and visible from the road. It is a negative visual feature.

SEGMENT 11

Development

From the mailbox labeled Kingdom Hall on the north side of the road to the Sweetheart Restaurant (mile 7.4 to mile 8.3).

Characteristics

There are scattered commercial development sites throughout this segment including a self-storage facility, a gas station and a farm market. Some of the development is housed in metal structures. The road widens at the westernmost end of the segment and has an extremely wide shoulder on the north side of the road.

Issues

- The self-storage facility, although buffered by a hedge planted along the road in front, was built into the side of a large hill. The area that was excavated behind the facility has not

been planted and has the potential for erosion.

- The large metal industrial/commercial buildings throughout this segment are very visible from the road.

SEGMENT 12

Village Town Center

From the Sweetheart Restaurant to State Street in Buckland (mile 8.3 to mile 9.5)

Characteristics

Though not visible through the trees that line both sides of the road, Shelburne Falls Village is located to the south. There is forest to the north along this portion of the segment. At the westernmost section of this segment Buckland is visible to the north. There is a view of the mountains in the distance as one proceeds down the hill heading west. Once across the bridge, there is a view of the Deerfield River.

Issues

- The utility poles are very prominent in this segment.

SEGMENT 13

Scattered Commercial Development

From State Street in Buckland to sign for the West County Physicians (mile 9.5 to mile 10.8)

Characteristics

This segment contains scattered commercial development. At the eastern-most end of this segment is the site of the future park and ride lot to the south of the road. There is a tourist-oriented gift/souvenir shop called the “Big Indian” Shop located in this segment. Along the western end of this segment, there are scattered residential houses and a view of the river opens up along the southern side of the road. This is the first location where a motorist traveling from east to west has a view of the river to the south of the road.

Issues

- The vacant lot that is used as an informal parking area is in need of maintenance and improvements. It is overgrown with grass in some areas and piles of debris (dirt and brush) are stored on this lot.
- The parking lot to the west of the vacant lot is underutilized, and in need of some landscaping improvements.

SEGMENT 14

Farmland/Open Space

From West County Physicians sign to the Country Aire Campground (mile 10.9 to mile 12.4)

Characteristics

The Hall Tavern Farm is located on the north side of the road. The river is located to the south. There are a number of locations within this segment that have long and beautiful views of the river. Particularly there is a long view of the river to the west. The Gen. Hap Adams House is located within this segment. The Little Red School built in 1928 is also located in this segment. The segment is characterized by farm

fields and scattered residential development. The Crab Apple White Water Rafting recreation area is also located in this segment along the river.

Issues

- There are pull-off areas in this segment that are in need of some repair. In one instance an asphalt-island that separates the stopping area from the traveled route has grass and weeds growing along the edges and in the cracks.
- There are prominent utility poles through this segment that detract from the view of the river.
- There is a trucking business that has a dirt parking area that is very visible from the road.
- The galvanized steel guardrail is very prominent along the river.

SEGMENT 15

Scattered Development

From the Country Aire Campground to the Red Rose Motel (mile 12.4 to mile 12.7)

Characteristics

This very short segment has an historic cemetery (the East Charlemont Cemetery) and a church. There are views of the river to the south of the road.

A scenic view of the Cold River in Charlemont





Overgrown trees block the scenic views of the Deerfield River along the Byway in Charlemont.

Issues

- Overgrown vegetation obstructs the view of the river.

SEGMENT 16

Farmland/Open Land

From the Red Rose Motel to the “Indian Plaza” Gift Shop (mile 12.7 to mile 13.7)

Characteristics

The easternmost portion of this segment has mature forest and a narrow roadway. The road opens up into farmland with rolling hills to the north and the river to the south. There is also a stone wall located to the north of the road. There are some areas of forest.

Issues

- The galvanized steel guardrail is very prominent along the river.

SEGMENT 17

Scattered Development

From the “Indian Plaza” Gift Shop to Charlemont Academy (mile 13.7 to mile 14.3)

Characteristics

This segment is predominantly characterized by residential development with the majority being concentrated in the eastern portion of the segment

and to the north of the road. The landscape has mature vegetation in this segment and the road curves to follow the landscape. The river is located to the south of the road. There is a location at mile 13.6 that has a spectacular view of the river to the east and to the west.

Issues:

- The galvanized steel guardrail is very prominent along the river.

SEGMENT 18

Mix of Farmland/Open Land and Development

From Charlemont Academy to Burlington Road (mile 14.3 to mile 15.2)

Characteristics

There is some development located around Charlemont Academy. Following the road west leads to a winding corner where there is a field to the north of the road and the river to the south. The trees along the edge of the road obstruct the river view. The Leavitt Cemetery is located in this segment. There is some scattered residential development at the westernmost end of the segment.

Issues

- There is a large retaining wall on the north side of the road that is out of character with the rural landscape.
- The guardrail is prominent.

SEGMENT 19

Forest

From Burlington Road to the “Welcome to Charlemont” sign (mile 15.2 to mile 16.4)

Characteristics

The landscape of this segment is characterized by forest. There is some scattered residential development through this segment. However, the forest is the dominant landscape feature. The trees create a canopy affect, and there are views of the river to the south of the road.

Issues

- The pull off areas along this segment need improvements.

MAJOR FINDING



In many locations, a thick cover of trees impedes the scenic views.

TABLE 1.1

Visual Segment Category and Evaluation—Franklin County Area

Segment Number	Starting/Ending Points	Approx. Length (miles)	Segment Category	Segment Evaluation
1	Rotary/Mohawk Trail Sign	.5	Developed commercial	Average
2	Mohawk Trail Sign/Small Pull off to the north of the Road (Greenfield)	1.0	Scattered Development	Noteworthy
3	Small Pull off to the north of the road/JED's(Drury)	1.1	Forest	Noteworthy
4	JED's /Auto Electric Specialist Shop	0.4	Scattered Development	Average
5	Auto Electric Specialist Shop/Peckville Road	0.3	Forest	Average
6	Peckville Road/Skinner Road	1.7	Scattered Development	Noteworthy
7	Skinner Road/Little Mohawk Road	0.4	Farm/Open Space	Outstanding
8	Little Mohawk Road/Mercy Anderson Road	0.4	Scattered Development	Noteworthy
9	Mercy Anderson Road/All Around Tile Store	0.3	Forest	Outstanding
10	All Around Tile Store/Mailbox with Kingdom Hall written on it on the north side of the road	1.3	Farm/Open Space	Distinctive
11	Mailbox with Kingdom Hall written on it on the north side of the road/Sweetheart Restaurant	0.9	Scattered Development	Average
12	Sweetheart Restaurant/State Street in Buckland	1.2	Village/town center	Noteworthy
13	State Street in Buckland/West County Physicians Sign on the north side of the street	1.3	Scattered Development	Distinctive
14*	West County Physicians Sign on the north side of the street/Country Aire Campground	1.6	Farmland/Open Space	Outstanding*
15	Country Aire Campground/Red Rose Motel	1.2	Scattered Development	Outstanding
16	Red Rose Motel/Indian Plaza	1.0	Farmland/Open Space	Outstanding
17	Indian Plaza/Charlemont Academy	.6	Scattered Development	Outstanding
18	Charlemont Academy/Burrington Road	0.9	Farmland/Open Space	Outstanding
19	Burrington Road/Charlemont Sign on the north side of the road		Forest	Outstanding
20	Charlemont Sign on the north side of the road/Zoar Outdoor	1.1	Village/Town Center (Charlemont)	Distinctive
21*	Zoar Outdoor/"Hail to the Sunrise" Statue	1.7	Farmland/Open Space	Outstanding*
22	"Hail to the Sunrise" Statue/Bridge over the railroad tracks	.6	Scattered Development	Distinctive
23A	Bridge over the railroad tracks/Town line at Savoy	2.1	Forest	Outstanding

Scenic Assessment Rating System: Outstanding: 7 or greater; Noteworthy: 3-4; Distinctive: 5-6; Average: Less than 3. See pp. 8-9.

*Denotes the two highest scoring segments.

■ Overgrown vegetation obstructs the view of the river.

SEGMENT 20

Village/Town Center

From the "Welcome to Charlemont" sign to Zoar Outdoor (mile 16.4 to mile 17.5).

Characteristics:

This 1.1-mile segment includes Charlemont village center. The village center is characterized by residential dwellings on the eastern portion of the segment and retail and business commercial uses in the center of the village. The buildings are located close to the

TABLE 1.2

Visual Segment Category and Evaluation—Berkshire County Area

Segment Number	Starting/Ending Points	Approx. Length (miles)	Segment Category	Segment Evaluation
23B*	Savoy Town Line /South County Rd (Drury)	3.5	Forest	Outstanding*
24	South County Rd /House #480 (Drury)	0.3	Scattered Development	Noteworthy
25	House #480 Giovanni’s Motel & Ristorante	0.5	Forest	Distinctive
26	Giovanni’s/Church Rd (north side of Rte. 2) (Florida Center)	0.5	Scattered Development	Noteworthy
27	Church Rd /Eastern Summit	0.4	Forest	Noteworthy
28	Eastern Summit	0.2	Summit	Outstanding
29	Eastern Summit /Whitcomb Summit	1.0	Forest	Noteworthy
30	Whitcomb Summit	0.2	Summit	Outstanding
31	Whitcomb Summit /House #184	0.6	Forest	Distinctive
32	House #184/Western Summit	2.0	Scattered Development	Average
33	Western Summit /Hairpin Turn	0.7	Summit	Outstanding
34	Hairpin Turn/Trailer park	1.3	Forest	Noteworthy
35	Trailer park/Mohawk Forest Blvd.	1.0	Scattered Development	Noteworthy
36	Mohawk Forest Blvd./Route 8A	1.2	Developed	Average
37	Rte. 8A/Overpass/Toyota Dealership	0.3	Village/Town Center (North Adams)	Noteworthy
38	Overpass/Toyota Dealership/Cole Avenue in Williamstown	4.5	Developed	Average
39*	Cole Avenue/Field Park	0.9	Village/Town Center (Williamstown)	Outstanding*

Scenic Assessment Rating System: Outstanding: 7 or greater Noteworthy: 3–4 Distinctive: 5–6 Average: Less than 3

*Denotes the two highest scoring segments.

sidewalk. The majority of the village center’s development follows the linear pattern of the corridor. Zoar Outdoor is located at the westernmost edge of this segment and is located in the town’s oldest house. Berkshire East Ski Area is located to the south of the corridor. When traveling east the mountain is visible in the distance.

Issues

- There seems to be concerns about pedestrian accessibility to and within the village due to the high speeds that vehicles travel along the corridor.

SEGMENT 21

Farmland/Open Land

From Zoar Outdoor to the “Hail to the Sunrise Statue” (mile 17.5 to mile 19.2)

Characteristics

This segment is characterized by flat farming fields with a view of the mountains in the distance to the north and a view of Berkshire East Ski area to the east. There are scattered residential homes.

Issues

- None

SEGMENT 22

Scattered Residential Development

From the “Hail to the Sunrise Statue” to the bridge over the railroad tracks (mile 19.2 to mile 19.8).

Characteristics

There is a campground in this segment and a mobile home park. The “Hail to the Sunrise” statue, which is often associated with the Mohawk Trail auto route is located in the State Park to the south of Route 2.

Issues

- None

SEGMENT 23A

Forest

From the bridge over the railroad tracks to the Charlemont town line to Savoy (mile 19.8 to mile 22).

Characteristic

The landscape of this segment dramatically changes to that characterized by forest. The forest area creates a tree canopy effect over the road. The Mohawk Trail State Forest is located in this segment. The recreational area has camping and swimming. There are some views of the mountains. The Cold River is located to the north of the road.

Issues

- None

Scenic Assessment of the Berkshire County Region

The Berkshire County section of the Scenic Byway has long been characterized by its long-range views of distant mountain ranges and bird’s-eye views of valley communities and rolling farmlands. Viewing towers, such as the one at Whitcomb Summit, and magni-

fying view scopes such as those at the Western Summit and the Hairpin Turn, have been tourist attractions for over 80 years. Pullovers between tourist viewing areas gave travelers additional chances to enjoy the scenery of the Berkshire Hills through the car windows. The views of some of these pullovers are compromised as the foliage of roadside trees grow in height and crown cover. Residents in the communities of North Adams and Florida have stated an interest in restoring a few historic pullovers by improving safety features and conducting vista pruning.

The Berkshire County section of the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway is 19.1 miles long. This section was divided into seventeen visual segments. The segments begin at the Franklin County border and are described sequentially from east to west, ending at Field Park in Williamstown.

SEGMENT 23B

Forest

From the Charlemont/Savoy border to South County Road in Drury (mile 21.5 to mile 25).

Characteristics

Crossing into Berkshire County, the Byway continues along the southern bank of the Cold River. The roadway is

Cold River gorge in Florida, driving west.





View from the Eastern Summit, looking northeast.

a continuation of visual segment 23A as it continues from east to west into Berkshire County. This segment is located entirely within the Mohawk Trail State Forest, including the entire 1.7-mile section through the town of Savoy. This segment of the Byway is extremely scenic in all seasons, but it especially shines during the fall foliage season.

The Cold River gorge is steep and narrow, giving visitors the feeling of traveling through a deep and wild gorge. The roadway is narrow and winding as it follows the river to climb 800 feet from the county line to South County Road. The road is generally lined with trees, but the occasional break in vegetation offers travelers glimpses of the river. Autumn, when the sun sits lower on the horizon, creates a contrast of colors and shadows along the Byway. The birch-beech-maple forests of Clark Mountain to the right (north), ablaze in sun-drenched yellows, and the oak-covered hillside to the left (south), burnished in rusts and copper, contrast the roadway, which is shadowed by the tree-lined ridge on the left (south).

After crossing the Cold River at mile 23.2 and entering the town of Florida, the Byway continues along the northern bank of the river. Here the Byway is characterized by many

rock outcrops on the north side and a very steep drop-off to the river to the south. After another ½ of a mile, the road veers north leaving the Cold River and climbs along the eastern bank of Manning Brook until the segment's end in the small settlement of Drury.

Issues

- Pullovers providing recreational access to the Cold River were littered with garbage during a site visit.

SEGMENT 24

Drury (Scattered Development)

From South County Road in Drury to house # 480 (mile 25.5 to mile 25.8)

Characteristics

This 0.3-mile segment consists of the historic settlement of Drury. Although considered a village center, the visual effect is more of scattered development than a concentrated settlement. Brown's Garage, which has provided service to travelers since the early days of automobile touring, is a notable landmark on the northeast side of the road after emerging from Mohawk Trail State Forest. Other development in this segment consists of modest houses. The road continues to climb steadily through this area and becomes

somewhat wider after leaving the state forest.

Issues

- None

SEGMENT 25

Forest

From house #480 to Giovanni's Motel and Ristorante (mile 25.8 to mile 26.3)

Characteristics

The forest along this ½ mile long segment is set back further from the road than the segment through Mohawk Trail State Forest. Power lines are quite visible in this area. Occasional views of distant mountains open up through the trees. At mile 4.1 a small pullover provides access to a snowmobile trail that crosses the road.

Issues

- Power lines are very prominent.
- Giovanni's is closed and beginning to look unkept.

SEGMENT 26

Florida Center (Scattered Development)

From Giovanni's to the intersection of Church Road on north side of Route 2 (mile 26.3 to mile 26.8).

Characteristics

As is the case with Drury, the Florida town center is visually categorized as Scattered Development rather than a Village Center. The segment includes

the Florida town hall, maintenance garage, cemetery, Baptist church and a number of single family homes that are generally set back from the road.

Issues:

- Maintenance vehicles, gravel piles, jersey barriers and concrete blocks stored at the town hall and DPW detract from the scenic quality of the segment.

SEGMENT 27

Forest

From Church Road to the Eastern Summit (mile 26.8 to mile 27.2).

Characteristics

The roadway continues its steady climb towards the Eastern Summit through this short, forested segment. The trees are fairly close to the road. When the leaves are gone from the trees, views of the distant hills open up to the north.

Issues:

- None

SEGMENT 28

Eastern Summit (Summit)

(Mile 27.2 to mile 27.4)

Characteristics

The spectacular panoramic view from the Eastern Summit has a field of view of 120° ranging from the northeast to the southeast. On very clear days the depth of the view extends for 65 miles. Included within the viewshed are the Green Mountains of Vermont, and Mount Monadnock in southern New

View from Whitcomb Summit tower, looking east





View from the Western Summit, looking west.

Hampshire. Also visible from the summit is Upper Bear Swamp Reservoir and an old landslide scar from the 1938 hurricane. The summit itself includes a gift shop and some abandoned motel units.

Issues

- The motel across from the gift shop is closed and the property is unkept.

SEGMENT 29

Forest

From Eastern Summit to Whitcomb Summit (mile 27.4 to mile 28.4).

Characteristics

This mile-long segment is dominated by a mature forest with occasional views of the Hoosic Range to the west.

Issues

- High voltage power lines cross the roadway.

SEGMENT 30

Whitcomb Summit (Summit)

(Mile 28.4 to mile 28.6)

Characteristics

Whitcomb Summit provides outstanding views that include a 130° panorama of the Green Mountains of Vermont to the northeast as well as the summit of Mt. Greylock and the Hoosic Range to

the southwest. At 2,185 feet, Whitcomb Summit is the highest point along the Byway. The summit itself has a restaurant and motel with a viewing tower on the north side of the road and small motel cabins on the south, some of which are dilapidated. The viewing tower expands the field and depth of the view from the summit. The ski slopes of Berkshire East ski area are plainly visible to the east. Whitcomb Summit is also the location of the “Elk on the Hill,” a bronze statue of an elk erected as a memorial to those who lost their lives in World War I.

Issues

- Many of the historic motel cabins are in obvious disrepair, giving the area a sad appearance and the feel of a tourist attraction whose golden days have passed by.

SEGMENT 31

Forest

From Whitcomb Summit to house # 184 (mile 28.6 to mile 29.2).

Characteristics

Proceeding west from Whitcomb Summit, the Byway gradually descends through a younger forest dominated by birch and oak. Although the dominant

visual aspect of this segment is forest, it has an open feel to it and includes occasional glimpses of the Hoosac Range.

Issues

- None.

SEGMENT 32

Scattered Development

From house #184 to Western Summit (mile 29.2 to mile 31.2).

Characteristics

This two-mile-long segment consists primarily of scattered residential development and includes the Florida Package Store, the town of Florida Fire Department and the Florida Lounge. As in the previous segment there are some brief views of the Hoosic Range. The roadway itself is wider than in previous segments. At mile 30.2, the Byway crosses into the city of North Adams.

Issues

- The Florida Lounge, like Giovanni's, is closed and the property is unkept.

SEGMENT 33

Summit

From Western Summit to Hairpin Turn (mile 31.2 to mile 31.9).

Characteristics

This segment contains two of the most well known landmarks on the Mohawk Trail: the Western Summit and the Hairpin Turn. Each location provides wide, panoramic views that give this segment an outstanding rating. Within the viewshed of the segment are the summits of Mt. Greylock, Ragged Mountain and Mount Prospect, the city of North Adams, Pine Cobble, Clarksburg State Forest, the Taconic Range in New York State, and the southern terminus of the Green Mountains of Vermont. The Western Summit has the Wigwam Gift Shop, rental cottages, a viewing platform with viewscopes, and some parking for the

Mahican-Mohawk hiking trail. The view from the Western Summit is 140°, ranging from the southwest to the north. The descent from the Western Summit to the Hairpin Turn is forested, but is included in the Summit classification due to the constant views that are available, especially when the leaves are gone.

The Hairpin Turn, the only part of the Byway in the town of Clarksburg, is the location of the Golden Eagle Restaurant. View scopes are available, and Mausart's Pond, located above the prominent red barn, can be seen amidst a deep forest.

Issues

- The viewscopes at the Hairpin Turn are located in the Parking lot of the Eagle Restaurant. Unfortunately, the Eagle's parking lot is small and appropriately serves restaurant patrons. Proper parking for viewscope use is limited, and it is located across the street and uphill of the viewscopes.
- Two pullovers between the Western Summit and Hairpin Turn are overgrown with trees that block the view.
- Radio towers on the east side of summit area are visible from the Western Summit area.

SEGMENT 34

Forest

From Hairpin Turn to Rock Manor Mobile Home Park (mile 31.9 to mile 33.2).

Characteristics

After rounding the Hairpin Turn, the Byway once again enters the city of North Adams and continues to descend through an area of forest. There are some scenic views through the trees when the leaves have fallen. Traveling in this direction, the lime quarry at Specialty Minerals in the town of Adams is highly visible straight ahead. Depending on the perspective of the viewer, this sight could be considered a

MAJOR FINDING



Many of the key scenic vistas are not permanently protected from development.

negative visual aspect or an interesting landscape and cultural feature.

Issues:

- Dilapidated trailers and other structures and debris are located on land adjacent to the Scenic Byway.

SEGMENT 35

Scattered Development

From Rock Manor Mobile Home Park to Mohawk Forest Boulevard (mile 33.2 to mile 34.2).

Characteristics

The traveler descends into the Hoosic River valley, leaving the dramatic long-range views that the higher elevations offer. Instead, views from the valley consist of the Taconic Hills and the Hoosac Range that form a backdrop for the more developed roadway corridor. This segment consists of scattered residential development. The roadway widens substantially and has a very wide shoulder. Traveling west, there are views of Mt. Greylock and Mt. Williams.

Issues

- None.

SEGMENT 36

Developed

From Mohawk Forest Boulevard to intersection of Eagle Street (Route 8A) (mile 34.2 to mile 35.4).

Characteristics

As the Byway passes the intersection of Mohawk Forest Boulevard, development along the road becomes denser and the road becomes narrower. There is a mix of residential and commercial development. At mile 34.2, Route 8 heads north towards Natural Bridge State Park and Clarksburg State Forest. The road then passes by the north branch of the Hoosic River and two large historic brick mill buildings. Houses are for the most part older and typical of housing associated with old mills. Structures are close together and close to the road. This seg-

ment is a transition from the rural area to a more developed urban area. Commercial development begins to line the street as we approach the city center area. There is a contrasting mix of commercial properties, the buildings housing the Crystal Hard Hat/Union Street/Ace's businesses and Pop's Variety have a drab and outdated appearance while the buildings housing McDonalds and Dunkin' Donuts are bold and too colorful.

Issues:

- The massive brick buildings that line the Byway and dominate the neighborhood were obviously important manufacturing sites for the area. However, the buildings are not identified and the history of these buildings is not noted.
- The Union Street area is the eastern gateway to the city center, and unfortunately the building facades along this street are sharply contrasting. (A preliminary streetscape design plan has been developed in coordination with this *Corridor Management Plan* for Union Street. For more information, refer to the Land Use chapter.)

SEGMENT 37

Village/Town Center

From the intersection of Route 8A to overpass/Toyota Dealership (mile 35.4 to mile 35.7).

Characteristics

Here the Byway passes through the downtown area of North Adams as it parallels Main Street. From the intersection of Eagle Street (Route 8A) there is a view of large Victorian houses on the hillside above Western Gateway Heritage State Park. Continuing east, the road becomes a 4-lane highway for a short distance and it is set among a sea of asphalt and concrete. To the left, the back of the Main Street buildings face parking lots, and to the right shopping centers are set behind their own large parking lots. The Massachusetts Museum of Modern Art (MASSMoCA),

located within a large mill complex on the north side of the road.

Issues

- The transition from a rural byway to an urban and busy road occurs rather abruptly in this section of the Byway. Development is located close to the road and some properties have the appearance of neglect.
- The modern highway and overpass that travels through the Center Street area is a stark comparison to even the urban residential and commercial mix of buildings that are located along Union Street. The area is a sea of asphalt and concrete, with wide travel lanes, paved median strips, and the parking lots of Main Street businesses to the left and in front of the retail businesses to the right. There is little or no vegetation or other amenities at this time. It should be noted that streetscape improvements have been designed and are scheduled for implementation to reduce the appearance the amount of pavement experienced by travelers.

SEGMENT 38

Developed

From overpass to Cole Avenue in Williamstown (mile 35.7 to mile 40.2).

Characteristics

This is a 4.5-mile long segment of mixed residential and commercial development between the downtown areas of North Adams and Williamstown. Heading west out of downtown North Adams, the residential development is typical of older mill-style homes, with houses placed close together and near the road. The Byway passes several old mill buildings and the historic Hillside Cemetery on both sides of the road. At mile 36.4, the Byway crosses the Hoosic River and passes through an area of commercial strip development. At mile 37 the river is crossed again just before the Cariddi Mill. After the mill, the residential de-

velopment becomes more contemporary, with fewer mill style houses, more trees and structures set further back from the road.

At mile 38.4 the Byway enters the town of Williamstown and passes the white lions that guard the entrance to the Spruces Mobil Home Park. The remainder of this segment passes through a mix of commercial strip development and residences. The Green River is crossed at mile 39.5. There are many excellent views of the surrounding mountains all along this segment. However, because of the large volume of traffic and the amount of development along this stretch of the byway, the scenery is not easily enjoyed.

Issues

- Modern commercial strip development along this stretch of the Byway and the volume of traffic make it difficult to enjoy the surrounding hillsides.
- Many of the buildings from the industrial era in the eastern end of the segment are in need of facade work and some repair.

The varied architecture of Williams College buildings has an influence the downtown character of Williamstown.



ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Issues

- Roadway features such as guardrails and retaining walls have not always been completed in a manner, which is sensitive to the scenic nature of the Byway.
- In some instances, site planning for development along the Byway has not been completed in a manner, which retains the natural landscape features such as the existing vegetation and slopes. In some locations, the natural vegetation has been cleared for parking areas located directly adjacent to the Byway. Alternative site planning and development layouts could have been completed in a manner to preserve the natural vegetation features of the area.
- Oversized signs and too many signs placed close to one another can cause confusion for Byway travelers and detract from the scenic qualities of the corridor.

- Many historically significant architectural features from the auto-touring era have been neglected and are in need of repair.
- In a number of locations along the Byway, vegetation has become overgrown and blocks the views of scenic vistas.
- In some locations where panoramic scenic vistas exist, the areas within the vistas are vulnerable to development.

Recommendations

- Pursue funding to purchase scenic easements or conservation restrictions to permanently protect important scenic vistas along the Byway.
- Complete selective pruning to open vistas that have become blocked by overgrown vegetation.
- As roadway improvement projects are completed, encourage the use of roadway features such as guardrails and retaining walls that are sensitive to the scenic nature of the Byway. Consider alternatives such as cor ten

and steel back timber guardrails as an alternative to the galvanized steel guardrails that are typically used.

- Encourage the adoption of site plan review bylaws by towns along the Byway in order to encourage development that is sensitive to the natural scenic feature of the Byway. Site plan review procedures can address the layout of a development and encourage project to retain natural vegetation and other landscape features.
- Encourage towns to adopt sign review bylaws to discourage the installation of oversized signs and too many signs placed close to one another which can cause confusion for Byway travelers and detract from the scenic qualities of the corridor.
- Work with the owners of historic motel cottages and other historically significant structures from the auto-touring era to maintain their landmarks. Assist in securing loans, grants or tax credits for restoration of these important structures.

SEGMENT 39

Village/Town Center

*From Cole Avenue to Field Park
(mile 40.2 to mile 41.5)*

Characteristics

This segment is the village center of the town of Williamstown. It has been ranked as “Outstanding” visually because of the historic and architecturally diverse buildings and manicured grounds of the Williams College Campus that dominate the segment, along with the views of the surrounding mountains. The buildings are set back from the road, fronted by expansive lawns, giving the segment a more open feeling. Williamstown has a picturesque village

center that is quintessential New England. Some of the interesting and historic buildings in this segment include Thompson Chapel, Williamstown Congregational Church, West College (the original Williams College), Williams College Museum of Art, Goodrich Chapel, former fraternity houses, Chapin Hall, the Williams Inn, the Adams Memorial Theater and a number of large Victorian Houses. Field Park, the remnants of a village green, is the designated western end of the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway.

Issues

- Busy traffic and frequent pedestrian crossing make it difficult to enjoy the architecture of the area.