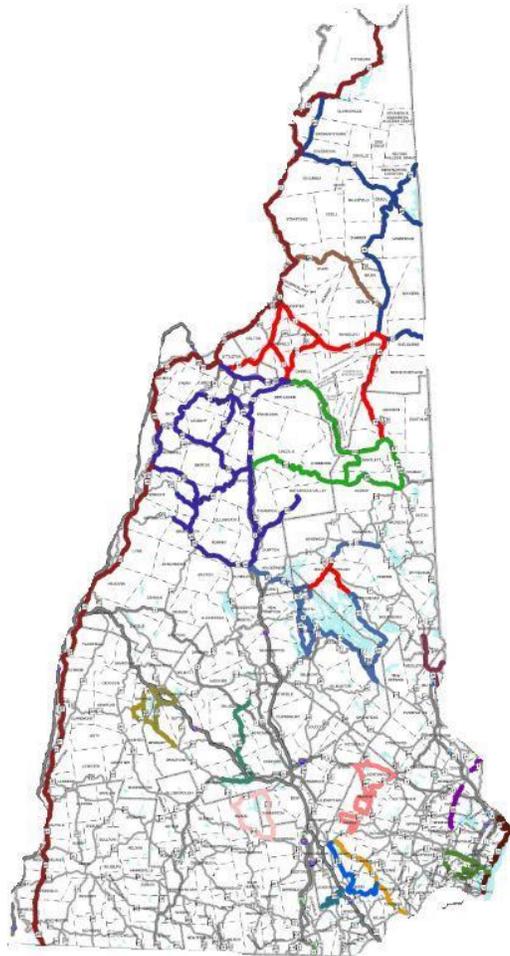




New Hampshire Scenic & Cultural Byways Wayfinding Sign Guide



Adopted by the New Hampshire Scenic & Cultural Byways Council

November 10, 2016

This document has been developed in an effort to better guide interested parties through the process of development, permitting and installation of scenic byway wayfinding signs in New Hampshire.

Should you have any questions regarding the process outlined in this manual, or with the New Hampshire Scenic & Cultural Byways program in-general, please contact the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Program Manager:

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More information regarding the New Hampshire Scenic & Cultural Byways Program may be found online here: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/scbp/index.htm>

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NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Program Background



Along the River Heritage Trail [NCC photo]

New Hampshire is home to 17 state designated byways that travel over state and local roadways. The state is also home to three (3) nationally designated byways.

All NH designated Scenic & Cultural Byways have these common features:

- Scenic and/or cultural attributes to offer the traveling public.
- A Corridor Management Entity that consists of at least 1 representative from each community the byway passes through, representatives from businesses along the route and any other potentially interested parties. These groups plan, promote and advocate on behalf of their byway.
- A Corridor Management Plan that identifies the intrinsic qualities of the designated byways, plans for the protection, improvement and promotion of those intrinsic qualities, identifies opportunity to market the byway and identifies future plans related to the management of the byway.

The New Hampshire Scenic & Cultural Byways Council has undertaken significant efforts to revitalize the New Hampshire Scenic & Cultural Byways program since 2013. These efforts have been taken to address deficiencies in a program where most of the designated byways lacked Corridor Management Plans and had long dormant or non-existent Corridor Management Entities and as a result lacked in interest, vision and community involvement and investment.

That situation paired with the loss of a dedicated federal funding source should have been a recipe for dissolution of the program. However – the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Council saw value in the program as a tool for economic opportunity for much of the state. As a result, the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Council has implemented programmatic changes to allow the program to evolve towards the type of economic tool New Hampshire’s communities deserve – particularly in those less populated portions of the state that have much to offer the myriad tourists from within and outside of New Hampshire.

Anytime a program or route is designated with an eye towards promoting additional travelers, it becomes critical for appropriate way finding signs to be installed at strategic locations to assist in ‘showing the way’ for those travelers and tourists. This manual has been developed in order to guide interested NH Scenic Byways advocates through the process of getting those signs in the ground along their byways. As we know from living in NH – natural beauty and locations of cultural import are not in limited supply, but finding the way to those areas can be challenging at times – particularly given the fact that many of these locations tend to be located where cellular reception is not the best.



Along the Currier & Ives Scenic Byway in Webster [CNHRPC photo]

Overview of the way finding sign process

Below is a summary of the seven steps in the wayfinding sign installation process. Each of the steps will be addressed in more detail over the next couple of pages.

- 1.) Define the route.
- 2.) Design the signs.
- 3.) Identify and document the proposed installation locations.
- 4.) Submit a completed sign permit application to NHDOT.
- 5.) Execute a Memorandum of Agreement with NHDOT
- 6.) Coordinate with the NHDOT Maintenance District and
- 7.) Install the signs.



An early version of the Old Stagecoach Scenic Byway logo [Source: RPC]

DEFINE THE ROUTE

The good news is that if you're considering a sign installation project on an already designated route – you have an adopted Corridor Management Plan that outlines where your designated byway is located, and probably also makes some recommendations regarding the locations for any wayfinding signs. The designated route of your byway should match the route as officially designated by the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Council (NHSCBC). The official map of NH's designated Scenic & Cultural Byways is located online here: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/scbp/documents/scenicbyways.pdf>

If your proposed byway route matches the route designated by the NHSCBC –you're ready to move on with step #2. If there is any discrepancy between the proposed route and the state designated byway route, your Corridor Management Entity (CME), the group charged with planning, managing and promoting the byway will need to engage the formal process to either designate new roadways into the existing byway, or de-designate portions that are currently designated, but for a host of reasons no longer complement the identified route.

The process for designation and de-designation of byways in NH may be found within the NH Scenic & Cultural Byway Council's Rules of Procedure (ROP), which are available on the NH Scenic & Cultural Byway Program website: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/scbp/index.htm>

Or you can connect directly to the ROP by clicking this link:

<https://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/scbp/documents/ROPBookletNov2016.pdf>

The most current version of the NH Scenic & Cultural Byway Nomination form is available through the following link: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/scbp/documents/sbnominationform.pdf>

DESIGN THE SIGNS

In addition to providing directions to your travelling public, wayfinding signs also provide a public opportunity to brand your byway. The logo you choose and the way it's presented will become the mark of your byway – and the experience it offers – becomes known by.

When the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways program began, designated byways typically favored the wayfinding signs pictured here. While that logo has become the 'brand identifier' for the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Program, several of the designated byways in NH have moved towards development of their own unique logo/brand/identifier. While the process for developing unique wayfinding signs allows for a significant amount of creativity, there are some basic regulations to keep in mind regarding these signs. These include:



- Signs should be no larger than 24" x 24". A supplemental directional panel (M6 Series within the Standard Highway Signs – 2004 Edition) may be installed below the Scenic Byway sign when necessary to direct motorists.
- The design of the signs should be simple using basic colors and must not resemble any official traffic sign.
- Sign material shall be made of either standard Type II Reflective Sheeting or better. Transparent inks may be used on Standard Type II White reflective sheeting or better.
- Signs must be installed on separate galvanized U-channel posts and cannot be attached to or installed on with any other traffic control device including signs and signal posts nor can they be attached to utility poles. NHDOT recommends posts that are a minimum 11' long post for standard installations.

Again – the first recommended step is to go back to the Corridor Management Plan for the byway. What are the themes identified? What are the identified *intrinsic qualities*, such as historic sites, scenic vistas or popular destinations that increase the popularity of the route? What themes might entice increased business for area attractions, eateries and overnight accommodations? Would those possible themes also serve as a unifying logo that easily identifies the byway to the traveling public?

While this guide cannot provide the answers to those questions, it can provide the details of recent successful efforts of a designated byway regarding the design of their custom logo wayfinding signs.

THE GENERAL JOHN STARK SCENIC BYWAY

The General John Stark Scenic Byway follows NH State Routes 13; 77 & 114 through the towns of Goffstown, Dunbarton, Weare and New Boston. Designated in 2008, the General John Stark Scenic Byway Council (GJSSBC) began efforts to create their unique wayfinding signs in early 2015. The group had to be creative as there were no new available grant funds to assist with the design effort. The option they elected was creative – approaching the local high school with the offer of a logo design contest. Six (6) designs were submitted with the winner offered a small cash prize from the GJSSBC.



A photo of the GJSSB wayfinding sign [Source: SNHPC]

The GJSSBC then met and selected the winning entry from the six (6) submitted. The signs were fabricated at a cost of \$22/sign by the NH Correctional Industries.

Is this the only way to approach the design of a unique wayfinding sign? Certainly not – but the example offered provides insight into a recently successful, low dollar effort that has an added benefit of engaging the local community in the process.

IDENTIFY AND DOCUMENT THE PROPOSED INSTALLATION LOCATIONS

OK – your corridor is identified and agrees with the route as officially designated by the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Council, and your Corridor Advisory Council has agreed on a unique wayfinding design that will attract and direct travelers along your byway. Next step is to figure out where the signs should be located along your route, and then to document those proposed locations formally for submittal to NHDOT for review and comment/approval.

Where should signs go? In general, NHDOT notes that wayfinding signs are typically installed at entrance points to a designated Scenic Byway. NHDOT also recommends that wayfinding signs be installed at periodic intervals along the designated route and at intersections where the designated route turns or follows a different numbered highway. Further, wayfinding signs may also be installed at locations where roadside features have been developed to enhance the traveler’s experience such as rest areas, historic sites, interpretive facilities, or scenic overlooks.

Your organization will most likely find it beneficial to ride the route with staff from your local Regional Planning Commission (RPC) to mark potential wayfinding sign locations with GPS equipment. A map of the RPC areas is found on the page 5. RPC assistance in this phase of the process will prove assistive to the application process undertaken in the next step of the process. A copy of the sign location form is included in Attachment B and will be discussed in additional detail in the next section of this guide.

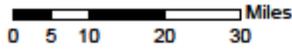
Cost will be a consideration with any of these signs – so the determination of where signs are placed should also consider cost. The \$30/sign + \$30/sign post = \$60 per installed sign is a reasonable estimate approach. If your organization has \$1,400 available to purchase signs, that’s works out to roughly two dozen signs along your byway.

It is also strongly recommended that your proposed byway wayfinding sign plan be discussed and approved through formal action of your Corridor Management Entity (CME). Community support should be solicited via the representative from each town where wayfinding signs are proposed to be located, and business support (via local businesses participating in the CME) will also benefit the proposal as well.

DID YOU KNOW?

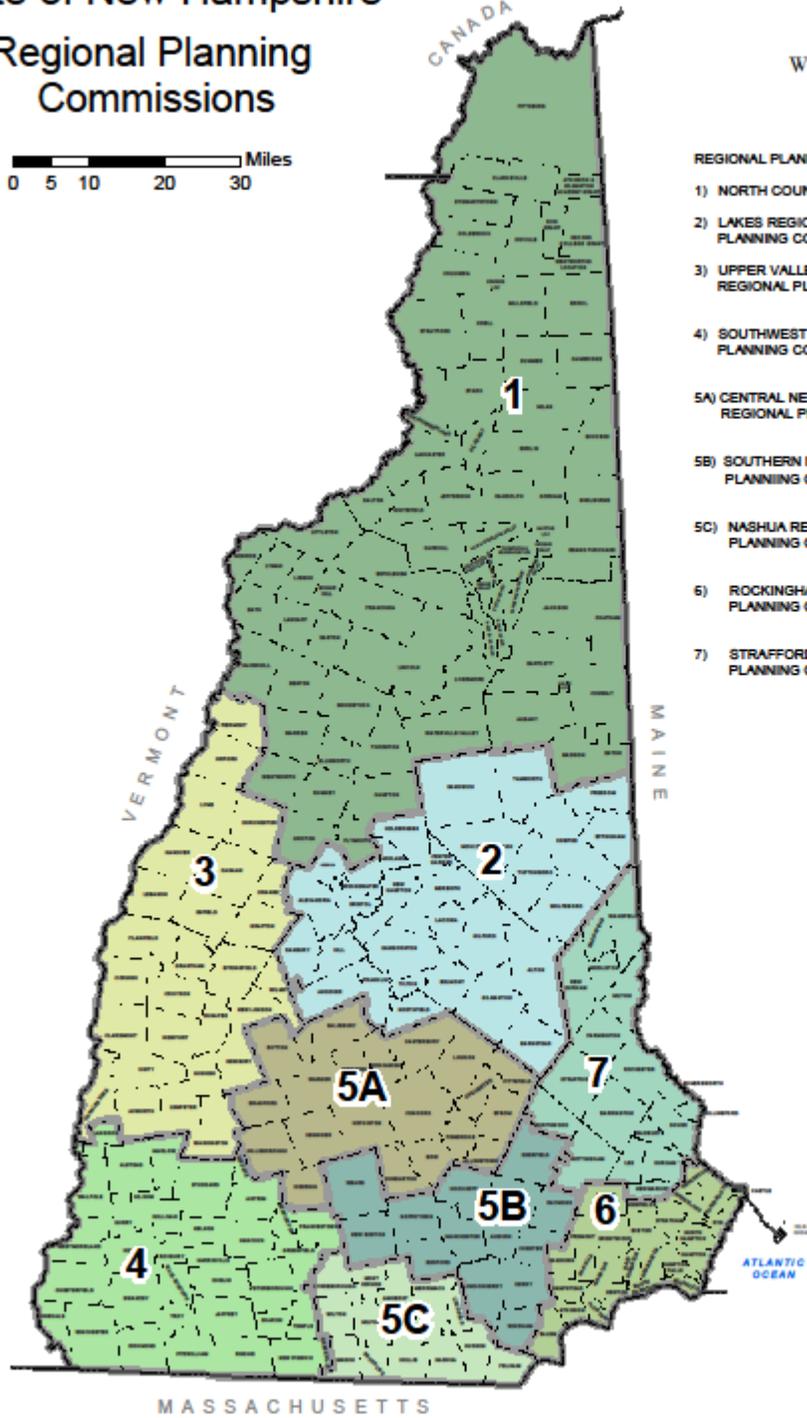
NH is home to 9 Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) that are available to provide planning assistance to NH’s cities, towns, counties and unincorporated places. Part of the suite of professional planning services offered to member communities by RPCs are transportation planning services – including assistance to Scenic Byways – via their 2 year contracts with the NHDOT. Please contact your RPC to discuss whether their staff is available to assist you with your byway signing effort.

State of New Hampshire Regional Planning Commissions



REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

- 1) NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL (NCC)
- 2) LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION (LRPC)
- 3) UPPER VALLEY-LAKE SUNAPEE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (UVALSRPC)
- 4) SOUTHWEST REGION PLANNING COMMISSION (SWRPC)
- 5A) CENTRAL NEW HAMPSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (CNRPC)
- 5B) SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE PLANNING COMMISSION (SNHPC)
- 5C) NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (NRPC)
- 6) ROCKINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION (RPC)
- 7) STRAFFORD REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (SRPC)



2018 CATALOG MAPS
PDF: 2018_RPC_8x11
GIS Planning
March 2018

SUBMIT A COMPLETED SIGN PERMIT APPLICATION TO NHDOT

NHDOT requires that all signs installed within its ROW receive permits. This is done for a variety of reasons which include:

- Ensuring compliance with all applicable state and federal regulations regarding roadway signs.
- Providing a safer environment for NH's travelling public.
- Providing for a more complete picture regarding the complete costs involved with roadway construction projects.

As noted previously in this guide, **all** proposed scenic byway wayfinding signs will require review and permit approval from NHDOT before installation. This permitting process requires that the following elements be submitted to NHDOT:

- **Sign specifications:** Submit sign details including size, materials, logo and color scheme on the document included in Attachment A.
- **Completed sign location worksheet:** All sections on the form provided in Attachment B must completely filled out - except for the columns titled *NHDOT Location Comments* and *Additional Comments*. Those sections will be filled out by NHDOT as part of the review and approval process. Please note that the assistance of professional planning staff and their GPS equipment will prove assistive in the effort to supply the required data.
- **Proposed Memorandum of Agreement:** Utilizing the sample provided in Attachment B, complete a draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for NHDOT's review and comment as part of your application submittal.



Along the Currier & Ives Scenic Byway [Source: CNHRPC]

Once the application is completed, please submit to the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Program Manager.

EXECUTE A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA) WITH NHDOT

NHDOT generally allows for properly designed and located wayfinding signs to be installed within its Right-of-Way (ROW) along corridors as supported in approved Corridor Management Plans. However – because these signs are considered to be *promotional* in nature and not *regulatory* signs, all financial obligations reside with the party approved to install the signs. This agreement is detailed in a fully executed Memorandum of Agreement between the NHDOT and the permitted party.

This means that all costs related to installation, maintenance, repair or replacement, removal or related to liability resides with the permitted party. The agreement will also outline that NHDOT reserves the right to remove signs based on maintenance or operational needs of the department.

Should you have any questions regarding the Memorandum of Agreement, please contact the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Program Manager.

COORDINATE WITH THE NHDOT MAINTENANCE DISTRICT

The state of NH is divided into six (6) highway maintenance districts. A map of the Maintenance Districts and listing of the Towns located within each district is available online here:

<http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/operations/highwaymaintenance/documents/DistrictEngineersandTownsMap.pdf>

While the sign locations will have already been reviewed and commented upon by the maintenance districts involved as part of the sign application process, it is still critical that installation details including date, time and locations be coordinated with the respective maintenance districts. This is to allow for any issues such as upcoming events contributing to higher-than-normal traffic volumes that would preclude activities that may distract or disrupt traffic flow, expected maintenance or construction activities that would not be complimentary to sign installation activities or other concerns or issues that may not be apparent to the party installing the signs at the approved locations on the byway.

INSTALL THE SIGNS

Your proposed sign design and locations for the signs have been approved and you've executed the MOA with NHDOT. You've also been in touch with the appropriate district maintenance staff and there are no conflicts with any ongoing or planned maintenance activities along the proposed route.

Congratulations! You are now ready to install your signs.

So what's next?

First – contact DigSafe, either by calling 811 or utilizing the web based process available at their website:

<http://www.digsafe.com>

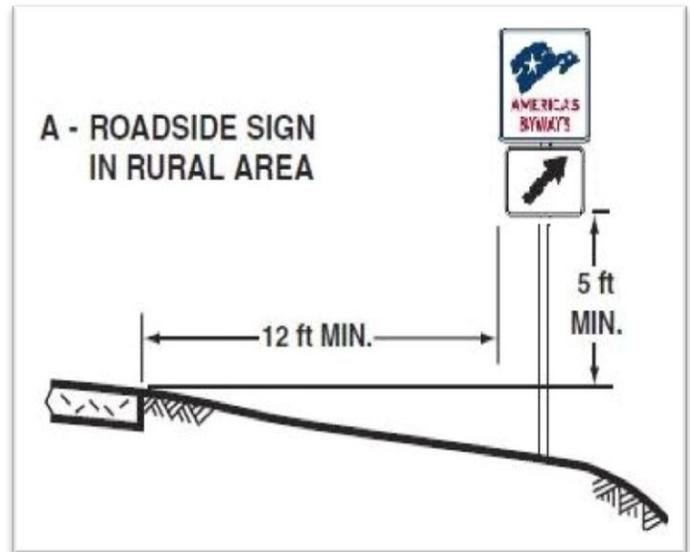
Please note that this will require some advance planning as DigSafe requires 72 hours' notice for NH projects. Undertaking this step will help to ensure that your installation forces avoid potential injury (or worse) from striking buried utilities.

Next – who will install your signs? There is no requirement that specifies who should complete the installation, so byway groups are free to rely on volunteer labor or may ask municipal public works staff to complete the installation. Whoever completes the installation effort should be sure to wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment such as high visibility vests and hazard flashers on nearby vehicles.

Finally – where should the signs be installed? The minimum standards established in the most recent edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) require scenic byway wayfinding signs be installed:

- Minimum of 12' from the edge of pavement
- Minimum of 5' from bottom of sign to top of pavement. As roads tend to slope away from the pavement, NHDOT recommends that the bottom of the signs be installed at a minimum of 7' above the ground.

NHDOT recommends that signposts should be driven 3' deep into the ground – or as close to 3' as possible, given the presence of ledge or rocks in much of NH's soils.



MUTCD diagram re: proper byway sign installation

HAVE QUESTIONS OR LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

Please contact the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Program Manager:

Lucy A. St. John, *Senior Planner*
NHDOT Bureau of Planning & Community Assistance
7 Hazen Drive, PO Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483
Phone: (603)271.3344
Email: Lucy.StJohn@dot.nh.gov



ATTACHMENT A:
PROPOSED SIGN SPECIFICATIONS



PROPOSED SIGN SPECIFICATIONS

NAME OF BYWAY:

CONTACT NAME:

CONTACT PHONE:

CONTACT EMAIL:

MAINTENANCE DISTRICT WHERE INSTALLATION IS PROPOSED:

SIZE OF SIGNS (HxW):

NUMBER OF SIGNS INCLUDED IN THIS APPLICATION:

SIGN MATERIAL:

MOUNTING POST TYPE:

MOUNTING POST LENGTH:

INSTALLATION TO BE COMPLETED BY:

PLEASE ATTACH COLOR RENDERING OF THE PROPOSED SIGN LAYOUT.

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY NHDOT BUREAU OF TRAFFIC

DATE RECEIVED: _____

REVIEWED BY: _____

DATE: _____

COMMENTS: _____

Check one:

APPROVED: _____

REVISIONS REQUIRED: _____



ATTACHMENT B:
SIGN LOCATION WORKSHEET



ATTACHMENT C:
MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND
_____ SCENIC BYWAY COUNCIL**

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this _____ day of _____, 2018 between the NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, herein called the "DEPARTMENT" and the "XXXXXXXX SCENIC BYWAY COUNCIL", hereinafter called the "BYWAY COUNCIL".

WHEREAS, the DEPARTMENT and the BYWAY COUNCIL have determined that a project to construct guide signs on State maintained roadways is necessary and will be done at the BYWAY COUNCIL'S expense; and

WHEREAS, the BYWAY COUNCIL will purchase and provide the signs, necessary hardware and installation; and

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the above premises and in further consideration of the agreements herein set forth by and between the parties hereto, it is mutually agreed as follows:

I. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BYWAY COUNCIL:

- A. The BYWAY COUNCIL shall be responsible for the installation of the signs in coordination with DEPARTMENT staff on state roadways.
- B. The BYWAY COUNCIL shall follow standard procedures for the installation of highway signing. All supports shall be galvanized steel "U" posts conforming to requirements of ASTM A 499, grade "60" or ASTM A 576, grade 1070-1080. The weight per foot shall be a minimum of 2.5 LB through a maximum of 3 LB.
- C. The BYWAY COUNCIL shall provide or cause to provide for both the maintenance and future replacement of all signs on State roads once the work under this agreement is completed. This includes removal or replacement due to Transportation needs of the DEPARTMENT.
- D. It is further understood and agreed between the DEPARTMENT and the BYWAY COUNCIL that the DEPARTMENT will not be responsible for any expenses or costs incurred under this agreement.
- E. That the BYWAY COUNCIL will process the invoices for payment for any future maintenance or replacement work in an expeditious manner.

II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT:

- A. The DEPARTMENT reserves the right to remove signs covered under this agreement if/when they are damaged, vandalized or no longer meet minimum retroreflectivity standards or have been installed without meeting current sign installation standards. The cost to remove signs for any of these reasons will be the responsibility of the BYWAY COUNCIL.

III. INDEMNIFICATION:

- A. The BYWAY COUNCIL shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless the DEPARTMENT, its officers and employees, from and against any and all losses suffered by the State, its officers and employees, and any and all claims, liabilities or penalties asserted against the State, its officers and employees, by or on behalf of any person, on account of, based or resulting from, arising out of (or which may be claimed to arise out of) the acts or omissions of the BYWAY COUNCIL. Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing herein contained shall be deemed to constitute a waiver of the sovereign immunity of the State, which immunity is hereby reserved to the State.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION**

**XXXXXXXXXX SCENIC
BYWAY COUNCIL**

By: _____
Commissioner
NH Department of Transportation

By: _____
Chairperson
XXXXXX
Scenic Byway Council