HIGHWAY CORRIDORS: HISTORIC ROADS AND LANDSCAPES
PRESENTATION

- Background
  - Regulations
  - Management Intro

- Types of Culturally Important Roads

- Examples of Roads to Illustrate Those Types

- Closing Remarks on Management
**REGULATIONS**

- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
  - Section 110
  - Section 106

- Department of Transportation Act of 1966
  - Section 4(f)

- National Environmental Policy Act
  - Definition of cultural resources is broader than NHPA

- Guidance, Executive Orders, Policies, Procedures
  - FHWA Historic Preservation and Archeology Program
BACKGROUND

- There is an appeal of cultural landscapes...
  - Stewardships
  - Conservancies
  - Organizations and enthusiasts

- Effects on management goes beyond the National Register and Section 106 requirements

- To aid in management decisions, landscapes should receive a holistic analysis that considers National Register criteria and corridor advocates
LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS
PLACES OF THE HEART

- A Landscape Approach to Preservation
TYPES OF ROADS AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

- Culturally Important Roads
- Engineered Road Designs
- Cultural Landscapes (adjacent to or incorporating road)
  - Designed
  - Vernacular
  - Historic Site
  - Ethnographic

The U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as America’s Byways®—All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways—based on one or more archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic intrinsic qualities.
CULTURALLY IMPORTANT ROADS

- Roads associated with important social or historical events/patterns of history

Route 66 – construction of US Highway System; American cultural icon

Wisconsin County Trunk Road A – Historic Race Course
ROUTE 66

- Constructed in 1926
- One of the original US Highways
- Major path of migration during Dust Bowl years
- Major route for tourism and travel between Chicago and LA
- “Mother Road”
Wisconsin County Trunk Road A

- Historic Open Road Race Course
CONTEMPORARY VIEWS OF COURSE

- Curves
- Narrow
- Trees
ROADS IMPORTANT FOR THEIR DESIGN

- Roads that included specific technological advances in design

  15 Merritt Parkway: associated with the City Beautiful movement – resulted in engineered pastoral parkway

  Columbia River Highway: cliff-face road design that used contemporary modern highway standards – resulted in a dramatic engineered highway; known as the “King of Roads”
Merritt Parkway

- Received an award for rehab design in 1995
- Back on National Trust for Historic Preservation Endangered List in 2010

"This great highway is not being constructed primarily for rapid transit but for pleasant transit. This county [Fairfield County] is fortunate in having such beautiful backcountry and it is our great duty to see that these beauties are preserved."

Congressman Schuyler Merritt
INTEGRATED DESIGN

- 1930s road engineering, safety, landscape and architectural design of bridges
  - Medians
  - Grade Separation
  - Interchanges
  - 45 MPH Design Speed
  - Parkway Landscape

Chief Project Engineer: Warren Creamer
Road and Bridge Structural Engineers: John Smith and Leslie Sumner
Architectural Bridge Design: George Dunkelberger
Landscape Engineer: A. Earl Wood
Landscape Architect: Thayer Chase
MARRIOTT PARKWAY TODAY
COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY

- Technicological and civic achievement of its time, successfully marrying ambitious engineering with sensitive treatment of the surrounding magnificent landscape.
ENGINEERING FEATS

- No curves with less than 100-foot turning radius
- Grades no greater than 5 percent
- Reinforced concrete bridges
- Tunnels

Designed by Samuel C. Lancaster, engineer and landscape architect
ROAD DETAILS OF THE PERIOD

- Masonry guardrails and retaining walls
- Concrete curbs
- French drains
- Rock sub-base
- Asphaltic pavement
- Clay tile culverts
COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY TODAY
CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

- The landscape associated with the road is important
  - Designed
  - Vernacular
  - Historic Site
  - Ethnographic
DEIGNED

- A landscape that was consciously designed by a professional according to design principles, or an amateur gardener working in a recognized style or tradition;
- The landscape may be associated with a significant person(s), trend, or event in landscape architecture; or
- Illustrate an important development in the theory and practice of landscape architecture.
DESIGN LANDSCAPES ON COLUMBIA RIVER

- Generally, Lancaster strove for fluidity of design in interconnecting the Historic Columbia River Highway with its surrounding natural landscape.
- Benefactors purchased waterfalls and other sites for parks along the Columbia River Highway.
- Landscapes were designed at these locations.
- Park masonry guard walls, retaining walls, and bridges on the pedestrian trails closely resemble those seen along the highway itself.
Features designed to integrate road into landscape

Designed to provide access to the natural features
Vernacular

- A landscape that evolved through use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped that landscape. Through social or cultural attitudes the landscape reflects the physical, biological, and cultural character of those everyday lives.
- They can be a single property such as a farm or a collection of properties such as a district of historic farms along a river valley. Examples include rural villages, industrial complexes, and agricultural landscapes.
Route 66: created an entire cultural corridor

Wisconsin Rustic Roads: program developed in 1973 to preserve the remaining less-traveled county roads
Route 66: It’s Not Just The Road
**WisDOT Rustic Roads**

- Outstanding natural features that set it apart from other roads.
- Lightly traveled local access road that serves the adjacent property owners and can support recreational enjoyment of its rustic features.
- Should not be planned for major improvements which would change its rustic characteristics.
- Minimum length of 2 miles and, where feasible, should provide a closure or loop, or connect to major highways at both ends of the route.
HISTORIC SITE

- A landscape significant for its association with a historic event, activity, or person. Examples can include battlefields.

3 Route 3, Virginia: Associated Civil War Battlefield
FREDERICKSBURG AND SPOTSYLVANIA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

- Corridor passes through Park
ETHNOGRAPHIC LANDSCAPE

- A landscape containing a variety of natural and cultural resources that associated people define as heritage resources.
- Examples are contemporary settlements, religious sacred sites and massive geological structures.

El Malpais National Monument: geological resource

Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Amish Country
EL MALPAIS NATIONAL MONUMENT

- Lava Flow
- I-40 passes through the landscape
AMISH COUNTRY, PENNSYLVANIA

- Village named for the intersection of two historic roads
- Cultural settlement
  - Lifestyle
  - Farms
  - Covered bridges
  - Carriages
WHY A PLACE IS IMPORTANT MATTERS

- Importance provides a pathway to management decisions
- What are the features that should be preserved in order to convey the importance
  - Can needs be met elsewhere?
  - Can modern standards be attained while maintaining the important qualities of the corridor?
  - Can some of the historic elements be altered to aid in necessary upgrades without losing their character?
  - Do there need to be partnerships to ensure preservation of elements not in your jurisdiction?
Preservation Approach

- Statement to define what is important about the corridor or place
- Identify the character-defining features
  - Essential elements that make the place what it is
  - Without them it would not be recognizable
- Use this data as baseline design data and integrate with project needs
- Work with stakeholders to identify the best compromises that meet specs and preserve the sense of place
SUMMARY

- There are many different types of cultural landscapes and historic roads
- There are regulations that require taking into account the effects a project will have on them
- A corridor can include more than one type
- Identifying the reason a place is important is critical in understanding your resource
- Defining the features or elements that should be preserved can help to inform design decisions and streamline a project