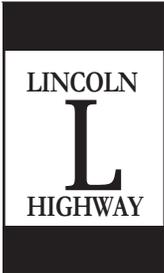




Lincoln Highway News

Winter 2002 / 2003



Newsletter 3: Preliminary Lincoln Highway Management Alternatives

■ Lincoln Highway Study Update

In 2000, Congress directed the National Park Service (NPS) to evaluate the significance of the Lincoln Highway and develop alternatives for preserving, interpreting, and using its remaining features (Public Law 106-563). In response, the Park Service's Midwest Regional Office assembled an interdisciplinary team and began a special resource study (SRS).

The SRS process involves four steps, typically carried out by a NPS study team.

The NPS uses SRSs to assess whether a resource should be added to the National Park System, or whether another management option is more appropriate. The SRS process involves four steps, typically carried out by a NPS study team. The steps include:

- determining if the resource(s) is/are *nationally significant*,
- assessing the *suitability* of the resource(s) for inclusion,
- establishing that its inclusion is *feasible* and there is a need for NPS management; and
- developing a range of potential *management alternatives*.

In previous newsletters, we outlined the purpose and history of the Lincoln Highway described the scope of this pro-

ject, and reported on our progress. In this newsletter, we briefly explain results of the team's research on both the historical significance of the Lincoln Highway and its suitability as an addition to the National Park System. We also present a series of alternatives for managing the highway and describe ways you can provide feedback on these alternatives.

■ New to this Project? Here's Some Background on the Lincoln Highway

In 1913, the nation's automobile industry was in its infancy, and innovation was the name of the game. During that year, a number of prominent automobile businessmen gathered to form an association, with the goal of building a hard-surfaced road stretching across the country from New York City to San Francisco – a bold and visionary idea at the time. This association named the road after President Abraham Lincoln and called itself the “Lincoln Highway Association” or “LHA.”

The LHA managed a successful marketing campaign that led many towns along the route of the Lincoln Highway to rename their main street “Lincoln Way” to honor their place along this premier transcontinental highway. Between 1913 and 1956, the Lincoln Highway was an integral part of towns across the country. Woven into the fabric of their lives, people and communities developed a strong cultural identity centering around this historic coast-to-coast highway.

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Throughout its period of significance (1913-1956), the highway continually evolved. In 1928, the names of all highways were changed to numbered routes through a new federal numbering system. No exception, the Lincoln Highway was renumbered “Route 30” for most of its route. What we call the Lincoln Highway today is actually a complex corridor consisting of original and subsequent routes constructed at different times as transportation needs evolved.

In the mid-1950s, the highway's use and fate changed. The Federal-Aid Highway Act was passed in 1956. The act set in motion the development of the modern interstate system. Surmounting the importance and efficiency of the Lincoln Highway, the growing interstate system changed transportation and land-use patterns. Through time, portions of the highway were abandoned or used mainly for local traffic.

But the decline in the highway's use does not diminish the important role it played in transportation, commerce, and community life during the first half of the 20th century. Today, more than 1,400 resources dating from 1913-1956 still exist along the Lincoln Highway. These resources still tell the story of this important historic road and its effect on the American landscape.

Your Views Count!

Public involvement is essential to the success of the Lincoln Highway SRS and so far, public stakeholder participation has been great. Over one hundred individuals submitted valuable comments during the information-gathering phase of this study. We would like to hear from you again about the preliminary alternatives that are presented in this newsletter. The comment period is open until April 4, 2003. You can submit comments in four ways:

1. Attend a public meeting (see schedule on page 7) to learn more about the project and offer comments in person.
2. Send comments in the mail using the form enclosed with this newsletter.
3. Fax comments to the study team's coordinator, Ruth Heikkinen, at 402-221-3465.
4. E-mail comments to Ms. Heikkinen through the project's planning website:

planning.nps.gov/plans.cfm

(the Lincoln Highway Plan is listed under the category Special Resource Studies)

Evaluating the Highway

■ National Significance

The process of determining national significance for a cultural resource like the Lincoln Highway involves evaluating the resource using National Historic Landmark (NHL) criteria. Many historic properties can be significant at a local, state, or even a national level. But only a small number have meaning to all Americans. When these properties "possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating and interpreting the heritage of the United States," they may be eligible for designation as NHLs. The Lincoln Highway has not been formally nominated as a NHL. Nonetheless, the SRS team believes it meets the NHL criteria.

Specifically, the Lincoln Highway was associated with events and ideas that have made a significant contribution to American history:

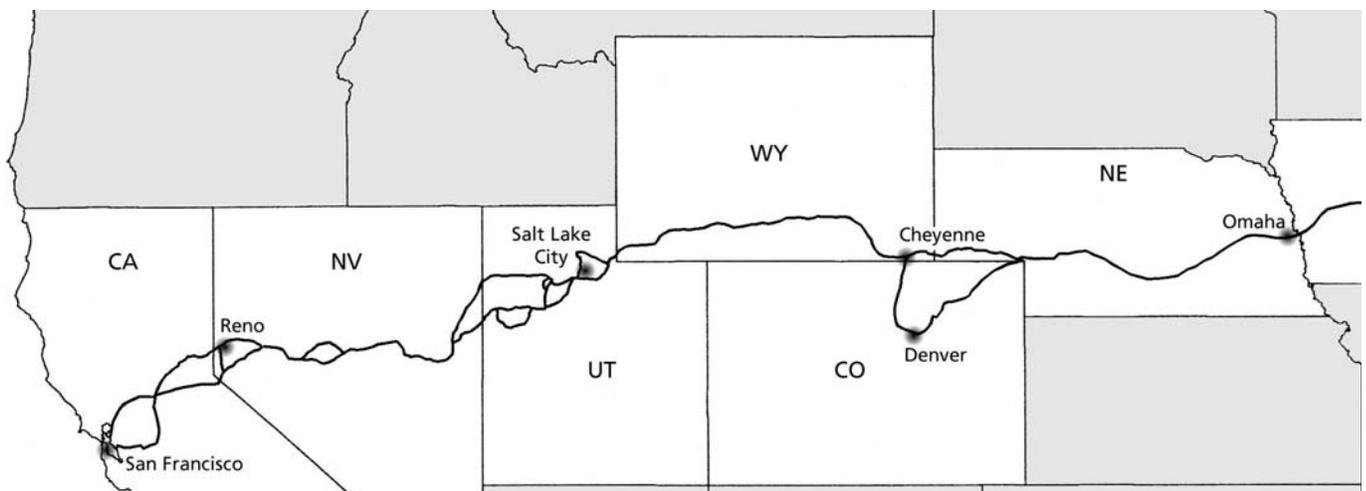
- the "good roads" movement of the early 20th century;
- the evolution of highways and auto-related commerce;
- the transformation of the natural and built environment through modern highway planning, promotion, design, and construction; and
- the American drive to forge a nation by developing an integrated economy from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Resources contributing to the significance of the Lincoln Highway represent the evolution of highways and auto-related commerce and include motels and restaurants, gas stations and garages, route markers, bridges, landscape vistas, and the roadway itself. When taken collectively, these resources tell the story of the Lincoln Highway and its effect on the American culture, its heritage, and its landscape.

Time and development have compromised Lincoln Highway resources. However, a coast-to-coast field study conducted as part of this SRS identified 1,416 Lincoln Highway historic resources that retain integrity. Based on this research, the SRS team believe the Lincoln Highway is nationally significant.

■ Suitability

The second step in the SRS process is determining whether or not a resource would make a suitable addition to the National Park System. This determination involves assessing the extent to which comparable resources are protected by either the National Park Service or other governmental or private organizations.



Resources comparable to the Lincoln Highway include other transcontinental historic highways of the same time period, including the Theodore Roosevelt International Highway and the Pike's Peak Ocean-to-Ocean Highway. While these roads are not part of the National Park System, a number of other historic roads are (for example, the Blue Ridge Parkway). However, none of the roads in the National Park System is comparable to the Lincoln Highway, in terms of scale or their role in American history.

Some notable examples of other governmental programs that protect historic roads for public enjoyment include scenic byway programs and heritage park programs. One route of the Lincoln Highway in Illinois has been designated a national scenic byway, but no other section of the road through other states has received this designation to date.

In at least one state (Pennsylvania), the highway's route across the central part of the state has been designated a state heritage corridor. A number of local governments have established historic districts along the route of the Lincoln Highway through their towns

Among private organizations that have taken action to protect and bring attention to the Lincoln Highway, the revitalized Lincoln Highway Association (LHA) is in the forefront. This nonprofit group's chapters help identify, preserve, and increase

public awareness of the highway segments passing through their region and state. While these and other programs do bring attention to certain stretches of the Lincoln Highway, they do not provide consistent preservation efforts that cover the road's entire length. The SRS team believes that adding the Lincoln Highway as a NPS unit would afford consistent protection, although other management options might do this also (see the draft alternatives). The team also maintains adding the highway to the park system neither expands, enhances, nor duplicates resource-protection or visitor-use opportunities of other historic roads. Based on these conclusions, the team believes the highway would make a suitable addition to the system.

■ Feasibility

The third step in the SRS process is determining whether or not a resource would be feasible to manage as a National Park System unit. Currently, the SRS team is in the process of assessing the feasibility of managing the entire Lincoln Highway, as well as for a subset of segments that, as a collection, both convey its national significance and meet suitability criteria.

Specific factors being taken into account in determining feasibility include:

- size and configuration,
- current land use and acquisition possibilities,
- existing impacts and threats to the resource, and
- social and environmental impacts.

A discussion of these feasibility assessments will be included in a draft SRS/environmental impact statement (EIS), scheduled to be available for public comment in fall 2003.

If these assessments result in a determination that the Lincoln Highway, in whole or as a collection of segments, would be both feasible and necessary to manage as a unit of the National Park System, then the draft will include a national park as a potential management alternative.

■ Management Alternatives

The last step in the SRS planning process is developing a series of management alternatives. The following presents preliminary management alternatives the SRS team has identified. There may be other alternatives we haven't considered.

Please take a few moments to review the alternatives. Then share your thoughts about them, or describe other alternatives you may see. You can mail or fax your comments to us using the enclosed comment form, or log on to planning.nps.gov/plans.cfm to send electronic comments. Or save your thoughts and share them at one of the scheduled public meetings listed on page 7.

Remember, these are preliminary alternatives. No decisions have been made. We need your help in reaching those decisions.



Preliminary Management Alternatives	The Concept	Leading Agency or Organization	How the program would be implemented	Where this program would have an impact
ALTERNATIVE 1: National Lincoln Highway Program	Develop a program to preserve and commemorate the Lincoln Highway that includes a national grants program.	A national not-for-profit organization, working with: National Park Service (NPS) State Departments of Transportation (SDOTs), State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs) and Certified Local Governments (CLGs) Other Partners	Coordinate commemoration and preservation efforts (not-for-profit organization) Facilitate technical assistance in preservation and interpretation (non-for-profit organization and NPS) Create a clearinghouse of related information (e.g. maps, survey data, brochures) (not-for-profit organization) Implement a unified national signage system (not-for-profit organization with NPS and SDOTs) Establish a matching grants program for planning, research, interpretation, and education (not-for-profit organization under a cooperative agreement with NPS)	Nationwide: All significant historic Lincoln Highway resources
ALTERNATIVE 2: Highway Touring and Discovery	Develop a series of discovery hubs to introduce visitors to the Lincoln Highway by encouraging state-based programming and local interpretation efforts. In each of the 14 states, one Lincoln Highway hub would be located in an existing Lincoln Highway resource or an appropriate partner facility (no new construction would be supported through this alternative). Hubs would include computer terminals where visitors could download personalized self-guided travel itineraries off of a website. Additional interpretive stations or sites (e.g. wayside exhibits, kiosks at rest areas) would be identified throughout the state and include computer terminals with access to the same information as at the hubs. Personalized itineraries would be available to the general public through the website.	NPS working with: Various partners in each state (e.g. businesses, tourism offices, SDOTs, chambers of commerce, historical societies)	Provide national coordination and develop criteria for Lincoln Highway hub locations, size, and functions (NPS) Select Lincoln Highway hubs and interpretive sites (NPS with state partners) Provide matching funds to grantees for design and construction for Lincoln Highway hubs in existing facilities and production of interpretation panels for national story at each hub (NPS) Design a template for interpretive panels for state and local stories to be used at Lincoln Highway hub and at dispersed interpretative stations or sites (NPS, with input from partners) Produce interpretive panels for state and local stories (state partners) Develop travel itineraries, brochures, and maps (NPS with SDOTs and tourism offices) Create and manage website from which individualized itineraries can be created and downloaded; provide software and software support (NPS working with partners) Maintain computer terminals and equipment (eg. monitors, printers, internet access, paper, ink) at hubs and interpretive stations for public use (local partner) Staff hubs and, as necessary, interpretive stations (partners)	One hub in each state; location of hub to be identified by state partners in consultation with NPS At interpretative stations or sites to be identified in collaboration between NPS and partners Potentially, along the entire highway as suggested by personalized travel itineraries
ALTERNATIVE 3: Lincoln Highway National Heritage Area	Create a locally-initiated heritage area consisting of multiple geographically-defined segments of the Lincoln Highway and associated resources. Within each segment, local groups (eg. businesses, non-profit organizations, units of local government) would take actions to protect, preserve, and promote the role that segment played in the national Lincoln Highway story. As a group, segments would reflect the diversity of landscapes crossed by the Lincoln Highway. As part of a national heritage area, each segment would pursue an action agenda developed as part of a national planning process for the heritage area as a whole.	A coalition of local, state, and/or regional organizations, working with: NPS	Identify boundaries of segments to comprise national heritage area (coalition) Develop Management Action Plan (coalition, with funding and assistance from NPS) Implement elements of Action Agenda (coalition, with assistance and 50% matched funding from NPS for initial 10 years)	Within identified segments of the Lincoln Highway
ALTERNATIVE 4: Lincoln Highway National Historic Highway	Create a new program within the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) to designate, preserve and interpret historic roads and highways that are nationally significant. Designate the Lincoln Highway as a National Historic Highway.	USDOT, working with: SDOTs SHPOs, THPOs, and CLGs NPS	Establish program criteria (USDOT and NPS) Develop Best Management Practices/guidelines for the management of National Historic Highways (USDOT, SDOTs, NPS) Provide technical assistance in preservation, documentation, and interpretation (USDOT, NPS, SHPOS, THPOS, and CLGs)	Nationwide: All Lincoln Highway resources (also would impact other historic roads that are nationally significant)
ALTERNATIVE 5: No New Federal Action¹	Take no new federal action. Work within existing programs (e.g. The National Scenic Byway and National Register of Historic Places Programs) to preserve and interpret the Lincoln Highway.	The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and NPS	Consider segments of the Lincoln Highway for designation as National Scenic Byways as nominations are received (FHWA, working with SDOT) As time and funding permits, continue to support grassroots groups in nominating segments of the Lincoln Highway as National Scenic Byways (NPS and the FHWA, working with SDOT) As time and funding permits, continue to support the nomination of significant Lincoln Highway properties to the National Register of Historic Places (NPS, working with State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices and Certified Local Governments)	Primarily in those locales and states with active scenic byway and historic register programs, but could eventually have nationwide impact

¹The National Environmental Policy Act requires that one of the alternatives considered in federal decision making of this type is a No Action Alternative. This alternative assumes funding and staffing levels and workloads remain consistent with current levels.

Next Steps

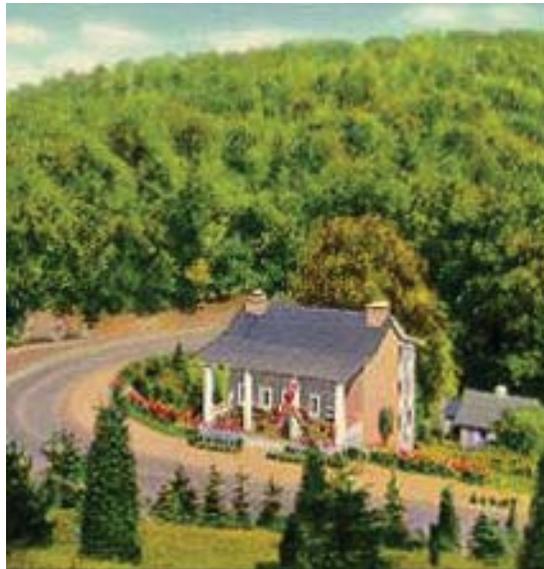
The next step in the planning process is to hold a series of public meetings where we can hear your views on the alternatives or answer questions you may have. If you can't attend a meeting, please mail, fax, or e-mail your comments. The comment period will end April 4, 2003.

Using the input we get, the team will begin work on a draft SRS/EIS. We'll present revised alternatives in the draft document, which we'll make available in hard copy and online (see website addresses below) in the fall of 2003.

The team will use public comments to select a preferred alternative and produce a final SRS/EIS. Following a final comment period, we will make a final decision on a preferred management alternative for the Lincoln Highway.

We'll keep you informed about the planning process through additional mailings and postings on the following websites:

- www.nps.gov/mwro/lincolnhighway
Comprehensive website
- www.planning.nps.gov/plans.cfm
NPS planning website for posting newsletters and submitting comments (project is located under Special Resource Studies category)



Public Meeting Schedule: February & March 2003

Thursday, February 27	Plymouth, Indiana WPA Conservation Clubhouse <i>(one block east of Highway 17 / Michigan St. on East Monroe St.)</i>	6:30 to 8:30 PM
Saturday March 1	Bucyrus, Ohio Bucyrus Middle School 245 Woodlawn Street	10:00 to 2:00 PM
Tuesday March 4	Ely, Nevada Convention Center 150 6th Street Sidney, Nebraska Security First Bank 1205 Jackson Street Princeton Township, New Jersey Princeton Municipal Building 400 Witherspoon Street	7:00 to 9:00 PM 7:00 to 9:00 PM 7:00 to 9:00 PM
Thursday March 6	Evanston, Wyoming Beeman-Cashin Building Front and 10th Streets Reno, Nevada California Building 100 Cowan Drive	7:00 to 9:00 PM 7:00 to 9:00 PM
Monday March 10	Fremont, Nebraska Visitor s Bureau in Old Post Office Building 605 North Broad Street	7:00 to 9:00 PM
Tuesday March 11	Jefferson, Iowa Jefferson High School 101 Ram Drive	6:30 to 8:30 PM
Wednesday March 12	Livermore, California Duarte Garage North L Street and Portola Avenue DeKalb, Illinois Ellwood House Museum 509 North First Street	10:00 AM to Noon 5:00 to 7:00 PM
Thursday March 13	Cedar Rapids, Iowa Iowa Hall at Kirkwood College	6:30 to 8:30 PM
Monday March 24	Gettysburg, Pennsylvania Valentine Hall, Lutheran Theological Seminary	7:00 to 9:00 PM
Tuesday March 25	Greensburg, Pennsylvania Greensburg-Salem Middle School North Main Street	7:00 to 9:00 PM

For updates or directions, please go to planning.nps.gov/plans.cfm and select the Lincoln Highway project under Special Resource Studies category.



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