



# **SCENIC ACTION NETWORK**

## **update**

November 11, 1997

### **WHY IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO SPEAK TO YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS:**

As we move into the holiday season, and our Senators and Representatives return home for recess, it is vital that we all take the time to contact our Members of Congress and tell them how we feel about scenic conservation. Why? Because *Representatives and Senators who know that their constituents are speaking out for scenic conservation are much more likely to care about these issues, and to take action to protect scenic resources.* Hearing from constituents can make a world of difference.

As a concerned citizen you can help protect America's landscape and its communities by being in regular contact with your Members of Congress. Establish an ongoing relationship with them. *The most effective way of getting your message across is to meet with your Members of Congress or their aides, especially when they are home for recess.* Call and write regularly; try to meet with your Representatives and Senators and their aides. Your concerns will become their concerns.

### **1998: ELECTION YEAR**

Our Members of Congress do care about what you have to say, and they especially care in election years. 1998 is an election year and we need to make it known to our Senators and Representatives that ISTEA provisions for transportation alternatives and scenic conservation are high on our list of priorities in choosing our elected officials.

### **TIME TO SPEAK OUT**

If you have never written to, or phoned, or met with your Members of Congress, take time out now before the year is up to do just that. Before you write or phone, or call to set up an appointment,

make a list of all the things you want to say. What are the issues that are of concern to you?

**ISTEA:** Your message is simple: better funding for transportation alternatives like mass transit, and for Scenic Byways, CMAQ and Enhancements (See previous SAN updates for summaries of these programs). More focus on flexible highway design and scenic conservation. Not just more highways and road widenings.

**ANTIQUITIES ACT:** Preserve the Antiquities Act as it is. The President should have the right to protect areas of national beauty in times of emergency. This is how the Grand Canyon and the Statue of Liberty were saved. Tell your Senators to oppose efforts to weaken the Antiquities Act.

**HIGHWAY BEAUTIFICATION ACT:** Tell your Members of Congress to support reform of the HBA, because billboards are still increasing in number on our highways and there is no money available to administer the HBA program.

**YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY:** Talk about programs in your community that you think are working, like bicycle and pedestrian improvements, or tree-planting and landscaping that has changed the way a local road looks. *Personal stories that relate to the issues that concern you are effective in communicating the need for change.*

### **CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE: ISTEA ON HOLD UNTIL 1998**

ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) will not be reauthorized this year. As we reported in the last update, the House chose to pass a six month extension of the existing ISTEA and to deal with the new ISTEA in 1998. The Senate, originally on track to reauthorize ISTEA this year, also recently passed a six-month extension to tide transportation funding over until 1998. The Senate has committed to reconsidering ISTEA 2, the original committee bill, first thing in January. The House will wait for the congressional

budget to be released in the hope of allocating even more money for transportation funding.

It may well be back to the drawing board next year on everything including the *Scenic Byways, Enhancements and CMAQ* (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) provisions, unless we let our Representatives and Senators know that we want to protect these provisions.

### **ANTIQUITIES ACT: WEAKENED IN THE HOUSE**

The House recently passed a "compromise" Antiquities Act reform bill sponsored by Representative Hansen (R-UT). The

bill created a 30-day advisory period before which the President can designate a monument.

Most damaging is a new provision that eliminates the designation after just two years unless Congress authorizes the monument. Under current law, the designation remains in place unless Congress overturns it. The proposed change would make it more difficult to conserve federal lands because a designation could easily expire before Congress makes a decision on a new monument. The Senate has yet to pass a bill, so it is important that our Senators hear from us on this issue.

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***"We have to believe that place by place, mile by mile, we can preserve scenic America and even reclaim ugly America. I haven't a doubt from all these years of wandering that Americans want to do that."***

Charles Kuralt at Scenic America's National Conference

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### **CONTACT YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS SOON! ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS**

Members of the House of Representatives:  
The Honorable  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Members of the Senate:  
The Honorable  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The phone number of the Capitol switchboard, which can connect you to any member's office:  
(202) 224-3121